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THE
PLAYS AND POEMS
OF
WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

VOLUME THE NINTH.

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OF
WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

VOLUME THE NINTH.

C O N T A I N I N G

R O M E O A N D J U L I E T.

H A M L E T.

O T H E L L O.

L O N D O N : P R I N T E D B Y H . B A L D W I N ,

For J. Rivington and Sons, L. Davis, B. White and Son, T. Longman,
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May, 1873

ROMEO AND JULIET.

VOL. IX.

B

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 children's 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 mend¹.

¹ 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.

Under the word PROLOGUE, in the copy of 1599 is printed *Chorus*, which I suppose meant only that the prologue was to be spoken by the same person who personated the chorus at the end of the first act.

The original prologue, in the quarto of 1597, stands thus;

Two household friends, alike in dignitie,
 In faire Verona, where we lay our scene,
 From civil broyles broke into enmitie,
 Whose civill warre makes civill hands uncleane.
 From forth the fatall loynes of these two foes
 A paire of starre-cross'd lovers tooke their life;
 Whose misadventures, piteous overthrowes,
 (Through the continuing of their fathers' strife,
 And death-markt passage of their parents' rage,
 Is now the two howres traffique of our stage,
 The which if you with patient eares attend,
 What here we want, wee'll studie to amend. MALONE.

Persons Represented.

Escalus, *Prince of Verona.*

Paris, *a young nobleman, kinsman to the Prince.*

Montague, } *Heads of two Houses, at variance with each*
Capulet, } *other.*

An old Man, uncle to Capulet.

Romeo, *son to Montague.*

Mercutio, *kinsman to the Prince, and friend to Romeo.*

Benvolio, *nephew to Montague, and friend to Romeo.*

Tybalt, *nephew to Lady Capulet.*

Friar Lawrence, *a Franciscan.*

Friar John, *of the same order.*

Balthasar, *servant to Romeo.*

Sampson, } *servants to Capulet.*
Gregory, }

Abram, *servant to Montague.*

An Apothecary.

Three Musicians.

Chorus. *Boy; Page to Paris; Peter; an Officer.*

Lady Montague, Wife to Montague.

Lady Capulet, Wife to Capulet.

Juliet, Daughter to Capulet.

Nurse to Juliet.

Citizens of Verona; several Men and Women, relations to both houses; Maskers, Guards, Citizens, Watchmen, and Attendants.

S C E N E *during the greater part of the play, in Verona: once in the fifth Act at Mantua.*

ROMEO AND JULIET².

ACT I. SCENE I.

A publick Place.

Enter SAMPSON and GREGORY, armed with swords and bucklers.

Sam. Gregory, o' my word, we'll not carry coals³.

Gre. No, for then we should be colliers.

Sam.

² The original relater of the story on which this play is formed, was Luigi da Porto, a gentleman of Vicenza, who died in 1529. His novel did not appear till some years after his death; being first printed at Venice in 1535, under the title of *La Giulietta*. A second edition was published in 1539: and it was again reprinted at the same place in 1553, (without the authour's name,) with the following title: *Historia nuovamente ritrovata di due nobili Amanti, con la loro pietosa morte; intervenuta gia nella citta di Verona, nell tempo del Signor Bartolomeo dalla Scala. Nuovamente stampata*. Of the authour some account may be found prefixed to the poem of *Romeus and Juliet*, in Vol. X.

In 1554 Bandello published, at Lucca, a novel on the same subject; [Tom. II. Nov. ix.] and shortly afterwards Boisteau exhibited one in French, founded on the Italian narratives, but varying from them in many particulars. From Boisteau's novel the same story was, in 1562, formed into an English poem, with considerable alterations and large additions, by Mr. Arthur Brooke. This piece, which the reader may find in the tenth volume, was printed by Richard Tottel with the following title, written probably, according to the fashion of that time, by the bookseller: *The tragicall History of Romeus and Juliet, containing a rare example of true constancie; with the subtill counsels, and practices of an old Fryer, and their ill event*. It was again published by the same bookseller in 1582. Painter in the second volume of his *Palace of Pleasure*, 1567, published a prose translation from the French of Boisteau, which he entitled *Rhomeo and Julietta*. Shakspeare had probably read Painter's novel, having taken one circumstance from it or some other prose translation of Boisteau; but his play was undoubtedly formed on the poem of Arthur Brooke. This is proved decisively by the following circumstances. 1. In the poem the prince of Verona is called *Escalus*; so also in the play.—In Painter's translation from Boisteau he is named *Signor Escala*, and sometimes *Lord Bartolomeo of Escala*. 2. In Painter's novel the family of Romeo are called the *Montesches*; in the poem and in the play, the *Montagues*. 3. The messenger employed by friar Lawrence to carry a letter to Romeo to inform him when Juliet would awake from her trance, is in Painter's translation called *Anselme*: in the poem, and in the play,

ROMEO AND JULIET.

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

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

Sam.

frier *John* is employed in this business. 4 The circumstance of Capulet's writing down the names of the guests whom he invites to supper, is found in the poem and in the play, but is not mentioned by Painter, nor is it found in the original Italian novel. 5. The residence of the Capulets, in the original, and in Painter, is called *Villa Franca*; in the poem and in the play *Freetown*. 6. Several passages of *Romeo and Juliet* appear to have been formed on hints furnished by the poem, of which no traces are found either in Painter's novel, or in Boisteau, or the original; and several expressions are borrowed from thence, which will be found in their proper places.

As what has been now stated has been controverted, (for what may not be controverted?) I should enter more largely into the subject, but that the various passages of the poem which I have quoted in the following notes, furnish such a decisive proof of the play's having been constructed upon it, as not to leave, in my apprehension, a shadow of doubt upon the subject. The question is not, whether Shakspeare had read other novels, or other poetical pieces, founded on this story, but whether the poem written by Arthur Brooke was the *basis* on which his play was built.

With respect to the name of *Romeo*, this also Shakspeare might have found in the poem; for in one place that name is given to him: or he might have had it from Painter's novel, from which or from some other prose translation of the same story he has, as I have already said, taken one circumstance not mentioned in the poem. In 1570 was entered on the Stationer's books by Henry Bynneman, *The pittifull History of ij louyng Italians*, which I suspect was a prose narrative of the story on which our authour's play is constructed.

Brevall says in his travels, that on a strict inquiry into the histories of Verona, he found that Shakspeare had varied very little from the truth, either in the names, characters, or other circumstances of his play.

"The story on which this play is founded," says Mr. Steevens, "is related as a true one in Girolama de la Corte's *History of Verona*. Among the entries on the books of the Stationers' Company, I find," (adds the same gentleman,) 'M. Tottell, Feb. 18, 1582: *Romeo and Julietta*.' Again, Aug. 5, 1596: 'Edward White, *A new ballad of Romeo and Juliett*.' 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 Brevall in his travels tells us that he saw at Vienna the tomb of these unhappy lovers." This is only an extract from Mr. Steevens's note. MALONE.

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

Sam. I strike quickly, being moved.

Gre. But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

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

Gre. To move, is—to stir; and to be valiant, is—to stand to it: therefore, if thou art moved, thou run’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.

Gre. 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.

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

“Sir *Romeus*’ annoy but trifle seems to mine.”

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

³ —*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 coals, I warrant you.” So, in Marston’s *Antonio and Melinda*, 2d part, 1602: “He has had wrong, and if I were he, I would bear no coals.” Again, in B. Jonson’s *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 *Henry V*: “At Calais they stole a fireshovel; I knew by that piece of service the men would carry coals.” STEEV.

The phrase should seem to mean originally, We’ll not submit to servile offices; and thence secondarily, we’ll not endure injuries. It has been suggested, that it may mean, “*we’ll not bear resentment burning like a coal of fire in our bosoms*, without breaking out into some outrage;” with allusion to the proverbial sentence, that smothered anger is a coal of fire in the bosom: But the word *carry* seems adverse to such an interpretation. MALONE.

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 King Charles 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 chaldron of scripture, that *John Lilburn* will not carry coals. By Dr. Gouge.” PERCY.

Sam. 'Tis all one, I will shew myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids⁴; I will cut off their heads.

Gre. The heads of the maids?

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

Gre. 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.

Gre. 'Tis well, thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been Poor John*. Draw thy tool; here comes two of the house of the Montagues⁵.

Enter ABRAM, *and* BALTHASAR.

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

Gre. How? turn thy back, and run?

Sam. Fear me not.

Gre. No, marry: I fear thee!

⁴ —cruel *with the maids*;⁴] The first folio reads—*civil* with the maids. JOHNSON.

So does the quarto 1599; but the word is written *civil*. It was manifestly an error of the press. The first copy furnishes no help, the passage there standing thus: "He play the tyrant; He first begin with the maids, and off with their heads:" but the true reading is found in the undated quarto. MALONE.

* —*Poor John*.] is hake, dried, and salted. MALONE.

⁵ *here comes two of the house of the Montagues*.] The word *two*, which was inadvertently omitted by the compositor in the quarto 1599, and of course in the subsequent impressions, I have restored from the first quarto of 1597, from which, in almost every page, former editors have drawn many valuable emendations in this play. The disregard of concord is in character.

It should be observed, that the partizans of the Montague family wore a token in their hats, in order to distinguish them from their enemies, the Capulets. Hence throughout this play, they are known at a distance. This circumstance is mentioned by Gascoigne, in a *Devisse of a Masque*, written for the right honourable viscount Mountacute, 1575:

"And for a further prooffe, he shewed in hys hat

"Thys token which the *Meuntacutes* did beare alwaies, for that

"They covet to be knowne from *Capels*, where they pass,

"For ancient grutch whych long 'twene these two houses was." MALONE.

Sam.

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9

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

Gre. 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 it⁶.

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 ?

Gre. No.

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

Gre. Do you quarrel, sir ?

Abr. Quarrel, sir ? no, sir.

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

Abr. No better.

Sam. Well, sir.

Enter BENVOLIO⁷, at a distance.

Gre. Say—better ; here comes one of my master's kinsmen^b.

Sam.

⁶ *I will bite my thumb at them ; which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.]* This mode of quarreling appears to have been common in our author's time. "What swearing is there, (says Decker, describing the various groupes that daily frequented the walks of St. Paul's Church,) what shouldering, what jostling, what jeering, what *biting of thumbs, to beget quarrels!*" THE DEAD TERM, 1608. MALONE.

Dr. Lodge, in a pamphlet called *Wits Miserie*, &c. 1596, has this passage. "Behold next I see contempt marching forth, giving mee the *fico* with his thombe in his moutb." In a translation from Stephens's *Apology for Herodotus*, in 1607, page 142, "I meet with these words: "If once they [the Italians,] *bite their fingers' ends in threating manner*, God knows, if they set upon theiremie face to face, it is because they cannot assail him behind his backe." 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.

⁷ *Enter Benvolio.]* Much of this scene is added since the first edition ; but probably by Shakspeare, since we find it in that of the year 1599. POPE.

⁸ *—here comes one of my master's kinsmen.]* Some mistake has happened

Sam. Yes, better, fir.

Abr. You lie.

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

Ben. Part, fools; put up your swords; you know not what you do. [beats down their swords.]

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. [They fight.]

Enter several Partizans of both houses, who join the fray; then enter Citizens, with Clubs.

I. Cit. Clubs¹, bills, and partizans! strike! beat them down!

Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

pened 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. STEEV.

^o —thy swashing blow.] Ben Jonson uses this expression in his *Staple of News*: “I do confess a swashing blow.”

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, Greene, 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.” STEEV.

See Vol. V. p. 323, n. 6. MALONE.

¹ Clubs, bills, &c.] When an affray arose in the streets, clubs was the usual exclamation. See Vol. III. p. 219, n. 6, and Vol. VI. p. 22, n. 1. MALONE.

Enter

Enter CAPULET, in his gown; and Lady CAPULET.

Cap. What noise is this?—Give me my long sword², 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 MONTAGUE, and Lady MONTAGUE.

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

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 weapons³ 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

² Give me my long sword,] The long sword was the sword used in war, which was sometimes wielded with both hands. JOHNSON.

See Vol. 1. p. 228, n. 8. MALONE.

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 Satiromastix*:

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

STEEVENS.

The little sword was probably nothing more than a dagger.

MALONE.

³ —mis-temper'd weapons] are angry weapons. So in *K. John*:

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

Cast by their grave befeeming ornaments,
 To wield old partizans, in hands as old,
 Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd 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-place⁴.
 Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

[*Exeunt Prince, and Attendants ;* CAPULET, *Lady*
 CAPULET, TYBALT, *Citizens, and Servants.*

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 ;
 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 east⁵,
 A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad ;

⁴ *To old Freetown, our common judgment-place.*] This name the poet found in *The Tragicall History of Romeus and Juliet*, 1562. It is there said to be the castle of the Capulets. MALONE.

⁵ *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.

Where,

Where,—underneath the grove of fycamour,
 That westward rooteth from the city's 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,—
 That most are busied⁶ when they are most alone,—
 Pursu'd my humour, not pursuing his,
 And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me⁷.

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
 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 of him.

Ben. Have you importun'd⁸ 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 founding and discovery,
 As is the bud bit with an envious worm,

⁶ *That most are busied, &c.*] Edition 1597. Instead of which it is in the other editions 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.

⁷ *And gladly shunn'd, &c.*] The ten lines following, not in the edition 1597, but in the next of 1599. POPE.

⁸ *Ben. Have you importun'd, &c.*] These two speeches also omitted in edition 1597, but inserted in 1599. POPE.

Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
 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.

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

[*Excunt* MONTAGUE, *and* Lady.]

Ben. Good morrow, cousin.

Or dedicate his beauty to the same.] 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.

Dr. Johnson's conjecture is, I think unfounded; the simile relates solely to Romeo's concealing the cause of his melancholy, and is again used by Shakspeare in *Twelfth Night*:

“—She never told her love,

“But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,

“Feed on her damask cheek.”

Mr. Theobald reads—to the sun. In the old spelling *sunne* and *same* were easily confounded.—In the last act of this play our poet has evidently imitated the *Rosalind* of Daniel; and in the present passage might have remembered the following lines in one of the Sonnets of the same writer, who was then extremely popular. The lines, whether remembered by our authour or not, add such support to Mr. Theobald's emendation, that I should have given it a place in the text, but that the other mode of phraseology was not uncommon in Shakspeare's time:

“And whilst thou *spread'st* unto the rising *sunne*,

“The fairest *flower* that ever saw the light,

“Now joy thy time, before thy sweet be done.”

Daniel's Sonnets, 1594.

The line quoted by Mr. Steevens does not appear to me to be adverse to this emendation. The bud could not dedicate its beauty to the sun, without at the same time dedicating it to the air.

A similar phraseology, however, to that of the text may be found in Daniel's 14th, 32d, 44th, and 53d Sonnets. MALONE.

Rem.

Rom. Is the day so young¹?

Ben. But new struck nine.

Rom. Ah 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—

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 to his will²!

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 love³! O loving hate!

O any thing, of nothing first create!

O heavy

¹ *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 *Accolastus*, a comedy, 1540: "It is yet *young nyghte*, or there is yet much of the nighte to come." STEEVENS.

² *—to his will!*] The meaning may be, that *love* finds out means to pursue his *desire*. JOHNSON.

It is not unusual for those who are blinded by love to overlook every difficulty that opposes their pursuit. NICHOLS.

This passage seems to have been misapprehended. Benvolio has lamented that the *God of love*, who appears so gentle, should be a tyrant.—It is no less to be lamented, adds Romeo, that the *blind god* should yet be able to direct his arrows at those whom he wishes to hit, that he should wound whomever he *wills*, or desires to wound.

MALONE.

The quarto 1597, reads

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

This reading is the most intelligible. STEEVENS.

³ *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.

ANONYMUS.

Every

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. Why, such is love's transgression⁴.—

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.

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 wave awaie to weare:

“ And health full of maladie,

“ And charitie full of envie;—

“ A laughter that is weping aie,

“ Rest that trauaileth 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 cielo, e ghiaccio in terra,

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

Sir Tho. Wyatt gives a translation of this sonnet, without any notice of the original, under the title of “*Description of the contrarious Passions in a Lover*,” amongst the *Songes and Sonnettes*, by the Earle of Surrey, and others, 1574. FARMER.

⁴ *Why, such is love's transgression.*—] Such is the consequence of unskilful and mistaken kindness. JOHNSON.

Love is a smoke rais'd with the fume of sighs;
 Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes⁵;
 Being vex'd⁶, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:
 What is it else? a madness most discreet,
 A choking 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.

Ben. Tell me in sadness⁷, 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:—
 Ah, 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;
 And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd⁸,

From

⁵ *Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;*] The authour 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 inforced. To *urge* the fire is the technical term. JOHNSON.

⁶ *Being vex'd, &c.*] As this line stands single, it is likely that the foregoing or following line that rhymed to it is lost. JOHNSON.

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

⁷ *Tell me in sadness,*] That is, tell me *gravely*, tell me in *seriousness*. JOHNSON.

See Vol. II. p. 223, n. 1. MALONE.

⁸ *And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd, &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

From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.
 She will not stay the siege of loving terms⁹,
 Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,
 Nor ope her lap to faint-seducing gold:
 O, she is rich in beauty; only poor,
 That, when she dies, with beauty dies her store¹.

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

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.

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

⁹ *She will not stay the siege of loving terms,*] So, in our authour's
Venus and Adonis:

“Remove your *siege* from my unyielding heart;

“To *love's* alarm it will not ope the gate.” MALONE.

¹ —*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.

Words are sometimes shuffled out of their places at the press; but that they should be at once transposed and corrupted, is highly improbable. I have no doubt that the old copies are right. She is *rich* in beauty; and *poor* in this circumstance alone, that with her, beauty will expire; her *store* of wealth [which the poet has already said was the fairness of her person,] will not be transmitted to posterity, inasmuch as she will “lead her graces to the grave, and leave the world no copy.” MALONE.

Theobald's alteration may be countenanced by the following passage in *Sweetnam 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 Shakspeare:

“Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date.”

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

“——— with her dies

“The abstract of all sweetnesss that's in woman.”

STEEVENS.

Rom.

Rom. She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste²;

For beauty, starv'd with her severity,

Cuts beauty off from all posterity³.

She is too fair, too wise; wisely too fair⁴,

To merit bliss by making me despair:

She hath forsworn to love; and, in that vow,

Do I live dead⁵, 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 more⁶:

These happy masks⁷, that kiss fair ladies' brows,

² *She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste;*] So, in our author's First Sonnet:

“ And, tender churl, mak'it waste in niggarding.” MALONE.

³ *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?”

Again, in his *Venus and Adonis*:

“ What is thy body but a swallowing grave,

“ Seeming to bury that posterity,

“ Which by the rights of time thou needs must have —.”

MALONE.

⁴ —*wisely too fair, &c.*] There is in her too much sanctimonious wisdom united with beauty, which induces her to continue chaste with the hopes of attaining heavenly bliss. MALONE.

None of the following speeches of this scene are in the first edition of 1597. POPE.

⁵ *Do I live dead,*] So Richard the Third:

“ — now they kill me with a living death.”

See Vol. VI. p. 467, n. 7. MALONE.

⁶ —*in question more.*] More into talk; to make her unparalleled beauty more the subject of thought and conversation. See Vol. III. p. 77, n. 2. MALONE.

⁷ *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.

These happy masks, I believe, means no more than *the happy masks*. Such is Mr. Tyrwhitt's opinion. See Vol. II. p. 53, n. 5. MALONE.

Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair;
 He, that is stricken blind, cannot forget
 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 forget⁸.

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

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Street.

Enter CAPULET, PARIS, and Servant.

Cap. And Montague is bound⁹ 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 pride¹,
 Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

Par. Younger than she are happy mothers made.

Cap. And too soon marr'd are those so early made².

The

¹ *Thou canst not teach me to forget.*]

“Of all afflictions taught a lover yet,

“’Tis sure the hardest science, to forget.” Pope’s *Elisa*.

STEEVENS.

⁹ *And Montague is bound*—] This speech is not in the first quarto. That of 1599 has—*But Montague*.—In that of 1609 and the folio, *But* is omitted. The reading of the text is that of the undated quarto.

MALONE.

¹ *Let two more summers wither in their pride,*] So, in our poet’s 103d Sonnet:

“——— Three winters cold

“Have from the forests shook three summers’ pride,—”

MALONE.

² *And too soon marr’d are those so early made.*] The quarto 1597, reads:—*And too soon marr’d are those so early married.*

Puttenham,

The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,
 She is the hopeful lady of my earth³:
 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.

Puttenham, in his *Art of Poesy*, 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 marred* 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.

Making and Marring is enumerated among other unlawful games in the Stat. 2 and 3 Phi. and Ma. c. 9. Great improvements have been made on this ancient game in the present century. MALONE.

³ *She is the hopeful lady of my earth*;] This line is not in the first edition. POPE.

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

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.

The explanation of Mr. Steevens may be right; but there is a passage in *The Maid's Tragedy*, which leads to another, where Amintor says,

“ This *earth* of mine doth tremble, and I feel

“ A stark affrighted motion in my blood.”

Here *earth* means corporal part. MASON.

Again, in this play:

“ Can I go forward, when my heart is here?

“ Turn back, dull *earth*, and find thy center out.”

Again, in our authour's 146th Sonnet:

“ Poor soul, the center of my sinful *earth*,—.” MALONE.

At my poor house, look to behold this night
 Earth-treading stars, that make dark heaven light⁴ :
 Such comfort, as do lusty young men feel⁵
 When well-apparell'd April on the heel
 Of limping winter treads, even such delight
 Among fresh female buds shall you this night

⁴ *Earth-treading stars, that make dark heaven light*:] Dr. Warburton calls this nonsense, and idly substitutes *even* for *heaven*.

MALONE.

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.

⁵ —*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 *Remaunt of the Rose*, will support the present reading, and shew the propriety of Shakspeare'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 *young folke* entendin aye,

“For to ben gaie and amorous,

“The time is then so flavorful.”

Remaunt of the Rose, v. 51, &c. STEEVENS.

Our authour's 98th *Sonnet* may also serve to confirm the reading of the text:

“From you have I been absent in the spring,

“When *proud-pied April*, drets'd in all his trim,

“Hath put a *spirit of youth* in every thing.”

Again, in *Tancred and Gismund*, a tragedy, 1592:

“Tell me not of the date of Nature's days,

“Then in the *April* of her *springing age*.—”. MALONE.

Inherit

Inherit at my house⁶; hear all, all see,
 And like her most, whose merit most shall be:
 Such, amongst view of many⁷, mine, being one,

May

⁶ Inherit at my house;] To inherit, in the language of Shakspeare's age, is to possess. See Vol. V. p. 7, n. 5. MALONE.

⁷ Such, amongst view of many, &c.] Thus the quarto, 1597. In the subsequent quarto of 1599, that of 1609, and the folio, the line was printed thus:

Which one [on] more view of many, &c. MALONE.

A very slight alteration will restore the clearest sense to this passage. Shakspeare might have written the line 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 please you. Abuse 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.

This interpretation is fully supported by a passage in *Measure for Measure*:

"—our compell'd sins

"Stand more for number, than account." i. e. estimation.

There is here an allusion to an old proverbial expression, that *one is no number*. So, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, Part II:

"—to fall to one,

"—is to fall to none,

"For one no number is."

Again, in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*:

"One is no number."

Again, in Shakspeare's 136th Sonnet:

"Among a number one is reckon'd none,

"Then in the number let me pass untold."

The following lines in the poem on which the tragedy is founded, may add some support to Mr. Steevens's conjecture:

"To his approved friend a solemn oath he plight,—

"—every where he would resort where ladies went to meet;

"Eke should his savage heart like all indifferently,

"For he would view and judge them all with unallured eye.—

* * * * *

"No knight or gentleman of high or low renown

"But Capulet himself had bid unto his feast, &c.

C 4

"Young

May stand in number, though in reckoning none.
Come, go with me;—Go, firrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona; find those persons out,
Whose names are written there⁸, [*gives a paper.*] and to
them say,

My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

[*Exeunt* CAPULET, and PARIS.]

Serv. Find them out, whose names are written here⁹?
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 languish¹:
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die².

Rom.

“ Young damfels thither flock, of bachelors a rout;

“ Not so much for the banquet's sake, as beauties to search
out.” MALONE.

⁸ —*find those persons out,*

Whose names are written there,] Shakspeare has here closely fol-
lowed the poem already mentioned:

“ No lady fair or foul was in Verona town,

“ No knight or gentleman of high or low renown,

“ But Capilet himself hath bid unto his feast,

“ Or by *his name*, in paper sent, appointed as a guest.” MALONE.

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 —*with another's languish:*]. This substantive is again found in
Antony and Cleopatra.—It was not of our poet's coinage, occurring
also (as I think) in one of Morley's songs, 1595:

“ Alas, it skills not,

“ For thus I will not,

“ Now

Rom. Your plantain leaf is excellent for that³.

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,

Whipp'd, 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.

[reads.

“ Now contented,

“ Now tormented,

“ Live in love and languish.” MALONE.

² Tut, man! one fire burns out another's burning,—

Take thou some new infection to thy eye,

And the rank poison of the old will die.] So, in the poem:

“ Ere long the townish dames together will resort;

“ Some one of beauty, favour, shape, and of so lovely port,

“ With so fast-fixed eye perhaps thou may'st behold,

“ That thou shalt quite forget thy love and passions past of old.

“ And as out of a plank a nail a nail doth drive,

“ So novel love out of the mind the ancient love doth rive.”

Again, in our authour's *Coriolanus*:

“ One fire drives out one fire; one nail one nail.”

So, in Lily's *Euphuus*, 1580: “—a fire divided in twayne burneth a flower;—one love expelleth another, and the remembrance of the latter quencheth the concupiscence of the first.” MALONE.

³ *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. GREY.

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, prithee get me a plantain.”

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

Signior

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; [*gives back the note.*] Whither should they come?

Serv. Up.

Rom. Whither?

Serv. To supper; to our house⁴.

Rom. Whose house?

Serv. My master's.

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 wine⁵. Rest you merry. [*Exit.*]

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.

⁴ *To supper; to our house.*] The words *to supper* are in the old copies annexed to the preceding speech. They undoubtedly belong to the servant, to whom they were transferred by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

⁵ —*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 *Hoffman's Tragedy*, 1631:

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

Again, in the *Pinner 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*. STEEVINS.

Ben.

Ben. Tut! you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself pois'd with herself in either eye:
But in those crystal scales⁶, let there be weigh'd
Your lady's love against some other maid⁷
That I will shew you, shining at this feast,
And she shall scant shew well, that now shews best.

Rom. I'll go along, no such fight to be shewn,
But to rejoice in splendour 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,

⁶ —in those crystal scales,—] The old copies have—*that* crystal, &c. The emendation was made by Mr. Rowe. I am not sure that it is necessary. The poet might have used *scales* for the entire machine.

MALONE.

⁷ —let there be weigh'd

Your lady's love against some other maid] *Your lady's love* is the love you bear to your lady, which in our language is commonly used for the lady herself. HEATH.

And

And yet, to my teen⁸ 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,
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 earthquake now eleven years⁹;
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,
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall,
My lord and you were then at Mantua:—
Nay, I do bear a brain¹:—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 tetchy, and fall out with the dug.
Shake, quoth the dove-house: 'twas no need, I trow,

⁸ —to my teen—] To my sorrow. JOHNSON.
So, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, B. I. C. 9.

“—for dread and doleful *teen*.”

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

See Vol. VI. p. 559, n. 4. MALONE.

⁹ 'Tis 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 Shakspeare 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.

¹ Nay, I do bear a brain:] So, in *Ram-alley*, or *Merry Tricks*, 1611:

“*Daff*, we must bear some brain.”

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

“—nay, an I bear not a brain,—” STEEVENS.

To bid me trudge.

And since that time it is eleven years :

For then she could stand alone ² ; nay, by the rood,
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 ³, and said—*Ay*.

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

Nurse. Yes, madam ; Yet I cannot choofe but laugh ⁴.

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*.

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

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

² —*could stand alone* ;] The quarto, 1597, reads : “ could stand
big lone, i. e. quite alone, completely alone. So in another of our au-
thour's plays, *bigb-fantastical* means entirely fantastical. STEEVENS.

³ —*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 *Cynthia's Revenge*, by Ben Jonson :

“ *Stint* thy babbling tongue.”

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

⁴ *Nurse.* Yes, madam ; yet I cannot choofe, &c.] This speech and
tautology is not in the first edition. POPE.

Thou

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. It is an honour⁵ 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.

La Cap. Well⁶, 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 wax⁷.

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

⁵ *It is an honour*—] The first quarto reads *honour*; the folio *bour*. I have chosen the reading of the quarto.

The word *bour* 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.

Honour was changed to *bour* in the quarto, 1599. MALONE.

⁶ *Well, &c.*] Instead of this speech, the quarto, 1597, has only one line:

Well, girl, the noble County Paris seeks thee for his wife.

STEEVENS.

⁷ *—a man of wax.*] So, in *Wily Beguiled*, 1606:

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

STEEVENS.

—a man of wax—] Well made, as if he had been modelled in wax, as Mr. Steevens by a happy quotation has explained it. “When you, Lydia, praise the waxen arms of Telephus,” says Horace, [*waxen*, well shaped, finely turned,]

“With passion swells my fervid breast,

“With passion hard to be suppress.”

Dr. Bentley changed *cerea* into *lactea*, little understanding, that the praise was given to the shape, not to the colour. S. W.

Nurse.

*Nurse*⁸. Nay, he's a flower: in faith, a very flower.

La. Cap. What say you⁹? can you love the gentleman?

This night you shall behold him at our feast:
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face¹,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
Examine every married lineament²,
And see how one another lends content;
And what obscur'd in this fair volume lies,
Find written in the margin of his eyes³

This

⁸ *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.

⁹ *La. Cap.* *What say you ?* &c.] This ridiculous speech is entirely added since the first edition. POPE.

¹ *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.

² *Examines every married lineament*;] This speech, as has been observed, is not in the quarto, 1597. The reading of the text is that of the quarto 1599. The folio, after a later quarto, that of 1609, reads *several* lineament. I have no doubt that *married* was the poet's word, and that it was altered only because the printer of the quarto of 1609 did not understand it. MALONE.

Shakspeare meant by this 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.

³ *And what obscur'd in this fair volume lies,*

Find written in the margin of his eyes.] So, in our authour's *Rape of Lucrece*:

“ But she, that never cop'd with stranger eyes,

“ Could pick no meaning from their parling looks,

“ Nor read the subtle shining secrecies,

“ Writ in the glassy *margin* of such *books*.” MALONE.

The comments on ancient books were always printed in the margin.

So

This precious book of love, this unbound lover⁴,
 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,
 That in gold clasps locks in the golden story⁵;
 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 eye⁶,
 Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam⁷, the guests are come, supper served up,
 you call'd, my young lady ask'd for, the nurse cursed 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.*]

So *Horatio* in *Hamlet* says: "—I knew, you must be edify'd by the
margent," &c. STEEVENS.

⁴ *This precious book of love, this unbound lover,*] The *unbound lover*,
 is a quibble between the binding of a book, and the binding of mar-
 riage. MASON.

⁵ *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, and doubtless often exquisitely embellished, but of which Canus,
 one of the popish doctors, proclaims the authour to have been *homo*
forrei 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.

⁶ —endart mine eye,] The quarto, 1597, reads:—engage mine
 eye. STEEVENS.

⁷ *Madam,* &c.] To this speech there have been likewise additions
 since the elder quarto, but they are not of sufficient consequence to be
 quoted. STEEVENS.

SCENE

SCENE IV.

A Street.

Enter ROMEO, MERCUTIO⁸, BENVOLIO, with five or six Maskers, Torch-bearers, and Others.

Rom. What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?
Or shall we on without apology?

Ben. The date is out of such prolixity⁹:
We'll have no Cupid hood-wink'd with a scarf,

⁸— *Mercutio,*] Shakspeare 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 beloved of all men, and by reason of his pleasant and courteous behaviour was in al companies wel intertaind.” *Painter's Palace of Pleasure*, tom. ii p. 221. STEEVENS.

Mercutio is thus described in the poem which Shakspeare followed:

“ At thone side of her chair her lover Romeo,
“ And on the other side there sat one call'd Mercutio;
“ A courtier that each where was highly had in price,
“ For he was courteous of his speech, and pleasant of device.
“ Even as a lion would among the lambs be bold,
“ Such was among the bashful maids Mercutio to behold.
“ With friendly gripe he seiz'd fair Juliet's snowish hand;
“ A gift he had, that nature gave him in his swathing band
“ That frozen mountain ice was never half so cold,
“ As were his hands, though ne'er so near the fire he did
 them hold.”

Perhaps it was this last circumstance which induced our poet to represent Mercutio, as little sensible to the passion of love, and “a jester at words which *he never felt*.” See *Othello*, Act III. sc. iv.

“ —This *band* is moist, my lady;—
“ This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart;
“ *Hot, bot, and moist*.”

See also Vol. VII. p. 432, n. 2. MALONE.

⁹ *The date is out of such prolixity* :] A tedious speech by way of introduction to maskers, before their entry at a masquerade, is no longer in fashion. To Mr. Steevens we are indebted for the true interpretation of this passage. MALONE.

In *Henry VIII.* where the king introduces himself to the entertainment given by Wolfey, 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

Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,
 Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper¹;
 Nor no without-book prologue², faintly spoke
 After the prompter, for our entrance³:
 But, let them measure us by what they will,
 We'll measure them a measure⁴, and be gone.

Rom. Give me a torch⁵,—I am not for this ambling;
 Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

casions 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.

¹ —like a crow-keeper;] The word *crow-keeper* is explained in *K. Lear*, Act IV. sc. vi. JOHNSON.

² *Nor no without-book prologue, &c.*] The two following lines are inserted from the first edition. POPE.

³ —for our entrance:] *Entrance* is here used as a trisyllable; *enterance*. MALONE.

⁴ *We'll measure them a measure,*] i. e. a dance. See Vol. II. p. 405, n. 4. MALONE.

⁵ *Give me a torch,*] The character which Romeo declares his resolution to assume, will be best explained by a passage in *Westward Ho*, 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. STEEVENS.

K. Henry VIII. when he went masked to Wolfey's palace, (now Whitehall,) had sixteen torch-bearers. See Vol. VII. p. 36.

MALONE.

Mer.

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 itakes me to the ground, I cannot move.

Mer. You are a lover⁶ ; borrow Cupid's wings,
And soar with them above a common bound.

Rom. I am too sore enpierced with his shaft,
To soar with his light feathers ; and so bound,
I cannot bound⁷ a pitch above dull woe :
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

Mer. And, to sink in it, should you burden love⁸ ;
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 deformities⁹ ?
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 : let wantons, light of heart¹,
Tickle

⁶ *Mer.* *You are a lover ; &c.*] The twelve following lines are not to be found in the first edition. POPE.

⁷ —so bound,

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

“ —in contempt

“ At one slight bound high over-leap'd all bound

“ Of hill,” &c. *Par. Lost*, book iv. l. 180. STEEVENS.

⁸ —should you burden love ;] i. e. by sinking in it, *you should, or would*, burden love. Mr. Heath, on whose suggestion a note of interrogation has been placed at the end of this line in the late editions, entirely misunderstood the passage. Had he attended to the first two lines of Mercutio's next speech, he would have seen what kind of burdens he was thinking of. See also the concluding lines of Mercutio's long speech in p. 43. MALONE.

⁹ —doth quote deformities ?] To quote is to observe. STEEVENS.

See Vol. II. p. 378, n. 6 ; and p. 432, n. 6. MALONE.

¹ *Let wantons, light of heart, &c.*] Middleton has borrowed this thought in his play of *Blurt Master-Constable*, 1602 :

Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels²;
 For I am proverb'd with a grandfire phrase³,—
 I'll be a candle-holder, and look on,—
 The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done⁴.

Mer. Tut! dun's the mouse, the constable's own word⁵:

If

“—bid him, whose heart no sorrow feels,

“Tickle the rushes with his wanton heels;

“I have too much lead at mine.” STEEVENS.

² *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*. STEEV.

See Vol. VIII. p. 352, n. 7.

Shakspeare, it has been observed, gives the manners and customs of his own time to all countries and all ages. It is certainly true; but let it always be remembered that his contemporaries offended against propriety in the same manner. Thus Marlowe in his *Hero and Leander*:

“She, fearing on the *rushes* to be stung,

“Striv'd with redoubled strength.—” MALONE.

³ —*a grandfire phrase*,—] The proverb which Romeo means, is contained in the line immediately following: *To hold the candle*, is a very common proverbial expression, for being an *idle spectator*. Among Ray's proverbial sentences, is this,—“A good *candle-holder* proves a good gamester.” STEEVENS.

The proverb to which Romeo refers, is rather that alluded to in the line next but one. MALONE.

⁴ *I'll be a candle-holder, and look on*,—

The game was ne'er so fair, &c.] An allusion to an old proverbial saying, which advises to give over when the game is at the fairest.

ANONYMUS.

⁵ *Tut! dun's the mouse, the constable's own word*, &c.] 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 tout les chats sont gris*: as much as to say, You need not fear, night

will

If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire⁶
Of this (save reverence) love, wherein thou stick'st⁷

Up

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. WARBURTON.

⁶ *If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire*—] A proverbial saying used by Mr. Thomas Heywood, in his play intitled *The Dutchess of Suffolk*, Act III.

“ A rope for Bishop Bonner; Clunce, run,
“ Call help, a rope, or we are all undone;
“ Draw *dun* out of the ditch.” GREY.

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 Midfommer bone-fier,
“ Or at the *drawing dun out of the myer*.”

Dun's the mouse 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 *mouse shall be dun*.”

It is also found among Ray's proverbial families. Again, in *the Two Merry Milkmaids*, 1620: “ Why then, 'tis done, and *dun's the mouse*, 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.

These passages serve to prove that Dr. Warburton's explanation is ill founded, without tending to explain the real sense of the phrase, or shewing why it should be *the constable's own word*. MASON.

⁷ *Of this (save reverence) love, wherein thou stick'st*—] I have followed the first quarto, 1597, except that it has *sur-reverence*, instead of *save-reverence*. It was only a different mode of spelling the same word; which was derived from the Latin, *salva reverentia*. See Blount's Glossograph. 8vo. 1681, in v. *sa-reverence*.

Up to the ears.—Come, we burn day-light, ho⁸.

Rom. Nay, that's not so.

Mer. I mean, sir, in delay

We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day⁹.

Take our good meaning; for our judgement fits

Five times in that, ere once in our five wits¹.

Rom.

So, in Massinger's *Very Woman*:

“The beastliest man,—

“(*Sir-reverence* of the company) a rank whore-maker.”

Again, in the *Puritan*, 1607:—“ungarter'd, unbutton'd, nay, (*Sir-reverence*,) untruffs'd.”

In *Cymbeline* we have the same thing more delicately expressed: “Why should his mistress not be fit too? The rather, *saving reverence* of the word, for 'tis said a woman's fitness comes by fits.”

In the *Comedy of Errors*, Vol. II. p. 168, the word is written as in the first copy of this play, and is used in the same sense: “—such a one as a man may not speak of, without he say *sir-reverence*,”—And in *Much ado about Nothing*, it occurs as now printed in the text: “I think you will have me say (*save reverence*) a husband.”

The printer of the quarto, 1599, exhibited the line thus unintelligibly:

Or, save you reverence, love—

which was followed by the next quarto, of 1609, and by the folio with a slight variation. The editor of the folio, whenever he found an error in a later quarto, seems to have corrected it by caprice, without examining the preceding copy. He reads,—*Or, save your reverence*, &c. MALONE.

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

See Vol. I. p. 221, n. 6. MALONE.

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

¹ —*for our judgment fits*

Five times in that, ere once in our five wits.] The quarto 1599, and the folio, have—*our fine wits*. Shakspeare is on all occasions so fond of antithesis, that I have no doubt he wrote *five*, not *fine*. The error has happened so often in these plays, and the emendation is so strongly confirmed by comparing these lines as exhibited in the enlarged copy of this play, with the passage as it stood originally, that I have not hesitated to give the reading which I proposed some time ago, a place in the text.

The same mistake has happened in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, Vol. II. p. 512, where we find in all the old copies—“of these *fine* the sense,” instead of “—these *five*.” Again, in *K. Henry VI.* P. I. Vol. VI. p. 5: “Deck'd with *fine* flower-de-luces,” instead of—“*five*,” &c. In *Cerrolaus*, (see Vol. VII. p. 293, n. 2.) the only authentick ancient copy has

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 lie.

Rom. In bed, asleep, while they do dream things true.

Mer. O, then², I see, queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife³ ; and she comes

In

has—"the *five* strains of honour," for "the *fine* strains of honour." Indeed in the writing of Shakspeare's age, the *u* and *n* were formed exactly in the same manner: we are not to wonder therefore that ignorant transcribers should have confounded them. In the modern editions these errors have all been properly amended.—See also on the same point, Vol. I. p. 292, n. 9; Vol. IV, p. 252, n. 9; and Vol. VIII. p. 84, n. 8.

Shakspeare has again mentioned the *five wits* in *Much ado about Nothing*, (see Vol. II. p. 210, n. 4.) in *K. Lear*, and in one of his sonnets. Again, in the play before us: "Thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy *wits*, than, I am, sure I have in my whole *five*." Mercutio is here also the speaker.

In the first quarto the line stands thus:

"Three times in that, ere once in our *right* wits."

When the poet altered "*three times*" to "*five times*," he, without doubt, for the sake of the jingle, discarded the word *right*, and substituted *five* in its place. The alteration, indeed, seems to have been made merely to obtain the antithesis.

Notwithstanding all these concurring circumstances, Mr. Steevens, thinks *fine* may be the true reading, because "they would whip me with their *fine wits*," occurs in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

MALONE.

² O, then, &c.] 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 —I see, queen Mab hath been with you.

She is the fairies' midwife;] 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.

D 4

I apprehend

In shape no bigger than an agat-stone
 On the fore-finger of an alderman⁴,
 Drawn with a team of little atomies⁵
 Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep:
 Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;

The

I apprehend, and with no violence of interpretation, that by "the fairies' midwife," the poet means, *the midwife among the fairies*, because it was her peculiar employment to steal the new-born babe in the night, and to leave another in its place. The poet here uses her *general* appellation, and character, which yet has so far a proper reference to the present train of fiction, as that her illusions were practised on persons in bed or asleep; for she not only haunted women in childbed, but was likewise the incubus or nightmare: Shakspeare, by employing her here, alludes at large to her midnight pranks performed on sleepers; but denominates her from the most notorious one, of her personating the drowsy midwife, who was insensibly carried away into some distant water, and substituting a new birth in the bed or cradle. It would clear the appellation to read the *fairy midwife*.—The poet avails himself of Mab's appropriate province, by giving her this nocturnal agency.

T. WARTON.

4 *On the fore-finger of an alderman,*] The quarto, 1597, reads, *of a burgomaster*. 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 *burgomasters*, 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 Shakspeare'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 o' 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 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 harnesses 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

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'ries straight :
 O'er lawyer's 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.
 Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
 And then dreams he of smelling out a suit ⁶ :

And

“ *The seat, the soft wool of the bee,*
 “ *The cover (gallantly to see)*
 “ *The wing of a py'd butterflee,*
 “ *I trow, '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 t'histle-down they shod it.*” STEEVENS.

Drayton's *Nymphidia* was written several years after this tragedy.
 See Vol. II. p. 460, n. 7. MALONE.

* —with sweet-meats—] i. e. kissing-comfits. These artificial aids to perfume the breath, are mentioned by Falstaff in the last act of *the Merry Wives of Windsor*. MALONE.

⁶ *Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,*
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit:] Dr. Warburton has justly observed, that in Shakspeare's time “ a court-solicitation was called simply a *suit*, and a process, a *suit at law*, to distinguish it from the other. ‘ The king (says an anonymous contemporary 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, wished his father to find [i. e. to smell out] a *suit* for him. Whereupon he became *suitor* 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.’

As

And sometimes 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, Spanish blades⁷,

Of

As almost every book of that age furnishes proofs of what Dr. Warburton has observed, I shall add but one other instance, from Decker's *Guls Hornebooke*, 1609 : " If you be a *courtier*, discourse of the obtaining of *suits*."

To avoid the repetition of the word *courtiers* in this speech, Mr. Tyrwhitt proposed to read—O'er *counties*' knees, i. e. the knees of *counts*; for in old language *county* signified a *nobleman*. So, as he observes, in Holinshed, p. 1150, " the *Countie* Egmond," and in the Burleigh papers, I. p. 7, " The *Countie* Palatine, Lowys." Paris, he adds, who, in one place is called *earl*, is most commonly styled the *county* in this play. See also Vol. I. p. 270, n. 8; Vol. III. p. 13, n. 5; and p. 431, n. *. He, however, candidly acknowledges that " the repetition of the *courtier*, which offends us in this passage, may be owing to the players having jumbled together the varieties of several editions, as they certainly have done in other parts of the play."

In the *present* instance I think it is more probable that the repetition arose from the cause assigned by Mr. Steevens. MALONE.

This speech at different times received much alteration and improvement. 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 dream :
 O'er ladies lips, who dream 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 sometimes 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 sadome deepe, &c.

Shakspeare, as I 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 :

Gladus

Of healths five fathom deep⁸; and then anon
 Drums in his ear; at which he starts, and wakes;
 And, being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two,
 And sleeps again. This is that very Mab,
 That plats the manes of horses in the night;
 And bakes the elf-locks⁹ in foul fluttish hairs,
 Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes:
 This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs¹,
 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,

Gladius Toletanus.

“ Unda Tagi non est uno celebranda metallo;

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

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

In the passage quoted from Grotius, *alio* has been constantly printed instead of *uno*, which makes it nonsense; the whole point of the couplet depending on that word. I have corrected it from the original. MALONE.

⁸ *Of bealths five fathom deep*;] So, in *Westward Hoe*, by Decker and Webster, 1607: “—troth, fir, my master and fir Goslin are guzzling; they are dabbling together *fathom deep*. The knight has *drunk* so much *bealth* to the gentleman yonder, on his knees, that he hath almost lost the use of his legs.” MALONE.

⁹ *And bakes 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.

So, in Heywood's *Iron Age*, 1632:

“ And when I shook these *locks*, now *knotted* all,

“ As *bak'd* in blood,”— MALONE.

¹ *—when maids, &c.*] So, in Drayton's *Nymphidia*:

“ And *Mab*, his merry queen, by night

“ *Besrides* young folks that lie upright,

“ (*In elder times the mare that bigbt*)

“ *Which plagues them out of measure.*”

So, in *Gervase of Tilbury*, Dec. I. c. 17. “Vidimus quosdam dæmones tanto zelo mulieres amare, quod ad inaudita prorumpunt ludibria, et cum ad concubitum earum accedunt, *mirâ mole eas opprimunt*, nec ab aliis videntur.” ANONYMUS.

—of good carriage.] So, in *Lowe's Labour's Lost*, Act I. sc. ii.

“—let them be men of good repute and *carriage.*”

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

Begot

Begot of nothing but vain fantasy ;
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 thence²,
Turning his face * to the dew-dropping south.

Ben. This wind, you talk of, blows us from ourselves ;
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 life³, clos'd in my breast,
By some vile forfeit of untimely death :
But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail⁴!—On, lusty gentlemen.

Ben. Strike, drum⁵.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V⁶.

A Hall in Capulet's House.

Musicians waiting. Enter Servants.

1. *Serv.* Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take
away ? he shift a trencher⁷ ! he scrape a trencher !

2. *Serv.*

² —*from thence,*] The quarto, 1597, reads :—in haste. STEEVENS.

* —*his face—*] So the quarto, 1597. The other ancient copies have
side. MALONE.

³ —*and expire the term*

Of a despised life,] So, in the *Rape of Lucrece* :

“ An expir'd date, cancell'd ere well begun.”

See Vol. X. p. 87, n. 8. MALONE.

⁴ *Direct my sail !*] 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.

Suit is the corrupt reading of the quarto 1599, from which it got
into all the subsequent copies. MALONE.

⁵ *Strike, drum.*] Here the folio adds: *They march about the stage, and
serving men come forth with their napkins.* STEEVENS.

⁶ This scene is added since the first copy. STEEVENS.

⁷ —*he shift a trencher !*] *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 ap-
pears that they were common to the tables of the first nobility. PERCY.

They

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

1. *Serv.* Away with the joint-stools, remove the court-cupboard⁸, look to the plate:—good thou, save me a piece of march-pane⁹; and, as thou lovest me, let the porter

They were common even in the time of Charles I. See Vol. I. p. 54, n. 3. MALONE.

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.

On the books of the Stationers' Company, in the year 1554, is the following entry: "Item, pay'd for x dozyn of trenchers. xxi d. STEEV.⁸ —*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 the *Roaring Girl*, 1611: "Place that in the *court-cupboard*." Again, in Chapman's *May-Day*, 1611: "*Court-cupboards* planted with flaggons, cans, cups, beakers," &c.

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

By "remove the court-cupboard," the speaker means, I think, remove the flaggons, cups, ewers, &c. contained in it.—A *court-cupboard* was not strictly what we now call a *side-board*, but a recess fitted up with shelves to contain plate, &c. for the use of the table. It was afterwards called a *buffet*, and continued to be used to the time of Pope:

"The rich *buffet* well colour'd serpents grace,

"And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face."

The *side-board* was, I apprehend, introduced in the present century.

MALONE.

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.

⁹ *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 Shakspeare'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.

GREY.

March pane was a kind of sweet bread or biscuit: called by some almond-cake. *Hermolaus Barbarus* terms it *mazapanis*, vulgarly *Martius panis*. G. *marcepain* and *massépan*. It. *marzapane*. H. *il maçapan*. B. *marcepyn*

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.

[*They retire behind.*]

Enter CAPULET, &c. *with the Guests, and the Maskers.*

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

Unplagu'd with corns, will have a bout with you:—

Ah ha, my mistresses! which of you all

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:

You are welcome, gentlemen!¹—Come, musicians, play.

A hall! a hall!² give room, and foot it, girls.

[*Musick plays, and they dance.*]

More

marcepeyn, i. e. *massa pura*. But, as few understood the meaning of this term, it began to be generally though corruptly called *mossepeyn*, *marcepeyn*, *marsepeyn*; 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, 1540: “—secing that the issue of the table, fruits and cheese, or wafers, hypocras, and *marcbpanes*, or comsytures, be brought in.” See Dugdale's *Orig. Jurid.* p. 133.

In the year 1560, I find the following entry on the books of the Stationers' Company: “Item, payd for ix *marthe paynes*, xxvi. s. viii. d.

STEEVENS.

* — *their* toes.—] Thus all the ancient copies. The modern editors, following Mr. Pope, read, with more delicacy, *their feet*.—An editor by such capricious alterations deprives the reader of the means of judging of the manners of different ages; for the word employed in the text undoubtedly did not appear indelicate to the audiences of Shakspeare's time, though perhaps it would not be endured at this day. MALONE.

¹ *You are welcome, gentlemen!*] These two lines, omitted by the modern editors, I have replaced from the folio. JOHNSON.

² *A hall! a hall!*] Such is the old reading, and the true one, though

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, fit, nay, fit, good cousin Capulet³;
 For you and I are past our dancing days⁴:
 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 penticost as quickly as it will,
 Some five and twenty years; and then we mask'd.

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!”

and numberless other passages. STEEVENS.

³ —*good cousin Capulet*,] This *cousin* Capulet is *uncle* in the paper of invitation; but as Capulet is described as old, *cousin* 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.

Shakspeare and other contemporary writers use the word *cousin* to denote any collateral relation, of whatever degree, and sometimes even to denote those of lineal descent.

The king calls Hamlet frequently his *cousin*, though his nephew and step-son:

“ But now, my *cousin* Hamlet, and my son.”

Richard III. during a whole scene calls his nephew York, *cousin*; who in his answer constantly calls him *uncle*. And the old Dutchess of York in the same play calls her grandson, *cousin*.

“ Why, my young *cousin*, it is good to grow.

“ *York. Grandam*, one night, as he did sit at supper,” &c.

In this very play Lady Capulet says,

“ Tybalt, my *cousin*, O, my brother's child!”

and in Fletcher's *Woman Pleas'd*, Sylvio styles Rhodope at one time his *aunt*, at others his *cousin*, to the great annoyance of Mr. Sympfon, the editor. MASON.

See also Vol. VI. p. 504, n. 4. MALONE.

⁴ —*our dancing days*:] Thus the folio: the quarto reads, *our standing days*. STEEVENS.

2. *Cap.*

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

1. *Cap.* Will you tell me that ⁵ ?
His son was but a ward two years ago.

Rom. What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight ⁶ ?

Serv. I know not, fir.

Rom. O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright !
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night ⁷
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear ⁸ :
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, fight !
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night ⁹.

⁵ *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 forborne to encumber the page by the insertion of them. The last, however, of these three lines is natural, and worth preserving. STEEVENS.

⁶ *What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand*

Of yonder knight ?] Here is another proof that our authour had the poem, and not Painter's Novel, in his mind. In the novel we are told, "A certain lord of that troupe took Juliet by the hand to dance." In the poem of *Romeus and Juliet*, as in the play, her partner is a knight :

"With torch in hand a comely knight did fetch her forth to
dance." MALONE.

⁷ *—upon the cheek of night—*] Shakspeare has the same thought in his 27th sonnet :

"Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,

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

STEEVENS.

⁸ *Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear :*] So, in *Lily's Euphues* :
"A fair pearl in a Morian's ear." T. H. W.

⁹ *For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.*] Thus *K. Henry VIII.*

"—o beauty,

"Till now I never knew thee !" STEEVENS.

Tyb.

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 fleer and scorn at our solemnity?
Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

1. *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.

1. *Cap.* Young Romeo is't?

Tyb. 'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

1. *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.

1. *Cap.* He shall be endur'd;

What, goodman boy!—I say, he shall;—Go to;—
Am I the master here, or you? go to.
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 you¹;—I know what.
You must contrary me²! marry, 'tis time—

Well

¹ To scathe you;] i. e. to do you an injury. STEEVENS.

See Vol. VI. p. 485, n. 3. MALONE.

² You must contrary me!] The use of this verb is common to our old
Vol. IX. E writers.

Well said, my hearts:—You are a princox; go³:—
Be quiet, or—More light, more light, for shame!—
I'll make you quiet; What!—Cheerly, my hearts.

Tyb. Patience perforce⁴ 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.

Rom. If I profane with my unworthy hand [to Juliet.

This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this,—
My lips, two blushing pilgrims⁵, 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.

writers. So, in *Tully's Love* by *R. 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 *Albions England*, 1602, B. 10. Chap. 59.

"—his countermand should have *contraried* so."

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

STEEVENS.

³ *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 Parnassus*, 1606: "Your proud university *Princox*;" again, in *Fuimus Troes*, 1633: "That *Princox* proud;" and indeed by most of the old dramattick writers. Cotgrave renders *un jeune estoudeau superbe*—a young *princox* boy. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Patience perforce*—] This expression is in part proverbial: the old adage is,

"*Patience perforce* is a medicine for a mad dog." STEEVENS.

⁵ *If I profane with my unworthy hand*

This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this,—

My lips, two blushing pilgrims, &c.] The old copies read *fin*.

MALONE.

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.

Jul.

Rom. O then, dear faint, let lips do what hands do ;
They pray, grant thou⁶, 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*⁷.

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 kifs by the book⁸.

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

Rom. What is her mother?

Nurse. Marry, bachelor,

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 chinks⁹.

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.

1. *Cap.* Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone ;

We have a trifling foolish banquet towards¹.—

Is

⁶ O then, dear faint, let lips do what hands do ;

They pray, grant thou, &c.] Juliet had said before, that *palm to palm* was holy palmers' *kifs*; she afterwards says that palmers have lips that they must use in prayer. Romeo replies, that "the prayer of his lips was, that they might do what hands do;" that is, that they might kifs. MASON.

⁷ —*kissing her.*] Our poet here, without doubt, copied from the mode of his own time: and kissing a lady in a publick assembly, we may conclude, was not thought indecorous. In *K. Henry VIII.* he in like manner makes Lord Sands kifs Anne Boleyn, next to whom he sits at the supper given by Cardinal Wolsey. MALONE.

⁸ *You kifs by the book.*] In *As you Like it*, we find it was usual to quarrel by the book, and we are told in the note, that there were books extant for good manners. Juliet here appears to refer to a third kind, containing the *art of courtship*, an example from which it is probable that Rosalind hath adduced. HENLEY.

⁹ —*the chinks.*] Thus the old copies; for which Mr. Pope and the subsequent editors have substituted *chink*. MALONE.

¹ *We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.*] *Towards* is ready at hand. So, in *Hamlet*:

Is it e'en so? Why, then I thank you all;¹
 I thank you, honest gentlemen⁹; good night:—
 More torches here!—Come on, then let's to bed.
 Ah, firrah, [*to z. Cap.*] by my fay, it waxes late;
 I'll to my rest. [*Exeunt all but Juliet and Nurse.*]

Jul. Come hither, nurse¹: What is yon gentleman?

Nurse. The son and heir of old Tiberio.

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

Nurse. Marry, that, I think, be 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.

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.*]

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

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

Again, in the *Phœnix*, by Middleton, 1607:—“here's a voyage *towards*, will make us all.” STEEVENS.

It appears from the former part of this scene that Capulet's company had supped. A *banquet*, it should be remembered, often meant in old times nothing more than a collation of fruit, wine, &c. So, in *The Life of Lord Cromwell*, 1602:

“Their dinner is our *banquet* after dinner.”

Again, in Heath's *Chronicle of the Civil Wars*, 1661, p. 662: “After dinner, he was served with a *banquet*.” MALONE.

⁹ — *bonest 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.

¹ *Come hither, nurse: What is yon gentleman?*] This and the following questions are taken from the novel. STEEVENS:

See the poem of *Romeus and Juliet*, Vol. X. p. 479. MALONE.

Enter

Enter CHORUS².

Now old desire doth in his death-bed lie,
 And young affection gapes to be his heir;
 That fair³, for which love groan'd for *, 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 extreme sweet. [Exit.

ACT II. SCENE I.

An open Place, adjoining Capulet's Garden.

Enter ROMEO.

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

[*He climbs the wall, and leaps down.*]

Enter BENVOLIO, and MERCUTIO.

Ben. Romeo! my cousin Romeo!

² This chorus added since the first edition. POPE.

The use of this chorus is not easily discovered; it conduces 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.

³ *That fair*—] *Fair* it has been already observed, was formerly used as a substantive, and was synonymous to beauty. See Vol. III. p. 170, n. 6. MALONE.

* —for which love groan'd for,] Thus the ancient copies, for which all the modern editors, adopting Mr. Rowe's alteration, read—groan'd fore. This is one of the many changes that have been made in the text from not attending to ancient phraseology; for this kind of duplication was common in Shakspeare's time. So, in *Coriolanus*: "In what enormity is Marcius poor in, that you two have not in abundance?" See Vol. VII. p. 184, n. 1. Again, in *As you Like it*, Act II. sc. vii: "—the scene wherein we play in." MALONE.

Mer. He is wise;
And, on my life, hath stolen him home to bed.

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

Mer.— Nay, I'll conjure too.—
Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh,
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied;
Cry but—Ah me! pronounce but—love and dove⁴;
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
One nick-name for her purblind son and heir,
Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim,
When king Cophetua lov'd the beggar-maid⁵.—

He

⁴ —pronounce *but love and dove*;] Thus the first quarto, 1597. *Pronounce* in the quartos of 1599 and 1609 was made *provaunt*.

In the first folio, which appears to have been printed from the latter of these copies, the same reading is adopted. The editor of the second folio arbitrarily substituted *couply*, meaning certainly *couple*, and all the modern editors have adopted his innovation. *Provaunt*, as Mr. Steevens has observed, means *provision*; but I have never met with the verb *To provaunt*, nor has any example of it been produced. I have no doubt therefore that it was a corruption, and have adhered to the first quarto.

In this very line, *love and dove*, the reading of the original copy of 1597, was corrupted in the two subsequent quartos and the folio, to —*love and day*; and *heir* in the next line corrupted into *ber*. MALONE.

⁵ *Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim,*

When king Cophetua lov'd the beggar-maid.] Cupid is called *Adam* with allusion to the celebrated archer Adam Bell, (see Percy's *Reliques of ancient English Poetry*, Vol. 1. p. 7.) whom Shakspeare has again alluded to in *Much ado about nothing*: "If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat, and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapp'd on the shoulder, and call'd *Adam*."—The old copies read *Abraham*, the initial letter only being probably set down in the manuscript. The foregoing passage fully supports the emendation, which was suggested by Mr. Upton. Of this kind of ignorance the old copies of the play before us furnish a remarkable instance in the next scene. In the original copy of 1597 we have this line:

And follow thee, my *lord*, throughout the world.

In the two next quartos the word *lord* being abbreviated, according to a common fashion of that time,—

And follow thee, my *L*, throughout the world.

the printer of the quarto published in 1637, exhibited the line thus:

And follow thee, my *love*, throughout the world.

and

He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not ;
 The ape is dead⁶, and I must conjure him.—
 I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
 By her high forehead⁷, and her scarlet lip,
 By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,
 And the demefnes 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 comforted with the humorous night⁸ :

Blind

and Mr. Pope, Mr. Theobald, and Dr. Warburton, adopted this arbitrary change.

The ballad here alluded to, is *King Copbetua and the Beggar-maid*, or, as it is called in some old copies, *The song of a beggar and a king*. The following stanza, which Shakspeare had particularly in view,

“ The blinded boy that shoots so trim,
 “ From heaven down did hie,
 “ He drew a dart and shot at him,
 “ In place where he did lie ;”

supports (as Dr. Percy has observed,) the reading *trim*, which is found in the first quarto 1597, and which in the subsequent copies was changed to *true*. The change was certainly not accidental ; and this is one of a great many instances in which I have observed changes to have been made by the printer or editor, in the later quartos, and even in the first folio, for the sake of some imaginary improvement, and without authority. MALONE.

⁶ *The ape is dead*,—] This phrase appears to have been frequently applied to young men, in our authour's time, without any reference to the mimicry of that animal. It was an expression of tenderness, like *poor fool*. Nashe, in one of his pamphlets, mentions his having read Lily's *Euphues*, when he was a little *ape* at Cambridge. MALONE.

⁷ *By her high forehead*,—] It has already been observed that a high forehead was in Shakspeare's time thought eminently beautiful. See Vol. I. p. 85, n. 7 ; and Vol. VII. p. 505, n. 7. MALONE.

⁸ —*the humorous night* :] I suppose *Shakspeare* means humid, the moist dewy night. *Chapman* uses the word in that sense in the translation of *Homer*, book II. edit. 1598 :

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 with his mistress were that kind of fruit,
As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone.—
Ah, Romeo^o, that she were, ah, that she were
An open—*et cætera*, thou a poperin pear!

Romeo,

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

In *Measure for Measure* we have “the vaporous night approaches;” which shews that Mr. Steevens has rightly interpreted the word in the text. MALONE.

^o *Ab, Romeo, &c.*] These two lines, which are found in the quartos of 1597, 1599, and in the folio, were rejected by Mr. Pope, who in like manner has rejected *whole scenes* of our authour; but what is more strange, his example has in this instance been followed by the succeeding editors.

However improper any lines may be for recitation on the stage, an editor in my apprehension has no right to omit any passage that is found in all the authentick copies of his authour's works. I know not on what authority it has been said, that these lines are a proof that “either the poet or his friends knew sometimes how to blot.” They appear not only in the editions already mentioned, but also in that copy which has no date, and in the edition of 1637.

I have adhered to the original copy. The two subsequent quartos and the folio read, with a slight variation,

An open—or thou a poperin pear.

Shakspeare followed the fashion of his own time, which was, when something indecent was meant to be suppressed, to print *et cætera*, instead of the word. See Minshew's Dictionary, p. 112, col. 2. Our poet did not consider, that however such a practice might be admitted in a printed book, it is absurd where words are intended to be recited. When these lines were spoken, as undoubtedly they were to our ancestors, who do not appear to have been extremely delicate, the actor must have evaded the difficulty by an abrupt sentence.

The unseemly name of the apple here alluded to, is well known.

Peperingue is a town in French Flanders, two leagues distant from Ypres. From hence the *Poperin* pear was brought into England. What were the peculiar qualities of a *Poperin* pear, I am unable to ascertain. The word was chosen, I believe, merely for the sake of a quibble, which it is not necessary to explain. Probably for the same reason the *Popering* tree was preferred to any other by the authour of the mock poem of *Hero and Leander*, small 8vo. 1653:

“She thought it strange to see a man

“In privy walk, and then anan

“ Syc

Romeo, good night;—I'll to my truckle-bed;
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep:
Come, shall we go?

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

S C E N E II.

Capulet's Garden.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. He jests at scars¹, that never felt a wound.—

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

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks!

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!—

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:

Be not her maid², since she is envious;

Her vestal livery is but sick and green,

And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.—

It is my lady; O, it is my love:

O, that she knew she were³!—

She speaks, yet she says nothing; What of that?

Her eye discourses, I will answer it.—

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

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat 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.

See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!

“ She stepp'd behind a *Popering* tree,

“ And listen'd for some novelty.” MALONE.

¹ *He jests at scars,*] That is, Mercutio jests, whom he overheard.

JOHNSON.

² *Be not her maid,*] Be not a votary to the moon, to Diana.

JOHNSON.

³ *It is my lady; &c.*] This line and half I have replaced.

JOHNSON.

O, that

O, that I were a glove upon that hand ⁴,
That I might touch that cheek ⁵!

Jul. Ah me!

Rom. She speaks:—

O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this night ⁶, 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 bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds ⁷,
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.*]

Jul. 'Tis but thy name, that is my enemy;—
Thou art thyself though, not a Montague ⁸.

What's

⁴ 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.

⁵ —touch that cheek!] The quarto 1597, reads—*kiss* that cheek. STEEVENS.

⁶ O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art

As glorious to this night, &c.] The 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. STEEVENS.

⁷ —the lazy-pacing clouds,] Thus corrected from the first edition: in the others *lazy-puffing*. POPE.

⁸ *Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.*] For the present punctuation I am accountable. It appears to me to afford a clear sense, which the line as printed in the old copies, where we have a comma after *thyself*, and no point after *though*, does not in my apprehension afford.

Thou art, however, says Juliet, a being *sui generis*, amiable and perfect, not tainted by the enmity which your family bears to mine.

According to the common punctuation, the adversative particle is used without any propriety, or rather makes the passage nonsense.

“ *Alibough*

What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!

“*Although* thou art *not* a Montague, not actuated by any of those unjustifiable prejudices that actuate your family, you are most amiable and virtuous.” The lady might with as much propriety have observed, that *though* it was summer, it was hot; or, *though* it was night, the sun did not shine.

According to Mr. Steevens, the meaning is—“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.” If he was *not* a Montague, or, as it is rightly explained, *not akin to his family in malice*, whence is the wonder that he is a being of distinguished excellence? or what the need of an *adversative* particle in such a proposition? If indeed the lady had said, that Romeo was a being of uncommon excellence, *though he was* a Montague, she would have talked with precision.

Though is again used by Shakspeare in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, Act III. sc. last, in the same sense:

“My legs are longer *though*, to run away.”

Again, in *The Taming of the Shrew*:

“Would Catharine had never seen him *though*.”

Again, in *K. Henry VIII.*

“I would not be so sick *though*, for his place.”

Other writers frequently use *though* for *however*. So, in *The Fatal Dowry*, a tragedy, by Massinger, 1632:

“Would you have him your husband that you love,

And can it not be?—He is your servant, *though*,

And may perform the office of a husband.”

Again, in *Cupid's Revenge*, by B. and Fletcher:

“—O dissembling woman,

Whom I must reverence *though*.”

Again, in the last speech of *the Maid's Tragedy* by B. and Fletcher, 1619:

“Look to him *though*, and bear those bodies in.”

Again, in Otway's *Venice Preserved*:

“I thank thee for thy labour *though*, and him too.”

Dr. Warburton's interpretation is wholly inadmissible. “You *would* be just what you are, [i. e. not *more* excellent,] although you were not of the house of Montague.”—Juliet is not here speculating whether, if Romeo were not, or ceased to be, of the hostile faction, his excellence was or was not capable of *increase*; nor does she say, “thou *would'st* be thyself,” (as Dr. Warburton makes her say,) but “thou *art* thyself.” This, I say, is not the subject of her speculation. She is simply endeavouring to account for Romeo's being amiable and excellent, though he *is* a Montague. And, to prove this, she asserts that he merely bears that name, but has none of the qualities of that house. MALONE.

What's

What's in a name ⁹? that which we call a rose,
 By any other name ¹ 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,
 Take all myself ².

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 not yet drunk a hundred words

⁹ —*nor any other part*

Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!

What's in a name? &c.] The middle line is not found in the original copy of 1597, being added, it should seem, on a revision. The passage in the first copy stands thus:

Nor arm, nor face, *nor any other part* :

What's in a name? That which we call a rose, &c.

In the copy of 1599 and all the subsequent ancient copies, the words *nor any other part* were omitted by the oversight of the transcriber or printer, and the lines thus absurdly exhibited :

Nor arm nor face, *O be some other name!*

Belonging to a man.

What's in a name, &c.

Belonging, &c. evidently was intended to begin a line, as it now does ; but the printer having omitted the words *nor any other part*, took the remainder of the subsequent line, and carried it to that which preceded. The transposition now made needs no note to support it: the context in this and many other places supercedes all arguments.

MALONE.

¹ *By any other name—*] Thus the quarto, 1597. All the subsequent ancient copies read—*By any other word.* MALONE.

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

STEVENS.

Of

Of that tongue's utterance³, yet I know the found;
Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

Rom. Neither, fair faint, if either thee dislike⁴.

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
walls⁵;

For stony limits cannot hold love out:
And what love can do, that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me⁶.

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

Rom. Alack! there lies more peril in thine eye,
Than twenty of their swords⁷; look thou but sweet,

3 *My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words*

Of that tongue's utterance,] Thus the quarto, 1597. The subsequent ancient copies read—of *thy* tongue's uttering. We meet with almost the same words as those here attributed to Romeo, in *King Edward III.* a tragedy, 1596:

“ I might perceive his eye in her eye lost,

“ *His ear to drink her sweet tongue's utterance.*” MALONE.

4 *Neither, fair faint, if either thee dislike.*] Thus the original copy. The subsequent ancient copies read—fair maid. “ If either thee dislike” was the phraseology of Shakspeare's age. So, it *likes* me well; for it pleases me well. MALONE.

5 *With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;*] Here also we find Shakspeare following the steps of the authour of *The History of Romeus and Juliet*, 1562:

“ Approaching near the place from whence his heart had life,

“ So light he wox, he leap'd the wall, and there he spy'd his wife,

“ Who in the window watch'd the coming of her lord,—”

MALONE.

6 —no let to me.] i. e. no stop or hinderance. So, in *Hamlet*:

“ By heaven I'll make a ghost of him that lets me.”

Thus the original edition. The subsequent copies read—no stop to me. MALONE.

7 —there lies more peril in thine eye,

Than twenty of their swords;] B. and Fletcher have copied this thought in *The Maid of the Mill*:

“ —The lady may command, sir;

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

STEEVENS.

And

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 sight⁸;

And, but thou love me, let them find me here⁹ :
My life were better ended by their hate,
'Than death prorogued¹, wanting of thy love.

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

Rom. By love, who first did prompt me to inquire ;
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 ;
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 compliment² !
Dost thou love me ? I know, thou wilt say—Ay ;
And I will take thy word : yet, if thou swear'st,

⁸ —*from their sight ;*] So the first quarto. All the other ancient copies have—*from their eyes.* MALONE.

⁹ *And, but thou love me, let them find me here :*] And so thou do but love me, I care not what may befall me : Let me be found here. Such appears to me to be the meaning.

Mr. Mason thinks that "*but thou love me,*" means, *unless* thou love me ; grounding himself, I suppose, on the two subsequent lines. But those contain, in my apprehension, a distinct proposition. He first says, that he is content to be discovered, if he be but secure of her affection ; and then adds, that death from the hands of her kinsmen would be preferable to life without her love. *But,* however, it must be acknowledged, has often in old English the meaning which Mr. Mason would here affix to it. MALONE.

¹ *'Than death prorogued,*] i. e. delayed, deferred to a more distant period. So in Act IV. sc. i.

" I hear thou must, and nothing may *prorogue* it,

" On thursday next be married to this county." MALONE.

² —*farewell compliment !*] That is, farewell attention to forms.
MASON.

Thou

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 strange³.
 I should have been more strange, I must confess,
 But that thou over-heard'st, 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 swear,
 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,
 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,

³ *Than those that have more cunning to be strange.*] Thus the quarto, 1597. In the subsequent ancient copies *cunning* was changed to—*coying*. MALONE.

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

See Vol. X. p. 38, n. 4. MALONE.

Ere one can say—It lightens ⁴. Sweet, good night ⁵!
 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.

[Nurse calls within.

I hear some noise within; Dear love, adieu!
 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, in-
 deed.

⁴ 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*. STEEV.

Drayton's *Miracles of Moses* was first printed in quarto, in 1604.

MALONE.

⁵ Sweet, good night!] All the intermediate lines from *Sweet, good night*, to *Stay but a little*, &c. were added after the first copy. STEEV.

If that thy bent of love be honourable⁶,
 Thy purpose marriage, fend 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 :

Nur. [*Within.*] Madam.

Jul. I come, anon :—But if thou mean'st not well,
 I do beseech thee,—

Nurse. [*Within.*] Madam.

Jul. By and by, I come :—
 To cease thy suit⁷, and leave me to my grief :
 To-morrow will I fend.

Rom. So thrive my soul,—

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

Rom. A thousand times the worie, to want thy light.—
 Love goes toward love, as school-boys from their books ;
 But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.

[*retiring slowly.*]

Re-enter JULIET, above.

Jul. Hift ! Romeo, hift !—O, for a faulconer's voice,
 To lure this tassel-gentle back again⁸ !

Bondage

⁶ *If that thy bent of love be honourable, &c.*] In *The Tragical History* already quoted Juliet uses nearly the same expressions :

“ —if your thought be chaste, and have on virtue ground,
 “ If wedlock be the end and mark which your desire hath found,
 “ Obedience set aside, unto my parents due,
 “ The quarrel eke that long ago between our households grew,
 “ *Both me and mine I will all whole to you betake,*
 “ And following you whereso you go, my father's house forsake :
 “ But if by wanton love and by unlawful suit
 “ You think in ripest years to pluck my maidenhood's dainty fruit.
 “ You are beguil'd, and now your Juliet you beseecks,
 “ To cease your suit, and suffer her to live among her likes.”

MALONE.

⁷ *To cease thy suit,—*] So the quarto, 1597. The two subsequent quartos and the folio have—*thy strife.* MALONE.

⁸ *To lure this tassel-gentle back again !*] The *tassel* or *tiercel* (for so it should be spelt) is the male of the *go'shawke* ; so called, because it is a *tierce* or *tbird* less than the female. This is equally true of all birds of prey. In the *Booke of Falconrye*, by George Turberville, gent.

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 musick to attending ears !

Jul. Romeo !

Rom. Madam^o.

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

Rom. At 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.

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.*”

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. STEEV.

It appears from the old books on this subject that certain hawks
 were considered as appropriated to certain ranks. The *tercel-gentle*
 was appropriated to the prince ; and thence, we may suppose, was
 chosen by Juliet as an appellation for her beloved Romeo. In an an-
 cient treatise entitled *Hawking, Hunting, and Fishing, with the true*
measures of blowing, is the following passage :

“ The names of all manner of hawkes, and to whom they belong :

For a PRINCE

There is a falcon gentle, and a *tercel* gentle ; and these are for a prince.”

MALONE.

^o —*Madam.*] Thus the original copy of 1597. In the two subse-
 quent copies and the folio we have—*My niece*. What word was in-
 tended it is difficult to say. The editor of the second folio substi-
 tuted—*My sweet*. I have already shewn, that all the alterations in that
 copy were made at random ; and have therefore preserved the ori-
 ginal word, though less tender than that which was arbitrarily sub-
 stituted in its place. MALONE.

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.

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 ¹. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E III.

Friar Laurence's Cell.

Enter Friar LAWRENCE, with a basket.

Fri. The grey-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night ²,
Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light ;
And flecked darkness ³ like a drunkard reels
From forth day's path, and Titan's fiery wheels ⁴ :

Now

¹ *Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell ;
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell.*] Thus the quarto,
1597, except that it has *good* instead of *dear*. That of 1599, and the
folio, read :

Hence will I to my ghostly frier's close cell,
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell. MALONE.

² *The grey-ey'd morn, &c.*] So the first edition. The first four lines
of this speech, as has been observed by Mr. Pope and Dr. Johnson, are
inadvertently printed twice over in the subsequent ancient copies, and
form the conclusion of Romeo's preceding speech as well as the com-
mencement of the friar's in the present scene. MALONE.

³ *And flecked darkness—*] *Flecked* is spotted, dappled, streak'd, or
variegated. In this sense it is used by Churchyard, in his *Legend of
Thomas Mowbray Duke of Norfolk*. Mowbray, speaking of the Ger-
mans, says :

Now ere the sun advance his burning eye,
 The day to cheer, and night's dank dew to dry,
 I must up-fill this osier cage of ours,
 With baleful weeds, and precious-juiced flowers.
 The earth, that's nature's mother, is her tomb⁵;
 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 powerful grace⁶, that lies
 In herbs, plants, stons⁷, and their true qualities:

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

"They swear, 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 V. sc. iii.

"*Dapples* the drowsy east with spots of grey." STEEVENS.

The word is still used in Scotland, where "a *flecked* cow" is a common expression. See the Glossary to Gawin Douglas's translation of Virgil, in v. *fleckit*. MALONE.

⁴ *From forth day's path, and Titan's fry wheels*:] Thus the quarto 1597. That of 1599, and the folio have—*burning* wheels.

The modern editions read corruptly, after the second folio:

From forth day's *path-way* made by Titan's wheels. MALONE.

⁵ *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.

So, in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

"—Time's the king of men,

"For *be's* their parent, and *be* is their grave." MALONE.

⁶ —*powerful grace*,] Efficacious virtue. JOHNSON.

⁷ *O, mickle is the powerful grace, that lies*

In herbs, plants, stons, &c.] This affords a natural introduction to the friar's furnishing Juliet with the sleepy potion in Act IV. In the passage before us Shakespeare had the poem in his thoughts:

"But not in vain, my child, hath all my wand'ring been;—

"What force the *stones*, the *plants*, and *metals*, have to work,

"And divers other things that in the bowels of earth do lurk,

"With care I have sought out, with pain I did them prove."

MALONE.

For

For nought so vile that on the earth doth live⁸,
 But to the earth⁹ some special good doth give;
 Nor aught so good, but, strain'd from that fair use,
 Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
 Virtue itself turns vice, being misapply'd;
 And vice sometime's by action dignify'd.
 Within the infant rind of this small flower¹
 Poison hath residence, and med'cine power:
 For this, being smelt, with that part² cheers each part;
 Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
 Two such opposed foes encamp them still
 In man³ as well as herbs, grace, and rude will;
 And, where the worser is predominant,
 Full soon the canker death eats up that plant⁴.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. Good morrow, father!

Fri. Benedicite!

⁸ *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.

⁹ *—to the earth—*] i. e. to the inhabitants of the earth. MALONE.

¹ *—of this small flower—*] So the quarto 1597. All the subsequent ancient copies have—this *weak* flower. MALONE.

² *—with that part—*] i. e. with the part which smells; with the olfactory nerves. MALONE.

³ *Two such opposed foes encamp them still*

In man—] So, in our authour's *Lower's Complaint*:

“—terror, and dear modesty,

“*Encamp'd in hearts, but fighting outwardly.*”

Thus the quarto of 1597. The quarto of 1599, and all the subsequent ancient copies read—such opposed *kings*.—Our authour has more than once alluded to these *opposed foes*, contending for the dominion of man.—So, in *Otello*:

“Yea, curse his *better angel* from his side.”

Again, in his 144th Sonnet:

“To win me soon to hell, my female evil

“Tempteth my *better angel* from my side:

“Yet this I ne'er shall know, but live in doubt,

“Till my *bad angel* fire my *good one* out.” MALONE.

⁴ *Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.*] So, in our authour's 99th Sonnet:

“A vengeful *canker* eat him up to death.” MALONE.

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;
 But where unbruised youth with unstuff'd brain⁵
 Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign:
 Therefore thy earliness doth me assure,
 Thou art up-rous'd by some distemp'ature;
 Or if not so, then here I hit it right—
 Our Romeo 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?

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 lies⁶:
 I bear no hatred, blessed man; for, lo,
 My intercession likewise steads my foe.

Fri. Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift;
 Riddling 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.

⁵ —with unstuff'd brain, &c.] The copy, 1597, reads:

—with unstuff'd brains

Doth couch his limmes, there golden sleep remains.

STEEVENS.

⁶ —both our remedies

Within thy help and holy physick lies:] See Vol. VIII. p. 357, n. 4;
 and Vol. X. p. 66, n. 9. MALONE.

Fri.

Fri. Holy faint 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.

Jesu Maria! 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;
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 doting, 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 spell⁷.
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 love⁸.

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

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

[*Exeunt.*]

⁷ —and could not spell.] Thus the quarto, 1597. The subsequent ancient copies all have—

Thy love did read by rote *that* could not spell.

I mention these minute variations only to shew, what I have so often urged, the very high value of first editions. MALONE.

⁸ The two following lines were added since the first copy of this play. STEEVENS.

SCENE IV.

*A Street.**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. Ah, 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.

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 dared.

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 but-shaft⁹; And is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

Ben. Why, what is Tybalt?

Mer. More than prince of cats¹, I can tell you². O,

⁹ —the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's but-shaft;] The allusion is to archery. The clout, or white mark at which the arrows are directed, was fastened by a black pin placed in the center of it. To hit this was the highest ambition of every marksman. So, in *No Wit like a Woman's*, a comedy, by Middleton, 1657:

“ They have shot two arrows without heads,

“ They cannot stick i' the but yet: hold out, knight,

“ And i'll cleave the black pin i' the midst of the white.”

Again, in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, 1590:

“ For kings are clouts that every man shoots at;

“ Our crown the pin that thousands seek to cleave.” MALONE.

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

So, in *Have with you to Saffron Walden*, &c. 1596: “ —not *Tibals* prince of cats,” &c. STEEVENS.

² —I can tell you.] So the first quarto. These words are omitted in all the subsequent ancient copies. MALONE.

he is the courageous captain of compliments³. He fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance, and proportion⁴; rests me his *minim* rest⁵, one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button⁶, a duellist, a duellist; a gentleman of the very first house,—of the first and second cause⁷: Ah, the immortal passado! the punto reverso! the hay⁸!—

Ben. The what?

Mer. The pox of such antick, lisping, affecting fantasticoes⁹; these new tuners of accents!—*By Jesu, a very good blade!—a very tall man!—a very good whore!*

³ —*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 authour of *Don Armado*, the Spaniard, in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

JOHNSON.

⁴ —*keeps time, distance, and proportion;*] So *Jonson's Bobadil*:

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

STEEVENS.

⁵ —*his minim rests*—] A *minim* is a note of slow time in musick, equal to two crotchets. MALONE.

⁶ —*the very butcher of a silk button,*] So, in the *Return from Parnassus*:

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

⁷ *A gentleman of the very first house,—of the first and second cause:*]

“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.

⁸ —*the bay!*] All the terms of the modern fencing-school were originally Italian; the rapier, or small thrusting sword, being first used in Italy. The *bay* 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.

⁹ —*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 *fantasticoes*, convers'd with humorists.” &c. STEEVENS.

Fantasticoes is the reading of the first quarto, 1597; all the subsequent ancient copies read arbitrarily and corruptly—*phantacies* MALONE.

—Why,

—Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandfire¹, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these pardon-mes², who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench? O, their *bons*, their *bons*³!

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

¹ *Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandfire,*] Humorously apostrophising his ancestors, whose sober times were unacquainted with the fopperies here complained of. WARBURTON.

² —*these pardon-mes,*] *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.

The old copies have—*these pardon-mees*, not, *these pardon nez-mois*. Theobald first substituted the French word, without any necessity.

MALONE.

³ *O, their bons, their bons!*] Mercutio is here ridiculing those frenchified fantastical coxcombs whom he calls *pardonnez-moi'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. THEOBALD.

The old copies read—*O, their bones, their bones!* Mr. Theobald's emendation is confirmed by a passage in Green's *Tu Quoque*, from which we learn that *bon jour* was the common salutation of those who affected to appear fine gentlemen in our authour's time: “No, I want the *bon jour* and the *tu quoque*, which yonder gentleman has.”

MALONE.

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 I. sc ii: “—sitting with her on the *form*, and taken following her into the park; which, put together, is, in manner and *form* following.” STEEVENS.

eye

eye or so⁴, but not to the purpose.—Signior Romeo, *bon jour!* there's a French salutation to your French sloop⁵. You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

Rom. Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you?

Mer. The slip, fir, the slip⁶; Can you not conceive?
Rom.

* *Thibbé a grey eye or so,*] He means to allow that Thibbé had a very fine eye; for from various passages it appears that a grey eye was in our authour's time thought eminently beautiful. This may seem strange to those who are not conversant with ancient phraseology; but a grey eye undoubtedly meant what we now denominate a blue eye. Thus, in *Venus and Adonis*:

“ Her two blue windows faintly she upheaveth,”—

i. e. the windows or lids of her blue eyes. In the very same poem the eyes of Venus are termed grey:

“ Mine eyes are grey and bright, and quick in turning.”

Again, in *Cymbeline*:

“ To see the inclosed lights, now canopy'd

“ Under these windows: white and azure lac'd;

“ With blue of heaven's own tinct.”

In *Twelfth Night*, Olivia says, “ I will give out divers schedules of my beauty;—as *item*, two lips, indifferent red; *item*, two grey eyes, with lids to them,” &c. So Julia, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, speaking of her rival's eyes, as eminently beautiful, says,

“ Her eyes are grey as glass, and so are mine.”

And Chaucer has the same comparison:

“ —hire eyes gray as glas.”

This comparison proves decisively what I have asserted; for clear and transparent glass is not what we now call grey, but blue, or azure.

MALONE.

⁵ —your French sloop.] Slops are large loose breeches or trowsers, worn at present only by sailors. STEEVENS.

See Vol. II. n. 376, n. 9. MALONE.

⁶ —What counterfeit, &c.

Mer. The slip, fir, the slip;] 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 counterfeit pieces of money, being brass, 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

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 court'sy.

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 said⁸: 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-soled jest⁹, solely singular for the singleness!

“Abus'd i' the business, had the slip slurr'd on me;

“A counterfeit.” *Magnetick Lady*, A. III. S. vi. 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.

⁷ —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. Tollet'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, 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.

⁸ Well said:] So the original copy. The quarto of 1599, and the other ancient copies, have—*Sure wit*, follow, &c. What was meant, I suppose, was—*Sheer wit!* follow, &c. and this corruption may serve to justify an emendation that I have proposed in a passage in *Antony and Cleopatra*, where I am confident *sure* was a printer's blunder. See Vol. VII. p. 483, n. 5. MALONE.

⁹ O single-soled jest,] This epithet is here used equivocally. It formerly signified mean or contemptible; and that is one of the senses in which it is used here. So, in Holinshed's Description of Ireland, p. 23:—“which was not unlikely, considering that a meane tower might serve such *single-soale* kings as were at those daies in Ireland.”

MALONE.

Mer.

Mer. Come between us, good Benvolio; my wits fail.

Rom. Switch and spurs, twitch and spurs; or I'll cry a match.

Mer. Nay, if thy wits run the wild-goose chase, I have done; for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one 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 ear¹ for that jest.

Rom. Nay, good goose, bite not².

Mer. Thy wit is a very bitter sweeting³; it is a most sharp fauce.

Rom. And is it not well served in to a sweet goose?

Mer. O, here's a wit of cheverel⁴, that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad!

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 art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by

¹ *I will bite thee by the ear—*] So Sir Epicure Mammon to Face in Jonson's *Alchymist*:

“Slave, I could bite thine ear.” STEEVENS.

² —*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.

³ —*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?” STEEV.

⁴ —*a wit of cheverel,*] *Cbeverel* is soft leather for gloves. JOHNST.

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

“Drawing on love's white hand a glove of warmth,

“Not *cbeveril* stretching to such prophanation.”

Again, in *The Owl*, by Drayton:

“A *cbeverell* conscience, and a searching wit.” STEEVENS.

Cbeveril is from Chevreuil, roebuck. MUSGRAVE.

nature: for this driveling love is like a great natural, that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole⁵.

Ben. Stop there, stop there.

Mer. Thou desirest me to stop in my tale against the hair⁶.

Ben. Thou would'st else have made thy tale large.

Mer. O, thou art deceived, 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 longer⁷.

Rom. Here's goodly geer!

Enter Nurse, and PETER.

Mer. A fail, a fail, a fail⁸!

Ben. Two, two; a shirt, and a smock.

Nurse. Peter!

Peter. Anon?

Nurse. My fan, Peter⁹.

Mer. Pr'ythee, do, good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan's the fairer of the two.

⁵ —to bide 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 *Albouvine*, 1629: "For such rich widows there love court fools, and use to play with their *baubles*."

See the plate at the end of *K. Henry IV.* P. I. with Mr. Tollet's observations on it. STEEVENS.

⁶ —against the hair.] *Acontrepoil*: Fr. An expression equivalent to one which we now use,—“against the grain.” STEEVENS.

⁷ —to occupy the argument no longer.] Here we have another wanton allusion. See Vol. V. p. 331, n. 5. MALONE.

⁸ *Mer.* *A fail, a fail, &c.*] Thus the quarto, 1597. In the subsequent ancient copies these words are erroneously given to Romeo.

MALONE.

⁹ *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 a 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.

Nurse.

Nurse. God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

Mer. God ye good den¹, fair gentlewoman.

Nurse. Is it good den?

Mer. 'Tis no less, I tell you; for the bawdy hand of the dial² 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.

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. No hare, fir³; unless a hare, fir, in a lenten pye, that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent.

¹ *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 Lads*, 1633:

“God you good even, fir.” STEEVENS.

² —*the hand of the dial*—] In the *Puritan Widow*, 1607, which has been attributed to our author, is a similar expression: “—the feskewe of the dial is upon the chrisse-crosse of noon.” STEEVENS.

³ *No hare, 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 hare, &c.* The rest is a series of quibbles unworthy of explanation, which he who does not understand, needs not lament his ignorance. JOHNSON.

So ho! is the term made use of in the field when the hare is found in her seat, and not when she is started. A. C.

*An old bare hoar⁴,
And an old hare boar,
Is very good meat in lent :
But a hare that is boar,
Is too much for a score,
When it boars ere it be spent.—*

Romeo, will you come to your father's? we'll to dinner thither.

Rom. I will follow you.

Mer. Farewel, ancient lady; farewel, lady, lady, lady⁵.

[*Exeunt* MERCUTIO, and BENVOLIO.]

Nurse. Marry, farewel⁶!—I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this⁷, that was so full of his ropery⁸?

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.

⁴ *An old bare hoar,*] *Hoar* or *boary*, is often used for mouldy, as things grow white from moulding. So, in *Pierce Pennyles's Supplication to the Devil*, 1593: "—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 vine-w'd and *boarie* with over-long lying." STEEVENS.

These lines appear to have been part of an old song. In the quarto 1597, we have here this stage direction: "*He walks between them,* [i. e. the nurse and Peter,] *and sings.* MALONE.

⁵ —*lady, lady, lady.*] The burthen of an old song. See Vol. IV. p. 38, n. 6. STEEVENS.

⁶ *Marry, farewell!*—] These words I have recovered from the quarto, 1597. MALONE.

⁷ —*was 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.

See Vol. VI. p. 38, n. 1. MALONE.

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 *roperye.*"

Rope-tricks are mentioned in another place. STEEVENS.

See Vol. III. p. 271, n. 6. MALONE.

Nurse.

Nurse. An 'a speak any thing against me, I'll take him down an 'a were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks⁹; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills; I am none of his skains-mates¹:—And thou must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

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 vex'd, that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave!—Pray you, sir, a word: and as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire 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 say², 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,

⁹—*such Jacks*;] See Vol. II. p. 214, n. 5. MALONE.

¹—*none of his skains-mates*:] *None of his skains-mates* means, I apprehend, none of his cut-throat companions. MALONE.

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 beare tokens of their *skains*.”

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.”

Skein is the Irish word for a *knife*. STEEVENS.

Swift has the word in his description of an Irish feast:

“A cubit at least

“The length of their *skains*.” NICHOLS.

²—*if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say*,] So, in *A Handfull of pleasant deligbtes, containing sundrie new sonets, &c.* 1584:

“When they see they may her win,

“They leave then where they did begin:

“They prate, and make the matter nice,

“And leave her in *fooles paradise*.” MALONE.

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 protest³; which, as I take it, is a gentleman-like offer.

Rom. Bid her devise some means to come to shrift
This afternoon;

And there she shall at friar Lawrence' cell
Be shriv'd, and marry'd. Here is for thy pains⁴.

Nurse. No, truly, sir; not a penny.

Rom. Go to; I say, you shall.

Nurse. This afternoon, sir? well, she shall be there.

Rom. And stay, good nurse, behind the abbey-wall:
Within this hour my man shall be with thee;
And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair⁵;
Which to the high top-gallant of my joy⁶
Must be my convoy in the secret night.
Farewel!—Be trusty, and I'll quit thy pains.
Farewel!—Commend me to thy mistress.

³ —*protest*;] Whether the repetition of this word conveyed any idea peculiarly comic to Shakspeare's audience, is not at present 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 protest*, till he be one and thirty years old at least; for the inheritance of that word is not to be possessed before.” STEEVENS.

⁴ —*Here is for thy pains*.] So, in *The Tragical History of Romulus and Juliet*, 1562:

“Then he vi crowns of gold out of his pocket drew,

“And gave them her;— a slight reward, quoth he;—and so adieu.” MALONE.

⁵ —*like a tackled stair*;] Like stairs of rope in the tackle of a ship.

JOHNSON.

A stair, for a flight of stairs, is still the language of Scotland, and was probably once common to both kingdoms. MALONE.

⁶ —*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—.” STEEVENS.

Nurse. Now God in heaven blefs thee!—Hark you, fir.

Rom. What fay'ft thou, my dear nurse?

Nurse. Is your man fetret? Did you ne'er hear fay—
Two may keep counfel, putting one away?

Rom. I warrant thee⁷: my man's as true as steel.

Nurse. Well, fir; my miftrefs is the sweeteft lady—
Lord, lord!—when 'twas a little prating thing⁸,—O,—
there's a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain
lay knife aboard; but ſhe, good foul, 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 war-
rant you, when I ſay ſo, ſhe looks as pale as any clout in
the varſal world. Doth not roſemary and Romeo begin
both with a letter⁹?

Rom. Ay, nurse; What of that? both with an R.

⁷ *I warrant thee*:] *I*, which is not in the quartos or firſt folio, was
ſupplied by the editor of the ſecond folio. MALONE.

⁸ *Well, fir; my miftrefs is the sweeteft lady*:—Lord, lord!—*when*
'twas a little prating thing,—] So, in the poem:

“ And how ſhe gave her ſuck in youth, ſhe leaveth not to tell.

“ A pretty babe, quoth ſhe, it was, when it was young;

“ Lord, how it could full prettily have *prated* with its tongue.”

&c.

This dialogue is not found in Painter's *Rhomeo and Julietta*

MALONE.

⁹ *Doth not roſemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?*] By this
queſtion the nurse means to inſinuate that Romeo's image was ever
in the mind of Juliet, and that they would be married. Roſemary
being conceived to have the power of ſtrengthening the memory, was
an emblem of remembrance, and of the affection of lovers, and (for
this reaſon probably,) was worn at weddings. So, in *A Handfull of*
pleasant Delites, &c. 1584:

“ Roſemary is for remembrance,

“ Betweene us daie and night,

“ Wiſhing that I might alwaies have

“ You preſent in my ſight.”

Again, in our authour's *Hamlet*:

“ There's *roſemary*, that's for *remembrance*.”

That roſemary was much uſed at weddings, appears from many
paſſages in the old plays. So, in the *Noble Spaniſh Soldier*, 1634:
“ I meet few but are ſtuck with roſemary; every one aſk'd me, who
was to be *married*?” Again, in the *Wit of a Woman*, 1604: “ What
is here to do? Wine and cakes, and *roſemary*, and *noſegayes*? What, a
wedding?” MALONE.

Nurse. Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name. R is for the dog. No; I know it begins with some other letter¹: 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 before². [*Exeunt.*

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 heralds should be thoughts³,

¹ *Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name. R. is for the dog. No; I know it begins with some other letter:*] This passage is not in the original copy of 1597. The quarto 1599, and folio read—Ah, mocker, that's the dog's name. R is for *the no*, I know it begins, &c. The emendation was made by Mr. Tyrwhitt.

Dr. Warburton observes that Ben Jonson in his *English Grammar*, says, that R is the dog's name, and hirreth in the sound.

“*Irritata canis quod R R quam plurima dicat.*” *Lucil.*

I am not sure that Mr. Tyrwhitt's emendation is necessary. An abrupt sentence may have been intended. R. is for the—No; I know it begins, &c. The same remark, I have lately observed, has been made by an anonymous writer. MALONE.

² *Peter, take my fan, and go before.*] Thus the first quarto. The subsequent ancient copies instead of these words have—Before, and apace.

MALONE.

³ *—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.

Which

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
 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, and 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 face⁴.

Nurse. I am aweary, give me leave a while;—
 Fie, how my bones ache! What a jaunt have I had⁵!

Jul. I would, thou hadst my bones, and I thy news:

⁴ *If good, thou sham'st the musick of sweet news,*

By playing it to me with so sour a face.] So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

“ —needs so tart a favour,

“ To trumpet such good tidings!”

Again, in *Cymbeline*:

“ —if it be summer-news,

“ Smile to it before.” MALONE.

⁵ *What a jaunt have I had!]* This is the reading of the folio. The quarto reads:

—what a jaunce have I had!

The two words appear to have been formerly synonymous. See *King Richard II.*

“ Spur-gall'd and tir'd by jauncing Bolingbroke.” MALONE.

Nay, come, I pray thee, speak;—good, good nurse,
speak.

Nurse. Jesu, 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 choose a man: Romeo! no, not he;
though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg ex-
cels 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 dined at home?

Jul. No, no: But all this did I know before;
What says he of our marriage? what of that⁶?

Nurse. Lord, how my head akes! what a head have I?
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.

My back o' t' 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?

⁶ *No, no: But all this did I know before;*

What says he of our marriage? what of that?] So, in *The Tragicall History of Romeus and Juliet*, 1562:

“Tell me else what, quod she, this evermore I thought;

“But of our marriage, say at oncce, what answer have you brought?” MALONE.

*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 Lawrence's 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 Lawrence's Cell,

Enter Friar LAWRENCE, and ROMEO⁷.

Fri. 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.

. G 4

Enter

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.

Fri. These violent delights have violent ends⁸,
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;
Too swift arrives⁹ as tardy as slow.

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 sifter time:

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 *These violent delights have violent ends,*] So, in our authour's *Rape of Lucrece*:

"These violent vanities can never last." MALONE.

⁹ *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.

Enter

Enter JULIET.

Here comes the lady¹:—O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint:
A lover may bestride the gossamours²
That idle in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall; so light is vanity.

Jul. Good even to my ghostly confessor.

Fri. 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 words³,
Braggs of his substance, not of ornament:
They are but beggars that can count their worth⁴;
But my true love is grown to such excess,

¹ *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.

² *A lover may bestride the gossamours—*] The *Gossamer* 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 *gossamer*,

“Whose curls when garnish'd by their dressing, shew

“Like that spun vapour when 'tis pearl'd with dew?”

STEEVENS.

See Bullokar's *English Expositor*, 1616: “*Gossamor*. Things that flye like cobwebs in the ayre.” MALONE.

³ *Conceit, more rich, &c.*] *Conceit* here means imagination. So, in the *Rape of Lucrece*:

“—which the *conceited* painter drew so proud,” &c.

See Vol. VI. p. 536, n. 8 MALONE.

⁴ *They are but beggars that can count their worth;*] So, in *Much ado about Nothing*: “I were but little happy, if I could say how much.” MALONE.

I cannot

I cannot sum up half my sum of wealth⁵.

Fri. 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.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

A publick Place.

Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, Page, and Servants.

Ben. I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire;
The day is hot⁶, the Capulets abroad,
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 moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved.

Ben. And what to?

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

⁵ *I cannot sum up half my sum of wealth.*] The quarto, 1599, reads:
I cannot sum up *sum* of half my wealth.

The undated quarto and the folio;

I cannot sum up *some* of half my wealth.

The emendation was made by Mr. Steevens. MALONE.

⁶ *The day is hot,*] It is observed, that in Italy almost all assassinations are committed during the heat of summer. JOHNSON.

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 tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? with another, for tying his new shoes with old ribband? and yet thou wilt tutor me from quarreling⁷!

Ben. An I were so apt⁸ 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!

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 them⁹.—
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 dis-

⁷ — *thou wilt tutor me from quarreling!*] Thou wilt endeavour to restrain me, by prudential advice, from quarreling.

Thus the quarto 1599, and the folio. The quarto, 1597, reads—*thou wilt forbid me of quarreling.* The modern editions, after Mr. Pope, read—*Thou wilt tutor me for quarreling.* MALONE.

⁸ *An I were so apt, &c.*] 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.

⁹ *Follow me close, for I will speak to them.*] In the original copy this line is not found, Tybalt entering alone. In that of 1599 we find this stage-direction: "Enter Tybalt, *Petrucchio*, and others;" and the above line is inserted; but I strongly suspect it to be an interpolation; for would Tybalt's partizans suffer him to be killed without taking any part in the affray? That they do not join in it, appears from the account given by Benvolio. In the original copy Benvolio says, on the entrance of Tybalt, "By my head, here comes a *Capulet*." Instead of the two latter words, we have in the quarto 1599, *the Capulets*.

MALONE.

cords:

cards: here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall make you dance. 'Zounds, comfort!

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, fir! here comes my man.

Mer. But I'll be hang'd, fir, if he wear your livery:
Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower;
Your worship, in that sence, may call him—man.

Tyb. Romeo, the hate I bear thee¹, 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 such a greeting:—Villain am I 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 mine own,—be satisfied.

Mer. O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
*A la stoccata*² carries it away.— [draws,

Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

Tyb. What would'st thou have with me?

¹ — *the hate I bear thee,*] So the quarto, 1597. The subsequent ancient copies have—the *love*, &c. MALONE.

² *A la stoccata*—] *Stoccata* is the Italian term for a thrust or a stab with a rapier. So, in the *Devil's Charter*. 1607:

“ He makes a quick thrust; I with a swift passado

“ Make quick avoidance, and with this *stoccata*,” &c.

STEEVENS.

Mer. Good king of cats³, 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. Will you pluck your sword out of his pilcher by the ears⁴? make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

Tyb. I am for you. [drawing.]

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.

[Exeunt Tybalt and his Partizans.]

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

³ *Good king of cats,*] Alluding to his name. See p. 72, n. 1.

MALONE.

⁴ *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 Satiromastix*: "Thou hast forgot how thou ambled'st in a leather *pilcb*, by a play-waggon on 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. STEVENS.

to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man⁵. I am pepper'd, I warrant, for this world:—A plague o' both your houses!—'Zounds, 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 this 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 *.

⁵ —*a grave man.*] After this, the quarto, 1597, continues Mercutio'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 Montagues and the Capulets: and then some peasantly rogue, some sexton, some base slave, shall write my epitaph, that Tybalt came and broke the prince's laws, and Mercutio was slain for the first and second cause. Where's the surgeon?

Boy. He's come, sir.

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 shall 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.

Again, in sir Thomas Overbury's Description of a Sexton, CHARACTERS, 1616: “ At every church-style commonly there's an ale-house; where let him bee found never so idle-pated, hee is still a grave drunkard.” MALONE.

* —soften'd valour's steel.] So, in *Coriolanus*:

“ —When steel grows soft

“ As the parasite's ſilk—.” MALONE.

Re-enter

Re-enter BENVOLIO.

Ben. O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead ;
That gallant spirit hath aspir'd the clouds ⁶,
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

Rom. This day's black fate on more days doth de-
pend ⁷ ;
This but begins the woe, others must end.

Re-enter TYBALT.

Ben. Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

Rom. Alive ! in triumph ⁸ ! and Mercutio slain !
Away to heaven, respective lenity ⁹,
And fire-ey'd fury be my conduct now ¹ !—
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,

⁶ —*batb* 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.

So also Marlowe, in his *Tamburlaine*, 1590 :

“ Untill our bodies turn to elements,

“ And both our souls *aspire* celestial thrones. MALONE.

⁷ *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.

⁸ *Alive ! in triumph ! &c.*—] Thus the quarto, 1597 : for which the quarto 1599 has :

He *gan* in triumph—

This in the subsequent ancient copies was made—He *gone*, &c.

MALONE.

⁹ —*respective lenity*—] Cool, considerate gentleness. *Respect* formerly signified consideration ; prudential caution. So, in the *Rape of Lucrece*, Vol. X. p. 102 :

“ *Respect* and reason well besem the sage.” MALONE.

¹ *And fire-ey'd fury be my conduct now !*] *Conduct* for *conductor*. So, in a former scene of this play, quarto, 1597 :

“ Which to the high top-gallant of my joy

“ Must be my *conduct* in the secret night.”

Thus the first quarto. In that of 1599 *end* being corruptly printed instead of *ey'd*, the editor of the folio, according to the usual process of corruption, exhibited the line thus :

And fire *and* fury be my conduct now. MALONE.

Staying

Staying for thine to keep him company ;
Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.

Tyb. Thou, wretched boy, that didst comfort 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 ² !

Ben. Why dost thou stay ? [Exit ROMEO,

Enter Citizens, &c.

1. *Cit.* Which way ran he, that kill'd Mercutio ?
Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he ?

Ben. There lies that Tybalt.

1. *Cit.* Up, sir, go with me ;

I charge thee in the prince's name, obey.

*Enter Prince, attended ; MONTAGUE, CAPULET, their
Wives, and Others.*

Prin. Where are the vile beginners of this fray ?

Ben. O noble prince, I can discover all
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl :
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

La. Cap. Tybalt, my cousin !—O my brother's child !
Unhappy fight ! ah, the blood is spill'd ³
Of my dear kinsman !—Prince, as thou art true ⁴,
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.—

² 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.

³ Unhappy fight ! ah, the blood is spill'd—] Thus the quarto, 1597. The quarto 1599, and the subsequent ancient copies, read :

O prince ! O cousin ! husband ! O, the blood is spill'd, &c.

The modern editors have followed neither copy. The word *me* was probably inadvertently omitted in the first quarto.

Unhappy fight ! ah *me*, the blood is spill'd, &c. MALONE.

⁴ —as thou art true,] As thou art just and upright. JOHNSON.

O cousin

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, bade him bethink
 How nice the quarrel⁵ was, and urg'd withal⁶
 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,
 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,
 Affection makes him false⁷, he speaks not true :

Some

⁵ *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.

See also Vol. VII. p. 539, n. 2. MALONE.

⁶ *—and urg'd withal—*] The rest of this speech was new written
 by the poet, as well as a part of what follows in the same scene.

STEEVENS.

⁷ *Affection makes him false,*] The charge of falsehood on Benvolio,
 though produced at hazard, is very just. The authour, who seems to
 intend the character of Benvolio as good, meant perhaps to shew, how

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?

Mon. 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:
 I have an interest in your hates' proceeding⁸,
 My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a bleeding;
 But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine,
 That you shall all repent the loss of mine:
 I will be deaf to pleading and excuses;
 Nor tears, nor prayers, shall purchase out abuses⁹,
 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 kill¹.

[*Exeunt.*]

the best minds in a state of faction and discord, are detorted to criminal partiality. JOHNSON.

⁸ —*in your hates' proceeding;*] This, as Mr. Steevens has observed, is the reading of the original quarto, 1597. From that copy, in almost every speech of this play, readings have been drawn by the modern editors, much preferable to those of the succeeding ancient copies. The quarto of 1599 reads—*bearts* proceeding; and the corruption was adopted in the folio. MALONE.

⁹ *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.

¹ *Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.*] So, in *Hale's Memorials*: "When I find myself sway'd to mercy, let me remember likewise that there is a mercy due to the country."

Thus the quarto 1599, and the folio. The sentiment here enforced is different from that found in the first edition, 1597. There the prince concludes his speech with these words:

Pity shall dwell, and govern with us still;

Mercy to all but murderers,—pardoning none that kill.

MALONE.

SCENE

SCENE II.

A Room in Capulet's house.

Enter JULIET:

Jul. Gallop apace, you fire-footed steeds,
Towards Phœbus' mansion²; such a waggoner
As Phaeton would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately³.—
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night!
That run-away's eyes may wink⁴; and Romeo

Leap

² Gallop apace, *you fire-footed steeds,*
Towards Phœbus' mansion; &c.] Our authour probably remem-
bered Marlowe's *King Edward II.* which was performed before 1593:

“*Galiop apace, bright Phœbus, through the skie,*

“*And dusky night in rusty iron car;*

“*Between you both, shorten the time, I pray,*

“*That I may see that most desired day.*” MALONE.

The second quarto and folio read, *Phœbus' lodging.* STEEVENS:

³ —*immediately.*] Here ends this speech in the eldest quarto. The rest of the scene has likewise received considerable alterations and additions. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night!*

That run-away's eyes may wink;] Dr. Warburton reads—*That the runaway's eyes may wink, i. e. the sun's.* Mr. Heath justly observes on this emendation, that the sun is necessarily absent as soon as night begins, and that it is very unlikely that Juliet, who has just complained of his tediousness, should call him a *runaway*. In the *Merchant of Venice*, as Dr. Warburton has observed, that term is applied to night:

“*For the close night doth play the runaway.*” MALONE.

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 III. sc. vi.

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! at 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

Leap to these arms, untalk'd of, and unseen!—
 Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
 By their own beauties⁵: or, if love be blind,
 It best agrees with night.—Come, civil night⁶,
 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 unmann'd blood⁷ bating in my cheeks,

of night are the stars, so called in the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*. Dr. Warburton has already proved that Shakspeare 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 bath many eyes*,

“Whereof, tho' most do sleep, yet some are spies.” STEEVENS.

That seems not to be the optative adverb *utinam*, but the pronoun *ista*: These lines contain no wish, but a reason for Juliet's preceding wish for the approach of *cloudy* night; for in such a night there may be no star-light to discover our stolen pleasures;

“That runaway eyes *may* wink, and Romeo

“Leap to these arms, untalk'd of, and unseen.”

BLACKSTONE.

5 *Lovers can see to do their amorous rites*

By their own beauties:] So, in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*:

“—dark night is Cupid's day.”

The quartos 1599 and 1609, and the folio read—*And by their own beauties*. In the text the undated quarto has been followed. MALONE.

6 *Come, civil night,*] *Civil is grave, decently solemn.* JOHNSON.

So, in our poet's *Lover's Complaint*:

“—my white stole of chastity I daff'd,

“Shook off my sober guards and *civil* fears.” MALONE.

7 —*unmann'd blood*—] *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 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 Shepherd*:

“A hawk yet half so haggard and *unmann'd*.”

Again; in the *Book of hauking*, &c. bl. l. no date: “It is called *bating*, for she *bateb* with herselfe most often causelesse.” STEEVENS.

See Vol. III. p. 317, n. *. To *hood* a hawk, that is, to cover its head with a hood, was an usual practice, before the bird was suffered to fly at its quarry. MALONE.

With

With thy black mantle ; till strange love, grown bold *,
 Think 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 upon 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 will be in love with night,
 And pay no worship to the garish sun †.—

* —grown bold,] This is Mr. Rowe's emendation. The old copies for *grown* have *grow*. MALONE.

† *Whiter than new snow upon a raven's back.*] Thus the quarto 1599, and the folio. The line is not in the first quarto. The editor of the second folio, for the sake of the metre, reads—*on a raven's back* ; and so, many of the modern editors. MALONE.

‡ —*when he shall die,*] This emendation is drawn from the undated quarto. The quarto of 1599, 1609, and the folio, read—*when I shall die*. MALONE.

§ *Take him and cut him out in little stars, &c.*] The same childish thought occurs in *The Wisdom of Doctor Dodypoll*, which was acted before the year 1596 :

“ The glorious parts of fair 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.”—*Shakspeare*.
 “ Till civil suited morn appear.”—*Milton*.
 “ Pay no worship to the garish sun.”—*Shakspeare*.
 “ Hide me from day's garish eye.”—*Milton*. JOHNSON.

Garish is gaudy, showy. So, in *K. Richard III* :

“ A dream of what thou wast, a garish flag.
 Again, in Marlow's *Edward II*. 1598 :
 “ —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 *Eliotho*.” Hinde's *Eliotho Libidinoso*, 1660. 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 bade thee fetch ?

Nurse. Ay, ay, the cords. [throws them down.]

Jul. Ah 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 I³,
 And that bare vowel I shall poison more
 Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice⁴ :

I am

* —*I have bought the mansion of a love,*] So, in *Antony and Cleopatra* :

“ — the strong base and building of my love

“ Is as the very center to the earth,

“ Drawing all things to it.” MALONE.

³ —*say thou but I,*] In Shakespeare's time (as Theobald has observed,) the affirmative particle *ay* was usually written *I*, and here it is necessary to retain the old spelling. MALONE.

⁴ —*death-darting eye of cockatrice :*] See Vol. VI. p. 181, n. * ; and p. 192, n. 7. MALONE.

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 those eyes shot, that make thee answer, I.

If he be slain, say—I ; or if not, no :

Brief sounds determine of my weal or woe.

These

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 swooned 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!

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?^s—
 Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom!
 For who is living, if those two are gone?

Nurse. Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banish'd;

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 bare 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.

^s *My dear-lov'd cousin, and my dearer lord?*] The quarto 1599, and the folio, read,

My dearest cousin, and my dearer lord?

Mr. Pope introduced the present reading from the original copy of 1597. MALONE.

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 cave⁶?

Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!

Dove-feather'd raven⁷! wolfish-ravening 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 did'st 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,

All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.—

Ah, where's my man? give me some *aqua vitæ*:—

These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old⁸.

Shame come to Romeo!

⁶ *O serpent heart, hid with a flow'ring face!*

Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?] So, in *King John*:

“Rush, inconsiderate, fiery voluntaries,

“*With ladies' faces and fierce dragons' spleen.*

Again, in *King Henry VIII.*

“You have angels' faces, but heaven knows your hearts.”

The line, *Did ever dragon, &c.*, and the following eight lines, are not in the quarto 1597. MALONE.

⁷ *Dove-feather'd raven!*] The quarto 1599, and folio, read:

Ravenous dove-feather'd raven, wolfish-ravening lamb.

The word *ravenous*, which was written probably in the manuscript by mistake in the latter part of the line, for *ravening*, and then struck out, crept from thence to the place where it appears. It was properly rejected by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

* *A damned saint,*] The quarto 1599, for *damned* has—*dimme*; the first folio *dimne*. The reading of the text is found in the undated quarto. MALONE.

⁸ *These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.*] So, in our author's *Lover's Complaint*:

“Not age, but sorrow, over me hath power.” MALONE.

Jul. Blister'd be thy tongue,
 For such a wish! he was not born to shame:
 Upon his brow shame is asham'd to sit;⁹
 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!¹—
 But, wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
 That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:
 Back, foolish tears², back to your native spring;

⁹ Upon his brow shame is asham'd to sit;] So, in *Painter's Palace of Pleasure*, tom. ij. p. 223: "Is it possible that under such beauteie and rare comelineffe, disloyaltie and treason may have their *sledge* and lodging?" STEEVENS.

¹ *Ab, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name, When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?*] So, in the poem already quoted:

"Ah cruel murd'ring tongue, murderer of others' fame,
 "How durst thou once attempt to touch the honour of his
 name?"

"Whose deadly foes do yield him due and earned praise,
 "For though his freedom be bereft, his honour not decays:
 "Why blam'st thou Romeus for slaying of Tybalt?
 "Since he is guiltless quite of all, and Tybalt bears the fault.
 "Whither shall he, alas! poor banish'd man, now fly?
 "What place of succour shall he seek beneath the starry sky?
 "Since she pursueth him, and him defames by wrong,
 "That in distress should be his fort, and only rampire strong."

MALONE.

² *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.

There is surely no need of change. Juliet's reasoning, as the text now stands, is perfectly correct. "*Back,*" says she, "*to your native source, you foolish tears!* Properly you ought to flow only on melancholy occasions; but now you erroneously shed your tributary drops for an event [the death of Tybalt and the subsequent escape of my beloved Romeo] which is in fact to me a subject of joy.—Tybalt, if he could, would have slain my husband; but my husband is alive, and has slain Tybalt. This is a source of joy, not of sorrow: wherefore then do I weep?" MALONE.

Your

Your tributary drops belong to woe,
 Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.
 My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
 And Tybalt's 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 damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds:
Tybalt is dead, and Romeo—banish'd;
 That—*banish'd*, that one word—*banish'd*,
 Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts³. Tybalt's death
 Was woe enough, if it had ended there:
 Or,—if four woe delights in fellowship⁴,
 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,
 Which modern lamentation⁵ might have mov'd?
 But, with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,
Romeo is banish'd,—to speak that word,
 Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
 All slain, all dead:—*Romeo is banish'd*,—
 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.

³ *Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts.*] That is, is worse than the loss of ten thousand Tybalts. Dr. Johnson's explanation [hath put Tybalt out of my mind, as if out of being,] cannot be right; for the passage itself shews that Tybalt was not out of her mind. MASON.

⁴ —*four woe delights in fellowship,*] So, in the *Rape of Lucrece*:

“ And fellowship in woe doth woe assuage,

“ As palmers' chat makes short their pilgrimage.”

Again, in *King Lear*:

“ —the mind much sufferance doth o'er-skip,

“ When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.” MALONE.

⁵ *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.

See Vol. III. p. 396, n. 6. MALONE.

Jul.

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.*]

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 four 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. Hence 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 banishment⁶
 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 mercy⁷, 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,
 Live here in heaven, and may look on her,
 But Romeo may not.—More validity,
 More honourable state, more courtship lives
 In carrion flies, than Romeo⁸: they may seize
 On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,
 And steal immortal blessing from her lips;
 Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
 Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin;
 But Romeo may not; he is banished⁹:

Flies

⁶ —then banishment—] The quarto 1599, and the folio, read—
 then *banished*. The emendation was made by Sir Thomas Hanmer.
 The words are not in the quarto 1597. MALONE.

⁷ *This is dear mercy,*—] So the quarto 1599, and the folio. The
 earliest copy reads—*This is mere mercy*. MALONE.

⁸ —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.

By *courtship*, the authour seems rather to have meant, the state of a
 lover; that dalliance, in which he who *courts* or woos a lady is
 sometimes indulged. This appears clearly from the subsequent lines:

“ —they may seize

“ On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,

“ And steal immortal blessing from her lips;—

“ *Flies may do this.*” MALONE.

⁹ *But Romeo may not; he is banished:]* This line in the original
 copy immediately follows—*And steal immortal blessing from her lips.*
 The two lines, *Who, even, &c.* were added in the copy of 1599, and are
 merely

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 ¹ ?
 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 profest,
 To mangle me with that word—banishment ?

Fri. Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word ².

Rom. O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

Fri. I'll give thee armour to keep off that word ;
 Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,
 To comfort thee, though thou art banished ³.

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.

merely parenthetical : the line therefore, *But Romeo may not, &c.* undoubtedly ought to follow those two lines. By mistake, in the copy of 1599, it was inserted lower down, after—*is not death.* MALONE.

¹ *They are free men, but I am banished.*

And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death ?] These two lines are not in the original copy. MALONE.

² *Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word.*] So the quartos 1597. The quartos 1599 and 1609 read :

Then fond mad man, bear me a little speak.

The folio :

Then fond mad man, hear me speak. MALONE.

³ *Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,*

To comfort thee, though thou art banished.] So, in *Romeo and Juliet*, the friar says,

“ Virtue is always thrall to troubles and annoy,

“ But wisdom in adversity finds cause of quiet joy.

See also Lily's *Euphues*, 1580 : “ Thou sayest banishment is better to the freeborne. There be many meates which are sowre in the mouth and sharp in the maw ; but if thou mingle them with sweet sawces, they yeeld both a pleasant taste and wholesome nourishment.—I speake this to this end ; that though thy exile seeme grievous to thee, yet guiding thyselfe with the rules of philosophy, it shall be more tolerable.”

MALONE.

Fri.

Fri. O, then I see that madmen have no ears.

Rom. How should they, when that wife 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 love⁴,
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
hair⁵,

And fall upon the ground, as I do now,
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

Fri. Arise; one knocks; good Romeo, hide thyself.

[*Knocking within.*]

Rom. Not I; unless the breath of heart-sick groans,
Mist-like, infold me from the search of eyes. [*Knocking.*]

Fri. Hark, how they knock!—Who's there?—
Romeo, arise;

Thou wilt be taken:—Stay a while:—stand up;

[*Knocking.*]

Run to my study:—By and by:—God's will!

What wilfulness is this⁶?—I come, I come. [*Knocking.*]
Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's your
will?

Nurse. [*within.*] Let me come in, and you shall know
my errand;
I come from lady Juliet.

Fri. Welcome then.

⁴ *Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,*] Thus the original copy;
for which in the folio we have—

Wert thou as young as Juliet my love.

I only mention this to shew the very high value of the early quarto
editions. MALONE.

⁵ *—then might'st thou tear thy hair,*] So, in the poem:

“These heavy tidings heard, his golden locks he tare,

“And like a frantick man hath torn the garments that he
ware.—

“He riseth oft, and strikes his head against the walls;

“He falleth down again, and loud for hasty death he calls.”

MALONE.

⁶ *What wilfulness—*] Thus the quarto 1597. That of 1599, and
the folio, have—*What simpleness.* MALONE.

Enter

ROMEO AND JULIET.

111

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 predicament⁷!

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;
Why should you fall into so deep an O?

Rom. Nurse!

Nurse. Ah fir! ah fir!—Well, death's 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 cancell'd love⁸?

Nurse. O, she says nothing, fir, 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

⁷ —O woeful sympathy!

Piteous predicament!] These words, which in the old copies make part of the nurse's speech, have been assigned to the friar on the suggestion of Dr. Farmer. MALONE.

⁸ —cancell'd love?] The folio reads—*conceal'd* love. JOHNSON.

The quarto, *cancell'd* love. STEEVENS.

The epithet *concealed* is to be understood, not of the person, but of the condition of the lady. So that the sense is, my lady whose being so, together with our marriage which made her so, is concealed from the world. HEATH.

The

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 beast⁹:

Unseemly woman, in a seeming man¹!

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 thee²,

By doing damned hate upon thyself?

Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth³?

⁹ *Art thou a man? thy form cries out, thou art;*

Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote

The unreasonable fury of a beast:] Shakspeare has here closely followed his original:

“*Art thou, quoth he, a man? thy shape saith, so thou art;*

“*Thy crying and thy weeping eyes denote a woman's heart.*

“*For manly reason is quite from off thy mind out-chased,*

“*And in her stead affections lewd and fancies highly placed;*

“*So that I stood in doubt, this hour at the least,*

“*If thou a man or woman wert, or else a brutish beast.”*

Tragicall History of Romeus and Juliet, 1562. MALONE.

¹ *Unseemly woman, &c.] Thou art a beast of ill qualities, under the appearance both of a woman and a man. JOHNSON.*

² *And slay thy lady too that lives in thee,]* Thus the first copy. The quarto 1599, and the folio, have—

And slay thy lady, that in thy life lives. MALONE.

³ *Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth?] Romeo has not here railed on his birth, &c. though in his interview with the friar as described in the poem, he is made to do so:*

“*First Nature did he blame, the author of his life,*

“*In which his joys had been so scant, and sorrows aye so rife;*

“*The time and place of birth he fiercely did reprove;*

“*He cryed out with open mouth against the stars above.—*

“*On fortune eke he rail'd”.*

Shakspeare copied the remonstrance of the friar, without reviewing the former part of his scene. He has in other places fallen into a similar inaccuracy, by sometimes following and sometimes deserting his original.

The lines, *Why rail'st thou, &c. to—thy own defence,* are not in the first copy. They are formed on a passage in the poem:

“*Why cry'st thou out on love? why dost thou blame thy fate?*

“*Why dost thou so cry after death? thy life why dost thou hate?”*

&c. MALONE.

Since

Since birth, and heaven, and earth, all three do meet
 In thee at once ; which thou at once would'st lose.
 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 a skill-less soldier's flask ⁴,
 Is set on fire by thine own ignorance,
 And thou dismember'd with thine own defence ⁵.
 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 art thou happy too ⁶ :
 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-behav'd and fullen wench,
 Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love ⁷ :

Take

⁴ *Like powder in a 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.

⁵ *And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.*] And thou torn to pieces with thy own weapons. JOHNSON.

⁶ —*there art thou happy too:*] Thus the first quarto. In the subsequent quartos and the folio *too* is omitted. MALONE.

⁷ *Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love:*] The quarto 1599, and 1609, read :

Thou *puts up* 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,
 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 ⁸.

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. [*Exit Nurse.*]

Rom. How well my comfort is reviv'd by this !

Fri. Go hence : Good night ⁹ ; and here stands all
 your state ¹ ;—

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,

The editor of the folio endeavoured to correct this by reading :

Thou *puttest* up thy fortune and thy love.

The undated quarto has *powrs*, which, with the aid of the original
 copy in 1597, pointed out the true reading. There the line stands :

Thou *frown'st upon* thy fate, that smiles on thee. MALONE.

⁸ *Romeo is coming.*] Much of this speech has likewise been added
 since the first edition. STEEVENS.

⁹ *Go hence : Good night ; &c.*] These three lines are omitted in all
 the modern editions. JOHNSON.

They were first omitted, with many others, by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

¹ *—here stands all your state ;*] The whole of your fortune depends
 on this. JOHNSON.

It were a grief, so brief to part with thee :
Farewel.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV².

A Room in Capulet's House.

Enter CAPULET, Lady CAPULET, and PARIS.

Cap. Things have fallen out, fir, so 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 up³ to her heaviness.

Cap. Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender
Of my child's love⁴ : 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 of my son Paris' love ;
And bid her, mark you me, on wednesday next—
But, soft ; What day is this ?

Par. Monday, my lord.

Cap. Monday ? ha ! ha ! Well, wednesday is too soon,
O' thursday let it be ;—o' thursday, tell her,

² Some few unnecessary verses are omitted in this scene according to the oldest editions. POPE.

Mr. Pope means, as appears from his edition, that *he* has followed the oldest copy, and omitted some unnecessary verses which are not found there, but inserted in the enlarged copy of this play. But he has expressed himself so loosely, as to have been misunderstood by Mr. Steevens. In the text these *unnecessary* verses, as Mr. Pope calls them, are preserved, conformably to the enlarged copy of 1599. MALONE.

³ —*mew'd up*—] This is a phrase from falconry. A *mew* was a place of confinement for hawks. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender*

Of my child's love :—] *Desperate* means only *bold, adventurous*, 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*, 1600 :

“ Witness this *desperate tender* of mine honour.” STEEVENS.

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 !
 Afore 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 ⁵.

Enter ROMEO, and JULIET.

Jul. Wilt thou be gone ? it is not yet near day ⁶ :
 It was the nightingale, and not the lark,

That

⁵ SCENE V. *Juliet's chamber.*] The stage-direction in the first edition is—"Enter Romeo and Juliet, at the window." In the second quarto, "Enter Romeo and Juliet aloft." They appeared probably in the balcony which was erected on the old English stage. See the *Account of the Ancient Theatres* in Vol. I. MALONE.

⁶ *Wilt thou be gone ? it is not yet near day, &c.*] This scene is formed on the following hints in the poem of *Romeus and Juliet*, 1562 :

"The golden sun was gone to lodge him in the west,
 "The full moon eke in yonder south had sent most men to rest ;
 "When restless Romeus and restless Juliet,
 "In wonted sort, by wonted mean, in Juliet's chamber met, &c.

* * *

"Thus these two lovers pass away the weary night
 "In pain, and plaint, not, as they went, in pleasure and delight.
 "But now, somewhat too soon, in farthest east arose
 "Fair Lucifer, the golden star that lady Venus chose ;
 "Whose course appointed is with speedy race to run,
 "A messenger of dawning day and of the rising sun.—
 "When thou ne lookest wide, ne closely dost thou wink,
 "When Phœbus from our hemisphere in western wave doth sink,
 "What

That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear ;
 Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree⁷ :
 Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

Rom. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
 No nightingale : look, love, what envious streaks
 Do lace the fevering clouds in yonder east :
 Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
 Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain 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, so thou wilt have it so.
 I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,
 'Tis but the pale reflex⁸ of Cynthia's brow ;
 Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
 The vaulty heaven so high above our heads :
 I have more care to stay⁹, 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 unpleasing sharps.

- “ What colour then the heavens do shew unto thine eyes,
- “ The same, or like, saw Romeus in farthest eastern skies :
- “ As yet he saw no day, ne could he call it night,
- “ With equal force decreasing dark fought with increasing light.
- “ Then Romeus in arms his lady gan to saïd,
- “ With friendly kifs, and ruthfully she 'gan her knight behold.”

MALONE.

⁷ *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.

⁸ *—the pale reflex—*] The appearance of a cloud opposed to the moon. JOHNSON.

⁹ *I have more care to stay,*] Care was frequently used in Shakespeare's age for inclination. MALONE.

Some say, the lark makes sweet division¹;
 This doth not so, for she divideth us:
 Some say, the lark and loathed toad change eyes;
 O, now I would they had chang'd voices too²!
 Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray³,
 Hunting thee hence with hunts-up to the day⁴.

O, now

¹ —sweet *division*;] *Division* seems to have been the technical term for the pauses or parts of a musical composition. So, in *K. Hen. IV.* P. 1:

“ Sung by a fair queen in a summer’s bower,
 “ With ravishing *division* to her lute.” STEEVENS.

² *Some say, the lark and loathed toad change eyes;*

O, now I would they had chang’d voices too!] I wish the lark and toad had changed voices; for then the noise which I hear would be that of the toad, not of the lark; it would consequently be evening, at which time the toad croaks; not morning, when the lark sings; and we should not be under the necessity of separation. A. C.

If the toad and lark had changed voices, the unnatural croak of the latter would have been no indication of the appearance of day, and consequently no signal for her lover’s departure. This is apparently the aim and purpose of Juliet’s wish. HEATH.

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. WARB.

This tradition of the toad and lark I have heard expressed in a rustick rhyme:

—*To leav’n I’d fly,*
But that the toad beguil’d me of mine eye. JOHNSON.

³ *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.

⁴ *Hunting thee hence with hunts-up to the day.*] The *buntsup* was the name of the tune anciently played to wake the hunters, and collect them together. So, in the *Return from Parnassus*, 1606:

“ Yet will I play a *bunts-up* to my Muse.”

Again, in Drayton’s *Polyolbion*, song 13th:

“ But *bunts-up* to the morn the feather’d sylvans sing.”

STEEVENS.

A *buntsup* also signified a morning *song* to a new-married woman, the

O, now be gone ; more light and light it grows.

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 kiss, and I'll descend.

[Romeo descends.]

Jul. Art thou gone so ? my love ! my lord ! my friend * !

I must hear from thee every day i' the hour,

For in a minute there are many days :

O ! by this count I shall be much in years,

Ere I again behold my Romeo ^s.

Rom. Farewel ! I will omit no opportunity
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

Jul. O, think'ft 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. O God ! I have an ill-divining soul ^s :

Methinks,

the day after her marriage, and is certainly used here in that sense. See Cotgrave's Dictionary, in v. *Resveil*. MALONE.

Puttenham in his *Art of English Poesy*, 1589, speaking of one Gray, says, "what good estimation did he grow unto with the same King Henry [the Eighth,] and afterward with the duke of Somerset, Protector, for making certaine merry ballades, whereof one chiefly was, *The bunte is up, the bunte is up.*" ANONYMUS.

* *Art thou gone so ? my love, my lord, my friend !*] Thus the quarto 1597. That of 1599, and the folio, read :

Art thou gone so ? love, lord, *ay husband*, friend ! MALONE.

^s *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. I.*

STEEVENS

⁶ *O God ! I have an ill-divining soul : &c.*] This miserable prescience of futurity I have always regarded as a circumstance particularly beautiful. The same kind of warning from the mind Romeo seems to have been conscious of, on his going to the entertainment at the house of Capulet :

Methinks, I see thee, now thou art below,
As one dead⁷ 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 blood⁸. 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. [*within.*] Ho, daughter! are you up?

Jul. Who is't that calls? it is my lady mother?
Is she not down so late, or up so early⁹?
What unaccustom'd cause procures her thither¹?

Enter Lady CAPULET.

La. Cap. Why, how now, Juliet?

Jul. Madam, I am not well.

La. Cap. Evermore weeping for your cousin's death²?
What,

“ —my mind misgives,

“ Some consequence yet hanging in the stars,

“ Shall bitterly begin his fearful date

“ From this night's revels.” STEEVENS.

⁷ O God! I have an ill-divining soul;

Methinks, I see thee, now thou art below,

As one dead—] So, in our author's *Venus and Adonis*: ¶

“ The thought of it doth make my faint heart bleed;

“ And fear doth teach it divination;

“ I prophecy thy death.”

The reading of the text is that of the quarto, 1597. That of 1599, and the folio, read—now thou art so low. MALONE.

⁸ Dry sorrow drinks our blood.] This is an allusion to the proverb, “sorrow's dry.” STEEVENS.

He is accounting for their *paleness*. It was an ancient notion that sorrow consumed the blood, and shortened life. Hence in one of the three parts of *King Henry VI.* we have—“blood-sucking sighs.”

MALONE.

⁹ Is she not down so late, or up so early?] Is she not laid down in her bed at so late an hour as this? or rather is she risen from bed at so early an hour of the morn? MALONE.

¹ —procures her thither?] Procures for brings. WARBURTON.

² Evermore weeping for your cousin's death? &c.] So, in *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, 1562:

“ —time it is that now you should our Tybalt's death forget;

“ Of whom since God hath claim'd the life that was but lent,

“ He is in bliss, ne is there cause why you should thus lament:

“ You

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 so the loss,

I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

La. Cap. Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his
 death,

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 hands³.

'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.

*" You cannot call him back with tears and shriekings shrill ;
 " It is a fault thus still to grudge at God's appointed will."*

MALONE.

* *God pardon him !*] The word *him*, which was inadvertently omitted
 in the old copies, was inserted by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

³ *Ay, madam, from, &c.*] 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.

The elder quarto has—That *shuld*, &c. The word *shall* is drawn
 from that of 1599. MALONE.

—*unaccustom'd dram,*] In vulgar language, shall give him a dram
 which he is not used to. Though I have, if I mistake not, observed,
 that in old books *unaccustomed* signifies *wonderful, powerful, effica-*
cious. JOHNSON.

Jul.

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!

La. Cap. 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, 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 †, at saint Peter's church,
 Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

Jul. Now, by saint Peter's church, and Peter too,

* —*my cousin Tybalt*—] The last word of this line, which is not in the old copies, was added by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

† *Find thou, &c.*] This line, in the quarto 1597, is given to Juliet.

STEEVENS.

† —*in happy time*,—] *A la bonne heure*. This phrase was interjected, when the hearer was not quite so well pleased as the speaker. JOHNS.

† *The county Paris*,—] It is remarked, that “Paris, though in one place called *Earl*, is most commonly stiled the *Countie* in this play. Shakspeare seems to have preferred, for some reason or other, the *Italian Conte* 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:

“So far'd the *Countie* with the Pagan bold,” &c.

Godfrey of Bulloigne, Book 7. Stanza 90. FARMER.

See p. 42, n. 6. MALONE.

He shall not make me there a joyful bride.
 I wonder at this haste; that I must wed
 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 dew⁸;
 But for the sun-set of my brother's son,
 It rains downright.—

How now? a conduit, girl? what, still in tears⁹?
 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!

⁸ *When the sun sets, the air doth drizzle dew;*] Thus the undated quarto. The quarto 1599, and the folio, read,—the *earth* doth drizzle dew. The line is not in the original copy.

The reading of the quarto 1599 and the folio is philosophically true; and perhaps ought to be preferred. Dew undoubtedly rises from the earth, in consequence of the action of the heat of the sun on its moist surface. Those vapours which rise from the earth in the course of the day, are evaporated by the warmth of the air as soon as they arise; but those which rise after sun-set, form themselves into drops, or rather into that fog or mist which is termed dew. MALONE.

⁹ *How now? a conduit, girl? what, still in tears?*] Conduits in the form of human figures, it has been already observed, were common in Shakspeare's time. See Vol. IV. p. 246, n. 9.

We have again the same image in the *The Rape of Lucrece*:

“A pretty while these pretty creatures stand,
 “Like ivory conduits coral cisterns filling.” MALONE.

Cap.

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. 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, you¹,
Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds,
But settle your fine joints 'gainst thursday next,
To go with Paris to saint Peter's church,
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.
Out, you green-sickness carrion! out, you baggage!
You tallow face²!

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 had sent us³ but this only child;
But now I see this one is one too much,

¹ *And yet not proud, &c.*] This line is wanting in the folio.

STEEVENS.

² —*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,—*bedgebrat, cullion, and tar-breech*, in the course of one speech.

Nay, in the interlude of the *Repentance of Mary Magdalene*, 1567, *Mary Magdalen* says to one of her attendants:

“*Horeson, I beshrowe your heart, are you here?*” STEEVENS.

³ —*had sent us—*] So the first quarto, 1597. The subsequent ancient copies read—*had lent us*. MALONE.

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.

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 ⁴! it makes me mad: Day, night,
early, late,

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 heart could 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* ⁵,

I am

⁴ *God's bread!* &c.] The first three lines of this speech are formed from the first quarto, and that of 1599, with which the folio concurs. The first copy reads:

God's *bleffed mother*, wife, it makes me mad.

Day, night, early, late, at home, abroad,

Alone, in company, waking or sleeping,

Still my care hath been to *see* her match'd.

The quarto 1599, and the folio, read:

God's *bread*, it makes me mad.

Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play;

Alone, in company, still my care hath been

To *have* her match'd, &c. MALONE.

⁵ —and *having now* provided

A gentleman of princely parentage,—

A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,

To answer—*I'll not wed,—I cannot love,—*] So, in *Romeus and*

Juliet, 1562:

“ Such

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,

“ Such care thy mother had, so dear thou wert to me,
 “ That I with long and earnest suit *provided* have for thee
 “ One of the greatest lords that wons about this town,
 “ And for his many virtues' sake a man of great renown ; —
 “ ———and yet thou playest in this case
 “ The *dainty fool* and stubborn girl ; for want of skill,
 “ Thou dost refuse thy offer'd weal, and disobey my will.
 “ Even by his strength I swear that first did give me life,
 “ And gave me in my youth the strength to get thee on my wife,
 “ Unless by Wednesday next thou bend as I am bent,
 “ And, at our castle call'd Freetown, thou freely do assent
 “ To county Paris suit, —
 “ *Not only will I give all that I have away,*
 “ *From thee to those that shall me love, me honour and obey ;*
 “ *But also to so close and to so hard a gale*
 “ *I shall thee wed for all thy life, that sure thou shalt not fail*
 “ *A thousand times a day to wish for sudden death : —*
 “ *Advise thee well, and say that thou art warned now,*
 “ *And think not that I speak in sport, or mind to break my word.*”

There is a passage in an old play called *Wily beguil'd*, so nearly resembling this, that one poet must have copied from the other. *Wily beguil'd* was on the stage before 1596, being mentioned by Nashe in his *Have with you to Saffron Walden*, printed in that year. In that play Gripe gives his daughter Lelia's hand to a suitor, which she plucks back ; on which her nurse says,

“ —She'll none, she thanks you, sir.
 “ *Gripe.* Will she none ? why, how now, I say ?
 “ What, you *powring*, peevish thing, you untoward *baggage*,
 “ Will you not be ruled by your father ?
 “ *Have I ta'en care to bring you up to this ?*
 “ And will you doe as you list ?
 “ Away, I say ; *bang, starve, beg*, be gone ;
 “ Out of my sight ! pack, I say :
 “ Thou ne'er get'st a pennyworth of my goods for this.
 “ Think on't ; *I do not use to jest* :
 “ Be gone, I say, I will not hear thee speake.” MALONE.

Nor

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 grief⁶ ?
O, sweet my mother, cast me not away !
Delay this marriage for a month, a week ;
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies⁷.

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 prevented ?
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 county⁸.

O, he's

⁶ *Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
That sees into the bottom of my grief ?*] So, in *King John*, in two
parts, 1591 :

“ Ah boy, thy yeeres, I see, are far too greene,
“ *To look into the bottom of these cares.*” MALONE.

⁷ *In that dim monument, &c.*] The modern editors read *dun monu-*
ment. I have replaced *dim* from the old quarto 1597, and the folio.

STEEVENS.

⁸ *'Faith, here 'tis : Romeo*

*Is banished ; and all the world to nothing,
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you ;—
Then since the case so stands as now it doth,
I think it best you married with the county.*] 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.

This

O, he's a lovely gentleman!
 Romeo's a dish-clout to him; an eagle, madam,
 Hath not so green¹, so quick, so fair an eye,
 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,
 As living here² and you no use of him.

Jul. Speak'ft thou from thy heart?

Nurse. Ay, and from my foul;

This picture, however, is not an original. In *The Tragicall History of Romeus and Juliet*, 1562, the nurse exhibits the same readiness to accommodate herself to the present conjuncture:

“ The flattering nurse did praise the friar for his skill,
 “ And said that she had done right well, by wit to order will;
 “ She setteth forth at large the father's furious rage,
 “ And eke she praiseth much to her *the second marriage*;
 “ *And county Paris now she praiseth ten times more*
 “ *By wrong, than she herself by right had Romeus prai'd before*:
 “ Paris shall dwell there still; *Romeus shall not return*;
 “ What shall it boot her all her life to languish still and
 mourn?” MALONE.

Sir John Vanbrugh, in the *Relapse*, has copied in this respect the character of his nurse from Shakspeare. BLACKSTONE.

¹ —so green an eye—] So the first editions. *Hanmer* reads—*so keen*.
 JOHNSON.

Perhaps Chaucer has given to *Emetrius*, in the *Knights Tale*, eyes of the same colour:

His nose was high, his eyin bright *citryn*:
i. e. of the hue of an unripe lemon or citron.

Again, in the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, by Fletcher and Shakspeare, Act V. sc. i.

“ —oh vouchsafe,
 “ With that thy rare *green eye*,” &c. STEEVENS.

What Shakspeare meant by this epithet here, may be easily collected from the following lines, which he has attributed to Thisbé in the last Act of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

“ These lily lips,
 “ This cherry nose,
 “ These yellow cowslip cheeks,
 “ Are gone, are gone!—
 “ His eyes were *green* as leeks.” MALONE.

² *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.

Or

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 damnation³! 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.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Friar Lawrence's Cell.

Enter Friar LAWRENCE, and PARIS.

Fri. On thursday, fir? the time is very short.

Par. My father Capulet will have it so;
And I am nothing slow, to slack his haste⁴.

Fri.

³ *Ancient damnation!*] This term of reproach occurs in the *Malcontent*, 1604:

“—out; you ancient damnation!” STEEVENS.

⁴ *And I am nothing slow, &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 authour's word, for, in the first edition, the line ran—

“ And I am nothing *slack* to slow his haste.”

Back could not have stood there.

If this kind of phraseology be justifiable, it can be justified only by supposing the meaning to be, *there is nothing of slowness in me, to induce me to slacken or abate his haste.* The meaning of Paris is very clear; he does not wish to restrain Capulet, or to delay his own marriage;

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 have I little talk'd of love;
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous,
That she doth 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^s.—

Look, sir, here comes the lady towards my cell.

[*Aside.*]

Enter JULIET.

Par. Happily met, 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.
Fri. 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;

riage; but the words which the poet has given him, import the reverse of this, and seem rather to mean, *I am not backward in restraining his haste*; I endeavour to retard him as much as I can. Dr. Johnson saw the impropriety of this expression, and that his interpretation extorted a meaning from the words, which they do not at first present; and hence his proposed alteration; but our authour must answer for his own peculiarities. See Vol. VII. p. 564, n. 6. MALONE.

^s —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.

For

For it was bad enough, before their spight.

Par. Thou wrong'st it, more than tears, with that report.

Jul. That is no wrong, sir, that 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 entreat the time alone.

Par. God shield, I should disturb devotion !—
Juliet, on thursday early will I rouse you :
'Till then, adieu ! and keep this holy kiss. [*Exit PARIS.*]

Jul. O, shut the door ! and when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me ; Past hope, past cure, past help !

Fri. 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 deed⁶,
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt

* *That is no wrong, sir, &c.*] So the quarto, 1597. A word was probably omitted at the press. The quarto, 1599, and the subsequent copies, read :

That is no *slander*, sir, which is a truth.

The context shews that the alteration was not made by Shakspeare.

MALONE.

⁶ *Shall be the label to another deed,*] The seals of deeds in our author's time were not impressed on the parchment itself on which the deed was written, but were appended on distinct slips or labels affixed to the deed. Hence in *K. Richard II.* the duke of York discovers a covenant which his son the duke of Aumerle had entered into by the depending seal :

“ What seal is that, which *hangs* without thy bosom ? ”

See the *fac-simile* of Shakspeare's hand writing in Vol. I. MALONE.

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 umpire⁷; arbitrating that
 Which the commission of thy years and art⁸
 Could to no issue of true honour bring.
 Be not so long to speak; I long to die,
 If what thou speakest speak not of remedy.

Fri. 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'it 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,
 From off the battlements of yonder tower⁹;
 Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk
 Where serpents are; chain me¹ with roaring bears;

Or

⁷ *Shall play the umpire;—*] That is, this knife shall decide the struggle between me and my distresses. JOHNSON.

⁸ *—commission of thy years and art—*] *Commission* is for authority or power. JOHNSON.

⁹ *O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris, From off the battlements of yonder tower;*] So in *King Lear*, written before 1594:

“ Yea, for to do thee good, I would ascend

“ The highest turret in all Britanny,

“ And from the top leap headlong to the ground.” MALONE.

—of yonder tower;] Thus the quarto 1597. All other ancient copies—*of any tower.* STEEVENS.

¹ *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

Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house,
 O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,
 With reeky shanks, and yellow chaplets sculls;
 Or bid me go into a new-made grave,
 And hide me with a dead man in his shroud²;
 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 phial³, being then in bed,

And

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 are;
 Or shut me—. STEEVENS.

The lines last quoted, which Mr. Pope and Dr. Johnson preferred, are found in the copy of 1597; in the text the quarto of 1599 is followed, except that it has—*Or bide me nightly, &c.* MALONE.

² *And bide me with a dead man in his shroud;*] In the quarto 1599, and 1609, this line stands thus:

And hide me with a dead man in his,

The editor of the folio supplied the defect by reading—in his *grave*, without adverting to the disgusting repetition of that word.

The original copy leads me to believe that Shakspeare wrote—in his *tomb*; for there the line stands thus:

Or lay me in a *tombe* with one new dead.

I have, however, with the other modern editors, followed the undated quarto, in which the printer filled up the line with the word *shroud*.

MALONE.

³ *Take thou this phial, &c.*] So, in *the Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*:

“ Receive this phial small, and keep it in thine eye,

“ And on the marriage day, before the sun doth clear the sky,

“ Fill it with water full up to the very brim,

“ Then drink it off, and thou shalt feel throughout each *vein* and
limb

“ A pleasant *slumber* slide, and quite disspread at length

“ On all thy parts; from every part reve all thy kindly strength:

“ Withouten moving then thy idle parts shall rest,

And this distilled liquor drink thou off:
 When, presently, through all thy veins shall run
 A cold and drowsy humour⁴, 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 ashes⁵; thy eyes' windows fall^{*},

“ *No pulse shall go, no heart once heave within thy hollow breast;*
 “ *But thou shalt lie as she that dieth in a trance;*
 “ *Thy kinsmen and thy trusty friends shall wail the sudden chance:*
 “ *Thy corps then will they bring to grave in this church-yard,*
 “ *Where thy forefathers long ago a costly tomb prepar'd:*
 “ *—— where thou shalt rest, my daughter,*
 “ *Till I to Mantua send for Romeo, thy knight,*
 “ *Out of the tomb both he and I will take thee forth that night.*”

MALONE.

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 kind of pleasant sleepe, which inroach-
 ing by litle and litle all the parts of your body, wil constrain them in such wise, as unmoveable they shal remaine: and by not doing their accustomed duties, shall loofe 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 astonneq 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 church-yard hard by our church, when you shall be intombed in the common monument of the Capellets your ancestors,” &c. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *through all thy veins shall run*

A cold and drowsy humour, &c.] 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,*” and a little lower, “*no sign of breath,*” &c. The speech, however, was greatly enlarged; for in the first copy it consists of only thirteen lines; in the subsequent edition, of thirty three. MALONE.

⁵ *To paly ashes;*] These words are not in the original copy. The quarto, 1599, and the folio, read—*To many ashes*, for which the editor of the second folio substituted—*mealy ashes*. The true reading is found in the undated quarto. This uncommon adjective occurs again in *K. Henry V.*

“ —— and through their *paly* flames,

“ Each battle sees the other's umber'd face.”

We have had too already in a former scene—“*Pale, pale as ashes.*”

MALONE.

* — *thy eyes' windows fall,*] See Vol. VII. p. 598, n. 3. MALONE.
 Like

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)
 In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier ⁶,
 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 ; and he and I
 Will watch thy waking ⁷, and that very night
 Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.
 And this shall free thee from this present shame ;

⁶ *Then (as the manner of our country is)*

In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier,] The Italian custom here alluded to, of carrying the dead body to the grave with the face *uncovered*, (which is not mentioned by Painter) our authour found particularly described in *The Tragicall History of Romeus and Juliet* :

“ Another use there is, that whosoever dies,

“ Borne to their church *with open face upon the bier he lies,*

“ In wonted weed attir'd, not wrapt in winding-sheet—.”

MALONE.

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 *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.

If no unconstant toy⁸, nor womanish fear,
Abate thy valour in the acting it⁹.

Jul. Give me, give me! O 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.*]

SCENE II.

A Room in Capulet's House.

Enter CAPULET, Lady CAPULET, Nurse, and Servant.

Cap. So many guests invite as here are writ.—

[*Exit* Servant.]

Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.

2. Serv. You shall have none ill, sir; for I'll try if they
can lick their fingers.

Cap. How canst thou try them so?

2. 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.

Nur. See, where she comes from shrift¹ with merry look.

⁸ *If no unconstant toy, &c.*] If no *fickle freak*, no *light caprice*, no *change of fancy*, hinder the performance. JOHNSON.

⁹ *If no unconstant toy, nor womanish fear, Abate thy valour in the acting it.*] These expressions are borrowed from the poem:

“ Cast off from thee at once the weed of *womanish dread*,

“ With manly courage arm thyself from heel unto the head:—

“ God grant he so confirm in thee thy present will,

“ That no *inconstant toy* thee let thy promise to fulfill!”

MALONE.

¹ —from shrift—] i. e. from confession. STEEVENS.

Cap.

Cap. How now, my head-strong? where have you been gadding?

Jul. Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin
Of disobedient opposition
To you, and your behests; and am enjoin'd
By holy Lawrence 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 Lawrence' 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.—
Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar,
All our whole city is much bound to him².

Jul. Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,
To help me fort 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. We shall be short³ in our provision;
'Tis now near night⁴.

Cap.

² —[*this reverend holy friar,*

All our whole city is much bound to him.] So, in *Romeus and Juliet*, 1562.

“—this is not, wife, the friar's first desert;

“In all our commonweal scarce one is to be found,

“But is, for some good turn, unto this *holy father bound.*”

MALONE.

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.

³ *We shall be short*—] That is, we shall be defective. JOHNSON.

⁴ *'Tis now near night.*] It appears in a foregoing scene, that Romeo parted from his bride at day-break on *Tuesday* morning. *Immediately afterwards* she went to Friar Lawrence, and he particularly mentions the day of the week:—[“*Wednesday is to-morrow.*”] She could not well

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.*]

S C E N E III.

Juliet's Chamber.

Enter JULIET, and Nurse⁵.

Jul. Ay, those attires are best:—But, gentle nurse,
 I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night;
 For I have need of many orisons⁶

well have remained more than an hour or two with the friar, and she is just now returned from shrift;—yet lady Capulet says, “ ’tis near night;” and this same night is ascertained to be *Tuesday*. This is one out of many instances of our authour's inaccuracy in the computation of time. MALONE.

[*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 my selfe.

Nurse. Well, there's a cleane smocke under your pillow, and so good night. STEEVENS.

⁶ *For I have need of many orisons—*] Juliet plays most of her pranks under the appearance of religion: perhaps Shakspeare meant to punish her hypocrisy. JOHNSON.

This pretence of Juliet's, in order to get rid of the nurse, was suggested by *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, and some of the expressions of this speech were borrowed from thence:

“ Dear friend, quoth she, you know to-morrow is the day

“ Of new contract; wherefore, *this night, my purpose is to pray*

“ Unto the *heavenly minds* that dwell above the skies,

“ And order all the course of things as they can best devise,

“ That they so *smile* upon the doings of to-morrow,

“ That all the remnant of my life may be exempt from sorrow;

“ Wherefore, I pray you, *leave me here alone this night,*

“ But see that you to-morrow come before the dawning light,

“ For you must curl my hair, and set on my attire—.” MALONE.

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?

Ful. 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 Capulet, and Nurse.*]

Ful. Farewel⁷!—God knows, when we shall meet
again.

I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,
That almost freezes up the heat of life⁸:
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 all⁹?

Must

⁷ *Farewel!*] This speech received considerable additions after the elder copy was published. STEEVENS.

⁸ *I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins, That almost freezes up the heat of life:*] So, in *Romeus and Juliet*, 1562:

“ And whilst she in these thoughts doth dwell somewhat too long,
“ The force of her imagining anon did wax so strong,
“ That she surmis'd she saw out of the hollow vault,
“ A grisly thing to look upon, the carcase of Tybalt;
“ Right in the self same sort that she few days before
“ Had seen him in his blood embrew'd, to death eke wounded sore.
“ Her dainty tender parts 'gan shiver all for dread,
“ Her golden hair did stand upright upon her *chilliss* head:
“ Then pressed with the fear that she there lived in,
“ *A sweat as cold as mountain ice pierc'd through her tender skin.*”

MALONE.

⁹ *What if this mixture do not work at all?*] Here also Shakspeare appears to have followed the poem:

“ —to

Must I of force be married to the county¹?—

No, no;—this shall forbid it:—lie thou there.—

[*laying down a dagger*².

What

“ —to the end I may my name and conscience save,

“ I must devour the *mixed drink* that by me here I have:

“ Whose *working* and whose force as yet I do not know:—

“ And of this piteous plaint began another doubt to grow:

“ What do I know, (quoth she) if that this powder shall

“ Sooner or later than it should, or else *not work at all*?

“ And what know I, quoth she, if *serpents* odious,

“ And other beasts and worms, that are of nature venomous,

“ That wonted are to lurk in dark caves under ground,

“ And commonly, as I have heard, in dead men's tombs are found,

“ Shall harm me, yea or nay, where I shall lie as dead?

“ Or how shall I, that always have in so fresh air been bred,

“ Endure the loathsome stink of such a heaped store

“ Of carcases not yet consum'd, and bones that long before

“ Intombed were, where I my sleeping-place shall have,

“ Where all my ancestors do rest, my kindred's common grave?

“ Shall not the friar and my Romeus, when they come,

“ Find me, if I awake before, *y-stified in the tomb*? MALONE.

So, in *Painter's Palace of Pleasure*, tom. ii. p. 239. “ —but what know I, (said she) whether the operation of this powder will be to soone or to late, or not correspondent to the due time, and that my fault 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 thinkyng that I am dead? But how shall I indure the stinche of so many carions and bones of myne auncestors which rest in the grave, if by fortune I do awake before Romeo and friar 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 fantasie of her cousin Ihibault, in the very same sort as she sawe him wounded and imbrued with blood;” &c. STEEVENS.

¹ Must I of force be married to the county?] Thus the quarto of 1597, and not, as the line has been exhibited in the late editions,

Shall I of force be married to the count?

The subsequent ancient copies read, as Mr. Steevens has observed,

Shall I be married then to-morrow morning? MALONE.

² —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 *beboveful* 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,

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 :
 I will not entertain so bad a thought ³.—
 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,
 Together with the terror of the place,—
 As in a vault, an ancient receptacle ⁴,

Again, in *King Edward III.* 1596 :

“ 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.

In order to account for Juliet's having a dagger, or, as it is called in old language, a knife, it is not necessary to have recourse to the ancient accoutrements of brides, how prevalent soever the custom mentioned by Mr. Steevens may have been ; for Juliet appears to have furnished herself with this instrument immediately after her father and mother had threatened to force her to marry Paris :

“ If all fail else, myself have power to die.”

Accordingly, in the very next scene, when she is at the friar's cell, and before she could have been furnished with any of the apparatus of a bride, (not having then consented to marry the count,) she says :

“ Give me some present counsel, or, behold,

“ 'Twixt my extremes and me *this bloody knife*

“ Shall play the umpire.” MALONE.

³ *I will not entertain so bad a thought.*] This line I have restored from the quarto, 1597. STEEVENS.

⁴ *As in a vault, &c.*] This idea was probably suggested to our poet by his native place. The charnel house 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 Shakspeare against the criticisms of Voltaire, is one of the least considerable out of many favours which he has conferred on the literary world. STEEVENS.

Where,

Where, for these many hundred years, the bones
 Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd;
 Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth⁵,
 Lies fest'ring⁶; in his shroud; where, as they say,
 At some hours in the night spirits resort;—
 Alack, alack! is it not like, that I⁷,
 So early waking,—what with loathsome smells;
 And shrieks like mandrakes' torn out of the earth,
 That living mortals, hearing them, run mad⁸;—
 O! if I wake, shall I not be distraught⁹,
 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

⁵ —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.

⁶ Lies festring—] To *fester* is to corrupt. So, in *R. Edward III.* 1596:

“ Lillies that *fester* smell far worse than weeds.”

This line likewise occurs in the 94th Sonnet of Shakspeare. The play of *Edward III.* has been ascribed to him. STEEVENS.

⁷ —is it not like, that I,] This speech is confused, and inconsequential, according to the disorder of Juliet's mind. JOHNSON.

⁸ —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.”

“ The *mandrake*,” (says Thomas Newton, in his *Herball* to the Bible, Svo. 1587,) “ has been supposed to be a creature having life and engendered under the earth, of the seed of some dead person that hath been convicted and put to death for some felonie or murder; and that they had the same in such dampish and funeral places where the said convicted persons were buried,” &c. STEEVENS.

See Vol. V. p. 368, n. 5; and Vol. VI. p. 191, n. 4. MALONE.

⁹ —be distraught.] *Distraught* is distracted. So, in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, Song 10:

“ Is, for that river's sake, near of his wits *distraught*,” &c.

STEEVENS.

Seeking

Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
Upon a rapier's point :—Stay, Tybalt, stay !—
Romeo, I come ! this do I drink to thee¹.

[*She throws herself on the bed.*]

SCENE IV.

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 pastry².

Enter CAPULET.

Cap. Come, stir, stir, stir ! the second cock hath
crow'd,

The curfeu bell hath rung³, 'tis three o'clock :—
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 lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

¹ *Romeo, I come ! this do I drink to thee.*] So the first quarto, 1597.
The subsequent ancient copies read :

Romeo, Romeo, Romeo, here's drink, I drink to thee.

MALONE.

² *They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.*] i. e. in the room
where paste was made. So *laundry, spicery, &c.* MALONE.

On the books of the Stationers' Company in the year 1560, are the
following entries :

“ Item payd for iiii pound of *dates* iiii *s.*”

“ Item payd for xxiiii pounce of *prunys* iiii *s.* viii *d.* STEEV.

³ *The curfeu bell—*] I know not that the morning-bell is called the
curfeu in any other place. JOHNSON.

The *curfeu* 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 *curfeu*.” STEEV.

La. Cap.

La. Cap. Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt⁴ 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 Servants, with spits, logs, and baskets.

1. *Serv.* Things for the cook, sir; but I know not what;

Cap. Make haste, make haste. [*Exit Serv.*]—Sirrah, fetch drier logs;

Call Peter, he will shew thee where they are.

2. *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;

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. Mistrefs!—what, mistrefs!—*Juliet!*—fast, I warrant her, she:—

Why, lamb!—why, lady!—fie, you slug-a-bed!—

Why, love, I say!—*madam!* sweet-heart!—why, bride!—

⁴ —a mouse-bunt—] 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*.” STEEV.

What,

What, not a word i—you take your pennyworths now;
 Sleep for a week; for the next night, I warrant,
 The county Paris hath set up his rest,
 That you shall rest but little⁵.—God forgive me,
 (Marry, and amen!) how sound is she asleep!
 I needs must wake her:—Madam! madam! madam!
 Ay, let the county take you in your bed⁶;
 He'll fright you up, i'faith.—Will it not be?
 What, drest! and in your clothes! and down again!
 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!

⁵ — set up his rest,

That you shall rest but little.] This expression, which is frequently employed by the old dramatick 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 lefs—”.

Again, in *the Roaring Girl*: “—like a musket on a rest.”

See Montfaucon's *Monarchie Française*, tom. v. plate 48. STEEVENS.

The origin of this phrase has certainly been rightly explained, but the good nurse was here thinking of other matters. T. C.

The above expression may probably be sometimes used in the sense already explained; it is however oftner employed with a reference to the game at *Primero*, in which it was one of the terms then in use. In the second instance above quoted it is certainly so. To avoid loading the page with examples, I shall refer to Doddsley's *Collection of Old Plays*, Vol. X. p. 364, edit. 1780, where several are brought together. REED.

⁶ —why lady!—*she, you slug-abad!*—

Ay, let the county take you in your bed;] So, in *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*:

“ First softly did she call, then louder did she cry,

“ *Lady, you sleep too long, the earl will raise you by and by.*”

MALONE.

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 LAWRENCE, and PARIS, with Musicians.

Fri. Come, is the bride ready to go to church ?

* *Accursed time! &c.*] This line is taken from the first quarto, 1597.
MALONE.

† *Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,*

Ties up her tongue, and will not let me speak.] Our authour has here followed the poem closely, without recollecting that he had made Capulet, in this scene, clamorous in his grief. In *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, Juliet's mother makes a long speech, but the old man utters not a word:

“ But more than all the rest the father's heart was so

“ Smit with the heavy news, and so shut up with sudden woe,

“ That he ne had the power his daughter to beweepe,

“ *Ne yet to speak*, but long is forc'd his tears and plaints to keep.”

MALONE.

Cap.

Cap. Ready to go, but never to return :
 O son, the night before thy wedding day ⁸
 Hath death lain with thy bride ⁹:—See, there she lies,
 Flower as she was, deflowered by him ¹.
 Death is my son-in-law, death is my heir ² ;
 My daughter he hath wedded! I will die,
 And leave him all ; life leaving, all is death's ³.

Par. Have I thought long to see this morning's face ⁴,
 And doth it give me such a fight as this ?

La. Cap. Accurs'd, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!
 Most miserable hour, that e'er time saw
 In lasting labour of his pilgrimage !

⁸ O son, the night before thy wedding day

Hath death lain with thy bride:—] Euripides has sported with this thought in the same manner. *Iphig. in Aul.* ver. 460.

“ Τὴν δ' αὖ τάλαναν παρθεῖον (ἢ παρθενον ;

“ Ἀδης νῦν, ὡς εἴκει, νυμφεύσει τάχα.)” Sir W. RAWLINSON.

⁹ Hath death lain with thy bride:] Perhaps this line is coarsely ridiculed in Decker's *Satiromastix*, 1602:

“ Dead : she's death's bride ; he hath her maidenhead.” STEEV.

Decker seems rather to have intended to ridicule a former line in this play :

“ —I'll to my wedding bed,

“ And *Death*, not Romeo, *take my maidenhead.*”

The word *see* in the line before us, is drawn from the first quarto.

MALONE.

¹ Flower as she was, deflowered by him.] This jingle was common to other writers ; and among the rest, to Greene, in his *Greene Concept*, 1598 : “ —in a garden-house having round about it many flowers, and within it much *deflowering.*” COLLINS.

² *Death* is my son-in-law, &c.] The remaining part of this speech, “ death is my heir,” &c. was omitted by Mr. Pope in his edition ; and some of the subsequent editors, following his example, took the same unwarrantable licence. The lines were very properly restored by Mr. Steevens. MALONE.

³ —life leaving, all is death's.] The old copies read—*life living.* The emendation was made by Mr. Steevens. MALONE.

⁴ —*morning's face,*] The quarto, 1597, continues the speech of Paris thus :

And doth it now present such prodigies ?

Accurst, unhappy, miserable man,

Forlorn, forsaken, destitute I am ;

Born to the world to be a slave in it :

Ditrest, remediless, unfortunate.

O heavens ! Oh nature ! wherefore did you make me

To live so vile, so wretched as I shall ? STEEVENS.

L 2

But

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. O woe! O woeful, woeful, woeful day!⁵
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 thou⁶!—alack! my child is dead;
And, with my child, my joys are buried!

Fri. Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's cure⁷ 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 fought 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?

⁵ *O woe! oh woeful, &c.*] This speech of exclamations is not in the edition above-cited. [that of 1597.] Several other parts, unnecessary or tautology, are not to be found in the said edition; which occasions the variation in this from the common books. POPE.

In the text the enlarged copy of 1599 is here followed. MALONE.

⁶ *Dead art thou! &c.*] From the defect of the metre it is probable that Shakspeare wrote—

Dead, dead, art thou, &c.

When the same word is repeated, the compositor often is guilty of omission. MALONE.

⁷ —*confusion's cure*—] Old Copies—*care*. Corrected by Mr. Theobald. These violent and confused exclamations, says the friar, will by no means alleviate that sorrow which at present overwhelms and disturbs your minds. So, in *The Rape of Lucrece*:

“Why, Collatine, is woe the cure of woe?” MALONE.

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;
 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 nature⁸ bids us all lament,
 Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

Cap. All things, that we ordained festival⁹,
 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:

⁸ *For though fond nature—*] This line is not in the first quarto. The quarto 1599, and the folio read,—though *some* nature. The editor of the second folio substituted *fond* for *some*. I do not believe this was the poet's word, though I have nothing better to propose. I have already shewn that all the alterations made by the editor of the second folio were capricious, and generally extremely injudicious.

In the preceding line the word *all* is drawn from the quarto, 1597, where we find—

In all her best and sumptuous ornaments, &c.

The quarto 1599, and folio, read:

And in her best array bear her to church. MALONE.

⁹ *All things, that we ordained festival, &c.*] So, in the poem already quoted:

“Now is the parents' mirth quite changed into mone,
 “And now to sorrow is return'd the joy of every one;
 “And now the *wedding weeds* for *mourning weeds* they change,
 “And *Hymen* to a *dirge*:—alas! it seemeth strange.
 “Instead of marriage gloves now funeral gowns they have,
 “And, whom they should see married, they follow to the grave;
 “The *feast* that should have been of pleasure and of joy,
 “Hath every dish and cup fill'd full of sorrow and annoy.”

MALONE.

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

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.

1. *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.*
1. *Mus.* Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

Enter PETER¹.

Pet. Musicians, O, musicians, *Hearts ease, heart's ease*;
O, an you will have me live, play—*heart's ease*.

1. *Mus.* Why *heart's ease*?

Pet. O, musicians, because my heart itself plays—*My heart is full of woe*²: O, play me some merry dump, to comfort me.

2. *Mus.* Not a dump we³; 'tis no time to play now.

Pet. You will not then?

Mus. No.

Pet. I will then give it you soundly.

1. *Mus.* What will you give us?

Pet. No money, on my faith; but the gleek⁴: I will give you the minstrel⁵.

1. *Mus.*

¹ *Enter Peter.*] From the quarto of 1599, it appears, that the part of *Peter* was originally performed by *William Kempe*. MALONE.

² *My heart is full of woe:*] This is the burthen of the first stanza of *A pleasant new ballad of Two Lovers*:

“Hey hoe! my heart is full of woe.” STEEVENS.

³ *Not a dump we;*] 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 *Arraignement of Paris*, 1584, after the shepherds have sung an elegiac hymn over the hearse of *Colin*, *Venus* says 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.

⁴ —*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.

1. *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?

1. *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 grief the heart doth wound⁶,

And doleful dumps the mind oppress⁷,

Then musick, with her silver sound;

Why *silver sound*? why, *musick with her silver sound*?

What

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.

⁵ —*the minstrel.*] From the following entry on the books of the Stationers' Company, in the year 1560, it appears that the hire of a *parson* was cheaper than that of a *minstrel* or a *cook*:

“ Item payd to the preacher vis. iijd.

“ Item payd to the minstrell xii s.

“ Item payd to the coke xv s.” STEEVENS.

⁶ *When griping grief, &c.*] The epithet *griping* was by no means likely to excite laughter at the time it was written. Lord Surrey, in his translation of the second book of Virgil's *Æneid*, makes the hero say:

“ New *gripes* of dred then pearse our trembling bréstes.”

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 ye hart would wouð, and dolful domps ye mind oppresse,

There musick with her silver sound, is wont with spede to geue redresse;

Of troubled minds for every sore, swete musick hath a salve in store:
In joy it maks our mirth abound, in grief it chers our heauy sprights,
The carefull head releef hath found, by musicks pleasant swete delights:

Our senses, what should I saie more, are subject unto musicks lore.

What say you, Simon Catling⁸?

1. *Mus.* Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

Pet. Pretty! What say you, Hugh Rebeck⁹?

2. *Mus.* I say—*silver sound*, because musicians sound for silver.

Pet. Pretty too!—What say you, James Sound-post?

3. *Mus.* 'Faith, I know not what to say.

Pet. O, I cry you mercy! you are the singer: I will say for you. It is—*musick with her silver sound*¹, because

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 playng on his harp.
Oh heauenly gift that turnes the minde, (like as the sterne doth rule
the ship)

Of musick, whom y^e Gods assignde, to comfort man, whom cares
would nip,

Sith thou both man, and beast doest moue, what wisemā thē will thee
reprove? *Richard Edwards.*

From *The Paradise of Daintie Devises*, Fol. 31. b.

Of Richard Edwards and William Hunnis, the authors of sundry poems in this collection, see an account in Wood's *Atbenæ 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.

⁷ *And doleful dumps the mind opprest,*] This line I have recovered from the old copy. [1597.] It was wanting to complete the stanza as it is afterwards repeated. STEEVENS.

⁸ *Simon Catling*?] A *catling* was a small lutestring made of *catgut*. STEEVENS.

In *An historical account of taxes under all denominations in the time of William and Mary*, p. 336, is the following article: "For every gross of *catlings* and lutestring," &c. A. C.

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*. In *England's Helicon*, 1614, is *The Shepberd Arfilius bis seng to bis REBECK*, by Bar. Yong. STEEV.

It is mentioned by Milton, as an instrument of mirth:

"When the merry bells ring round.

"And the jocund *rebecks* sound,—". MALONE.

¹ —*silver sound*,] So, in *The Return from Parnassus*, 1606:

"'Faith, fellow fiders, here's no *silver sound* in this place."

Again, in *Wily Beguiled*, 1606:

"—what harmony is this,

"With *silver sound* that glutteth Sophos' ears?"

cause such fellows as you² have feldom gold for founding:—

Then musick with her silver sound,

With speedy help doth lend redrefs. [Exit, singing.

1. *Mus.* What a pestilent knave is this fame?

2. *Mus.* Hang him, Jack! Come, we'll in here; tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner. [Exeunt.

ACT V³. SCENE I.

Mantua. *A Street.*

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. If I may trust the flattering eye of sleep⁴,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:

My

Spenser perhaps is the first who used this phrase:

“A silver sound that heavenly music seem'd to make.” STEEV.

Edwards's Song preceded Spenser's poem. MALONE.

² —because such fellows as you—] Thus the quarto 1597. The others read—because *musicians*. I should suspect that a fidler made the alteration. STEEVENS.

³ 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 proper intervals. JOHNSON.

⁴ *If I may trust the flattering eye of sleep,*] i. e. If I may confide in those delightful *visions* which I have *seen* while asleep. The precise meaning of the word *flattering* here, is ascertained by a former passage in Act II.

“—all this is but a *dream*,

“Too *flattering-sweet* to be substantial.”

By *the eye of sleep* Shakspeare, I think, rather meant the visual power, which a man asleep is enabled by the aid of imagination to exercise, than the eye of *the god of sleep*.

This is the reading of the original copy in 1597, which in my opinion is preferable in this and various other places, to the subsequent copies. That of 1599, and the folio, read:

If I may trust the flattering *truth* of sleep,

which by a very forced interpretation may mean, If I may confide in the pleasing visions of sleep, and, believe them to be true.—Dr. Johnson's

My bosom's lord^s fits lightly in his throne;
And, all this day, an unaccustom'd spirit

Lifts

son's interpretation is, "If I may trust the honesty of sleep, which I know however not to be so nice as not often to practice flattery."

Otway, to obtain a clearer sense than that furnished by the words which Dr. Johnson has thus interpreted, reads, less poetically than the original copy, which he had probably never seen, but with nearly the same meaning:

If I may trust the flattery of sleep,

My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:

and Mr. Pope has followed him. MALONE.

^s My bosom's lord—] So, in *K. Artbur*, a Poem, by R. Chester, 1601:

"That neither Uter nor his councill 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*. STEEVENS.

So also, in the preface to *Caliba Poetarum, or the Bumble-bee*, 1599:
"—whilst he [*Cupid*,] continues honoured in the world, we must once a yeare bring him upon the stage, either dancing, kissing, laughing, or angry, or dallying with his darlings, *seating himself in their breasts*," &c.

Thus too Shakspeare, in *Twelfth Night*:

It gives a very echo to the feat

Where love is thron'd.

Again, in *Otello*:

Yield up, O Love, thy crown and bearded throne.

Though the passage quoted above from *Otello* proves decisively that Shakspeare considered the *heart* as the *throne* of love, it has been maintained, since this note was written, strange as it may seem, that by *my bosom's lord*, we ought to understand, not the *god of love*, but the *heart*. The words—*love fits lightly on his throne*, says Mr. Mason, can only import "that Romeo loved less intensely than usual." Nothing less. Love, the lord of my bosom, (says the speaker,) who has been much disquieted by the unfortunate events that have happened since my marriage, is now, in consequence of my last night's dream, *gay and cheerful*. The reading of the original copy—*fits cheerful* in his throne, ascertains the authour's meaning beyond a doubt.

When the poet described the god of love as sitting lightly on the heart, he was thinking, without doubt, of the common phrase, a *light heart*, which signified in his time, as it does at present, a heart undisturbed by care.

Whenever Shakspeare wishes to represent a being that he has personified, eminently happy, he almost always *crowns* him, or places him on a *throne*. So in *K. Henry IV.* P. I.

"And on your eyelids *crown* the god of sleep."

Again, in the play before us:

"Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit:

"For 'tis a *throne* where honour may be *crown'd*,

"Sole monarch of the universal earth."

"Again,

Lifts me above the ground with cheerful 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'd⁶, 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.

Bal. Then she is well, and nothing can be ill ;
 Her body sleeps in Capels' monument⁷,

And

Again, more appositely, in *K. Henry V.*

“ As if allegiance in their bosoms sat,

“ Crowned with faith and constant loyalty.” MALONE.

My bosom's lord—] These three lines are very gay and pleasing. But why does Shakspeare give Romeo this involuntary 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.” STEEV.

⁶ *I dreamt, my lady came and found me dead ;—*

And breath'd such life with kisses in my lips,

That I reviv'd,—] Shakspeare seems here to have remember'd Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, a poem which he has quoted in *As you Like it* :

“ By this sad Hero—

“ Viewing Leander's face, fell down and fainted ;

“ *He kiss'd her, and breath'd life into her lips,*” &c. MALONE.

* *How fares my Juliet ?*] So the first quarto. That of 1599, and the folio, read :

How doth my lady Juliet ? MALONE.

⁷ —in *Capels' monument*,] Shakspeare found *Capel* and *Capulet* used indiscriminately in the poem which was the ground work of this tragedy. For *Capels'* monument the modern editors have substituted—*Capulet's* monument. MALONE.

The old copies read in *Capels'* monument ; and thus Gascoigne in his *Flowers*, p. 51 :

“ Thys

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.

Rom. Is it even so? then I defy my stars⁸!—
Thou know'st my lodging: get me ink and paper,
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.

Bal. Pardon me, sir, I will not leave you thus⁹:
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?

Bal. 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 apothecary¹,—

And

“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 'twenee these two houses
was.” STEEVENS.

⁸ *I defy my stars!*] Thus the original copy in 1597. The quarto of 1609, and the folio, read—*I deny you, stars.* MALONE.

⁹ *Pardon me, sir, I will 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.

So also the quarto, 1599. MALONE.

¹ *I do remember an apothecary, &c.*] It is clear, I think, that Shakspeare had here the poem of *Romeus and Juliet* before him; for he has borrowed more than one expression from thence:

“And seeking long, alas, too soon! the thing he sought, he found.

“An apothecary sat unbusied at his door,

“Whom by his *beauty countenance* he guessed to be poor;

“And in his shop he saw his *boxes* were but few,

“And in his window of his wares there was so small a *shew* :

“Wherefore our *Romeus* assuredly hath thought,

“What by no friendship could be got, with money should be bought;

“For needy lack is like the poor man to compel

“To sell that which the city's law forbiddeth him to sell.—

“Take

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'd², and other skins
 Of ill-shap'd fishes; and about his shelves
 A beggarly account of empty boxes³,
 Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,
 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 geer
 As will disperse itself through all the veins,
 That the life-weary taker may fall dead;

“Take fifty crowns of gold, (quoth he)—

“Fair sir, (quoth he) be sure this is the *speeding geer*,

“And more there is than you shall need; for half of that is there

“Will serve, I undertake, in less than half an hour

“To kill the strongest man alive, such is the poison's power.”

MALONE.

² *An alligator stuff'd*—] It appears from Nashe's *Have with you to Saffron Walden*, 1596, that a stuff'd alligator, in Shakspeare's time, made part of the furniture of an apothecary's shop. “He made (says Nashe,) an anatomie of a rat, and after hanged her over his head, instead of an *apothecary's* crocodile, or *dried alligator*.” MALONE.

³ *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 pompous.

JOHNSON.

And

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 thy eyes ⁴,
Upon thy back hangs ragged misery ⁵,
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.

⁴ *Need and oppression starveth in thy eyes,*] The first quarto reads :
" And starved famine dwelleth in thy cheeks."

The quartos, 1599, 1609, and the folio:

" Need and oppression *starveth* in thy eyes."

Our modern editors, without authority,

" Need and oppression *stare* within thy eyes." STEEVENS.

This modern reading was introduced by Mr. Pope, and was founded
on that of Otway, in whose *Caius Marius* the line is thus exhibited :

" Need and oppression *stareth* in thy eyes."

The word *starved* in the first copy shews that *starveth* in the text is
right. In the quarto of 1597, this speech stands thus :

And dost thou fear to violate the law ?

The law is not thy friend, nor the lawes friend,

And therefore make no conscience of the law.

Upon thy back hangs ragged miserie,

And starved famine dwelleth in thy cheeks.

The last line is in my opinion preferable to that which has been sub-
stituted in its place, but it could not be admitted into the text without
omitting the words—*famine is in thy cheeks*, and leaving an hemistick.

MALONE.

⁵ *Upon thy back hangs ragged misery,*] So, in Kyd's *Cornelia*, a
tragedy, 1594 :

" Upon thy *back* where *miserie* doth sit,

" O Rome, &c. MALONE.

This is the reading of 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 Shakspeare :

" Whose famish'd jaws look like the chaps of death,

" Upon whose eye-brows hang damnation." STEEVENS.

Jeronimo was performed before 1590. MALONE.

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 souls,
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 II.

Friar Lawrence's Cell.

Enter Friar JOHN.

John. Holy Franciscan friar! brother, ho!

Enter Friar LAWRENCE.

Law. 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,
One of our order, to associate me^o,

Here

^o *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 Baretti, they are a check upon each other. STEEV.

Going to find a bare-foot brother out,

One of our order, to associate me,

Here in this city visiting the sick,

And finding him, the searchers of the town

Suspecting, &c.] So, in The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet, 1562:

“Apace our friar John to Mantua him hies;

“And, for because in Italy it is a wonted guise

“That friars in the town should seldom walk alone,

“But of their convent aye should be accompanied with one

“Of his profession, straight a house he findeth out,

“In mind to take some friar with him, to walk the town about.”

Our authour having occasion for friar John, has here departed from the poem, and supposed the pestilence to rage at Verona, instead of Mantua.

Friar John fought for a brother merely for the sake of form, to accompany him in his walk, and had no intention of visiting the sick; the

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.

Law. 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.

Law. Unhappy fortune! by my brotherhood,
 The letter was not nice⁷, 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.]

Law. Now must I to the monument alone;
 Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake⁸;
 She will beshrew me much, that Romeo
 Hath had no notice of these accidents:
 But I will write again to Mantua,

the words therefore, *to associate me*, must be considered as parenthetical, and *Here in this city, &c.* must refer to the bare-foot brother.

I formerly conjectured that the passage ought to be regulated thus:

Going to find a bare-foot brother out,
 One of our order, to associate me,
 And finding him, the searchers of the town
 Here in this city visiting the sick, &c.

But the text is certainly right. The searchers would have had no ground of suspicion, if neither of the friars had been in an infected house. MALONE.

⁷ —*was not nice*,—] i. e. was not written on a trivial or idle subject.

Nice signifies *foolish* in many parts of Gower, and Chaucer. 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 synonymes of *fool*. Apol. Herod l. i. c. 4. STEEVENS.

See Vol. VI. p. 552, n. 9, and Vol. VII. p. 386, n. 9. MALONE.

⁸ *Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake;*] Instead of this line, and the concluding part of the speech, the quarto, 1597, reads only:

“Left that the lady should before I come

“Be wak'd from sleep, I will hie

“To free her from that tombe of miserie.” STEEVENS.

And

And keep her at my cell till Romeo come ;
 Poor living corse, clos'd in a dead man' tomb ! [Exit.

S C E N E III.

A Church-yard; in it, a monument belonging to the Capulets.

Enter PARIS, and his Page, bearing flowers and a torch.

Par. Give me thy torch, boy: Hence, and stand aloof;—

Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.
 Under yon yew-trees lay thee all along,
 Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground ;
 So shall no foot upon the church-yard tread,
 (Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves,)
 But thou shalt hear it: whistle then to me,
 As signal that thou hear'st something approach.
 Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

Page. I am almost afraid to stand alone
 Here in the church-yard; yet I will adventure. [*retires.*

Par. Sweet flower, with flowers I strew thy bridal bed:

Sweet tomb, that in thy circuit dost contain
 The perfect model of eternity ;

Fair Juliet, that with angels dost remain⁹,
 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.*

⁹ *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 dust and stones,
- “ Which with sweet water nightly I will dew,
- “ Or, wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans.
- “ The obsequies that 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.

The folio follows the quarto of 1599. In the text the seven lines are printed as they appear in the quarto, 1597. MALONE.

The boy gives warning, something doth approach.
 What curst foot wanders this way to-night,
 To cross my obsequies, and true love's rites?
 What, with a torch!—muffle me, night, a while. [*retires.*]

Enter ROMEO, and BALTHASAR *with a torch, mattock,*
&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 dear employment¹: therefore hence, be gone:—
 But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry
 In 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-wild²;
 More fierce, and more inexorable far,
 Than empty tygers, or the roaring sea.

Bal. 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.

Bal. For all this fame, I'll hide me hereabout;
 His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt. [*retires.*]

Rom. Thou détestable³ maw, thou womb of death,
 Gorg'd

¹ —*dear employment*:] That is, *action of importance*. Gems were supposed to have great powers and virtues. JOHNSON.

See Vol. VIII. p. 130, n. 6. MALONE.

² —*savage-wild*;) Here the speech concludes in the old copy.

STEEVENS.

³ —*détestable*—] This word, which is now accented on the second syllable, was once accented on the first; therefore this line did not originally

Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,

[*breaking up the monument.*

And, in despite, 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.— [*advanc'g.*

Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague;
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,

Heap not another sin⁴ 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. I do defy thy conjurations⁵,

And

originally seem to be inharmonious. So, in the *Tragedie of Cræsus*,
1604:

“ Court with vain words and *détestable* lyes.”

Again, in Shakspeare's *K. John*, Act III. Sc. iii:

“ And I will kiss thy *détestable* bones.” STEEVENS.¹

Again, in Daniel's *Civil Warres*, 1595:

“ Such *détestable* vile impiety.” MALONE.

⁴ Heap *not another sin*—] Thus the quarto 1597. So, in the poem
of *Romeus and Juliet*:

“ With sighs and salted tears her shriving doth begin,

“ For she of *beaped* sorrows hath to speak, and not of *sin*.”

The quarto 1599 and folio have—*Put not.* MALONE.

⁵ *I do defy thy conjurations,*] So the quarto 1597. Instead of this,
in that of 1599, we find—*commiration*. In the next quarto of 1609
this was altered to *commiseration*, and the folio being probably printed
from thence, the same word is exhibited there. The obvious interpre-

And do attach thee as a felon here.

Rom. Wilt thou provoke me? then have at thee, boy.

Page. O lord! they fight: I will go call the watch. [*They fight.*

[*Exit Page.*

Par. O, I am slain! [*falls.*—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 lantern, slaughter'd youth,
For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
This vault a feasting presence⁶ full of light.

Death,

tation of these words, “*I refuse to doas thou conjurest me to do, i. e. to depart,*” is in my apprehension the true one. MALONE.

Paris conceived Romeo to have burst open the monument for no other purpose than to do *some villainous shame* 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.”

To *defy*, anciently meant to *refuse* or *deny*. So, in the *Death of Robert Earl of Huntingdon*, 1601:

“Or, as I said, for ever I *defy* your company.”

Again, in the *Miseries of Queen Margaret*, by Drayton:

“My liege, quoth he, all mercy now *defy*.”

Again, in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, b. ii. c. 8:

“Foole, (said the Pagan) I thy gift *defye*.”

Paris may, however, mean—I refuse to do as thou *conjurest* me to do, *i. e.* to depart. STEEVENS.

⁶ —*presence*—] A *presence* means a publick room, which is at times the *presence-chamber* of the sovereign. So, in the *Noble Gentleman*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, Jacques says, his master is a duke,

“His chamber hung with nobles, like a *presence*.” MASON.

Again,

Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd⁷.

[*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: O, how may I
Call this a lightning⁸?—O, my love! my wife!
Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty⁹:
'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 there¹.—

Tybalt,

Again, in *Westward for Smelts*, 1620: "—the king sent for the wounded man into the *presence*." MALONE.

This thought, extravagant as it is, is borrowed by Middleton in his comedy of *Blunt Master Constable*, 1602:

"The darkest dungeon which spite can devise
To throw this carcase in, her glorious eyes
Can make as lightfome as the fairest chamber
In Paris Louvre." STEEVENS.

⁷ —by a dead man interr'd.] Romeo being now determined to put an end to his life, considers himself as already dead. MALONE.

⁸ —O, how may I

Call this a lightning?—] I think we should read,

—O, now may I

Call this a lightning.— JOHNSON.

The reading of the text is that of the quarto, 1599. The first copy reads: *But how, &c.* which shews that Dr. Johnson's emendation cannot be right. MALONE.

This idea occurs frequently in the old dramatic pieces. So, in the second part of *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon*, 1601:

"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 Odyssy:

"—extend their cheer

To th' utmost lightning that still ushers death." STEEVENS.

⁹ Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,

Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:] So, in Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond*, 1594:

"Decayed roses of discolour'd cheeks

Do yet retain some notes of former grace,

And ugly death fits faire within her face." MALONE.

¹ —beauty's ensign yet

Is crimson in thy lips, and in thy cheeks;

Tybalt, ly'st thou there in thy bloody sheet²?
 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,
 Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe
 That unsubstantial death is amorous³;

And

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*, Shakspeare 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. STEEV.

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 spiegó su'l volto mio.

Rime lugubri, p. 149. ed. Venet. 1605. TYRWHITT.

² *Tybalt, ly'st thou there in thy bloody sheet? &c.*] So, in Painter's translation, tom. ii. p. 242: “—what greater or more cruel satisfaction canst thou desire to have, or henceforth hope for, than to see hym which murdered thee, to be empoysoned wyth hys owne handes, and buried by thy syde?” STEEVENS.

³ ——— *Ah, dear Juliet,*

Why art thou yet so fair? shall I believe

That unsubstantial death is amorous; &c.] So, in Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond*, 1594:

“Ah, now, methinks, I see *death dallying seeks*

“*To entertain it selfe in love's sweete place.*”

Instead of the very long notes which have been written on this controverted passage, I shall lay before the reader the lines as they are exhibited in the original quarto of 1597, and that of 1599, with which the folio corresponds.

In the quarto 1597, the passage appears thus:

————— Ah dear Juliet,

How well thy beauty doth become this grave!

O, I believe that unsubstantial death

Is amorous, and doth court my love.

Therefore will I, O here, Q ever here,

Set up my everlasting rest

With worms that are thy *chamber-maids*.

Come,

And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour?

For

Come, desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary barge:
Here's to my love.—O, true apothecary,
Thy drugs are swift: thus with a kiss I die.

[falls

In the quarto 1599, and the folio, (except that the folio has *arms* instead of *arm*,) the lines stand 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 abhorred monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour;
For fear of that I still will stay with thee,
And never from this palace [*palat 4^c*] of dim night
[Depart again. Come, lie thou in my arm:
Here's to thy health where e'er thou tumblest in.
O true apothecary!
Thy drugs are quick: thus with a kiss I die.]
Depart again; here, here, will I remain
With worms that are thy chamber-maids: O, here
Will I set up my everlasting rest,
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars, &c.
Come, bitter conduct, come, unfavoury guide!
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark!
Here's to my love. O, true apothecary,
Thy drugs are quick: thus with a kiss I die.

There cannot, I think, be the smallest doubt that the words included within crotchets, which are not found in the undated quarto, were repeated by the carelessness or ignorance of the transcriber or compositor. In like manner, in a former scene we have two lines evidently of the same import, one of which only the poet could have intended to retain. See p. 135, n. 6.

In a preceding part of this passage Shakspeare was probably in doubt whether he should write:—

—*I will believe*
That unsubstantial death is amorous;

Or,

—*Shall I believe*
That unsubstantial death is amorous;

and having probably erased the words *I will believe* imperfectly, the wise compositor printed the rejected words as well as those intended to be retained.

With respect to the line,

Here's to thy health, where'er thou tumblest in,

it is unnecessary to inquire what was intended by it, the passage in which

For fear of that, I will still stay with thee;
 And never from this palace of dim night
 Depart again; here, here will I remain
 With worms that are thy chamber-maids; O, here
 Will I set up my everlasting rest;⁴
 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 death⁵!—
 Come, bitter conduct⁶, come, unfavoury guide!

Thou

this line is found, being afterwards exhibited in another form; and being much more accurately expressed in its second than its first exhibition, we have a right to presume that the poet intended it to appear in its second form, that is, as it now appears in the text. MALONE.

⁴ —*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,

⁵ ————— *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!] So, in *Daniel's Complaint of Rosamond*, 1594:

“ Piteful mouth, said he, that living gavest

“ The sweetest comfort that my soul could wish,

“ O be it lawful now, that dead, thou havest

“ The sorrowing farewell of a dying kiss!

“ And you, fair eyes, containers of my bliss,

“ Motives of love, born to be matched never,

“ Entomb'd in your sweet circles, sleep for ever!”

I think there can be little doubt, from the foregoing lines and the other passages already quoted from this poem, that our authour had read it recently before he wrote the last act of the present tragedy. MALONE.

—*to engrossing death!*] *Engrossing* seems to be here used in its clerical sense. MALONE.

⁶ *Come, bitter conduct*,] Marston also in his satires, 1599, uses *conduct* for *conductor*:

“ Be thou my *conduct* and my genius.”

So,

Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark!
Here's to my love!—*[drinks.]* O, true apothecary!
Thy drugs are quick.—Thus with a kiss I die. *[dies.]*

Enter, at the other end of the church-yard, Friar LAWRENCE, with a lantern, crow, and spade.

Fri. Saint Francis be my speed! how oft to-night
Have my old feet stumbled at graves?⁷—Who's there?

Bal. Here's one, a friend, and one that knows you
well.

Fri. Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,
What torch is yond', that vainly lends his light
To grubs and eyeless skulls? as I discern,
It burneth in the Capels' monument.

Bal. It doth so, holy fir; and there's my master,
One that you love.

Fri. Who is it?

Bal. Romeo.

Fri. How long hath he been there?

Bal. Full half an hour

Fri. Go with me to the vault.

Bal. I dare not, fir:

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.

Fri. Stay then, I'll go alone:—Fear comes upon me;
O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.

Bal. As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,

So, in a former scene in this play:

“And fire-ey'd fury be my *conduct* now.”

See also Vol. I. p. 98, n. 7. MALONE.

⁷ —*how oft to-night*

Have my old feet stumbled at graves?] This accident was reckoned
ominous. So, in *K. Henry VI.*

“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.

I dream:

I dreamt my master and another fought ⁸,
And that my master slew him.

Fri. Romeo?—

[*advances.*

Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulcher?—
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?

[*enters the monument.*

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 ⁹.

[*Juliet wakes, and stirs.*

Jul. 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.*

Fri. I hear some noise.— Lady, come from that nest
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep¹;
A greater Power than we can contradict

⁸ *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 Shakspeare. 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.

⁹ *The lady stirs.*] In the alteration of this play now exhibited on the stage, Mr. Garrick appears to have been indebted to Otway, who, perhaps without any knowledge of the story as told by Da Porto and Bandello, does not permit his hero to die before his wife awakes:

Mar. Jun. She breathes, and stirs.

Law. [*in the tomb.*] Where am I? blest me! Heaven!

'Tis very cold, and yet here's something warm.

Mar. Jun. She lives, and we shall both be made immortal.

Speak, my Lavinia, speak some heavenly news,
And tell me how the gods design to treat us.

Law. O, I have slept a long ten thousand years.—

What have they done with me? I'll not be us'd thus:

I'll not wed Sylla; Marius is my husband." MALONE.

¹ —and unnatural sleep;] Shakspeare alludes to the sleep of Juliet, which was unnatural, being brought on by drugs. STEEVENS.

Hath

Hath thwarted our intents ; come, come away :
 Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead ² ;
 And Paris too ; come, I'll dispose of thee
 Among a sisterhood of holy nuns :
 Stay not to question, for the watch is coming ³ ;
 Come, go, good Juliet,—[*Noise again,*] I dare no longer
 stay. [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 ⁴,
 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 !

1. *Watch.* [*within.*] Lead, boy :—Which way ?

² *Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead ;*] Shakspeare has been arraigned for departing from the Italian novel, in making Romeo die before Juliet awakes from her trance ; and thus losing a happy opportunity of introducing an affecting scene between these unfortunate lovers. But he undoubtedly had never read the Italian novel, or any literal translation of it, and was misled by the poem of *Romeus and Juliet*, the authour of which departed from the Italian story, making the poison take effect on Romeo before Juliet awakes. See a translation of the original pathetick narrative in Vol. X. in a note on the poem near the end. MALONE.

³ *Stay not to question, for the watch is coming ;*] It has been objected that there is no such establishment in any of the cities of Italy. Shakspeare seldom scrupled to give the manners and usages of his own country to others. In this particular instance the old poem was his guide :

“ The weary *watch* discharg'd did hie them home to sleep.”

Again :

“ The *watchmen* of the town the whilst are pass'd by,

“ And through the gates the candlelight within the tomb they
 spy.” MALONE.

⁴ *O churl ! drink all ; and leave no friendly drop,*] The text is here made out from the quarto of 1597 and that of 1599. The first has—
Ab churl ! drink all, and leave no drop for me !

The other :

*O churl ! drunk all, and left no friendly drop,
 To help me after ?* MALONE.

Jul.

Jul. Yea, noise?—then I'll be brief.—O happy dagger!

[*snatching Romeo's dagger*⁵.
This is thy sheath; [*stabs herself.*] there rust, and let me die⁶. [*falls on Romeo's body, and dies.*

Enter Watch, with the Page of Paris.

Page. This is the place; there, where the torch doth burn.

1. *Watch.* The ground is bloody; Search about the church-yard;

Go, some of you, who e'er you find, attach. [*Exeunt some.*
Pitiful fight! 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,—

Raise up the Montagues,—some others search⁷;—

[*Exeunt other watchmen.*

⁵ *Snatching Romeo's dagger.*] So, in Painter's translation of *Pierre Boifseau*, tom. ii. p. 244.—Drawing out the dagger which Romeo wore by his side, she pricked herself with many blows against the heart." STEEVENS.

It is clear that in this and most other places Shakspeare followed the poem, and not Painter, for Painter describes Romeo's dagger as hanging at *his side*; whereas the poem is silent as to the place where it hung, and our authour, governed by the fashion of his own time, supposes it to have hung at Romeo's *back*:

"And then past deadly fear, (for life he had the care,)

"With hasty hand she did draw out the dagger that he wore."

MALONE.

⁶ —*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.

⁷ *Raise up the Montagues,—some others search;—*] Here seems to be a rhyme intended, which may be easily restored;

"Raise 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 Shakspeare, for the second and fourth lines in a stanza, to rhyme with each other. STEEV.

We

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 Lawrence.

3. *Watch.* Here is a friar, that trembles, fighs, 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 ?

Enter CAPULET, Lady CAPULET, and Others.

Cap. What should it be, that they so shriek abroad⁸ ?

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 ears⁹ ?

1. *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.

1. *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, heavens !—O, wife ! look how our daughter bleeds !

This dagger hath mista'en,—for, lo ! his house

⁸ —that they so shriek abroad ?] Thus the folio and the undated quarto. The quarto of 1599 has—that is so shriek abroad. MALONE.

⁹ What fear is this, which startles in our ears ?] The old copies read—in your ears. The emendation was made by Dr. Johnson.

Is empty on the back of Montague,—
And is mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom¹.

La. Cap. O me! this sight of death is as a bell,
That warns my old age to a sepulcher.

Enter MONTAGUE, and Others.

Prince. Come, Montague; for thou art early up²,
To see thy son and heir more early down.

Mon. Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night³;
Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath:
What further woe conspires against mine age?

Prince. Look, and thou shalt see.

Mon. O thou untaught! what manners is in this⁴,
To

¹ *This dagger hath mista'en, for lo! his house*

Is empty on the back of Montague,

And is mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom.] The words, "for, lo! his house is empty on the back of Montague," are to be considered as parenthetical. In p. 163, l. 7, we have a similar construction.

The reading of the text is that of the undated quarto, that of 1609, and the folio. The quarto of 1599 reads—And it mis-sheathed. In the original copy of 1597 the line stands thus:

—This dagger has mistook,

For lo! the backe is empty of yong Montague,

And it is sheathed in our daughter's breast. MALONE.

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 sword 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.

² —*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 Huntingdon*, 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.

³ *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.

⁴ *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 prepost'rous and o'er-thwart." STEEVENS.

Again,

To press before thy father to a grave?

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.

Fri. 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.

Fri^s. I will be brief, for my short date of breath
Is not so long as is a tedious tale⁶.

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.

Again, in our poet's *Rape of Lucrece*:

“If children pre-decease progenitors,

“We are their offspring, and they none of ours.” MALONE.

⁵ *Friar.*] 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.

Shakspeare was led into this uninteresting narrative by following too closely *The Tragicall History of Romeus and Juliet*. MALONE.

⁶ —my short date of breath

Is not so long as is a tedious tale.] So, in the 91st Psalm:—“when thou art angry, all our days are gone; we bring our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told.” MALONE.

Then

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.
 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 awakening,) 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 in this ?

Bal. 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,

Anon, comes one with light to ope the tomb;
And, by and by, my matter 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 kinsmen⁷:—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 peace⁸ this morning with it brings;
The sun, for sorrow, will not shew his head:

⁷ *Have lost a brace of kinsmen:*] Mercutio and Paris: Mercutio is expressly called the prince's kinsman in Act III. sc. iv. and that Paris also was the prince's kinsman, may be inferred from the following passages. Capulet, speaking of the count in the fourth act, describes him as "a gentleman of princely parentage," and, after he is killed, Romeo says,

"—Let me peruse this face;

"*Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris.*" MALONE.

⁸ *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; I meet with it likewise in the play of *Tom Tyler and his wife*, 1661:

"If either he gaspeth or gloometb." STEEVENS.

Gloomy is the reading of the old copy in 1597; for which *glooming* was substituted in that of 1599. MALONE.

Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things ;
 Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished⁹ :
 For never was a story of more woe,
 Than this of Juliet and her Romeo¹.

[*Exeunt.*

⁹ *Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished :*] This seems to be not a resolution in the *prince*, but a reflection on the various dispensations 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 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 Lawrence was permitted to retire to a hermitage in the neighbourhood of Verona, where he ended his life in penitence and peace. STEEVENS.

¹ — [*Juliet and her Romeo.*] Shakspeare 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:

“ Lufcus, what's play'd to-day?—faith, now I know

“ I set thy lips abroach, from whence doth flow

“ Nought but pure Juliet and Romeo.” STEEVENS.

For never was a story of more woe,

Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.] These lines seem to have been formed on the concluding couplet of the poem of *Romeus and Juliet*:

“ —among the monuments that in Verona been,

“ There is no monument more worthy of the fight,

“ Than is the tomb of Juliet, and Romeus her knight.”

MALONE.

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 Shakspeare 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 Shakspeare, 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

cutio'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 Shakspeare to have continued his existence, though some of his fallies 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 comick scenes are happily wrought, but his pathetick 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 Represented.

Claudius, *King of Denmark.*

Hamlet, *son to the former, and nephew to the present, king.*

Polonius, *Lord Chamberlain.*

Horatio, *friend to Hamlet.*

Laertes, *son to Polonius.*

Voltimand,
Cornelius,
Rosencrantz,
Guildenstern, } *Courtiers.*

Ofrick, *a courtier.*

Another courtier.

A Priest.

Marcellus, } *Officers.*
Bernardo, }

Francisco, *a soldier.*

Reynaldo, *servant to Polonius.*

A Captain. An Ambassador.

Ghost of Hamlet's father.

Fortinbras, *Prince of Norway.*

Gertrude, *Queen of Denmark, and mother of Hamlet.*

Ophelia, *daughter of Polonius.*

*Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Grave-diggers,
Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants.*

S C E N E, Elfinore.

H A M L E T.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Elfinore. *A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO *on his post.* Enter to him BERNARDO.

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me²: stand, and unfold yourself.

¹ 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. 1. 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 Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke*, as it was lately acted by the Lord Chamberlain his servantes."

In *Eastward Hoe* by G. Chapman, B. Jonson, and J. 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?" STEEVENS.

Surely no satire was here intended. *Eastward Hoe* was acted at Shakspeare's own playhouse, (Blackfriars,) by the children of the revels, in 1605.

A play on the subject of *Hamlet* had been exhibited on the stage before the year 1589, of which Thomas Kyd was, I believe, the authour. On that play, and on the bl. letter *Historie of Hamblett*, our poet, I conjecture, constructed the tragedy before us. The earliest edition of the prose-narrative which I have seen, was printed in 1608, but it undoubtedly was a republication.

Shakspeare's *Hamlet* was written, if my conjecture be well founded, in 1596. See *An Attempt to ascertain the order of his plays*, Vol. I.

MALONE.

² —me:] i. e. me, who am already on the watch, and have a right to demand the watch-word. STEEVENS.

Ber. Long live the king³!

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,
The rivals of my watch⁴, bid them make haste.

³ *Long live the king!*] This sentence appears to have been the watch-word. MALONE.

⁴ *The rivals of my watch,*] *Rivals*, for partners. WARBURTON. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra* (the quotation is Mr. Steevens's): "Cæsar having made use of him in the wars against Pompey, presently denied him *rivality*."

Rival is constantly used by Shakspeare for a partner or associate. In Bullokar's *English Expositor*, 8vo. 1616, it is defined, "*One that sueth for the same thing with another*;" and hence Shakspeare, with his usual licence, always uses it in the sense of *one engaged in the same employment or office with another*. *Competitor*, which is explained by Bullokar by the very same words which he has employed in the definition of *rival*, is in like manner (as Mr. Mason has observed,) always used by Shakspeare for *associate*. See Vol. I. p. 140, n. 7. Vol. II. p. 330, n. 7, Vol. IV. p. 90, n. 3, Vol. VI. p. 589, n. *, and Vol. VII. p. 455, n. 7.

Mr. Warner would read and point thus:

If you do meet Horatio, and Marcellus

The *rival* of my watch,—

because Horatio is a gentleman of no profession, and because, as he conceived, there was but one person on each watch. But there is no need of change. Horatio is certainly not an officer, but Hamlet's fellow-student at Wittenberg: but as he accompanied Marcellus and Bernardo on the watch from a motive of curiosity, our poet considers him very properly as an *associate* with them. Horatio himself says to Hamlet in a subsequent scene,

" — This to me

" In dreadful secrecy impart they did,

" And I with them the third night kept the watch." MALONE.

Enter

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?

Hor. A piece of him⁵.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus.

Hor. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night⁶?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy;

And will not let belief take hold of him,

Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:

Therefore I have entreated him along,

With us to watch the minutes of this night⁷;

That, if again this apparition come,

He may approve our eyes⁸, and speak to it.

Hor.

⁵ A piece of him.] But why a piece? He says this as he gives his hand. Which direction should be marked. WARBURTON.

A piece of him, is, I believe, no more than a cant expression,

STEEVENS.

⁶ *Hor. What, &c.*] Thus the quarto, 1604. These words in the folio are given to Marcellus. MALONE.

⁷ —the minutes of this night;] This seems to have been an expression common in Shakspeare's time. I find it in one of Ford's plays, *The Fancies*, Act V.

“ I promise ere the minutes of the night,—.” STEEVENS.

⁸ He may approve our eyes,—] He may make good the testimony of our eyes; be assured by his own experience of the truth of that which we have related, in consequence of having been eye-witnesses to it. To approve in Shakspeare's age signified to make good, or establish, and is so defined in Cawdrey's *Alphabetical Table of hard English words*, 8vo. 1604. So, in *King Lear*:

“ Good

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,
What we two nights have seen⁹.

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,—

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 harrows me¹ 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 sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak.

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay; speak; speak I charge thee, speak.

[*Exit Ghost.*]

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

“ Good king, that must *approve* the common saw!

“ Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st

“ To the warm sun.” MALONE.

⁹ *What we two nights have seen.*] This line is by Hanmer given to Marcellus, but without necessity. JOHNSON.

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 *barrowed* hell.” STEEVENS.

Ber.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble, and look pale;
Is not this something more than fantasy?
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,
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle²,
He smote the fledged Polacks on the ice³.
'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump at this dead hour⁴,

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 fledged Polacks on the ice.] *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 hap of kings.

“ This little stone a great king's heart doth hold,

“ That rul'd the fickle French and *Polacks* bold:

“ Whom, with a mighty warlike host attended,

“ With trait'rous knife a cowled monster ended.

“ So frail are even the highest earthly things!

“ Go, passenger, and wail the hap of kings.” JOHNSON.

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.” STEEVENS.

All the old copies have *Polax*.—Mr. Pope and the subsequent edi-
tors read—*Polack*; but the corrupted word shews, I think, that Shak-
speare wrote—*Polacks*. MALONE.

⁴ —jump at this dead hour—] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio,
where we sometimes find a familiar word substituted for one more an-
cient, reads—*just* at this dead hour. MALONE.

Jump and *just* were synonymous in the time of Shakspeare. So, in
Chapman's *May Day*, 1611:

“ Your appointment was *jump* at three, with me.”

Again, in *M. Kyffin's* translation of the *Andria* of Terence, 1588:

“ Comes he this day so *jump* in the very time of this mar-
riage?” STEEVENS.

With

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work⁵, I know not ;
But, in the gross and scope⁶ 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 cast⁷ of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war!
Why such impress of ship-wrights, whose fore 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; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratify'd by law, and heraldry⁸,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands,
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror:

⁵ *In what particular thought to work,*] i. e. What particular train of thinking to follow. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *gross and scope* —] General thoughts, and tendency at large.

JOHNSON.

⁷ — *daily cast* —] The quartos read *cost*. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *by law and heraldry,*] i. e. well ratified by the rules of law, and the forms prescribed *jure feicali*; such as proclamation, &c.

MALONE.

Mr. Upton says, that Shakspeare sometimes expresses one thing by two substantives, and that *law and heraldry* means, by the *berald law*. So *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act IV.

“Where rather I expect victorious life,

“Than death and honour,” i. e. honourable death. STEEV.

Puttenham, in his *Art of Poetrie*, speaks of the *Figure of Twinnes*, “*borjes and barbes*, for *barbed borjes*; *venim & dartes*, for *venimous dartes*,” &c. FARMER.

Against

Against the which, a moiety competent
 Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
 To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
 Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same co-mart⁹,
 And carriage of the article design'd¹,
 His fell to Hamlet: Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
 Of unimproved mettle² hot and full,
 Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
 Shark'd up a list of landless resolute³,
 For food and diet, to some enterprize
 That hath a stomach in't⁴: which is no other
 (As it doth well appear unto our state)
 But to recover of us, by strong hand,
 And terms compulsory⁵, 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 romage⁶ in the land.

Ber. I think⁷, it be no other, but even so:

Well

⁹ — as by the same co-mart,] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—as by the same covenant: for which the late editions have given us—as by that covenant.

Co-mart is, I suppose, a joint bargain, a word perhaps of our poet's coinage. A *mart* signifying a great fair or market, he would not have scrupled to have written *to mart*, in the sense of *to make a bargain*. In the preceding speech we find *mart* used for bargain or purchase. MALONE.

¹ And carriage of the article design'd,] Carriage, is import: design'd, is formed, drawn up between them. JOHNSON.

Cawdrey in his *Alphabetical Table*, 1604, defines the verb *design* thus. "To marke out or appoint for any purpose." See also Minshew's Dict. 1617. "To *design* or shew by a token." *Designed* is yet used in this sense in Scotland. The old copies have *desaigne*. The correction was made by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

² Of unimproved mettle—] Full of unimproved mettle, is full of spirit not regulated or guided by knowledge or experience. JOHNSON.

³ 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 *lawlejs* instead of *landless*. STEEVENS.

⁴ That hath a stomach in't:—] *Stomach*, in the time of our author, was used for *constancy*, *resolution*. JOHNSON.

⁵ —compulsatory,] So the quarto. Folio—*compulsative*. MALONE.

⁶ —romage—] Tumultuous hurry. JOHNSON.

⁷ 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

Well may it fort⁸, that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
That was, and is, the question of these wars⁹.

Hor. A mote it is¹, to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome²,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets;

* * * * *

As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood;
Disasters dimm'd the sun³; and the moist star⁴,

Upon

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.* STEEV.

This and the following seventeen lines are omitted in the folio. As I shall throughout this play always mention what lines are omitted in that copy, I have not thought it necessary to follow Dr. Johnson in distinguishing the omitted lines by inclosing them within crotchets.

MALONE.

⁸ *Well may it fort,* —] The cause and the effect are proportionate and suitable. JOHNSON.

⁹ — *the question of these wars.*] The theme or subject. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

“ — You were the word of war.” MALONE.

¹ *A mote it is,* —] The first quarto reads, a *moth*. STEEVENS.

A *moth* was only the old spelling of *mote*, as I suspected in revising a passage in *K. John*, Vol. IV. p. 526, where we certainly should read *mote*. See a note on the passage referred to, in the *Appendix*, Vol. X.

MALONE.

² — *palmy state of Rome,*] *Palmy*, for *victorious*. POPE.

³ *As stars with trains of fire, and dews of blood; —*
Disasters dimm'd the sun;] The quarto, 1604, reads
Disasters in the sun.

For the emendation I am responsible. It is strongly supported not only by Plutarch's account in the life of Cæsar, [“ also the brightness of the sunne was darkened, the which, all that yeare through, rose very pale, and shined not out,”] but by various passages in our authour's works. So, in the *Tempest*:

“ — I have be-dimm'd

“ The noon-tide sun.”

Again, in *King Richard III*:

“ As doth the blushing discontented sun,—

“ When he perceives the envious clouds are bent

“ To dim his glory.”

Again,

Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to dooms-day with eclipse.

And

Again, in our authour's 18th Sonnet :

“ Sometimes too hot *the eye of beaven shines,*

“ And often is his gold complexion *dim'm'd.*”

I suspect that the words *As stars* are a corruption, and have no doubt that either a line preceding or following the first of those quoted at the head of this note, has been lost; or that the beginning of one line has been joined to the end of another, the intervening words being omitted. That such conjectures are not merely chimerical, I have already proved. See Vol. V. p. 228, n. 8. and Vol. VI. p. 507, n. 3.

The following lines in *Julius Cæsar*, in which the prodigies that are said to have preceded his death, are recounted, may throw some light on the passage before us :

“ — There is one within,

“ Besides the things that we have heard and seen,

“ Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.

“ A lioness hath whelped in the streets ;

“ And graves have yawn'd and yielded up their dead :

“ Fierce fiery warriors fight upon the clouds,

“ In ranks, and squadrons, and right form of war,

“ Which drizzel'd blood upon the capitol :

“ The noise of battle hurtled in the air,

“ Horses do neigh, and dying men did groan ;

“ And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.”

The lost words perhaps contained a description of *fiery warriors fighting on the clouds*, or of *brands burning bright beneath the stars*.

The 15th book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, translated by Golding, in which an account is given of the prodigies that preceded Cæsar's death, furnished Shakspeare with some of the images in both these passages :

“ — battels fighting in the clouds with crashing armour flew,

“ And dreadful trumpets founded in the ayre, and hornes eke blew,

“ As warning men beforehand of the mischief that did brew ;

“ And Phæbus also looking *dim* did cast a drowsie light,

“ Upon the earth, which seemde likewise to be in fery plighte :

“ From underneath beneath the starres brandes oft seemde burning bright,

“ It often rain'd drops of blood. The morning star look'd blew,

“ And was befotted here and there with specks of rustie hew.

“ The moone had also spots of blood.—

“ Salt teares from ivorie—images in fundry places fell ;—

“ The dogges did howle, and every where appeared ghastly sprights,

“ And with an earthquake shaken was the towne.”—

Plutarch only says, that “ the sunne was darkened,” that “ diverse men were seen going up and down in fire” ; there were “ fires in the element ; spirites were seene running up and downe in the night, and olitarie birds sitting in the great market-place.”

The

And even⁵ the like precurse of fierce events⁶,—
 As harbingers preceding still the fates,
 And prologue to the omen coming on⁷,—
 Have heaven and earth together démonstrated
 Unto our climatures and countrymen.—

The disagreeable recurrence of the word *stars* in the second line induces me to believe that *As stars* in that which precedes, is a corruption. Perhaps Shakspeare wrote :

Astres with trains of fire,——
 _____ and dews of blood

Disastrous dimm'd the sun.

The word *astre* is used in an old collection of poems entitled *Diana*, addressed to the Earl of Oxenforde, a book of which I know not the date, but believe it was printed about 1580. In *Otbello* we have *antres*, a word exactly of a similar formation. MALONE.

4 *And the moist star, &c.*] i. e. the moon, So in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, 1598:

“Not that night-wand’ring, pale, and watry star,” &c. MALONE.

5 *And even, &c.*] 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 —*precurse 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 even the like precurse of fierce events,*

As harbingers preceding still the fates

And prologue to the omen coming on,] So, in one of our author's poems, Vol. X. p. 341:

“But thou shrieking *barbinger*,

“Foul *precurser* of the fiend,

“*Augur* of the fever's end,” &c.

The *omen coming on* is, the approaching dreadful and portentous event. So in *K. Richard III.*

“Thy name is *ominous* to children.”

i. e. (not boding ill fortune, but) *destructive* to children.

Again, *ibidem*:

“O Pomfret, Pomfret, O, thou bloody prison,

“Fatal and *ominous* to noble peers.”

Theobald reads—the *omen'd* coming-on. MALONE.

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 GHOST.

But, soft; behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound⁸, 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 majestic,
To offer it the shew of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable⁹,
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 morn¹,

Doth

⁸ *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 *—it is, as the air, invulnerable,]* So in *Macbeth*:

“As easy may'st thou the intrenchant air,

“With thy keen blade impress.”

Again, in *King John*:

“Against the invulnerable clouds of heaven.” MALONE.

¹ *The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,]* So the quarto, 1604, Folio:—to the day.

In *England's Parnassus*, 8vo, 1600, I find the two following lines ascribed to Drayton, but know not in which of his poems they are found.

Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
 Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,
 Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air²,
 The extravagant³ 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 cock⁴.

Some

“ And now *the cocke, the morning's trumpeter,*
 “ Play'd huntsup for the day-star to appear.”

Mr. Gray has imitated our poet:

“ The *cock's shrill clarion*, or the echoing horn,

“ No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.” MALONE.

² *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 Shakspeare mentions presently, were usually copied from the elder Christian poets. FARMER.

³ *The extravagant*—] i. e. got out of its bounds. WARBURTON.

So, in *Nobody and Somebody*, 1598: “—they took me up for a *stravagant*,” STEEVENS.

⁴ *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.

Faded

Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long :
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad ⁵ ;
The nights are wholesome ; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes ⁶, 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 russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill ⁷ :
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.]

SCENE II.

The same. A Room of state in the same.

*Enter the King, Queen, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES,
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death

Faded has here its original sense ; it *vanish'd*. *Vado*, Lat. So, in
Spenser's *Faery Queen*, B. I. C. V. St. 15 :

“ He stands amazed how he thence should *fade*.”

That our authour uses the word in this sense, appears from some
subsequent lines :

“ ——— The morning *cock crew* loud ;

“ And at the found it shrunk in haste away,

“ And *vanish'd* from our sight.” MALONE.

5—dares stir abroad ;] Quarto. The folio reads—*can walk*—. STEEV.
Spirit was formerly used as a monosyllable : *sprite*. The quarto,
1604, has—*dare* stir abroad. Perhaps Shakspeare wrote—*no spirits dare*
stir abroad. The necessary correction was made in a late quarto of no
authority, printed in 1637. MALONE.

⁶ *No fairy takes,*] *No fairy strikes* with lameness or diseases. This
sense of *take* is frequent in this authour. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *high eastern hill* :] The old quarto has it better *eastward*. WARE.
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.

The memory be green; and that it us befitted
 To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
 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 eye⁸;
 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,—
 Colleagu'd with this dream of his advantage⁹,
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,

Importing

⁸ *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.

Dropping in this line probably means *depressed* or cast downwards; an interpretation which is strongly supported by the passage already quoted from the *Winter's Tale*. It may, however, signify *weeping*. "*Dropping of the eyes*" was a technical expression in our author's time.—"If the spring be wet with much south wind,—the next summer will happen agues and blearness, *dropping of the eyes*, and pains of the bowels." Hopton's *Concordance of years*, 8vo. 1616.

Again, in Montaigne's *Essais*, 1603:—"they never saw any man there—with eyes *dropping*, or crooked and stooping through age."

MALONE.

⁹ *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.

Mr. Theobald, in his *Shakspeare Restored*, proposed to read—*collogued*, but in his edition very properly adhered to the ancient copies.

MALONE.

Importing the surrender of those lands
 Lost by his father, with all bands of law,
 To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.
 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 herein¹; in that the levies,
 The lifts, 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 scope²
 Of these dilated articles allow³.

Farewel; and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. 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?
 The head is not more native to the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father⁴.

What

¹ *His further gait herein*;] *Gate* or *gait* is here used in the northern sense, for *proceeding, passage*; from the A. S. verb *gae*. A *gate* for a path, passage, or street, is still current in the north. PERCY.

² — *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.

³ — *these dilated articles, &c.*] i. e. the articles when dilated. MUSE.
 The poet should have written *allows*. Many writers fall into this error, when a plural noun immediately precedes the verb; as I have had occasion to observe in a note on a controverted passage in *Love's Labours Lost*. MALONE.

⁴ *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.*] The sense seems to be this: the head is not formed to be more useful to the heart, the

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 slow leave⁵,
By laboursome petition ; and, at last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent :
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes ; time be thine,
And thy best graces : spend it at thy will⁶.—
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than kind⁷.

[*Aside.*

King.

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 *native to the heart* Dr. Johnson understands, "natural and congenial to it, born with it, and co-operating with it."

Formerly the heart was supposed the seat of wisdom ; and hence the poet speaks of the close connexion between the heart and head. See Vol. VII. p. 150, n. 4. MALONE.

⁵ — *wrung from me my slow leave,*] These words and the two following lines are omitted in the folio. MALONE.

⁶ *Take thy fair hour, Laertes ; time be thine,*

And thy best graces : spend it at thy will.] The sense, is : "You have my leave to go, Laertes ; make the fairest use you please of your time, and spend it at your will with the fairest graces you are master of." THEOBALD.

I rather think this line is in want of emendation. I read,

— *Time is thine,*

And my best graces ; spend it at thy will. JOHNSON.

⁷ *Ham.* *A little more than kin, and less than kind.*] *Kind* is the Teutonic word for *child*. Hamlet therefore answers with propriety, to the titles of *cousin* and *son*, which the king had given him, that he was somewhat more than *cousin*, and less than *son*. JOHNSON.

In this line, with which Shakspeare 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

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord, I am too much i' the sun⁸.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not, for ever, with thy veiled lids⁹

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 *kindelyness*."

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 II. Sc. the last:

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, *kindless* villain.

Dr. Farmer, however, observes that *kin* is still used for *cousin* in the midland counties. STEEVENS.

Hamlet does not, I think, mean to say, as Mr. Steevens supposes, that *his uncle* is a little more than kin, &c. The king had called the prince—"My cousin Hamlet, and my son."—His reply, therefore, is,—"I am a little more than thy kinsman, [for I am thy step-son;] and somewhat less than kind to thee [for I hate thee, as being the person who has entered into an incestuous marriage with my mother]. Or, if we understand *kind* in its ancient sense, then the meaning will be,—*I am more than thy kinsman, for I am thy step-son*; being such, *I am less near to thee than thy natural offspring*, and therefore not entitled to the appellation of *son*, which you have now given me. MALONE.

⁸ — *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.

⁹ — *veiled lids*—] With lowering eyes, cast down eyes. JOHNSON.
See Vol. V. p. 286, n. 9. MALONE.

Seek for thy noble father in the dust :
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 grief¹,
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 woe².

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,
Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father :
But, you must know, your father lost a father ;
That father lost, lost his³ ; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation, for some term
To do obsequious sorrow⁴ : But to persever

¹ — shews of grief,] Thus the folio. The first quarto reads—
shapes,—I suppose for *shapes*. STEEVENS.

² *But I have that within, which passeth shew ;*
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.] So, in *K. Rich. II.*
“ —my grief lies all within ;
“ And these external manners of lament
“ Are merely shadows to the unseen grief
“ That swells with silence to the tortured soul.” MALONE.

³ — *your father lost a father ;*
That father lost, lost his ;] 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.

⁴ — *obsequious sorrow :*] *Obsequious* is here from *obsequies* or *fun-
eral ceremonies*. JOHNSON.

So, in *Titus Andronicus*:

“ To shed *obsequious* tears upon his trunk.” STEEVENS.

See Vol. VI. p. 461, n. 5. MALONE.

In obstinate condolment ⁵, is a course
 Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:
 It shews a will most incorrect to heaven ⁶;
 A heart unfortify'd, or mind impatient;
 An understanding simple and unchool'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,
 To reason most absurd ⁷; 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;
 And, with no less nobility of love ⁸,
 Than that which dearest father bears his son,
 Do I impart toward you ⁹. For your intent

In

⁵ *In obstinate condolment,*] *Condolment, for sorrow.* WARBURTON.

⁶ — *a will most incorrect to heaven;*] Not sufficiently regulated by a sense of duty and submission to the dispensations of providence.

MALONE.

⁷ *To reason most absurd;*] *Reason* is here used in its common sense, for the *faculty* by which we form conclusions from arguments.

JOHNSON.

⁸ *And with no less nobility of love,*] *Nobility, for magnitude.*

WARBURTON.

Nobility is rather *generosity*. JOHNSON.

By *nobility of love* Mr. Heath understands, eminence and distinction of love. MALONE.

⁹ *Do I impart toward you.*] I believe *impart* is, *impart myself, communicate* whatever I can bestow. JOHNSON.

The crown of Denmark was elective. So, in *Sir Clyomon 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. STEEV.

I agree with Mr. Steevens, that the crown of Denmark (as in most of the Gothick kingdoms) was elective, and not hereditary; though

it

In going back to school in Wittenberg¹,
 It is most retrograde to our desire:
 And, we beseech you, bend you to remain²
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet;
 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,
 No jocund health³, that Denmark drinks to-day,

it might be customary, in elections, to pay some attention to the royal blood, which by degrees produced hereditary succession. Why then do the rest of the commentators so often treat Claudius as an *usurper*, who had deprived young Hamlet of his *right* by *beirship* to his father's crown? Hamlet calls him drunkard, murderer, and villain: one who had carried the election by low and mean practices; had

“ Popt in between the election and my hopes—”

had

“ From a shelf the precious diadem stole,

“ And put it in his pocket:”

but never hints at his being an *usurper*. His discontent arose from his uncle's being preferred before him, not from any legal right which he pretended to set up to the crown. Some regard was probably had to the recommendation of the preceding prince, in electing the successor. And therefore young Hamlet had “ the voice of the king himself for his succession in Denmark;” and he at his own death prophesies that “ the election would light on Fortinbras, who had his dying voice,” conceiving that by the death of his uncle, he himself had been king for an instant, and had therefore a right to recommend. When, in the fourth act, the rabble wished to choose Laertes king, I understand that antiquity was forgot, and custom violated, by electing a new king in the lifetime of the old one, and perhaps also by the calling in a stranger to the royal blood. BLACKSTONE.

¹ — to school in Wittenberg,] In Shakspeare's time there was an university at Wittenberg, to which he has made Hamlet propose to return.

The university of Wittenberg was not founded till 1502, consequently did not exist in the time to which this play is referred. MALONE.

² — bend you to remain—] i. e. subdue your inclination to go from hence, and remain, &c. STEEVENS.

³ No jocund health, —] The king's intemperance is very strongly impressed; every thing that happens to him gives him occasion to drink. JOHNSON.

But

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 King, Queen, Lords, &c. POL. and LAERT.*]

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
 Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew⁴ !
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter⁵ ! 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 seed ; things rank, and gross in nature,
 Possess it merely⁶. That it should come to this !
 But two months dead !—nay, not so much, not two :
 So excellent a king ; that was, to this,
 Hyperion to a satyr⁷ : so loving to my mother,

That

4 —resolve itself into a dew !] *Resolve* means the same as *dissolve*. 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.

5 *Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd*

His canon 'gainst self-slaughter !] The generality of the editions read *cannon*, 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.

If the true reading wanted any support, it might be found in *Cymbeline* :

“ — 'gainst *self-slaughter*
 “ There is a *prohibition* so divine,
 “ That cravens my weak hand.”

In Shakspeare's time *canon*, (*norma*) was commonly spelt *cannon*. MALONE.³

6 —merely] is *entirely*. See Vol. VII. p. 233, n. 4. MALONE.

7 *So excellent a king ; that was, to this,*

Hyperion to a satyr :] *Hyperion* or *Apollo* is represented in all the ancient statues, &c. as exquisitely beautiful, the *satyrs* hideously ugly.—Shakspeare may surely be pardoned for not attending to the quantity of Latin names, here and in *Cymbeline* ; when we find *Henry Parrot*,

That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Vifit her face too roughly³. Heaven and earth!

Parrot, the authour of a collection of epigrams printed in 1613, to which a *Latin* preface is prefixed, writing thus:

“ *Poffbūmus*, not the laft of many more,

“ Afks why I write in fuch an idle vaine,” &c.

Laquei ridiculoſi, or Springes for Woodcocks, 16mo. fig. c. 3. MALONE.

All our English poets are guilty of the ſame falſe quantity, and call Hyp̄erion Hyp̄erion; at leaſt the only inſtance I have met with to the contrary, is in the old play of *Fuimus Troes*, 1633:

“ ————— Blow, gentle Africus,

“ Play on our poops, when Hyp̄erion’s ſon

“ Shall couch in weſt.” STEEVENS.

³ *That he might not beteem the winds of heaven*

Vifit her face too roughly.] This paſſage ought to be a perpetual memento to all future editors and commentators to proceed with the utmoſt caution in emendation, and never to diſcard a word from the text, merely becauſe it is not the language of the preſent day.

Mr. Hughes or Mr. Rowe, ſuppoſing the text to be unintelligible, for *beteem* boldly ſubſtituted *permitted*. Mr. Theobald, in order to favour his own emendation, ſtated untruly that *all* the old copies which he had ſeen, read *beteene*, and with great plauſibility propoſed to read,

That he might not *let e’en* the winds of heaven, &c.

This emendation appearing uncommonly happy, was adopted by all the ſubſequent editors. But without neceſſity; for the reading of the firſt quarto, 1604, and indeed of all the ſubſequent quartos, *beteeme*, is no corruption, but a word of Shakspeare’s age; and accordingly it is now once more reſtored to the text. It is uſed by Golding in his tranſlation of the tenth book of Ovid’s *Metamorphoſes*, 4to, 1587:

“ The king of Gods did burne ere while in love of Ganymede,

“ The Phrygian; and the thing was found which Jupiter, that fled,

“ Had rather be than what he was; yet could he not *beteeme*

“ The ſhape of any other bird than eagle for to ſeeme.”

Rex ſuperum Phrygii quondam Ganymedis amore

Arſit; et inventum eſt aliquid quod Jupiter eſſe,

Quam quod erat, mallet; *nullā tamen alite verti*

Dignatur, niſi quæ poſſit ſua fulmina ferre.

In the folio the word is corruptly printed *beteene*. The rhyme in Golding’s verſes proves that the reading of the original quarto is the true one. Golding manifeſtly uſes the word in the ſenſe of *endure*.

We find a ſentiment ſimilar to that before us, in Marſton’s *Inſatiate Counteſs*, 1603:

“ ————— ſhe had a lord,

“ Jealous that air ſhould raviſh her chaste looks.” MALONE.

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.” STEEV.

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 tears⁹;—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 galled 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!

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 you¹.

And what make you² from Wittenberg, Horatio?—
 Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord,—

Ham. I am very glad to see you; good even, fir³.—

But

⁹ Like Niobe, all tears;] Shakspeare might have caught this idea from an ancient ballad entitled “The falling out of lovers is the renewing of love:”

“Now I, like weeping Niobe,

“May wash my hands in tears.”

Of this ballad *Amantium iræ*, &c. is the burden. STEEVENS.

¹ — I'll change that name—] I'll be your servant, you shall be my friend. JOHNSON.

² — what make you —] A familiar phrase for *what are you doing*. JOHNSON.

³ — good even, fir.] So the copies. Sir Th. Hanmer and Dr. Warburton put it, *good morning*. The alteration is of no importance, but

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 Elsinore ?

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 followed hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd
meats⁴

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

'Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven⁵,

Or

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.

⁴ —*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*, 1598. "His corpes was with funerall pompe conveyed to the church, and there solemnly enterred, 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 quenes mornynge day,

"That was buried in an abbay." COLLINS.

See also Hayward's *Life and Raigne of King Henrie the Fourth*, 4to 1599, p. 135: "Then hee [King Richard II.] was conveyed to Langley Abby in Buckinghamshire,—and there obscurely interred,—without the charge of a *dinner* for celebrating the funeral." MALONE.

⁵ —*my dearest foe*—] *Dearest*, for *direst*, 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,

Or ever⁶ I had seen that day, Horatio!—
My father,—Methinks, I see my father.

Hor. Where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye⁷, Horatio.

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 again⁸.

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 admiration⁹ for a while

With an attent ear¹; till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Again, in B. and Fletcher's *Maid in the Mill*:

“You meet your *dearest* enemy in love,

“With all his hate about him.” STEEVENS.

See Vol. VIII, p. 130, n. 6. MALONE.

⁶ Or ever—] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—*ere ever*. This is not the only instance in which a familiar phraseology has been substituted for one more ancient, in that valuable copy. MALONE.

⁷ 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.”

Telemachus lamenting the absence of Ulysses, is represented in like manner:

ῥοσομένος πατήρ' ἔσθλον ἐν φρεσίν,—

STEEVENS.

This expression occurs again in our author's 113th Sonnet:

“Since I left you, mine *eye is in my mind*.” MALONE.

⁸ I shall not look upon his like again.] Mr. Holt proposes to read from Sir Thomas Stamwell, Bart. of Upton, near Northampton:

“*Eye* shall not look upon his like again;”

and thinks it is more in the true spirit of Shakspeare 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 pleafant valley that ever *eye* beheld.”

STEEVENS.

⁹ Season your admiration—] That is, *temper* it. JOHNSON.

¹ With an attent ear,] Spenser, as well as our poet, uses *attent* for *attentive*. MALONE.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen, Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch, In the dead waist and middle of the night², Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father, Armed at point³, exactly, cap-à-pé, Appears before them, and, with solemn march, Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd, By their oppress'd and fear-surprized eyes, Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd Almost to jelly with the act of fear⁴, 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?

² In the dead waist and middle of the night,] This strange phraseology seems to have been common in the time of Shakspeare. By *waist* is meant nothing more than *middle*; and hence the epithet *dead* did not appear incongruous to our poet. So in Marston's *Malecontent*, 1604:

" 'Tis now about the immodest *waist* of *night*." i. e. midnight.

Again, in *The Puritan*, a comedy, 1607:—"ere the day be spent to the *girdle*,"—

In the old copies the word is spelt *wast*, as it is in the second act, sc. ii. "then you live about her *wast*, or in the middle of her favours." The same spelling is found in *K. Lear*, Act IV. sc. vi. "Down from the *wast*, they are centaurs." See also Minshew's Dict. 1617: "*Wast*, *middle*, or *girdle-steed*." We have the same pleonasm in another line in this play:

"And given my heart a working *mute* and *dumb*."

All the modern editors read—In the dead *waste*, &c. MALONE.

³ Armed at point,] Thus the quarto, 1604. Folio: Arm'd at all *points*. MALONE.

⁴ — with the act of fear,] *Fear* was the cause, the active cause, that *distill'd* them by that force of operation which we strictly call *act* in voluntary, and *power* in involuntary, agents, but popularly call *act* in both. JOHNSON.

The folio reads—*bestil'd*. STEEVENS.

Hor.

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, fay you?

All. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face.

Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up⁵.

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

⁵ —wore his beaver up.] Though *beaver* properly signified that part of the helmet which was *let down*, to enable the wearer to drink, Shakespeare always uses the word as denoting that part of the helmet which, when raised up, exposed the face of the wearer; and such was the popular signification of the word in his time. In Bullokar's *Engliss Expositor*, 8vo. 1616, *beaver* is defined thus: "In armour it signifies that part of the helmet which may be *lifted up*, to take breath the more freely." MALONE.

Might tell a hundred.

Mar. Ber. 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'd⁶.

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 tenable⁷ 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:
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 HOR. MAR. and BER.*

My father's spirit in arms!⁸ all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would the night were come!
Till then sit 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.

A Room in Polonius' House.

Enter LAERTES, and OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd; farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,

⁶ *A fable silver'd.*] So in our poet's 12th sonnet:

"And fable curls, all silver'd o'er with white." MALONE.

⁷ *Let it be tenable—*] So the quarto, 1604. Folio:—*treble.* MALONE.

⁸ *My father's spirit in arms!*] From what went before, I once hinted to Mr. Garrick, that these words might be spoken in this manner:

My father's spirit! in arms! all is not well, WHALLEY.

And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Opb. 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,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute⁹;
No more.

Opb. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:

For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews¹, and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now;
And now no foil, nor cautel, doth besmirch²
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
The safety and the health of the whole state³;

And

⁹ *The perfume and suppliance of a minute*;] The words *perfume and*, which are found in the quarto, 1604, were omitted in the folio.

MALONE.

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.

¹ *In thews*,] i. e. in sinews, muscular strength. STEEVENS.

² *And now no foil, nor cautel, &c.*] *Cautel* is subtlety, or deceit. Minshew in his Dictionary, 1617, defines it, "A crafty way to deceive." The word is again used by Shakspeare in *A Lover's Complaint*:

"In him a plenitude of subtle matter,

"Applied to *cautels*, all strange forms receives." MALONE.

So, in the second part of Greene's *Art of Coneycatching*, 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 comprize both *excellence* and *power*, and may be explained the *pure effect*. JOHNSON.

* *For he himself, &c.*] This line is not in the quarto. MALONE.

³ *The safety and the health of the whole state*;] Thus the quarto, 1604, except that it has—*this* whole state, and the second *the* is inadvertently omitted. The folio reads:

And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body,
 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 deed⁴; 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 his unmaster'd⁵ importunity.
 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
 And keep you in the rear of your affection⁶,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.
 The chariest maid⁷ 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,

The *sanctity* and health of the whole state.

This is another proof of arbitrary alterations being sometimes made in the folio. The editor, finding the metre defective, in consequence of the article being omitted before *bealtb*, instead of supplying it, for *safety* substituted a word of three syllables. MALONE.

⁴ *May give his saying deed*;] So, in *Timon of Athens*:—"the deed of saying is quite out of use." Again, in *Troilus and Cressida*:

"Speaking in deeds, and deedless in his tongue." MALONE.

⁵ — *unmaster'd*—] i. e. *licentious*. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *keep you in the rear, &c.*] That is, do not advance so far as your affection would lead you. JOHNSON.

⁷ *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 chafly enough, that liveth *charily*."

STEEVENS.

Shew

Shew me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
 Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
 And recks not his own read⁸.

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;
 The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail⁹,
 And you are staid for: There,—my blessing with you;

[*laying his hand on Laertes' head.*]

And these few precepts in thy memory
 Look thou character¹. 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 hooks of steel²;

But

⁸ —recks not his own read.] That is, heeds not his own lessons.

POPE.

So, in *Hycke Scorer*;

“ — I reck not a feder.” STEEVENS.

Read is counsel. MALONE.

So the *Old Proverb* in the *Two Angry Women of Abington*, 1599 :

“ Take heed, is a good reed.” STEEVENS.

So Sternhold, Psalm i.

“ — that hath not lent

“ To wicked rede his ear.” BLACKSTONE.

⁹ — the shoulder of your sail,] This is a common sea phrase. STEEV.

¹ And these few precepts in thy memory

Look thou character.] i. e. write; strongly infix. The same phrase is again used by our authour in his 122d Sonnet:

“ —thy tables are within my brain

“ Full character'd with lasting memory.”

Again, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona* :

“ ————— I do conjure thee,

“ Who art the table wherein all my thoughts

“ Are visibly character'd and engrav'd.” MALONE.

² Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel;] The old copies read —with *hoops* of steel. I have no doubt that this was a corruption in the original quarto of 1604, arising, like many others, from similitude

But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
 Of each new-hatch'd unfledg'd comrade³. 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 censure⁴, but reserve thy judgment.
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
 But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
 And they in France, of the best rank and station,
 Are of a most select and generous chief, in that⁵.

Neither

of sounds. The emendation, which was made by Mr. Pope, and adopted by three subsequent editors, is strongly supported by the word *grapple*. See Minshew's *Dictionary*, 1617: "To *book* or *grapple*, viz. to grapple and to board a ship."

A *grapple* is an instrument with several *books* to lay hold of a ship, in order to board it.

This correction is also justified by our poet's 137th sonnet:

"Why of eyes' falshood hast thou forged *books*,
 "Whereto the judgment of my *heart* is ty'd?"

It may be also observed, that *books* are sometimes made of steel, but *loops* never. MALONE.

³ *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.

⁴ — *each man's censure,*] *Censure* is opinion. STEEVENS.

See Vol. IV. p. 149, n. 8. MALONE.

⁵ *Are of a most select and generous chief, in that.*] Thus the quarto, 1604, and the folio, except that in that copy the word *chief* is spelt *chieff*. The substantive *chief*, which signifies in heraldry the upper part of the shield, appears to have been in common use in Shakspeare's time, being found in Minshew's *Dictionary*, 1617. He defines it thus: "*Est superior et scuti nobilior pars; tertiam partem ejus obtinet; ante Christi adventum dabatur in maximi honoris signum senatoribus et honoratis viris.*" B. Jonson has used the word in his *Poetaster*.

The meaning then seems to be, *They in France approve themselves of a most select and generous escutcheon by their dress.* *Generous* is used with the signification of *generosus*. So, in *Othello*: "The generous islanders," &c.

If *chief* in this sense had not been familiarly understood, the editor of the folio must have considered the line as unintelligible, and would have probably omitted the words—*of a* in the beginning of it, or attempted

Neither a borrower, nor a lender be :
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend ;
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry ⁶.
 'This above all,—To thine ownself be true ;
 And it must follow, as the night the day ⁷,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man.
 Farewell ; my blessing season this in thee ⁸ !

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you ⁹ ; go, your servants tend ¹.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia ; and remember well

What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,

And you yourself shall keep the key of it ².

Laer. Farewel.

[*Exit* LAERTES.]

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you ?

tempted some other correction. That not having been done, I have adhered to the old copies.

Our poet from various passages in his works, appears to have been accurately acquainted with all the terms of heraldry. MALONE.

⁶ — of husbandry.] i. e. of thrift ; æconomical prudence. See Vol. IV. p. 315, n. 8. MALONE.

⁷ And it must follow, as the night the day,] So, in the 145th Sonnet of Shakspeare :

“ That follow'd it as gentle day

“ Doth follow night,” &c. STEEVENS.

⁸ — my blessing season this in thee !] Infix it in such a manner as that it may never 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.

⁹ The time invites you ;—] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, reads—The time invests you : which Mr. Theobald preferred, supposing that it meant, “ the time besieges, presses upon you on every side.” But to invest, in Shakspeare's time, only signified, to clothe, or to give possession. MALONE.

Either reading may serve. Macbeth says,

“ I go, and it is done ; the bell invites me.” STEEVENS.

¹ — your servants tend.] i. e. your servants are waiting for you.

JOHNSON.

² — yourself shall keep the key of it.] 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.

Oph. 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.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection ? puh ! you speak like a green girl,
Unfitted in such perilous circumstance³.
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. Tender yourself more dearly ;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wrangling it thus,) you'll tender me a fool⁴.

Oph.

³ Unfitted in such perilous circumstance.] Unfitted, for untried. Untried signifies either not tempted, or not refined ; unfitted signifies the latter only, though the sense requires the former. WARBURTON.

I do not think that the sense requires us to understand untempted. "Unfitted in," &c. means, I think, one who has not nicely canvassed and examined the peril of her situation. MALONE.

⁴ —Tender yourself more dearly ;

Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,

Wrangling it thus,) you'll tender me a fool.] I have followed the punctuation of the first quarto, 1604, where the parenthesis is extended to the word thus, to which word the context in my apprehension clearly shews it should be carried. "Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase, playing upon it, and abusing it thus,)" &c. So, in *The Rape of Lucrece* :

"To wrong the wronger, till he render right."

The quarto, by the mistake of the compositor, reads—*Wrong* it thus. The folio, *Roaming* it thus. The correction was made by Mr. Pope.

MALONE.

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

Oph. My lord, he hath impórtun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to⁵.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my
lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks⁶. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter⁷,
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 scantier of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments⁸ at a higher rate,
Than a command to parley. For lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, That he is young;

go on thus wrong. This is a mode of speaking perhaps not very gram-
matical, 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,*

With 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.
— *Tender yourself more dearly;*] To *tender* is to regard with affec-
tion. So in *King Richard III.*

“ ————— And so betide me,

“ As well I *tender* you and all of yours.”

Again, in *The Maydes Metamorphosis* by Lily, 1601:

“ — if you account us for the same

“ That *tender* thee, and love Apollo's name.” MALONE.

⁵ — *fashion you may call it;*—] She uses *fashion* for *manner*, and
he for a *transient practice*. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *springes to catch woodcocks.*] A proverbial saying.

“ Every woman has a *springe to catch a woodcock.*” STEEV.

⁷ *These blazes, daughter,*] Some epithet to *blazes* was probably
omitted, by the carelessness of the transcriber or compositor, in the first
quarto, in consequence of which the metre is defective. MALONE.

⁸ *Set your entreatments;*—] *Entreatments* here means *company, conver-
sation*, from the French *entrétién*. JOHNSON.

Entreatments, I rather think, means the objects of *entreaty*; the fa-
vours for which lovers sue. In the next scene we have a word of a
similar formation:

“ As if it some *impartment* did desire,” &c. MALONE.

And

And with a larger tether⁹ may he walk,
 Than may be given you: In few, Ophelia,
 Do not believe his vows: for they are brokers¹
 Not of that dye which their investments shew,
 But mere implorators of unholy suits,
 Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds²,
 The better to beguile. This is for all,—

⁹ — *larger tether*—] *Tether* is that string by which an animal, set to graze in grounds uninclosed, is confined within the proper limits.

JOHNSON.
 So, in Green's *Card of Fancy*, 1601: "To tye the ape and the bear in one *tetter*." *Tether* is a string by which any animal is fastened, whether for the sake of feeding or the air. STEVENS.

¹ *Do not believe his vows, for they are brokers,*] A *broker* in old English meant a *bawd* or *pimp*. See the Glossary to Gawin Douglass's translation of Virgil. So, in *King John*:

"This *bawd*, this *broker*," &c.

See also Vol. VIII. p. 304, n. 9. In our authour's *Lovers Complaint* we again meet with the same expression, applied in the same manner:

"Know, *vows* are ever *brokers* to defiling." MALONE.

² *Breathing, like sanctified and pious bonds,*] For *bonds* Mr. Theobald substituted *bawds*; but the old reading is undoubtedly the true one. Do not, says Polonius, believe his vows, for they are merely uttered for the purpose of persuading you to yield to a criminal passion, though they appear only the genuine effusions of a pure and lawful affection, and assume the semblance of those sacred engagements entered into at the altar of wedlock. The *bonds* here in our poet's thoughts were *bonds of love*. So, in his 142d Sonnet:

"——— those lips of thine,

"That have profan'd their scarlet ornaments,

"And seal'd false *bonds of love*, as oft as mine."

Again, in *The Merchant of Venice*:

"O, ten times faster Venus pigeons fly,

"To seal *love's bonds* new made, than they are wont

"To keep obliged faith unforfeited."

"Sanctified and pious bonds," are the *true bonds of love*, or, as our poet has elsewhere expressed it,

"A contract and *eternal bond of love*."

Dr. Warburton certainly misunderstood this passage. His comment, which has been received in all the late editions is this: "Do not believe, (says Polonius,) Hamlet's amorous vows made to you; which pretend religion in them, (*the better to beguile*,) like those sanctified and pious vows made to *heaven*." And why, he triumphantly asks, "may not this pass without suspicion?" If he means his own comment, the answer is, because it is not perfectly accurate. MALONE.

I would

I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure ³,
 As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.
 Look to't, I charge you; come your ways.

Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [Exeunt.]

SCENE 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 ⁴.

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.

[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*

What does this mean, my lord?

Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes his
 rouse ⁵,

Keeps wassel ⁶, and the swaggering up-spring ⁷ reels;
 And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,

The

³ *I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,*

Have you so slander any moment's leisure,] Polonius says, in plain terms, that is, not in language 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 — *an eager air.*] That is, a sharp air, *aigre*, Fr. So, in a subsequent scene:

“And curd, like *eager* droppings into milk.” MALONE.

⁵ — *takes his rouse.*] A rouse is a large dose of liquor, a debauch. So, in *Otello*: “— they have given me a rouse already.”

It should seem from the following passage in Decker's *Gul's Horn-book*, 1609, that the word *rouse* was of Danish extraction. “Teach me, thou sovereign skinker, how to take the German's uply freeze, the *Danish rouser*, the Switzer's stoop of rhenish,” &c. STEEVENS.

⁶ *Keeps wassel.* —] Devotes the night to intemperance. See Vol. II. p. 411, n. 9, and Vol. IV. p. 311, n. 2. MALONE.

⁷ — *the swaggering up-spring* —] The blustering upstart. JOHNSON. It

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.
This heavy-headed revel, east and west⁸,
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,
The pith and marrow of our attribute⁹.
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 choose his origin¹,)
By the o'er-growth of some complexion²,

Of

It appears from the following passage in *Alphonfus 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. STEEVENS.

⁸ *This heavy-headed revel, east and west, &c.*] *This heavy-headed revel makes us traduced east and west, and taxed of other nations.* JOHNSON.

By *east and west*, as Mr. Edwards has observed, is meant, throughout the world; *from one end of it to the other*.—This and the following twenty one lines have been restored from the quarto. MALONE.

⁹ *The pith and marrow of our attribute.*] The best and most valuable part of the praise that would be otherwise attributed to us. JOHNS.

¹ *That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,*

As in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,

Since nature cannot choose his origin,] We have the same sentiment in *The Rape of Lucrece*:

“ For marks descried in men's nativity

“ Are nature's fault, not their own infamy.”

Mr. Theobald, without necessity, altered *mole* to *mould*. The reading of the old copies is fully supported by a passage in *King John*:

“ Patch'd with foul moles and eye-offending marks.” MALONE.

² — complexion,] *i. e.* humour; as sanguine, melancholy, phlegmatic, &c. WARBURTON.

The quarto 1604 for *the* has *their*; as a few lines lower it has *his* virtues, instead of *their* virtues. The correction was made by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason ;
 Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
 The form of plausible manners ³;—that these men,—
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect ;
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's star ⁴,—
 Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
 As infinite as man may undergo ⁵),
 Shall in the general censure take corruption
 From that particular fault: The dram of base
 Doth all the noble substance of worth dout,
 To his own scandal ⁶.

Enter

3 — *that too much o'er-leavens*

The form of plausible manners :] That intermingles too much with their manners; infects and corrupts them. See Vol. VIII. p. 392, n. 2. *Plausible* in our poet's age signified gracious, pleasing, popular. So, in another play:

“ —his *plausible* words

“ He scatter'd not in ears, but grafted them,

“ To grow there, and to bear.”

Plausible, in which sense *Plausible* is here used, is defined by Cawdrey in his *Alphabetical Table*, &c. 1604, “ *Pleasing*, or received joyfully and willingly.” MALONE.

4 — *or fortune's star,*] Some accidental blemish, the consequence of *the overgrowth of some complexion* or humour allotted to us by fortune at our birth, or some vicious habit accidentally acquired afterwards.

Theobald, plausibly enough, would read—fortune's *scar*. The emendation may be supported by a passage in *Anthony and Cleopatra*:

“ The *scars* upon your honour therefore he

“ Does pity as constrained *blemishes*,

“ Not as deserv'd.” MALONE.

5 *As infinite as man may undergo,*] As large as can be accumulated upon man. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *The dram of base*

Doth all the noble substance of worth dout,

To his own scandal.] The quarto, where alone this passage is found, exhibits it thus:

—— the dram of *eale*

Doth all the noble substance of a *doubt*,

To his own scandal.

To *dout*, as I have already observed in a note on *King Henry V.* Vol. V. p. 552, n. 8, signified in Shakspeare's time, and yet signifies in Devonshire and other western counties, to *do out*, to efface, to extinguish. Thus they say, “ *dout* the candle, *dout* the fire,” &c. It is

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us! —

Be

is exactly formed in the same manner as to *don*, (or *do on*,) which occurs so often in the writings of our poet and his contemporaries.

I have no doubt that the corruption of the text arose in the following manner. *Dout*, which I have now printed in the text, having been written by the mistake of the transcriber, *doubt*, and the word *worth* having been inadvertently omitted, the line, in the copy that went to the press, stood,

Doth all the noble substance of *doubt*,—

The editor or printer of the quarto copy, finding the line too short, and thinking *doubt* must want an article, inserted it, without attending to the context; and instead of correcting the erroneous, and supplying the true word, printed—

Doth all the noble substance of a *doubt*, &c.

The very same error has happened in *K. Henry V.*

“ That their hot blood may spin in English eyes,

“ And *doubt* them with superfluous courage:”

where *doubt* is again printed instead of *dout*.

That *worth* (which was supplied first by Mr. Theobald,) was the word omitted originally in the hurry of transcription, may be fairly collected from a passage in *Cymbeline*, which fully justifies the correction made:

“ —Is she with Posthumus?

“ From whose so many weights of *baseness* cannot

“ A *dram* of *worth* be drawn.”

This passage also adds support to the correction of the word *eale* in the first of these lines, which was likewise made by Mr. Theobald. — *Base* is used substantively for *baseness*: a practice not uncommon in Shakspeare. So, in *Measure for Measure*:

“ Say what thou canst, my *false* outweighs your *true*.”

Shakspeare, however, might have written—The dram of *ill*. This is nearer the corrupted word *eale*, but the passage in *Cymbeline* is in favour of the other emendation.

The meaning of the passage thus corrected is, The smallest particle of vice so blemishes the whole mass of virtue, as to erase from the minds of mankind the recollection of the numerous good qualities possessed by him who is thus blemished by a single stain, and taints his general character.

To his own scandal, means, *so as to reduce the whole mass of worth to its own vicious and unsightly appearance; to translate his virtue to the likeness of vice.*

His for *its*, is so common in Shakspeare, that every play furnishes us with examples. So, in a subsequent scene in this play:—“ than the force of honesty can translate beauty into *his* likeness.”

Again,

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd⁸,
 Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
 Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
 Thou com'st in such a questionable shape⁹,

That

Again, in another play :

“ When every feather sticks in *bis* own wing,—”

Again, in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* :

“ Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
 “ To take from thence all error with *bis* might.”

Again, in *K. Richard II.*

“ That it may shew me what a face I have,
 “ Since *it* is bankrupt of *bis* majesty.”

So, in *Grim, the Collier of Croydon* :

“ Contented life, that gives the heart *bis* ease,—”

We meet with a sentiment somewhat similar to that before us, in
K. Henry IV. P. I.

“ —oftentimes it doth present harsh rage,
 “ Defect of manners, want of government,
 “ Pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain ;
 “ The *least* of *which*, haunting a nobleman,
 “ Lofeth men's hearts, and leaves behind a *stain*
 “ Upon the beauty of all parts besides,
 “ Beguiling them of commendation.” MALONE.

⁷ *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'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: ob! answer me.* JOHNSON.

⁸ *Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd, &c.*] So, in *Acolastus bis After-wit, 1600* :

“ Art thou a god, a man, or else a ghost ?
 “ Com'st thou from heaven, where blifs 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.

⁹ — *questionable shape,*] By *questionable* is meant provoking question.
 HANMER.
 So

That I will speak to thee; I'll call thee, Hamlet,
 King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me:
 Let me not burst in ignorance! but tell,
 Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearfed in death,
 Have burst their cerements¹! why the sepulchre,

Wherein

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 perhaps only means *capable of being conversed with*. *To question*, certainly in our authour's time signified *to converse*. So, in his *Rape of Lucrece*, 1594:

"For after supper long he *questioned*

"With modest Lucrece—."

Again, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

"Out of our *question* wipe him."

See also Vol. VIII. p. 667, n. 1. MALONE.

¹ ——— tell,

Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearfed in death,

Have burst their cerements!] Hamlet, amazed at an apparition, which, though in all ages credited, has in all ages been considered as the most wonderful and most dreadful operation of supernatural agency, enquires of the spectre, in the most emphatick terms, why he 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?* JOHNSON.

By *hearfed in death*, the poet seems to mean, *repositd and confined in the place of the dead*. In his *Rape of Lucrece* he has again used this uncommon participle in nearly the same sense:

"Thy sea within a puddle's womb is *hearfed*,

"And not the puddle in thy sea dispersed." MALONE.

By the expression *hearfed in death* is meant, shut up and secured with all those precautions which are usually practised in preparing dead bodies for sepulture, such as the winding-sheet, shroud, coffin, &c. perhaps embalming into the bargain. So that *death* is here used, by a metonymy of the antecedent for the consequents, for the rites of death,

Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd²,
 Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
 To cast thee up again? What may this mean,
 That thou, dead corse, again, in complète steel³,
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
 Making night hideous; and we fools of nature⁴
 So horridly to shake our disposition⁵,
 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 fee⁶;
 And, for my soul, what can it do to that,

death, such as are generally esteemed due, and practised with regard to dead bodies. Consequently, I understand by *cerements*, the waxed winding-sheet or winding-sheets, in which the corpse was enclosed and sown up, in order to preserve it the longer from external impressions from the humidity of the sepulchre, as embalming was intended to preserve it from internal corruption. HEATH.

² — quietly in-urn'd,] The quartos read *interr'd*. STEEVENS.

³ *That thou, dead corse, again, in complète steel,*] It is probable that Shakspeare 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 Warmius*, cap. 7.

“*Struem regi nec vestibus, 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. STEEV.

⁴ — *we fools of nature*—] i. e. making us, who are the sport of nature, whose mysterious operations are beyond the reaches of our souls, &c. So, in *Romeo and Juliet*: “O, I am *fortune's fool*.” MALONE.

⁵ — *to shake our disposition,*] *Disposition*, for *frame*. WARBURTON.

⁶ — *pin's fee*;] The value of a pin. JOHNSON.

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 base⁷ into the sea?
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason⁸,
And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts toys of desperation⁹,
Without more motive, into every brain,
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still:—
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 nerve¹.—[*Ghost beckons.*
Still am I call'd;—unhand me, gentlemen;—

[*Breaking from them.*

⁷ *That beetles o'er his base—*] That *bangs* o'er his base, like what is called a *beetle-brow*. This verb is, I believe, of our authour's coinage. MALONE.

⁸ — *deprive* your sovereignty, &c.] Dr. Warburton would read *deprave*; but several proofs are given in the notes to *King Lear* of Shakspeare's use of the word *deprive*, which is the true reading.

STEEVENS.

I believe, *deprive* in this place signifies simply to *take away*. JOHNS.

⁹ — *puts toys of desperation,*] *Toys*, for *whims*. WARBURTON.

This and the three following lines are omitted in the folio.

MALONE.

¹ *As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.*—] Shakspeare has again accented the word *Nemean* in this manner, in *Love's Labour's Lost*:

“ Thus dost thou hear the Nemean lion roar.”

Spenser, however, wrote *Neméan*, *Faery Queene*, B. V. c. i.:

“ Into the great Neméan lion's grove.”

Our poet's conforming in this instance to Latin prosody was certainly accidental, for he and almost all the poets of his time disregarded the quantity of Latin names. So, in *Loerine*, 1595, (though undoubtedly the production of a scholar,) we have *Amphion* instead of *Amplion*, &c. See also p. 204, n. 7. MALONE.

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me² :—
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 it³.

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 !

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What ?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit ;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night ;
And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires⁴,

Till

² — *that lets me :*] To let among our old authors signifies to prevent, to hinder. STEEVENS.

So, in *No Wit like a Woman's*, a comedy by Middleton, 1657 :

“ That lets her not to be your daughter now.” MALONE.

³ *Heaven will direct it.*] Marcellus answers Horatio's question, “ To what issue will this come ?” and Horatio also answers it himself, with a pious resignation, “ Heaven will direct it.” BLACKSTONE.

⁴ *Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,*

And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,] Chaucer has a similar passage with regard to the punishments of hell. *Parson's Tale*, p.

Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
 Are burnt and purg'd away⁵. But that I am forbid
 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 spheres⁶;

193, Mr. Urry's edition: "And moreover the misefe of hell shall be in defeaute of mete and drinke." SMITH.

Nash, in his *Pierce Penniless's Supplication to the Devil*, 1595, has the same idea: "Whether it be a place of horror, stench, and darkness, where men see meat, but can get none, and are ever thirsty," &c. Before I had read the *Perfones Tale* of Chaucer, I supposed that he meant rather to drop a stroke of satire on sacerdotal luxury, than to give a serious account of the place of future torment. Chaucer, however, is as grave as Shakspeare. So likewise at the conclusion of an ancient pamphlet called *The Wyll of the Dewyll*, bl. l. no date:

"Thou shalt lye in frost and fire

"With sicknesse and hunger;" &c. STEVENS.

⁵ *Are burnt and purg'd away.*] Gawin Douglas really changes the Platonick hell into the "punytion of saulis in purgatory;" and it is observable, that when the ghost informs Hamlet of his doom there,

"Till the foul crimes, done in his days of nature,

"*Are burnt and purg'd away,*—

the expression is very similar to the bishop's. I will give you his version as concisely as I can: "It is a nedeful thyng to suffer 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 purgitt.*"—*Sixte Book of Eneados*, fol. p. 191. FARMER.

Shakspeare might have found this expression in the *Hy storie of Hamlet*, bl. let. F. 2. edit. 1608: "He set fire in the four corners of the hal, in such fort, that of all that were as then therein not one escaped away, but were forced to *purge their sinnes by fire.*" MALONE.

Shakspeare talks more like a papist than a platonist; but the language of bishop Douglas is that of a good protestant:

"—— Thus the many vices

"Contrackit in the corpis be done away .

"And purgit."

These are the very words of our liturgy in the commendatory prayer for a sick person at the point of departure, in the office for the visitation of the sick: "—*whatsoever defilements it may have contracted— being purged and done away.*" WHALLEY.

⁶ *Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;*] So, in our poet's 108th sonnet:

"How have mine eyes cut of their spheres been fitted,

"In the distraction of this madding fever!" MALONE.

Thy

Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
 And each particular hair to stand on end,
 Like quills upon the fretful porcupine⁷ :
 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 murder⁸.

Ham. Murder ?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is ;
 But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know it ; that I, with wings as swift
 As meditation, or the thoughts of love⁹,

⁷ —*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 *urbin* is a hedge-hog. STEEVENS.

⁸ *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. “ Shakspeare 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 Madnesse, discovering the incarnate devils of the age*, quarto. One of these devils is, *Hate-virtue, 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.

I suspect that this stroke was levelled, not at Shakspeare, but at the performer of the Ghost in an older play on this subject, exhibited before 1589. See *An Attempt to ascertain the order of Shakspeare's plays*, Vol. I. MALONE.

⁹ *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.

May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt ;
And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf²,
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.

Ham. O, my prophetick soul ! my uncle ?

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit *, with traiterous gifts,

² *And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed*

That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf, &c.] Shakspeare, apparently through ignorance, makes Roman Catholicks 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.

That roots itself in ease, &c.] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—"That *rots* itself," &c. I have preferred the reading of the original copy, because to *root itself* is a natural and easy phrase, but "to *rot* itself," not English. Indeed in general the readings of the original copies, when not corrupt, ought in my opinion not to be departed from, without very strong reason. *That roots itself in ease*, means, whole sluggish root is idly extended.

The modern editors read—*Lethe's wharf*; but the reading of the old copy is right. So, in Sir Aston Cockain's poems, 1658, p. 177 :

"—fearing these great actions might die,
"Neglected cast all into *Lethe lake*." MALONE.

Otway has the same thought :

"—like a coarse and useles 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 *roots*. STEEVENS.

* — *bis wit*,—] The old copies have *wits*. The subsequent line shews that it was a misprint. MALONE.

O wicked

(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 moy'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven ;
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will fate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.
But, soft ! methinks, I scent the morning air ;
Brief let me be :—Sleeping within mine orchard³,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of curd hebenon in a vial⁴,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour

³ —mine orchard,] Orchard for garden. So, in *Romeo and Juliet* :

“ The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb.” STEEV.

⁴ With juice of curd hebenon in a vial,] The word here used was more probably designed by a *metathesis*, either of the poet or transcriber, for *benebon*, that is, *benbane* ; of which the most common kind (*byoscyamus 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 (ὄσχυαμος 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 succory ;—heat in the throat, giddiness, dimness of sight and delirium. *Cicut. Aquatic.* c. 18. GREY.

So, in Drayton's *Barons' Wars*, p. 51.

“ The pois'ning *benbane*, and the mandrake drad.”

In Marlowe'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.

The leperous distilment⁵; 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, at once dispatch'd⁶:
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin⁷,
 Unhousel'd⁸, disappointed⁹, unanel'd⁴;

No

⁵ *The leperous distilment*;] So, in *Painter's Palace of Pleasure*, Vol. II. p. 142: "—which being once possessed, never leaveth the patient till it hath enfeebled his state, like the qualitie of *poison distilling* through the veins even to the heart." MALONE.

⁶ —*at once dispatch'd*:] *Dispatch'd*, for *bereft*. WARBURTON.

⁷ *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.

⁸ *Unhousel'd*,—] *Housel*'s the old word for the holy eucharist. *To bowse*, says Bullokar in his *Expositor*, 8vo, 1616, is "to minister sacraments to a sick man in danger of death." *Unhousel'd* therefore is, without having received the sacrament in the hour of death. So, in *Hoffman's Tragedy*, 1631:

"None sung thy requiem, no friend clos'd thine eyes,

"Nor lay'd the hallow'd earth upon thy lips:

"Thou wert not *houset'd*."

Again, in Holinshed's *Chronicle*: "Also children were christened, and men *houseled* and *anoyled*, thorough all the land, except such as were in the bill of excommunication by name expressed." MALONE.

⁹ —*disappointed*,] is the same as *unappointed*; and may be properly explained *unprepared*. A man well furnished with things necessary for an enterprise, was said to be well *appointed*. JOHNSON.

So, in Holinshed's *Chronicle*: "He had not past a fifteen lances, as they termed them in those days, that is, to wit, men of arms, furnished and *appointed*."

Mr. Upton is of opinion, that the particular preparation of which the Ghost laments the want, was *confession* and *absolution*. *Appointment*,

No reckoning made, but sent to my account
 With all my imperfections on my head:
 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible²!
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury³ and damned incest.
 But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
 Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
 The glow-worm shews the matin⁴ to be near,
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire⁴:

Adieu,

ment, he adds, is again used in *Measure for Measure*, in the same sense as here:

“Therefore your best *appointment* make with speed.”

Isabella is the speaker, and her brother, who was condemned to die, is the person addressed. MALONE.

¹ —*unanel'd* ;] Without extreme unction. So, in Sir Thomas More's Works, p. 345: “The extreme unction or *anelynge*, and confirmation, he sayd, be no sacraments of the church.” See also the quotation from Holinshed in n. 8, where the word is spelt *anoyled*.

MALONE.

The Anglo-saxon noun-substantives, *boufel*, (the eucharist,) and *ele*, oil, are plainly the roots of the compound adjectives, *boufeled* and *aneled*. For the meaning of the affix *an* to the last, I quote Spelman's *Glossary* in loco. “*Quin et dictionibus (an) adjungitur, siquidem vel majoris notationis gratia, vel ad singulare aliquid vel unicum demonstrandum.*” Hence *aneled* should seem to signify *oiled*, or *anointed*, by way of eminence, i. e. having received extreme unction. BRAND.

² *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.

³ *A couch for luxury*—] i. e. for *lewdness*. So, in *K. Lear*:

“*To't luxury pell-mell, for,*” &c. STEEVENS.

See Vol. VIII. p. 278, n. 2. MALONE.

⁴ —*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

Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me ⁵. [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 ⁶. Remember thee?
Yea, from the table of my memory ⁷
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, damned villain!
My tables,—meet it is, I set it down ⁸,

That

“ ———— Death can pale as well

“ A cheek of roses as a cheek less bright.”

Again, in Urry's Chaucer, p. 368: “The sterre *paletb* 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.

⁵ *Adieu, adieu, adieu!* &c.] The folio reads:

Adieu, adieu, *Hamlet*: remember me. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *Remember thee!*

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe.] So in our poet's 122d sonnet:

“ Which shall above that idle rank remain,

“ Beyond all dates, even to eternity;

“ Or at the least, *so long as brain and heart*

“ *Have faculty by nature to subsist.*” MALONE.

— *this* distracted globe.] i. e. in this head confused with thought.
STEEVENS.

⁷ *Yea, from the table of my memory*—] This expression is used by
Sir Philip Sydney in his *Defence of Poesie*. MALONE.

⁸ *My tables,—meet it is, I set it down,*] Hamlet avails himself of
the same caution observed by the doctor in the fifth act of *Macbeth*:

“ I will

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. Now to my word⁹;
 It is, *Adieu, adieu! remember me.*
 I have sworn it.

Hor. [*within.*] My lord, my lord,—

Mar. [*within.*] Lord Hamlet,—

Hor. [*within.*] Heaven secure him!

Ham. So be it!

Mar. [*within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come¹.

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,—

Hor. Mar. Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham.

“ I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance
 the more strongly.” STEEVENS.

See also *The Second Part of K. Henry IV.*:

“ And therefore will he wipe his tables clean,

“ And keep no tell-tale to his memory.”

York is here speaking of the king. *Table-books* in the time of our
 author appear to have been used by all ranks of people. In the church
 they were filled with short notes of the sermon, and at the theatre
 with the sparkling sentences of the play. MALONE.

⁹ — *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.

¹ — *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

Ham. There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all Denmark,
But he's an arrant knave.

Hor. 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, by saint Patrick², 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 is 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.

Hor. Mar. My lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear it.

Hor. In faith, my lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

It appears from all these passages, that it was the falconer's call, as *Hanmer* has observed. STEEVENS.

² — 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,

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-penny³?

Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—
Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword⁴.

Ghost.

3 — *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.

4 *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.* WARB.

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.

Shakspeare, 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 ber sword* to serve truth ever.”

“ And in *Hieronimo*, the common butt of our author, and the
66 wits of the time, says Lorenzo to Pedringano:—

“ Swear on this *cross*, that what thou say'st is true,

“ But if I prove thee perjurd 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 war
“ in time of great danger; and herewith they made a solemn vow,”
&c.

Again,

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. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome⁵.
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 soe'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,

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 to note

Again, in Decker's comedy of *Old Fortunatus*, 1600:

“He has sworn to me on the *cross* of his pure Toledo.”

In the soliloquy of Roland addressed to his sword, the *cross* on it is not forgotten: “—capulo eburneo candidissime, *cruce aureâ splendidissime*,” &c. Turpini Hist. de Gestis Caroli Mag. cap. 22. STEEV.

Spenser observes that the Irish in his time used commonly to swear by their sword. See his *View of the State of Ireland*, written in 1596. This custom, indeed, is of the highest antiquity; having prevailed, as we learn from Lucian, among the Scythians. MALONE.

⁵ *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.

* —*an if they might*;] Thus the quarto. The folio reads—*an if there might*. MALONE.

That

That you know aught of me⁶: This do swear⁷,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you!

Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit⁸!—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.*]

⁶ Or such ambiguous giving out to note

[*That you know aught of me:—*] The construction is irregular and elliptical. Swear as before, says Hamlet, that you never shall by folded arms or shaking of your head intimate that a secret is lodged in your breasts; and by no ambiguous phrases to note that you know aught of me.

Shakspeare has in many other places begun to construct a sentence in one form, and ended it in another. So, in *All's Well that ends Well*: “I would the cutting of my garments would serve the turn, or the baring of my beard; and to say it was in stratagem.”

Again, in the same play: “No more of this, Helena;—lest it be rather thought you affect a sorrow than to have:” where he ought to have written *than that you have: or, lest you rather be thought to affect a sorrow, than to have.*

Again, *ibidem*:

“I bade her—if her fortunes ever stood
“Necessity'd to help, *that* by this token
“I would relieve her.”

Again, in *The Tempest*:

“I have with such provision in mine art
“So safely order'd, that there is *no soul*—
“No, not so much perdition as an hair
“Betid to any creature in the vessel.”

See also Vol. IV. p. 156, n. 8, and p. 240, n. 8.

Having used the word *never* in the preceding part of the sentence, [that you never shall—] the poet considered the *negative* implied in what follows; and hence he wrote—“*or—to note,*” instead of *nor*. MALONE.

⁷ — *this do swear, &c.*] The folio reads, *this not to do, swear, &c.*

STEEVENS.

Swear is used here as in many other places, as a disyllable.

MALONE.

⁸ — *perturbed spirit!*] The verb *perturb* is used by Holinshed, and by Bacon in his *Essay on Superstition*: “—therefore atheism did never *perturb* states.” MALONE.

ACT II.

A C T II. S C E N E I.

A Room in Polonius's House.

*Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO*⁹.

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 inquiry
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said: very well said. Look you, fir,
Inquire me first what Danskers¹ 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
Than your particular demands will touch it²:
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;
Admitted 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, fir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,

⁹ The quartos read, *Enter old Polonius with his man or two.* STEEV.

¹ —*Danskers*—] *Danske* (in Warner's *Albions England*) is the ancient name of Denmark. STEEVENS.

² — *come you more nearer*

Than your particular demands will touch it;] The late editions read, and point, thus:

— *come you more nearer;*

Then your particular demands will touch it:

Throughout the old copies the word which we now write—*than*, is constantly written *then*. I have therefore here printed *than*, which the context seems to me to require, though the old copies have *then*. There is no point after the word *nearer*, either in the original quarto, 1604, or the folio. MALONE.

As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing³, quarrelling,
Drabbing:—You may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge⁴.
You must not put another scandal on him⁵,
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;
A savageness⁶ in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault⁷.

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 warrant⁸:

You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working,

³ —*drinking, fencing, swearing,*] I suppose by *fencing* is meant a too diligent frequentation of the fencing-school, a resort of violent and lawless young men. JOHNSON.

Fencing, I suppose, means, piquing himself on his skill in the use of the sword, and quarrelling and brawling, in consequence of that skill. "The cunning of *fencers*, says Goffon in his *Schoole of Abuse*, 1579, is now applied to *quarrelling*: they thinke themselves no men, if, for stirring of a straw, they prove not their valure uppon some bodies fleshe." MALONE.

⁴ 'Faith, no; as you may season it, &c.] The quarto reads—Faith, as you may season it in the charge. MALONE.

⁵ You must not put another scandal on him,] i. e. a very different and more scandalous failing, namely habitual incontinency, Mr. Theobald in his *Shakspeare Restored* proposed to read—an utter scandal on him; but did not admit the emendation into his edition.

MALONE.

⁶ A savageness—] *Savageness*, for *wildness*. WARBURTON.

⁷ Of general assault.] i. e. such as youth in general is liable to.

WARBURTON.

⁸ And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:] So the folio. The quarto reads,—a fetch of wit. STEEVENS.

Mark you,

Your party in converse, him you would found,
 Having ever seen, in the prenominate crimes⁹,
 The youth, you breathe of, guilty, be assur'd,
 He closes with you in this consequence ;
Good sir, or *so*¹ ; or *friend*, or *gentleman*,—
 According to the phrase, or the addition,
 Of man, and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this,—He does—What was I
 about to say?—By the mass, I was about to say some-
 thing :—Where did I leave ?

Rey. At, closes in the consequence².

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 ;
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 falsehood takes this carp of truth :
 And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
 With windlaces, and with assays 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 inclination in yourself³.

⁹ —*prenominate crimes*,] i. e. crimes already named. STEEVENS.

¹ *Good sir, or so* ;] I suspect, (with Mr. Tyrwhitt,) that the poet wrote—*Good sir, or sir, or friend, &c.* In the last act of this play, *so* is used for *so forth* : “—six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hanger, and *so*.” MALONE.

² *At, closes in the consequence.*] Thus the quarto. The folio adds—*At friend, or so, or gentleman.* MALONE.

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.

Rey.

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; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle⁴;
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?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;

But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. 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 stay'd he so;
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk⁵,
And end his being: That done, he lets me go:
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,

⁴ *Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle;*] *Down-gyved* means hanging down like the loose cincture which confines the fetters round the ancles. STEEVENS.

Thus the quartos 1604, and 1605, and the folio. In the quarto of 1611, the word *gyved* was changed to *gyred*. MALONE.

⁵ — *all his bulk,*] i. e. all his body. So, in *The Rape of Lucrece*:
“ — her heart

“ Beating her *bulk*, that his hand shakes withal.”

See Vol. VI. p. 488, n. 3. MALONE.

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 ecstacy of love ;
 Whose violent property foredoes itself⁶,
 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 ?

Oph. 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,
 I had not quoted him⁷ : I fear'd he did but trifle,
 And meant to wreck thee ; but, beshrew my jealousy !
 It seems, it is as proper to our age
 To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
 As it is common for the younger sort
 To lack discretion⁸. Come, go we to the king :

This

⁶ — foredoes itself,] To foredo is to destroy. So, in *Otello* :

“ That either makes me, or foredoes me quite.” STEEVENS.

⁷ I had not quoted him:] I had not marked or observed him. So, in *The Rape of Lucrece* :

“ Yea, the illiterate —

“ Will quote my loathed trespass in my looks.”

In this passage, in the original edition of 1594, the word is written *cote*, as it is in the quarto copy of this play. It is merely the old or corrupt spelling of the word. See Vol. II. p. 378, n. 6, and p. 431, n. 6 ; Vol. III. p. 471, n. 6, and Vol. IV. p. 537, n. 6. In Minshew's Dict. 1617, we find, “ To quote, mark, or note, à quotus. Numeris enim scribentes sententias suas notant et distinguunt.” See also Cotgrave's Dict. 1611 : “ Quoter. To quote or marke in the margin ; to note by the way.” MALONE.

⁸ — 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

This must be known; which, being kept close, might
move⁹

More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.

Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

*Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,
and Attendants.*

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need, we have to use you, did provoke
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 humour¹,—

life cast commonly beyond themselves, let their cunning go farther 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 beaven*, it is as proper, &c. STEEVENS.

In Decker's *Wonderful Yeare*, 4to. 1603, we find an expression similar to that in the text. "Now the thirstie citizen casts beyond the moone." MALONE.

⁹ *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.

Hanmer reads,

More grief to hide hate, than to utter love. JOHNSON.

¹ —and *bumour*,] Thus the folio. The quartos read, *haviour*.

STEEVENS.

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,
 Whether, aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus²,
 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
 To shew us so much gentry³, and good will,
 As to expend your time with us a while,
 For the supply and profit of our hope⁴,
 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, in the full bent⁵,
 To lay our service freely at your feet,
 To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern,

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz;
 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!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt ROS. GUIL. and some Attendants.*]

² *Whether aught, &c.*] This line is omitted in the folio. STEEV.

³ *To shew us so much gentry—*] *Gentry*, for *complaisance*. WARB.

⁴ *For the supply, &c.*] That the hope which your arrival has raised may be completed by the desired effect. JOHNSON.

⁵ — *in the full bent,*] *The full bent* is the utmost extremity of exertion. The allusion is to a bow bent as far as it will go. So afterwards in this play:

“They fool me to the top of my bent.” MALONE.

Enter

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 sure⁶
As it hath us'd to do,) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the embassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast⁷.

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.

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 hand⁸,—sends out arrests

⁶ — *the trail of policy*—] The trail is the course of an animal pursued by the scent. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *the fruit*—] The desert after the meat. JOHNSON.

⁸ — *borne in hand*,—] *i. e.* deceived, imposed on. STEEVENS.

See Vol. IV. p. 357, n. 6. MALONE.

On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
 Receives rebuke from Norway; and, in fine,
 Makes vow before his uncle, never more
 To give the assay⁹ of arms against your majesty.
 Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
 Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee¹;
 And his commission, to employ those soldiers,
 So levied as before, against the Polack:
 With an entreaty, herein further shewn, [*gives a paper*]
 That it might please you to give quiet pass
 Through your dominions for this enterprize;
 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; at night we'll feast together²:
 Most welcome home! [*Exeunt VOL. and COR.*]
Pol. This business is well ended.
 My liege, and madam, to expostulate³

What

⁹ *To give the assay*—] *To take the assay* was a technical expression, originally applied to those who tasted wine for princes and great men. See Vol. VIII. p. 673, n. 5. MALONE.

¹ *Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee;*] Thus the folio. The quarto has—*threescore thousand*. MALONE.

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.

Fee is defined by Minshew in his Dict. 1617, a reward. MALONE.

² — *at night we'll feast*—] The king's intemperance is never suffered to be forgotten. JOHNSON.

³ *My liege, and madam, to expostulate*—] *To expostulate*, for *to enquire or discuss*.

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 jingle and play of words. With what art is he made to pride himself in his wit.

That

What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,

Were

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 *reason 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 Shakspeare 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 Shakspeare,) *we must add the wonderful preservation of it*. 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 Shakspeare 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 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 the very 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

Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
 Therefore,—since brevity is the soul of wit,
 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 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, while she is mine;
 Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
 Hath given me this: Now gather, and surmise.

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 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.

—*To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,*—⁴

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; *beautify'd* is a vile phrase; but you shall hear.—Thus:

*In her excellent white bosom, these*⁵, &c.—

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay a while; I will be faithful.—

Doubt thou, the stars are fire; [reads,
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 art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best, O most best⁶, believe it. Adieu.

Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, Hamlet.

This

⁴ *To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia*—] Mr. Theobald for *beautified* substituted *beatified*. MALONE.

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.

Hayward, in his *History of Edward VI.* says, “*Katherine Parre, queen dowager to king Henry VIII. was a woman beautified with many excellent virtues.*” FARMER.

Again, Nash dedicates his *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem, 1594*, “to the most *beautified* lady, the lady Elizabeth Carey.”

Again, in Green's *Mamilia, 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 goodly shape,” &c. STEEVENS.

⁵ *In 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.

I have here followed the quarto. The folio reads:

These in her excellent white bosom, *these*, &c.

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shewn me;
 And more above⁷, 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,
 If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
 Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;
 Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
 What might you think⁸? no, I went round to work,
 And my young mistress thus I did bespeak;

In our poet's time the word *Tbese* was usually added at the end of the superscription of letters, but I have never met with it both at the beginning and end. MALONE.

⁶ *O most best*] So, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1540: "—that same most best redresser or reformer, is God." STEEVENS.

⁷ —more above,—] is, moreover, besides. JOHNSON.

⁸ *If I had play'd the desk or table-book;*
Or given 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 connived at it, only observed them in secret, without acquainting my daughter with my discovery [*given my heart a mute and dumb working*]; or lastly, had been negligent in observing the intrigue, and overlooked it [*looked upon this love with idle sight*]; what would you have thought of me? WARBURTON.

I doubt whether the first line is rightly explained. It may mean, if I had lock'd up this secret in my own breast, as closely as if it were confined in a desk or table-book. MALONE.

Or given my heart a working mute and dumb;] The same pleonasm is found in our authour's *Rape of Lucrece*:

"And in my hearing be you mute and dumb." MALONE.

The folio reads—a winking. STEEVENS.

*Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy sphere*⁹;
This must not be: and then I prescripts gave her¹,
 That she should lock herself from his resort,
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice²;
 And he, repulsed, (a short tale to make,)
 Fell into a sadness; then into a fast³;
 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,)
 That I have positively said, 'Tis so,
 When it prov'd otherwise?

King.

⁹ *Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy sphere;*] The quarto 1604, and the first folio, for *sphere*, have *spar*. The correction was made by the editor of the second folio. Mr. Steevens observes, that "all princes were alike out of her sphere," and therefore points thus:

Lord Hamlet is a prince:—out of thy sphere;"]

I see no need of departing from the ancient punctuation. The poet clearly means that lord Hamlet is a prince, and, being a prince, is out of Ophelia's sphere. MALONE.

¹ — prescripts gave her,] Thus the quarto. The folio reads—*precepts*. The original copy in my opinion is right. Polonius had ordered his daughter to lock herself from Hamlet's resort, &c. See p. 219.

"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." MALONE.

² *Which done, she took the fruits of my advice:*] 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—

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 carters⁵.

King.

Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed

Within the centre. WARBURTON.

4 — four hours together,] Perhaps it would be better were we to read indefinitely,—for hours together. TYRWHITT.

I formerly was inclined to adopt Mr. Tyrwhitt's proposed emendation ; but have now no doubt that the text is right. The expression, *four hours together, two hours together, &c.* appears to have been common : So, in *King Lear*, Act I.

“ *Edm.* Spake you with him ?

“ *Edg.* Ay, *two hours together.*”

Again, in *The Winter's Tale* :

“ —ay, and have been, any time these *four hours.*”

Again, in Webster's *Dutchess of Malfy*, 1623 :

“ She will muse *four hours together*, and her silence

“ *Methinks* expresseth more than if she spake.” MALONE.

5 *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.]

The scheme of throwing Ophelia in Hamlet's way, in order to try his sanity, as well as the address of the king in a former scene to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern,

“ ——— I entreat you both——

“ That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court

“ Some

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, Queen, and Attendants.*
How

- “ Some little time ; so by your companies
“ *To draw him on to pleasures*, and to gather
“ So much as from occasion you may glean,
“ Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,
“ That open'd lies within our remedy ;—”

seem to have been formed on the following slight hints in *The History of Hamlet*, bl. let. fig. C. 3 : “ They counselled to try and know if possible, how to discover the intent and meaning of the young prince ; and they could find no better nor more fit invention to intrap him, then to set some faire and beautiful woman in a secret place, that with flattering speeches and all the craftiest meanes she could, should purposely seek to allure his mind to have his pleasure of her.—To this end, *certain courtiers* were appointed to lead Hamlet into a solitary place, within the woods, where they brought the woman, inciting him to take their pleasures together. And surely the poore prince at this assault had beene in great danger, if a gentleman that in Horvendille's time had been nourished with him, had not showne himselfe more affectioned to the bringing up he had received with Hamlet, than desirous to please the tyrant.—This gentleman bare the courtiers company, making full account that the least shewe of perfect sence and wisdom that Hamlet should make, would be sufficient to cause him to loose his life ; and therefore by certain signes he gave Hamlet intelligence in what danger he was like to fall, if by any means he seemed to obaye, or once like the wanton toyes and vicious provocations of the gentlewoman sent thither by his uncle : which much abashed the prince, as then wholly being in affection to the lady. But by her he was likewise informed of the treason, as one that from her infancy loved and favoured him.—The prince in this sort having deceived the courtiers and the ladys expectation, that affirmed and swore hee never once offered to have his pleasure of the woman, although in subtlety he affirmed the contrary, every man thereupon assured themselves that without doubt he was disfraught of his senses ;—so that as then Fengon's practise took no effect.”

Here we find the rude outlines of the characters of Ophelia, and Horatio,—*the gentleman that in the time of Horvendille (the father of Hamlet) had been nourished with him.* But in this piece there are no traits of the character of *Polonius*. There is indeed a counsellor, and he

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.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, fir; 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 breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion⁶,—Have you a daughter?

Pol.

he places himself in the queen's chamber behind the arras;—but this is the whole. MALONE.

⁶ For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion,—&c.] The old copies read—a good killing carrion. The emendation was made by Dr. Warburton, who yet in my apprehension did not understand the passage. I have therefore omitted his laboured comment on it, in which he endeavours to prove that Shakspeare intended it as a vindication of the ways of Providence in permitting evil to abound in the world. He does not indeed pretend that this profound meaning can be drawn from what Hamlet says; but this is what he was *thinking of*; for “this wonderful man (Shakspeare) had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors say, but with what they *think!*”

Hamlet's observation is, I think, simply this. He has just remarked that honesty is very rare in the world. To this Polonius assents. The prince then adds, that since there is so little virtue in the world, since corruption abounds every where, and maggots are bred by the sun, even in a dead dog, Polonius ought to take care to prevent his daughter from walking in the sun, lest she should prove “a breeder of sinners;” for though *conception* in general be a blessing, yet as Ophelia (whom Hamlet supposes to be as frail as the rest of the world,) might chance to *conceive*, it might be a calamity. The maggots *breeding* in a dead dog, seem to have been mentioned merely to introduce the word *conception*; on which word, as Mr. Steevens has observed, Shakspeare has play'd in *King Lear*: and probably a similar quibble was intended here. The word, however, may have been used in its ordinary sense, for *pregnancy*, without any double meaning.

The slight connection between this and the preceding passage, and Hamlet's abrupt question, *have you a daughter?* were manifestly intended more strongly to impress Polonius with the belief of the prince's madness.

Perhaps

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing⁷; but as your daughter may conceive,—friend, look to't.

Perhaps this passage ought rather to be regulated thus:—"being a *god-kissing carrion*; i. e. a carrion that kisses the sun. The participle *being* naturally refers to the last antecedent, *dog*: Had Shakspeare intended that it should be referred to *sun*, he would probably have written—"be, being a god," &c. We have many similar compound epithets in these plays. Thus in *K. Lear*, Act II. Sc. i. Kent speaks of "*ear-kissing arguments*." Again, more appositely in the play before us:

"New lighted on a *heaven-kissing hill*."

Again, in *The Rape of Lucrece*:

"Threatning *cloud-kissing* Ilion with annoy."

However, the instance quoted from *Cymbeline* by Dr. Warburton, "*—common-kissing Titan*," seems in favour of the regulation that has been hitherto made; for here we find the poet considered the sun as kissing the carrion, not the carrion as kissing the sun. So also in *K. Henry IV.* P. I. "Did'st thou never see *Titan kifs* a dish of butter?" The following lines also in the historical play of *King Edward III.* 1596, which Shakspeare had certainly seen, are, it must be acknowledged, adverse to the regulation which I have suggested:

"The freshest *summer's day* doth soonest taint

"The loathed *carrion*, that it seems to *kifs*."

In justice to Dr. Johnson, I should add, that the high eulogium which he has pronounced on Dr. Warburton's emendation, was founded on the *comment* which accompanied it; of which however, I think, his judgment must have condemned the reasoning, though his goodness and piety approved its moral tendency. MALONE.

This is a noble emendation, which almost sets the critick on a level with the author. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *conception is a blessing*; &c.] Thus the quarto. The folio reads: "Conception is a blessing, but *not* as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to't." The word *not*, I have no doubt, was inserted by the editor of the folio, in consequence of his not understanding the passage. A little lower we find a similar interpolation in some of the copies, probably from the same cause: "You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will *not* more willingly part withal, except my life." MALONE.

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.

Pol. How say you by that? [*Aside.*] 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. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here, that old men have grey beards^s; that their faces 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, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, shall

^s *Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here, that old men, &c.]*
By the *satirical rogue* he means Juvenal in his tenth satire:

Da spatium vitæ, multos da Jupiter annos:

Hoc recto vultu, solum hoc et pallidus optas.

Sed quàm continuis et quantis longa senectus

Plena malis! deformem, et tetrum ante omnia vultum,

Diffimilemque 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 Shakspeare read *Juvenal* in the original, he had met with “*De temone Britanno, Excidet Arviragus.*”—and —“*Uxorem, Possibume, ducis?*” We should not then have had continually in *Cymbeline*, *Arviragus* and *Possibumus*. Should it be said that the *quantity* in the former word might be forgotten, it is clear from the mistake in the latter, that Shakspeare 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 Shakspeare'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 Shakspeare wrote for the *people*; and could not have been so absurd as to bring forward any allusion, which had not been familiarized by some accident or other. FARMER.

GROW

grow 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 pregnant⁹ sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be deliver'd of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive¹ 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 ROSENCRANTZ², and GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the lord Hamlet; there he is,

Ros. God save you, sir! [to *Pol.* *Exit Pol.*]

Guil. My 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.

⁹ *How pregnant, &c.*] *Pregnant* is ready, dexterous, apt. STEEV.

¹ —and suddenly, &c.] This, and the greatest part of the two following lines, are omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

² *Rosencrantz,*] There was an ambassador of that name in England about the time when this play was written. STEEVENS.

Ham. In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What news?

Rof. None, my lord; but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is dooms-day near: But your news is not true. Let me³ question more in particular: 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 nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space; were it not that I have had dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream⁴.

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. Then are our beggars, bodies⁵; and our mo-

³ *Let me, &c.*] From here to the word *attended* in p. 261, l. 7, (as Mr. Steevens has observed,) is wanting in the quarto. MALONE.

⁴ — *the shadow of a dream.*] Shakspeare has accidentally inverted an expression of Pindar, that the state of humanity is *σκιά; ύπας*, 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.

⁵ *Then are our beggars, bodies;—*] Shakspeare seems here to design a ridicule of those declamations against wealth and greatness, that seem to make happiness consist in poverty. JOHNSON.

narchs, and out-stretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows :
Shall we to the court ? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros. Guil. 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 Elfinore ?

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, 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, whe-
ther you were sent for, or no ?

Ros. What say you ?

[to Guil.]

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you⁶ ;—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. I have of late⁷, (but, where-
fore

* — too dear, a half-penny.] i. e. a half-penny too dear : they are
worth nothing. The modern editors read—at a half-penny.

MALONE.

⁶ Nay, then I have an eye of you ;—] An eye of you means, I have
a glimpse of your meaning. STEEVENS.

⁷ I have of late, &c.] This is an admirable description of a rooted
melancholy sprung from thickness of blood ; and artfully imagined to

fore, I know not,) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises: and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a steril promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'er-hanging firmament⁸, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire⁹, 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 entertainment¹ the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way²; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Ham.

hide the true cause of his disorder from the penetration of these two friends, who were set over him as spies. WARBURTON.

⁸ — *this brave o'er-banging firmament,*] Thus the quarto. The folio reads,—this brave o'er-hanging, this, &c. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *this most excellent canopy, the air,—this majestical roof fretted with golden fire,*] So, in our authour's 21st sonnet:

“As those gold candles, fix'd in heaven's air.”

Again, in the *Merchant of Venice*:

“— Look, how the floor of heaven

“Is thick inlaid with patins of bright gold!” MALONE.

¹ — *lenten entertainment*—] i. e. sparing, like the entertainments given in Lent. So, in the *Duke's Mistress*, by Shirley, 1638:

“— to maintain you with bisket,

“Poer John, and half a livery, to read moral virtue

“And lenten lectures.” STEEVENS.

² *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.”

Again, in Warner's *Albions England*, 1602, book 6, chap. 30:

“Gods and goddeses for wantonnes out-coted.”

Again,

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 fight gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace: the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o' the sere²; and the lady shall say her mind freely³, or

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 courting, 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.

²—*the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' the 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 betwene the Comen Secretary and Jealousy, touchyng the unstaiblenes of barlottes*, bl. l. no date:

"And wyll byde whyfperynge in the eare,

"Thynke ye her tayle is not lyght of the *seare*."

The *sere* is likewise a part about a hawk. STEEVENS.

These words are not in the quarto. I am by no means satisfied with the explanation given, though I have nothing satisfactory to propose. I believe Hamlet only means, that the clown shall make those laugh who have a disposition to laugh; who are pleased with their entertainment. That no asthmatick disease was in contemplation, may be inferred from both the words used, *tickled* and *lungs*; each of which seems to have a relation to laughter, and the latter to have been considered by Shakspeare, as (if I may so express myself,) its natural seat. So, in *Coriolanus*:

"—with a kind of *smile*,

"Which ne'er came from the *lungs*,—"

Again, in *As you Like it*:

—When I did hear

"The motley fool thus moral on the time,

"My *lungs* began to crow like chanticleer."

O' the *sere*, or of the *sere*, means, I think, by the *sere*; but the word *sere* I am unable to explain, and suspect it to be corrupt. Perhaps we should read—the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o' the *scene*, i. e. by the scene. A similar corruption has happened in another place, where we find *seare* for *scene*. See Vol. I. p. 291, n. 3.

MALONE.

³ — *the lady shall say her mind, &c.*] *The lady shall have no objection, unless for the lameness of the verse.* JOHNSON.

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 travel⁴? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Rof. I think, their inhibition⁵ comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham.

⁴ *How chances it, they travel?*] To *travel*, in Shakspeare's time was the technical word, for which we have substituted to *stroll*. So, in the Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels to king Charles the First, a manuscript of which an account is given in Vol. I. Part the second: "1622. Feb. 27, for a certificate for the Palsgrave's servants to *travel* into the country for six weeks, 10s." Again, in Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, 1601: "If he pen for thee once, thou shalt not need to *travell*, with thy pumps full of gravell, any more, after a blinde jade and a hamper, and stalk upon boords and barrel-heads to an old crackt trumpet." These words are addressed to a player. MALONE.

⁵ *I think, their inhibition, &c.*] 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 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* of *Aristippus, or the Jovial Philosopher*, 1630, from whence the following passage is taken: "Sberw having been long intermitted and forbidden by authority, for their abuses, could not be raised but by conjuring." *Sberw* 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 there in the order of the words seems to be quite unnecessary. STEEVENS.

There

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.

Ham. How comes it⁶? Do they grow ruffy?

Rof. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: But there is, fir, an aiery of children⁷, little eyases, that cry

There will still, however, remain some difficulty. The statute 39 Eliz. ch. 4. which seems to be alluded to by the words—*their inhibition*, was not made to inhibit the players from acting any longer at an *established theatre*, but to prohibit them from *strolling*. “All fencers (says the act) bearwards, *common players of enterludes*, and minstrels, *wandering abroad*, (other than players of enterludes, belonging to any baron of this realm or any other honourable personage of greater degree, to be authorized to play under the hand and seal of arms of such baron or personage,) shall be taken, adjudged and deemed, rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, and shall sustain such pain and punishments as by this act is in that behalf appointed.”

This statute, if alluded to, is repugnant to Dr. Johnson's transposition of the text, and to Mr. Steevens's explanation of it as it now stands. Yet Mr. Steevens's explanation may be right: Shakspeare might not have thought of the act of Elizabeth. He could not however, mean to charge his friends the *old tragedians* with the *new custom* of introducing personal abuse; but must rather have meant, that the old tragedians were inhibited from performing in the city, and obliged to travel, on account of the misconduct of the younger company. See n. 7. MALONE.

⁶ *How comes it? &c.*] From here to *Hercules and his load too*, inclusively, is only found in the folio. MALONE.

⁷ — *an aiery of children, &c.*] Relating to the play houses then continuing, 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 stench of garlick, nor be pasterd
 “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*, 1664, that “both the children of the chappel and St. Paul's, acted plays, the one in White-Friers, the other behinde the Convocation-house in Paul's; till people growing more precise, and playes
 more

cry out on the top of question^s, and are most tyrannically clapp'd for't: these are now the fashion; and so berattle

more licentious, the theatre of Paul's was quite suppress'd, and that of the children of the chapel converted to the use of the children of the revels." STEEVENS.

The suppression to which Fleckno alludes took place in the year 1583-4; but afterwards both the children of the chapel and of the Revels played at our authour's playhouse in Blackfriars, and elsewhere; and the choir-boys of St. Paul's at their own house. See *the Account of our old theatres* in Vol. I. Part II. A certain number of the children of the Revels, I believe, belonged to each of the principal theatres.

Our authour cannot be supposed to direct any satire at those young men who played occasionally at his own theatre. Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, and his *Poetaster*, were performed there by the children of Queen Elizabeth's chapel, in 1600 and 1601; and *Eastward Hoe* by the children of the revels, in 1604 or 1605. I have no doubt therefore that the dialogue before us was pointed at the choir-boys of St. Paul's, who in 1601 acted two of Marston's plays, *Antonio and Mellida*, and *Antonio's Revenge*. Many of Lily's plays were represented by them about the same time; and in 1607 Chapman's *Bussy Ambris* was performed by them with great applause. It was probably in this and some other noisy tragedies of the same kind, that they cry'd out on the top of question, and were most tyrannically clapp'd for't.

At a later period indeed, after our poet's death, the Children of the Revels had an established theatre of their own, and some dispute seems to have arisen between them and the king's company. They performed regularly in 1623, and for eight years afterwards, at the Red Bull in St. John's Street; and in 1627, Shakspeare's company obtained an inhibition from the Master of the Revels to prevent their performing any of his plays at their house: as appears from the following entry in Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book, already mentioned: "From Mr. Heminge, in their company's name, to forbid the playinge of any of Shakspeare's plays to the Red-Bull company, this 11th of Aprill, 1627, — 5 0 0." From other passages in the same book, it appears that the Children of the Revels composed the Red-Bull company.

We learn from Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, that the little *eyases* here mentioned were the persons who were guilty of the late *innovation*, or practice of introducing personal abuse on the stage, and perhaps for their particular fault the players in general suffered; and the older and more decent comedians, as well as the children, had on some recent occasion been inhibited from acting in London, and compelled to turn strollers. This supposition will make the words, concerning which a difficulty has been stated, (see n. 6.) perfectly clear. Heywood's *Apology for Actors* was published in 1612; the passage therefore which is found in the folio, and not in the quarto, was probably added not very long before that time.

"Now to speake (says Heywood,) of some abuse lately crept into the quality, as an *inwrigging* against the state, the court, the law, the city,

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 them? how are they escoted⁹? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing¹? will they not say afterwards,

citty, and their governments, with the particularizing of private mens humours, yet alive, noblemen and others, I know it distastes many; neither do I any way approve it, nor dare I by any means excuse it. The liberty which some arrogate to themselves, committing their bitterness and liberal inveclives against all estates to the moutbes of children, supposing their juniority to be a priviledge for any rayling, be it never so violent, I could advise all such to curbe, and limit this presumed liberty within the bands of discretion and government. But wise and judicial censurers before whom such complaints shall at any time hereafter come, will not, I hope, impute these abuses to any transgression in us, who have ever been carefull and provident to shun the like."

Prynne in his *Histriomastix*, speaking of the state of the stage, about the year 1620, has this passage: "Not to particularise those late new scandalous invective playes, wherein sundry persons of place and eminence [Gundemore, the late lord admiral, lord treasurer, and others,] have been particularly personated, jeared, abused in a gros and scurrilous manner," &c.

The folio, 1623, has—*berattled*. The correction was made by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

⁸ — *little eyases, that cry out on the top of question,*] Little eyases; i. e. young nestlings, creatures just out of the egg. THEOBALD.

From *ey*, Teut. ovum, q. d. qui recens ex ovo emerfit. Skinneri *Etymol.* An *aiery* or *eyerie*, as it ought rather to be written, is derived from the same root, and signifies both a young brood of hawks, and the nest itself in which they are produced.

An *eyas* hawk is sometimes written a *nyas* hawk, perhaps from a corruption that has happened in many words in our language, from the letter *n* passing from the end of one word to the beginning of another. However, some etymologists think *nyas* a legitimate word.

MALONE.

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 *conversation, dialogue*. So, in *The Merchant of Venice*: "— think, you *question* with the Jew." The meaning of the passage may therefore be— *Children that perpetually recite in the highest notes of voice that can be uttered*. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *escoted?*] Paid, from the French *escot*, a shot or reckoning. JOHNS.

¹ *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

afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like², if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession³?

Rof. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them on to controversy⁴: 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?

Rof. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too⁵.

Ham. It is not very strange: for my uncle⁶ is king of Denmark;

of boys? So afterwards he says to the player, *Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.* JOHNSON.

So, in the players' *Dedication*, prefixed to the first edition of Fletcher's plays in folio, 1647: "—directed by the example of some who once steered in our *quality*, and so fortunately aspired to chuse your honour, joined with your now glorified brother, patrons to the flowing compositions of the then expired sweet swan of Avon, Shakspeare." Again, in Goffon's *School of Abuse*, 1579: "I speak not of this, as though every one [of the players] that professeth the *qualitie*, so abused himself,—"

"Than they can *sing*", does not merely mean, "than they keep the voices of boys," but is to be understood literally. He is speaking of the choir-boys of St. Paul's. MALONE.

² — *most like*,— The old copy reads,—*like most*. STEEVENS.

The correction was made by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

³ — *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.

⁴ — *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 *ταράττω*. JOHNSON.

⁵ — *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.

I suppose Shakspeare meant, that the boys drew greater audiences than the elder players of the *Globe* theatre. MALONE.

⁶ *It is not very strange: for my uncle—*] I do not wonder that the new players have so suddenly risen to reputation; my uncle supplies another

Denmark; and those, that would make mouths at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little⁷. 'Sblood there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. [*Flourish of trumpets within.*]

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply⁸ 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 deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north west: when the wind is southerly⁹, I know a hawk from a hand-saw¹.

Enter

another example of the facility with which honour is conferred upon new claimants. JOHNSON.

It is not very strange, &c. was originally Hamlet's observation, on being informed that the old tragedians of the city were not so followed as they used to be: [see p. 265, n. 6.] but Dr. Johnson's explanation is certainly just, and this passage connects sufficiently well with that which now immediately precedes it. MALONE.

7 — *in little.*] i. e. in miniature. So, in Drayton's *Shepherd's Sirena* 3
"Paradise in little done."

Again, in Massinger's *New way to pay old debts*:

"His father's picture in little." STEEVENS.

8 — *let me comply*—] Hanmer reads, *Let me compliment with you.*
JOHNSON.

9 *When the wind is southerly, &c.*] So, in *Damon and Pythias*,
1582:

"But I perceive now, either the *winde is at the south,*

"Or else your tunge cleaveth to the rooffe of your mouth."

STEEVENS.

1 — *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 bernshaw*, as if the other had been a corruption of the 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 exhibits but an odd combination of images, It was originally (as I learn from 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.

Rof. Hapily, 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: o' 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. Buz, buz²!

Pol. Upon my honour,—

Ham. *Then came*³ *each actor on his ass*,—

the title-page of an old play) the *Boulogne Gate*, i. e. one of the gates of *Boulogne*; designed perhaps as a compliment to Henry VIII. who took that place in 1544.

The *Boulogne mouth*, now the *Bull and Mouth*, had probably the same origin, i. e. the *mouth of the harbour of Boulogne*. STEEVENS.

² *Buz, buz!*—] Mere idle talk, the *buz* of the vulgar. JOHNSON.

Buz, buz! are, I believe, only interjections employed to interrupt Polonius. B. Jonson uses them often for the same purpose, as well as Middleton in *Amad World my masters*, 1608. STEEVENS.

Buz used to be an interjection at Oxford, when any one began a story that was generally known before. BLACKSTONE.

Buzzer, in a subsequent scene in this play, is used for a *busy talker*:

“ And wants not *buzzers*, to infect his ear

“ With pestilent speeches.”

Again, in *King Lear*:

—on every dream,

“ Each *buz*, each fancy.”

Again, in Trusiel's *History of England*, 1635: “—who, instead of giving redrefs, suspecting now the truth of the duke of Gloucester's *buzz*,” &c.

It is, therefore, probable from the answer of Polonius, that *buz* was used, as Dr. Johnson supposes, for an idle rumour without any foundation.

In B. Jonson's *Staple of News*, the collector of mercantile intelligence is called *Emiffary Buz*. MALONE.

³ *Then came*, &c.] This seems to be a line of a ballad. JOHNSON.

Pol.

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, [tragical-historical⁴, tragical-comical, historical-pastoral,] scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light⁵. For the law of writ, and the liberty⁶, 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*?

4 — *tragical*, &c.] The words within the crotchets I have recovered from the folio, and see no reason why they were hitherto omitted. There are many plays of the age, if not of Shakspeare, that answer to these descriptions. STEEVENS.

5 *Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.*] The tragedies of Seneca were translated into English by Thomas Newton, and others, and published in 1581. One comedy of Plautus, viz. the *Menæcbmi*, was likewise translated and published in 1595. STEEVENS.

I believe the frequency of plays performed at publick schools, suggested to Shakspeare the names of *Seneca* and *Plautus* as dramatick authors. T. WARTON.

6 *For the law of writ, and the liberty,*—] 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 authour'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 *bovs* of tardy and of active faculties into *quick wits* and *slow wits*. JOHNSON.

The old copies are certainly right. *Writ* is used for *writing* by authours contemporary with Shakspeare. Thus, in *The Apologie of Pierce Pennileffe*, by Thomas Nashe, 1593: "For the lowlie circumstance of his poverty before his death, and sending that miserable *writte* to his wife, it cannot be but thou liest, learned Gabriel." Again, in bishop Earle's *Character of a mere dull Physician*, 1638: "Then follows a *writ* to his druggier, in a strange tongue, which he understands, though he cannot coniter."

Again, in *K. Henry VI.* P. II.

"Now, good my lord, let's see the devil's *writ*." MALONE.

Pol.

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. Why, *As by lot, God wot*⁷, and then, you know, *It came to pass, As most like it was*,—The first row of the pious chançon⁸ will shew you more; for look, my abridgment⁹ 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 valanced¹ since I saw thee

⁷ *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. "*Jeffa Judge of Israel*," p. 93. vol. iii. Dec. 14, 1624. STEEVENS.

There is a Latin tragedy on the subject of *Jephtha*, by John Christopher in 1546, and another by Buchanan, in 1554. A third by Du Pleffis Mornay is mentioned by Prynne in his *Histrionastix*. The same subject had probably been introduced on the English stage.

MALONE.

⁸ — *the pious chançon* —] It is *pons chançons* in the first folio edition. The old ballads sung on bridges, and from thence called *pons chançons*. Hamlet is here repeating ends of old songs. POPE.

The old quartos in 1604, 1605, and 1611, read *pious chançon*, which gives the sense wanted, and I have accordingly inserted it in the text.

The *pious chançons* 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.* division) of one of these, to obtain the information he wanted. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *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 dramattick piece in the *Midsommer-Night's Dream*, Act V. Sc. i.

"Say what *abridgment* have you for this evening?"

but it does not commodiously apply to this passage. STEEVENS.

¹ — *thy face is valanced* —] *i. e.* fringed with a beard. The valance is the fringes or drapery hanging round the tester of a bed.

MALONE.

last;

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, by the altitude of a chopine². Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not crack'd within the ring³.—Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers⁴, fly at any thing we see:

² — by the altitude of a chopine.] A *chioppine* is a high shoe worn by the Italians, as in Tho. Heywood's *Challenge of Beauty*, Act 5-Song.

“ The Italian in her high *chopeene*,
 “ Scotch lass, and lovely free too;
 “ The Spanish Donna, French Madame,
 “ He doth not feare to go to.” STEEVENS.

Again, in Marston's *Dutch Courtezan*, 1605: “Dost not weare high corked shoes, *chopines*?”

The word ought rather to be written *chapine*, from *chapin*, Span. which is defined by Minshew in his Spanish Dictionary, “a high cork shoe.” There is no synonymous word in the Italian language, though the *Venetian* ladies, as we are told by Lessels, “wear high-heel'd shoes, like silts, which being very inconvenient for walking, they commonly rest their hands or arms upon the shoulders of two grave matrons.”

MALONE.

³ — be not crack'd witbin 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 witbin the ring*.” STEEVENS.

The following passage in Lily's *Woman in the Moon*, 1597, as well as that in Fletcher's *Captain*, might lead us to suppose that this phrase sometimes conveyed a wanton allusion: “Well, if she were twenty grains lighter, refuse her, provided always she be not *clipt witbin the ring*.” T. C.

⁴ — like French falconers,] Thus the folio. Quarto:—like *friendly* falconers. MALONE.

The amusement of falconry was much cultivated in France. In *All's well that ends well*, Shakspeare has introduced an *asfringer* 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.

We'll have a speech straight; 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, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general⁵: but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments, in such matters, cried in the top of mine⁶,) an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty⁷ as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no fallets⁸ in the lines,

⁵ —*caviare to the general*:] *Caviare* or *Caveare* is a kind of pickle, greatly esteemed in Muscovy, made of the roe of the sturgeon and Belluga, taken out, salted, and dried by the fire, or in the sun. The fish is caught in great quantities at the mouth of the Volga-

Florio in his Italian Dictionary, 1598, defines, *Caviare*, “a kinde of salt meat, used in Italie, like black sope; it is made of the roes of fishes.”

Lord Clarendon uses *the general for the people*, in the same manner as it is used here. “And so by undervaluing many particulars, (which they truly esteemed,) as rather to be consented to than that *the general* should suffer,—” B. V. p. 530. MALONE.

B. Jonson has ridiculed the introduction of these foreign delicacies in his *Cynthia's Revels*, 1602:—“He doth learn to eat anchovies, Macaroni, Bovoli, Fagioli, and *Caviare*,” &c.

Again, in Marston's *What you will*, 1607:

“—a man can scarce eat good meat,

“Anchovies, *caviare*, but he's fatired.” STEEVENS.

⁶ —*cried in the top of mine*,] i. e. that were higher than mine.

JOHNSON.

Whose judgment, in such matters, was in much higher vogue than mine. HEATH.

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.

⁷ —*set down with as much modesty*—] *Modesty for simplicity*.

WARBURTON.

⁸ —*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 *falt*, &c.

Mr. Pope's alteration may indeed be in some degree supported by the following passage in Decker's *Satiromastix*, 1602:—“—a prepared troop of gallants, who shall distaste every *unsalted* line in their fly-blown comedies.” Though the other phrase was used as late as in the year 1665, in a *Banquet of Jest*, &c. “—for junkets, joci; and for curious *fallets*, sales.” STEEVENS.

to make the matter favoury; nor no matter in the phrase, that might indite the author of affection⁹: but call'd it, an honest method¹, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine². One speech in it I chiefly loved: '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 fo; 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
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules³; horridly trick'd⁴
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons;
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and a damned light*

⁹ — that might indite the author—] Indite, for convict. WARB.

— indite the author of affection:] i. e. convict the author of being a fantastical affected writer. Maria calls Malvolio an *affected* d afs, i. e. an *affected* afs; 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 chiefe conditions and qualities in a waiting-gentlewoman," is, "to flee *affection* or curiosity." STEEVENS.

¹ — but call'd it, an honest method,—] Hamlet is telling how much his judgment differed from that of others. *One said, there was no salt in the lines, &c. but called it an honest method.* The author probably gave it, but I called it an honest method, &c. JOHNSON.

— an honest method,—] Honest for chaste. WARBURTON.

² — as wholesome, &c.] This passage was recovered from the quartos by Dr. Johnson. STEEVENS.

³ *Now is he total gules;*] *Gules* is a term in the barbarous jargon peculiar to heraldry, and signifies red. Shakspeare has it again in *Timon*: "With man's blood paint the ground; *gules, gules.*"

Heywood, in the second part of the *Iron Age*, has made a verb from it:

" — old Hecuba's reverend locks

" Be *gul'd* in slaughter."— STEEVENS.

⁴ — *trick'd*—] i. e. smeared, painted. An heraldick term. See Vol. III. p. 358, n. 8. MALONE.

To their lord's murder : Roasted in wrath, and fire,
 And thus o'er-fixed with coagulate gore,
 With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
 Old grandfire Priam seeks :—So proceed you³.

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 falls⁴. 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 tyrant⁵, 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 death⁶: anon, the dreadful thunder

³ So proceed you.] These words are not in the folio. MALONE.

⁴ But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword

The unnerved father falls.] So, as Mr. Stevens has observed, in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, a tragedy, by Marlowe and Nashe, 1594:

“ Which he disdainning, whisk'd his sword about,
 “ And with the wind thereof the king fell down.”

The king here spoken of is Priam. MALONE.

⁵ —as a painted tyrant—] Shakspeare was probably here thinking of the tremendous personages often represented in old tapestry, whose uplifted swords stick in the air, and do nothing. MALONE.

⁶ — as we often see, against some storm,

The bold winds speechless, and the orb below

As hush as death:] So, in *Venus and Adonis*:

“ Even as the wind is hush'd before it raineth.”

This line leads me to suspect that Shakspeare wrote—the bold wind speechless. Many similar mistakes have happened in these plays, where one word ends with the same letter with which the next begins. MALONE.

*Doth rend the region : So, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a work ;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Marses armour, forg'd for proof eterns,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' 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 hill 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 bawdry⁷,
or he sleeps:—say on: come to Hecuba.

1. *Play.* But who, ah woe⁸ ! had seen the mabled queen—⁹

⁷ — *be's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry*] A jig, in our poet's time signified a ludicrous metrical composition, as well as a dance. Here it is used in the former sense. So, in Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: "Frottola, a countrie jig, or round, or countrie song, or wanton verses. See Vol. X. p. 334, n. 3, and the *Historical Account of the English Stage*, &c. in Vol. I. Part II. MALONE.

⁸ *But who, ah woe!*] Thus the quarto, except that it has—*a woe*. *A* is printed instead of *ab* in various places in the old copies. *Woe* was formerly used adjectively for *woeful*. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

"Woe, woe are we, sir, you may not live to wear

"All your true followers out."

The folio reads—But who, *O wbo*, &c. MALONE.

⁹ —*the mabled queen*—] The *mabled* queen, (or *mobled* queen, as it is spelt in the quarto,) means, the queen attired in a large, coarse, and careless head-dress. A few lines lower we are told she had "a *clout* upon that head, where late the diadem stood." The word is used (as Dr. Warburton has observed) by Sandys in his travels. Speaking of the Turkish women, he says, "their heads and faces are *mabled* in fine linen, that no more is to be seen of them than their eyes."

To *mab*, (which in the North is pronounced *mob*, and hence the spelling of the old copy in the present instance,) says Ray in his Dict. of North Country words, is "to dress carelessly. *Mabs* are *flatterns*."

The ordinary morning head-dress of ladies continued to be distinguished by the name of a *mab*, to almost the end of the reign of George the second. The folio reads—the *inobled* queen. MALONE.

Mobled signifies *buddled*, *grossly covered*. JOHNSON.

I meet with this word in Shirley's *Gentleman of Venice*:

"The moon does *mobble* up herself." FARMER.

Ham. The mabled queen?

Pol. That's good; mabled queen is good.

1. *Play.* Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the flames
With *biffon rheum*¹; 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 milch² the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods.

Pol. Look, whether 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 bodikin, 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.

Pol. Come, firs.

¹ *With biffon rheum*;—] *Biffon* or *baesen*, i. e. blind. A word still in use in some parts of the north of England.

So in *Coriolanus*: "What harm can your *biffon* conspectivities 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.

Ham.

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 have it 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. [*Exeunt POLONIUS and Players.*] My good friends, [*to Ros. and Guil.*] I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

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 here³,

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 wann'd⁴;

Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect⁵,

A broken

³ *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 Shakspeare 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. STEEV.

⁴ *That, from her working, all his visage wann'd,*

Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,] *Wan'd* (*wann'd* it should have been spelt,) is the reading of the quarto, which Dr. Warburton, I think rightly, restored. The folio reads *warm'd*, for which Mr. Steevens contends in the following note.

“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 circumstance in the speech uttered before Hamlet, as could introduce the *wanness* for which Dr. Warburton contends.”

Whether an actor can produce paleness, it is, I think, unnecessary to inquire. That Shakspeare thought he could, and considered the speech in question as likely to produce *wanness*, is proved decisively

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
 With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
 For Hecuba!
 What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba⁶,

by the words which he has put into the mouth of Polonius in this scene; which add such support to the original reading, that I have without hesitation restored it. Immediately after the player has finished his speech, Polonius exclaims,

“ Look, whether he has not *turn'd his colour*, and has *tears in his eyes*.” Here we find the effort to shed tears, *taking away*, not *giving* a colour. If it be objected, that by *turn'd his colour*, Shakspeare meant that the player *grew red*, a passage in *King Richard III.* in which the poet is again describing an actor, who is master of his art, will at once answer the objection.

Rich. Come, cousin, can't thou *quake*, and *change thy colour*?
 Murder thy breath in middle of a word;
 And then again begin, and stop again,
 As if thou wert *distracted* and *mad with terror*?

Buck. Tut, I can counterfeit the *deep tragedian*;
 Tremble and start at wagging of a straw, &c.

The words, *quake*, and *terror*, and *tremble*, as well as the whole context, shew, that by “ *change thy colour*,” Shakspeare meant *grew pale*.

MALONE.

⁵ *Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,*] The word *aspect* (as Dr. Farmer very properly observes) was in Shakspeare's time accented on the second syllable. The folio exhibits the passage as I have printed it.

STEEVENS.

⁶ *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 Pheræus] 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.
 Shakspeare, it is highly probable, had read the life of *Pelopidas*, but I see no ground for supposing there is here an allusion to it. Hamlet is not ashamed of being seen to weep at a theatrical exhibition, but mortified that a player, in a *dream of passion*, should appear more agitated by fictitious sorrow, than the prince was by a real calamity. MALONE.

That

That he should weep for her? What would he do,
 Had he the motive and the cue for passion⁷,
 That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
 And cleave the general ear⁸ with horrid speech;
 Make mad the guilty, and appall the free,
 Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,
 The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
 Like John a-dreams⁹, unpregnant of my cause¹,
 And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
 Upon whose property, and most dear life,
 A damn'd defeat was made². Am I a coward?

Who

⁷ — *the cue for passion,*] The hint, the direction. JOHNSON.

⁸ — *the general ear*—] The ears of all mankind. So before, *caviare to the general*, that is, to the multitude. JOHNSON.

⁹ Like John-a-dreams,—] John-a-dreams, i. e. of dreams, means only *John the dreamer*; a nick-name, I suppose, for any ignorant silly fellow. Thus the puppet formerly thrown at during the season of Lent, was called *Jack-a-lent*, and the ignis fatuus *Jack-a-lantern*. *John-a-droynes*, however, if not a corruption of this nick-name, 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-droynes* his man, whom he had hired," &c. *John-a-droynes* is likewise a foolish character in Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578, who is seized by informers, has not much to say in his defence, and is cheated out of his money. STEEV.

¹ — *unpregnant of my cause,*] *Unpregnant*, for *having no due sense of*. WARBURTON.

Rather, *not quickened with a new desire of vengeance; not teeming with revenge*. JOHNSON.

² *A damn'd defeat was made.*—] *Defeat*, for *destruction*. WARB.

Rather, *dispossession*. JOHNSON.

The word *defeat* is very licentiously used by the old writers. Shakspeare in *Otello* employs it yet more quaintly:—"Defeat thy 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 good aged father's life." STEEVENS.

In the passage quoted from *Otello*, to *defeat* is used for *undo* or *alter*: *defaire*, Fr. See Minshew in v. Minshew considers the substantives

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 lie 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!
 Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!³
 Why, what an ass am I? 'Tis is most brave⁴;
 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 scullion⁵!
 Fie upon't! foh! About my brains⁶! Humph! I have heard,
 That guilty creatures, sitting at a play⁷,

Have

stantives *defeat* and *defeat* as synonymous. The former he defines an *overtrow*; the latter, *execution or slaughter of men*. In *K. Henry V.* we have a similar phraseology:

“*Making defeat upon the powers of France.*”

And the word is again used in the same sense in the last act of this play:

“ ——— Their *defeat*

“ Doth by their own insinuation grow.” MALONE.

3 — *kindless*—] *Unnatural*. JOHNSON.

4 *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.

5 *A scullion*!] Thus the folio. The quartos read,—a *fallion*.

STEEVENS.

6 *About, my brains*!] *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.

7 ——— *I have beard*,

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,] A number of these stories
 are

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 tent him ⁸ to the quick ; if he do blench ⁹,
 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 ¹ ; The play's the thing,
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. [Exit.

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSEN-
 CRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you by no drift of conference ²
 Get from him, why he puts on this confusion ;
 Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
 With turbulent and dangerous lunacy ?

are collected together by Thomas Heywood, in his *Astor's Vindication*. STEEVENS.

⁸ — tent him—] Search his wounds. JOHNSON.

⁹ — if he do blench,] If he shrink, or start. The word is used by Fletcher, in *The Night-walker* :

“ Blench at no danger, though it be a gallows.”

Again in Gower, *De Confessione Amantis*, lib. vi. fol. 128 :

“ Without blenchinge of mine eie.” STEEVENS.

See Vol. IV. p. 142, n. 3. MALONE.

¹ More relative than this ;—] Relative, for convictive. WARB.

Convictive is only the consequential sense. Relative is, nearly related, closely connected. JOHNSON.

² — conference—] The folio reads, circumstance. STEEVENS.

Ref.

Rof. He does confefs, he feels himfelf diftracted ;
But from what caufe he will by no means fpeak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be founded ;
But, with a crafty madnefs, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to fome confeffion
Of his true ftate.

Queen. Did he receive you well ?

Rof. Moft like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his difpofition.

Rof. Niggard of queftion ; but, of our demands,
Moft free in his reply³.

Queen. Did you affay him
To any paftime ?

Rof. Madam, it fo fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way⁴: of thefe we told him ;
And there did feem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it : They are about the court ;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis moft true :
And he befecch'd me to entreat your majefties,
To hear and fee the matter.

King. With all my heart ; and it doth much content me
To hear him fo inclin'd.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpofe on to thefe delights.

Rof. We fhall, my lord. [Exeunt *Rof. and Guil.*

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too :

³ *Niggard of queftion ; but, of our demands, Moft free in his reply.*] Slow to begin converfation, but free enough in his answers to our demands. Guildenftern has juft faid that Hamlet kept aloof when they wifhed to bring him to confefs the caufe of his diftraction : Roſencrantz therefore here muſt mean, that up to that point, till they touch'd on that, he was free enough in his answers. MALONE.

⁴ — 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.

For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither ;
 That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
 Affront Ophelia⁵ : Her father, and myself⁶
 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 your part⁷, 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.

Opb. 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 Ophelia.]

That show of such an exercise may colour
 Your loneliness⁸.— We are oft to blame in this,—
 'Tis too much prov'd⁹,— 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.]
 The harlot's cheek, beauty'd with platt'ring art,

⁵ *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.*”

STEEVENS.

⁶ *Her father, and myself—*] Thus the quarto. The folio after these words adds—*lawful espials*, i. e. spies. MALONE.

⁷ *And, for your part,*] Thus the quarto 1604, and the folio. The modern editors, following a quarto of no authority, read—*for my part.*

MALONE.

⁸ *Your loneliness.*] Thus the folio. The first and second quartos read *lowliness*. STEEVENS.

⁹ *'Tis too much prov'd,—*] It is found by too frequent experience.

JOHNSON.

Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it¹,
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. To be, or not to be², that is the question:—
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer

The

¹ — *more ugly to the thing that helps it,*] That is, compared with the thing that helps it. JOHNSON.

² *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.

Dr. Johnson's explication of the first five lines of this passage is surely wrong. Hamlet is not deliberating whether after our present state we are to exist or not, but whether he should continue to live or put an end to his life: as is pointed out by the second and the three following lines, which are manifestly a paraphrase on the first; "whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer, &c. or to take arms." The question concerning our existence in a future state is not considered till the tenth line:—"to sleep! perchance, to dream," &c. The train of

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune³ ;
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles⁴,
 And, by opposing, end them?—To die,—to sleep,—⁵
 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
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die ;—to sleep ;—
 To sleep ! perchance, to dream ;—ay, there's the rub ;

Hamlet's reasoning from the middle of the fifth line, " If to die, were to sleep," &c. Dr. Johnson has marked out with his usual accuracy.

In our poet's *Rape of Lucrece* we find the same question stated, which is proposed in the beginning of the present soliloquy :

" — with herself she is in mutiny,

" To live or die, which of the twain were better." MALONE.

3 — arrows of outrageous fortune ;] " Homines nos ut esse meminerimus, eâ lege natos, ut omnibus telis fortunæ propofita fit vita noſtra." Cic. Epist. Fam. v. 16. STEEVENS.

4 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,] One cannot but wonder that the smallest doubt should be entertained concerning an expression which is so much in Shakspeare's manner ; yet, to preserve the integrity of the metaphor, Dr. Warburton reads *assail* of troubles, and Mr. Pope proposed *siege*. In the *Prometheus Vinculus* of Æschylus a similar imagery is found :

Δυσχειμερον γε πελαγος ατερας δυης.

The stormy sea of dire calamity.

and in the same play, as an anonymous writer has observed, (*Genl. Magazine*, Aug. 1772,) we have a metaphor no less harsh than that of the text :

Θολιροι δε λογοι παιουσι' εικη

Στυγης προς κυμασιν ατης.

" My plaintive words in vain confusedly beat

" Against the waves of hateful misery."

Shakspeare might have found the very phrase that he has employed, in *The Tragedy of Queen Cordila*, MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES, 1575, which undoubtedly he read :

" For lacke of frendes to tell my seas of giltlesse smart." MALONE.

A sea of troubles among the Greeks grew into a proverbial usage ; κακῶν θαλασσα, κακῶν τρικυμία. So that the expression figuratively means, the troubles of human life, which flow in upon us, and encompass us round, like a sea. THEOBALD.

I know not why there should be so much solicitude about this metaphor. Shakspeare breaks his metaphors often, and in this desultory speech there was less need of preserving them. JOHNSON.

5 — To die,—to sleep,—] This passage is ridiculed in the *Scornful 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, fir." &c. &c. STEEV.

For

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil⁶,
 Must give us pause: There's the respect⁷,
 That makes calamity of so long life:
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time⁸,
 The

⁶ — *mortal coil*,] i. e. turmoil, bustle. WARBURTON.

⁷ *There's the respect*,] i. e. the consideration. See Vol. X. p. 102, n. 3. MALONE.

⁸ — *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 Shakspeare wrote

— *the whips and scorns of th' time.*

And the description of the evils of a corrupt age, which follows, confirms this emendation. WARBURTON.

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 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 Shakspeare, 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, in his *Musophilus*, 1599, has the same complaint:

“ Do you not see these pamphlets, *libels*, rhimes,

“ 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 Ist'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. STEEV.

The

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely^o,
 The pangs of despis'd love¹, 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 a bare bodkin²? who would fardels bear,

To

The word *wbips* is used by Marston in his *Satires*, 1599, in the sense required here:

“ Ingenuous melancholy,——

“ Inthroned thee in my blood; let me entreat,

“ Stay his quick jocund skips, and force him run

“ A sad-pac'd course, untill my *wbips* be done.” MALONE.

^o — the proud man's contumely,] Thus the quarto. The folio reads — the poor man's contumely; the contumely which the poor man is obliged to endure.

“ Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,

“ Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.” MALONE.

¹ — of despis'd love,] The folio reads—of *dispriz'd* love. STEEV.

² — 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 Malfy*, 1623:

“ You had the trick in audit-time to be sick,

“ Till I had sign'd your *quietus*.”

A *bodkin* was, the ancient term for a *small dagger*. So, in the Second Part of *The Mirrour of Knighthood*, 4to. bl. let. 1598: “ Not having any more weapons but a poor poynado, which usually he did weare about him, and taking it in his hand, delivered these speeches unto it: Thou, silly *bodkin*, shalt finish the piece of worke,” &c.

In the margin of *Stowe's Chronicle*, edit. 1614, it is said, that Cæsar was slain with *bodkins*.

Again, in *Cbaucer*, 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

“ Murder'd at Rome, of Brutus Craffus.” STEEVENS.

Lydgate in his *Fall of Princes*, says that Julius Cæsar was slain in the Capitol with *bodkins*.

The first Lord Lyttelton, it seems, was of opinion that Pope's edition of Shakspeare was better than that of Theobald's, because

VOL. VII.

U

“ Theobald

To grunt and sweat³ under a weary life ;
 But that the dread of something after death,—
 The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn

“ Theobald was continually making alterations.” “ For *bodkin*,” says the noble lord, “ he would read *dodkin*, which he has found out to be an old word for *dagger*; whereas the beauty of the thought depends on the insignificance of the instrument.” Graves’s *Recollections of some particulars in the life of William Shenstone, Esq;*—His lordship’s meaning, as Fluellen says, was goot, “ save the phrase is a little variations.” Theobald never did propose to read *dodkin*, though he gave the ancient signification of the word *bodkin*, which, as we have seen was *dagger*.

By a *bare bodkin*, does not perhaps mean, “ by so little an instrument as a dagger,” but “ by an *unbeated dagger*.”

In the account which Mr. Steevens has given of the original meaning of the term *quietus*, after the words, “ who personally attended the king on any foreign expedition,” should have been added, “ and were therefore exempted from the claim of *scutage*, or a tax on every knight’s fee. MALONE.

³ *To grunt 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 *groans*, echwhere strong youth is spent.”

And *Stanyburst* in his translation of Virgil, 1582, for *supremum congemuit* gives us: “ —for fighting it *grunts*.”

The change made by the editors [*to groan*] is however supported by the following lines in *Julius Cæsar*, Act IV. sc. 3.

“ To *groan* and sweat under the business.” STEEVENS.

I apprehend that it is the duty of an editor to exhibit what his authour wrote, and not to substitute what may appear to the present age preferable: and Dr. Johnson was of the same opinion. See his note on the word *buzzer-muzzer*, Act IV. sc. v. I have therefore, though with some reluctance, adhered to the old copies, however unpleasing this word may be to the ear. On the stage, without doubt, an actor is at liberty to substitute a less offensive word. To the ears of our ancestors it probably conveyed no unpleasing sound; for we find it used by Chaucer and others:

“ But never *gront* he at no stroke but on,

“ Or elles at two, but if his storie lie.”

The Monkes Tale, v. 14627, Tyrwhitt’s edit.

Again, in *Wily Beguil’d*, written before 1596:

“ She’s never well, but *grunting* in a corner.” MALONE.

No

No traveller returns⁴,—puzzles the will;
 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

⁴ *The 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 Shakspeare'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

Illuc unde negant redire quenquam. *Catullus.* STEEVENS.

This passage has been objected to by others on a ground which, at the first view of it, seems more plausible. Hamlet himself, it is objected, has had ocular demonstration that travellers do sometimes return from this strange country.

I formerly thought this an inconsistency. But this objection also is founded on a mistake. Our poet without doubt in the passage before us intended to say, that from the *unknown* regions of the dead no traveller returns, with all his *corporal powers*; such as he who goes on a voyage of *discovery* brings back, when he returns to the port from which he sailed. The traveller whom Hamlet had seen, though he appeared in the same habit which he had worn in his life time, was nothing but a shadow; "invulnerable as the air," and consequently *incorporeal*.

If, says the objector, the traveller has once reached this coast, it is not an undiscovered country. But by *undiscovered* Shakspeare meant not, undiscovered by departed spirits, but, undiscovered, or unknown to "such fellows as us, who crawl between earth and heaven;" *superis incognita tellus*. In this sense every country, of which the traveller does not return *alive* to give an account, may be said to be *undiscovered*. The ghost has given no account of the region from whence he came, being, as he has himself informed us, "forbid to tell the secrets of his prison-house."

Marlowe, before our poet, had compared death to a journey to an undiscovered country:

"—————weep not for Mortimer,

" That scorns the world, and, as a traveller,

" Goes to discover countries yet unknown."

King Edward II. 1598 (written before 1593).

MALONE.

Is sickly'd o'er with the pale cast of thought;
 And enterprizes of great pith⁵ and moment,
 With this regard, their currents turn awry⁶,
 And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now!
 The fair Ophelia:—Nymph, in thy orisons⁷
 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?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That, if you be honest, and fair, you should
 admit no discourse to your beauty⁸.

⁵ — great pith—] Thus the folio. The quartos read, of great pitch.
 STEEVENS.

⁶ — turn awry,] Thus the quartos. The folio—turn away.

STEEVENS.

⁷ — 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.

⁸ 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.

Oph.

Oph. 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 his likeness⁹: this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me: for virtue cannot so inoculate¹ our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

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 me²: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in³, 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?

Oph. 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.

⁹ —into his likeness:] The modern editors read *its* likeness; but the text is right. Shakspeare and his contemporaries frequently use the personal for the neutral pronoun. So Spenser, *Faery Queen*, B. III. c. ix.

“Then forth it breaks; and with *his* furious blast,

“Confounds both land and seas, and skies doth overcast.”

See p. 221, n. 6. MALONE.

¹ —inoculate—] This is the reading of the first folio. The first quarto reads *euocutat*; the second, *euacuat*; and the third *evacuate*.

STEEVENS.

² I could accuse me of such things, that it were better, my mother had not borne me:] So, in our poet's 88th Sonnet:

“—— I can set down a story

“Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attained.” MALONE.

³ —with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in,] To put a thing into thought, is to think on it. JOHNSON.

— at my beck,—] That is, always ready to come about me.

STEEVENS.

Oph. 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.

Oph. Heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough⁵; 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 make your wantonness your ignorance⁶: Go to; I'll no more of'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';

⁵ *I have heard of your paintings too, well enough, &c.*] This is according to the quarto; the folio, for *paintings*, has *prattlings*, and for *face*, has *pace*, which agrees with what follows, *you jig, you amble*. Probably the authour 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 Shakspeare, to have been general objects of satire. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *make your wantonness your ignorance:*] You mistake by *wanton* affection, and pretend to mistake by *ignorance*. JOHNSON.

* — *all but one shall live;*] By the one who shall not live, he means, his step-father. MALONE.

⁷ *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*: “ *Multum agit sexus, ætas, conditio; ut in feminis, senibus, pupillis, liberos, parentes, conjuges, alligantibus.*”

FARMER.

The

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
 The glass of fashion, and the mould of form⁸,
 The observ'd of all observers! quite, quite down!
 And I, of ladies most deject⁹ and wretched,
 That suck'd the honey of his musick vows,
 Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
 Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune¹ and harsh;
 That unmatch'd form and feature² of blown youth,
 Blasted with ecstasy³: O, woe is me!
 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 disclose⁴,
 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-fettled matter in his heart;

⁸ — *the mould of form,*] The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves. JOHNSON.

⁹ — *most deject*—] So, in Heywood's *Silver Age*, 1613:

“ — What knight is that

“ So passionately deject?” STEEVENS.

¹ — *out of tune*—] Thus the folio. The quarto—*out of time*. STEEV.

These two words in the hand-writing of Shakspeare's age are almost indistinguishable, and hence are frequently confounded in the old copies. See Vol. IV. p. 40, n. 1. MALONE.

² — *and feature*—] Thus the folio. The quartos read *stature*. STEEV.

³ — *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.” STEEVENS.

See Vol. IV. p. 361, n. 9. MALONE.

⁴ — *the disclose*,] This was the technical term. So, in the *Maid of Honour*, by Massinger;

“ One aerie with proportion ne'er disclose

“ The eagle and the wren.” MALONE.

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 him⁵;
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.*]

S C E N E II.

A Hall in the same.

Enter HAMLET, and certain Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced
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 faw 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-pated⁶ fellow tear a passion
to

⁵ — *be round with him;*] To be *round* with a person, is to reprimand him with freedom. So, in *A Mad World my Masters*, by Middleton, 1640; "She's *round* with her i'faith." MALONE.

⁶ — *perriwig-pated*—] This is a ridicule on the quantity of false hair worn in Shakspeare'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

to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings⁷; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shews, and noise⁸: I would have such

“ — 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.

⁷— *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 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 now
 “ Intreat 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.”

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.

⁸ — *are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shews, and noise*:] i. e. have a capacity for nothing but dumb shews; understand nothing else. So, in Heywood's *History of Women*, 1624: “ I have therein imitated

such a fellow whipp'd for o'er-doing Termagant⁹; it out-herods Herod¹: Pray you, avoid it.

1. *Play*. I warrant your honour.

Ham.

imitated our *historical* and comical poets, that write to the stage; who, left the auditory should be dulled with serious discourses, in every act present some zany, with his mimick gesture to breed in the less capable mirth and laughter." See Vol. VI. p. 525, n. 7. MALONE.

— *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 *Presenter* 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 exprefs:" &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 affecting him, though she makes no show of it." Surely this may be called an *inexplicable dumb shew*." STEEVENS.

⁹ *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 *A King and 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 *Termagaunt*." STEEVENS.

¹ — *out-berods Herod*:] The character of *Herod* in the ancient mysteries was always a violent one:

See the *Conventiæ 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,"

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,

Again, in the *Chester Whitfun Plays*, Mss. Harl. 2013:

- “ I kynge of kynges, non foe keene,
 “ I sovraigne sir, as well is seene,
 “ I tyrant that maye bouth take and teene
 “ Castell tower, and towne;
 “ I welde this worlde withouten wene,
 “ I beate all those unbuxome beene;
 “ I drive the devills alby dene
 “ Deepe in hell adowne.
 “ For I am kynge 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 shall have that liberty
 “ That dare abyde and I byd fleey,
 “ But I shall crake his crowne.”

See the *Vintner's Play*, p. 67.

Chaucer describing a parish clerk, in his *Miller's Tale*, says,

“ He playeth *Herode* on a skaffold high.”

The parish clerks and other subordinate ecclesiasticks 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 procession is entered into y^t place, and the Herowdys takyn his *schaffalde*, and Annas and Cayphas their *schaffaldys*,” &c. STEEV.

To the instances given by Mr. Steevens of Herod's lofty language, may be added these lines from the Coventry plays among the Cotton Mss. p. 92.

- “ Of bewte and of boldnes I ber evermor the belle,
 “ Of mayn and of myght I master every man;
 “ I dyng with my downtines the devyl down to helle,
 “ For bothe of hevyn and of earth I am kynge certayn.”

MALONE.

both

both¹ at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold as 'twere the mirrour up to nature; to shew virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time², his form and pressure³. Now this, over-done, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one⁴, must, in your allowance⁵, o'er-weigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players⁶, that I have seen play,—and heard others praise,

² — age and body of the time,—] 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.

Dr. Johnson says, “*the age of the time* can hardly pass.” Mr. Steevens has endeavoured to explain it. But perhaps Shakspeare did not mean to connect these words. It is the end of playing, says Hamlet, to shew the age in which we live, and the body of the time, its form and pressure: to delineate exactly the manners of the age, and the particular humour of the day. MALONE.

³ — *pressure* —] Resemblance, as in a *print*. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *the censure of which one, &c.*] Ben Jonson seems to have imitated this passage in his *Poetaster*, 1601;

“ — I will try

“ If tragedy have a more kind aspect;

“ Her favours in my next I will pursue;

“ Where if I prove the *pleasure but of one,*

“ *If he judicious be, he shall be alone*

“ *A theatre unto me.*” MALONE.

⁵ — *in your allowance,*] In your approbation. See Vol. VIII. p. 570, n. 8. MALONE.

⁶ — *O, there be players, &c.*] 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.

I have no doubt that our authour wrote—“that I thought some of nature’s journeymen had made *them*, and not made them well,” &c. *Them* and *men* are frequently confounded in the old copies. See the *Comedy of Errors*, Act. II. sc. ii. folio, 1623:—“because it is a blessing that he bestows on beasts, and what he hath scanted *them* [r. *men*] in hair, he hath given them in wit.”—In the present instance the compositor probably caught the word *men* from the last syllable of *journeymen*. Shakspeare could not mean to assert as a general truth, that nature’s journeymen had made *men*, i. e. all mankind;

for,

praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely⁷, that, neither having the 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 them⁸: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh,

for, if that were the case, these strutting players would have been on a footing with the rest of the species. Nature herself, the poet means to say, made all mankind except these strutting players, and they were made by Nature's journeymen.

A passage in *King Lear*, in which we meet with the same sentiment, in my opinion, fully supports the emendation now proposed :

“ *Kent.* Nature disclaims in THEE, a tailor made THEE.

“ *Corn.* Thou art a strange fellow : A tailor make a man !

“ *Kent.* Ay, a tailor, sir ; a stone-cutter or a painter [*Nature's journeymen*] could not have made *bim* so ill, though he had been but two hours at the trade.” MALONE.

⁷ — *not to speak it profanely*—] *Profanely* seems to relate, not to the praise which he has mentioned, but to the censure which he is about to utter. Any gross or indelicate language was called *profane*.

JOHNSON.

So, in *Otello* :—“ he is a most *profane* and liberal counsellor.”

MALONE

⁸ — *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 *Tarleton*, 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 plentifull, pleasant *extemporall witt*,” &c.

Again, in *Tarleton'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.

The

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.—

[*Exeunt Players.*]

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord? will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste.— [*Exit* POLONIUS.]
Will you two help to hasten them?

Both. 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 the pregnant hinges of the knee^o,
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul¹ was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish her election,

The clown very often address'd the audience, in the middle of the play, and enter'd into a contest of raillery and sarcasm with such of the audience as chose to engage with him. It is to this absurd practice that Shakspeare alludes. See the *Historical Account of our old English Theatres*. Vol. I. Part II. MALONE.

^o — *the pregnant hinges of the knee,*] I believe the sense of *pregnant* in this place is, *quick, ready, prompt*. JOHNSON.

¹ — *my dear soul* —] *Dear soul* is an expression equivalent to the *φίλα γυναίκα, φίλον ἦτορ*, of Homer. STEEVENS.

She

She hath seal'd thee for herself²: for thou hast been
 As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
 A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
 Hast ta'n with equal thanks: and blest are those,
 Whose blood and judgment³ are so well co-mingled⁴,
 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 stithy⁵. 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.

² She hath seal'd thee for herself:] Thus the quarto. The folio reads:
 And could of men distinguish, her election
 Hath seal'd thee for herself. MALONE.

³ Whose blood and judgment—] According to the doctrine of the
 four humours, desire and confidence were seated in the blood, and judg-
 ment in the phlegm, and the due mixture of the humours made a
 perfect character. JOHNSON.

⁴ — co-mingled,] Thus the folio. The quarto reads—comedled;
 which had formerly the same meaning. MALONE.

⁵ — 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.” STEEVENS.

Danish march. A flourish. Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and Others.

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

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 now⁶. My lord,—you play'd once in the university⁷, you say? [to Polonius.

Pol.

⁶ — *nor mine now.*] A man's words, says the proverb, are his own no longer than he keeps them unspoken. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *you play'd once in the university,*] The practice of acting Latin plays in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, is very ancient, and continued to near the middle of the last century. They were performed occasionally for the entertainment of princes and other great personages; and regularly at Christmas, at which time a *Lord of misrule* was appointed at Oxford, to regulate the exhibitions, and a similar officer with the title of *Imperator*, at Cambridge. The most celebrated actors at Cambridge were the students of St. John's and King's colleges: at Oxford, those of Christ-Church. In the hall of that college a Latin comedy called *Marcus Geminus*, and the Latin tragedy of *Progne*, were performed before Queen Elizabeth in the year 1566; and in 1564, the Latin tragedy of *Dido* was played before her majesty, when she visited the university of Cambridge. The exhibition was in the body or nave of the chapel of King's college, which was lighted by the royal guards, each of whom bore a staff-torch in his hand. See Peck's *Desider. Cur.* p. 36. n. x. The actors in this piece were all of that college. The authour of the tragedy, who in the Latin account of this royal visit, in the Museum, [MSS. Baker, 7037, p. 203,] is said to have been *Regalis Collegii olim socius*, was, I believe, John Rightwise, who was elected a fellow of King's college, in 1507, and according to Anthony Wood, "made the tragedy of *Dido* out of Virgil, and acted the same with the scholars of his school, [St. Paul's, of which he was appointed master in 1522,] before Cardinal Wolfey with great applause." In 1583, the same play was performed at Oxford, in Christ-Church hall, before Albertus de Alasco, a Polish prince Palatine, as was William Gager's Latin comedy, entitled *Rivales*. On Elizabeth's second visit to Oxford, in 1592, a few years before the writing of the present play, she was entertained on the 24th and 26th of September, with the representa-

tion

Pol. That did I, my lord: and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar⁸: I was kill'd i' the Capitol; Brutus kill'd me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him⁹, to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

Rof. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience¹.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol. O ho! do you mark that? [to the king.]

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?
[lying down at Ophelia's feet².
Oph.]

tion of the last mentioned play, and another Latin comedy, called *Bellum Grammaticale*. MALONE.

It should seem from the following passage in Vice Chancellor Hatched's letter to Lord Burghley, on June 21, 1580, that the common players were likewise permitted to perform in the universities. "Whereas it hath pleased your honour to recommend my lord of Oxenford his players, that they might shew their cunning in several plays already practised by 'em before the Queen's Majesty;—(denied on account of the pestilence and commencement:)—"of late we denied the like to the right honourable the Lord of Leiceſter his servants." FARMER.

⁸ *I did enact* Julius Cæsar:—] A Latin play on the subject of Cæsar's death was performed at Christ-Church in Oxford, in 1582; and several years before a Latin play on the same subject, written by Jaques Grevin, was acted in the college of Beauvais, at Paris. I suspect that there was likewise an English play on the story of Cæsar before the time of Shakspeare. See Vol. VII. p. 307, n. 1. and the *Essay on the order of Shakspeare's plays*, Vol. I. MALONE.

⁹ — *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.

¹ — *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.

² — *at Ophelia's feet.*] To lie at the feet of a mistress during any dramatic representation, seems to have been a common act of galantry. 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.*"

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap³?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think, I meant country matters⁴?

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-maker⁵. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully

Again, in Gascoigne's *Greene Knight's farewell to Fancie*:

"To lie along in ladies lappes," &c.

This fashion, which Shakspeare 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.

I do not conceive that this fashion was intended to be ridiculed by Shakspeare. Decker, in his *Guls Hornebooke*, inveighs in general against the custom of sitting on the stage, but makes no mention of lying in ladies' laps, nor did any woman, I believe, sit on the publick stage, in our poet's time. MALONE.

³ *I mean, &c.*] This speech, and *Opbelia's* reply to it, are omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Do you think, I meant country matters?*] Dr. Johnson, from a casual inadvertence, proposed to read—country manners. The old reading is certainly right. What Shakspeare meant to allude to, must be too obvious to every reader, to require any explanation. MALONE.

⁵ — *your only jig-maker.*] A *jig*, as has been already observed, signified not only a dance, but also a ludicrous prose or metrical composition, which in our authour's time was sometimes represented or sung after a play. So, in the prologue to Fletcher's *Fair Maid of the Inn*:

" — when for approbation

" A jig shall be clapp'd at, and every rhyme

" Prais'd and applauded by a clamorous chime."

See also p. 277, n. 7. and *The Historical Account of the old English theatres*, Vol. I. P. II. MALONE.

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.

my

my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Opb. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of fables⁶. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet; Then there's hope, a great man's memory may out-live his life half a year: But, by'r-lady, he must build churches then: or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse⁷; whose epitaph, is, *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot*⁸.

Trumpets

⁶ *Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of fables.*] Nay then, says Hamlet, if my father be so long dead as you say, let the devil wear black; as for me, so far from wearing a mourning dress, I'll wear the most costly and magnificent suit that can be procured; a suit trimmed with fables.

Our poet furnished Hamlet with a suit of fables on the present occasion, not, as I conceive, because such a dress was suited to "a country where it was bitter cold, and the air was nipping and eager," (as Dr. Johnson supposed,) nor because "a suit of fables was the richest dress that could be worn in Denmark," (as Mr. Steevens has suggested,) of which probably he had no knowledge, but because a suit trimmed with fables was in Shakspeare's time the richest dress worn by men in England. We have had again and again occasion to observe, that, wherever his scene might happen to be, the customs of his own country were still in his thoughts.

By the statute of apparel, 24 Henry VIII. c. 13, (article *furres*,) it is ordained, that none under the degree of an *earl* may use *fables*.

Bishop says in his *Blossoms*, 1577, speaking of the extravagance of those times, that a *thousand ducates* were sometimes given for "a *face of fables*."

That a *suit of fables* was the magnificent dress of our authour's time, appears from a passage in B. Jonson's *Discoveries*: "Would you not laugh to meet a *great counsellor of state*, in a flat cap, with his trunk-hose, and a hobby-horse cloak, and yond haberdasher in a velvet gown trimm'd with *fables*?" MALONE.

7 — *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 of the ridiculous zeal of the sectaries: from these ballads Hamlet quotes a line or two. WARBURTON.

8 — *O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*] In *Love's Labour's Lost*, this line is also introduced.

Trumpets sound. The dumb shew follows.

Enter a king and a queen, 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 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. Marry, this is miching mallecho⁹; it means mischief.

Opb.

In *TEXNOGAMIA, or the Marriage of the Arts, 1618*, is the following stage-direction.

“Enter a *bobby-horse*, dancing the morrice,” &c.

Again, in *B. and Fletcher's Woman Pleas'd*:

Soto. “Shall the *bobby-horse* be forgot then,

“The hopeful *bobby-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 *bobby-horse*.

Again, in *Ben Jonson's Entertainment for the Queen and Prince at Aliborpe*:

“But see, the *bobby-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 K. Henry IV.* with *Mr. Tollet's* observations on it. *STEEVENS.*

⁹ — *miching mallecho*;] A secret and wicked contrivance; a concealed wickedness. To *mich* is a provincial word, and was probably once general, signifying to lie hid, or play the truant. In *Norfolk michers* signify pilferers. The signification of *miching* in the present passage may be ascertained by a passage in *Decker's Wonderful Yeare*, 4to, 1603: “Those that could shift for a time,—went most bitterly *miching* and muffled, up and downe, with rue and wormwood stuf into their ears and nostrills.”

See

Oph. Belike, this shew 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 ashamed to shew¹, 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 hearing patiently.

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King, and a Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus cart² gone round

Neptune's salt wash, and 'Tellus' orb'd ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen³,
About the world have times twelve thirties been;

See also Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598, in v. *Acciapinare*. "To *miche*, to shrug or sneak in some corner, and with pouting and lips to shew some anger." In a subsequent passage we find that the murderer before he poisons the king makes *damnable faces*.

Where our poet met with the word *mallecho*, which in Minshew's Spanish Dictionary, 1617, is defined *malefactum*, I am unable to ascertain. In the folio, the word is spelt *malicho*. The quarto reads — *munching Mallico*. *Mallico* is printed in a distinct character, as a proper name. MALONE.

¹ — *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 Shakspeare, 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 madnes, at least of such madnes as should be represented on the scene. STEEVENS.

² — *cart*—] A chariot was anciently so called. Thus Chaucer in the *Knights Tale*, late edit. ver. 2024:

"The carter overridden with his cart." STEEVENS.

³ — *sheen*,] Splendour, lustre. JOHNSON.

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, even as they love⁴;
And women's fear and love hold quantity;
In neither aught, or in extremity.

Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so.

Where love is great⁵, 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 powers⁶ 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—

4 — *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, *lust*. The folio gives the next line thus:

“For women's fear and love holds quantity.” STEEVENS.

Some trace of the lost line is found in the quarto, which reads:

Either none in neither aught, &c.

Perhaps the words omitted might have been of this import:

Either none they feel, or an excess approve;

In neither aught, or in extremity.

In two preceding passages in the quarto, half a line was inadvertently omitted by the compositor. See p. 276, “*then senseless Ilium, seeming,*” &c. and p. 291, “*thus conscience does make cowards of us all*:—the words in Italick characters are not found in the quarto.

MALONE.

5 *Where love, &c.*] These two lines are omitted in the folio.

STEEVENS:

6 — *operant powers*—] *Operant* is active. Shakspeare 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.

P. Queen.

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. The instances⁷, 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 ourselves what to ourselves is debt⁸:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy⁹:
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.

⁷ *The instances,—*] *The motives.* JOHNSON.

⁸ *— 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.

⁹ *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 editors have *enactors*. JOHNSON.

But, orderly to end where I begun,—
 Our wills, and fates, do so contráry run,
 That our devices still are overthrow'n;
 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 me give food¹, nor heaven light!
 Sport and repose lock from me, day, and night!
 'To desperation² turn my trust and hope!
 An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope³!
 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 between us twain! [*Exit.*

¹ *Nor earth to me give food,—*] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio and the late editors read:

Nor earth to give me food,—.

An imperative or optative verb was evidently intended here, as in the following line: "Sport and repose lock from me," &c. MALONE.

² *To desperation, &c.*] This and the following line are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

³ *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 *Wyntkin de Worde*: "We have robbed and killed nonnes, holy *aunkers*, preestes, clerkes," &c.

Again, in *The Vision of Pierce Plowman*:

"As *ankers* and hermits that hold them in her selles."

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 cheyre*,

"To win some parched shreds of mineverc." STEEVENS.

The old copies read—*And anchor's cheer*. The correction was made by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

Ham.

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-trap⁴. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name⁵; his wife, Baptista⁶: 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 wince⁷, our withers are unwrung.—

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king⁸.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

⁴ *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.

⁵ *Gonzago is the duke's name;*] Thus all the old copies: yet in the stage-direction for the dumb shew, and the subsequent entrance, we have "Enter a king and queen," &c. and in the latter part of this speech both the quarto and folio read—Lucianus, nephew to the king.

This seeming inconsistency however may be reconciled. Though the interlude is the *image* of the murder of a *duke* of Vienna, or in other words founded upon that story, the poet might make the principal person of *his fable* a king. MALONE.

⁶ *Baptista*—] is, I think, in Italian, the name always of a man:

JOHNSON.

⁷ *Let the gall'd jade wince, &c.*] This is a proverbial saying. So, in *Damon and Pytias*, 1582:

"I know the *gall'd horse* will soonest wince." STEEVENS.

⁸ — *nephew to the king.*]—i. e. to the king in the play then represented. The modern editors, following Mr. Theobald, read—"nephew to the *duke*," though they have not followed that editor in substituting *duke and dutchess*, for *king and queen*, in the dumb shew and subsequent entrance. There is no need of departing from the old copies. See n. 5, MALONE.

Ham.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying⁹.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning, to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse¹.

Ham. So you mistake your husbands².—Begin, murderer;—leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come:—The croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

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 magick and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.]

Ham.

⁹ *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 *Groatworth 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.

¹ *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.

² *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 *Shakspeare 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 *Bartolomeu Fair*) must be ever busie, and mistake away the bottles and cans, before they be half drunk off.” FARMER.

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Augurs*: “—To mistake six torches from the chandry, and give them one.”

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.

Opb. The king rises.

Ham. What! frightened with false fire³!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light:—away!

Pol. Lights, lights, lights⁴!

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET, and HORATIO.*]

Ham. Why, let the strucken deer go weep,

The hart ungalled play:

For some must watch, while some must sleep;

Thus runs the world away.—

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers⁵, (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me⁶,) with two proven-

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.

³ *What! frightened with false fire!*] This speech is omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Pol. Lights, &c.*] Thus the quarto. In the folio *All* is prefixed to this speech. MALONE.

⁵ *Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, &c.*] It appears from Decker's *Guls Hornebooke*, that feathers were much worn on the stage in Shakspeare's time. MALONE.

⁶ — 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 overthrow was published by A. Barker 1609; and, in 1612, a play was written on the same subject called *A Christian turn'd Turk*.

STEEVENS.

cial.

cial roses⁷ on my razed shoes⁸, get me a fellowship in a cry of players⁹, sir?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I¹.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear²,

This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here

A very, very—peacock³.

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham.

⁷ — *with two* Provençal roses,—] The old copies have *provincial*, which as Mr. Warton has observed, was undoubtedly a misspelling for *Provençal*, or Provençal, i. e. roses of Provence, “a beautiful species of rose formerly much cultivated.” Here, roses of ribbands must be understood. MALONE.

When shoe-strings were worn, they were covered where they met in the middle by a ribband, gathered in the form of a rose. So, in an old song:

“Gilderoy was a bonny boy,

“Had roses tull his shoon.” JOHNSON.

⁸ — *on my razed shoes,*] The quarto has *raz'd*; the folio—*rac'd*. It is the same word differently spelt. *Raz'd shoes* are shoes *break'd*. See Minheu's *Dict.* in v. *To rase*. “To these their nether-stockes, (says Stubbes in his *Anatomic of Abuses*, 1583,) they [the people of England] have corked *shoces*, pinsnets, and pantoffles, which beare them up a finger or two from the ground; whereof some be of white leather, some of blacke, and some of red; some of black velvet, some of white, some of red, some of greene,—*raced*, carved, cut, and stiched all over *with filke*, and laied on with gold, silver, and such like.” MALONE.

⁹ — *a cry of players*—] A troop or company of players. So, in *Coriolanus*:

“— You have made good work,

“You, and your cry.”

Again, in *A Strange Horse-race*, by Thomas Decker, 1613: “The last race they ran, (for you must know they had many,) was from a cry of serjeants.” MALONE.

¹ *Hor.* Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.] It should be, I think,

A whole one;—*ay*,—

For &c.

The actors in our authour's time had not annual salaries as at present: The whole receipts of each theatre were divided into shares, of which the proprietors of the theatre, or *house-keepers*, as they were called, had some; and each actor had one or more shares, or part of a share, according to his merit. See *The Account of the Ancient Theatres*, Vol. I. Part II.

MALONE.

² — *O Damon dear,*] Hamlet calls Horatio by this name, in allusion to the celebrated friendship between *Damon* and *Pythias*. A play

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.

on this subject was written by Rich. Edwards, and published in 1582.

STEEVENS.

The friendship of Damon and Pythias is also enlarged upon in a book that was probably very popular in Shakspeare's youth, Sir Thomas Elliot's *Governour*, 1553. MALONE.

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 Shakspeare, 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*, *bufo*, *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—afs. THEOBALD.

A peacock seems proverbial for a fool. Thus *Gascoigne* in his *Weeds*:

“A thefe, a cowarde, and a *peacocke* foole.” FARMER.

In the last scene of this act, Hamlet, speaking of the king, uses the expression which Theobald would introduce:

“Would from a *paddock*, from a bat, a gib,

“Such dear concernments hide?”

The reading, *peacock*, which I believe to be the true one, was first introduced by Mr. Pope.

Mr. Theobald is unfaithful in his account of the old copies. No copy of authority reads—*paicocke*. The quarto, 1604, has *paiock*; the folio, 1623, *paiocke*.

Shakspeare, I suppose, means, that the king fruts about with a false pomp, to which he has no right. See Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: “*Pavonnegiare*. To jet up and down, fondly gazing upon himself, as a peacock doth.” MALONE.

Ham.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come, some musick; come, the recorders.—

For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike⁴,—he likes it not, perdy⁵.—

Enter ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

Come, some musick.

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, marvellous distemper'd.

Ham. With drink, sir⁶?

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 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 diseased: But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall

⁴ *Why, then, belike,—*] Hamlet was going on to draw the consequence, when the courtiers entered. JOHNSON.

⁵ — *be 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.

command;

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, where she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade⁷ with us?

Rof. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers⁸.

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.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Rof. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?⁹

Ham. Ay, sir, but, *While the grass grows*,—the proverb is something musty¹.

Enter the Players, with Recorders².

O, the recorders:—let me see one.—To withdraw with

⁷ — *further trade*—] Further business; further dealing. JOHNSON.

⁸ — *by these pickers, &c.*] By these hands. JOHNSON.

Alluding to the *Church Catechism*:—"to keep my hands from picking and stealing," &c. MALONE.

⁹ — *when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark.*] See p. 201, n. 9. MALONE.

¹ *Ay, sir, but, While the grass grows,—the proverb is something musty.*] The remainder of this old proverb is preserved in Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578:

"Whylst grass doth growe, oft serues the seely feede."

Again, in *The Paradise of Daintie Devises*, 1578:

"To whom of old this proverbe well it serues,

"*While grass doth growe, the silly horse be serues.*"

Hamlet means to intimate, that whilst he is waiting for the succession to the throne of Denmark, he may himself be taken off by death. MALONE.

² — *Recorders.*] i. e. a kind of large flute.

To record anciently signified to sing or modulate. STEEVENS.

See Vol. I. p. 180, n. 5. MALONE.

you:

you:—[*taking Guil. aside.*] Why do you go about to recover the wind of me³, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly⁴.

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.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages⁵ with your fingers and thumb⁶, give it breath with your mouth,

³ — to recover the wind of me,] So, in an ancient Ms. play entitled *The second Maidens Tragedy*:

“ ————— Is that next?

“ Why then I have your ladyship in *the wind.*” STEEVENS.

⁴ 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.

⁵ — ventages —] The holes of a flute. JOHNSON.

⁶ — 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.” 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,

mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent musick. Look you, these are the stops⁷.

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 there is much musick, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think, 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 weazel.

Pol. It is back'd like a weazel⁸.

Ham.

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. TOLLET.

⁷—*the stops.*] The sounds formed by occasionally stopping the holes; while the instrument is played upon. So, in the Prologue to *K. Henry V.*

“Rumour is a *pipe*—

“And of so easy and so plain a *stop*,” &c. MALONE.

⁸ *Methinks, it is like a weazel.*

Pol. *It is back'd like a weazel.*] Thus the quarto, 1604, and the folio. The weazel, Mr. Steevens observes, is remarkable for the length of its back. In a more modern quarto, that of 1611, *back'd*, the original reading, was corrupted into *black*.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by.—
They fool me to the top of my bent⁹.—I will come by
and by.

Pol. I will say so.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

Ham. By and by is easily said.—Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt* ROS. GUIL. HOR. &c.

'Tis now the very witching time of night;
When church-yards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: Now could I drink hot blood,
And do such business as the bitter day¹
Would quake to look on. Soft; now to my mother.—
O, heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever

Perhaps in the original edition the words *camel* and *weazel* were shuffled out of their places. The poet might have intended the dialogue to proceed thus:

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in the shape of a
weazel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a weazel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a *camel*.

Pol. It is back'd like a *camel*.

The protuberant back of a camel seems more to resemble a cloud; than the back of a weazel does. MALONE.

Mr. Tollet observes, that we might read—"it is *beck'd* like a weazel," i. e. weasel-snouted. So, in Holinshed's *Description of England*, p. 172: "if he be *wesell-becked*." Quarles uses this term of reproach in his *Virgin Widow*: "Go, you *weazel-snouted*, addle-pated," &c. Mr. Tollett adds, that Milton, in his *Lycidas*, calls a promontory *beaked*, i. e. prominent like the *beak* of a bird. STEEVENS.

⁹ *They fool me to the top of my bent.*—] They compel me to play the fool, till I can endure it no longer. JOHNSON.

See p. 246, n. 5. MALONE.

¹ *And do such business as the bitter day.*—] Thus the quarto. The folio reads:

And do such *bitter business* as the day, &c. MALONE.

The expression *bitter business* is still in use, and though at present a vulgar phrase, might not have been such in the age of Shakspeare. The *bitter day* is the day rendered hateful or *bitter* by the commission of some act of mischief.

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.

The

The foul of Nero enter this firm bosom :
 Let me be cruel, not unnatural :
 I will speak daggers to her², but use none ;
 My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites :
 How in my words soever she be shent³,
 To give them seals⁴ never, my foul, consent !

[Exit.]

S C E N E III.

A Room in the same.

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 you⁵ :
 The terms of our estate may not endure
 Hazard so near us, as doth hourly grow

² *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.

³ — *be shent,*] To *shend*, is to reprove harshly, to treat with injurious language. So, in *The Coxcomb* of B. and Fletcher :

" — We shall be *shent* soundly." STEEVENS.

See Vol. VII. p. 286, n. 3. MALONE.

⁴ *To give them seals—*] i. e. put them in execution. WARBURTON.

⁵ *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 :] In *The History of Hamblett*, bl. let. the king does not adopt this scheme of sending Hamlet to England till after the death of Polonius ; and though he is described as doubtful whether Polonius was slain by Hamlet, his apprehension lest he might himself meet the same fate as the old courtier, is assigned as the motive for his wishing the prince out of the kingdom. This at first inclined me to think that this short scene, either from the negligence of the copyist or the printer, might have been misplaced ; but it is certainly printed as the authour intended, for in the next scene Hamlet says to his mother, " I must to England ; you know that ? " before the king could have heard of the death of Polonius.

MALONE.

Out of his lunes ⁶.

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.

Rof. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from 'noyance ; but much more,
That spirit upon whose weal⁷ depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone ; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it, with it : it is a massy wheel⁸,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd ; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boist'rous ruin. Never alone

⁶ *Out of his lunes.*] The quarto reads—out of his *brows* ; the folio —out of his *lunacies*. *Lunes* was introduced by Mr. Theobald. Shakspeare probably had here the following passage in *The History of Hamblett*, bl. l. in his thoughts : “ *Fengon* could not content himselfe, but still his mind gave him that the *foole* [*Hamlet*] would play him *some tricke of legerdemaine*. And in that conceit seeking to be rid of him, determined to find the meanes to doe it, by the aid of a stranger ; making the king of England minister of his massacrous resolution, to whom he purposed to send him.” MALONE.

I take *brows* to be, properly read, *frows*, which, I think, is a provincial word for *perverse humours* ; which being, I suppose not understood, was changed to *lunacies*. But of this I am not confident. JOHNSON.

I would receive Theobald's emendation, because Shakspeare 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 Lowe, by Greene, 1616.

Perhaps, however, Shakspeare designed a metaphor from horned cattle, whose powers of being dangerous encrease with the *growth of their brows*. STEEVENS.

⁷ *That spirit upon whose weal—*] So the quarto. The folio gives,
That spirit, upon whose *spirit*,—. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *it is a massy wheel,*] Thus the folio. The quarto reads—*Or it is*, &c. MALONE.

Did the king sigh, 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.

Ros. Guil. We will haste us. [*Exeunt Ros. and GUIL.*]

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet;
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,⁹
To hear the process; I'll warrant, she'll tax him home;
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet, that some more audience, than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial¹, should o'er-hear
'The speech of vantage². 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 POLONIUS.*]
O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,

⁹ *Behind the arras I'll convey myself,*] The arras-hangings, in Shakespeare's time, were hung at such a distance from the walls, that a person might easily stand behind them unperceived. The principal witness against the Countess of Exeter, who was unjustly charged in the year 1616, with a design to poison lady Lake and lady Rosse, was Sarah Wharton, a chambermaid, who swore that she stood *behind the hangings* at the entrance of the great chamber at Wimbleton, and heard the countess confess her guilt. The plot against this innocent lady was discovered by king James, who went to Wimbleton, and found that the hangings, which had not been changed for thirty years, were two feet from the ground, so that the chambermaid must have been discovered, had she been there. His majesty observing a great distance between the window, near which the countess was supposed to have stood, and the lower end of the room, where the maid was said to have stood, placed himself behind the hangings, and finding that he could not hear the lords at the window, though they purposely spoke loud, obtained evidence of the falsehood of this charge. MALONE.

¹ *Since nature makes them partial, &c.*]

“ ——— Matres omnes filiis

“ In peccato adjutrices, auxilii in paterna injuria

“ Solent esse.”

Ter. Heaut. Act. 5. Sc. 2.

STEEVENS.

² — *of vantage.*] By some opportunity of secret observation.

JOHNSON.

A brother's murder!—Pray can I not,
 Though inclination be as sharp as will³;
 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 curied 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!—
 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.
 May one be pardon'd, and retain the offence⁴?
 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?
 Yet what can it, when one can not repent⁵?

³ *Though inclination be as sharp as will;*] *Will is command, direction.* Thus, *Ecclesiasticus*, 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.

⁴ *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.

⁵ *Yet what can it, when one can not repent?*] *What can repentance do for a man that cannot be penitent?* for a man who has only a part of penitence, distress of conscience, without the other part, resolution of amendment? JOHNSON.

O wretched

O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
 O limed soul⁶; 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! [retires, and kneels.]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying⁷;
 And now I'll do't;—And so he goes to heaven:
 And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd⁸:
 A villain kills my father; and, for that,
 I, his sole son, do this same villain send⁹
 To heaven.

Why, this is hire and salary¹, not revenge.
 He took my father grossly, full of bread;
 With all his crimes broad blown², 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.

⁶ O, limed soul;—] This alludes to *bird-lime*. Shakspeare uses the same word again, *K. Henry VI.* P. II.

“Madam, myself have *lim'd* a bush for her.” STEEVENS.

⁷ — pat, *now he is praying*;] Thus the folio. The quartos read — *but now*, &c. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *That would be scann'd*:] i. e. That should be considered, estimated. STEEVENS.

⁹ I, his sole son, do this same villain send—] The folio reads, *foule son*, a reading apparently corrupted from the quarto. The meaning is plain. I, his only son, who am bound to punish his murderer. JOHNSON.

¹ — hire and salary,] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*base* and *filly*. STEEVENS.

² He took my father grossly, full of bread;

With all his crimes broad blown,—] The uncommon expression, *full of bread*, our poet borrowed from the sacred writings: “Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, *fullness of bread*, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.” Ezckiel, xvi. 49.

MALONE.

Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent³:
 When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
 Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed⁴;
 At gaming, swearing^{*}; or about some act
 That has no relish of salvation in't:
 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven⁵;
 And that his soul may be as damn'd, and black,
 As hell, whereto it goes⁶. My mother stays:
 This physick but prolongs thy sickly days.

[Exit.
The

³ *Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent:*] To *hent* is used by Shakspeare for, to *seize*, to *catch*, to *lay bold on*. *Hent* is, therefore, *bold*, or *seizure*. *Lay bold on him, sword*, at a more horrid time.

JOHNSON.

See Vol. II. p. 108, n. 2. MALONE.

⁴ *When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;*

Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed;] So, in Marston's *Infernal Countess*, 1603:

“—Did'st thou not kill him drunk?

“Thou should'st, or in th' embraces of his lust.” STEEVENS.

^{*} *At gaming, swearing;*—] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, reads—*At game, a swearing, &c.* MALONE.

⁵ — *that his heels may kick at heaven;*] So, in Heywood's *Silver Age*, 1613:

“Whose heels tript up, kick'd 'gainst the firmament.” STEEV.

⁶ *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*.” STEEV.

This 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

The King rises, and advances.

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below :
Words, without thoughts, never to heaven go. [Exit.]

S C E N E IV.

Another Room in the same.

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 here⁷.
Pray you, be round with him.

Queen. I'll warrant you ; fear me not.
Withdraw, I hear him coming. [Polonius *hides himself*⁸.
Enter

“ Even in the height of sin ; then damn them both,

“ And let them sink before they ask God pardon,

“ That *your revenge may stretch unto their souls.*” MALONE.

⁷ I think it not improbable, that when Shakspeare put this horrid sentiment into the mouth of Hamlet, he might have recollected the following story : “ One of these monsters meeting his enemy unarmed, threatened to kill him, if he denied not God, his power, and essential properties, viz. his mercy, suffrance, &c. the which when the other, desiring life, pronounced with great horreur, kneeling upon his knees ; the bravo cried out, *nowe will I kill thy body and soule*, and at that instant thrust him through with his rapier.” *Brief Discourse of the Spanish State, with a Dialogue annexed, intituled Philobasilis*, 4to, 1590, p. 21. REED.

A similar story is told in *The Turkish Spy*, Vol. III. p. 243.

MALONE.

⁷ — *I'll silence me e'en here :*] *I'll silence me e'en here*, is, *I'll use no more words.* JOHNSON.

⁸ Polonius *hides himself.*] The concealment of Polonius in the queen's chamber, during the conversation between Hamlet and his mother, and the manner of his death, were suggested by the following passage in *The History of Hamlet*, bl. let. fig. D I : “ The counsellour entered secretly into the queene's chamber, and there *hid himselfe behind the arras*, and long before the queene and Hamlet came thither ; who being craftie and polittique, as soone as hee was within the chamber, doubting some treason, and fearing if he should speake severely and wisely to his mother, touching his secret practises, hee should be understood

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.

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 fet those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not
budge;

You go not, till I fet 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? *[draws.*

Dead, for a ducat, dead.

[Hamlet makes a pass through the arras.

Pol. [*behind.*] O, I am slain. *[falls, and dies.*

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not:

Is it the king?

[lifts up the arras, and draws forth Polonius.

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.

understood, and by that means intercepted, used his ordinary manner of dissimulation, and began to come [*r. crew*] like a cocke, beating with his arms (in such manner as cockes use to strike with their wings) upon the hangings of the chamber; whereby feeling something stirring under them, he cried, *a rat, a rat*, and presently drawing his sword, thrust it into the hangings; which done, pulled the counsellour (half-deade) out by the heeles, made an end of killing him; and, being slaine, cut his body in pieces, which he caused to be boyled, and then cast it into an open vault or privie." MALONE.

Queen.

Queen. As kill a king⁹!

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

[to Polonius.

I took

⁹ Queen. *As kill a king!*] It has been doubted, whether Shakspeare intended to represent the queen as accessary to the murder of her husband. The surprize she here expresses at the charge seems to tend to her exculpation. Where the variation is not particularly marked, we may presume, I think, that the poet intended to tell his story as it had been told before. The following extract therefore from *The History of Hamlet*, bl. let. relative to this point, will probably not be unacceptable to the reader: “Fengon [the king in the present play] boldened and encouraged by such impunitie, durst venture to couple himself in marriage with her, whom he used as his concubine during good Horvendille’s life; in that sort spotting his name with a double vice, incestuous adulterie, and paracide murther.—This adulterer and infamous murtherer slaudered his dead brother, that he would have slaine his wife, and that hee by chance finding him on the point ready to do it, in defence of the lady, had slaine him.—The unfortunate and wicked woman that had received the honour to be the wife of one of the valiantest and wisest princes in the North, imbased herself in such vile sort as to falsifie her faith unto him, and, which is worse, to marrie him that had bin the tyrannous murtherer of her lawful husband; *whicb mode diverse men think that she had beene the causer of the murther*, thereby to live in her adulterie without controule.” *Hyft. of Haml.* fig. C 1. 2.

In the conference however with her son, on which the present scene is founded, she strongly asserts her innocence with respect to this fact:

“I know well, my sonne, that I have done thee great wrong in marrying with Fengon, the cruel tyrant and murtherer of thy father, and my loyal spouse; but when thou shalt consider the small meanes of resistance, and the treason of the palace, with the little cause of confidence we are to expect, or hope for, of the courtiers, all wrought to his will; as also the power he made ready if I should have refused to like him; thou wouldst rather excuse, than accuse mee of lasciviousness or inconstancy, much less offer me that wrong *to suspect that ever thy mother Geruth once consented to the death and murther of her husband*: swearing unto thee by the majestie of the gods, that if it had layne in me to have resisted the tyrant, although it had beene with the losse of my blood, yea and of my life, I would surely have saved the life of my lord and husband.” *Ibid.* fig. D 4.

It is observable, that in the drama neither the king or queen make so good a defence. Shakspeare wished to render them as odious as he could, and therefore has not in any part of the play furnished them with even the semblance of an excuse for their conduct.

Though the inference already mentioned may be drawn from the

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 ; takes off the rose¹
 From the fair forehead of an innocent love,

And

surprize which our poet has here made the queen express at being charged with the murder of her husband, it is observable that when the player-queen in the preceding scene says,

“ In second husband let me be accurst !

“ None wed the second, *but who kill'd the first,*”

he has made Hamlet exclaim—“ *that's wormwood.*” The prince, therefore, both from that expression and the words addressed to his mother in the present scene, must be supposed to think her guilty.—Perhaps after all this investigation, the truth is, that Shakspeare himself meant to leave the matter in doubt. MALONE.

I know not in what part of this tragedy the king and queen could have been expected to enter into a vindication of their mutual conduct. The former indeed is rendered contemptible as well as guilty ; but for the latter our poet seems to have felt all that tenderness which the ghost recommends to the imitation of her son. STEEVENS.

Had Shakspeare thought fit to have introduced the topicks I have suggested, can there be a doubt concerning his ability to introduce them ? The king's justification, if to justify him had been the poet's object, (which it certainly was not,) might have been made in a soliloquy ; the queen's, in the present interview with her son. MALONE.

¹ — *takes off the rose, &c.*] 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 Shepberd's 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

And sets a blister there ; makes marriage vows
 As false as dicers' oaths : O, such a deed,
 As from the body of contraction² plucks
 The very soul ; and sweet religion makes
 A rhapsody of words : Heaven's face doth glow ;
 Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
 With tristful visage, as against the doom,
 Is thought-sick at the act³.

Queen. Ah me, what act,

That

Figure 4, in the *Morrice-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 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 II. Sc. 3. STEEVENS.

I believe, by the *rose* was only meant the *roseate hue*. The forehead certainly appears to us an odd place for the hue of innocence to dwell on, but Shakspeare might place it there with as much propriety as a *smile*. In *Troilus and Cressida* we find these lines :

“ So rich advantage of a promis'd glory,

“ As smiles upon the forehead of this action.”

That part of the forehead which is situated between the eye-brows; seems to have been considered by our poet as the seat of innocence and modesty. So, in a subsequent scene :

“ ——— brands the harlot,

“ Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow

“ Of my true mother.” MALONE.

² — from the body of contraction—] *Contraction for marriage contract.* WARBURTON.

³ — 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.

Frost

That roars so loud, and thunders in the index ⁴?

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this⁵;

The

From whence it appears, that Shakspeare wrote :

*Heaven's face doth glow,
O'er this solidity and compouna 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 *beated*, 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 Shakspeare, 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 objection. JOHNS.

I am strongly inclined to think that the reading of the quarto, 1604, is the true one. In Shakspeare's licentious diction, the meaning may be, The face of heaven doth glow with heated visage, over the earth: *and heaven*, as against the day of judgment, is thought-sick at the act.

Had not our poet St. Luke's description of the last day in his thoughts?—"And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring: men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking on those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken," &c. MALONE.

⁴ *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 *Otello*, Act II. sc. vii.—"an *index* and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts." STEEVENS.

See Vol. VIII. p. 180, n. 6. Bullokar in his *Expositor*, 8vo. 1616, defines an *Index* by "A table in a booke." The *table* was almost always prefixed to the books of our poet's age. *Indexes*, in the sense in which we now understand the word, were very uncommon. MALONE.

⁵ *Look here, upon 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 spook his plumes.—Milton, B. V. STEEVENS.

The

The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
 See, what a grace was seated on this brow:
 Hyperion's curls⁶; the front of Jove himself;
 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
 A station like the herald Mercury,
 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill⁷;
 A combination, and a form, indeed,
 Where every god did seem to set his seal,

The introduction of miniatures in this place appears to be a modern innovation. A print prefixed to Rowe's edition of *Hamlet*, published in 1709, proves this. There, the two royal portraits are exhibited as half-lengths, hanging in the Queen's closet; and either thus, or as whole lengths, they probably were exhibited from the time of the original performance of this tragedy to the death of Betterton. To half-lengths, however, the same objection lies, as to miniatures. MALONE.

⁶ *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.

⁷ *A station like the herald Mercury,*

New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;] I think it not improbable that Shakspeare caught this image from Phaer's translation of Virgil, (Fourth *Æneid*,) a book that without doubt he had read:

“ And now approaching neere, the top he seeth and mighty lims

“ *Of Atlas, mountain tough, that heaven on boystrous shoulders beares*;—

“ There first on ground with wings of might doth *Mercury* arrive,

“ Then down from thence right over seas himselfe doth headlong drive.”

In the margin are these words: “ The description of *Mercury's* journey from *heaven*, along the *mountain Atlas* in *Afrike*, *bighest* on earth.

MALONE.

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 III. sc. iii.

“ 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.

In the first scene of *Timon of Athens*, the poet, admiring a picture, introduces the same image:

“ ——— How this *grace*

“ Speaks his own *standing!*” MALONE.

To

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 ear⁸,
 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ?
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
 And batten⁹ on this moor ? Ha ! have you eyes ?
 You cannot call it, love : for, at your age,
 The hey-day in the blood¹ is tame, it's humble,
 And waits upon the judgment ; And what judgment
 Would step from this to this ? Sense, sure, you have,
 Else, could you not have motion² : 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,

⁸ — like a mildew'd ear,

Blasting his wholesome brother.] This alludes to *Pbaraob's dream* in the 41st chapter of *Genesis*. STEEVENS.

⁹—batten—] i. e. to grow fat. So, in *Claudius Tiberius Nero*, 1607.

“ ——— and for milk

“ I batten'd was with blood.”

Bat is an ancient word for *increase*. Hence the adjective *batful*, so often used by Drayton in his *Polyolbion*. STEEVENS.

¹ *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 forfeit ?” STEEVENS.

² — Sense, sure, you have,

Else, could you not have motion :] These words, and the following lines to the word *difference*, are found in the quarto, but not in the folio. *Sense* is sometimes used by Shakspeare for sensation or *sensual appetite* ; as *motion* is for the effect produced by the impulse of nature. Such, I think, is the signification of these words here. So, in *Measure for Measure* :

“ — she speaks, and 'tis

“ Such sense, that my *sense* breeds with it.”

Again, more appositely in the same play, where both the words occur :

“ ——— One who never feels

“ The wanton stings and motions of the *sense*.”

So, in Braithwaite's *Survey of Histories*, 1614 : These continent relations will reduce the straggling motions to a more settled and retired harbour.”

Sense has already been used in this scene, for *sensation* :

“ That it be proof and bulwark against *sense*.”

Dr. Warburton for *motion* substituted *notion*, i. e. intellect. MALONE.

To

To serve in such a difference. What devil was't,
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind³?
 Eyes without feeling⁴, feeling without sight,
 Ears without hand or eyes, smelling fans all,
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense
 Could not so mope⁵.

O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones⁶,
 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,
 And reason panders will⁷.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;

³ — at hoodman-blind?] This is, I suppose, the same as *blindman's-buff*. So, in *Two lamentable Tragedies in One, the One a murder of Master Beech, &c.* 1601:

“ Pick out men's eyes, and tell them that's the sport

“ Of hood-man blind.” STEEVENS.

⁴ *Eyes without feeling, &c.*] This and the three following lines are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

⁵ *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.

⁶ — Rebellious hell,

If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,] So, in *Othello*:

“ This hand is moist, my lady;—

“ 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.”

To *mutine*, for which the modern editors have substituted *mutiny*, was the ancient term, signifying to rise in mutiny. So, in Knolles's *History of the Turks*, 1603: “ The Janisaries—became wonderfully discontented, and began to *mutine* in diverse places of the citie.”

MALONE.

⁷ — *reason panders will.*] So the folio, I think rightly; but the reading of the quarto is defensible:

— *reason pardons will.* JOHNSON.

Panders was certainly Shakspeare's word. So, in *Venus and Adonis*:

“ When *reason* is the *lawd* to *lust's* abuse.” MALONE.

And there I see such black and grained⁸ spots,
As will not leave their tinct⁹.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed¹;
Stew'd in corruption; honeying, and making love
Over the nasty styte;—

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 kings²:
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule;
'That from a shelf the precious diadem stole³,
And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more.

Enter Ghost.

Ham. A king of shreds and patches⁴:—
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, laps'd in time and passion⁵, lets go by

⁸ — *grained*—] Dyed in grain. JOHNSON.

⁹ *As will not leave their tinct.*] The quartos read:
“As will leave there their tinct.” STEEVENS.

¹ — *an enseamed bed*;] Thus the quarto, 1604, and the folio. A later quarto of no authority reads—*incestuous bed*. *Enseamed bed*, as Dr. Johnson has observed, is *greasy bed*. *Seam* signifies *bogslard*. MALONE.
In the *Book of Haukyng*, &c. bl. l. no date, we are told that “*Ensayme of a hauke is the grece*.” STEEVENS.

² — *vice of kings*:] A low mimick of kings. The *vice* is the fool of a farce; from whom the modern *punch* is descended. JOHNSON.

³ *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. WARBURTON.

⁴ *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.

⁵ — *laps'd in time and passion*,—] That, having suffered *time* to slip, and *passion* to cool, lets go, &c. JOHNSON.

The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

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 works⁶;
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 foldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements⁷,
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 capable⁸.—Do not look upon me;

⁶ Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works;] Conceit for imagination,
So, in the *Rape of Lucrece*:

“ And the conceited painter was so nice,—.”

See also Vol. VI. p. 536, n. 8. MALONE.

⁷ — 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.

So, in *Macbeth*:

“ The time has been——

“ —— my fell of hair,

“ Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir,

“ As life were in't.” MALONE.

⁸ His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable.] Capable here signifies intelligent; equi-
ded with understanding. So, in *King Richard III*:

“ —— O, 'tis a parlous boy,

“ Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, capable.”

We yet use capacity in this sense. See Vol. VII. p. 122, n. 8.

MALONE.

Lest, with this piteous action, you convert
My stern effects⁹: 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!
My father, in his habit as he liv'd¹!

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[Exit Ghost.]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstacy
Is very cunning in².

Ham. Ecstacy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful musick: 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;

⁹ *My stern effects:*] *Effects* for actions; deeds *effected*. MALONE.

¹ *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 difficulty might perhaps be a little obviated by pointing the line thus:

My father—in his habit—as he liv'd. STEEVENS.

² *This is the very coinage of your brain:*

This bodiless creation ecstacy

Is very cunning in.] So, in *The Rape of Lucrece*:

“Such shadows are the weak brain's forgeries.” MALONE.

Ecstacy in this place, and many others, means a temporary alienation of mind, a fit. So, in *Eliosto Libidinoso*, a novel, by John Hinde, 1606: “—that bursting out of an *ecstacy* wherein she had long stood, like one beholding Medusa's head, lamenting,” &c. STEEVENS.

See Vol. IV. p. 361, n. 9. MALONE.

Repent.

Repeat what's past; avoid what is to come;
 And do not spread the compost on the weeds³,
 To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue:
 For, in the fatness of these purify times,
 Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg;
 Yea, curb⁴ 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.
 Good night: but go not to my uncle's bed;
 Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
 That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
 Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this⁵;
 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 easy⁶:
 For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
 And either curb the devil⁷, or throw him out

³ — *do not spread the compost, &c.*] Do not, by any new indulgence, heighten your former offences. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *curb* —] That is, *bend* and *truckle*. Fr. *courber*. So, in *Pierce Plowman*:

“Then I *courbid* on my knees,” &c. STEEVENS.

⁵ *That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
 Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this;*] Dr. Thirlby conjectured that Shakspeare wrote—of habits *evil*. I incline to think with him; though I have left the text undisturbed. From *That monster* to *put on*, is not in the folio. MALONE.

I think Thirlby's conjecture wrong, though the succeeding editors have followed it; *angel* and *devil* are evidently opposed. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *the next more easy*: &c.] This passage, as far as *potency*, is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

⁷ *And either curb the devil, &c.*] In the quarto, where alone this passage is found, some word was accidentally omitted at the press in the line before us. The quarto, 1604, reads:

And either *the devil*, or throw him out, &c.

For the insertion of the word *curb* I am answerable. The printer or corrector of a later quarto, finding the line nonsense, omitted the word *either*, and substituted *master* in its place. The modern editors have accepted the substituted word, and yet retain *either*; by which the metre is destroyed. The word omitted in the first copy was undoubtedly a monosyllable. MALONE.

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,—
To punish me with this, and this with me⁸,—
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.—
One word more, good lady⁹.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king¹ tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you, his mouse²;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses³,

Or

⁸ *To punish me with this, and this with me,*] To punish me by making me the instrument of this man's death, and to punish this man by my hand. For this, the reading of both the quarto and folio, Sir T. Hanmer and the subsequent editors have substituted,

To punish him with me, and me with this. MALONE.

⁹ *One word more, &c.*] This passage I have restored from the quartos. STEEVENS.

¹ *Let the bloat king*—] i. e. the swollen king. *Bloat* is the reading of the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—the *blunt* king. MALONE. This again hints at his intemperance. He had drunk himself into a dropsy. BLACKSTONE.

² —*bis mouse*;] *Mouse* was once a term of endearment. So, in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602, b. 2. chap. 10:

"God bless thee, *mouse*, the bridegroom said," &c.

Again, in the *Menæchmi*, 1595: "Shall I tell thee, sweet *mouse*? I never look upon thee, but I am quite out of love with my wife."

STEEVENS.

This term of endearment is very ancient, being found in *A new and merry Enterlude, called the Trial of Treasure*, 1567:

"My *mouse*, my nobs, my cony sweete;

"My hope and joye, my whole delight." MALONE.

³ —*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

Or padding in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
 Make you to ravel all this matter out,
 That I essentially am not in madnes,
 But mad in craft⁴. 'Twere good, you let him know :

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.

Reechy includes, I believe, *beat* as well as *smoke*. The verb to *reech*, which was once common, was certainly a corruption of—to *reek*. In a former passage Hamlet has remonstrated with his mother, on her living

“ In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed.” MALONE.

4 That I essentially am not in madnes,

But mad in craft.—] The reader will be pleased to see Dr. Farmer's extract from the old quarto *Historie of Hamlet*, 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 haue all men esteeme mee wholly depriued of sense and reasonable understanding, bycause I am well assured, that he that hath made no conscience to kill his owne brother, (accustomed to murders, and allured with desire of gouernement 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 fayne madnesse, then to use my right senses as nature hath bestowed them upon me. The bright shining clearnes thereof I am forced to hide vnder this shadow of dissimulation, as the sun doth hir beams under 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 preferue my life for the Danes and the memory of my late deccased father ; for that the desire of reuenging his death is so ingraven in my heart, that if I dye not shortly, I hope to take such and so great vengeance, that these countryes shall for euer speake thereof. Neuerthelesse I must stay the time, meanes, and occasion, lest by making ouer-great hast, I be now the cause of mine own 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 discourteous man, must vse craft, and politike inuentions, such as a fine witte can best imagine, not to discouer his interprise ; for seeing that by force I cannot effect my desire, reason alloweth me by dissimulation, subiltie, and secret practises to proceed therein.” STEEVENS.

Z 4

For

For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wife,
 Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib⁵,
 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 fly⁶; and, like the famous ape,
 To try conclusions⁷, in the basket creep,
 And break your own 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 England⁸; you know that?

Queen. Alack, I had forgot; 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. There's letters seal'd⁹; and my two school-fel-
 lows,—

⁵ — a gib,] So, in Drayton's Epistle from *Elinor Cobham* to *Duke Humpfrey*:

“ And call me beldam, gib, witch, night-mare, trot.”

Gib was a common name for a cat. STEEVENS.

See Vol. V. p. 123, n. 5. MALONE.

⁶ *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 let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too.”

WARNER.

⁷ *To try conclusions,*] i. e. experiments. STEEVENS.

See Vol. VIII. p. 334, n. 3. MALONE.

⁸ *I must to England;*] Shakspeare does not inform us, how Hamlet came to know that he was to be sent to England. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were made acquainted with the king's intentions for the first time in the very last scene; and they do not appear to have had any communication with the prince since that time. Add to this, that in a subsequent scene, when the king, after the death of Polonius, informs Hamlet he was to go to England, he expresses great surprise, as if he had not heard any thing of it before.—This last, however, may perhaps be accounted for, as contributing to his design of passing for a madman. MALONE.

⁹ *There's letters seal'd: &c.*] The nine following verses are added out of the old edition. POPE.

Whom

Whom I will trust, as I will adders fang'd¹,—
 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
 Hoist² 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 guts³ 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.
 Come, sir, to draw toward an end with with you⁴:—
 Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally; Hamlet dragging in Polonius.*]

¹ — *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.

² *Hoist, &c.*] *Hoist* for *hoised*; as *past* for *passed*. STEEVENS.

* *When in one line two crafts directly meet.*] Still alluding to a countermine. MALONE.

³ — *the guts* —] The word *guts* was not anciently so offensive to delicacy as it is at present; but was used by *Lylly* (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*. *Stanyburst* often has it in his translation of *Virgil*, 1582: *Pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit exta.*

"She weens her fortune by *guts* hoate smoakye to conster."

STEEVENS.

⁴ *Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you:*] Shakspeare 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.

A C T

A C T IV^s. S C E N E I.*The same.**Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDEN-
STERN.**King.* There's matter in these sighs; these profound
heavesYou must translate: 'tis fit we understand them:
Where is your son?*Queen.* Bestow this place on us a little while⁶.—*[to Ros. and Guil. who go out.*Ah, my good lord⁷, what have I seen to-night?*King.* What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?*Queen.* Mad as the sea, and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier*: In his lawless fit,
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 out of haunt⁸,

This

⁵ *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. JOHNS.

⁶ *Bestow this place on us a little while.*] This line is wanting in the folio. STEEVENS.

⁷ — *my good lord,*] The quartos read—*mine own lord.* STEEVENS.

* *Mad as the sea, and wind, when both contend, &c.*] We have precisely the same image in *K. Lear*, expressed with more brevity:

“ ——— he was met even now,

“ *As mad as the vex'd sea.*” MALONE.

⁸ — *out of haunt,*] *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,

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, like some ore⁹,
 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 !

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 ;

Again, in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602, book v. 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 *Romeo and Juliet* :

“ We talk here in the public *baunt* of men.” STEEVENS.

⁹ — *like some ore,*] Shakspeare seems to think *ore* to be *or*, that is, gold. Base metals have *ore* no less than precious. JOHNSON.

He has perhaps used *ore* in the same sense in his *Rape of Lucrece* :

“ When beauty boasted blushes, in despite

“ Virtue would stain that *ore* with silver white.”

See Vol. X. p. 90, n. 6.

A *mineral* Mintheu defines in his Dictionary, 1617, “ Any thing that grows in mines, and contains metals.” Shakspeare seems to have used the word in this sense,—for a *rude mass of metals*. In Bullokar's *English Expositor*, 8vo, 1616, *Mineral* is defined, “ mettall, or any thing digged out of the earth.” MALONE.

Minerals are *mines*. So, in *The Golden Remains of Hales of Eton*, 1693, p. 34. Controversies of the times, “ like spirits in the *minerals*, with all their labour, nothing is done.” STEEVENS.

And

And let them know, both what we mean to do,
 And what's untimely done : so viperous slander¹,—
 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,
 And hit the woundless air².—O, come away!
 My soul is full of discord, and dismay. [Exeunt]

S C E N E II.

Another Room in the same,

Enter HAMLET.

Ham.—Safely stow'd,—[*Ros. &c. within.* Hamlet!
 lord Hamlet!] But soft³,—what noise? who calls on
 Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter

¹ — *so viperous slander, &c.*] Neither these words, nor the following three lines and an half, are in the folio. In the quarto, 1604, and all the subsequent quartos, the passage stands thus :

—And what's untimely done.

Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter, &c.

the compositor having omitted the latter part of the first line, as in a former scene; (see p. 310, n. 4.) a circumstance which gives additional strength to an observation made in Vol. VII. p. 575, n. 8. Mr. Theobald supplied the *lacuna* by reading—*For haply slander, &c.* So appears to me to suit the context better; for these lines are rather in apposition with those immediately preceding, than an illation from them. Mr. Mason, I find, has made the same observation.

Shakspeare, as Theobald has observed, again expatiates on the diffusive power of slander, in *Cymbeline* :

“ ——— 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.” MALONE.

² — *the woundless air.*] So, in a former scene :

“ It is as *the air invulnerable.*” MALONE.

³ — *But soft,*] I have added these two words from the quartos.

STEEVENS.

The folio reads :

Ham. Safely stow'd.

Ros. &c. within. Hamlet! lord Hamlet.

Ham. What noise, &c.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

Rof. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust⁴, whereto 'tis kin.

Rof. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Rof. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own.
Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!—what replica-
tion should be made by the son of a king?

Rof. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance,
his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the
king best service in the end: He keeps them, like an
ape⁵, in the corner of his jaw; first mouth'd, to be
last

In the quarto, 1604, the speech stands thus:

Ham. Safely stow'd; but soft, what noise? who calls on Hamlet? &c.

I have therefore printed Hamlet's speech unbroken, and inserted
that of Rosencrantz, &c. from the folio, before the words, *but soft, &c.*
In the modern editions Hamlet is made to take notice of the noise made
by the courtiers, before he has heard it. MALONE.

⁴ *Compounded it with dust,*—] So in *K. Henry IV.* P. II.

“Only compound me with forgotten dust.”

Again, in our poet's 71st Sonnet;

“When I perhaps compounded am with clay.” MALONE.

⁵ — *like an ape,*] The quarto has *apple*, which is generally fol-
lowed. The folio has *ape*, which Hanmer has received, and illus-
trated 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 provided with
“on the side of their jaw, and there they keep it, till they have done
“with the rest.” JOHNSON.

Surely this should be “like an *ape* an *apple*.” FARMER.

The reading of the folio, *like an ape*, I believe to be the true one,
because Shakspeare has the same phraseology in many other places.
The word *ape* refers to the king, not to his courtiers. *He keeps*
them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw, &c. means, he keeps them,
as an ape keeps food, in the corner of his jaw, &c. So, in *K. Henry IV.*
P. I. “your chamber-lie breeds fleas like a loach;” i. e. as fast as a
loach breeds loaches. Again, in *K. Lear*: “They flatter'd me like a
dog;” i. e. as a dog savours upon and flatters his master.

That the particular food in Shakspeare's contemplation was an
apple, may be inferred from the following passage in *The Captain*, by
Beaumont and Fletcher:

“And

last swallow'd: When he needs what you have glean'd, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ref. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear⁶.

Ref. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king:

Ham. The body is with the king⁷, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing—

Guil. A thing, my lord?

Ham. Of nothing⁸: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after⁹.

[*Exit.*

SCENE

“ And lie, and kiss my hand unto my mistress,

“ As often as an ape does for an apple.”

I cannot approve of Dr. Farmer's reading. Had our poet meant to introduce both the ape and the apple, he would, I think, have written not *like*, but “ *as* an ape an apple.”

The two instances above quoted shew that any emendation is unnecessary. The reading of the quarto is, however, defensible.

MALONE.

⁶ *A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.*] This, if I mistake not, is a proverbial sentence. MALONE.

⁷ *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.

⁸ *Of nothing:—*] 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-bear, a forty puffs of winde, a *thing of nothing*.” FARMER.

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

“ At what dost thou laugh?

“ At a *thing of nothing*; at thee.”

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Magnetic Lady*:

“ A toy, a *thing of nothing*.” STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens has given here many parallelisms; but the origin of all is to be look'd for, I believe, in the 144th Psalm, ver. 5: “ Man is like a *thing*

S C E N E III.

*Another Room in the same.**Enter King, attended.*

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,

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

Or not at all.—How now? what hath befallen?

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.

Enter HAMLET, and GUILDERSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper? Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a

a thing of nought." The book of Common Prayer, and the translation of the bible into English, furnished our old writers with many forms of expression, some of which are still in use. WHALLEY.

9 *Hide fox, &c.*] There is a play among children called, *Hide fox, and all after.* HANMER.

The same sport is alluded to in *Decker's Satiromastix*: "—our unhandsome-faced poet does play at bo-peep with your grace, and cries —*All bid, as boys do.*"

This passage is not in the quarto. STEEVENS.

certain

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, alas¹!

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. [*to some Attendants.*

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 quickness²: Therefore, prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help³,
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;

¹ *Alas, alas!*] This speech, and the following, are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

² *With fiery quickness:*] These words are not in the quartos. STEEVENS.

³ — *the wind at help,*] I suppose it should be read,
The bark is ready, and the wind at helm. JOHNSON.

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 set
Our sovereign process⁴ ; which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect⁵,

The

⁴ — thou may'st not coldly set

Our sovereign process ;] Mr. Steevens says, he adheres to this reading, which is found both in the folio and quarto, because—to set is an expression used at the gaming-table. To set a sum of money at hazard, is to stake it, or to offer it as a *wager* ; but I do not see how that throws any light on the present passage.

To set at nought is a phrase yet in use, and occurs in one of our poet's plays :

“ To have a son set your decrees at nought.”

To set the king's process coldly, may therefore perhaps mean, to value or rate it low ; to set it at nought. MALONE.

⁵ By letters conjuring—] Thus the folio. The quarto reads,

“ By letters congruing. STEEVENS.

The reading of the folio may derive some support from the following passage in *The History of Hamlet*, bl. let. —“ making the king of England minister of his massacring resolution ; to whom he purposed to send him, [Hamlet,] and by letters desire him to put him to death.” So also, by a subsequent line :

“ Ham. Wilt thou know the effect of what I wrote ?

“ Hor. Ay, good my lord.

“ Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,” &c.

The circumstances mentioned as inducing the king to send the prince to England, rather than elsewhere, are likewise found in *The History of Hamlet*.

Effect was formerly used for *act* or *deed*, simply, and is so used in the line before us. So, in Leo's *Historie of Africa*, translated by Pory, folio, 1600, p. 253 : “ Three daies after this effect, there came to us a Zuum, that is, a captaine,” &c. See also *supra*, p. 340, n. 9.

The verb to conjure (in the sense of to supplicate,) was formerly accented on the first syllable. So, in *Macbeth* :

“ I conjure you, by that which you profess,

“ Howe'er you come to know it, answer me :”

The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
 For like the heſtick in my blood he rages⁶,
 And thou muſt cure me: Till I know 'tis done,
 Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin⁷.

S C E N E IV.

A Plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS, and Forces, marching.

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.

Cap. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go ſoftly on. [*Exeunt FORTINBRAS and Forces.*]

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, &c.

Ham. Good fir⁹, whoſe powers are theſe?

Cap. They are of Norway, fir.

Again, in *King John*:

“ I conjure thee but ſlowly; run more faſt.”

Again, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

“ I conjure thee, by Roſaline's bright eyes”,—.

Again, in *Measure for Measure*:

“ O Prince, I conjure thee, as thou believ'ſt,” &c. MALONE;

⁶ — *like the heſtick, in my blood he rages,*] So, in *Love's Labour's Loſt*:

“ I would forget her, but a fever, ſhe,

“ Reigns in my blood.” MALONE.

⁷ *Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin.*] i. e. (as Dr. Johnſon obſerves,) “ till I know 'tis done, I ſhall be miſerable, whatever befall me.”

This is the reading of the quarto. The folio, for the ſake of rhyme, reads:

“ Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.”

But this, I think, the poet could not have written. The king is ſpeaking of the future time. To ſay, till I ſhall be informed that a certain act *has been done*, whatever may befall me, my joys never *had* a beginning, is ſurely nonſenſe. MALONE.

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.

Ham.

Ham. How purpos'd; fir, I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who commands them, fir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, fir,
Or for some frontier?

Cap. 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.

Cap. 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, fir.

Cap. God be wi'you, fir. [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 chief good, and market of his time¹,

Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.

Sure, he, that made us with such large discourse²,

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 scruple³

Of thinking too precisely on the event,—

A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,

¹ — chief good, and market of his time, &c.] If his highest good, and that for which he sells his time, be to sleep and feed. JOHNSON.

Market, I think, here means profit. MALONE.

² — large discourse,] Such latitude of comprehension, such power of reviewing the past, and anticipating the future. JOHNSON.

³ — some craven scruple—] Some cowardly scruple. See Vol. III. p. 287, n. 2. MALONE.

And, ever, three parts coward,—I do not know
 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:
 Witnesses, this army, of such mass, and charge,
 Led by a delicate and tender prince;
 Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
 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. Rightly to be great,
 Is, not to stir without great argument⁴;
 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,
 Excitements of my reason, and my blood⁵,
 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 continent⁶,
 To hide the slain?—O, from this time forth,
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [Exit.

⁴ — *Rightly to be great, Is, not to stir without, &c.*] The sentiment of Shakspeare is partly just, and partly romantick.

— *Rightly to be great, Is not to stir without great argument*;
 is exactly philosophic.

But greatly to find quarrel in a straw, When honour's at the 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.

⁵ *Excitements of my reason, and my blood,*] Provocations which excite both my reason and my passions to vengeance. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *continent,*] *Continent,* in our author, means that which comprehends or encloses. So, in *King Lear*:

“Give your concealing continents.” STEEVENS.

SCENE

SCENE V.

Elfinore. *A Room in the Castle.*

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;

Spurns enviously at straws⁷; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection⁸; they aim at it⁹,
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 unhappily¹.

Queen.

⁷ *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 *King Henry VIII*.

“ You turn the good we offer into *envy*.”

Again, in *God's Revenge against Murder*, 1621, *Hist.* VI.— “ She loves the memory of Syponus, and *envies* and detests that of her two husbands.” STEEVENS.

See Vol. VII. p. 42, n. 1, and Vol. VI. p. 75, n. 6. MALONE.

⁸ — *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.

⁹ — *they aim at it*,] The quartos read—they *yawn* at it. *To aim* is to guess. STEEVENS.

¹ *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.

See Vol. II. p. 234, n. 2; Vol. III. p. 456, n. 6; and Vol. VII. p. 37, n. 2. MALONE.

Queen. 'Twere good, she were spoken with ²; for she
may frew

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 amiss ³:

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?

Oph. How should I your true love know ⁴

From another one?

By his cockle hat, and staff,

And his sandal spoon ⁵.

[Singing.

Queen.

That *unhappy* once signified *mischievous*, may be known from P. Holland's translation of *Pliny's Nat. Hist.* b. 19. ch. 7. "— the shrewd and *unhappie* fowles, which lie upon the lands, and eat up the seed new-sowne." We still use *unlucky* in the same sense. STEEVENS.

² 'Twere good, she were spoken with;— These lines are given to the Queen in the folio, and to Horatio in the quarto. JOHNSON.

I think the two first lines of Horatio's speech, ['Twere good, &c.] belong to him; the rest to the queen. BLACKSTONE.

In the quarto, the Queen, Horatio, and a *Gentleman*, enter at the beginning of this scene. The two speeches, "She is importunate," &c. and "She speaks much of her father," &c. are there given to the *Gentleman*, and the line now before us, as well as the two following, to *Horatio*: the remainder of this speech to the queen. I think it probable that the regulation proposed by Sir W. Blackstone was that intended by Shakspeare. MALONE.

³ —to some great amiss;] Shakspeare 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." STEEVENS.

See Vol. X. p. 315. Each toy is, each trifle. MALONE.

⁴ How should I your true love, &c.] There is no part of this play, in its representation on the stage, more pathetick than this scene; which, I suppose, proceeds from the utter insensibility Ophelia has to her own misfortunes.

A great

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

He is dead and gone, lady,

[sings.]

He is dead and gone;

At his head a grafs-green turf,

At his heels a stone.

O, ho!

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia,—

Oph. Pray you, mark.

White his shroud as the mountain snow,

[sings:]

Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. Larded all with sweet flowers⁶;

Which bewept to the grave did not go,

With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God 'ield you⁷! They say, the owl was a baker's

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.

⁵ *By his cockle hat, and staff,*

And his sandal spoon.] 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 *Greene's Newer too late*, 1616:

“ A hat of straw like to a swain,

“ Shelter for the sun and rain,

“ With a scallop-shell before,” &c.

Again, in *The Old Wives Tale*, by George Peele, 1595: “ I will give thee a Palmer's staffe of yvorie, and a scallop-shell of beaten gold.” STEEVENS.

⁶ *Larded all with sweet flowers;]* The expression is taken from cookery. JOHNSON.

⁷ *Well, God'ield you !]* i. e. Heaven reward you! So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

“ Tend me to-night two hours, I ask no more,

“ And the Gods yield you for't!”

A a 4

Sc,

baker's daughter⁸. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Opb. 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 day⁹,

All in the morning betime,

And I a maid at your window,

To be your Valentine:

Then up he rose, and donn'd his cloaths¹,

And dupp'd the chamber door²;

Let in the maid, that out a maid

Never departed more.

King.

So Sir John Grey, in a letter in Ashmole's Appendix to his Account of the Garter, Numb. 46: "The king of his gracious lordship, God yield him, hath chosen me to be owne of his brethrene of the knyghts of the garter." THEOBALD.

See Vol. IV. p. 302, n. 9. MALONE.

⁸ — *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.

⁹ *Saint Valentine's day,*] There is a rural tradition that about this time of year birds choose their mates. Bourne in his *Antiquities of the Common People*, observes, that "it is a ceremony never omitted among the vulgar, to draw lots, which they term *Valentines*, on the eve before Valentine-day. The names of a select number of one sex are by an equal number of the other put into some vessel; and after that every one draws a name, which for the present is called their *Valentine*, and is also look'd upon as a good omen of their being man and wife afterwards." Mr. Brand adds, that he has "searched the Legend of St. Valentine, but thinks there is no occurrence in his life, that could have given rise to this ceremony." MALONE.

¹ — *donn'd his cloaths,*] *To don,* is to *do on*, to put on, as *doff* is to *do off*, put off. STEEVENS.

² *And dupp'd the chamber-door;*] *To dup*, is to *do up*; to lift the latch. It were easy to write, *And op'd* —. JOHNSON.

To dup, was a common contraction of *to do up*. So, in *Damon and Pythias*,

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an end on't.

By Gis, and by Saint Charity³,

Alack, and fie for shame!

Young men will do't, if they come to't;

By cock⁴, they are to blame.

Quoth she, before you tumbled me,

You promis'd me to wed:

[He answers⁵.]

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

Pythias, 1582: "— the porters are drunk; will they not *dup* the gate to-day?"

Lord Surrey, in his translation of the second Æneid, renders *Panduntur portæ*, "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*.

It appears from *Martin Mark-all's Apologie to the Bel-man of London*, 1610, that in the cant of gypsies, &c. *Dup the gigger*, signified to open the doore. STEEVENS.

³ By Gis, and by Saint Charity,] *Saint Charity* is a known saint among the Roman Catholics. Spenser mentions her, *Eclog. V.* 255:

"Ah dear lord, and sweet *Saint Charity*!"

I find, by *Giffé*, used as an adjuration, both by Gascoigne in his Poems, by Preston in his *Cambyfes*, and in *K. Edward III.* 1599:

"By *Gis*, fair lords, ere many daies be past," &c. STEEVENS.

In the scene between the bastard Faulconbridge and the friers and nunne in the first part of *The troublesome Raigne of King John*, (edit. 1779, p. 256, &c.) the nunne swears by *Gis*, and the friers pray to *Saint Witbold*, (another obsolete saint mentioned in *K. Lear*, Act III.) and adjure him by *Saint Charitie* to hear them. BLACKSTONE.

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.

⁴ 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 fifth Act of the Second Part of *K. Henry IV.* STEEVENS.

⁵ He answers.] These words I have added from the quartos.

STEEVENS.

him

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, ladies⁶; 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 unwholesome in their thoughts, and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly⁷,
In hugger-mugger to enter him⁸: Poor Ophelia
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

⁶ Come, my coach! *Good night, ladies;*] In Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, 1590, Zabina in her frenzy uses the same expression: "Hell, snake ready my coach, my chair, my jewels. I come, I come." MALONE.

⁷ — *but greenly,*] But *unskillfully*; with *greenness*; that is, without maturity of judgment. JOHNSON.

⁸ *In hugger-mugger to enter him:*—] All the modern editions that I have consulted, give it,

In private to enter him;—

That the words now replaced are better, I do not undertake to prove; it is sufficient that they are Shakspeare'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 unskillfully made, we shall in time have very little of his meaning. JOHNSON.

On this just observation, I ground the restoration of a gross and unpleasing word in a preceding passage, for which Mr. Pope substituted *groan*. See p. 290, n. 3. The alteration in the present instance was made by the same editor. MALONE.

Shakspeare 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 *bugger-mugger*."

It is used in Harrington's *Ariosto*:

"So that it might be done in *bugger-mugger*."

It appears from Greene's *Groundwork of Coneycatching*, 1592, that *to bugger*, was to lurk about. STEEVENS.

The

Her brother is in secret come from France :
 Feeds on his wonder⁹, keeps himself in clouds,
 And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
 With pestilent speeches of his father's death ;
 Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd¹,
 Will nothing stick our person to arraign
 In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
 Like to a murdering-piece², in many places
 Gives me superfluous death ! [A noise within.]

Queen. Alack ! what noise is this³ ?

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Attend. Where are my Switzers* ? Let them
 guard the door :
 What is the matter ?

The meaning of the expression is ascertained by Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598 : "*Dinascoso*, Secretly, hiddenly, in *bugger-mugger*."

MALONE

⁹ 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. Hanmer reads unnecessarily,—Feeds on his anger. JOHNSON.

¹ Wherein necessity, &c.] Wherein, that is, in which pestilent speeches, necessity, or, the obligation of an accuser to support his charge, will nothing stick, &c. JOHNSON.

² Like to a murdering-piece, &c.] Dr. Warburton thought that by a murdering-piece was meant "such a piece as assassins use, with many barrels"; and Mr. Steevens conceived, that this explanation was justified by the following passage in *The Double Marriage* of B. and Fletcher:

"And, like a murdering piece, aims not at one,

"But all that stand within the dangerous level."

But Dr. Warburton was certainly mistaken. A murdering-piece was the specific term in Shakspeare's time, for a piece of ordnance, or small cannon. The word is found in Coles's Latin Dictionary, 1679, and rendered, "*tormentum murale*."

The small cannon, which are, or were, used in the fore-castle, half-deck, or steerage of a ship of war, were within this century called murdering-pieces. MALONE.

³ Alack ! &c.] This speech of the Queen is omitted in the quartos.

STEEVENS.

* Where are my Switzers ?] I have observed in many of our old plays, that the guards attendant on kings are called *Switzers*, and that without any regard to the country where the scene is laid. REED.

The reason is, because the Swiss in the time of our poet, as at present, were hired to fight the battles of other nations. So, in Nashe's *Christ's Teares over Jerusalem*, 4to, 1594: "Law, logicke, and the *Switzers*, may be hired to fight for any body." MALONE.

Gen.

Gen. Save yourself, my lord;
 The ocean, over-peering of his list⁴,
 Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
 Than young Laertes, in a riotous haste,
 O'er-bears your officers! The rabble call him, lord;
 And, as the world were now but to begin,
 Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
 The ratifiers and props of every word⁵,
 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 dogs⁶.

⁴ *The ocean over-peering of his list,*] *List*, in this place, signifies boundary, i. e. the shore. So, in *K. Henry IV.* P. I.:

“The very list, the very utmost bound
 “Of all our fortunes.”

The *selvage* of cloth was in both places, I believe, in our author's thoughts. MALONE.

⁵ *The ratifiers and props of every word,*] Sir T. Hanmer would transpose this line and the next. Dr. Warburton proposes to read, *wad*; and Dr. Johnson, *weal*, instead of *word*. I should be rather for reading, *work*. TYRWHITT.

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 *be utters*, cry, Let us make choice, that Laertes shall be king. TOLLET.

This construction might certainly be admitted, and *the ratifiers and props of every word* might be understood to be applied to the rabble mentioned in a preceding line, without Hanmer's transposition of this and the following line; but there is no authority for what Mr. Tollet adds, “of every word *be* [i. e. Laertes] *utters*,” for the poet has not described Laertes as having uttered a word. If therefore the rabble are called *the ratifiers and props of every word*, we must understand, “of every word *uttered by themselves*;” which is so tame, that it would be unjust to our poet to suppose that to have been his meaning. *Ratifiers*, &c. refer not to the people, but to *custom* and *antiquity*, which the speaker says are the true ratifiers and props of every word. The last word however of the line may well be suspected to be corrupt; and Mr. Tyrwhitt has probably suggested the true reading. MALONE.

⁶ *O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.*] Hounds run counter when they trace the trail backwards. JOHNSON.

King.

King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*]

Enter LAERTES, arm'd ; Danes following.

Laer. Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

Dan. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

Dan. We will, we will. [*They retire without the door.*]

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
baffard;

Cries, cuckold, to my father; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow⁷
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?

⁷ — *unsmirched brow*—] i. e. clean, not defiled. To *besmirch*, our author uses *Act I. sc. v.*

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 pelican⁸,
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 ſenſibly⁹ in grief for it,
It ſhall as level to your judgment 'pear¹,
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now ! what noiſe is that ?

*Enter OPHELIA, fantaſtically dreſs'd with ſtraws and
flowers.*

O heat, dry up my brains ! tears, ſeven times falt,

⁸ — *life-rend'ring pelican,*] So, in the ancient *Interlude of Nature*,
bl. l. no date :

“ Who taught the cok hys watche-howres to obſerve,

“ And ſyng of corage wyth ſhryll throte on hye ?

“ Who taught the *pellycan* her tender hart to carve ?—

“ For ſhe nolde ſuffer her byrdys to dye ?”

It is almoſt needleſs to add that this account of the bird is entirely fa-
bulous. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *moſt ſenſibly*—] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio, follow-
ing the error of a later quarto, reads—moſt *ſenſible*. MALONE.

¹ — *to your judgment 'pear,*] So the quarto. The folio, and all the
later editions, read,—*to your judgment pierce*, leſs intelligibly.

JOHNSON.

This eluſion of the verb to *appear*, is common to Beaumont and
Fletcher. So, in *The Maid of the Mill* :

“ And where they 'pear ſo excellent in little,

“ They will but flame in great.” STEEVENS.

Burn

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 loves².

Oph. *They bore him bare-fac'd on the bier*³;
*Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny*⁴;
And in his grave rain'd many a tear;—

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
 It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, *Down a-down*⁵, *an you call him*
a-down-a.

² *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.

³ *They bore him bare-fac'd on the bier, &c.*] So, in Chaucer's *Knighthe's Tale*, late edit. ver. 2879:

“He laid him bare the visage on the bere,
 “Therwith he wept that pitee was to here.” STEEVENS.

⁴ *Hey no nonny, &c.*] These words, which were the burthen of a song, are found only in the folio. See Vol. VIII. p. 592, n. 6.

MALONE.

⁵ — *sing, Down a-down,*] Perhaps Shakspeare alludes to *Phæbe's Sonnet*, by Tho. Lodge, which the reader may find in *England's Helicon*, 1614:

“*Down a-down, &c.*
 “Thus Phillis sung,
 “By fancy once distressed: &c.
 “And so sing I, with *downe a-downe,*” &c.

Down a-down

a-down-a. O, how the wheel becomes it⁶! It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray you,

Down a-down is likewise the burthen of a song in the *Three Ladies of London*, 1584, and perhaps common to many others. STEEVENS.

See Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: "*Filibustacchina*, The burthen of a countrie song; as we say *Hay doun a doun, douna.*"

MALONE.

⁶ O, how the wheel becomes it!] The story alluded to I do not know; but perhaps the lady stolen by the steward was reduced to *spin*.

JOHNSON:

The *wheel* 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 Shakspeare:

"The song was accounted a good one, though it was not moche graced by the *wbeele*, 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.

I am inclined to think that *wbeel* is here used in its ordinary sense, and that these words allude to the occupation of the girl who is supposed to sing the song alluded to by Ophelia.—The following lines in Hall's *Virgidemiarum*, 1597, appear to me to add some support to this interpretation:

"Some drunken rimer thinks his time well spent,
 "If he can live to see his name in print;
 "Who when he is once fished to the presse,
 "And sees his handfelle have such faire successe,
 "Sung to the *wbeele*, and sung unto the payle,
 "He sends forth thraves of *ballads* to the sale."

So, in Sir Thomas Overbury's *Characters*, 1614: "She makes her hands hard with labour, and her heart soft with pittie; and when winter evenings fall early, sitting at her merry *wbeele*, she sings a defiance to the giddy wheele of fortune."

Our authour likewise furnishes an authority to the same purpose. *Twelfth Night*, Act II. sc. iv.

"——— Come, the *song* we had last night:
 "The *spinners*, and the knitters in the sun,
 "Do use to *chaunt* it."

A musical

you, love, remember : and there is pansies, that's for thoughts⁷.

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines⁸ :—there's
rue

A musical antiquary may perhaps contend, that the controverted words of the text allude to an ancient instrument mentioned by Chaucer, and called by him a *rote*, by others a *wielle*; which was played upon by the friction of a *wheel*. MALONE.

⁷ *There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;—and there is 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 *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. It was not only carried at funerals, but worn at weddings, as appears from a passage in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Elder Brother*, Act III. sc. i.

So, in *A Dialogue between Nature and the Phœnix*, by R. Chester, 1601:

“ There's *rosemarie*; the Arabians justifie

“ (Physitions of exceeding perfect skill)

“ It comforteth the braine and *memorie*,” &c. STEEVENS

Rosemary being supposed to strengthen the memory, was the emblem of fidelity in lovers. So, in *A Handfull of Pleasant Delites*, containing sundrie new Sonets, 16mo, 1584:

“ *Rosemary* is for remembrance

“ Betweene us daie and night;

“ Wishing that I might alwaies have

“ You present in my sight.”

The poem in which these lines are found, is entitled *A Nofegaie alwaies sweet for Lovers to send for Tokens of love*, &c. MALONE.

⁸ *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 *thapklefs* flower grows not in my garden.”

rue for you;—and here's some for me:—we may call it, herb of grace o'fundays⁹:—you may wear your rue with a difference¹.—There's a daisy²:—I would give you some

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 *Calta 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.

Columbine was an emblem of cuckoldom on account of the horns of its nectaria, which are remarkable in this plant. See *Aquilegia* in Linnaeus's *Genera*, 684. S. W.

Ophelia gives her fennel and columbines to the king. In the collection of Sonnets quoted above, the former is thus mentioned:

“ Fennel is for flatterers,

“ An evil thing 'tis sure;

“ But I have alwaies' meant truly,

“ With constant heart most pure.”

See also Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: “ *Dare finocchio*, to give fennel,—to flatter, to dissemble.” MALONE.

⁹ *There's rue for you;—and here's some for me:—we may call it herb of grace o'fundays:*] I believe there is a quibble meant in this passage; *rue* anciently signifying the same as *rutb*, 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.

¹ *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.

Herb of grace was not the *sunday name*, but the *every day name* of *rue*. In the common dictionaries of Shakspeare's time it is called *herb of grace*. See Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598, in *v. ruta*, and Cotgrave's French Dictionary, 1611, in *v. rue*. There is no ground therefore for supposing, with Dr. Warburton, that *ue* was called herb of

some violets; but they wither'd all, when my father died³:—They say, he made a good end,—

*For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy*⁴,— [sings.

Laer. Thought and affliction⁵, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Oph. *And will he not come again?* [sings.

And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead,

Go to thy death-bed,

He never will come again.

of grace, from its being used in exorcisms performed in churches on Sundays.

Ophelia only means, I think, that the queen may with peculiar propriety on *Sundays*, when she solicits pardon for that crime which she has so much occasion to *rue* and repent of, call her *rue*, *herb of grace*. So, in *King Richard II.*

“Here did she drop a tear; here in this place

“I’ll set a bank of *rue*, four *herb of grace*.

“*Rue*, even for *rutb*, here shortly shall be seen,

“In the remembrance of a weeping queen.”

Ophelia, after having given the queen *rue*, to remind her of the sorrow and contrition she ought to feel for her incestuous marriage, tells her, she may wear it with a *difference*, to distinguish it from that worn by Ophelia herself; because her tears flowed from the loss of a father, those of the queen ought to flow for her guilt. MALONE.

² *There’s a daisy:*] Greene in his *Quip for an upstart Courtier*, has explained the significance of this flower: “—Next them grew the DISSEMBLING DAISIE, to warne such light-of-love wenches not to trust every faire promise that such amorous bachelors make them.”

HENLEY.

³ *I would give you some violets, but they wither’d all, when my father died:*] The violet is thus characterized in the old collection of Sonnets above quoted, printed in 1584:

“Violet is for *faithfulnessse*,

“Which in me shall abide;

“Hoping likewise that from your heart

“You will not let it slide.” MALONE.

⁴ *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 IV. sc. i:

“— 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.

*His beard was as white as snow*⁶,

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 souls⁷! I pray God. God be wi'you!

[Exit OPHELIA.]

Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune 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:
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.

Laer. Let this be so;

His means of death, his obscure funeral,—

⁵ Thought and affliction,—] *Thought* here, as in many other places, signifies melancholy. See Vol. VII. p. 528, n. 2. MALONE.

⁶ *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 III.:

“ *His head 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.

⁷ *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. Barthelette, 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.

No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones⁸,
 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;

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 in the same.

Enter HORATIO, *and a* Servant.

Hor. What are they, that would speak with me?

Serv. Sailors, sir;

They say, they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in.— [*Exit* Servant.]

I do not know from what part of the world
 I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

1. *Sail.* God blefs you, sir.

Hor. Let him blefs thee too.

1. *Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir; it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [*reads.*] 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*

⁸ *No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,*] It was the custom, in the times of our author, to hang a sword over the grave of a knight. JOHNSON.

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.

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 matter⁹. 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.

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [Exeunt.

S C E N E VII.

Another Room in the same.

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,
But 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,

⁹ — *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.

Why to a publick count I might not go,
 Is, the great love the general gender¹ bear him :
 Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
 Work like the spring² that turneth wood to stone,
 Convert his gyves to graces ; so that my arrows,
 Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind³,
 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 sifter driven into desperate terms ;
 Whose worth, if praises may go back again⁴,
 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 danger⁵,
 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 news⁶ ?

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet⁷ :

¹ — *the general gender*—] The *common race* of the people. JOHNSON.

² *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.

³ — *for so loud a wind*,] Thus the folio. The quarto 1604, has—*for so loud arm'd*: as extraordinary a corruption as any that is found in these plays. MALONE.

⁴ — *if praises may go back again*,] If I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more. JOHNSON.

⁵ *That we can let our beard be shook with danger*,] It is wonderful that none of the advocates for the learning of Shakspere have told us that this line is imitated from Persius, Sat. 2 :

Idcirco stolidam præbet tibi vellere barbam

Jupiter ? STEEVENS.

⁶ *How now, &c.*] Omitted in the quartos. THEOBALD.

⁷ *Letters, &c.*] Omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

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 received them
Of him that brought them⁸.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them :—
Leave us.

[*Exit Mess.*]

[*reads.*] *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 return'd,—
As checking at his voyage⁹, and that he means

⁸ *Of him that brought them.*] I have restored this hemistich from the quartos. STEEVENS.

⁹ *As checking at his voyage,*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, exhibits a corruption similar to that mentioned in n. 3. It reads: *As the king at his voyage.* MALONE.

The phrase is from falconry ; and may be justified from the following passage in *Hinde's Elusto Libidinoso*, 1606: “ — For who knows not, quoth she, that this hawk, which comes now so fair to the fist, may to-morrow *check 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 *checke 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*¹. 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,
 Of the unworthiest siege².

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,
 Importing health, and graveness³.—Two months since,
 Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—
 I have seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,
 And they can well on horseback: but this gallant
 Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;
 And to such wond'rous doing brought his horse,
 As he had been incorp'd and demy-natur'd
 With the brave beast: so far he topp'd my thought,
 That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks⁴,

¹ *Laer*.] The next sixteen lines are omitted in the folio. STEEV.

² *Of the unworthiest siege*.] Of the lowest rank. *Siege*, for *seat*,
place. JOHNSON.

So, in *Otello*:

“ —I fetch my birth

“ From men of royal *siege*.” STEEVENS.

³ *Importing health, and graveness*.—] *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, *bealth*. JOHNSON.

Importing bealth, I apprehend, means, *denoting an attention to bealth*.
 MALONE.

⁴ — *in forgery of shapes and tricks*.] I could not contrive so many
 proofs of dexterity as he could perform. JOHNSON.

Come

Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman, was't ?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamord*.

King. The very fame.

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 in your defence⁵,
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out, 'twould be a fight indeed,
If one could match you: the scrimers⁶ 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 you.
Now, 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 ?

King. Not that I think, you did not love your father ;
But that I know, love is begun by time⁷ ;
And that I see, in passages of proof⁸,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.

* —*Lamord.*] Thus the quarto, 1604. Shakspeare, I suspect, wrote
Lamode. See the next speech but one. The folio has—*Lamound.*

MALONE:

⁵ —*in your defence,*] That is, in the *science* of defence. JOHNSON.

⁶ —*the scrimers*—] The *fencers.* JOHNSON.

From *escrimeur*, Fr. a fencer. From here to the word *them* inclu-
sively, is not in the folio. MALONE.

⁷ —*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 be-
gins at a certain time from some external cause, and being always
subject to the operations of time, suffers change and diminution. JOHNS.

⁸ —*in passages of proof;*] In transactions of daily experience. JOHNS.

There

There lives within the very flame of love⁹
 A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it ;
 And nothing is at a like goodnes still ;
 For goodnes, growing to a plurisy¹,
 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 ;
 And then this *should* is like a spendthrift sigh,
 That hurts by easing². But, to the quick o' the ulcer :

Hamlet

⁹ *There lives, &c.*] The next ten lines are not in the folio. STEEV.

¹ *For goodnes, growing to a plurisy,*] I would believe, for the honour of Shakspere, that he wrote *pletbery*. 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 *plurise* of blood. The disease of blood is, some young horses will feed, and being fat will *increase* blood, and so *grow to a plurise*, and *die* thereof if he have not soon help." TOLLET.

Dr. Warburton is right. The word is spelt *plurisy* in the quarto, 1604, and is used in the same sense as here, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* :

" ——— that heal't with blood

" The earth, when it is sick, and cur't the world

" Of the *plurise* of people."

Again, in *'Tis Pity she's a Whore*, by Ford, 1633 :

" Must your hot itch and *plurise* of lust,

" The hey-day of your luxury, be fed

" Up to a surfeit?" MALONE.

² *And then this should is like a spendthrift sigh,*

That burts by easing.—] A *spendthrift sigh* is 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. JOHNS.

Hence they are call'd, in *K. Henry VI.*—blood-consuming *sighs*.

Again, in *Pericles*, 1609 :

" Do not *consume* your *blood with sorrowing*,"

The idea is enlarged upon in Fenton's *Tragic Discourses*, 1579 :
 " Why staye you not in tyme the source of your scorching *sighes*, that have already drayned your body of his wholesome humoures, appointed by nature to gyve sucke to the entrals and inward parts of you ?"

The original quarto, as well as the folio, reads—a *spendthrift's sigh* ; but I have no doubt that it was a corruption, arising from the first letter of the following word *sigh*, being an s. I have therefore, with the other modern editors, printed—*spendthrift sigh*, following a late

late

Hamlet comes back ; What would you undertake,
To shew yourself in deed your father's son
More than in words ?

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize ;
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, together,
And wager o'er your heads : he, being remis³,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils ; so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated⁴, and, in a pass of practice⁵,

Requite

late quarto, (which however is of no authority,) printed in 1611. That a sigh, if it consumes the blood, *hurts us by easing*, or is prejudicial to us on the whole, though it affords a temporary relief, is sufficiently clear: but the former part of the line, *and then this should*, may require a little explanation. I suppose the king means to say, that if we do not promptly execute what we are convinced we *should* or ought to do, we shall afterwards in vain repent our not having seized the fortunate moment for action: and this opportunity which we have let go by us, and the reflection that we *should* have done that, which, from supervening accidents, it is no longer in our power to do, is as prejudicial and painful to us as a blood-consuming sigh, that at once hurts and eases us.

I apprehend the poet meant to compare such a conduct, and the consequent reflection, *only* to the *pernicious* quality which he supposed to be annexed to sighing, and not to the temporary ease which it affords. His similes, as I have frequently had occasion to observe, seldom run on four feet. MALONE.

³ — *he being remis*,] He being not vigilant or cautious. JOHNSON.

⁴ *A sword unbated*,—] Not blunted, as foils are by a button fixed to the end. So in *Love's Labour's Lost*:

“ That honour, which shall *bate* his scythe's keen edge.”

MALONE.

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.

⁵ — *a pass of practice*,] Practice is often by Shakspeare, and other writers, taken for an *insidious stratagem*, or *privy treason*, a sense not incongruous

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 withall : 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,
May fit us to our shape⁶ : if this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'Twere better not assay'd ; therefore, this project
Should have a back, or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof⁷. Soft ;—let me see :—
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunning, —
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, I'll have preferr'd him⁸
A chalice for the nonce ; whereon but sipping,

incongruous to this passage, where yet I rather believe, that nothing more is meant than a *burst* for exercise. JOHNSON.

So, in *Look about you*, 1600 :

“ I pray God there be no *practice* in this change.”

Again, more appositely in our author's *Twelfth Night*, Act V. Sc. ult.

“ This *practice* hath most shrewdly *pass'd* upon thee.” STEEV.

⁶ *May fit us to our shape :—*] May enable us to assume proper characters, and to act our part. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *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.

⁸ — *I'll have preferr'd him—*] i. e. presented to him. Thus the quarto, 1604. The word indeed is misspelt, *prefard*. The folio reads — *I'll have prepar'd him*. MALONE.

If

If he by chance escape your venom'd stucc⁹,
Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise¹?

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet queen^{*}?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel²,
So fast they follow:—Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Lacr. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows ascaunt the brook³,
That shews his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
Therewith fantastick garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daiesies, and long purples⁴,

That

⁹ — *your venom'd stucc,*] Your venom'd thrust. *Stucc* was a term of the fencing-school. So, in *Twelfth Night*: “—and he gives me the *stucc* with such a mortal motion,—” Again, in *The Return from Parnassus*, 1606: “Here is a fellow, *Judicio*, that carried the deadly *stocke* in his pen.”—See Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: “*Stoccata*, a foyné, a thrust, a *stoccado* given in fence.” MALONE.

¹ — *But stay, what noise?*] I have recovered this from the quartos.

STEEVENS.

^{*} *How now sweet queen?*] These words are not in the quarto. The word *now*, which appears to have been omitted by the carelessness of the transcriber or compositor, was supplied by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

² *One woe doth tread upon another's heel,*] A similar thought occurs in *Pericles Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

“One sorrow never comes, but brings an heir,

“That may succeed as his inheritor.” STEEVENS.

Again, in Drayton's *Mortimeriados*, 4to, 1596:

“—miseries, which seldom come alone,

“Thick on the neck one of another fell.”

Again, in Shakspeare's 131st sonnet:

“A thousand groans, but thinking on thy fall,

“One on another's neck,—” MALONE.

³ — *ascaunt the brook,*] Thus the quartos. The folio reads, *aslant*. *Ascaunce* is interpreted in the Glossary to Chaucer—*askew, aside, sideways*. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *and long purples,*] By *long purple* is meant a plant; the modern botanical name of which is *orchis morio mas*, anciently *testiculus morionis*. The grosser name by which it passes, is sufficiently known in many parts of England, and particularly in the county where Shakspeare 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.

One of the grosser names of this plant Gertrude had a particular reason to avoid:—*the rampant widow*. *Liberal* is free-spoken, licentious

tiOUS

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 slyver 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 :
 Which time, she chaunted snatches of old tunes⁵ ;
 As one incapable of her own distress⁶,
 Or like a creature native and indu'd
 Unto that element⁷ : 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 death⁸.

Laer.

tious in language. So, in *Otello*: "Is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor? Again, in *A Woman's a Weathercock*, by N. Field, 1612 :

" ——— Next that, the same

" Of your neglect, and liberal-talking tongue,

" Which breeds my honour an eternal wrong." MALONE.

⁵ Which time, she chaunted snatches of old tunes;] Fletcher, in his *Scornful Lady*, very injudiciously ridicules this incident:

" I will run mad first, and if that get not pity,

" I'll drown myself to a most dismal ditty." WARBURTON.

The quartos read—"snatches of old lauds," i. e. *hymns*. STEEVENS.

⁶ As one incapable of her own distress,] As one having no understanding or knowledge of her danger. See p. 339, n. 8. MALONE.

⁷ — like a creature native and indu'd

Unto that element.] As we are indued with certain original dispositions and propensities at our birth, Shakspeare here uses *indued* with great licentiousness, for formed by nature; clothed, endowed, or furnished, with properties suited to the element of water.

Our old writers used *indued* and *endowed* indiscriminately. "To indue," says Minshew in his Dictionary, "sepissime refertur ad dotes animo infusas, quibus nimirum ingenium alicujus imbutum et initiatum est, unde et G. *instruire* est. L. *imbuere*. *Imbuere* proprie est inchoare et initiari."

In Cotgrave's French Dictionary, 1611, *instruire* is interpreted, "to fashion, to furnish with." MALONE.

⁸ To muddy death.] In the first scene of the next act we find Ophelia buried with such rites as betoken she *foredid her own life*. Shakspeare, Mr. Mason has observed, "seems to have forgotten himself in the speech before us, for there is not a single circumstance in this relation of her death, that induces us to think she had drowned herself intentionally." But it should be remembered, that the account here given, is that of a friend; and that the queen could not possibly know
 what

Laer. Alas then, she is 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 out⁹.—Adieu, my lord!
I have a speech of fire; that fain would blaze,
But that this folly drowns it¹. [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.

A C T V. S C E N E 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, make her grave straight²: the crowner hath set on her, and finds it christian burial.

1. *Clown.*

what passed in the mind of Ophelia, when she placed herself in so perilous a situation. After the facts had been weighed and considered, the priest in the next act pronounces, that *her death was doubtful*. MALONE

⁹ *The woman will be out.*] i. e. tears will flow. So, in *K. Henry V.*

“And all *the woman* came into my eyes.” MALONE.

¹ — *that fain would blaze,*

But that this folly drowns it.] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—But that this folly *doubts* it, i. e. *douts*, or extinguishes it. See p. 221, n. 6. MALONE.

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,

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 an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform³: 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; crowner's-quest law⁴.

2. *Clown*.

Again, in *Hamlet*, Act III. sc. iv. "*Pol*. He will come *straight*." Again, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*: "— we'll come and dress you *straight*." Again, in *Orbello*:

"Farewell, my Desdemona, I will come to thee *straight*." STEEV.
Again, in *Troilus and Cressida*: "Let us make ready *straight*."

MALONE.

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.

⁴ — 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 *felo de se*. The legal and logical subtleties, 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 Shakspeare 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. HAWK.

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 folks should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even christian⁵. Come; my spade. There is no ancient 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.

2. *Clown*⁶. 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, confests 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 out-lives a thousand tenants.

If Shakspeare meant to allude to the case of Dame Hales, (which indeed seems not improbable,) he must have heard of that case in conversation; for it was determined before he was born, and Plowden's Commentaries, in which it is reported, were not translated into English till a few years ago. Our authour's study was probably not much encumbered with old French Reports. MALONE.

⁵ — *their even christian*.] So all the old books, and rightly. An old English expression for fellow-christians. THIRLBY.

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. STEEVENS.

So King Henry the Eighth in his answer to parliament in 1546: "—you might say that I, beying put in so speciall a trust as I am in this case, were no trustie frende to you, nor charitable man to mine *even christian*.—" Hall's *Cronicle*, fol. 261. MALONE.

⁶ 2. *Clown*.] This speech, and the next as far as—*without arms*, is not in the quartos. STEEVENS.

* — *confests thyself*—] *and be bang'd*, the clown, I suppose, would have said, if he had not been interrupted. This was a common proverbial sentence. See *Otello*, Act IV. sc. i.—He might, however, have intended to say, *confests thyself an ass*. MALONE.

1. *Clown*.

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*. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke⁷.

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 it⁸; for your dull asfs 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.

In youth when I did love, did love⁹,

Methought, it was very sweet,

To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my bebove

O, methought, there was nothing meet¹.

7 *Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.*] 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 sore, I can worke no more.” FARMER.

Again, in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, at the end of Song I.

“ Here I'll unyoke awhile and turne my steeds to meat.”

Again, in P. Holland's Translation of *Pliny's Nat. Hist.* p. 593:

“ —in the evening, and when thou dost unyoke.” STEEVENS.

⁸ *Cudgel thy brains no more about it;*] So, in *The Maydes Metamorphosis*, by John Lily, 1600:

“ In vain, I fear, I beate my brains about,

“ Proving by search to find my mistresse out.” MALONE.

⁹ *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 renunceth 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.

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.

1. Clown. *But age, with his stealing steps,* [sings.
Hath clawd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me into the land,
*As if I had never been such*². [throws up a scull:

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 a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches³; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor.

¹ — *nothing meet.*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, reads:

O me thought there *a* was nothing *a* meet. MALONE.

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 Gafcoigne. 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 lothe that I did love;
In youth that I thought swete:
As time requires for my bebove,
Metbinks they are not mete.

All these difficulties, however, (says the Rev. Thomas Warton, *Hist. of English Poetry*, Vol. III. p. 45.) are at once adjusted by Mss. Harl. in the British Museum, 1713—25, in which we have a copy of Vaux's poem, beginning, *I lothe that I did love*, with this title: "A dyttie or sonet made by the lord Vaus, in the time of the noble quene Marye, representing the image of death."

The entire song is published by Dr. Percy, in the first volume of his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. STEEVENS.

² *As if I had never been such.*] Thus, in the original:

For age with stealing steps
Hath claude me with his croweb;
And iustly youthe away he leapes,
As there had bene none such. STEEVENS.

³ — *which this ass now o'er-reaches;*] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—*o'er-offices*. MALONE.

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 it⁴; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so: and now my lady Worm's⁵; 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 breeding, but to play at loggats with them⁶? mine ache to think on't.

1. *Clown.*

Over-reaches agrees better with the sentence: it is a strong exaggeration to remark, that an *afs* can *over-reach* him who would once have tried to *circumvent*— I believe both the words were Shakspeare'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 more newly impressed upon him, without observing their want of congruity to the general texture of his original design. JOHNSON.

⁴ *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 I.:

“ ——— 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.

⁵ — and now my lady Worm's;] The scull that was my lord Such-a-one's, is now my lady Worm's. JOHNSON.

⁶ — to play at loggats with them?] So Ben Jonson, *Tale of a Tub*, Act IV. sc. vi.

“ Now are they tossing of 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.”

It is one of the unlawful games enumerated in the statute of 33 of Henry VIII. STEEVENS.

Loggeting in the fields is mentioned for the first time among other “new and crafty games and plays,” in the statute 33 Henry VIII. c. 9. Not being mentioned in former acts against unlawful games, it was probably not practised long before the statute of Henry the Eighth was made. MALONE.

A *loggat-ground*, like a skittle-ground, is strewed with ashes, but is more extensive. A bowl much larger than the jack of the game of bowls is thrown first. The pins, which I believe are called *loggats*, are much thinner and lighter at one extremity than the other. The bowl being first thrown, the players take the pins up by the thinner

1. *Clown.* A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade, [sings:
 For—and a shrouding sheet:
 O, a pit of clay for to be made
 For such a guest is meet⁷. [throws up a scull.

Ham. There's another: Why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits⁸ now, his quilllets⁹, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce¹ with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes², his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries³, 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

and lighter end, and fling them towards the bowl, and in such a manner that the pins may once turn round in the air, and slide with the thinner extremity foremost towards the bowl. The pins are about one or two and twenty inches long. BLOUNT.

⁷ For such a guest is meet.] Thus in the original.

A pick-axe and a spade,
 And eke a shrouding sheet;
 A house of clay for to be made,

For such a guest most meet. STEEVENS.

⁸ —quiddits, &c.] i. e. subtleties. So, in *Soliman and Perseda*;

“ I am wise, but quiddits will not answer death.” STEEVENS.

Again, in Drayton's *Orule*, 4to, 1604:

“ By some strange quiddit, or some wrested clause,

“ To find him guiltie of the breach of lawes.” MALONE.

⁹ — bis quilllets,] *Quilllets* are nice and frivolous distinctions. The word is rendered by Coles in his Latin Dictionary, 1679, *res frivola*.

MALONE.

¹ — the sconce—] i. e. the head. STEEVENS.

See Vol. II. p. 143, n. 8. MALONE.

² — bis statutes,] By a statute is here meant, not an act of parliament, but a species of security for money, affecting real property; whereby the lands of the debtor are conveyed to the creditor, till out of the rents and profits of them his debt may be satisfied. MALONE.

³ Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries,] Omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

will

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 that⁴. I will speak to this fellow:—Whose grave's this, firrah?

1. Clown. Mine, fir.—

O, a pit of clay for to be made [sings.
For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou ly'st in't.

1. 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.

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.

1. Clown. 'Tis a quick lie, fir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1. Clown. For no man, fir.

Ham. What woman then?

1. Clown. For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

1. 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 card⁵, or equivocation will undo us. By the lord,

⁴ — assurance in that.] A quibble is intended. Deeds, which are usually written on parchment, are called the common *assurances* of the kingdom. MALONE.

⁵ — by the card,—] i. e. we must speak with the same precision and accuracy as is observed in marking the true distances of coasts, the heights, courses, &c. in a *sea-chart*, which in our poet's time was called a *card*. So in *The Commonwealth and Government of Venice*, 4to, 1599, p. 177: "Sebastian Munster in his *carde* of Venice—." Again, in Bacon's *Essays*, p. 326. edit. 1740: "Let him carry with him also some *card*, or book, describing the country where he travelleth." In 1589 was published in 4to, *A briefe Discourse of Mappes and Cardes, and of their Uses*.—The "shipman's *card*" in *Macbeth*, is the paper on which the different points of the compass are described.

MALONE.

Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked⁶, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. —How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1. *Clown*. Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long's that since?

1. *Clown*. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: It was that very day that young Hamlet was born⁷; he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

1. *Clown*. Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1. *Clown*. 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

1. *Clown*. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

1. *Clown*. 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

1. *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?

1. *Clown*. 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, (as we have many pocky corfes now-a-days⁸, that will scarce hold the laying in,) he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

⁶ — *the age is grown so picked,*—] i. e. so spruce, so quaint, so affected. See Vol. II. p. 393, n. 4, and Vol. IV. p. 546, n. 2.

There is, I think, no allusion to *picked* or pointed shoes, as has been supposed. *Picked* was a common word of Shakspeare's age, in the sense above given, and is found in Minshew's Dictionary, 1617, with its original signification: "*Trimm'd or drest sprucely.*" It is here used metaphorically. MALONE.

⁷ — *that young Hamlet was born;*] By this scene it appears that Hamlet was then thirty years old, and knew Yorick well, who had been dead twenty-two years. And yet in the beginning of the play he is spoken of as a *very young man*, one that designed to go back to school, i. e. to the university of Wittenberg. The poet in the fifth act had forgot what he wrote in the first. BLACKSTONE.

⁸ — *now-a-days,*] Omitted in the quarto, MALONE.

Ham.

Ham. Why he more than another?

1. *Clown.* Why, fir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a fore decayer of your whorson dead body. Here's a scull now hath lain you i'the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

1. *Clown.* A whorson mad fellow's it was; Whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1. *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 scull⁹, the king's jester.

Ham. This? [takes the scull.]

1. *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 kifs'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 favour² 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! [throws down the scull.]

⁹ — *Yorick's scull,*—] Thus the folio.—The quarto reads—*Sir Yorick's scull.* MALONE.

* — *your own grinning?*] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads —*your own jeering.* In that copy, after this word, and *chap-fallen*, there is a note of interrogation, which all the editors have adopted. I doubt concerning its propriety. MALONE.

¹ — *my lady's chamber,*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*my lady's table*, meaning, I suppose, her *dressing-table.* STEEVENS.

² — *to this favour*—] i. e. to this countenance or complexion. See Vol. II, p. 499, n. 6, and Vol. VII, p. 328, n. 3. MALONE.

Hor.

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-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar³, 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 winter's flaw⁴!

But soft! but soft! aside;—Here comes the king,

Enter Priests, &c. in procession: the corpse of OPHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners following it; King, Queen, their Trains, &c.

The queen, the courtiers: Who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites⁵! This doth betoken,
The corse, they follow, did with desperate hand
Fordo its own life⁶. 'Twas of some estate⁷:

³ Imperious Cæsar,] Thus the quarto, 1604. The editor of the folio substituted *imperial*, not knowing that *imperious* was used in the same sense. See Vol. VIII. p. 264, n. *, and p. 412, n. *. There are other instances in the folio of a familiar term being substituted in the room of a more ancient word. See p. 395, note 9. MALONE.

⁴ — winter's flaw!] Winter's blast. JOHNSON.

The quartos read—to expel the water's flaw. STEEVENS.

See Vol. VI. p. 177. n. 8. A *flaw* meant a sudden gust of wind. So, in Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: "Gropo, a *flaw*, or berrie of wind." See also Cotgrave's Dictionary, 1611: "*Lis de vent*, a gust or *flaw* of wind." MALONE.

⁵ — maimed rites!—] Imperfect obsequies. JOHNSON.

⁶ Fordo its own life.] To *fordo*, is to undo, to destroy. So, in *Otello*:
"—this is the night

"That either makes me, or *fordo*s me quite."

Again, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1540: "—wolde to God it might be lesful for me to *fordo* myself, or to make an end of me!" STEEVENS.

⁷ — some estate:] Some person of high rank. JOHNSON.

See Vol. VIII. p. 202, n. 8. MALONE.

Couch we a while, and mark. [*retiring with* Horatio.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,

A very noble youth: Mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

1. *Priest*⁸. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd

As we have warrant^{*}: 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;

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants⁹,

Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home

Of bell and burial¹.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

Priest. No more be done;

We should profane the service of the dead,

⁸ *Priest.*] This *priest* in the old quarto is called *doEor*. STEEVENS.

* — *as we have warrant* :] Is there any allusion here to the coroner's warrant, directed to the ministers and churchwardens of a parish, and permitting the body of a person who comes to an untimely end, to receive christian burial? WHALLEY.

9 — *allow'd her virgin crants,*] Thus the quarto, 1604. For this unusual word the editor of the first folio substituted *rites*. By a more attentive examination and comparison of the quarto copies and the folio, Dr. Johnson, I have no doubt, would have been convinced that this and many other changes in the folio were not made by Shakspeare, as is suggested in the following note. MALONE.

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 definitive 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 *roosen krans* means *sertum rosaceum*; and such is the name of a character in this play.

TOLLET.

¹ *Of bell and burial.*] *Burial*, here, signifies interment in consecrated ground. WARBURTON.

To sing a *requiem*², 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 ministr'ring 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 should'st have been my Hamlet's wife ;
I thought, thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
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 :

[*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. [*ad-ancing*] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis ? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers ? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane.

[*leaps into the grave.*

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 splenetic 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 !

*All*³. Gentlemen,—

² 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.

³ *All, &c.*] This is restored from the quartos. STEEVENS.

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*]

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.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Zounds, shew me what thou'lt do:
Woul't weep? woul't fight? woul't fast? woul't tear thy-
self?

Woul't drink up eisel⁴? eat a crocodile?

I'll

⁴ *Woul't drink up eisel?*] *Woul't* is a contraction of *wouldest*, [wouldest thou] and perhaps ought rather to be written *woul'st*. The quarto, 1604, has *esil*. In the folio the word is spelt *esile*. *Eisil* or *eisel* is vinegar. The word is used by Chaucer, and Skelton, and by Sir Thomas More, *Works*, p. 21. edit. 1557:

“ — with sowre pocion

“ If thou paine thy tast, remember therewithal

“ How Christ for thee tasted *eisil* and gall.”

The word is also found in Minshew's Dictionary, 1617, and in Coles's Latin Dictionary, 1679.

Our poet, as Dr. Farmer has observed, has again employed the same word in his 111th sonnet:

“ — like a willing patient, I will drink

“ Potions of *eyfell* 'gainst my strong infection;

“ No *bitterness* that I will bitter think,

“ Nor double penance, to correct correction.”

Mr. Stevens supposes, that a river was meant, either the *Yffel*, or *Oesil*, or *Weisel*, a considerable river which falls into the Baltick ocean. The words, *drink up*, he considers as favourable to his notion. “Had Shakspeare,” he observes, “meant to make Hamlet say, *Wilt thou drink vinegar*, he probably would not have used the term *drink up*, which means, *totally to exhaust*. In *King Richard II.* Act II, sc. ii. (he adds) a thought in part the same occurs:

“ — the task he undertakes,

“ Is numb'ring sands, and *drinking oceans dry*.”

But I must remark, in that passage evidently *impossibilities* are pointed out. Hamlet is only talking of difficult or painful exertions. Every man can weep, fight, fast, tear himself, drink a potion of vinegar, and eat a piece of a dissected crocodile, however disagreeable; for I have no doubt that the

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 fit drooping.

Ham.

the poet uses the words *eat a crocodile*, for *eat of a crocodile*. We yet use the same phraseology in familiar language.

On the phrase *drink up* no stress can be laid, for our poet has employed the same expression in his 114th sonnet, without any idea of *entirely exhausting*, and merely as synonymous to *drink*:

“Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you,

“*Drink up* the monarch's plague, this flattery?

Again, in the same sonnet:

“—'tis flattery in my seeing,

“And my great mind most kingly *drinks it up*.”

Again, in *Timon of Athens*:

“And how his silence *drinks up* his applause.”

In Shakespeare's time, as at present, to *drink up*, often meant no more than simply to drink. So, in Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: “*Sorbire*, to sip or *sup up* any drink.” In like manner we sometimes say, “when you have *swallow'd down* this potion,” though we mean no more than—“when you have *swallow'd* this potion.” MALONE.

⁵ *This is mere madness: &c.*] This speech in the first folio is given to the king. MALONE.

⁶ *When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,*] To *disclose* was anciently used for to *batch*. So, in the *Booke of Huntyng, Hawking, Fyshyng, &c.* bl. l. no date: “First they ben eyes; and after they ben *disclosed* haukes; and commonly goshaukes ben *disclosed* as sone as the choughes.” To *exclude* is the technical term at present. During three days after the pigeon has *batched* 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.

The young nestlings of the pigeon, when first *disclosed*, are callow, only covered with a yellow down: and for that reason stand in need of being cherished by the kindly warmth of the hen, to protect them from
 the

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 HORATIO.
 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 Hall in the Castle.

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 fighting,
 That would not let me sleep⁷ ; methought, I lay
 Worse

the chillness of the ambient air, for a considerable time after they are
 hatched. HEATH.

The word *disclose* has already occurred in a sense nearly allied to
hatch, in this play :

“ And I do doubt, the hatch and the *disclose*

“ Will be some danger.” MALONE.

⁷ *Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,*

That would not let me sleep ; &c.] So, in *Troilus and Cressida* :

“ Within my soul there doth commence a fight,

“ Of this strange nature,” &c.

The Historie of Hamlet, bl. let. furnished our authour with the
 scheme of sending the prince to England, and with most of the cir-
 cumstances described in this scene :

[After the death of Polonius] “ Fencion [the king in the present
 play] could not content himselfe, but still his mind gave him that the
 foole [Hamlet] would play him some trick of legerdemaine. And in
 that conceit, seeking to bee rid of him, determined to find the meanes
 to

Worse than the mutines in the bilboes³. Rashly,
And prais'd be rashness for it—⁹, Let us know,

Our

to doe it by the aid of a stranger, making the king of England minister of his massacreous resolution; to whom he purposed to send him, and by letters desire him to put him to death.

“ Now, to beare him company, were assigned two of Fengeon's faithful ministers, bearing letters ingraven in wood, that contained Hamlet's death, in such sort as he had advertised the king of England. But the subtil Danish prince, (being at sea,) whilst his companions slept, having read the letters, and knowing his uncle's great treason, with the wicked and villainous mindes of the two courtiers that led him to the slaughter, raced out the letters that concerned his death, and instead thereof graved others, with commission to the king of England to hang his two companions; and not content to turn the death they had devised against him, upon their own neckes, wrote further, that king Fengeon willed him to give his daughter to Hamlet in marriage.” *Hyf. of Hamlet*, signat. G 2.

From this narrative it appears that the faithful ministers of Fengeon were not unacquainted with the import of the letters they bore. Shakspeare, who has followed the story pretty closely, probably meant to describe their representatives, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as equally guilty; as confederating with the king to deprive Hamlet of his life. So that his procuring their execution, though certainly not absolutely necessary to his own safety, does not appear to have been a wanton and unprovoked cruelty, as Mr. Steevens has supposed in his very ingenious observations on the general character and conduct of the prince throughout this piece.

In the conclusion of his drama the poet has entirely deviated from the fabulous history, which in other places he has frequently followed.

After Hamlet's arrival in England, (for no sea-fight is mentioned,) “ the king, (says *The History of Hamlet*) admiring the young prince,—gave him his daughter in marriage, according to the counterfeited letters by him devised; and the next day caused the two servants of Fengeon to be executed, to satisfy, as he thought, the king's desire.” *Hyf. of Hamb.* Ibid.

Hamlet, however, returned to Denmark, without marrying the king of England's daughter, who, it should seem, had only been betrothed to him. When he arrived in his native country, he made the courtiers drunk, and having burnt them to death, by setting fire to the banqueting-room wherein they sat, he went into Fengeon's chamber, and killed him, “ giving him (says the relater) such a violent blowe upon the chine of the neck, that he cut his head clean from the shoulders.” Ibid. signat. F 3.

He is afterwards said to have been crowned king of Denmark.

MALONE.

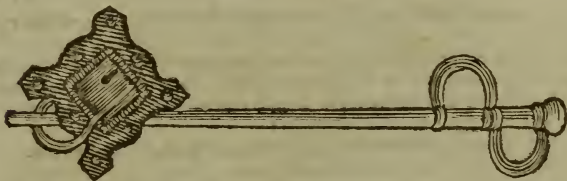
³ — mutines in the bilboes.] To mutine was formerly used for to mutiny.

Our indiscretion sometime serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall¹: and that should teach us,
There's

mutiny. See p. 337, n. 6. So *mutine*, for *mutiner*, or *mutineer*: "un homme *mutin*," Fr. a mutinous or seditious person. In *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, a tragedy, 1587, the adjective is used:

"Suppresseth *mutin* force, and practicke fraud." MALONE.

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 Shakspeare's allusion completely, it should be known, that as these fetters connect the legs of the offenders very close together, their attempts to resist 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.



¹ ———— *Rashly*,

*And prais'd be rashness for it,—Let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,*

When, &c.] 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. JOHNS.

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.* TYRWHITT.

When our deep plots do pall:] Thus the first quarto, 1604. The editor
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'There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will².

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,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life³,—
That, on the superville, no leisure bated⁴,

No,

of the next quarto, for *pall*, substituted *fall*. The folio reads—when our dear plots do *paule*.

Mr. Pope and the subsequent editors read—when our deep plots do *fail*: but *pall* and *fail* are by no means likely to have been confounded. I have therefore adhered to the old copies. In *Antony and Cleopatra* our poet has used the participle:

“ I'll never follow thy *pall'd* fortunes more.” MALONE.

² *There's a divinity that shapes our ends,*

Rough hew *them how we will*.] Dr. Farmer informs me, that these words are merely technical. A wool-man, butcher, and dealer in *skewers*, lately observed to him, that his nephew (an idle lad) could only *assist* him in making them; “—he could *rough-hew* them, but I was obliged to *shape their ends*.” Whoever recollects the profession of Shakspeare's father, will admit that his son might be no stranger to such a term. I have seen packages of wool pinn'd up with *skewers*. STEEV.

* Larded with many several sorts of reasons,] I am afraid here is a very poor conceit, founded on an equivocal between *reasons* and *raisins*, which in Shakspeare's time were undoubtedly pronounced alike. *Sorts* of *raisins*, sugars, &c. is the common phraseology of shops.—We have the same quibble in another play. MALONE.

³ *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 *Faery Queen*, B. 2. c. 3:

“ As ghastly *bug* does unto them affeare.”

We call it at present a *bugbear*. STEEVENS.

See Vol. VI. p. 373, n. 4. MALONE.

⁴ — *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.

No

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. Being thus benetted round with villanies,
Or I could make * a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play⁵;—I sat me down;
Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do⁶,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service⁷: 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;

No leisure bated—means, without any *abatement* or intermission of *time*. MALONE.

* *Or I could make*—] *Or* in old English signified *before*. See Vol. IV. p. 540, n. 9. MALONE.

⁵ *Being thus benetted round with villanies,*

Or I could make a prologue to my brains,

They had begun the play:—] 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.

⁶—*as our statists do*,] A *statist* is a *statesman*. So, in Ben Jonson's *Magnetic Lady*:

“Will screw you out a secret from a *statist*.” STEEVENS.

Most of the great men of Shakspeare's times, whose autographs have been preserved, wrote very bad hands; their secretaries very neat ones. BLACKSTONE.

⁷ —*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 time past (says Sir Tho. Smith), and the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France.” STEEV.

As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities⁸;
 And many such like ases of great charge⁹,—
 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;

⁸ *As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,*

And stand a comma 'tween their amities;] 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. Shakspeare 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 Shakspeare? JOHNSON.

⁹ — *ases of great charge,*] *Akses heavily loaded.* A quibble is intended between *as* the conditional particle, and *as* the beast of burden. 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 *as* charg'd with crowns to make way.”

JOHNSON.

Shakspeare 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.

Though the first and obvious meaning of these words certainly is, “*many similar adjurations, or monitory injunctions, of great weight and importance,*” yet Dr. Johnson's notion of a quibble being also in the poet's thoughts is supported by two other passages of Shakspeare, in which *asses* are introduced as usually employed in the carriage of gold, a *charge* of no small weight:

“He shall but bear them, as the *as* bears gold,

“To groan and sweat under the business.”

Julius Cæsar.

Again, in *Measure for Measure*:

“—like an *as*, whose back with *ingots* bows,

“Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,

“And death unloads thee.”

In further support of his observation, it should be remembered, that the letter *s* in the particle *as* is in the midland counties usually pronounced hard, as in the pronoun *us*. Dr. Johnson himself always pronounced the particle *as* hard, and so I have no doubt did Shakspeare. It is so pronounced in Warwickshire at this day. The first folio accordingly has—*assis*. MALONE.

I had

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 impressi^on ; plac'd it safely,
'The changeling never known¹ : Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight ; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Ham. Why, man², they did make love to this employ-
ment ;

They are not near my conscience ; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation³ 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 thee⁴, stand me now upon ?
He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother ;
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes ;
Thrown out his angle⁵ for my proper life,
And with such cozenage ; is't not perfect conscience,
To quit him⁶ 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.

* — *the model of that Danish seal :*] The *model* is in old language the *copy*. The signet was formed in imitation of the Danish seal. See Vol. V. p. 58, n. 4, and Vol. VI. p. 568, n. 5. MALONE.

¹ *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.

² *Why, man, &c.*] This line is omitted in the quartos. STEEV.

³ — *by their own insinuation*—] By their having insinuated or thrust themselves into the employment. MALONE.

⁴ — *think thee,*] i. e. bethink thee. MALONE.

⁵ *Thrown out his angle*—] An *angle* in Shakspeare's time signified a fishing-rod. So, in Lily's *Sappho and Phao*, 1591 :

“ *Phao*. But he may bless fishing, that caught such a one in the sea.

“ *Venus*. It was not with an *angle*, myboy, but with a net.” MALONE.

⁶ *To quit him, &c.*] To requite him ; to pay him his due. JOHNSON.

This passage, as well as the three following speeches, is not in the quartos. STEEVENS.

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 favours⁵;
 But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
 Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace; who comes here?

Enter OSRICK.

Os. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark,

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly⁶?

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: 'Tis a chough⁷; but, as I say, spacious
 in the possession of dirt.

Os. 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;
 Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Os. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is
 northerly.

Os. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very fultry⁸ and hot; or
 my complexion—⁹

Os. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very fultry¹,—as

⁵ *I'll count his favours:] I'll count his favours is—I will make account of them, i. e. reckon upon them, value them.* STEEVENS.

Mr. Rowe for count very plausibly reads court. MALONE.

⁶ — *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.

⁷ — *'Tis a chough;—] A kind of jackdaw.* JOHNSON.

⁸ *But yet, methinks, it is very fultry, &c.] Hamlet is here playing over the same farce with Osrick, which he had formerly done with Polonius.* STEEVENS.

⁹ — *or my complexion—] The folios read—for my complexion.* STEEV.

¹ *Exceedingly, my lord; it is very fultry,]*

— *igniculum brumæ si tempore poscas,*

Accipit endromidem; si dixeris æstuo, sudat, Juv. MALONE.

Os.

'twere,—I cannot tell how.—My lord, his majesty 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—²

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*

Of. Nay, good my lord; for my ease, in good faith³. Sir⁴, here is newly come to court, Laertes: believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences⁵, of very soft society, and great shewing: Indeed, to speak feelingly⁶ of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry⁷, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see⁸.

² *I beseech you, remember—*] “Remember not your courtesy,” I believe, Hamlet would have said, if he had not been interrupted. “Remember thy courtesy,” he could not possibly have said, and therefore this abrupt sentence may serve to confirm an emendation which I proposed in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, (Vol. II. p. 396, n. 8.) where Armado says—“*I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy;—I beseech thee, apparel thy head.*” I have no doubt that Shakspeare there wrote, “—remember not thy courtesy,”—and that the negative was omitted by the negligence of the compositor. MALONE.

³ *Nay, good my lord; for my ease, in good faith.*] This seems to have been the affected phrase of the time.—Thus in Marston’s *Male-content*, 1604: “I beseech you, sir, be covered.”—“No, in good faith, for my ease.” And in other places. FARMER.

It appears to have been the common language of ceremony in our poet’s time. “Why do you stand bare-headed? (says one of the speakers in Florio’s *SECOND FRUTES*, 1591,) you do yourself wrong. Pardon me, good sir (replies his friend); I do it for my ease.” Again, in *A New Way to pay old Debts*, by Massinger, 1633:

“————— Is’t for your ease

“You keep your hat off?” MALONE.

⁴ *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.

⁵ — full of most excellent differences,—] Full of distinguishing excellencies. JOHNSON.

⁶ — speak feelingly —] The first quarto reads *feelingly*. STEEVENS.

⁷ — 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.

⁸ — 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.

Ham. Sir, his definement⁹ suffers no perdition in you ; —though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetick of memory ; and yet but raw neither¹, in respect of his quick fail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article² ; and his infusion of such dearth³ 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. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue ? You will do't, sir, really⁴.

Ham,

⁹ *Sir, bis 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, that to find any thing like him we must look into his mirror, and his imitators will appear no more than his shadows.” WARBURTON.

¹ —and yet but raw neither, &c.] *Raw* 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.

² — 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.

³ — of such dearth —] *Dearth* is *deariness, value, price*. And his internal qualities of such value and rarity. JOHNSON.

⁴ *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.

Theobald

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Ofr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Ofr. I know, you are not ignorant—

Ham. I would, you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me⁵;—Well, sir.

Ofr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence⁶; 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, in his meed⁷ 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 impawn'd⁸, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns,

Theobald has silently substituted *rarely* for *really*. I think Horatio's speech is addressed to Hamlet. *Another tongue* does not mean, as I conceive, *plainer language*, (as Dr. Johnson supposed,) but "language so fantastical and affected as to have the appearance of a *foreign tongue*:" and in the following words Horatio, I think, means to praise Hamlet for imitating this kind of babble so happily. I suspect, however, that the poet wrote—*Is't possible not to understand in a mother tongue?* MALONE.

⁵ — *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.

⁶ *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.

⁷ — *in his meed*— In his excellence. JOHNSON.

See Vol. VI. p. 366, n. 6. MALONE.

⁸ — *impawn'd*,—] Thus the quarto 1604. The folio reads—*impon'd*. *Pignare* in Italian signifies both to *pawn*, and to lay a wager, MALONE.

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, *impawned*; so spelt to ridicule the affectation of uttering English words with French pronunciation. JOHNS.

as girdle, hangers⁹, and so: Three of the 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, you must be edified by the margent¹, ere you had done.

Ofr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german² 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 bet against the Danish: Why is this impawn'd, as you call it?

Ofr. The king, sir, hath lay'd³, that in a dozen passes

⁹ — as girdle, hangers, and so:] i. e. and so forth. The word *bangers* has been misunderstood. That part of the girdle or belt by which the sword was suspended, was in our poet's time called *the bangers*. See Mintheu's Dictionary, 1617: "The *bangers* of a sword. G. Pendants d'espée, L. Subcingulum," &c. So, in an Inventory found among the papers of Hamlet Clarke, an attorney of a court of record in London in the year 1611, and printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVIII, p. 111:

"Item, One payre of girdle and *bangers*, of silver purple, and cullored silke.

Item, One payre of girdler and *bangers* upon white fattene."

The bangers ran in an oblique direction from the middle of the fore-part of the girdle across the left thigh, and were attached to the girdle behind. MALONE.

¹ — you must be edified by the margent,—] Dr. Warburton very properly observes, that in the old books the gloss or comment was usually printed on the margent 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.

See Vol. X. p. 92, n. 6. MALONE.

² — more german—] More *a-kin*. JOHNSON.

³ *The king, sir, hath lay'd, &c.*] 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 meaning, I think, is, The king hath laid that in a game of a dozen passes, or in other words, in a trial of skill with foils, which is to be *witbin*, or at the utmost, *not to go beyond*, a dozen passes or bouts,

passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed 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

bouts, Laertes does not exceed you three hits; *the king hath laid on the principle of him who makes a bet, with the chance of gaining twelve, for nine that he may lose: or, in the language of gamesters, the king (by the advantage allowed to the prince,) hath odds, tantamount to four to three.*

So, in *The Tempest*,

— each putter out, on three for one,"

means, each layer out of money on the terms of gaining three pounds, &c. if he returns from his travels, for one that he hath staked, and will lose, if he does not return.

If the words, "*he hath lay'd, &c.*" relate to *Laertes*, they must mean, I think, that "*Laertes hath laid on the principle of one who undertakes to make twelve passes for nine, that his adversary shall make; on the ratio of twelve to nine.*"

Dr. Johnson objects very plausibly to this wager, that in a dozen passes one must exceed the other more or less than three hits; nor can there, says he, in a dozen passes be *twelve to nine*. If my interpretation of the words—*he hath laid on twelve for nine*, be right, the latter objection is done away: for these words relate to the nature or principle of the bet, and not to the number of passes actually to be made.

Let us then consider the other objection.—In a dozen passes or bouts, if they are play'd out, one must certainly exceed the other more or less than three hits; for the victor must either gain eight to four, or seven to five. But *Shakspeare* by the words—in a dozen passes, meant, I believe,—within a dozen passes, or in a game that at the utmost may be extended to a dozen passes. In such a game it might be ascertained that *Laertes* could not exceed *Hamlet* by three hits, without the twelve passes being made: for if *Hamlet* obtained the first five hits, the king would win his wager, and it would be useless to play out the remaining passes, inasmuch as *Laertes* could not, in that case, exceed his adversary by three hits. So, if *Laertes* was successful in the first five, and *Hamlet* in the second five,—the game would be at an end, and *Hamlet* be victorious; for the remaining hits could avail *Laertes* nothing: and so in other cases that might be put.

A case, however, it must be acknowledged, might arise, in which it might be necessary to play out the whole twelve passes. Thus, if *Hamlet* had made four hits, and *Laertes*, seven, *Hamlet* would have

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 head⁴.

Ham.

a right to insist on the twelfth bout being played, because if he was successful in that, his antagonist would be defeated, and lose his wager.

Shakspeare probably did not advert to the circumstance, that if the whole twelve passes were made, one must exceed the other by more or less than three hits, because it is obvious that the wager *might* be determined without twelve passes being made.

Three bits, was, I suppose, the usual number by which superior skill in the use of the sword was ascertained in Shakspeare's time. In Master Slender's engagement with a master of defence, the victor on making *three venies*, i. e. *bits*, more than his antagonist, was to have a dish of stew'd prunes. How many bouts or passes were allowed, is not mentioned; but probably the game generally was limited, and not permitted to exceed twelve passes.—The passage alluded to, has been misunderstood. See the note on it in Vol. X. in the APPENDIX. MALONE.

⁴ *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 bustle from his birth.* JOHNS.

The same image occurs in Ben Jonson's *Staple of News*:

“ ——— 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 *Revenge of 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.

I believe, Hamlet means to say that *Ofrick* is, bustling and impetuous, and yet “but *raw* in respect of his quick sail.” So, in *The Character of an Oxford Incendiary*, 1643: “This lapwing incendiary ran away half-batch'd from Oxford, to raise a combustion in Scotland.”

In

Ham. He did comply with his dug⁵, before he suck'd it. Thus has he (and many more of the same breed⁶, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on,) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter⁷; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnow'd opinions⁸; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out⁹.

Enter

In Meres's *Wit's Treasury* 1598, we have the same image expressed exactly in our poet's words: "As *the lapwing runneth away with the spell on her head*, as soon as she is hatched," &c. MALONE.

⁵ He did comply with his dug, &c.] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, reads—*A* [i. e. *be*] did, sir, with his dug, &c. For comply Dr. Warburton and the subsequent editors; read—*compliment*. The verb *to compliment* was not used, as I think, in the time of Shakspeare.

MALONE.

Shakspeare seems to have used *comply* in the sense in which we use the verb *compliment*. See before, Act II. sc. ii. *let me comply with you in this garb*. TYRWHITT.

⁶ — 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.

There may be a propriety in *beavy*, as he has just call'd him a *lapwing*. TOLLET.

"Many more of the same breed," is the reading of the quarto, 1604. MALONE.

⁷ — outward habit of encounter;] Thus the folio The quartos—*read—out of an habit of encounter*. STEEVENS.

We should, I think, read—*an outward habit, &c.* MALONE.

⁸ — a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnow'd opinions;] 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 trennowned opinions." If this printer preserved any traces of the original, our author wrote, "the most *sane* and *renowned* opinions," which is better than [the reading proposed by Dr. Warburton,] *fann'd* and *winnowed*.

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.

The quarto, 1604, reads, "—dotes on; *only* got the tune of the time, and out of an habit," &c. and—*not misty*, but *bisty*; the folio rightly, *yefty*: the same quarto has not *trennowned*, but *trennowed* (a corruption of *winnowed*,) for which (according to the usual process,) the next quart

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord¹, his majesty commended him to you by young Osrick, 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 some gentle entertainment² 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 odds³.

quarto gave *trenowned*. *Fond* and *winnowed* is the reading of the folio. MALONE.

Fond is evidently opposed to *winnowed*. *Fond*, in the language of Shakspeare's age, signified *foolish*. So, in the *Merchant of Venice*:

"Thou naughty jailer, why art thou so *fond*," &c.

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 *trice renowned*. STEEVENS.

Fann'd and *winnow'd* seems right to me. Both words, *winnowed*, *fan'd** and *drift*, 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 Shakspeare mentions together the *fan* and *wind* in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act V. sc. iii. TOLLET.

⁹ — *do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.*] These men of show, 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 tenuity of their intellects. JOHNSON.

¹ *My lord*, &c.] All that passes between *Hamlet* and this *Lord* is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

² — *gentle entertainment* —] Mild and temperate conversation. JOHNS.

³ *I shall win at the odds.*] I shall succeed with the advantage that I am allowed. MALONE.

* So written without the apostrophe, and easily might in MS. be mistaken for *fond*.

But

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 a kind of gain-giving⁴, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it⁵: 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: Since no man of aught he leaves, knows, what is't to leave betimes⁶? Let be.

Enter

⁴ —of gain-giving,] *Gain-giving* is the same as *mis-giving*. STEEV.

⁵ *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.

⁶ *Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows, what is't to leave betimes?*] The old quarto reads, *Since no man, of aught 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 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.”

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

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, fir⁷: 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 fore 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:

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 audience⁸,

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 nature⁹,

in reason or piety; my comfort is, that I cannot fall but by the direction of providence.

Hanmer has, *Since no man owes ought*, a conjecture not very reprehensible. *Since no man can call any possession certain*, what is it to leave?

JOHNSON.

Dr. Warburton has truly stated the reading of the first quarto, 1604. The folio reads—*Since no man has ought of what* he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?

In the late editions neither copy has been followed. MALONE.

⁷ *Give me your pardon, fir:*] 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.

⁸ *Sir, &c.*] This passage I have restored from the folio. STEEV.

⁹ *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*:

“*Evad.* Will you forgive me then?

“*Mel.* Stay, I must ask mine honour first.” STEEVENS.

whose

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 honour¹,
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.

King. Give them the foils, young Osrick.—Cousin
Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side².

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.*]

¹ *Till by some elder masters, of known honour,*] Mr. Steevens thinks that "this is said in allusion to the *ancient masters of defence*," of Shakspeare's time. See Vol. I. p. 204, n. 9. Our poet frequently alludes to English customs, and may have done so here, but I do not believe that gentlemen ever submitted points of honour to persons who exhibited themselves for money as prize-fighters on the publick stage; though they might appeal in certain cases to Raleigh, Essex, or Southampton, who from their high rank, their course of life, and established reputation, might with strict propriety be styled, "elder masters, of known honour." MALONE.

² *Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.*] Hamlet either means, that what the king had laid was more valuable than what Laertes staked; or that *the king hath made his bet, an advantage being given to the weaker party.* I believe the first is the true interpretation. In the next line but one the word *odds* certainly means *an advantage given to the party*, but here it may have a different sense. This is not an uncommon practice with our poet. MALONE.

Ofr. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table³:—
If Hamlet give the first, or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw⁴,
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 heaven 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.

Ofr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well,—again.

King. Stay, give me drink: Hamlet, this pearl is thine⁵;
Here's.

³ —*the stoups of wine*—] A *stoup* is a *flaggon*, or *bowl*. STEEVENS
Containing somewhat more than two quarts. See Vol. IV. p. 33,
n. 1. MALONE.

⁴ *And in the cup an union shall be throw,*] Thus the folio rightly.
In the first quarto by the carelessness of the printer, for *union*, we have
unice, which in the subsequent quarto copies was made *onyx*. An
union is a very precious pearl. See Bullokar's *English Expofitor*, 1616,
and Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598, in v. MALONE.

The *union* is thus mentioned in P. Holland's translation of *Pliny's Nat. Hist.* "And hereupon it is that our dainties and delicates here at Rome, &c. call them *unions*, as a man would say singular and by themselves alone."

To swallow a *pearl* in a draught seems to have been equally common to royal and mercantile prodigality. So, in the second part of *If you know not me, you know No Body*, 1606, Sir Thomas Gresham says:

"Here 16,000 pound at one clap goes.

"Instead of sugar, Gresham *drinks this pearle*

"Unto his queen and mistress." STEEVENS.

⁵ —*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

Here's to thy health.—Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound; and cannon shot off within.*

Ham. I'll play this bout first, set it by a while.

Come.—Another hit; What say you? [*They play.*

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath⁶.—

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

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 it.

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, you make a wanton of me⁷.

the wine. Hamlet seems to suspect this, when he afterwards discovers the effects of the poison, and tauntingly asks him,—*Is the union here?*

STEEVENS.

⁶ *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, Shakspeare 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 Shakspeare. STEEVENS.

The authour of *Historia Histrionica*, and Downes the prompter, concur in saying that Taylor was the performer of Hamlet. Roberts the player alone has asserted, (apparently without any authority,) that this part was performed by Lowin. MALONE.

⁷ — *you make a wanton of me.*] A *wanton* was a man feeble and effeminate. In *Cymbeline*, Imogen says, I am not

“—so citizen a *wanton*, as

“To seem to die, ere sick.” JOHNSON.

E e 2

Laer.

Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They 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. [*The queen falls.*]

Ofr. Look to the queen there, ho!

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! [*dies.*]

Ham. O villainy!—Ho! let the door be lock'd:

Treachery! seek it out. [*Laertes falls.*]

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 evenom'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 evenom'd too!—

Then, venom, to thy work, [*Stabs the king.*]

Ofr. and Lords. Treason! treason!

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 here⁸?

Follow my mother.

[*King dies.*]

Laer. He is justly serv'd;

⁸ *Is the union here?*] Thus the folio. In a former passage in the quarto, 1604, for *union* we had *unice*; here it has *onyx*.

It should seem from this line, and *Laertes's* next speech, that *Hamlet* here forces the expiring king to drink some of the poisoned cup, and that he dies while it is at his lips. MALONE.

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,

That are but mutes or audience to this act⁹,

Had I but time, (as this fell serjeant, death,

Is strict in his arrest¹,) 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 !—Horatio², what a wounded name,

Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me³ ?

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,

Absent thee from felicity a while,

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,

To tell my story.— [*March afar off, and shot 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 ; -

⁹ *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.

¹ — as this fell serjeant, death,

Is strict in his arrest,] So, in our poet's 74th Sonnet:

“ — when that fell arrest,

“ *Without all bail, shall carry me away,—*” MALONE.

² *O God !—Horatio, &c.*] Thus the quarto, 1604. Folio: *O good Horatio.* MALONE.

³ — *shall live behind me?*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*shall I leave behind me.* STEEVENS.

The potent poison quite o'er-crows 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 solicited⁶,—The rest is silence. [*dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart:—Good night, sweet
 prince;
 And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest⁷!—
 Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*
Enter

⁴ *The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit*;] This word, for which Mr. Pope and the succeeding editors have substituted *over-grows*, is used by Holinshed in his *History of Ireland*: “These noblemen laboured with tooth and nayle to *over-crowe*, and consequently to overthrow, one another.”

Again, in the epistle prefixed to Nashe's *Apologie of Pierce Pennileffe*, 1593: “About two yeeres since a certayne demi-divine took upon him to set his foote to mine, and *over-crowe* mee with comparative terms.”

MALONE.

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.” STEEVENS.

⁶ *Which have solicited*,—] What Hamlet would have said, the poet has not given us any ground for conjecturing. By *solicited*, Dr. Warburton understands, *brought on the event*. The words seem to mean no more than—*which have incited me to*— MALONE.

⁷ *Now cracks a noble heart:—Good night, sweet prince;
 And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!*] So, in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

“If thou liv'st, Pericles, thou hast a *heart*,
 “That even *cracks* for woe.”

The concluding words of the unfortunate Lord Essex's prayer on the scaffold were these: “—and when my life and body shall part, send *thy blessed angels, which may receive my soule, and convey it to the joys of heaven.*”

Hamlet had certainly been exhibited before the execution of that amiable nobleman; but the words here given to Horatio might have been one of the many additions made to this play. As no copy of an earlier date than 1604 has yet been discovered, whether Lord Essex's last words were in our authour's thoughts, cannot now be ascertained.

MALONE.

Let us review for a moment the behaviour of Hamlet, on the strength of which Horatio founds 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 ef-

Enter FORTINBRAS, *the* English Ambassadors, *and*
Others.

Fort. Where is this fight?

Hor.

fort 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. Akenfide once observed to me, that the conduct of Hamlet was every way unnatural and indefensible, unless he were 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 Shakspeare has taken the pains to point out the immoral tendency of his character. STEEVENS.

Hor. What is it, you would see?
If aught of woe, or wonder, cease your search.

Fort.

Some of the charges here brought against Hamlet appear to me questionable at least, if not unfounded. I have already observed that in the novel on which this play is constructed, the ministers who by the king's order accompanied the young prince to England, and carried with them a packet in which his death was concerted, were apprized of its contents; and therefore we may *presume* that Shakspeare meant to describe their representatives, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as equally criminal; as combining with the king to deprive Hamlet of his life. His procuring their execution therefore does not with certainty appear to have been an unprovoked cruelty, and *might* have been considered by him as necessary to his *future safety*; knowing, as he must have known, that they had devoted themselves to the service of the king in whatever he should command. The principle on which he acted, is ascertained by the following lines, from which also it may be inferred that the poet meant to represent Hamlet's school-fellows as privy to the plot against his life:

“ There's letters seal'd; and my two school-fellows—

“ Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,—

“ They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,

“ And marshall me to knavery: Let it work;

“ For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer

“ Hoist with his own petar; and it shall go hard,

“ But I will delve one yard below *their* mines,

“ *And blow them to the moon.*”

Another charge is, that “*he comes to disturb the funeral of Ophelia:*” but the fact is otherwise represented in the first scene of the fifth act: for when the funeral procession appears, (which he does not seek, but finds,) he exclaims,

“ The queen, the courtiers: *who is this they follow,*

“ *And with such maimed rites?*”

nor does he know it to be the funeral of Ophelia, till Laertes mentions that the dead body was that of his sister.

I do not perceive that he is accountable for the madness of Ophelia. He did not mean to kill her father when concealed behind the arras, but the king; and still less did he intend to deprive her of her reason and her life: her subsequent distraction therefore can no otherwise be laid to his charge, than as an unforeseen consequence from his too ardently pursuing the object recommended to him by his father.

He appears to have been induced to leap into Ophelia's grave, not with a design to insult Laertes, but from his love to her, (which then he had no reason to conceal,) and from the *irrawery of her brother's grief*, which excited him (not to condemn that brother, as has been stated, but) to *vie* with him in the expression of affection and sorrow:

“ Why,

Fort. This quarry cries on havoc⁹!—O proud death!
 What feast is toward in thine eternal cell¹,
 That thou so many princes, at a shot,
 So bloodily hast struck?

1. *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 mouth²,
 Had it the ability of life to thank you;
 He never gave commandment for their death.
 But since, to jump upon this bloody question,
 You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
 Are here arriv'd; give order, that these bodies

“ Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
 “ Until my eyelids will no longer wag.—
 “ I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers.
 “ Could not with all their quantity of love
 “ Make up my sum.”

When Hamlet says, “ the bravery of his grief did put me into a *towering passion*,” I think, he means, into a lofty expression (not of *resentment*, but) of *sorrow*. So, in *King John*, Vol. IV. p. 487:

“ She is *sad* and *passionate* at your highness' tent.”

Again, more appositely in the play before us:

“ The instant burst of clamour that she made,
 “ (Unless things mortal move them not at all),
 “ Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
 “ And *passion* in the gods.”

I may also add, that he neither assaulted, nor insulted Laertes, till that nobleman had curst him, and seized him by the throat. MALONE.

⁹ *This quarry cries on havoc!*] Hanmer 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.

¹ *What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,*] Shakspeare has already employed this allusion to the *Choæ*, 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.

² — *bis mouth,*] i. e. the king's. STEEVENS.

High

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 carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts³ ;
 Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters ;
 Of deaths put on⁴ by cunning, and forc'd cause⁵ ;
 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 kingdom⁶,
 Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have all cause to speak,
 And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more⁷ :

³ *Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts ;*] Of sanguinary and unnatural acts, to which the perpetrator was instigated by concupiscence, or, to use our poet's own words, by "*carnal stings.*" The speaker alludes to the murder of old Hamlet by his brother, previous to his incestuous union with Gertrude. A feeble *Remarker* asks, "was the relationship between the usurper and the deceased king a secret confined to Horatio?"—No, but the *murder* of Hamlet by Claudius was a secret which the young prince had imparted to Horatio, and had imparted to him alone ; and to this it is he principally, though covertly, alludes.—*Carnal* is the reading of the only authentick copies, the quarto 1604, and the folio 1623. The modern editors, following a quarto of no authority, for *carnal*, read *cruel*. MALONE.

⁴ *Of deaths put on—*] i. e. instigated, produced. See Vol. VII. p. 217, n. 7. MALONE.

⁵ — *and forc'd cause ;*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—and *for no cause*. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *some rights of memory in this kingdom,*] Some rights, which are remembered in this kingdom. MALONE.

⁷ *And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more :*] Thus the folio. The quarto 1604, reads—draw no more. MALONE.

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.

But

But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance,
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' musick, 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 shoot⁸. [*A dead march.*

[*Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies; after which,
a peal of ordnance is shot off.*

⁸ If the dramas of Shakspeare 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 sop 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 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

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.

ACT II. SCENE II. P. 275.

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 Shakspeare 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, pleased 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 pleased 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 *Rebearfal* 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 displeased 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 should quote what they say. Now it could not be, if this play displeased because of the bombast, that those whom it displeased 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, pleased 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 judgement I have the highest esteem, it was an excellent play, *well digested in the scenes*, i. e. where the three unities were well preserved

preferred. *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 overcharged into farce. But these qualities, which gained my esteem, lost the public's. For *I remember one said, There was no salt in the lines 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 called it an honest method*, i. e. he owned, 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 fucus of false art.

2. A second proof that this speech was given to be admired, is from the intrinsic merit of the speech itself; which contains the description of a circumstance very happily imagined, namely, Ilium and Priam's falling together, with the effect it had on the destroyer.

———*The bellish Pyrrhus, &c.*

To, *Repugnant to command.*

The unnerved father falls, &c.

To, ———*So after Pyrrhus' pause.*

Now this circumstance, illustrated with the fine similitude of the storm, is so highly worked up, as to have well deserved a place in Virgil's second book of the *Aeneid*, even though the work had been carried on to that perfection which the Roman poet had conceived.

3. The third proof is, from the effects which followed on the recital. Hamlet, his best character, approves it; the player is deeply affected in repeating it; and only the foolish Polonius tired 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 laedent,

Telephe, vel Peleu. MALE SI MANDATA LOQUERIS,

Aut 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

*Telephus & Peleus, cùm 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 Shakspeare intended to represent a player unnaturally and fantastically affected, we must appeal to Hamlet, that is, to Shakspeare 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 Shakspeare has here shewn the effects 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 Shakspeare 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

eries 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,] *Pr'ythee, 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. Mobled 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 unnerwed 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 big,
That the false huswife Fortune break her wheel,
Provok'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 Shakspeare'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 Shakspeare has employed the same thoughts cloathed in the same expressions, in his best plays. If he bids the false huswife 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 if what Dr. Warburton has said should be found in any instance to be exactly true, what can we infer from thence, but that Shakspeare 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 Shakspeare. 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

work had been carried to that perfection which the Roman poet had conceived.

Had Shakspeare 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 unskilfully 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 classick 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 Shakspeare, 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 Shakspeare 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 Shakspeare 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 this 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 Shakspeare ; but alas ! no traces of genius or vigour are discoverable in this *trambe repetita*, 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 Shakspeare'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 publick 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 Shakspeare : 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 publickly 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 *Zayre*, *Mabomet*, 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 Shakspeare, 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.

I formerly thought that the lines which have given rise to the foregoing observations, were extracted from some old play, of which it appeared to me probable that Christopher Marlowe was the authour; but whatever Shakspeare's view in producing them may have been, I am now decidedly of opinion that they were written by himself, not in any former unsuccessful piece, but expressly for the play of *Hamlet*. It is observable that what Dr. Warburton calls "the fine similitude of the storm," is likewise found in our poet's *Venus and Adonis*.

The levity of behaviour which Hamlet assumes immediately after the disappearance of the ghost in the first act, [sc. v.] has been objected to; but the writer of some sensible Remarks on this tragedy, published in 1736, justly observes, that the poet's object there was, that Marcellus "might not imagine that the ghost had revealed to Hamlet some matter of great consequence to him, and that he might not therefore be suspected of any deep design."

"I have heard (adds the same writer,) many persons wonder, why the poet should bring in this ghost in complete armour.—I think these reasons may be given for it. We are to consider, that he could introduce him in these dresses only; in his regal dress, in a habit of interment, in a common habit, or in some fantastick one of his own invention. Now let us examine, which was most likely to affect the spectators with passions proper on the occasion.—

"The regal habit has nothing uncommon in it, nor surprizing, nor could it give rise to any fine images. The habit of interment was something too horrible; for terror, not horror, is to be raised in the spectators. The common habit (or *habit de ville*, as the French call it,) was by no means proper for the occasion. It remains then that the poet should choose some habit from his own brain: but this certainly could not be proper, because invention in such a case would be so much in danger of falling into the grotesque, that it was not to be hazarded.

"Now as to the armour, it was very suitable to a king who is described as a great warrior, and is very particular; and consequently affects the spectators without being fantastick.—

"The king spurs on his son to revenge his foul and unnatural murder,

from these two considerations chiefly; that he was sent into the other world without having had time to repent of his sins, and without the necessary sacraments, according to the church of Rome, and that consequently his soul was to suffer, if not eternal damnation, at least a long course of penance in purgatory; which aggravates the circumstances of his brother's barbarity; and secondly, that Denmark might not be the scene of usurpation and incest, and the throne thus polluted and profaned. For these reasons he prompts the young prince to revenge; else it would have been more becoming the character of such a prince as Hamlet's father is represented to have been, and more suitable to his present condition, to have left his brother to the divine punishment, and to a possibility of repentance for his base crime, which, by cutting him off, he must be deprived of.

“ To conform to the ground-work of his plot, Shakspeare makes the young prince feign himself mad. I cannot but think this to be injudicious; for so far from securing himself from any violence which he feared from the usurper, it seems to have been the most likely way of getting himself confined, and consequently debarred from an opportunity of revenging his father's death, which now seemed to be his only aim; and accordingly it was the occasion of his being sent away to England; which design, had it taken effect upon his life, he never could have revenged his father's murder. To speak truth, our poet by keeping too close to the ground-work of his plot, has fallen into an absurdity; for there appears no reason at all in nature, why the young prince did not put the usurper to death as soon as possible, especially as Hamlet is represented as a youth so brave, and so careless of his own life.

“ The case indeed is this. Had Hamlet gone naturally to work, as we could suppose such a prince to do in parallel circumstances, there would have been an end of our play. The poet therefore was obliged to delay his hero's revenge: but then he should have contrived some good reason for it.

“ His beginning his scenes of Hamlet's madness by his behaviour to Ophelia, was judicious, because by this means he might be thought to be mad for her, not that his brain was disturbed about state affairs, which would have been dangerous.

“ It does not appear whether Ophelia's madness was chiefly for her father's death, or for the loss of Hamlet. It is not often that young women run mad for the loss of their fathers. It is more natural to suppose that, like *Chimene* in the *Cid*, her great sorrow proceeded from her father's being killed by the man she loved, and thereby making it indecent for her ever to marry him.

“ Laertes's character is a very odd one; it is not easy to say whether it is good or bad: but his consenting to the villainous contrivance of the usurper's to murder Hamlet, makes him much more a bad man than a good one.—It is a very nice conduct in the poet to make the usurper build his scheme upon the generous unsuspecting temper of the person he intends to murder, and thus to raise the prince's character by the confession of his enemy; to make the villain ten times more odious from his own mouth. The contrivance of the foil unbated (i. e. without

without a button,) is methinks too gross a deceit to go down even with a man of the most unsuspecting nature.

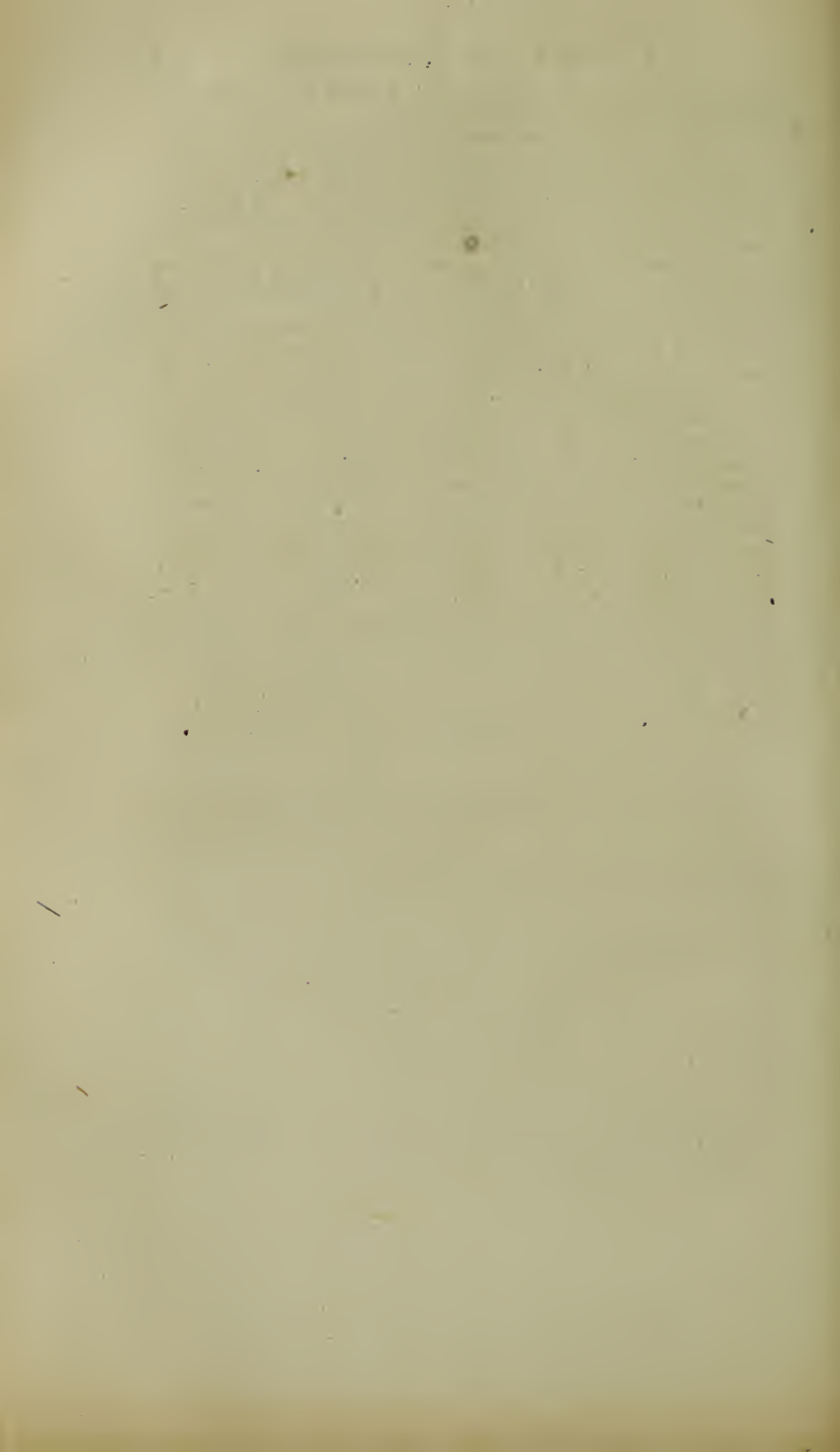
“Laertes’s death and the queen’s are truly poetical justice, and very naturally brought about, although I do not conceive it so easy to change rapiers in a scuffle without knowing it at the time. The death of the queen is particularly according to the strictest rules of poetical justice; for she loses her life by the villainy of the very person, who had been the cause of all her crimes.

“Since the poet deferred so long the Usurper’s death, we must own that he has very naturally effected it, and still added fresh crimes to those the murderer had already committed.

“Upon Laertes’s repentance for contriving the death of Hamlet, one cannot but feel some sentiments of pity for him; but who can see or read the death of the young prince without melting into tears and compassion? Horatio’s earnest desire to die with the prince, thus not to survive his friend, gives a stronger idea of his friendship for Hamlet in the few lines on that occasion, than many actions or expressions could possibly have done. And Hamlet’s begging him *to draw his breath in this harsh world* a little longer, to clear his reputation, and manifest his innocence, is very suitable to his virtuous character, and the honest regard that all men should have not to be misrepresented to posterity; that they may not set a bad example, when in reality they have set a good one: which is the only motive that can, in reason, recommend the love of fame and glory.

“Horatio’s desire of having the bodies carried to a stage, &c. is very well imagined, and was the best way of satisfying the request of his deceased friend: and he acts in this, and in all points, suitably to the manly honest character, under which he is drawn throughout the piece. Besides, it gives a sort of content to the audience, that though their favourite (which must be Hamlet) did not escape with life, yet the greatest amends will be made him, which can be in this world, viz. justice done to his memory.

“Fortinbras comes in very naturally at the close of the play, and lays a very just claim to the throne of Denmark, as he had the dying voice of the prince. He in a few words gives a noble character of Hamlet, and serves to carry off the deceased hero from the stage with the honours due to his birth and merit.” MALONE.



O T H E L L O.

Persons Represented,

Duke of Venice.

Brabantio, a Senator.

Two other Senators.

Gratiano, brother to Brabantio.

Lodovico, kinsman to Brabantio.

Othello, the Moor :

Cassio, his Lieutenant ;

Iago, his Ancient.

Roderigo, a Venetian Gentleman.

*Montano, Othello's predecessor in the government of
Cyprus.*

Clown, servant to Othello.

Herald.

Desdemona, daughter to Brabantio, and wife to Othello.

Emilia, wife to Iago.

Bianca, a courtesan, mistress to Cassio.

*Officers, Gentlemen, Messengers, Musicians, Sailors, At-
tendants, &c.*

*SCENE, for the first Act, in Venice ; during the rest
of the play, at a sea-port in Cyprus.*

O T H E L L O¹.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Venice. *A Street.*

Enter RODERIGO, *and* IAGO.

Rod. Tush, never tell me², I take it much unkindly,
That thou, Iago,—who hast had my purse,
As if the strings were thine,—should'st know of this.

Iago. 'Sblood, but you will not hear me: if ever
I did dream of such a matter, abhor me.

Rod. Thou told'st me, thou did'st hold him in thy hate.

Iago. Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of the
city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Oft capp'd to him³;—and, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place:

¹ The story is taken from *Cymbio's Novels*. POPE.

I have not hitherto met with any translation of this novel (the seventh in the third decad) of so early a date as the age of Shakspeare; but undoubtedly many of those little pamphlets have perished between his time and ours.

This play was first entered at Stationers' Hall, Oct. 6, 1621, by Thomas Walkely. STEEVENS.

I have seen a French translation of *Cymbio*, by Gabriel Chappuys, Par. 1584. This is not a faithful one; and I suspect, through this medium the work came into English. FARMER.

This tragedy I have ascribed (but on no very sure ground) to the year 1611. See *An Attempt to ascertain the order of Shakspeare's plays*, Vol. I. MALONE.

² Tush, never tell me,] Thus the quarto, 1622. In the folio the word *tush* is omitted. MALONE.

³ Oft capp'd to him;—] Thus the quarto. The folio reads, *Off-capp'd to him*. STEEVENS.

In support of the folio, *Antony and Cleopatra* may be quoted:

“ I have ever held my cap off to thy fortunes.”

This reading I once thought likely to be the true one. But a more intimate knowledge of the quarto copies has convinced me that they ought not without very strong reason to be departed from.

MALONE.

But

But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
 Evades them, with a bombast circumstance,
 Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war;
 And, in conclusion, nonsuits my mediators;
*For, certes*⁴, says he, *I have already*
Chosen my officer. And what was he?
 Forsooth, a great arithmetician⁵,
 One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
 A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife⁶;

That

⁴ —*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.

⁵ *Forsooth, a great arithmetician*,] So, in *Romeo and Juliet*, Mercutio says: “—one that fights by the book of *arithmetick*.” STEEV.

Iago, however, means to represent Cassio, not as a person whose arithmetick was “*one, two, and the third in your bosom*,” but as a man merely conversant with *civil* matters, and who knew no more of a squadron than the *number* of men it contained. So afterwards he calls him this *counter-caster*. MALONE.

⁶ *A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife*;] Sir Thomas Hanmer supposed that the text must be corrupt, because it appears from a following part of the play that Cassio was an unmarried man. Mr. Steevens has clearly explained the words in the subsequent note: I have therefore no doubt that the text is right; and have not thought it necessary to insert Mr. Tyrwhitt's note, in which he proposed to read—“*a fellow almost damn'd in a fair life*.” Shakspeare, he conceived, might allude to the judgment denounced in the gospel against those *of whom all men speak well*. MALONE.

Mr. Tyrwhitt's conjecture is ingenious, but cannot be right; for the malicious Iago would never have given Cassio the highest commendation that words can convey, at the very time that he wishes to depreciate him to Roderigo: though afterwards, in speaking to himself, [Act V. sc. i.] he gives him his just character. MASON.

That Cassio 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 IV. Scene i, 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 Shakspeare, however, designed *Bianca* for a curtizan of *Cyprus*, (where Cassio had not yet been, and had therefore never seen her,) Iago

That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows

More

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 Shakspeare, 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. STEEV.

There is no ground whatsoever for supposing that Shakspeare designed Bianca for a courtesan of Cyprus. Cassio, who was a Florentine, and Othello's lieutenant, sailed from Venice in a ship belonging to Verona, at the same time with the Moor; and what difficulty is there in supposing that Bianca, who, Cassio himself informs us, "haunted him every where," took her passage in the same vessel with him; or followed him afterwards? Othello, we may suppose, with some of the Venetian troops, sailed in another vessel; and Desdemona and Iago embarked in a third.

Iago, after he has been at Cyprus but one day, speaks of Bianca, (A&C IV. sc. i.) as one whom he had long known: he must therefore (if the poet be there correct) have known her at Venice:

"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." MALONE.

Ingenious as Mr. Tyrwhitt's conjecture may appear, it but ill accords with the context. Iago is enumerating the disqualifications of Cassio for his new appointment; but surely his *being well spoken of by all men* could not be one of them. It is evident from what follows that a report had prevailed at Venice of Cassio's being soon to be married "to the most fair Bianca." Now as she was in Shakspeare's language "a customer," it was with a view to such a connexion that Iago called the new lieutenant a *fellow almost damn'd*. It may be gathered from various circumstances that an intercourse between Cassio and Bianca had existed before they left Venice; for Bianca is not only well known to Iago at Cyprus, but she upbraids Cassio, (A&C III. sc. iv.) with having been absent a week from her, when he had not been *two days* on the island. Hence, and from what Cassio himself relates, (A&C IV. sc. i.) *I was the other day talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians, and thither comes the bauble; by this band she falls thus about my neck;*"—it may be presumed she had secretly

More than a spinster; unless the bookish theorick⁷,
 Wherein the toged consuls can propose⁸
 As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,
 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,— must be be-lee'd and calm'd⁹

By

followed him to Cyprus: a conclusion not only necessary to explain the passage in question, but to preserve the consistency of the fable at large.—The *sea-bank* on which Cassio was conversing with certain Venetians, was at Venice; for he had never till the day before been at Cyprus: he specifies those with whom he conversed as *Venetians*, because he was himself a *Florentine*; and he mentions the behaviour of Bianca in their presence, as tending to corroborate the report she had spread that he was soon to marry her. HENLEY.

I think, as I have already mentioned, that Bianca was a Venetian courtesan: but the *sea-bank* of which Cassio speaks, may have been the shore of Cyprus. In several other instances beside this, our poet appears not to have recollected that the persons of his play had only been one day at Cyprus. I am aware, however, that this circumstance may be urged with equal force against the concluding part of my own preceding note; and the term *sea-bank* certainly adds support to what Mr. Henley has suggested, being the very term used by Lewkenor, in his account of the *Lido maggior* of *Venice*. See p. 453, n. 2. MALONE.

⁷ —*the bookish theorick,*] *Theorick* for *theory*. STEEVENS.

This was the common language of Shakspeare's time. See Vol. III. p. 445, n. 8. MALONE.

⁸ —*the toged consuls*—] The *rulers of the state*, or civil governours. The word is used by Marlowe, in the same sense, in *Tamburlaine*, a tragedy, 1590:

“Both we will rainge as *consuls* of the earth.” MALONE.

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*. STEEV.

⁹ —*must be be-lee'd and calm'd*—] *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 to 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.

The quarto, 1622, reads—

— must be *led* and *calm'd*—.

I suspect therefore that Shakspeare wrote—*must be lee'd and calm'd*.

The

By debtor and creditor, this counter-caster¹;
 He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
 And I, (God blefs the mark²!) his Moor-ship's³ ancient.

Rod. By heaven, I rather would have been his hang-
 man.

Iago. But there's no remedy, 'tis the curse of service;
 Preferment goes by letter⁴, and affection,
 Not by the old gradation⁵, where each second
 Stood heir to the first. Now, fir, be judge yourself,
 Whether I in any just term am affin'd⁶
 To love the Moor.

Rod. I would not follow him then.

Iago. O, fir, content you;
 I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
 We cannot all be masters, nor all masters

The *lee*-side of a ship is that on which the wind blows. To *lee*, or to be *lee'd*, may mean, to fall to leeward, or to lose the advantage of the wind.

The reading of the text is that of the folio. I doubt whether there be any such sea-phrafe as to *be-lee*; and suspect the word *be* was inadvertently repeated by the compositor of the folio.

Mr. Steevens has explain'd the word *becalm'd*, but where is it found in the text? MALONE.

¹ — *this counter-caster*;] It was anciently the practice to reckon up sums with *counters*. To this Shakspeare alludes again in *Cymbeline*, Act V. "— it fums 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, 1540: "I wyl call my *counters*, or with *counters* make all my rekenynges." STEEVENS.

So, in *The Winter's Tale*:—"fifteen hundred shorn,—What comes the wool to?—I cannot do't without *counters*." MALONE.

² — *blefs the mark!*] Kelly, in his comments on Scots proverbs, observes, that the Scots, when they compare person to person, use this exclamation. STEEVENS.

³ — *his Moorship's*—] The first quarto reads—*his worship's*— STE.

⁴ — *by letter*,—] By recommendation from powerful friends. JOHNES.

⁵ *Not by the old gradation*,—] *Old gradation*, is gradation established by ancient practice. JOHNSON

⁶ *Whether 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 *assign'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.

The original quarto, 1622 has *assign'd*; but it was manifestly an error of the press. MALONE.

Cannot

Canhot 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, cashier'd;
 Whip me such honest knaves⁷: 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.

For, sir,

It is as sure 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 so, for my peculiar end:
 For when my outward action doth demonstrate
 The native act and figure of my heart
 In compliment extern⁸, 'tis not long after
 But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
 For doves to peck at⁹: I am not what I am.

⁷ — *Honest knaves*:] *Knave* is here for *servant*, but with a mixture of sly contempt. JOHNSON.

⁸ *In compliment extern*,] In that which I do only for an outward shew of civility. JOHNSON.

So, in Sir W. D'Avenant's *Albion*, 1629:

“ — that in sight *extern*

“ A patriarch seems.” STEEVENS.

⁹ *But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve*

For doves to peck at:] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads—
 For *dawit*, &c. I have adhered to the original copy, because I suspect
 Shakspeare had in his thoughts a passage in Lily's *Euphues and his Eng-
 land*, 1580: “As all coynes are not good that have the image of Cæsar,
 nor all gold, that is coyned with the kings stampe, so all is not truth that
 beareth the shew of godlinesse, nor all friends that beare a faire face.
 If thou pretend such love to Euphues, carry *thy heart on the backe of
 thy hand*, and thy tongue in thy palme, that I may see what is in thy
 minde, and thou with thy finger claspe thy mouth.—I can better take
 a blister of a nettle, than a pricke of a rose; more willing that a raven
 should peck out mine eyes, than a turtle peck at them.” MALONE.

Rod. What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe¹,
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,
As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spy'd in populous cities².

Rod. What ho! Brabantio! signior Brabantio, ho!

Iago. Awake! what, ho! Brabantio! thieves! 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?

¹ *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.

So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

“ — not the imperious shew

“ Of the *full-fortun'd* Cæsar—.”

Full is used by Chaucer in the same sense in his *Troilus*, B. L.

“ Sufficeth this, my *full* friend Pandare,

“ That I have said—.”

See also Vol VII. p. 534, n. 5. MALONE.

² *As when, by night and negligence, the fire*

Is spy'd in populous cities.] The meaning, as Mr. Edwards has observed, is, “not that the fire was spied by negligence, but the fire, which came by night and negligence, was spied.—And this double meaning to the same word is common to Shakspeare with all other writers, especially where the word is so familiar a one, as this in question, Ovid seems even to have thought it a beauty instead of a defect.” MALONE.

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.

Rod.

Rod. Signior, is all your family within?

Iago. Are your doors lock'd³?

Bra. Why? wherefore ask you this?

Iago. 'Zounds, fir, you are robb'd; for shame, put on your gown;

Your heart is burst⁴, you have lost half your soul;

Even now, very now, an old black ram

Is tuppung your white ewe⁵. 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 distempering draughts⁶,

Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come

To start my quiet.

Rod. Sir, fir, fir,—

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 fir.

Bra. What tell'it thou me of robbing? this is Venice;

³ *Are your doors lock'd?*] The first quarto reads, *Are all doors lock'd?* STEEVENS.

⁴ — *is burst,*] i. e. broken. *Burst* for *brecke* is used in our author's *King Henry IV.* P. II: "— and then he *burst* his head for crowding among the marshal's men." STEEVENS.

See also Vol. III. p. 244, n. 6, and p. 312, n. 1. MALONE.

⁵ — *tuppung your white ewe.*] In the north of England a ram is called a *tup*. MALONE.

⁶ — *distempering draughts,*—] To be distempred with liquor, was, in Shakspeare's age, the phrase for intoxication. In *Hamlet*, the king is said to be "marvellous *distempred* with wine." MALONE.

My house is not a grange⁷.

Rod. Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

Iago. 'Zounds, 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 nephews neigh to you⁸: you'll have courfers for cousins, and gennets for germans⁹.

Bra. What profane wretch art thou¹?

Iago.

⁷ — *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 reposit 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 Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond*, 1599:

" — soon was I train'd from court

" To a solitary grange," &c.

Again, in *Measure for Measure*:

" At the moated grange resides this dejected Mariana."

STEEVENS.

⁸ — *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 thrice eleven descents the crown obtain'd."

Again, in Chapman's version of the *Odyssey*, B. 24, Laertes 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 shew 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 Shakspeare to have recourse to it. STEEVENS.

See Vol. VI. p. 555, n. 7. MALONE.

⁹ — *gennets for germans.*] A *jennet* is a Spanish horse. STEEVENS.

¹ *What profane wretch art thou?*] That is, *what wretch, of gross and licentious language?* In that sense Shakspeare often uses the word profane. JOHNSON.

Iago. I am one, fir, that comes to tell you, your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs².

Bra. Thou art a villain.

Iago. You are—a fenator.

Bra. This thou shalt answer; I know thee, Roderigo.

Rod. Sir, I will answer any thing. But I beseech you, If't be your pleasure³, and most wise consent, (As partly, I find, it is,) that your fair daughter, At this odd-even and dull watch o' the night⁴; Transported—with no worse nor better guard,

It is so used by other writers of the same age :

“ How far off dwells the house-surgeon ?

“ — You are a *profane* fellow, i'faith.”

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

“ By the sly justice, and his clerk *profane*.” STEEVENS.

² — *your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs.*] This is an ancient proverbial expression in the French language, whence Shakspeare probably borrowed it; for in the *Diſtionaire des Proverbes Françoises*, par G. D. B. Bruxelles, 1710, 12mo, I find the following article : “ Faire la bête a deux dos,” pour dire, faire l'amour. PERCY.

In the *Diſtionaire Comique*, par le Roux, 8vo. 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 Shakspeare. MALONE.

³ *If't be your pleasure, &c.*] This and the sixteen following lines are not in the original quarto. They are found in the folio, 1623.

MALONE.

⁴ *At this odd-even and dull-watch o'the night,*] “ The *even of night*,” Dr. Johnson observes, “ is *midnight*, the time when night is divided into two *even* parts.” This is certainly true; but our business is to explain the *odd-even* of night. By this singular expression,—“ this *odd-even* of night,” our poet appears to have meant, that it was just approaching to, or just past, midnight; so near, or so recently past, that it was doubtful whether at that moment it stood at the point of midnight, or at some other less equal division of the twenty four hours; which a few minutes either before or after midnight would be.

So, in *Macbeth* :

“ ——— What is the *night* ?

“ *Lady M.* Almost at *odds with morning*, *which is which*.”

Shakspeare was probably thinking of his boyish school-play, *odd or even*. MALONE.

But

But with a knave of common hire, a gondalier,—
 To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor,—
 If this be known to you, and your allowance⁵,
 We then have done you bold and faucy 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 civility⁶,
 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,
 In an extravagant⁷ and wheeling stranger⁸,
 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 you⁹.

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 :—

⁵ — and your allowance,] i. e. done with your approbation. See Vol. VIII. p. 203, n. 3, and p. 505, n. 5. MALONE.

⁶ That from the sense of all civility,] That is, in opposition to, or departing from the sense of all civility. So, in *Twelfth Night* :

“ But this is from my commission.”

Again, in *The Mayor of Queenborough*, by Middleton, 1661 :

“ But this is from my business.” MALONE.

⁷ In an extravagant, &c.] *Extravagant* is here used in its Latin signification, for *wandering*. Thus in *Hamlet* : “ — The *extravagant* and erring spirit,—.” STEEVENS.

⁸ Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes,

In an *extravagant* and *wheeling stranger*,] Thus the old copies, for which the modern editors, following Mr. Pope, have substituted—*To an extravagant, &c.* In *K. Lear* we find—“ And hold our lives in mercy ; (not at mercy ;) in *The Winter's Tale*, “ he was torn to pieces with a bear,” not “ by a bear ;” and in *Hamlet*,

“ To let this canker of our nature come

“ In further evil.”

So, in the next scene, p. 468, we have “ —in your part,” not “ on your part.” We might substitute modern for ancient phraseology in all these passages with as much propriety as in the present. We yet say, “ she is *wrapp'd up* in him.” MALONE.

⁹ For thus deluding you.] The first quarto reads, *For this delusion.*

STEEVENS.

Light, I say! light!

[Exit, from above.]

Iago. Farewel; for I must leave you:

It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,

To be produc'd¹ (as, if I stay, I shall,)

Against the Moor: For, I do know, the state,—

However this may gall him with some check²,—

Cannot with safety cast him³; for he's embark'd

With such loud reason to the Cyprus' wars,
(Which even now stand in act) that, for their souls,

Another of his fathom they have not,

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 Sagittar⁴ the raised search;

And there will I be with him. So, farewell. [Exit.]

Enter, below, BRABANTIO, and Servants with torches.

Bra. It is too true an evil: gone she is;

And what's to come of my despised time⁵,

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?—O, thou deceiv'st me

Past thought⁶!—What said she to you?—Get more tapers;
Raise

¹ To be produc'd—] The folio reads, *produced*. STEEVENS.

² — *some check*,] Some rebuke. JOHNSON.

³ — *cast him*;—] That is, *dismiss* him; *reject* him. We still say, *a cast coat*, and a *cast serving-man*. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *the Sagittar*—] Thus the quarto, 1622. Folio:—the *Sagittary*. MALONE.

⁵ *And what's to come of my despised time*,] *Despised time*, is *time of no value*; time in which

“ There's nothing serious in morality;

“ 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.

⁶ — *O, thou deceiv'st me*

Past thought!—] Thus the quarto 1622. The folio 1623, and the quartos 1630 and 1655 read,

Raise all my kindred.—Are they marry'd, think you?

Rod. Truly, I think, they are.

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.—Is there not charms⁷,
By which the property⁸ of youth and maidhood⁹
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, that 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 on¹. At every house I'll call;
I may command at most:—Get weapons, ho!
And raise some special officers of night².—
On, good Roderigo; I'll deserve your pains. [Exeunt.

SCENE

—— O she deceives me

Past thought.

I have chosen the apostrophe to his absent daughter, as the most spirited of the two readings. STEEVENS.

⁷ —Is there not charms,] Is there not such a thing as charms, &c. The modern editors, following an alteration made by the editor of the second folio, read—Are there not charms, &c. MALONE.

⁸ 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 false imagination:

“—wicked dreams abuse

“The curtain'd sleep.” *Macbeth.* JOHNSON.

⁹ —and maidhood—] The quartos read—and manhood—. STEEVENS.

¹ Pray you, lead on.] The first quarto reads, Pray lead me on.

STEEVENS.

² And raise some special officers of night.—] Thus the original quarto, 1622; for which the editor of the folio substituted—officers of night; a reading which all the modern editors have adopted. I have more than once had occasion to remark that the quarto readings were sometimes changed by the editor of the folio, from ignorance of our poet's phraseology or meaning.

I have no doubt that Shakspeare, before he wrote this play, read *The Commonwealth and Government of Venice*, translated from the Italian

S C E N E II.

*The same. 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 o' the conscience³
 To do no contriv'd murder; I lack iniquity
 Sometimes, to do me service: Nine or ten times
 I had thought to have yerk'd him⁴ here under the ribs.

Oth. 'Tis better as it is.

by Lewes Lewkenor, and printed in 4to, 1599: a book prefixed to which we find a copy of verses by Spenser. This treatise furnished our poet with the knowledge of those *officers* of night, whom Brabantio here desires to be called to his assistance.

“For the greater expedition thereof, of these kinds of judgments, the heads or chieftains of *the officers by night* do obtaine the authority of which the advocates are deprived. These *officers of the night* are six, and six likewise are those meane officers, that have only power to correct base vagabonds and trifling offences.

“Those that do execute this office are called heads of the tribes of the city, because out of every tribe, (for the city is divided into six tribes,) there is elected an *officer of the night*, and a head of the tribe. —The duty of eyther of these officers is, to keepe a watch every other night by turn, within their tribes; and, now the one and then the other, to make rounds about his quarter, till the dawning of the day, being always guarded and attended on with weaponed officers and sergeants, and to see that there be not any disorder done in the darkness of the night, which alwaies emboldeneth men to naughtinesse; and that there be not any houses broken up, nor theeves nor rogues lurking in corners with intent to do violence.” *Commonwealth of Venice*, pp. 97, 99. MALONE.

³ — stuff o' the conscience—] This expression to common readers appears harsh. *Stuff* of the conscience is, *substance*, or *essence* of the conscience. *Stuff* is a word of great force in the Teutonick languages. The elements are called in Dutch, *Hoefd 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.

⁴ *I had thought to have yerk'd him*—] *Iago* is probably here speaking of Roderigo. MALONE.

Iago.

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, sir,
 Are you fast marry'd? for, be sure of this,—
 That the magnifico⁵ is much belov'd;
 And hath, in his effect, a voice potential
 As double as the duke's⁶: he will divorce you;

⁵ — *the magnifico*—] “The chief men of Venice are by a peculiar name called *Magnifici*, i. e. *magnificoes*.” Minshew's *Dictionary*. See too *Volpone*. TOLLET.

⁶ — *a voice potential*

As double as the duke's:] It appears from Thomas's *History of Italy*, 4to. 1560, to have been a popular opinion, though a false one, that the duke of Venice had a *double voice*. “Whereas,” says he, “many have reported, the duke in ballotyng should have *two voices*; it is nothinge so; for in giving his voice he hath but one ballot, as all others have.” Shakspeare, therefore, might have gone on this received opinion, which he might have found in some other book. Supposing, however, that he had learned from this very passage that the duke had *not* a double voice in the Council of Seven, yet as he has a vote in each of the various councils of the Venetian state, (a privilege which no other person enjoys,) our poet might have thought himself justified in the epithet which he has here used; and this circumstance, which he might have found in a book already quoted, Costareno's *Commonwealth and Government of Venice*, 4to, 1599, was, I believe, here in his thoughts.

“The duke himself also, if he will, may use the authority of an advocator or president, and make report to the councill of any offence, and of any amercement or punishment that is thereupon to be inflicted;—for so great is the prince's authoritie, that he may, in whatsoever court, ADJOINE himselfe to the magistrate therein, being president, as his colleague and companion, and have EQUAL POWER WITH THE OTHER PRESIDENTS, that he might so by this means be able to look into all things.” p. 41. Again, *ibidem*, p. 42: “Besides this, this prince [i. e. the duke,] hath in every councill equal authoritie with any of them, for one suffrage or lotte.” Thus we see, though he had not a double voice in any one assembly, yet as he had a vote in all the various assemblies, his voice, thus added to the voice of each of the presidents of those assemblies, might with strict propriety be called *double*, and *potential*.—*Potential*, Dr. Johnson thinks, means, operative, having the effect, (by *weight* and *influence*,) without the external actual property. It is used, he conceives, “in the sense of science; a caustick is called *potential fire*.” I question whether Shakspeare meant more by the word than *operative*, or *powerful*. MALONE.

Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
The law (with all his might, to enforce it on,)
Will give him cable.

Oth. 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 promulgate⁷;) I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege⁸; and my demerits⁹
May speak, unbonnetted¹, to as proud a fortune

As

⁷ — 'Tis yet to know,

(*Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,*

I shall promulgate,)—] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads:

—Tis yet to know

That boasting is an honour.

I shall promulgate, I fetch, &c.

Some words certainly were omitted at the press; and perhaps they have been supplied in the wrong place. Shakspeare might have written:

— 'Tis yet to know

That boasting is an honour; which when I know,

I shall promulgate, I fetch my life, &c.

I am yet to learn that boasting is honourable, which when I have learned, I shall proclaim to the world *that* I fetch my life, &c.

MALONE.

⁸ — *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 *siege royall* for the king."

Again, in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, b. 2. c. 7:

"A stately *siege* of soveraigne majesty." STEEVENS.

So, in Grafton's *Chronicle*, p. 443: "Incontinent after that he was placed in the *royal siege*," &c, MALONE.

⁹ — *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*.

Again, in Dugdale's *Warwickshire*, p. 850, edit. 1730: "Henry Conway, esq. for his singular *demerits* received the dignity of knight-hood."

Mereo and *demereo* had the same meaning in the Roman language.

STEEVENS.

¹ *May speak unbonnetted*,] Thus all the copies read this passage. But, to *speak unbonnetted*, is to speak *with the cap off*, which is directly

As this that I have reach'd: For know, Iago,
 But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
 I would not my unhoused² free condition
 Put into circumscription and confine
 For the sea's worth³. But, look! what lights come yonder?

Enter CASSIO, at a distance, and certain officers, with torches.

Iago. These are the raised father, and his friends:
 You were best go in.

Oth. Not I: I must be found;

My

rectly 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 Shakspeare wrote:

May speak, and bonnetted, &c. THEOBALD.

Bonnetter (says Cotgrave) is to *put off one's cap*. So, in *Coriolanus*: "—those, who having been supple and courteous to the people, *bonnetted* without any further deed to have 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 Shakspeare to make or use words compounded in the same manner. Such are *impavon*, *impaint*, *impale*, and *immask*. Of all the readings hitherto proposed, that of Theobald is, I think, the best. STEEVENS.

The objection to Mr. Steevens's explanation of *unbonnetted*, i. e. *without taking the cap off*, is, that Shakspeare has himself used the word in *K. Lear*, Act III. sc. i. with the very contrary signification, namely, for *one whose cap is off*:

"—*Unbonnetted* he runs,

"And bids what will take all."

He might, however, have employed the word here in a different sense. MALONE.

Unbonnetted, is uncovered, revealed, made known. In the second act and third scene of this play we meet with an expression similar to this: "—you *unlace* your reputation;" and another in *As you like it*, Act IV. sc. i. "Now *unmuzzle* your wisdom." A. C.

² — *unhoused* —] Free from *domeſtick* cares. A thought natural to an adventurer. JOHNSON.

Othello talking as a soldier, *unhoused* may signify the having no settled house or habitation. WHALLEY.

³ *For the sea's worth*.] I would not marry her, though she were as rich as the Adriatick, which the Doge annually marries. JOHNSON.

I believe

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?

Caf. 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?

Caf. Something from Cyprus, as I may divine;
It is a business of some heat: the galleys
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers⁴
This very night, at one another's heels;
And many of the consuls⁵, rais'd, and met,
Are at the duke's already: You have been hotly call'd for;
When, being not at your lodging to be found,

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 loose 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 fees, or

“ The close earth wombs, or *the profound sea bides*

“ *In unknown fatboms,*” &c.

Again, in *King Henry V.* Act I:

“ ————— As rich with praise,

“ As is the ouze, and *bottom of the sea,*

“ With sunken wreck, and sumless treasuries.” STEEVENS.

4 — sequent messengers.—] The first quarto reads—*frequent messengers.* STEEVENS.

5 — 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 *Albion's Triumph*, a masque, 1631, the emperor Albanaet 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.

See p. 442, n. 3. MALONE.

The

The senate hath sent about three several quests⁶,
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 boarded a land carack⁷;
If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.

Caf. I do not understand.

Iago. He's married.

Caf. To who⁸?

Re-enter

⁶ *The senate hath sent about—*] 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.

⁷ — a land carack;] A *carack* 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 *caracks*, all for strength and stowage.”

STEEVENS.

Mr. Mason observes, that “the first ship that came richly laden from the West Indies to Europe were those from the *Caraccas*;” and seems to think that the vessel called a *carack* derived its name from thence. But a *carack*, or *carick*, (for so it was more frequently written in Shakspeare's time,) is of higher origin, and was denominated from the Spanish word, *caraca*, which signifies a vessel of great bulk, constructed to carry a heavy burthen. The Spanish *caraca*, Minshew thinks, may have been formed from the Italian *carico*, a lading, or freight.

MALONE.

⁸ *To who?*] It is somewhat singular that Cassio should ask this question. In the third scene of the third 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 married. STEEV.

Cassio's seeming ignorance of Othello's courtship or marriage might only be affected; in order to keep his friend's secret, till it became publickly known. BLACKSTONE. *

Re-enter OTHELLO.

Iago. Marry, to—Come, captain, will you go?

Oth. Have with you.

Caf. Here comes another troop to seek for you.

Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and *Officers of night,*
with torches and weapons.

Iago. It is Brabantio:—general, be advis'd^o;
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 magick were not bound,
Whether a maid—so tender, fair, and happy;
So opposite to marriage, that she shunn'd
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation¹,—

Would

Or he might fear that Othello had proved false to the gentle Des-
demona, and married another. MALONE.

^o — *be advis'd*;] That is, be cool; be cautious; be discreet.

¹ *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 Shakspeare employs the same expression, and
evidently alludes to *the hair*:

“ If the first meet the *curled* Antony,” &c.

Sir *W. D' Avenant* uses the same expression in his *Just Italian*, 1630:

“ The *curl'd* and silken nobles of the town.”

Again:

“ Such is the *curled* youth of Italy.”

I believe Shakspeare has the same meaning in the present instance.

STEEVENS,

That

Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
 Run from her guardage to the footy bosom
 Of such a thing as thou; to fear, not to delight²,
 Judge me³ the world, if 'tis not gross in sense,
 That thou hast practis'd on her with fowl charms;
 Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,
 That waken motion⁴:—I'll have it disputed on:

'Tis

That Dr. Johnson was mistaken in his interpretation of this line, is ascertained by our poet's *Rape of Lucrece*, where the hair is not merely alluded to, but expressly mentioned, and the epithet *curled* is added as characteristick of a person of the highest rank:

“ Let him have time to tear his *curled hair*.”

Tarquin, a king's son, is the person spoken of. See Vol. X. p. 102, n. 1. Edgar, when he was “ proud in heart and mind,” *curl'd his hair*. MALONE.

² — *to fear, not to delight*.] To one more likely to terrify than to delight her. So, in the next scene (Brabantio is again the speaker):

“ To fall in love with what *she fear'd* to look on.”

Mr. Steevens supposes *fear* to be a verb here, used in the sense of to terrify; a signification which it formerly had. But *fear*, I apprehend, is a substantive, and poetically used for the *object* of fear. MALONE.

³ *Judge me, &c.*] This and the five following lines are not in the quarto, 1622. MALONE.

⁴ *Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,*

That waken motion:] The folio, where alone this passage is found, reads—That *weaken* motion. The emendation was made by Sir Thomas Hanmer; and I have adopted it, because I have a good reason to believe that the words *weaken* and *waken* were in Shakspeare's time pronounced alike, and hence the mistake might easily have happened. *Motion* is elsewhere used by our poet precisely in the sense required here. So, in *Cymbeline*:

“ ——— for there's no *motion*

“ That tends to vice in man, but I affirm

“ It is the woman's part.”

Again, in *Hamlet*:

“ — sense sure you have, r.³

“ Else could you not have *motion*.”

Again, in *Measure for Measure*:

“ ——— one who never feels

“ The wanton stings and *motions* of the sense.”

So also, in *A Mad World, my Masters*, by Middleton, 1608:

“ And in myself sooth up adulterous *motions*,

“ And such an appetite as I know damns me.”

'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.

We have in the play before us—*waken'd wrath*, and I think in some other play of Shakspeare—*waken'd love*. So, in our poet's 117th Sonnet:

“ But shoot not at me in your *waken'd bate*.”

Ben Jonson in the preface to his *Volpone* has a similar phraseology. “ —it being the office of the comick poet to *stirre up gentle affections*.”

Mr. Theobald reads—That weaken *notion*, i. e. says he, her right conception and idea of things; understanding, judgment.

This reading it must be acknowledged, derives some support from a passage in *King Lear*, Act II. sc. iv.—“ either his *notion weakens*, or his discernings are lethargy'd.” But the objection to it is, that no opiates or intoxicating potions or powders of any sort can distort or pervert the *intelleets*, but by destroying them for a time; nor was it ever at any time believed by the most credulous, that *love-powders*, as they were called, could *weaken the understanding*, though it was formerly believed that they could *fascinate the affections*: or in other words, *waken motion*.

Brabantio afterwards asserts,

“ That with some mixtures powerful o'er the *blood*,

“ He wrought upon her.”

(Our poet, it should be remembered, in almost all his plays uses *blood* for *passion*. See p. 356, n. 5; and Vol. VIII. p. 81, n. 4, and p. 199, n. 7.) And one of the senators asks Othello, not, whether he had *waken'd* Desdemona's *understanding*, but whether he did

“ — by indirect and forced courses

“ Subdue and *poison* this young maid's *affections*.”

The notion of the efficacy of love-powders was formerly so prevalent, that in the parliament summoned by King Richard the Third, on his usurping the throne, it was publickly urged as a charge against Lady Grey, that she had bewitched King Edward the Fourth “ by strange potions and amorous *charms*.” See Fabian, p. 495; Speed, p. 913, edit. 1632; and Habington's *History of King Edward the Fourth*, p. 35.

MALONE.

Motion in a subsequent scene of this play is used in the very sense in which Hammer would employ it. “ But we have reason to cool our raging *motions*, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts.” STEEVENS.

^s For an abuser, &c.] The first quarto reads, *Such* an abuser, &c.

STEEVENS.

Otb.

Oth. 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.

Oth. 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,
To bring me to him⁶?

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,
Bond-slaves, and pagans, shall our statesmen be⁷.

[*Exeunt.*]

⁶ To bring—] The quartos read—To bear. STEEVENS.

⁷ Bond-slaves, and pagans, &c.] Brabantio 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.

In our authour's time *pagan* was a very common expression of contempt. So, in *K. Henry IV.* P. II.

“What *pagan* may that be?”

See Vol. V. p. 319, n. 8. MALONE,

SCENE

S C E N E III.

The same. A Council-Chamber.

The Duke, and Senators, sitting at a table; Officers attending.

Duke. There is no composition⁸ in these news*,
That gives them credit.

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,
(As in these cases, where the aim reports⁹,
'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.

Off. 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 Angelo¹.

Duke. How say you by this change?

⁸ *There is no composition—*] *Composition, for consistency, concordancy.*

WARBURTON.

* — *these news,*] Thus the quarto, 1622, and such was frequently the phraseology of Shakspeare's age. So, in *The Spanish Tragedy*, 1610:

"The news are more delightful to his soul,—"

See also Vol. VI. p. 194, n. 2. The folio reads—*this news.* MALONE.

⁹ — *where the aim reports,*] In these cases where conjecture or suspicion tells the tale. *Aim* is again used as a substantive, in this sense, in *Julius Cæsar*:

"What you would work me to, I have some *aim*."

Thus the folio. The quarto reads—*they aim'd reports.* MALONE.
To *aim* is to conjecture. So, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

"But fearing lest my jealous *aim* might err." STEEVENS.

¹ *By Signior Angelo.*] This hemistich is wanting in the first quarto.
STEEVENS.

1. *Sen.*

1. *Sen.* This cannot be,
 By no assay of reason²; '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 facile question³ bear it,
 For that it stands not⁴ in such warlike brace⁵,
 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, a danger profitless⁶.

Duke. Nay, in all confidence, he's not for Rhodes.

Off. Here is more news.

Enter a Messenger.

Mes. The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
 Steering with due course toward the isle of Rhodes,
 Have there injoined them with an after fleet.

1. *Sen.* Ay, so I thought⁷:—How many, as you guess?

Mes. Of thirty sail: and now do they re-stem⁸
 Their backward course, bearing with frank appearance
 Their purposes toward Cyprus.—Signior Montano,

² *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.

³ — *with more facile question* —] With less *dispute*; with less opposition. MASON.

⁴ *For that it stands not, &c.*] The seven following lines are added since the first edition. POPE.

⁵ — *warlike brace*,] State of defence. To arm was called to *brace* on the armour. JOHNSON.

⁶ *To wake, and wage, a danger profitless.*] To *wage* here, as in many other places in Shakspeare, 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.

⁷ *Ay, so, &c.* —] This line is not in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *they do re-stem* —] The quartos mean to read *re-sterne*, though in the first of them the word is misspelt. STEEVENS.

Your trusty and most valiant servitor,
With his free duty, recommends you thus,
And prays you to believe him².

Duke. 'Tis certain then for Cyprus.—
Marcus Lucchesé¹, is not he in town?

1. *Sen.* He's now in Florence.

Duke. Write from us; wish him, post, post-haste dis-
patch².

1. *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 Ottoman³.

I did not see you; welcome, gentle signior; [to Bra.]
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 general care
Take hold⁴ on me; for my particular grief
Is of so flood-gate and o'er-bearing nature,

2 *And prays you to believe him.*] *He intreats you not to doubt the truth of this intelligence.* JOHNSON.

1 *Marcus Lucchesé,*] The old copies have *Luccicos*. Mr. Steevens made the correction. MALONE.

2 — *wish him, post, post-haste dispatch.*] i. e. tell him we wish him to make all possible haste. *Post-haste* is before in this play used adjectively:
“And he requires your haste, *post-haste appearance.*”

All messengers in the time of Shakspeare were enjoined, “*Haste haste; for thy life, post haste.*”

The reading of the text is that of the quarto, 1622, The folio reads:

“Write from us *to him*, post, post-haste dispatch.” MALONE.

3 *Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you*

Against the general enemy Ottoman.] It is part of the policy of the Venetian state never to entrust the command of an army to a native. “To exclude, therefore,” (says Contareno, as translated by Lewkenor, 4to, 1599,) “out of our estate the danger or occasion of any such ambitious enterprises, our ancestors held it a better course to defend the dominions on the continent with foreign mercenary soldiers, than with their homebred citizens.” Again: “Their charges and yearly occasions of disbursement are likewise very great; for alwaies they do entertain in honourable sort with great provision a *captaine generall*, who alwaies is a *stranger borne.*” MALONE.

4 *Take hold* — [The first quarto reads, *Take any hold.* STEEVENS.

That

That it engluts and swallows other forrows,
And it 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 mountebanks⁵:
For nature so preposterously to err,
Being not deficient⁶, blind, or lame of sense,
Sans witchcraft could not⁷.

⁵ *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 Shakspeare without question well understood. Thus the law, *De i maleficii et herbarie*, cap. 17. of the Code, intitled, Della promission del maleficio. "Statuimo etiamdio, che se alcun homo, o femina, harra fatto maleficii, equali se dimandano vulgarmente *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 Shakspeare 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.

See p. 462, n. 4. MALONE.

⁶ *Being not, &c.*] This line is wanting in the first quarto.

STEEVENS.

⁷ *For nature so preposterously to err—*

Sans witchcraft could not.] Omit *to*, says Mr. Mason, "and then the sentence will be complete."

Omission is at all times the most dangerous mode of emendation, and here assuredly is unnecessary. We have again and again had occasion to observe, that Shakspeare frequently begins to construct a sentence in one mode, and ends it in another. See p. 239, n. 6. Here he uses *could not*, as if he had written, *has not the power or capacity to, &c.* It is not in nature *so to err*; she knows not how to do it.

MALONE.

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
Stood in your action⁸.

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.

Duke, and Sen. 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;
The very head and front of my offending⁹
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,
And little bless'd with the set phrase of peace¹;

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, nextenuated. JOHNSON.

A similar expression is found in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, 1590:

“The man that in the forebead of his fortunes,
Beares figures of renowne and miracle.”

Again, in *Troilus and Cressida*:

“So rich advantage of a promis'd glory,
As smiles upon the forebead of this action.” MALONE.

¹ *And little bless'd with the set phrase of peace;*] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads—with the soft phrase of peace. *Soft* may have been used for *still* and *calm*, as opposed to the clamours of war. So, in *Coriolanus*:

“——— Say to them,
“Thou art their soldier, and, being bred in broils,
“Hast not the soft way, which thou dost confess
“Were fit for thee to use.”

Again, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

“——— 'Tis a worthy deed,
“And shall become you well, to entreat your captain
“To soft and gentle speech.” MALONE.

For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
 Till now some nine moons wasted, they have us'd
 Their dearest action² 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 patience,
 I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
 Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what charms,
 What conjuration, and what mighty magick,
 (For such proceeding I am charg'd withal,)
 I won his daughter³.

Bra. A maiden never bold;
 Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
 Blush'd at herself⁴; 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,

² *Their dearest action* —] i. e. their most important action. See Vol. VIII. p. 130, n. 6. MALONE.

I should give these words a more natural signification, and suppose that they mean—their favourite action, the action most dear to them. Othello says afterwards:

“ ——— I do agnize
 “ A natural and prompt alacrity
 “ I find in hardness.” MASON.

³ *I won his daughter.*] i. e. I won his daughter *with*: and so all the modern editors read, adopting an interpolation made by the editor of the second folio, who was wholly unacquainted with our poet's metre and phraseology. In *Timon of Athens* we have the same elliptical expression:

“ Who had the world as my confectionary,
 “ The mouths, the tongues, the eyes, and hearts of men,
 “ At duty, more than I could frame *employment* [for].

See also Vol. VIII. p. 472, n. 3. where several other instances of a similar phraseology are collected. MALONE.

⁴ *Blush'd at herself;*] Mr. Pope reads—at *itself*, but without necessity. Shakspeare, like other writers of his age, frequently uses the *personal*, instead of the *neutral* pronoun. STEEVENS.

That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,
He wrought upon her.

Duke. To vouch this⁵, is no proof;
Without more certain and more overt test⁶,
Than these thin habits⁷, and poor likelihoods
Of modern seeming, do prefer against him.

1. *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 Sagittary⁸,
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 you⁹,
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even fall upon my life.

Duke. Fetch Desdemona hither.

Oth. Ancient, conduct them; you best know the place.—

[*Exeunt IAGO, and Attendants.*]

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.

So *modern* is generally used by Shakspeare. See Vol. III. p. 396; n. 6. and Vol. IV. p. 409, n. 8. MALONE.

The first quarto reads:

These are thin habits, and poore likelihoods

Of modern seemings you prefer against him. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *to the Sagittary,*] So the folio here and in a former passage. The quarto in both places reads—the *Sagittar*. MALONE.

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.

⁹ *The trust, &c.*] This line is wanting in the first quarto.

STEEVENS.

And

And, till she come, as truly ¹ as to heaven
 I do confes ² the vices of my blood,
 So justly to your grave ears I'll present
 How I did 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 spake of most disastrous chances,
 Of moving accidents, by flood, and field;
 Of hair-breadth scapes i' the imminent deadly breach;
 Of being taken by the insolent foe,
 And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,
 And portance in my travel's history ³:

Wherein

¹ — as truly—] The first quarto reads, as *faithful*. STEEVENS.

² *I do confes*, &c.] This line is omitted in the first quarto.

STEEVENS.

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 *portents*, 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.

I doubt much whether this line, as it appears in the folio, came from the pen of Shakspeare. The reading of the quarto may be *weak*, but it is sense; but what are we to understand by my demeanour, or my sufferings, (which ever is the meaning,) *in my travel's history*?

MALONE.

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.

H h 4

Spenser

Wherein of antres vast⁴, and desarts idle⁵,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,
It was my hint to speak⁶, such was the process;

Spenser, in the third Canto of the second Book of the *Faery Queen*, likewise uses it:

“ But for in court gay *portance* he perceiv'd.” 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 noble author of the *Characteristics*, who more obliquely sneers at 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, reclusive, 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.

⁵ —and *desarts* idle,] Every mind is liable to absence and inadvertency, else Pope [who reads—*desarts wild*,] could never have rejected a word so poetically beautiful. *Idle* is an epithet used to express the infertility of the chaotick state, in the Saxon translation of the Pentateuch. JOHNSON.

So, in the *Comedy of Errors*:

“ Usurping ivy, briar, or *idle* moss.”

Mr. Pope might have found the epithet *wild* in all the three last folios. STEEVENS.

The epithet, *idle*, which the ignorant editor of the second folio did not understand, and therefore changed to *wild*, is confirmed by another passage in this act “ — either to have it steril with *idleness*, or manur'd with industry.” MALONE.

— *antres* —] *Caves* and *dens*. JOHNSON.

⁶ *It was my hint to speak*,] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622 reads, It was my *bent* to speak. MALONE.

Hent occurs at the conclusion of the fourth Act of *Measure for Measure*. It is derived from the Saxon *Hentan*, and means, to take hold of, to seize.

“ — the gravest citizen

“ Have *bent* the gates.”

But in the very next page *Orbello* says:

— Upon this *hint* I spake.

It is certain therefore that change is unnecessary. STEEVENS.

And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
 The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
 Do grow beneath their shoulders ⁷. 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
 Devour up my discourse ⁸ : Which I observing,
 Took once a pliant hour ; and found good means

⁷ — 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 Shakspeare 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 wand'ring wights.”

The poet might likewise have read of them in Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* translated by P. Holland, 1601, and in Stowe's *Cronicle*.

STEEVENS.

Our poet has again in *The Tempest* mentioned “ men whose heads stood in their breasts.” He had in both places probably Hackluyt's *Voyages*, 1598, in view :—“ On that branch which is called Caora, are a nation of people whose beades appeare not above their shoulders :— they are reported to have their eyes in their shoulders, and their mouths in the middle of their breasts.”

Raleigh also has given an account of men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders, in his *Description of Guiana*, published in 1596, a book that without doubt Shakspeare had read. MALONE.

⁸ — and with a greedy ear

Devour up my discourse :] So, in Marlowe's *Lust's Dominion*, written before 1593 :

“ Hang both your greedy ears upon my lips ;

“ Let them devour my speech.”

Again, in Spenser's *Faery Queene*, B. VI. c. ix.

“ Whylest thus he talkt, the knight *with greedy eare*

“ Hong still upon his melting mouth attent.” MALONE.

“ Iliacosque iterum demens audire labores

“ Expofcit, pendetque iterum narrantis ab ore.” *Virg.*

MASON.

To

To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,
 That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
 Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
 But not intently⁹: I did consent;
 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 sighs¹:
 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,

⁹ *But not intently:*—] Thus the eldest quarto. The folio reads *insinctively*. 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 *Otello's* tale *intently*, i. e. with *attention* to all its parts.

Again, in Chapman's Version of the *Odyssey*, B. VIII.

"For our ships know th' expressed minds of men;

"And will so most *intently* retaine

"Their scopes appointed, that they never erre." STEEVENS.

Shakspeare has already used the word in the same sense in his *Merry Wives of Windsor*: "— she did course over my exteriors with such a greedy *intention*." See also Vol. VIII. p. 48, n. 4.

Distinctively was the conjectural emendation of the editor of the second folio, who never examined a single quarto copy. MALONE.

¹ — *a world of sighs*:] It was *kisses* in the later editions: but this is evidently the true reading. The lady had been forward indeed to give him a *world of kisses* upon the bare recital of his story; nor does it agree with the following lines. POPE.

Sigs is the reading of the quarto, 1622; *kisses* of the folio. MALONE.
 Take

Take up this mangled matter at the best :
Men do their broken weapons rather use,
Than their bare hands.

Bra. I pray you, hear her speak ;
If she confess, that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head ², 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 ³,
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 ⁴,
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 ⁵, 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.

² *Destruction, &c.*] The quartos read, destruction *light on me.*

STEEVENS.

³ *You are the lord of duty,*] The first quarto reads,

You are lord of *all my* duty. STEEVENS.

⁴ *And so much duty as my mother shew'd*

To you, preferring you before her father, &c.] Perhaps Shakspeare had here in his thoughts the answer of the youngest daughter of *Ina*, king of the West Saxons, to her father, which he seems to have copied in *King Lear*. See Vol. VIII. p. 486. MALONE.

⁵ *Which, &c.*] This line is omitted in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

Duke.

Duke. Let me speak like yourself⁶; and lay a sentence,
Which, as a grise⁷, or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour⁸.

When remedies are past, the griefs are ended⁹,
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 on¹.
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
But the free comfort which from thence he hears²:
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.

⁶ *Let me speak like your self;*] The duke seems to mean, when he says he will speak like Brabantio, that he will speak sentimentously.

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.

⁷ — as a grise,] *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 Shakspeare. “ — From the provost's stall, unto the *grece* called *Gradus Chori*, 90 feet.” STEEVENS.

⁸ *Into your favour.*] This is wanting in the folio, but found in the quarto. JOHNSON.

⁹ *When remedies are past, the griefs are ended,*—] This our poet has elsewhere expressed by a common proverbial sentence, *Past cure is still past care*. See Vol. X. p. 313, n. 5. MALONE.

¹ — *new mischief on.*] The quartos read—*more mischief*.—

STEEVENS.

² *But the free comfort which from thence he bears :*] But the moral precepts of consolation, which are liberally bestowed on the occasion of the sentence. JOHNSON.

These

These sentences, to fugar, 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 ear³.
 I humbly

³ *But words are words; I never yet did hear,*

That the bruis'd heart was pierced through the ear.] These moral precepts, says Brabantio, may perhaps be founded in wisdom, but they are of no avail. Words after all are but words; and I never yet heard that consolatory speeches could reach and penetrate the afflicted heart, through the medium of the ear.

Brabantio here expresses the same sentiment as the father of Hero in *Much ado about Nothing*, when he derides the attempts of those comforters who in vain endeavour to

“ Charm acbe with air, and agony with words.”

Our authour has in various places shewn a fondness for this antithesis between the *heart* and *ear*. Thus, in his *Venus and Adonis*:

“ This dismal cry rings sadly in her ear,

“ Through which it enters, to surprize her heart.”

Again, in *Much ado about Nothing*: “ My cousin tells him in his ear, that he is in her heart.”

Again, in *Cymbeline*:

“ — I have such a heart as both mine ears

“ Must not in haste abuse.”

Again, in his *Rape of Lucrece*:

“ His ear her prayers admits, but his heart granteth

“ No penetrable entrance to her plaining.”

A doubt has been entertained concerning the word *pierced*, which Dr. Warburton supposed to mean *wounded*, and therefore substituted *pieced* in its room. But *pierced* is merely a figurative expression, and means not *wounded*, but penetrated, in a metaphorical sense; thoroughly affected; as in the following passage in Shakspeare's 46th sonnet:

“ My heart doth plead, that thou in him dost lie;

“ A closet never pierc'd with crystal eyes.”

So also, in *Love's Labour's Lost*:

“ Honest plain words best pierce the ear of grief.”

Again, in *The Merchant of Venice*:

“ With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear.”

In a word, a *heart pierced through the ear*, is a heart which (to use our poet's words elsewhere,) has granted a penetrable entrance to the language of consolation. So, in *The Mirrour for Magistrates*, 1575:

“ My piteous plaint—the hardest heart may pierce.”

Spenser has used the word exactly in the same figurative sense in which it is here employed; *Faery Queene*, B. VI. c. ix:

“ Whylest

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 safer voice on you: you must therefore be content to flubber the gloss of your new fortunes with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

Oth. The tyrant custom, most grave senators,

“ Whylest thus he talkt, the knight with greedy eare

“ Hong still upon his melting mouth attent;

“ Whose sensefull words empierst his hart so neare,

“ That he was rapt with double ravishment.”

And in his Fourth Book, c. viii. we have the very words of the text:

“ Her words, —————

“ Which, *passing through the eares*, would pierce the hart.”

Some persons have supposed that *pierced* when applied metaphorically to the heart, can only be used to express pain; that the poet might have said, *pierced with grief*, or *pierced with plaints*, &c. but that to talk of *piercing* a heart with *consolatory speeches*, is a catachresis: but the passage above quoted from Spenser's sixth book shews that there is no ground for the objection. So also, in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, 1590, we find—

“ Nor thee nor them, thrice noble Tamburlaine,

“ Shall want my heart to be *with gladness pierc'd*.” MALONE.

[*That the bruised heart was pierced through the ear.*] Shakspeare 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 Shakspeare'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. *Reached* 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 *pierced the heart*, which is very stiff, and, as Polonius says, *is a wile phrase*.

Sir J. REYNOLDS.

Hath

Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
 My thrice-driven bed of down⁴: I do agnize⁵
 A natural and prompt alacrity,
 I find in hardness; and do undertake
 These present wars* against the Ottomites.
 Most humbly therefore bending to your state,
 I crave fit disposition for my wife;
 Due reference of place, and exhibition⁶;
 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 ear⁷;
 And let me find a charter in your voice⁸,

⁴ — *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.

⁵ — *I do agnize*:—] i. e. acknowledge, confess, avow. STEEVENS. It is so defined in Bullokar's *English Expositor*, 8vo. 1616.

MALONE.

* *These present wars*:—] The quarto 1622, and the folio, by an error of the press, have—*this* present wars. For the emendation I am responsible. MALONE.

⁶ *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 *precedency*, 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. STEEVENS.

See Vol. VIII. p. 507, n. 3. MALONE.

⁷ — *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.

⁸ — *a charter in your voice*,] Let your favour *privilege me*.

JOHNSON.

To

To assist my simpleness⁹.

Duke. What would you, Desdemona?

Des. That I did love the Moor to live with him,
My down-right violence and storm of fortunes¹

May

⁹ *To assist my simpleness.*] The first quarto reads this as an unfinished sentence:

And if my simpleness — STEEVENS.

¹ *My down-right violence and storm of fortunes—*] *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 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. I:

“ ————— 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.

So, in *King Henry VIII.*

“ An old man broken with the storms of state.”

The expression in the text is found in Spenser’s *Faery Queen*, B. VI.

c. 9.

“ Give leave awhile, good father, in this shore

“ To rest my barcke, which hath bene beaten late

“ With storms of fortune and tempestuous fate.”

And Bacon, in his *History of King Henry the Seventh*, has used the same language: “The king in his account of peace and calms did much overcast his *fortunes*, which proved for many years together full of broken seas, tides, and *tempests*.”

Mr. Mason objects, that Mr. Steevens has not explained these words. Is any explanation wanting? or can he, who has read in *Hamlet*, that a judicious player “in the *tempest* and *wirlwind* of his *passion* should acquire and beget a temperance;” who has heard Falstaff wish for a *tempest* of provocation; and finds in *Troilus and Cressida*—“in the wind and *tempest* of her frown,” be at a loss to understand the meaning of a *storm of fortunes*? By her *downright violence and storm of fortunes*, Desdemona without doubt means, the bold and decisive measure she had taken, of following the dictates of passion and giving herself to the Moor; regardless of her parent’s displeasure, the forms of her country, and the future inconvenience she might be subject to, by “tying her duty, beauty, wit, and *fortunes*, in an extravagant and wheeling stranger, of here and every where.”

On

May trumpet to the world; my heart's subdu'd
 Even to the very quality of my lord²;
 I saw Othello's visage in his mind³;
 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, lords⁴:—beseech you, let her will
 Have a free way.

On looking into Mr. Edwards's remarks, I find he explains these words nearly in the same manner. "*Downright violence*," says he, "means, the unbridled impetuosity with which her passion hurried her on to this unlawful marriage; and *storm of fortunes* may signify the hazard she thereby ran, of making shipwreck of her worldly interest. Both very agreeable to what she says a little lower—

"— to his honours and his valiant parts

"Did I my soul and *fortunes* consecrate." MALONE:

² *Even to the very quality of my lord*:] The first quarto reads,
 Even to the utmost pleasure.— STEEVENS.

Quality here means *profession*. "I am so much enamoured of Othello, that I am even willing to endure all the inconveniences incident to a *military life*, and to attend him to the wars." "I cannot mervaile," (said Lord Essex to Mr. Ashton, a Puritan preacher who was sent to him in the Tower,) "though my protestations are not believed of my enemies, when they so little prevaile with a man of your *quality*." See also p. 267, n. 1.

That this is the meaning, appears not only from the reading of the quarto,—“my heart's subdued, even to the utmost pleasure of my lord, i. e. so as to prompt me to go with him wherever he wishes I should go,” but also from the whole tenour of Desdemona's speech; the purport of which is, that as she had married a *soldier*, so she was ready to accompany him to the wars, and to consecrate her soul and fortunes to his *honours*, and his *valiant* parts; i. e. to attend him wherever his *military character* and his *love of fame* should call him. MALONE.

³ *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.

⁴ *Your voices, lords*:] The folio reads, *Let her have your voice*.

STEEVENS.

Vouch with me, heaven ⁵, I therefore beg it not,
 To please the palate of my appetite ;
 Nor to comply with heat, the young affects,
 In my disjunct and proper satisfaction ;
 But to be free and bounteous to her mind ⁶ :

And

⁵ *Vouch with me, heaven,*] Thus the folio. These words are not in the original copy, 1622. MALONE.

⁶ *Nor to comply with heat, the young affects,*
In my disjunct and proper satisfaction ;

But to be free and bounteous to her mind :] The old copies read :
 In my *defunct* and proper satisfaction.

For the emendation now made I am responsible. Some emendation is absolutely necessary, and this appears to me the least objectionable of those which have been proposed. Dr. Johnson, in part following Mr. Upton, reads and regulates the passage thus :

Nor to comply with heat (the young affects
 In *me defunct*) and proper satisfaction.

To this reading there are, I think, three strong objections. The first is, the suppression of the word *being* before *defunct*, which is absolutely necessary to the sense, and of which the omission is so harsh, that it affords an argument against the probability of the proposed emendation. The second and the grand objection is, that it is highly improbable that Othello should declare on the day of his marriage that heat and the youthful affects were dead or *defunct* in him ; that he had outlived the passions of youth. He himself (as Theobald has observed,) informs us afterwards, that he is “declined into the vale of years ;” but adds, at the same time, “yet that’s *not much*.” This surely is a decisive proof that the text is corrupt. My third objection to this regulation is, that by the introduction of a parenthesis, which is not found in the old copies, the words *and proper satisfaction* are so unnaturally disjoined from those with which they are connected in sense, as to form a most lame and impotent conclusion ; to say nothing of the awkwardness of using the word *proper* without any possessive pronoun prefixed to it.

All these difficulties are done away, by retaining the original word *my*, and reading *disjunct*, instead of *defunct* ; and the meaning will be, I ask it not for the sake of my *separate* and private enjoyment, by the gratification of appetite, but that I may indulge the wishes of my wife.

The young affects, may either mean the affections or passions of youth, (considering *affects* as a substantive,) or these words may be connected with *heat*, which immediately precedes : “I ask it not, for the purpose of gratifying that appetite *which* peculiarly stimulates the young.” So in Spenser’s *Faery Queene*, B. V. c. ix.

“Layes of sweete love, and *youth*’s delightful *heat*.”

Mr. Tyrwhitt would transpose the last two lines :

Nor

And heaven defend⁷ your good souls, that you think
I will your serious and great business scant,

For

Nor to comply with heat, the young affects;
But to be free and bounteous to her mind
In my desunct and proper satisfaction.

and "recommends it to consideration, whether the word *desunct*, (which would be the only remaining difficulty,) is not capable of a signification, drawn from the primitive sense of its Latin original, which would very well agree with the context."

The mere English reader is to be informed, that *desunctus* in Latin signifies *performed*, *accomplished*, as well as *dead*: but is it probable that Shakspeare was apprized of its bearing that signification? In Bullokar's *English Expofitor*, 8vo. 1616, the work of a physician and a scholar, *desunct* is only defined by the word *dead*; nor has it, I am confident, any other meaning annexed to it in any dictionary or book of the time. Besides; how, as Mr. Tollet has observed, could his conjugal duties be said to be *discharged* or *performed*, at a time when his marriage was not yet consummated?—On this last circumstance however I do not insist, as Shakspeare is very licentious in the use of participles, and might have employed the past for the present: but the former objection appears to me fatal.

Proper is here and in other places used for *peculiar*. In this play we have *unproper* beds; not *peculiar* to the rightful owner, but *common* to him and others.

In the present tragedy we have many more uncommon words than *disjunct*: as *facile*, *agnize*, *acerb*, *sequestration*, *injointed*, *congregated*, *guttured*, *sequent*, *extincted*, *exsufficate*, *indign*, *segregated*, &c.—Iago in a subsequent scene says to Othello, "let us be *conjunctive* in our revenge;" and our poet has *conjunct* in *King Lear*, and *disjoin* and *disjunctive* in two other plays. In *King Jobn* we have *adjunct* used as an adjective:

"Though that my death be *adjunct* to the act,—"

and in *Hamlet* we find *disjoint* employed in like manner:

"Or thinking——"

"Our state to be *disjoint*, and out of frame." MALONE.

Theobald has observed the impropriety of making Othello confess, that all youthful passions were *desunct* in him; and Hanmer's reading [*disjunct*] 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 *disjunct* 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:

For she is with me: No, when light-wing'd toys
 Of feather'd Cupid feel with wanton dulness
 My speculative and active instruments⁸,
 That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
 Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
 And all indign and base adversities

“ — I shall not need to urge
 “ The sacred purity of our *affects*.”

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.”

There is, however, in *The Bondman*, by Massinger, a passage which seems to countenance and explain — the young affects in *me de-funct*, &c.

“ ————— youthful heats,
 “ That look no further than your outward form,
 “ Are long since *buried* in me.”

Timoleon is the speaker. STEEVENS.

7 — *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.

⁸ — when light-wing'd toys

Of feather'd Cupid feel with wanton dulness

My speculative and active instruments,] Thus the folio, except that instead of *active instruments*, it has *offic'd instrument*. MALONE.

The quarto reads —

————— when light-wing'd toys
Anc' feather'd Cupid foils 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.

Speculative instruments, in Shakspeare's language, are the *eyes*; and *active instruments*, the *hands and feet*. So, in *Coriolanus*:

“ — where, the other *instruments*
 “ Did see, hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel, &c.”

To *feel* is to close the eyelids of a hawk by running a thread through them. As it is here metaphorically used, it applies very properly to the *speculative instruments*; but *foils*, the reading of the quarto, agrees better with *active instruments*.

Wanton dulness is dulness arising from wanton indulgences.

MALONE.

Make

Make head against my estimation⁹!

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;
With 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 Bra.*
If virtue no delighted beauty lack¹,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

I Sen. Adieu, brave Moor! use Desdemona well.

Bra. Look to her, Moor; have a quick eye to see²;
She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.

[*Exeunt Duke, Senators, Officers, &c.*

9 — my estimation!] Thus the folio; the quarto—*reputation.*

STEEVENS.

¹ *If virtue no delighted beauty lack,*] The 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*; Shakspeare 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 Shakspeare in the sense of *delighting*, or *delightful*. See *Cymbeline*, Act V:

“Whom best I love, I cross, to make my gift,

“The more delay'd, *delighted.*” TYRWHITT.

² — *have a quick eye to see*;) Thus the eldest quarto. The folio reads,—*if thou hast eyes to see.* STEEVENS.

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 after³ in the best advantage⁴.—
Come, Desdemona ; I have but an hour
Of love, of worldly matters 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 filliness 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 years⁵ : and since I could distinguish

³ *And bring them after—*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads—and bring *her* after. MALONE.

⁴ *— best advantage.—*] Fairest opportunity. JOHNSON.

⁵ *I have look'd upon the world for four times seven years :*] From this passage Iago's age seems to be ascertained ; and it corresponds with the account in the novel on which *Otobella* is founded, where he is described as a *young*, handsome man. The French translator of Shakspeare is however of opinion, that Iago here only speaks of those years of his life in which he had looked on the world with an eye of observation. But it would be difficult to assign a reason why he should mention the precise term of *twenty-eight* years ; or to account for his knowing so accurately when his understanding arrived at maturity, and the operation of his sagacity, and his observations on mankind, commenced.

That Iago meant to say he was but twenty eight years old, is clearly ascertained, by his marking particularly, though indefinitely, a period *within that time*, [*“ and since I could distinguish,”* &c.] when he began to make observations on the characters of men.

Waller on a picture which was painted for him in his youth, by Cornelius Jansen, and which is now in the possession of his heir, has expressed the same thought: “*Anno ætatis 23 ; vitæ vix primo.*”

MALONE.

between

between a benefit and an injury, I never found a man that knew how to love himself. Ere I would say, I would drown myself for the love of a Guinea hen⁶, I would change my humanity with a baboon.

Rod. What should I do? I confess, it is my shame to be so fond; but it is not in 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 to have it steril with idleness⁷, or manured with industry; why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills. If the balance⁸ 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 lusts⁹; whereof I take this, that you call—love, to be a sect, or scyon¹.

⁶ — *a Guinea hen,*] A showy bird with fine feathers. JOHNSON.

A Guinea-ben was anciently the cant term for a prostitute. So, in *Albertus Wallenstein*, 1640:

“ ——— Yonder's the cock o' the game,
“ About to tread you *Guinea-ben*; they're billing.”

STEEVENS.

⁷ — *either to have it steril with idleness,*—] Thus the authentic copies. The modern editors following the second folio, have omitted the word *to*.—I have frequently had occasion to remark that Shakspeare often begins a sentence in one way, and ends it in a different kind of construction. Here he has made *Iago* say, *if we will plant, &c.* and he concludes, as if he had written—*if our will is*—either to have it, &c. See p. 467, n. 7. MALONE.

⁸ *If the balance*—] The folio reads—*If the brain*. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *reason to cool—our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts;*] So, in *A Knack to know an Honest Man*, 1596:

“ —Virtue ne'er taught thee that;
“ She sets a bit upon her bridled lusts.”

See also *As you Like it*, Act II. sc. vi.

“ For thou thyself hast been a libertine;
“ As sensual as the brutish sting itself.” MALONE.

¹ — *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.

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 toughness²; I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse; follow these wars; defeat thy favour with an usurped beard³; I say, put money in 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: it was a violent commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration⁴;—put but money in thy purse.—These Moors are changeable in their wills;—fill thy purse

² *I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness;*] So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

“To make you brothers, and to knit your hearts

“With an *unslipping knot*.”

Again, in our author's 26th Sonnet:

“Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage

“Thy *merit* hath my duty strongly knit.” MALONE.

³ — defeat *thy favour with an usurped beard;*] To defeat, is to undo, to charge. JOHNSON.

Defeat is from *desfaire*, Fr. to undo. STEEVENS.

To defeat, Minshew in his Dictionary, 1617, explains by the words—“to abrogate, to undo.” See also Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: “*Disfacere*. To undoe, to marre, to unmake, to defeat.” MALONE.

⁴ — *it was a violent commencement, 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.

Surely *sequestration* was used in the sense of *separation* only, or in modern language, *parting*. *Their passion began with violence, and it shall end as quickly, of which a separation will be the consequence*. A total and voluntary *sequestration* necessarily includes the cessation or end of affection.—We have the same thought in several other places. So, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

“These

purse with money: the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts shall be to him shortly as bitter as *coloquintida*⁵. She must change for youth: when she is fated 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, betwixt an erring Barbarian⁶ 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

“ These *violent delights* have *violent ends*,
 “ And in their triumph die.”

Again, in *The Rape of Lucrece*:

“ Thy violent vanities can never last.”

I have here followed the first quarto. The folio reads—it was a violent commencement *in ber*, &c. The context shews that the original is the true reading. Othello's love for Desdemona has been just mentioned, as well as her's for the Moor. MALONE.

⁵ —as luscious as locusts,—as bitter as *coloquintida*.] The old quarto reads—as *acerv* as *coloquintida*.

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 seeds, 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.

Mr. Daines Barrington suggests to me, that Shakspeare perhaps had the third chapter of St. Matthew's gospel in his thoughts, in which we are told that John the Baptist lived in the wilderness on *locusts* and wild *boney*. MALONE.

⁶ —betwixt an erring *Barbarian*—] So, in *Hamlet*:

“ Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies

“ To his confine.” STEEVENS.

An *erring Barbarian*; perhaps means a *rover* from *Barbary*. He had before said, “ You'll have your daughter covered with a *Barbary* horse.” MALONE.

The word *erring* is sufficiently explained by a passage in the first scene of this play, where Roderigo tells Brabantio, that his daughter was

“ Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortune

“ In an extravagant and *wheeling* stranger,

“ Of here and every where.”

Erring is the same as *erraticus* in Latin. MASON.

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 issue⁷?

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 conjunctive⁸ 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.

Rod. I'll be with thee betimes.

Iago. Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo⁹?

Rod. What say you?

Iago. No more of drowning, do you hear.

Rod. I am changed. I'll sell all my land.

Iago. Go to; farewell: put money enough in your purse.

[Exit RODERIGO.]

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse:
For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,
If I would 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

7 — *If I depend on the issue?*] These words are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

8 — *conjunctive*—] The first quarto reads, *communicative*. STEEV.

9 — *Do you hear, Roderigo?*] In the folio, instead of this and the following speeches, we find only these words:

Iago. Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

Rod. I'll sell all my land. [Exit.]

Iago. Thus do I ever, &c.

The quarto, 1622, reads:

Iago. Go to; farewell:—do you hear, Roderigo?

Rod. What say you?

Iago. No more of drowning, do you hear.

Rod. I am chang'd. [Exit Rod.]

Iago. Go to; farewell: put money enough in your purse.

Thus do I ever, &c.

The reading of the text is formed out of the two copies, MALONE.
He

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 ¹. 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 will ²,
 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 nature ³,
 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.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Sea-port town in Cyprus. A Platform.*

Enter MONTANO, and two Gentlemen.

Mon. What from the cape can you discern at sea ?

1. Gent. Nothing at all : it is a high-wrought flood ;
 I cannot

¹ — *as if for surety.*] i. e. as if I were certain of the fact. MASON.

² — *to plume up, &c.*] The first quarto reads—*to make up, &c.* STEEV.

³ *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.

* All the modern editors, following Mr. Rowe, have supposed the capital of Cyprus to be the place where the scene of *Othello* lies during four acts : but this could not have been Shakspeare's intention ; NICOSIA, the capital city of Cyprus, being situated nearly in the center of the island, and thirty miles distant from the sea. The principal sea-port town of Cyprus was FAMAGUSTA ; where there was formerly a strong fort and a commodious haven, the only one of any magnitude in the island ; and there undoubtedly the scene should be placed. “ Neere unto the haven (says Knolles,) standeth an old CASTLE, with four towers after the ancient manner of building.” To this castle, we find, Othello presently repairs.

It is observable that Cinthio in the novel on which this play is founded, which was first published in 1565, makes no mention of any
 attack

I cannot, 'twixt the haven⁴ and the main,
Descry a sail.

Mon. Methinks, the wind hath spoke aloud at land;
A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements:
If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea⁵,
What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them⁶,

Can

attack being made on Cyprus by the Turks. From our poet's having mentioned the preparations against this island, which they first assaulted and took from the Venetians in 1570, we may suppose that he intended that year as the era of his tragedy; but by mentioning *Rhodes* as also likely to be assaulted by the Turks, he has fallen into an historical inconsistency; for they were then in quiet possession of that island, of which they became masters in December, 1522; and if, to evade this difficulty, we refer *Oebello* to an era prior to that year, there will be an equal incongruity; for from 1473, when the Venetians first became possessed of Cyprus, to 1522, they had not been molested by any Turkish armament. MALONE.

4 — 'twixt the haven—] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio has—the *beaver*, which affords a bolder image; but the article prefixed strongly supports the original copy; for applied to *beaven*, it is extremely awkward. Besides; though in *The Winter's Tale* our poet has made a Clown talk of a *ship boring the moon with her mainmast*, and say that "between the sea and the firmament you cannot thrust a bodkin's point," is it probable, that he should put the same hyperbolical language into the mouth of a gentleman, answering a serious question on an important occasion? In a subsequent passage indeed he indulges himself without impropriety in the elevated diction of poetry.

Of the *haven* of Famagusta, which was defended from the main by two great rocks, at the distance of forty paces from each other, Shakspeare might have found a particular account in Knolles's *History of the Turks*, ad ann. 1570, p. 863. MALONE.

5 *If it batb ruffian'd so upon the sea,*] So, in *Troilus and Cressida*:

"But let the *ruffian* Boreas once enrage

"The gentle *Tbetis*,— MALONE.

6— *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.

The quarto 1622—reads, when the huge mountaine *melt*; the letter *s*, which perhaps belongs to *mountain*, having wandered at the press from its place.

I apprehend, that in the quarto reading (as well as in the folio,) by *mountains* the poet meant not land-mountains, which Mr. Steevens seems

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 shore?⁷
 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,
 And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole⁸:
 I never did like molestation view
 On the enchas'd flood.

Mon. If that the Turkish fleet
 Be not inshelter'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.

Mon. How! is this true?

3. *Gent.* The ship is here put in,
 A Veronefé⁹: Michael Cassio,

Lieutenant

seems by his quotation to have thought, but those huge surges, (resembling mountains in their magnitude,) which "with high and monstrous main seem'd to cast water on the burning bear."

So, in a subsequent scene:

"And let the labouring bark climb *bills* of seas,

"*Olympus* high,—"

Again, in *Troilus and Cressida*:

"—— and anon behold

"The strong-ribb'd bark through *liquid mountains* cuts."

MALONE.

7 — *the foaming shore,*] The elder quarto reads—*banning* shore, which offers the bolder image; *i. e.* the shore that execrates the rage of the waves. So, in *King Henry VI.* P. I:

"Fell, *banning* hag, enchantress, hold thy tongue." STEEV.

8 *And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole:*] Alluding to the star *Arctophylax.* JOHNSON.

The elder quarto reads—*ever-fired* pole. STEEVENS.

9 *A Veronefé:*] The quarto, 1622, has—a *Veroneffa*: the folio, *Veronneffa*. The true spelling was pointed out by Mr. Heath. In Thomas's *History of Italy*, already quoted, the people of Verona are called the *Veronesi*.

This

Lieutenant to the warlike Moor, Othello,
Is come on shore: the Moor himself's at sea,
And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

Mon. I am glad on't; tis a worthy governour.

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.

Mon. Pray heaven he be;

For I have serv'd him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier¹. 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,
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 isle³,
That so approve the Moor; O, let the heavens

This ship has been already described as a ship of Venice. It is now called "a *Veronesé*;" that is, a ship belonging to and furnished by the inland city of Verona, for the use of the Venetian state; and newly arrived from Venice. "Besides many other towns, (says Contareno,) castles, and villages, they [the Venetians,] possess seven faire cities; as Trevigi, Padoua, Vicenza, Verona, Brescia, Bergamo, and Crema." *Commonwealth of Venice*, 1599.

Mr. Heath, Mr. Steevens, and Mr. Warton, concur in observing that *Veronesé* must be pronounced as a quadrisyllable. In our poet's age, "it was common" Mr. Warton observes, "to introduce Italian words, and in their proper pronunciation then familiar. So Spenser, in *The Faery Queene*, B. III. c. xiii. st. 10.

"With sleeves dependant *Albanesé* wife." MALONE.

¹ Like a full soldier.] Like a complete soldier. So before, p. 447:

"What a full fortune doth the thick-lips owe." MALONE.

² Even till we make the main, &c.] This line and half is wanting in the eldest quarto. STEEVENS.

³ — warlike isle,] Thus the folio. The first quarto reads—*worthy* isle. STEEVENS.

Give

Give him defence against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea!

Mon. Is he well shipp'd?

Cas. His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot
Of very expert and approv'd allowance⁴;
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure⁵.

Within.] A fail, a fail, a fail!

Enter another Gentleman.

Cas. What noise?

4. Gent. The town is empty; on the brow o' the sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry—a fail.

Cas. My hopes do shape him for the governour.

2. Gent. They do discharge their shot of courtesy;
Our friends, at least. [*Guns heard.*]

Cas. I pray you, sir, go forth,

And

⁴ *Of very expert and approv'd allowance;*] *Expert and approv'd allowance* is put for *allow'd and approv'd expertness*. This mode of expression is not unfrquent in Shakspeare. STEEVENS.

⁵ *Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,*

Stand in bold cure.] Dr. Johnson says, "he knows not why *hope* should be considered as a disease." But it is not *hope* which is here described as a disease; those misgiving apprehensions which diminish hope, are in fact the disease, and hope itself is the patient.

A surfeit being a disease arising from an *excessive* overcharge of the stomach, the poet with his usual licence uses it for any species of *excess*.—Therefore, says Cassio, my hopes, which, though faint and sickly with apprehension, are not totally destroyed by an excess of despondency, erect themselves with some degree of confidence that they will be relieved, by the safe arrival of Othello, from those ill-divining fears under which they now languish.

The word *surfeit* having occurred to Shakspeare, led him to consider such a hope as Cassio entertained, not a sanguine, but a faint and languid hope, ("ficklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,") 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:

"Give me *excess* of it; that, *surfeiting*,

"The appetite may *sicken*, and so die."

Again, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

"O, I have fed upon this *woe* already,

"And now *excess* of it will make me *surfeit*." MALONE:

To *stand in bold cure*, is to erect themselves in confidence of being fulfilled. A parallel expression occurs in *K. Lear*, Act III. sc. vi.

"This

And give us truth who 'tis that is arriv'd.

2. *Gent.* I shall.

[*Exit.*

Mon. But, good lieutenant is your general wiv'd?

Caf. Most fortunately: he hath atchiev'd a maid
That paragon's description, and wild fame;
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens⁶,
And, in the essential vesture of creation,
Does bear all excellency⁷.—How now? who has put in?

Re-enter

“ This rest might yet have balm'd thy 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.

I believe that Solomon upon this occasion will be found the best interpreter: “ *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.*” HENLEY.

⁶ *One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,*] So, in our poet's 203d Sonnet:

“ ——— a face

“ That over-goes my blunt invention quite,

“ Dulling my lines, and doing me disgrace.” MALONE.

⁷ *And, in the essential vesture of creation*

Does bear all excellency.] 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 verse.

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 II. sc. ii.

“ --To save the money he spends in *tiring*,” &c.

The

Re-enter second Gentleman.

2. *Gent.* 'Tis one Iago, ancient to the general.

Caf. He has had moit favourable and happy speed:
 Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,
 The gutter'd rocks, and congregated sands,—
 Traitors ensteep'd⁸ to clog the guiltless keel,

As

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 V. Lorenzo calls the body—"the muddy vesture of decay."

It may, however, be observed, that the word *ingener* 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 I. sc. i:

"No, Silius, we are no good *ingeners*,
 "We want the fine arts," &c.

Ingene therefore may be the true reading of this passage: and a similar thought occurs in the *Tempest*, Act IV. sc. i:

"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*. STEEV.

Perhaps the words intended in the folio, were,

Does tire the *ingene* ever.

Ingene is used for *ingenium* by Puttenham, in his *Arte of Poesie*, 1589: "—such also as made most of their workes by translation out of the Latin and French tongue, and few or none of their owne *engine*." *Engine* is here without doubt a misprint for *ingene*.—I believe, however, the reading of the quarto is the true one.—If *tire* was used in the sense of *wear*, then *ingener* must have been used for the ingenious person who should attempt to enumerate the merits of Desdemona. To the instance produced by Mr. Steevens from *Sejanus*, may be added another in Fleckno's *Discourse of the English Stage*, 1664. "Of this curious art the Italians (this latter age) are the greatest masters, the French good proficients, and we in England only scholars and learners, yet, having proceeded no further than to bare painting, and not arrived to the stupendous wonders of your great *ingeniers*." In one of Daniel's Sonnets, we meet with a similar imagery to that in the first of these lines:

"Though time doth spoil her of the fairest vaile

"That ever yet mortalitie did cover." MALONE.

⁸ Traitors ensteep'd—] Thus the folio and one of the quartos. The first copy reads—*enferped*, of which every reader may make what he

As having sense of beauty, do omit
Their mortal natures, letting go safely by
The divine Desdemona.

Mon. 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'nights 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,⁹
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,
And bring all Cyprus comfort!— O, behold,

Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, IAGO, RODERIGO,
and Attendants.

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?

Caf. He is not yet arriv'd; nor know I aught
But that he's well, and will be shortly here.

pleases. Perhaps *escerped* was an old English word borrowed from the French *escarpé*, which Shakspeare not finding congruous to the image of clogging the keel, afterwards changed.

I once thought that the poet had written—traitors *enscarf'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.

* *Great Jove, &c.*] For this absurdity I have not the smallest doubt that the Master of the Revels, and not our poet, is answerable. See *The Historical Account of the English Stage*, Vol. I. Part II. MALONE.

⁹ *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!*] This passage is only found in the quartos. STEEVENS.

Des.

Des. O, but I fear;—How lost you company?

Caf. The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship: But, hark! a fail.

[*Cry within.* A fail, a fail! *Then guns heard.*

2. *Gent.* They give their greeting to the citadel;
This likewise is a friend.

Caf. See for the news².— [Exit Gentleman.
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. [*kissing 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 much³;
I find it still, when I have list to sleep:
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,
She puts her tongue a little in her heart,
And chides with thinking.

Emil. 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,

Saints

² See for the news.] The first quarto reads, *So speaks this voice.* STEEV.

³ In faith, too much;] Thus the folio. The first quarto thus:

I know too much;

I find it, I; for when, &c. STEEVENS.

⁴ Saints in your injuries, &c.] When you have a mind to do injuries, you put on an air of sanctity. JOHNSON.

In Puttenham'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 Master Constable*, 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 beds."

Again, in the *Miseries of Inforc'd Marriage*, 1607: "Women are in churches saints, abroad angels, at home devils."

Saints in your injuries ⁴, devils being offended,
 Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds.

Des. O, fie upon thee, slanderer ⁵!

Iago. Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk;
 You rise to play, and go to bed to work.

Emil. You shall not write my praise.

Iago. No, let me not.

Des. What would'st thou write of me, if thou should'st
 praise me?

Iago. O gentle lady, do not put me to't;
 For I am nothing, if not critical ⁶.

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 would'st 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 ⁷.

Des. Worse and worse.

Emil. How, if fair and foolish?

Iago. She never yet was foolish that was fair ⁸;
 For even her folly help'd her to an heir.

Des.

Puttenham, who mentions all other contemporary writers, has not
 once spoken of Shakspeare; so that it is probable he had not produced
 any thing of so early a date. STEEVENS.

⁵ O, fie upon thee, slanderer!] This short speech is, in the quarto,
 unappropriated; and may as well belong to *Æmilia* as to *Desdemona*.

STEEVENS.

⁶ — critical.] That is, censorious. JOHNSON.

⁸ So, in our authour's 122d Sonnet:

“ ——— my adder's sense

“ To critick and to flatterer stopped are.” MALONE.

⁷ — her blackness fit.] The first quarto reads *bit*. STEEVENS.

⁸ She never yet was foolish, &c.] We may read,

She

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 best. But what praise could'st thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed⁹? one, that, in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself¹?

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 tail²;

*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 foolishhest woman, if *pretty*, may have a child, no *pretty* woman is ever foolish. JOHNSON.

⁹ — *But what praise could'st thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed?*] The hint for this question, and the metrical reply of Iago is taken from a strange pamphlet, called *Choice, Chance, and Change, or Conceits in their Colours*, 1606; when after Tidero has described many ridiculous characters in verse, *Arnoslo* asks him, “but I pray thee, didst thou write none in commendation of some worthy creature?” *Tidero* then proceeds, like Iago, to repeat more verses. STEEV.

¹ — *one, that, in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?*] The sense 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 is to provoke, 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.

Surely the poet had a further allusion, which it is not necessary to explain. The word *frail* in the preceding line shews that *vians* were not alone in his thoughts. MALONE.

She that could think, and ne'er disclose her mind,
See suitors following, and not look behind³;
She was a wight,—if ever such wight were,—

Def. To do what?

Iago. 'To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer⁴.

Def. O most lame and impotent conclusion!—Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband.—How say you, Cassio? is he not a most profane⁵ and liberal counsellor⁶?

Cas. He speaks home, madam; you may relish him more in the soldier, than in the scholar.

Iago. [*Aside.*] 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 thee⁷ 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

³ See *suitors following, and not look behind*;] The first quarto omits this line. STEEVENS.

⁴ *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.

⁵ — *profane* —] Gross of language, of expression broad and brutal. So Brabantio, in the first act, calls Iago *profane* wretch. JOHNSON.

Ben Jonson, in describing the characters in *Every Man out of his Humour*, styles Carlo Buffone, a publick, scurrilous, and *profane* jester. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *liberal counsellor* ?] *Liberal*, for *licentious*. WARBURTON.
So, in the *Fair Maid of Bristow*, 1605, bl. l.

“ But Vallenger, most like a *liberal* villain,

“ Did give her scandalous, ignoble terms.” STEEVENS.

See p. 382, n. 4. MALONE.

Counsellor seems to mean, not so much a man that gives counsel, as one that discourages fearlessly and volubly. A talker. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *I will give thee* —] *i. e.* catch, shackle. POPE.

The first quarto reads—“ I will *catch* you in your own courtesies;” the second quarto—“ I will *catch* you in your own courtship.” The folio as it is in the text. STEEVENS.

excellent

excellent courtesy⁸! '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 comes!

Enter 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 calmness⁹,
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
As hell's from heaven! If it were now to die,
'Twere now to be most happy¹; 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,

⁸ —*well kiss'd! an excellent courtesy!*—] Spoken when Cassio kisses his hand, and Desdemona courties. JOHNSON.

This reading was recovered from the quarto, 1622, by Dr. Johnson. The folio has—*and excellent courtesy.*

I do not believe that any part of these words relates to Desdemona. In the original copy, we have just seen, the poet wrote—"ay, smile upon her, do; I will catch you in your own *courtesies.*" Here therefore he probably meant only to speak of Cassio, while kissing his hand. "Well kiss'd! an excellent courtesy!" i. e. an excellent salute. *Courtesy*, in the sense of an obeisance or salute, was in Shakspeare's time applied to men as well as women. See Vol. X. p. 160, n. 9.

MALONE.

⁹ —*come such calmness,*] Thus the original quarto, 1622. The folio has *calmes.* MALONE.

¹ —*If it were now to die,*

'Twere now to be most happy;] So Cherea, in *The Eunuch* of Terence, Act III. sc. v.:

"——— Proh Jupiter!

"Nunc tempus profecto est, cum perpeti me possum interfeci,

"Ne vita aliquâ hoc gaudium contaminet ægritudine."

MALONE.

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*².

That e'er our hearts shall make !

Iago. O, you are well tun'd now !

But I'll set down³ the pegs that make this musick,

As honest as I am.

[*Aside.*

Oth. Come, let's to the castle.—

News, friends⁴ ; 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 fashion⁵, and I dote

In mine own comforts.—I pr'ythee, good Iago,

Go to the bay, and disembark my coffers :

Bring thou the master⁶ to the citadel ;

He

² *And this, and this, &c.—kissing her.*] So, in Marlowe's *Lusi's Dominion* :

“ I pr'ythee, chide, if I have done amiss,

“ But let my punishment be *this and this.*” [*kissing the Moor.*”

MALONE.

Marlowe's play was written before that of Shakspeare, who might possibly have acted in it. STEEVENS.

³ *I'll set down—*] Thus the old copies, for which the modern editors, following Mr. Pope, have substituted—*let down*. But who can prove that to *set down* was not the language of Shakspeare's time, when a viol was spoken of?—To *set* formerly signified to *tune*, though it is no longer used in that sense. “ It was then,” says Anthony Wood in his *Diary*, “ that I *set* and tuned in strings and fourths,” &c. So in *Skialetheia*, a Collection of Satires, &c. 1598 :

“ ——— to a nimbler key

“ *Set thy wind instrument.*” MALONE.

⁴ *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 alteration, I have as silently restored the old readings. STEEVENS.

⁵ *I prattle out of fashion,—*] Out of method, without any settled order of discourse. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *the master—*] Dr. Johnson supposed, that by the *master* was meant the *pilot* of the ship, and indeed had high authority for this supposition ; for our poet himself seems to have confounded them. See Act. III. sc. ii. l. i. But the *master* is a distinct person, and has the principal command, and care of the navigation of the ship, under
the

He is a good one, and his worthiness
Does challenge much respect.—Come, Desdemona,
Once more well met at Cyprus.

[*Exeunt OTHELLO, 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 lieu-
tenant to-night watches on the court of guard⁷:—First, I
must tell thee this—Desdemona is directly in love with him.

Rod. With him! why, 'tis not possible.

Iago. Lay thy finger—thus⁸, and let thy soul be in-
structed. Mark me with what violence she first loved the
Moor, but for bragging, and telling her fantastical lies:
And will she love him still for prating⁹? let not thy
discreet heart think it. Her eye must be fed; and what
delight shall she have to look on the devil? When the
blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should be,
—again to inflame it¹, and to give satiety a fresh ap-
petite,—loveliness in favour; sympathy in years, man-
ners and beauties; all which the Moor is defective in:
Now, for want of these required conveniences, her deli-
cate tenderness will find itself abused, 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 preg-
nant and unforced position,) who stands so eminently in

the captain, where there is a captain; and in chief, where there is
none. The pilot is employed only in navigating the ship into or out
of port. MALONE.

* — *base men, being in love, have then a nobility in their na-
tures—*] So, in *Hamlet*:

“Nature is fine in love.” MALONE.

⁷ — *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.” STEEV.

⁸ *Lay thy finger—thus,—*] On thy mouth, to stop it while thou art
listening to a wiser man. JOHNSON.

⁹ *And will she love him still for prating?*] The folio reads—*To love
him still for prating!* STEEVENS.

¹ — *again to inflame it,*] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads
—*a game.* STEEVENS.

the

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 seeming², 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 green minds³ 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 blefs'd condition⁴.

Iago. Blefs'd fig's end! the wine she drinks is made of grapes: if she had been blefs'd, she would never have loved the Moor: Blefs'd pudding! Didst 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 prologue⁵ to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips, that their breaths embraced together. Villanous 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 ruled 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 tainting⁶ his discipline; or from what other course⁷ you please, which the time shall more favourably minister.

² — *and humane seeming,*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads—*and hand-seeming.* MALONE.

³ — *green minds*—] Minds unripe, minds not fully formed. JOHNS.

⁴ — *condition.*] Qualities, disposition of mind. JOHNSON.

See Vol. V. p. 600, n. 1. MALONE.

⁵ — *an index and obscure prologue, &c.*] That indexes were formerly prefixed to books, appears from a passage in *Troilus and Cressida*. See p. 334, n. 4, of this volume, and Vol. VIII. p. 180, n. 6. MALONE.

⁶ — *tainting*—] Throwing a slur upon his discipline. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *other course*—] The first quarto reads, *cause.* STEEVENS.

Rod.

Rod. Well.

Iago. Sir, he is rash, and very sudden in choler^s; 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 come⁹ into no true taste¹ again, but by 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 I can bring it to any opportunity².

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 lustful Moor Hath leap'd into my seat: the thought whereof Doth, like a poisonous mineral³, gnaw my inwards; And nothing can or shall content my soul,

^s — *sudden in choler*; —] *Sudden*, is precipitately violent. JOHNSON.

⁹ — *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.

¹ — *no true taste*—] So the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads—no true trust. MALONE.

^{*} — *to prefer them*;] i. e. to advance them. So, in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*: "The short and the long is, our play is preferr'd."

MALONE.

² — *if I can bring it to any opportunity*.] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads—if you can bring it, &c. MALONE.

³ — *like a poisonous mineral*,] This is philosophical. Mineral poisons kill by corrosion. JOHNSON.

Till I am even with him ⁴, wife for wife ;
 Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor
 At least into a jealousy so strong
 That judgment cannot cure. Which thing to do,—
 If this poor trash of Venice, whom I crush
 For his quick hunting, stand the putting on ⁵,

I'll

⁴ *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 *Tancred and Gismund*, 1592:

“For now the walls are *even'd* with the plain.” STEEVENS.

⁵ *If this poor trash of Venice, whom I crush*

For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,—] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads—whom I *trace*. To *crush* is again used in *Troilus* and *Cressida*, where it signifies, to *diminish*, or *abate*:

“Why then we did our main opinion *crush*,

“In taint of our best man.”

Again, in one of Shakspeare's Sonnets:

“Bated and *crush'd* with tann'd antiquity.”

Here therefore it may certainly mean to *keep down* and restrain.

Mr. Mason is of opinion, that there is no proof that Roderigo was so eager in the chase, that Iago had occasion to correct and restrain him, and therefore thinks the reading of the folio right; and that the meaning is, “If this poor trash of Venice, whom I follow solely in order to quicken him in his hunting, does but pursue the trail on which I have put him, I shall have our Michael Cassio on the hip.” But the doubt which Iago expresses concerning Roderigo's *standing the putting on*, proves, in my apprehension, that he *did* think him too impetuous in the chase.—Iago, I think, fears that Roderigo's impatience will hasten too fast to the conclusion he had in view, the possession of Desdemona; and that by his impetuous folly their plan may be discovered before it is yet ripe for execution.

Our poet in *K. Henry V.* has made that king say, in his address to his soldiers before Hartleur:

“I see you stand like *greybounds* in the slips,

“Straining upon the start.—The game's afoot.”

This, I think, was the particular species of hound here in Shakspeare's thoughts. Iago finding Roderigo too eager after his *game*, “*straining upon the start*,” feared he would not *stand the putting on*.

It has been suggested by Mr. Pegge, that to *trace* signifies to put a trace or pair of couples on a dog; and that therefore *whom I trace*, &c. may mean here, “whom I lead in my band on account of his too great eagerness in the pursuit.” MALONE.

If

I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip⁶;
Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb⁷,—

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 *crush*, signifying indeed the same as *trash*, but plainly corrupted from it. To *trash* a *bound* 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*, Act I. sc. ii.

Prosper. "Being once perfected how to grant suits,

"How to deny them, whom to advance, and whom

"To *trash* for overtopping,—"

To *trash* for overtoppings; 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. Shakspeare is fond of allusions to hunting, and appears to be well acquainted with its language. WARTON.

To *trash* likewise signifies to *follow*. So, in *The Puritan*, 1607: "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 Shakspeare's manner, though in his worst. In a subsequent scene, Iago calls Bianca—*trash*. STEEVENS.

To *trash* is used in the instance quoted from the *Puritan*, to express the awkward gait of the lackeys, and ought, I think, to be written *trashing*. When coupled with the word *after*, as it is there, it may signify to *follow*; but to *trash*, simply by itself, I believe, never had that signification. MALONE.

⁶ *I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip;*] A phrase from the art of wrestling. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *in the rank garb,*] The quarto reads in the *rank garb*, which I think is right, *Rank garb*, I believe, means, *grossly*, i. e. *without mincing the matter*. So, in Marston's *Dutch Courtesan*, 1605:

"Whither, in the *rank* name of madness, whither?" STEEV.

The folio reads—in the *right garb*. *Rank* perhaps means not only *gross*, but *lascivious*. So, in *The Merchant of Venice*:

"— the ewes, being *rank*,

"In end of autumn," &c. MALONE.

For

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 ;
 Knavery's plain face is never seen^s, till us'd. [Exit.]

S C E N E II.

A Street.

Enter a Herald, with a proclamation : people following.

Her. It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere perdition⁹ 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 addiction¹ leads him ; for, besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptials : So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All 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 !

S C E N E III.

A Hall in 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

⁸ *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 purpose, but at the time of execution. JOHNSON.

⁹ — *mere perdition—*] *Mere* in this place signifies *entire*. So, in *Hamlet* :

“ ——— possesses it *merely*. STEEVENS.

¹ — *his addiction,*] The first quarto reads, *his mind*. STEEVENS.

^{*} — *of feasting—*] These words are not in the original quarto, 1622. MALONE.

Will I look to't.

Oth. Iago is most honest.

Michael, good night: To-morrow, with our earliest,
Let me have speech with you.—Come, my dear love;
The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue; [*to Des.*
That profit's yet to come 'twixt me and you.—

Good night. [*Exeunt OTH. DES. and Attendants.*

Enter IAGO.

Caf. Welcome, Iago: We must to the watch.

Iago. Not this hour, lieutenant; 'tis not yet ten
o'clock: Our general cast us² thus early, for the 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 founds a par-
ley of provocation³.

Caf. An inviting eye; and yet, methinks, right modest.

Iago. And, when she speaks, is it not an alarm⁴ to
love⁵?

Caf. She is, indeed, perfection.

² *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 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. STEEVENS.

³ — a parley of provocation.] So the quarto, 1622. Folio:—re
provocation. MALONE.

⁴ — an alarm—] The voice may sound an alarm more properly
than the eye can sound a parley. JOHNSON.

⁵ — is it not an alarm to love?] The quartos read, —'tis an alarm
to love. STEEVENS.

Iago.

Iago. Well, happiness to their sheets! Come, lieutenant, I have a sloop 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 craftily qualified⁶ 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,
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 has 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 Cyprus⁷,—noble swelling spirits,
That hold their honours in a wary distance,
'The very elements⁸ of this warlike isle,—
Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups,
And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of drunk-
ards,

Am I to put our Cassio in some action

That may offend the isle;—But here they come:

⁶ — *craftily qualified* —] Slightly mixed with water. JOHNSON.

⁷ *Three lads of Cyprus*,—] The folio reads—*Three else of Cyprus*.

STEEVENS.

⁸ *The very elements*—] As quarrelsome as the *discordia semina rerum*; as quick in opposition as fire and water. JOHNSON.

If consequence do but approve my dream⁹,
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

Re-enter CASSIO; with him MONTANO, and Gentlemen.

Cas. 'Fore heaven, they have given me a rouse already¹.

Mon. Good faith, a little one; not past a pint,
As I am a soldier.

Iago. Some wine, ho!

And let me the canakin clink, clink; [sings.

And let me the canakin clink:

A solai^r's a man;

A life's but a span²;

Why then, let a soldier drink.

Some wine, boys! [Wine brought in.

Cas. 'Fore heaven, an excellent song.

Iago. I learn'd it in England, where (indeed) they are most potent in potting: your Dane, your German³, and your swag-bellied Hollander,—Drink, ho!—are nothing to your English.

Cas. Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking⁴?

Iago. Why, he drinks you, with facility, your Dane dead

⁹ *If consequence do but approve my dream,*] Every scheme subsisting only in the imagination may be termed a *dream*. JOHNSON.

¹ — *given me a rouse, &c.*] A *rouse* appears to be a quantity of liquor rather too large. So, in *Hamlet*: and in *The Christian turn'd Turk*, 1612:

“ — — our friends may tell,

“ We drank a *rouse* to them.” STEEVENS.

² *A life's but a span;*] Thus the quarto. The folio reads:

Ob, man's life's but a span. STEEVENS.

³ — *most potent in potting: your Dane, your German, &c.*] “ Enquire at ordinaries: there must be *fallets* for the Italian, *toothpicks* for the Spaniard, *pots* for the German!” Prologue to *Lily's Midas*, 1592. MALONE.

⁴ — *so expert in his drinking?*] Thus the quarto, 1622. Folio — *so exquisite.* MALONE.

This accomplishment in the English is likewise mentioned by Beaumont and Fletcher in *The Captain*:

Lod. “ Are the Englishmen such stubborn drinkers?”

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!

*King Stephen*⁵ *was a worthy peer*⁶,
His breeches cost him but a crown;
He held them six-pence all too dear,
*With that he call'd the tailor—lown*⁷:

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.

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.

⁵ *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 heroick 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 pair, and thought them passing costly.” STEEVENS.

⁶ — *a worthy peer,*] *i. e.* a worthy fellow. In this sense *peer*, *seer*, and *peere*, are often used by the writers of our earliest romances.

STEEVENS.

See Vol. X. p. 429, n. 3. MALONE.

⁷ — *lown.*] Sorry fellow, paltry wretch. JOHNSON.

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 hand:—I am not drunk now; I can stand well enough, and speak well enough.

All. Excellent well.

Caf. Why, very well then: you must not think then that I am drunk. [Exit.]

Mon. 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.

Mon. But is he often thus?

Iago. 'Tis evermore the prologue to his sleep:
He'll watch the horologe a double set⁸,
If drink rock not his cradle.

Mon. It were well,
The general were put in mind of it.
Perhaps, he sees it not; or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,
And looks not on his evils; Is not this true?

⁸ *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 *borologe* in more places than one:

“ Well fikerer was his crowing in his loge

“ Than is a clock or abbey *borologe*.” JOHNSON.

So, in *The Devil's Charter*, 1607:

“ — my gracious lord,

“ By Sisto's *borologe* 'tis struck eleven.” STEEVENS.

Enter RODERIGO.

Iago, How now, Roderigo?

[*Aside.*

I pray you, after the lieutenant; go.

[*Exit Rod.*

Mon. And 'tis great pity, that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place, as his own second,
With one of an ingraft infirmity⁹:
It were an honest action, to say
So to 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 knave into a twiggen bottle¹.

Rod. Beat me!

Cas. Dost thou prate, rogue?

[*Striking Rod.*

Mon. 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.

Mon. Come, come, you're drunk.

Cas. Drunk?

[*They fight.*

Iago. Away, I say! go out, and cry—a mutiny.

[*Aside to Rod. who goes out.*

Nay, good lieutenant,—alas, gentlemen,—

Help, ho!—Lieutenant.—sir,—Montano,—sir;—

Help, masters!—Here's a goodly watch, indeed!

[*Bell rings.*

9 — ingraft infirmity:] An infirmity rooted, settled in his constitution. JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson's explanation is certainly just, though it has been controverted. So, in *King Lear* :—" then must we look to receive from his age not alone the imperfection of long ingrafted condition, but therewithal," &c. MALONE.

¹ — into a twiggen bottle.] A twiggen bottle is a wicker'd bottle; and so the quarto reads. STEEVENS.

Who's

Who's that that rings the bell?—Diablo², ho!
The town will rise: God's will, lieutenant! hold;
You will be sham'd for ever.

Enter OTHELLO, and Attendants.

Oth. What is the matter here?

Mon. 'Zounds, I bleed still, I am hurt to the death³.

Oth. Hold, for your lives.

Iago. Hold, hold, lieutenant⁴,—sir, Montano,—gentlemen,—

Have you forgot all sense of place and duty⁵?

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.—

Silence that dreadful bell⁶, it frights the isle

From

² — *Diablo*,] I meet with this exclamation in Marlowe's *King Edward II.* "*Diablo!* what passions call you these?" STEEVENS.

³ 'Zounds, I bleed still, I am hurt to the death.] Thus the quarto 1622. The editor of the folio, thinking it necessary to omit the first word in the line, absurdly supplied its place by adding at the end of the line, *He dies*.

I had formerly inadvertently said that the marginal direction, *He faints*, was found in the quarto, 1622: but this was a mistake. It was inserted in a quarto of no value or authority, printed in 1630.

MALONE.

— *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 fifth act, he says,—“Villain, thou dy'st.” TOLLET:

He dies, i. e. he shall die. He may be supposed to say this as he renews the fight. STEEVENS.

⁴ Hold, hold, lieutenant,] Thus the original quarto. The folio reads—Hold *ho*, lieutenant. MALONE.

⁵ — all sense of place and duty?] So Hanmer. The rest,

— all place of sense and duty? JOHNSON.

⁶ Silence that dreadful bell,] It was a common practice formerly, when any great affray happened in a town, to ring the alarm bell. When David Rizzio was murdered at Edinburgh, the Provost ordered

From her propriety⁷.— What is the matter, makers?—
Honest Iago, that look'ft dead with grieving,
Speak, who began this? on thy love, I charge thee.

Iago. I do not know;—friends all but now, even now,
In quarter⁸, and in terms like bride and groom
Devesting 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 forgot⁹?

Caf. 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,
That you unlace¹ your reputation thus,

the common bell to be rung, and five hundred persons were immediately assembled. See Saunderfon's Hist. of Queen Mary, p. 41. MALONE.

⁷ From her propriety.—] From her regular and proper state.

JOHNSON.

⁸ In quarter,] i. e. on our station. So, in *Timon of Athens*:

“ _____ to atone your fears

“ With my more noble meaning, not a man

“ Shall pass his quarter.”

Their station or quarter in the present instance, was the guard-room in Othello's castle. In *Cymbeline* we have—“ their quarter'd fires,” i. e. their fires regularly disposed.

In quarter Dr. Johnson supposed to mean, at their lodgings; but that cannot be the meaning, for Montano and the gentlemen who accompanied him, had continued, from the time of their entrance, in the apartment in Othello's castle, in which the carousal had been; and Cassio had only gone forth for a short time to the platform, to set the watch. On his return from the platform into the apartment, in which he left Montano and Iago, he meets Roderigo; and the scuffle, first between Cassio and Roderigo, and then between Montano and Cassio, ensues.

MALONE.

⁹ — you are thus forgot?] i. e. you have forgot yourself.

STEEVENS.

¹ That you unlace.—] Slacken, or loosen. Put in danger of dropping; or perhaps strip of its ornaments. JOHNSON.

And

And spend your rich opinion², 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,
By me that's said or done amiss this night;
Unless self-charity³ 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;
And passion, having my best judgment collid⁴,
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 he that is approv'd in this offence⁵,
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 brimfull of fear,
To manage private and domestick quarrel,

² — *spend your rich opinion,*] Throw away and squander a reputation so valuable as yours. JOHNSON.

³ — *self-charity*—] Care of one's self. JOHNSON.

⁴ *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 *besmut*, 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 *collew'st* me and my ruffe.” The word (as I am assured) is still used in the midland counties. STEEVENS.

Coles in his Dictionary, 1679, renders “ *collew'd* by *denigratus*:— “ to *colly*,” *denigro*.

The quarto, 1622, reads—having my best judgment *cool'd*. A modern editor supposed that *quell'd* was the word intended. MALONE.

⁵ *And he that is approv'd in this offence,*] He that is convicted by proof, of having been engaged in this offence. JOHNSON.

In night, and on the court of guard and safety ⁶!

⁷'Tis monstrous*.—Iago, who began it?

Mon. If partially affin'd⁷, or leagu'd in office⁸,

⁶ *In night, and on the court of guard and safety!*] The old copies have—on the court *and guard of safety*; the words having undoubtedly been transposed by negligence at the press. For this emendation, of which I am confident every reader will approve, I am answerable. The *court of guard* was the common phrase of the time for the *guard-room*. It has already been used by Iago in a former scene; and what still more strongly confirms the emendation, Iago is there speaking of *Cossio*, and describing him as about to be placed in the very station where he now appears: “The lieutenant to-night watches on *the court of guard*.”

Again, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

“If we be not reliev'd within this hour,

“We must return to *the court of guard*.”

The same phrase occurs in *Sir John Oldcastle*, 1600, and in many other old plays. A similar mistake has happened in the present scene, where in the original copy we find,

“Have you forgot *all place of sense and duty*?”
instead of—*a l sense of place and duty*.

I may venture to assert with confidence, that no editor of Shakspeare has more sedulously adhered to the ancient copies than I have done, or more steadily opposed any change grounded merely on obsolete or unusual phraseology. But the error in the present case is so apparent, and the phrase, *the court of guard*, so established by the uniform usage of the poets of Shakspeare's time, that not to have corrected the mistake of the compositor in the present instance, would in my apprehension have been unwarrantable. If the phraseology of the old copies had merely been unusual, I should not have ventured to make the slightest change: but the frequent occurrence of the phrase, *the court of guard*, in all our old plays, and that being *the word of art*, leave us not room to entertain a doubt of its being the true reading.

Mr. Steevens says, a phraseology as unusual occurs in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*; but he forgets that it is supported by the usage of contemporary writers. When any such is produced in support of that before us, it ought certainly to be attended to.

I may add, that *the court of safety* may in a metaphorical sense be understood; but who ever talked of *the guard* [i. e. the *safety*] of *safety*?

MALONE.

* 'Tis monstrous.] This word was used as a trisyllable, as if it were written *monsterous*. MALONE.

⁷ *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:

“If I, in any just term, am *affin'd*

“To love the Moor.” STEEVENS.

⁸ —leagu'd in office,] Old copies—*league*. Corrected by Mr. Pope.

MALONE.

Thou

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 mouth⁹,
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 him¹ 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.—

⁹ —cut from my mouth,] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads
—this tongue out from my mouth. MALONE.

¹ And Cassio following him—] The word *him* in this line seems to
have crept into it from the compositor's eye glancing on that below.

MALONE.

Enter

Enter Desdemona, attended,

Lock, if my gentle love be not rais'd up ;—
I'll make thee an example.

Des. What is the matter, dear ?

Oth. All's well now, sweeting ; Come away to bed.
Sir, for your hurts, myself will be your surgeon : [*to Mon.*
Lead him off². [*Montano 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.

[*Exeunt all but 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 thought you had re-
ceived some bodily wound ; there is more offence³ 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 now cast in his mood⁴, a punishment more in po-
licy than in malice ; even so as one would beat his of-
fenceless dog, to affright an imperious lion : sue to him
again, and he's yours.

Cas. I will rather sue to be despised, than to deceive

² *Lead him off.*] I am persuaded, these words were originally a marginal direction. In our old plays all the stage-directions were couched in imperative terms : *Play musick ;—Ring the bell ;—Lead him off.* MALONE.

³ — *there is more offence, &c.*] Thus the quartos. The folio reads, — *there is more sense, &c.* STEEVENS.

⁴ — *cast in his mood,*] Ejected in his anger. JOHNSON.

so good a commander, with so slight⁵, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? and speak parrot⁶? 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 pleased 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

⁵ — *so slight,*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads—*so light*. MALONE.

⁶ — *and speak parrot?*] A phrase signifying to act foolishly and childishly. So Skelton:

“These maidens full mekely with many a divers flour

“Freshly they drefs and make sweete my boure,

“With *spake parrot* I pray you full courteously thei saye.”

WARBURTON.

So, in Lyly's *Woman in the Moon*, 1597:

“Thou pretty *parrot*, *speak*, awhile.” STEEVENS.

From *Drunk*, &c. to *shadow*, inclusively, is wanting in the quarto, 1622. By “*speak parrot*,” surely the poet meant, “*talk idly*,” and not, as Dr. Warburton supposes, “*act foolishly*.” MALONE.

strange!

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 it. And, good lieutenant, I think, you think I love you.

Caf. I have well approved it, sir.—I drunk!

Iago. You, or any man living, may be drunk at some time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general;—I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement⁷ 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 joint⁸, between you and her husband, entreat 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, will I 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.

Caf. Good night, honest Iago. [Exit Cassio.]

Iago. And what's he then, that says—I play the villain?

When this advice is free⁹, I give, and honest,

⁷ — *mark, and denotement*—] The old copies, by an accidental inversion of the letter *u*, have—*devotement*. The same mistake has happened in *Hamlet*, and in several other places. See Vol. I. p. 292, n. 9. Mr. Theobald made the correction. MALONE.

⁸ *This broken joint,*] Thus the folio. The original copy reads—*This brawl*. MALONE.

⁹ — *this advice is free,*] This counsel has an appearance of honest openness, of frank good-will. JOHNSON.

Probal to thinking¹, and (indeed) the course
 To win the Moor again? For 'tis most easy
 The inclining Desdemona to subdue²
 In any honest suit; she's fram'd as fruitful
 As the free elements³. 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 enfetted 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 to this parallel course⁴,
 Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!
 When devils will their blackest sins put on,
 They do suggest⁵ 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,
 I'll pour this pestilence⁶ into his ear,—

¹ Probal to thinking,] Mr. Steevens observes, that “the old editions concur in reading *probal*. There may be such a contraction of the word, [*probable*] but I have not met with it in any other book. Yet, abbreviations as violent occur in our ancient writers.” He, however, reads—*probable*. MALONE.

² The inclining Desdemona—] *Inclining* here signifies *compliant*. MALONE.

³ — as fruitful as the free elements:] Liberal, bountiful, as the elements, out of which all things are produced. JOHNSON.

⁴ — to this parallel course,] Parallel, for even, because parallel lines run even and equidistant. WARBURTON.

So, in our authour's 70th Sonnet:

“Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
 And delves the parallels in beauty's brow.” MALONE.

Parallel course; i. e. a course level, and even with his design. JOHNSON.

⁵ When devils will their blackest sins put on,
 They do suggest—] When devils mean to *instigate* men to commit the most atrocious crimes. So, in *Hamlet*:

“Of deaths put on by cunning and forc'd cause.”

To *put on*, has already occurred twice in the present play, in this sense. To *suggest* in old language is to *tempt*. See Vol. I. p. 139, n. 6.

MALONE.

⁶ I'll pour this pestilence —] Pestilence, for poison. WARBURTON.

That

That she repeals him ⁷ for her body's lust ;
 And, by how much she strives to do him good,
 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 all⁸.—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 wit⁹, 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,

Content

⁷ *That she repeals him—*] That is, recalls him. JOHNSON.

⁸ *That shall enmesh them all.—*] A metaphor from taking birds in meshes. POPE.

Why not from taking fish, for which purpose nets are more frequently used. MASON.

⁹ — *a little more wit,*] Thus the folio. The first quarto reads—
 And with that wit. STEEVENS.

¹ *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*. Hamner has not, I think, rightly conceived the sentiment ; for he reads,

Those 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 Hamner. JOHNSON.

The *blossoming*, or fair appearance of things, to which Iago alludes, is, the removal of Cassio. As their plan had already *blossomed*, so there was good ground for expecting that it would *soon be ripe*. Iago does
 not

Yet fruits, that blossom first, will first be ripe¹ :
 Content thyself a while.—By the mass, 'tis morning² ;
 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 Rod.*] Two things are to be
 done,—
 My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress ;
 I'll set her on ;
 Myself, the while, to draw³ 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.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Before the Castle.

Enter CASSIO, and some Musicians.

Cas. Masters, play here, I will content your pains,
 Something that's brief ; and bid—good-morrow, general.
 [*Musick.*]

Enter Clown.

Clown. Why, masters, have your instruments been at
 Naples, that they speak i' the nose thus⁴ ?

i. Mus. How, sir, how !

Clown. Are these, I pray you, call'd wind instruments ?

not, I think, mean to compare *their* scheme to *tardy* fruits, as Dr. Johnson seems to have supposed. MALONE.

² By the mass, 'tis morning ;] Here we have one of the numerous arbitrary alterations made by the Master of the Revels in the playhouse copies, from which a great part of the folio was printed. It reads—*In troth, 'tis morning.* See *The Historical Account of the English Stage*, Vol. I. Part II. MALONE.

³ *Myself, the while, to draw—*] The old copies have *awhile*. Mr. Theobald made the correction.

The modern editors read—*Myself, the while, will draw.* But the old copies are undoubtedly right. An imperfect sentence was intended. Iago is ruminating on his plan. MALONE.

⁴ *Why, masters, have your instruments been at Naples, that they speak i' the nose thus ?*] The venereal disease first appeared at the siege of Naples. JOHNSON.

Mus.

1. *Mus.* Ay, marry, are they, fir.

Clown. O, thereby hangs a tail.

1. *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 musick, that he desires you, of all loves⁵, to make no more noise with it.

1. *Mus.* Well, fir, we will not.

Clown. If you have any musick that may not be heard, to't again: but, as they say, to hear musick, the general does not greatly care.

1. *Mus.* We have none such, fir.

Clown. Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I'll away⁶: Go; vanish into air⁷; away. [*Exeunt Mus.*

Caf. Dost thou hear, my honest friend?

Clown. No, I hear not your honest friend; I hear you.

Caf. Pr'ythee, keep up thy quilllets⁸. 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.*

Enter IAGO.

Caf. Do, good my friend.—In happy time, Iago,

Iago. You have not been a-bed then?

Caf. Why, no; the day had broke
Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,
To send in to your wife: My suit to her
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

⁵ — of all loves,] The folio reads — for love's sake. STEEVENS.

⁶ — for I'll away:] Hanmer reads, and he away. JOHNSON.

⁷ — vanish into air;] So the folio and one of the quartos. The eldest quarto reads—Vanish away. STEEVENS.

⁸ — thy quilllets.] See p. 390, n. 9. MALONE.

A Florentine more kind and honest^o.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. 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 front¹, To bring you in again.

Cas. Yet, I beseech you,— If you think fit, or that it may be done,— Give me advantage of some brief discourse With Desdemona alone.

Emil. Pray you, come in; I will bestow you where you shall have time To speak your bosom freely.

Cas. I am much bound to you². [*Exeunt.*]

^o ———— *I never knew*

A Florentine more kind and honest.] In consequence of this line, a doubt has been entertained concerning the country of Iago. Cassio was undoubtedly a Florentine, as appears by the first scene of the play, where he is expressly called one. That Iago was a *Venetian*, is proved by a speech in the third scene of this act, and by what he says in the fifth act, after having stabbed Roderigo:

Iago. Alas, my dear friend and countryman, Roderigo!

Gra. What, of *Venice*?

Iago. Yes.

All that Cassio means to say in the passage before us is, I never experienced more honesty and kindness even in one of my own countrymen, than in this man.

Mr. Steevens has made the same observation in another place.

MALONE.

¹ *To take the safest occasion by the front,*] This line is wanting in the folio. STEEVENS.

² *I am much bound to you.*] This speech is omitted in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

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 state³:
 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.

*Before 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 his⁴.

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 you⁵: 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 politick distance.

Cas. Ay, but lady,

³ — to the state:] Thus the quarto, 1622. Folio: to the senate.

⁴ *As if the case were his.*] The folio reads—as if the cause were his. STEEVENS. MALONE.

⁵ O, sir, I thank you:] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads—*I know't, I thank you.* MALONE.

That

That policy may either last so long⁶,
 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 Emilia 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;
 I'll watch him tame⁷, 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.

Emil. Madam, here comes my lord.

Cas. Madam, I'll take my leave.

Des. Why, stay, and hear me speak.

Cas. 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.

Oth. What dost thou say?

⁶ *That policy may either last so long,*] He may either of himself think it politick 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.

⁷ *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.”

Again, in Sir W. D'Avenant's *Just Italian*, 1630:

“They've *watch'd* my hardy violence so tame.”

Again in the *Booke of Haukyng, Huntynge, &c.* bl. l. no date:
 “Wake her all nyght, and on the morrowe all daye, and then she will be previ enough to be re Claymed.” STEEVENS.

Iago. Nothing, my lord: or if—I know not what.

Oth. 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.

Oth. 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.

Oth. Who is't, you mean?

Des. Why, your lieutenant Cassio. Good my lord,
If I have any grace, or power to move you,
His present reconciliation take⁸;
For, if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance, and not in cunning⁹,
I have no judgment in an honest face:
I pr'ythee, call him back.

Oth. Went he hence now?

Des. Ay, sooth; so humbled,
That he hath left part of his grief with me;
I suffer with him¹. Good love, call him back.

Oth. Not now, sweet Desdemona; some other time.

Des. But shall't be shortly?

Oth. The sooner, sweet, for you.

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;

⁸ *His present reconciliation take;*] To take his reconciliation, may be, to accept the submission which he makes in order to be reconciled.

9 — *and not in cunning,*] *Cunning*, for design, or purpose, simply. JOHNSON.
WARBURTON.

Perhaps rather for *knowledge*, the ancient sense of the word. So, in *Measure for Measure*: "In the boldness of my *cunning* I will lay myself in hazard." The opposition which seems to have been intended between *cunning* and *ignorance*, favours this interpretation. MALONE.

¹ *I suffer with him.*] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads—*To suffer with him.* MALONE.

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, the wars must make examples
 Out of their best²;) 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 on³. What! Michael Cassio,
 That came a wooing with you⁴; and so many a time,
 When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,
 Hath ta'en your part; to have so much to do
 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,

² — 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.

The old copies read—*her best*. Mr. Rowe made this necessary emendation. MALONE.

³ — *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, 1540: "I stand in doubt, or in a *mamorynge* between hope and fear." STEEVENS.

Again in Lily's *Euphues*, 1580:—"neither stand in a *mamering* whether it be best to depart or not." The quarto, 1622, reads *muttering*. *Mammering* is the reading of the folio. MALONE.

⁴ — *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.

See the notes on the passage alluded to, p. 459, n. 8. MALONE.

It shall be full of poize⁵ 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. Emilia, come:—Be it as your fancies teach you ;
Whate'er you be, I am obedient. [*Exit, with Emil.*]

Oth. Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul,
But I do love thee⁶! and when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again⁷.

Iago. My noble lord,—

Oth.

⁵ — full of poize—] *i. e.* of weight. So, in *The Dumb Knight*,
1633:

“ But we are all prest down with other poize.” STEEVENS.

⁶ 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, harmless, helpless excellence. JOHNSON.

Sir *W. D'Avenant* uses the same expression in his *Cruel Brother*, 1630, and with the same meaning. It occurs twice: “ — *Excellent wretch!* with a timorous modesty she stifles up her utterance.” STEEV.

⁷ — 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 elegant, the second is perhaps more easy. Shakspeare 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.

This passage does not strike me in the same light in which it appeared to Dr. Johnson; as Othello had not yet any experience of that perturbation and discord, by which he afterwards is so fatally agitated. He means

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 her.

Oth. O, yes; and went between us very oft.

Iago. Indeed?

Oth. Indeed! ay, indeed;—Discern'st thou aught in that?
Is he not honest?

Iago. Honest, my lord?

Oth. Honest! ay, honest.

Iago. My lord, for aught I know.

Oth. What dost thou think?

Iago. Think, my lord?

Oth. Think, my lord!—By heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought⁸,

means, I think, to say,—and ere I cease to love thee, the world itself
shall be reduced to its primitive chaos. Shakspeare probably preferred—
“chaos is come again,” to “chaos shall come again,” as more bold
and expressive. *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,

“Tetras in antiquum sit reditura Chaos.”

The meaning of Shakspeare 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 o' the earth together,

“And mar the seeds within!” MALONE.

⁸ — 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.* STEEVENS.

This is one of the numerous alterations made in the folio copy by
the Licenser. MALONE.

Too hideous to be shewn.—Thou dost mean something :
 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 did'st contract and purse thy brow together,
 As if thou then had'st 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.

Oth. 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 denotements ⁹, working from the heart,
 That passion cannot rule.

⁹ *They are close denotements, &c.]* i. e. indications, or discoveries, not openly revealed, but involuntarily working from the heart, which cannot rule and suppress its feelings.

Thus the original copy, 1622. The folio reads—They are close *dilations* ; but nothing is got by the change, for *dilations* was undoubtedly used in the sense of *dilatements*, or *large and full expositions*. See Minshew's Dict. 1617 : “ To dilate or make large.”

Dilatement is used in the sense of *dilation* by Lodge, our poet's contemporary : “ After all this foul weather follows a calm *dilatement* of others too forward harmfulness” *Rosalynde, or Euphues Golden Legacie*, 4to. 1592.

Dr. Johnson very elegantly reads—They are close *delations* ; “ i. e. *occult* and *secret accusations*, working involuntarily from the heart, which, though resolved to conceal the fault, cannot rule its passion of resentment.”

But the objection to this conjectural reading is, that there is strong ground for believing that the word was not used in Shakspeare's age. It is not found in any dictionary of the time, that I have seen, nor has any passage been quoted in support of it. On the contrary, we find in Minshew the verb, “ To *delate*,” not signifying, to *accuse*, but thus interpreted : “ to *speak at large* of any thing. *vid. to dilate* :” so that if even *delations* were the word of the old copy, it would mean no more than *dilations*. To the reading of the quarto no reasonable objection can be made. MALONE.

Iago.

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 ruminate ; 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 to².
Utter my thoughts ? Why, say, they are vile and false,—
As where's that palace, whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not³ who has a breast so pure,
But some uncleanly apprehensions
Keep leets, and law-days⁴, and in session sit
With meditations lawful ?

Oth.

¹ Or, those that be not, 'would they might seem none !] I believe the meaning is, would they might no longer seem, or bear the shape of men.

JOHNSON.

May not the meaning be, 'Would they might not seem honest !

MALONE.

² — to that all slaves are free to.] I am not bound to do that, which even slaves are not bound to do. MALONE.

³ — where's that palace, whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not ?] So, in *The Rape of Lucrece* :

“ ——— no perfection is so absolute,

“ That some impurity doth not pollute.” MALONE.

⁴ — who has a breast so pure,

But some uncleanly apprehensions

Keep leets, and law-days, and in session sit

With meditations lawful ?] Who has so virtuous a breast, that some uncharitable surmises and impure conceptions will not sometimes enter into it ; hold a session there as in a regular court, and “ bench by the side” of authorized and lawful thoughts ?—In our poet's 30th Sonnet we find the same imagery :

“ When to the sessions of sweet silent thought

“ I summon up remembrance of things past.”

A leet and law-day were synonymous terms, “A leet,” says Bullokar,
in

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,—
Though I, perchance, am vicious in my guesses,
As, I confess, it is my nature's plague

in his *English Expositor*, 1616, "is a court or law-day, holden commonly every half year." To keep a leet was the *verbum juris*; the title of one of the chapters in Kitchin's book on Courts, being, "The manner of keeping a court-leet." The leet, according to Lambard, was a court or jurisdiction above the wapentake or hundred, comprehending three or four hundreds. The jurisdiction of this court is now in most places merged in that of the County Court. MALONE.

5 *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 his 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 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 too speak of.*

Vicious in my guesses 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.

The reader should be informed, that the mark of abruption which I have placed after the word *you*, was placed by Mr. Steevens after the word *perchance*: and his note, to which I do not subscribe, is founded on that regulation. I think the poet intended that Iago should break off at the end of the first hemistich, as well as in the middle of the fifth line. What he would have added, it is not necessary very nicely to examine. The adverbative particle, *though*, in the second line, does not indeed appear very proper; but in an abrupt and studiously clouded sentence like the present, where more is meant to be conveyed than meets the ear, strict propriety may well be dispensed with. The word *perchance*, if strongly marked in speaking, would sufficiently shew that the speaker did not suppose himself *vicious in his guesses*.

By the latter words, Iago, I apprehend, means only, "though I perhaps am mistaken, led into an error by my natural disposition, which is apt to shape faults that have no existence." MALONE.

To

To spy into abuses ; and, oft, my jealousy
 Shapes faults that are not,—I entreat you then ⁶,
 From one that so imperfectly conjects,
 You'd 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 ⁷ ; '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,
 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 ;

⁶ — *I entreat you then, &c.*] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads :

————— and of, my jealousy
 Shapes faults that are not) that your wisdom
 From one that so imperfectly conceits,
 Would take no notice. MALONE.

To *conject*, i. e. to *conjecture*, is a verb used by other writers. So, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1540 :

“ Now reason I, or *conject* with myself.”

Again :

“ I cannot forget thy saying, or thy *conjecting* words.”

STEEVENS.

⁷ Good name, in man, and woman, dear my lord,

Is the immediate jewel of their souls :

Who steals my purse, steals trash ; &c.] The sacred writings were here perhaps in our poet's thoughts : “ A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour than silver and gold.” PROVERBS, chap. xxiii. verse 1. MALONE.

It is the green-ey'd monster, which doth make
The meat it feeds on⁹: That cuckold lives in bliss,
Who,

⁸ *It is the green-ey'd monster, which doth make
The meat it feeds on:]* The old copies have *mock*. The correction
was made by Sir Thomas Hanmer. MALONE.
—*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 ap-
pears 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!* WARBURTON.

I have received Hanmer's emendation; because *to mock* does not
signify *to loath*; and because, when Iago bids Othello *beware of*
jealousy, the green-ey'd monster, it is natural to tell why he should be-
ware; 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
mamock. FARMER.

If Shakspeare 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 foot 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 sus-
pects, 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 Hanmer, 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.”

Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger ;
But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er,

Who

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.*

A similar idea occurs in *All's well that ends well*:

“ ————— so lust doth play
“ With what it loaths.”

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 Hammer'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 Shakspeare 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 Hammer's meaning, a change in the text is necessary. I am counsel for the old reading. STEEVENS.

I have not the smallest doubt that Shakspeare wrote *make*, and have therefore inserted it in the text. The words *make* and *mocke* (for such was the old spelling) are often confounded in these plays, and I have assigned the reason in a note on *Measure for Measure*, Vol. II. p. 21, n. 5.

Mr. Steevens in his paraphrase on this passage interprets the word *mock* by *sport*; but in what poet or prose-writer, from Chaucer and Mandeville to this day, does the verb *to mock* signify to *sport with*? In the passage from *Antony and Cleopatra*, I have proved, I think incontrovertibly, from the metre, and from our poet's usage of this verb in other places, (in which it is followed by a personal pronoun,) that Shakspeare must have written —

“ Being so frustrate, tell him, he mocks *us* by
“ The pauses that he makes.” [See Vol. VII. p. 575, n. 8.]

Besides; is it true as a general position, that jealousy (*as* jealousy) *sports* or *plays with* the object of love (allowing this not very delicate interpretation of the words, *the meat it feeds on*, to be the true one)? The position certainly is not true. It is *Love*, not *Jealousy*, that sports with

Who dotes, yet doubts; suspects, yet strongly loves⁹!

Oth. O misery!

Iago.

with the object of its passion; nor can those circumstances which create suspicion, and which are *the meat it feeds on*, with any propriety be called the *food* of LOVE, when the poet has clearly pointed them out as the food or cause of JEALOUSY; giving it not only being, but nutriment.

“There is no beast,” it is urged, “that can *literally* be said to make its own food.” It is indeed acknowledged, that jealousy is a monster which often *creates* the suspicions on which it feeds, but is it, we are asked, “*the monster?* (i. e. a *well known and conspicuous animal;*) and whence has it *green-eyes?* *Yellow* is the colour which Shakspeare appropriates to jealousy.”

To this I answer, that *yellow* is not the only colour which Shakspeare *appropriates* to jealousy, for we have in *The Merchant of Venice*,

“—shuddering fear, and *green-ey'd jealousy.*”

and I suppose, it will not be contended that he was *there* thinking of any of the tyger kind.

If our poet had written only—“It is *the green-ey'd monster*; beware of it;” the other objection would hold good, and some particular monster, *κατ' εἶδος*, must have been meant; but the words, “It is *the green-ey'd monster, which doth, &c.* in my apprehension have precisely the same meaning, as if the poet had written, “it is *that green-ey'd monster, which, &c.*” or, “it is *a green-ey'd monster.*” He is *the man* in the world *whom* I would least wish to meet,—is the common phraseology of the present day.

When Othello says to Iago in a former passage, “By heaven, he echoes me, as if there were some *monster* in his thought,” does any one imagine that any *animal* whatever was meant?

The passage in a subsequent scene, to which Mr. Steevens has alluded, strongly supports the emendation which has been made:

“—*jealousy* 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.*”

It is, *strictly* speaking, as false that any monster can be *begot*, or *born*, on itself, as it is, that any monster (whatever may be the colour of its eyes, whether green or yellow) can *make* its own food; but, poetically, both are equally true of that monster, JEALOUSY. Mr. Steevens seems to have been aware of this, and therefore has added the word *literally*: “No monster can be *literally* said to make its own food.”

It should always be remembered, that Shakspeare's allusions scarcely ever answer precisely on both sides; nor had he any care upon this subject. Though he has introduced the word *monster*,—when he talk'd of its *making its own food*, and being *begot by itself*, he was still
thinking

Iago. Poor, and content, is rich, and rich enough¹ ;
 But riches, fineless², is as poor as winter³,
 To him that ever fears he shall be poor :—
 Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
 From jealousy !

Oth. Why ? why is this ?

thinking of jealousy *only*, careless whether there was any animal in the world that would correspond with his description.

That by the words, *the meat it feeds on*, is meant, not *Desdemona* herself, as has been maintained, but *pabulum zelotypiæ*, may be likewise inferred from a preceding passage in which a kindred imagery is found :

“ That *policy* may either last so long,
 “ Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,” &c.

And this obvious interpretation is still more strongly confirmed by Daniel’s *Rosamond*, 1592, a poem which Shakspeare had diligently read, and has more than once imitated in *Romeo and Juliet* :

“ O Jealousy, —————
 “ Feeding upon *suspect* that doth renew thee,
 “ Happy were lovers, if they never knew thee.”

In this and the few other places in which I have ventured to depart from the ancient copies, I have thought it my duty to state in the fullest and clearest manner the grounds on which the emendation stands: which in some cases I have found not easily accomplished, without running into greater prolixity than would otherwise be justifiable.

MALONE.

The same idea occurs in Massinger’s *Picture*, where Mathias, speaking of the groundless jealousy which he entertained of Sophia’s possible inconstancy, says,

“ I am strangely troubled ; yet why should I *nourish*
 “ A *fury* here, and with *imagin’d food*,—
 “ Holding no real ground on which to raise
 “ A building of suspicion she was ever
 “ Or can be false hereafter ?”

Imagin’d food is food created by imagination, the food that jealousy makes, and feeds on. MASON.

⁹ — strongly loves !] Thus the quarto ; the folio, — *soundly* loves.

STEEVENS.

¹ Poor, and content, is rich, and rich enough ;] So in *Dorastus and Fawnia*, (the novel on which *The Winter’s Tale* is formed,) 1592 :

“ We are rich, in that we are poor with content.” MALONE.

² But riches, fineless,] Unbounded, endless, unnumbered treasures.

JOHNSON.

³ — as poor as winter,] Finely expressed : *winter* producing no fruits. WARBURTON.

Think’st

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
 To such exsufflicate and blown surmises ⁴.
 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;
 Where virtue is, these are more virtuous ⁵:
 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.

⁴ *To such exsufflicate and blown surmises,*] Whether our poet had any authority for the word *exsufflicate*, which I think is used in the sense of *swollen*, and appears to have been formed from *sufflatus*, I am unable to ascertain: but I have not thought it safe to substitute for it another word equally unauthorized. *Suffolare* in Italian signifies to *whistle*. How then can Dr. Johnson's interpretation of *exsuffolate* be supported? The introducer of this word explains it, by "whispered, buzz'd in the ears." MALONE.

To such exsuffoiate and blown surmises.] This old and far-fetched word was made yet more uncouth in all the editions before Hanmer'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 show without solidity; or that, in consequence of such empty fears, I will close with thy inference against the virtue of my wife. JOHNSON.

⁵ *Where virtue is, these are more 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*." *Gratior e pulchro veniens et corpore virtus*.

STEVENS.

Most was arbitrarily introduced by the ignorant editor of the second folio. MALONE.

Iago.

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 ;
 Wear your eye—thus, not jealous, nor secure :
 I would not have your free and noble nature,
 Out of self-bounty, be abus'd⁶ ; look to't :
 I know our country disposition well ;
 In Venice⁷ they do let heaven see the pranks
 They dare not shew their husbands ; their best conscience
 Is—not to leave undone, but keep unknown⁸.

Oth. Dost thou say so ?

Iago. She did deceive her father, marrying you ;
 And, when she seem'd to shake and fear your looks⁹,
 She lov'd them most.

⁶ *Out of self-bounty, be abus'd ;*] *Self-bounty* for inherent generosity. WARBURTON.

⁷ — our country disposition—

In Venice——] Here Iago seems to be a Venetian. JOHNSON.
 Various other passages, as well as the present, prove him to have been
 a Venetian, nor is there any ground for doubting the poet's intention
 on this head. See p. 529, n. 9. MALONE.

⁸ *Is—not to leave undone, but keep unknown.*] The folio perhaps more
 clearly reads :

Is not to leav't undone, but keep't undone. STEEVENS.

The folio, by an evident error of the press, reads—*kept* unknown.
 MALONE.

⁹ *And, when she seem'd, &c.*] This and the following argument of
 Iago ought to be deeply impress'd on every reader. Deceit and false-
 hood, 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.

Oth. And so she did.

Iago. Why, go to, then;

She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,
'To feel her father's eyes up, close as oak'¹,—

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 issues², 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 success³

A 9

¹ *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*. To feel is an expression from falconry. STEEVENS.

To feel a hawk is to sew up his eyes-lids. See Vol. VII. p. 589, n. 9. In *the Winter's Tale*, Paulina says,

“The root of his opinion, which is rotten

“As ever oak, or stone, was found.” MALONE.

² *To grosser issues,*] *Issues*, for conclusions. WARBURTON.

³ *My speech should fall into such vile success,*] 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 *wile success*, because he would appear to Othello, to wish that the enquiry into Desdemona's guilt might prove fruitless and unsuccessful.

STEEVENS:

The

As my thoughts aim not at. Cassio's my worthy friend :—
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 will most rank⁴,
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,

The following passages will perhaps be considered as proofs of Dr. Johnson's explanation:

"Then the poore desolate women, fearing lest their case would sorte to some pitifull *successse*,—." *Palace of Pleasure*, bl. let.

"God forbid all his hope should turne to such *successse*." *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578. HENDERSON.

⁴ — a will most rank,] *Will*, is for wilfulness. It is so used by Ascham. A rank will, is self-will, overgrown and exuberant.

JOHNSON.

You shall by that perceive him and his means⁵;
 Note, if your lady strain his entertainment⁶
 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 caute I have, to fear—I am,)
 And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.

Oth. Fear not my government⁷.

Iago. I once more take my leave.

[*Exit.*

Oth. This fellow's of exceeding honesty,
 And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit⁸,
 Of human dealings: If I do prove her haggard⁹,
 Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings¹,
 I'd

⁵ *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.

⁶ —*strain his entertainment*—] Press hard his re-admission to his pay and office. *Entertainment* was the military term for admission of soldiers. JOHNSON.

⁷ *Fear not my government.*] Do not distrust my ability to contain my passion. JOHNSON.

⁸ —*with a learned spirit,*] *Learned*, for experienced.

WARBURTON.

The construction is, He knows with a learned spirit all qualities of human dealings. JOHNSON.

⁹ —*If I do prove her haggard,*] A *haggard* hawk is a wild hawk, a hawk unreclaimed, or irreclaimable. JOHNSON.

A *haggard* is a particular species of hawk. It is difficult to be reclaimed, but not irreclaimable.

From a passage in *Vittoria Corombona*, it appears that *haggard* was a term of reproach sometimes applied to a wanton: "Is this your perch, you *haggard*? fly to the stews."

Turberville says, that "the *haggart* falcons are the most excellent birds of all other falcons." *Latbam* gives to the *haggart* only the second place in the *valued file*. In *Holland's Leaguer*, a comedy, by Shakerly Marmyon, 1633, is the following illustrative passage:

"Before these courtiers lick their lips at her,

"I'll trust a wanton *haggard* in the wind."

Haggard, however, had a popular sense, and was used for *wild* by those who thought not on the language of falconers. STEEVENS.

¹ *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

I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,
 To prey at fortune². Haply, for I am black;
 And have not those soft parts of conversation
 That chamberers³ 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
 Must be—to loath her. O curse of marriage,
 That we can call these delicate creature 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 base⁴:

'Tis

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 *jeffes*, and her bells.” STEEVENS.

² 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'd 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 *floupes* upon a sudden.”

PERCY;

Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Bonduca*:

“ ——— he that basely

“ *Whistled his honour off to the wind,*” &c. STEEVENS.

³ — chamberers—] i. e. men of intrigue. So, in the Countess of Pembroke's *Antonius*, 1590:

“ Fal'n from a souldier to a *chamberer*.” STEEVENS.

Chambering and *wantonness* are mentioned together in the sacred writings. MALONE.

⁴ *Prerogativ'd are they less than the base:*] In asserting that the base

'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death⁵;
 Even then this⁶ forked plague is fated to us,
 When we do quicken. Desdemona comes⁷:

bafe have more prerogative in this respect than the great, that is, that the bafe or poor are less likely to endure this forked plague, our poet has maintained a doctrine contrary to that laid down in *As you like it*:—
 “Horns? even so.—*Poor men* alone? No, no; the *noblest* deer has them as huge as the *rascal*.” Here we find all mankind are placed on a level in this respect, and that it is “destiny unshunnable, like death.”

Shakspeare would have been more consistent, if he had written,

“Prerogativ’d are they *more* than the bafe?”

Othello would then have answered his own question: [*No*]; 'Tis destiny, &c. MALONE.

⁵ 'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death;] To be consistent, Othello must mean, that it is destiny unshunnable by *great ones*, not by all mankind.

MALONE.

⁶ — forked plague—] In allusion to a *barbed* or *forked* arrow, which, once infix'd, cannot be extract'd. 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 bead*,

“Misses his brows but narrowly.”

Again, in *King Lear*:

“— though the *fork* invade

“The region of my heart,—.” STEEVENS.

I have no doubt that Dr. Percy's interpretation is the true one. Let our poet speak for himself. “Quoth she,” says Pandarus, in *Troilus and Cressida*, “which of these hairs is Paris, my husband? The *forked* one, quoth he; pluck it out, and give it him.” Again, in *The Winter's Tale*:

“—— o'er head and ears a *fork'd* one.”

So, in Tarleton's *News out of Purgatorie*:—“but the old squire, knight of *the forked order*,—.”

One of Sir John Harrington's epigrams, in which our poet's very expression is found, puts the matter beyond a doubt:

“Actæon guiltless unawares espying

“Naked Diana bathing in her bowre,

“Was plagu'd with *bornes*; his dogs did him devour;

“Wherefore take heed, ye that are curious, prying,

“With some such *forked plague* you be not smitten,

“And in your foreheads see your faults be written.”

MALONE.

⁷ Desdemona comes:] Thus the quartos. The folio reads: *Look where she comes*. STEEVENS.

Enter DESDEMONA, and EMILIA.

If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself⁸!—
I'll not believe it.

Des. How now, my dear Othello?
Your dinner, and the generous islanders⁹
By you invited, do attend your presence.

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. Faith, that's with watching; 'twill away again:
Let me but bind it hard, within this hour
It will be well.

Oth. Your napkin¹ is too little;

[*He puts the handkerchief from him, and it drops.*]

Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you.

Des. I am very sorry that you are not well.

[*Exeunt DES. 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,

⁸ *If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself!*—] i. e. renders its own labours fruitless, by forming so beautiful a creature as Desdemona, and suffering the elegance of her person to be disgraced and sullied by the impurity of her mind.—Such, I think is the meaning.—The construction, however, may be different. If she be false, O, then even *heaven itself* cheats us with “unreal mockeries,” with false and specious appearances, intended only to deceive. MALONE.

⁹ — *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.

¹ *Your napkin*—] In the North of England, and in Scotland, this term for a handkerchief is still used. The word has already often occurred. See Vol. IV. p. 337, n. 7, and Vol. VII. p. 374, n. 7. MALONE.

To kifs, and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out²,
 And give it Iago:
 What he'll do with it, heaven knows, not I;
 I nothing, but to please his fantaſy³.

Enter IAGO.

Iago. How now! what do you here alone?

Emil. Do not you chide; I have a thing for you.

Iago. A thing for me?—it is a common thing.

Emil. Ha!

Iago. To have a fooliſh wife.

Emil. O, is that all? What will you give me now
 For that ſame handkerchief?

Iago. What handkerchief?

Emil. What handkerchief?

Why, that the Moor firſt gave to Deſdemona;
 That which ſo often you did bid me ſteal.

Iago. Haſt ſtole it from her?

Emil. No, faith; ſhe let it drop by negligence;

² — *I'll have the work ta'en out,*] That is, copied. Her firſt thoughts are, to have a copy made of it for her husband, and reſtore the original to Deſdemona. But the ſudden coming in of Iago, in a ſurly humour, makes her alter her reſolution, to pleaſe him. The ſame phraſe afterwards occurs between Caſſio and Bianca, in ſc. iv.

BLACKSTONE.

This ſcheme of getting the work of this valued handkerchief copied, and reſtoring the original to Deſdemona, was, I ſuppoſe, introduced by the poet, to render Emilia leſs unamiable.

It is remarkable, that when ſhe perceives Othello's fury on the loſs of this token, though ſhe is repreſented as affectionate to her miſtreſs, ſhe never attempts to relieve her from her diſtreſs; which ſhe might eaſily have done by demanding the handkerchief from her husband, or divulging the ſtory, if he reſuſed to reſtore it.—But this would not have ſerved the plot.

Shakſpeare fell into this incongruity by departing from Cinthio's novel; for there, while the artleſs Deſdemona is careſſing the child of Othello's ancient, (the Iago of our play,) the villain ſteals the handkerchief which hung at her girdle, without the knowledge of his wife.

MALONE.

³ *I nothing, but to pleaſe his fantaſy.*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads:

I nothing know but for his fantaſy. STEEVENS.

And,

And, to the advantage⁴, I, being here, took it up.
Look, here it is.

Iago. A good wench; give it me.

Emil. What will you do with it, that you have been so earnest

To have me filch it?

Iago. Why, what's that to you? [*snatching it.*]

Emil. 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 of't⁵; I have use for it.
Go, leave me. [*Exit Emil.*]

I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,
And let him find it: Trifles, light as air,
Are, to the jealous, confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ. This may do something.
The Moor already changes with my poison⁶:—
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 so⁷:

Enter

4 — to the advantage, &c.] I being *opportunely* here, took it up.

JOHNSON.

⁵ *Be not you known of't*;] Thus the quarto, except that it has *on't*, the vulgar corruption in speaking and writing, of *of't* or *of it*; as is proved by various passages in these plays as exhibited in the folio and quarto, where in one copy we find the corrupt and in the other the genuine words: and both having the same meaning. The folio reads, as Mr. Steevens has observed—Be not *acknowun* on't, i. e. do not acknowledge any thing of this matter. The reading of the quarto affords the same meaning.

The participial adjective, found in the folio, is used by Thomas Kyd, in his *Cornelia*, a tragedy, 1594:

“ Our friends' misfortune doth increase our own,

“ *Cic.* But ours of others will not be *acknowun*.” MALONE.

Again, in *The Life of Ariosto*, subjoined to Sir John Harrington's translation of *Orlando*, p. 418. edit. 1607: “ Some say, he married to her privilie, but durst not be *acknowne of it*.” PORSON.

⁶ *The Moor already, &c.*] Thus the folio. The line is not in the original copy, 1622. MALONE.

⁷ — *I did say so*:] As this passage is supposed to be obscure, I shall attempt an explanation of it.

Iago

Enter OTHELLO.

Look, where he comes! Not poppy, nor mandragora⁷,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever med'cine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ow'dst yesterday⁸.

Oth. Ha! ha! false to me? to me?

Iago. Why, how now, general? no more of that.

Oth. 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?

Oth. What sence had I of her stolen hours of lust⁹?
I saw it not, thought it not, it harm'd not me:

I slept

Iago first ruminates on the qualities of the passion which he is labouring to excite; and then proceeds to comment on its effects. *Jealousy* (says he) *with the smallest operation on the blood, flames out with all the violence of sulphur, &c.*

— I did say so;

Look where he comes!—

i. e. I knew that the least touch of such a passion would not permit the Moor to enjoy a moment of repose:—I have just said that jealousy is a restless commotion of the mind; and look where Othello approaches, to confirm the propriety and justice of my observation.

STEEVENS.

⁷ — *nor mandragora,*] The *mandragoras* or *mandrake* has a soporifick quality, and the ancients used it when they wanted an opiate of the most powerful kind. So *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act. I. sc. vi.

“ ——— give me to drink *mandragora*,

“ That I may sleep out this great gap of time

“ My Antony is away.” STEEVENS.

See Vol. VII. p. 451, n. 9. MALONE.

⁸ *Shall ever med'cine thee to that sweet sleep,*

Which thou ow'dst yesterday.] To *owe*, as Dr. Johnson has observed, signified formerly to *possess*. See Vol. IV. p. 473, n. 7.

MALONE.

⁹ *What sence 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 feele

I slept the next night well ¹, 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,

“ I feele 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 done, 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 burns 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 : when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handfaw.”—Thus, *Almabides* :—“ There is some difference betwixt my jovial condition and the lunary state of madness. I am not quite out of my wits : 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.

¹ *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.

Pioneers

Pioneers and all², 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 !
 Farewel the neighing steed³, and the shrill trump,
 The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife⁴,

The

² — if the general camp,

Pioneers and all,] That is, the most abject and vilest of the camp. Pioneers were generally degraded soldiers, appointed to the office of pioneer, as a punishment for misbehaviour.

“ A soldier ought ever to retaine and keep his arms in fastie and forth comming, for he is more to be detested than a coward, that will lose or play away any part thereof, or refuse it for his ease, or to avoid paines; wherefore such a one is to be dismissed with punishment, or to be made some *abject pioner*.” *The Art of War and Englands Traynings, &c.* by Edward Davies, Gent. 1619.

So, in *The Lawes and Ordinances of War* established by the earl of Essex, printed in 1640: “ If a trooper shall loose his horse or hackney, or a footman any part of his arms, by negligence or lewdnesse, by dice or cardes; he or they shall remain in qualitie of *pioners*, or scavengers, till they be furnished with as good as were lost, at their own charge.” GROSE.

³ Farewel the plumed troop and the big wars, —

Farewel the neighing steed, &c.] In a very ancient drama entitled *Common Conditions*, printed about 1576, Sedmond, who has lost his sister in a wood, thus expresses his grief :

“ But farewell now, my coursers brave, atraped to the ground !

“ Farewell! adue all pleasures eke, with comely hauke and hounde !

“ Farewell, ye nobles all, farewell eche martial knight,

“ Farewell, ye famous ladies all, in whom I did delight !

“ Adue, my native soile, adue, Arbaccus kyng,

“ Adue, eche wight, and martial knight, adue, eche living thyng !”

One is almost tempted to think that Shakspeare had read this old play. MALONE.

⁴ *The spirit-stirring drum, the 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 age by 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

The royal banner; and all quality,

Pride

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 of the duke of Cumberland, when they were encamped at Maeftricht, 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 *arums*. In an old English treatise written by William Garrard before 1587, and published by one captain Hichcock 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 *drommes* and *viffieurs* 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 Armorie*, printed in 1576, describing a Christmas magnificently celebrated at the Inner Temple, says, "We entered the prince his hall, where anon we heard the noise 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 bonettes." Chron. iii. 805. col. 2. There are many more instances in Holinshed, and Stowe's *Survey of London*.

From the old French word *viffieur*, above-cited, came the English word *wbiffler*, 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 *wbifflers*, their footmen, and their armourers." Eccles. Memor. iii. p. 211. This explains the use of the word in Shakspeare, where it is also literally applied. *Hen. V. Act. IV. sc. ult.*

" ——— behold, the British beach

" Pales in the flood with men, with wives and boys,

" Whose shouts and claps out-voice the deep-mouth'd sea,

" Which, like a *migbty wbiffler* 'fore the king,

" Seems to prepare his way."

By degrees, the word *wbiffler* hence acquired the metaphorical meaning, which it at present obtains in common speech, and became an application of contempt: *Wbiffler*, a light trivial character, a fellow bired to pipe at processions. T. WARTON.

Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war⁵!
 And O you mortal engines, whose rude throats⁶
 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;

[*taking him by the throat.*]

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!

In the old dramatic piece, intitl'd *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 *wbiffler*!”

Again, in *Ram-alley, or Merry Tricks*, 1611:

“ ——— he was known

“ But only for a swaggering *wbiffler*. STEEVENS.

⁵ *Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war*!] Sir *William D'Avenant* does not appear to have been scrupulous of adopting almost Shakspeare's own words. So, in *Albovine*, 1629:

“ Then *glorious war*, and all *proud circumstance*

“ That gives a soldier noise, for evermore *farewell*!”

STEEVENS.

Fletcher has parodied this passage of *Othello*, in his *Propbetess*, which was first represented in May, 1622:

“ ——— and to keep

“ My faith untainted, *farewel pride, and pomp*,

“ *And circumstance of glorious majesty*,

“ *Farewel, for ever!* MALONE.

⁶ —*whose rude throats*—] So Milton, *P. L. B. VI.*

“ 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*.

Shakspeare might have designed an opposition between *man* and *dog*.

STEEVENS.

Iago,

Iago. My noble lord,—

Oth. If thou dost slander her, and torture me,
Never pray more : abandon all remorse⁸ ;
On horreur'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 friend, since love² 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 world³,
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 : My name⁴, that was as fresh

As

⁸ — *abandon all remorse* ;] All tenderness of nature, all pity ; in which sense, as Mr. Steevens has justly observed, the word was frequently used in Shakspeare's time. See p. 565, n. 5. The next line shews it is used in this sense here. MALONE.

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 lov'st—.

STEEVENS.

² — *since love*—] So, the quarto, 1622. Folio : *sitb love*—.

MALONE.

³ *By the world, &c.*] This speech is not in the first edition.

POPE.

⁴ — *My name, &c.*] Thus the folio, where alone this speech is found. Mr. Pope and all the subsequent editors read—*Her name* : but this, like a thousand other changes introduced by the same editor, was made without either authority or necessity. Shakspeare undoubtedly might have written *Her name* ; but the word which the old copy furnishes, affords also good sense. Othello's name or reputation, accord-

ing

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?

Oth. Would ? nay, I will.

Iago. And may : But, how ? how satisfied, my lord ?
Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on ?
Behold her tupp'd ⁵?

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,
Were they as prime as goats ⁶, 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 may have it.

Oth. Give me a living reason that she's disloyal ⁷.

Iago.

ing to the usual unjust determination of the world, would be sullied by the infidelity of his wife. Besides, how could either transcriber or printer have substituted *My* for *Her*. MALONE.

⁵ *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 tupp'ing* your white ewe.” STEEVENS.

The old copies have—*topp'd*. Mr. Theobald made the correction.

MALONE.

⁶ *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.” STEEV.

⁷ *Give me a living reason that she's disloyal.*] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio omits the word *that*, probably for the sake of the metre ; but our poet often uses such words as *reason*, as a monosyllable.

A li-

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 :

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'd his leg
Over my thigh, and sigh'd, and kifs'd; and then
Cry'd,—⁸ *Cursed fate that gave thee to the Moor!*

Oth. O monstrous! monstrous!

Iago. Nay, this was but his dream.

Oth. But this denoted a foregone conclusion⁹;
'Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream¹.

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: yet we see nothing done²;

A living reason is a reason founded on fact and experience, not on surmise or conjecture: a reason that convinces the understanding as perfectly as if the fact were exhibited to the life. MALONE.

⁸ — and sigh'd, and kifs'd; and then

Cry'd,—] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads:

_____ then lay'd his leg o'er my thigh,

And sigh, and kifs, and then cry, cursed fate, &c.

The omission of the personal pronoun before *lay'd* is much in our author's manner. See Vol. VIII. p. 560, n. 8. MALONE.

⁹ — a foregone conclusion;] A conclusion in Shakspeare's time meant an experiment or trial. See Vol. VII. p. 384, n. 3. MALONE.

¹ Othel. 'Tis a shrewd doubt, &c.] The old quarto gives this line, with the two following, to Iago; and rightly. WARBURTON.

In the folio this line is given to Othello. MALONE.

I think it more naturally spoken by Othello, who, by dwelling so long upon the proof, encouraged Iago to enforce it. JOHNSON.

² — yet we see nothing done;] This is an oblique and secret mock at Othello's saying, *Give me the ocular proof.* WARBURTON

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 that was her's³,
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!
Now do I see 'tis true⁴.—Look here, Iago;
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven⁵:
'Tis gone.—

Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell⁶!

Yield

³ — that *was* her's,] The only authentick copies, the quarto, 1622, and the folio, read—or any, *it* was hers. For the emendation I am answerable. The mistake probably arose from *ye* only being written in the manuscript. The modern editors, following an amendment made by the editor of the second folio, read—if 'twas her's. MALONE.

⁴ *Now do I see 'tis true.*—] The old quarto reads,
Now do I see 'tis time.

And this is Shakspeare'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.

⁵ *All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven:*] So, in Marlowe's *Lust's Dominion*, 1657:

“Are these your fears? thus blow them into air.” MALONE.

⁶ — *from thy hollow cell!*] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads—*from the hollow bell.* *Hollow*, Dr. Warburton considers as “a poor unmeaning epithet.” MALONE.

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.

And in *Paradise Lost*, B. I. ver. 314, the same epithet and subject occur:

He

Yield up, O love, thy crown, and hearted throne⁷,
To tyrannous hate! swell, bosom, with thy fraught⁸,
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, Iago⁹. Like to the Pontick sea¹,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb², but keeps due on

To

“ He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep

“ Of bell resounded.” H. T. W.

Milton was a great reader and copier of Shakspeare, and he undoubtedly read his plays in the folio, without thinking of examining the more ancient quartos. In the first book of *Paradise Lost*, we find—

“ ————— the universal host up sent

“ A shout that tore bell's concave.” MALONE.

7 — hearted throne,] *Hearted throne*, is the heart on which thou wast enthroned. JOHNSON.

So, in *Twelfth Night*:

“ It gives a very echo to the seat,

“ Where love is thron'd.”

See also *Romeo and Juliet*, p. 154, n. 5. MALONE.

8 — swell, bosom, &c.] i. e. swell, because the fraught is of poison.
WARBURTON.

9 *Newer, Iago.*] From the word *Like* to *marble heaven*, inclusively, is not found in the quarto, 1622. MALONE.

1 — *Like to the Pontick sea, &c.*] This simile is omitted in the first edition: I think it should be so, as an unnatural excursion in this place. POPE.

Every reader will, I durst say, abide by Mr. Pope's censure on this passage. When Shakspeare 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 MSS. notes, conceives this simile to allude to Sir Phillip Sidney's device, whose imprefs, Camden, in his *Remains*, says, was the Caspian sea, with this motto, SINE REFLUXU.

STEEVENS.

2 *Ne'er feels retiring ebb,*] The folio, where alone this passage is found, reads—*Ne'er keeps retiring ebb, &c.* Many similar mistakes have

To the Propontick, 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 capable and wide revenge ³
 Swallow them up.—Now, by yond' marble heaven ⁴,
 In the due reverence of a sacred vow [kneels.
 I here engage my words.

Iago. Do not rise yet.— [kneels.

Witness, you ever-burning lights above !
 You elements that clip us round about !
 Witness, that here Iago doth give up
 'The execution ⁵ of his wit, hands, heart,
 To wrong'd Othello's service ! let him command,
 And to obey shall be in me remorse,

happened in that copy, by the compositor's repeating a word twice in the same line. So, in *Hamlet* :

" My *news* shall be the *news* [r. fruit] to that great feast."

Again, *ibidem* :

" The spirit, upon whose *spirit* depend and rest," &c.

instead of—upon whose *weal*. The correction was made by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

³ — a capable and wide revenge—] *Cap able* perhaps signifies ample, capacious. So, in *As you like it* :

" The cicatrice and *capable* impressure."

Again, in *Pierce Penniless his Supplication to the Devil*, by Nashe, 1592: " Then belike, quoth I, you make this word, *Dæmon*, a *Capable* name, of Gods, of men, and of devils."

It may however mean *judicious*. In *Hamlet* the word is often used in the sense of *intelligent*. What Othello says in another place seems to favour this latter interpretation :

" Good ; good ;—the *justice* of it pleases me." MALONE.

⁴ — by yond' marble heaven,] In *Soliman and Perseda*, 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.

⁵ *The execution*—] The first quarto reads *excellency*.

STEEVENS.

By *execution* Shakspeare meant *employment* or *exercise*. So, in *Love's Labour's Lost* :

" Full of comparisons and wounding flouts,

" Which you on all estates will *execute*."

The quarto, 1622, reads—*band*. MALONE.

What

What bloody work soever ⁶.

Oth. I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
And

⁶ — let him command,

And to obey shall be in me remorse,
[What bloody work soever.] Let him command whatever bloody
business, and in me it shall be an act, not of cruelty, but of *tendernefs*,
to obey him; not of malice to others, but of *tendernefs* 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.

The quarto, 1622, has not the words—in me. They first appeared
in the folio. Theobald reads, *Nor* to obey, &c.

Dr. Johnson's explanation of this passage is so just, that any further
comment on it appears to me unnecessary. We have so often had occa-
sion to point out the ancient usage of the word *remorse*, i. e. *pity*, that
I shall only here refer to some of the passages in which it may be
found. See Vol. II. p. 112, n. 1, and Vol. IV. p. 295, n. 2, and
p. 544, n. 1. See also p. 559, n. 8, of the play before us. About
the year 1680 the word began to be disused in this sense; for in An-
thony Wood's *Diary*, we find the following passage, *ad ann.* 1652 :
“ One of these, a most handsome virgin, arrai'd in costly and gorgeous
apparel, kneel'd down to Thomas Wood, with tears and prayers to
save her life : And, being stricken with a deep *remorse*, took her under
his arme, went with her out of the church,” &c. In his revised work,
which he appears to have finished about the year 1680, instead of the
words “ a deep *remorse*,” we find “ a profound *pitie*.” In the pro-
logue to *Town Shifis*, a comedy, printed in 1671, *remorse* is employed
in its ancient sense :

“ Why should you be such strangers to *remorse*,

“ To judge before you try ?” MALONE.

Again, in *King Edward III.* 1599, that prince speaking to the
citizens of Calais :

“ But for yourselves, look you for no *remorse*.”

I could add many more instances, but shall content myself to ob-
serve 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.

Before I saw Dr. Johnson's edition of Shakspeare, 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 signi-
fies pity, mercy, compassion, or a tendernefs of heart, unattended with
the stings of a guilty conscience. So, in *The Two Gentlemen of*
Verona, Act IV. sc. iii. the crimeless Eglamour is called *remorsefull*.
So, in *King Richard III.* Act III. sc. vii.

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.

The same.

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 ?

“ As well we know your tenderness of heart,

“ And gentle, kind, effeminate remorse.”

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.

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.

What bloody work soever.] So the quartos. The folio :

What bloody business ever. STEEVENS.

* — at your request :] Thus the quarto, 1622, reads—
 as you request. MALONE.

7 O, damn her !] Thus the quarto, 1622. Folio : O damn her,
 damn her. MALONE.

Clown.

Clown. To tell you ⁸ 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 my own throat.

Des. Can you enquire him out ? and be edify'd by report ?

Clown. I will catechize the world for him ; that is, make questions, and by them answer ⁹.

Des. Seek him, bid him come hither : tell him, I have moved 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 ¹.

[*Exit.*

Des. Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia ?

Emil. I know not, madam.

Des. Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse Full of cruzadoes ². 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.

Emil. Is he not jealous ?

⁸ *To tell you, &c.*] This and the following speech are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

⁹— and *by them answer.*] i. e. and by them, *when answered*, form my own answer to you. The quaintness of the expression is in character. Dr. Warburton for *by*, which is found both in the quarto, 1622, and the folio, reads—*bid*, “i. e. bid the world, those whom he questions.”

The modern editors, following a quarto of no authority, printed in 1630, read—and *make them answer.* MALONE.

¹ *To do this is within the compass of man's wit ; and therefore, &c.*] So, in *K. Lear* :

“ I cannot draw a cart, nor eat wild oats ;

“ *If it be man's work, I'll do it.*” MALONE.

² — *cruzadoes* :—] A Portugueze coin, in value three shillings sterling. GREY.

So called from the cross stamped upon it. JOHNSON.

Def. Who, he? I think, the sun, where he was born,
Drew all such humours from him.

Emil. Look, where he comes.

Def. I will not leave him now, till Cassio be call'd to
him³.—How is it with you, my lord?

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. Well, my good lady:—[*Aside.*] O, hardness to
dissemble!—

How do you, Desdemona?

Def. Well, my good lord.

Oth. Give me your hand: This hand is moist, my lady.

Def. It yet has felt no age, nor known no sorrow.

Oth. This argues fruitfulness, and liberal heart;—
Hot, hot, and moist⁴: This hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout⁵;
For here's a young and sweating devil here,
That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand,
A frank one.

Def. You may, indeed, say so;
For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.

³ — till *Cassio be call'd to him.*—] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads—*Let Cassio be call'd to him.* MALONE.

⁴ *Hot, hot, and moist:*] Ben Jonson seems to have attempted a ridicule on this passage, in *Every man out of his Humour*, Act.V. sc. ii. where Sogliardo says to Saviolina: “How does my sweet lady? *Hot and moist?* beautiful and lusty?” STEEVENS.

Ben Jonson was ready enough on all occasions to depreciate and ridicule our authour, but in the present instance, I believe, he must be acquitted; for *Every Man out of his Humour* was printed in 1600, and written probably in the preceding year; at which time, we are almost certain that *Othello* had not been exhibited. MALONE.

⁵ — exercise devout;] *Exercise* was the religious term. Henry the seventh (says Bacon) “had the fortune of a true *christian* as well as of a great king, in living *exercised*, and dying repentant.”

So, Lord Hastings in *K. Richard III.* says to a priest:

“I am in debt for your last *exercise.*”

See Vol. VI. p. 531, n. 1. MALONE.

Oth.

Oth. A liberal hand: The hearts, of old, gave hands;
But our new heraldry is—hands, not hearts⁶.

Des.

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 bands of old gave hearts:

Otherwise it would be no reply to the preceding words,

For 'twas that band that gave away my heart:

Not so, says her husband: *The bands of old indeed gave hearts; but the custom now is to give bands without hearts.* The expression of *new heraldry* was a satirical allusion to the times. Soon after 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 *bands* 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 used 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 dramatick 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 band 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 Shakspeare at the badge of honours instituted by a Prince whom on all other occasions he was solicitous to flatter, and at whose court this

Def. I cannot speak of this. Come now your promise.

Oth. What promise, chuck?

Def.

this very piece was acted in 1613, very strongly incline me to question the propriety of Dr. Warburton's historical explanation.

STEEVENS.

To almost every sentence of Dr. Warburton's note, an objection may be taken; but I have preserved it as a specimen of this commentator's manner.

It is not true that king James created the order of baronets soon after he came to the throne. It was created in the year 1611.—The conceit that by the word *bearts* the poet meant to allude to the gallantry of the reign of Elizabeth, in which men distinguished themselves by their *steel*, and that by *bands* those courtiers were pointed at, who served her inglorious successor only by their *gold*, is too fanciful to deserve an answer.

Thus Dr. Warburton's note stood as it appeared originally in Theobald's edition; but in his own, by way of confirmation of his notion, we are told, that "it was not uncommon for the satirical poets of that time to satirise the ignominy of James's reign;" and for this assertion we are referred to Fletcher's *Fair Maid of the Inn*. But, unluckily, it appears from the office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, a Ms. of which an account is given in Vol. I. Part II, that Fletcher's plays were generally performed at court soon after they were first exhibited at the theatre, and we may be assured that he would not venture to offend his courtly auditors. *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, indeed, never was performed before King James, being the last play but one that Fletcher wrote, and not produced till the 22d of Jan. 1625-6, after the death both of its authour and king James; but when it was written, he must, from the circumstance already mentioned, have had the court before his eyes.

In various parts of our poet's works he has alluded to the custom of plighting troth by the union of hands. So, in *Hamlet*:

"Since love our *bearts*, and *Hymen* did our *bands*

"Unite co-mutual in most sacred bands."

Again, in *The Tempest*, which was probably written at no great distance of time from the play before us:

"*Mir.* My husband then?

"*Fer.* Ay, with a heart as willing

"As bondage e'er of freedom. Here's my *band*."

"*Mir.* And mine, with my *beart* in't."

The hearts of old, says Othello, dictated the union of *bands*, which formerly were joined with the *the bearts* of the parties in *them*; but in our modern marriages, *bands* alone are united, without *bearts*. Such evidently is the plain meaning of the words. I do not, however, undertake to maintain that the poet, when he used the word *beardry*, had

Des. I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

Oth. I have a salt and sullen rheum⁷ offends me ;

Lend me thy handkerchief.

Des. Here, my lord.

Oth. That which I gave you.

Des. I have it not about me.

Oth. Not ?

Des. No, indeed, my lord.

Oth. That is a fault : That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give⁸ ;

She

had not the new order of baronets in his thoughts, without intending any satirical allusion. MALONE.

I think, with Dr. Warburton, that the new order of baronets is here again alluded to. See *Merry Wives of Windsor*, p. 221, and Spelman's Epigram there cited :

“ ————— florentis nomen honoris

“ Indicat in clypei fronte cruenta manus.

“ Non quod sævi aliquid, aut stricto fortiter ense

“ Hostibus occisis gesserit iste cohors.” BLACKSTONE.

The reader will not find the epigram alluded to by Sir William Blackstone, in the page to which he has referred ; for I have omitted that part of his note, (an omission of which I have there given notice,) because it appeared to me extremely improbable that any passage in that play should allude to an event that did not take place till 1611. The omitted words I add here, (distinguishing them by Italic characters,) as they may appear to add weight to his opinion and that of Dr. Warburton.

“ I suspect this is an oblique reflection on the prodigality of James the first in bestowing these honours, and erecting a new order of knighthood called baronets ; which few of the ancient gentry would condescend to accept. See Sir Henry Spelman's epigram on them, GLOSS. p. 76, which ends thus :

“ ————— dum cauponare recusant

“ Ex verâ geniti nobilitate viri,

“ Interea è caulis hic prorepat, ille tabernis,

“ Et modo fit dominus, qui modo servus erat.

See another stroke at them in *Othello*.” MALONE.

⁷ — salt and sullen rheum—] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio, for sullen, has sorry. MALONE.

Sullen, that is, a rheum obstinately troublesome. I think this better.

JOHNSON.

⁸ — That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give :] In the account of this tremendous handkerchief, are some particulars, which lead me to think that

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
 Entirely 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 of'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 ?

Oth. 'Tis true : there's magick in the web of it :
 A sibyl⁹, that had number'd in the world

that here is an allusion to a fact, heightened by poetical imagery. It is the practice in the eastern regions for persons of both sexes to carry handkerchiefs very curiously wrought. In the Ms. papers of Sir J. Chardin, that great oriental traveller, is a passage which fully describes the custom. " The mode of wrought handkerchiefs (says this learned inquirer) is general in Arabia, in Syria, in Palestine, and in all the Turkish empire. They are wrought with a needle, and it is the amusement of the fair sex there, as among us the making tapestry and lace. The young women make them for their fathers, their brothers, and by way of preparation before hand for their spouses ; bestowing them as favours on their lovers. They have them almost constantly in their hands, in those warm countries, to wipe off sweat." But whether this circumstance ever came to Shakspeare's knowledge and gave rise to the incident, I am not able to determine.

WHALLEY.

Shakspeare found in Cinthio's novel the incident of Desdemona's losing a handkerchief finely wrought in Morisco work, which had been presented to her by her husband, or rather of its being stolen from her by the villain who afterwards by his machinations robbed her of her life. The eastern custom of brides presenting such gifts to their husbands, certainly did not *give rise* to the incident on which this tragedy turns, though Shakspeare should seem to have been apprized of it. However, I have retained the preceding note as illustrative of the passage before us. MALONE.

⁹ *A sibyl, &c.*] This circumstance perhaps is imitated by Ben Jonson in *The Sad Shepherd* :

" A Gypfan lady, and a right beldame,

" Wrought it by moon-shine for me, and star-light," &c.

STEEVENS.

The

The sun to make ¹ two hundred compasses,
 In her prophetick fury sew'd the work :
 The worms were hallow'd, that did breed the silk ;
 And it was dy'd in mummy ², which the skilful
 Conserv'd of maidens' hearts ³.

Def. Indeed ! is it true ?

Oth. Most veritable ; therefore look to it well.

Def. Then 'would to heaven, that I had never seen it.

Oth. Ha ! wherefore ?

Def. Why do you speak so startingly and rash ⁴ ?

Oth. Is't lost ? is't gone ? speak, is it out of the way ?

Def. Heaven blefs us !

Oth. Say you ?

Def. It is not lost ; But what an if it were ?

¹ *The sun to make two hundred compasses,*] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads—to *course* two hundred compasses. I have preferred the original reading, because we have in *Hamlet*,

“ When you fame star, that's eastward from the pole,
 “ Had made his *course*, to illumine that part of heaven.”

MALONE.

— *number'd* —

The sun to course, &c.] i. e. number'd the sun's courses : badly expressed. WARBURTON.

The expression is not very infrequent : we say, *I counted the clock to strike four* ; so the *number'd* the sun to *course*, to run *two hundred compasses*, two hundred circuits. JOHNSON.

² *And it was dy'd in mummy,*] The balsamick liquor running from *mummies* was formerly celebrated for its anti-epileptick 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*

Conserves, &c. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *rash* ?] Is *vehement, violent*. JOHNSON.

Oth.

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.

Oth. Fetch me that handkerchief: my mind misgives.

Des. Come, come;

You'll never meet a more sufficient man.

Oth. The handkerchief,—

Des. I pray, talk me of Cassio⁵.

Oth. The handkerchief,—

Des. A man that, all his time,

Hath founded his good fortune on your love;

Shar'd dangers with you;—

Oth. The handkerchief,—

Des. In sooth you are to blame.

Oth. Away!

[*Exit* OTHELLO.]

Emil. 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.

Emil. 'Tis not a year or two shews us a man⁶:

They

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 vacancy 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. V. sc. ii.

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

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 impórtune 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 the duty of my heart⁷,
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,
But to know so must be my benefit⁸;

What Emilia says, is a sort of proverbial remark, of general applica-
tion, 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.

7 — *the duty 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; [*“the office of my heart,”* the reading of the
folio;] but, as fashion is a very weak protectress, the old word is now
ready to resume its place. JOHNSON.

A careful comparison of the quartos and folio inclines me to believe
that many of the variations which are found in the later copy, did
not come from the pen of Shakspeare. See p. 395, n. 9. That *duty*
was the word intended here, is highly probable from other passages
in his works. So, in his 26th *Sonnet*:

“Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage

“Thy merit has my duty strongly knit.”

Again, in his Dedication of *Lucrece*, to Lord Southampton: “Were
my worth greater, my duty would shew greater; mean time, as it is,
it is bound to your lordship.” MALONE.

⁸ *But to know so, must be my benefit;*]

“Si nequeo placidas affari Cæsaris aures,

“Saltem aliquis veniat, qui mihi, dicat, abi.” JOHNSON.

So shall I clothe me in a forc'd content,
And shut myself up in some other courſe,
To fortune's alms⁹.

Def. Alas! thrice-gentle Caſſio,
My advocacy is not now in tune;
My lord is not my lord; nor ſhould I know him,
Were he in favour¹, as in humour, alter'd.
So help me every ſpirit ſanctified,
As I have ſpoken for you all my beſt:
And ſtood within the blank of his diſpleaſure²,
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.

⁹ *And ſhut myſelf up in ſome other courſe,
To fortune's alms.*] The quarto, 1622, reads—*And ſhoot myſelf,*
&c. I think, with Mr. Steevens, that it was a corruption, and that
the reading of the folio is the true one.

Hanmer reads:

And *shoot* myſelf upon ſome other courſe,
To fortune's alms.

To fortune's alms means, waiting patiently for whatever bounty fortune or chance may beſtow upon me.

We have the ſame uncommon phraſe in *King Lear*:

“ ——— Let your ſtudy
“ Be to content your lord, who hath receiv'd you
“ *At fortune's alms.*” MALONE.

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 monaſtick life. The words, *forc'd content*, help to confirm the ſuppoſition. The meaning will 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.”

Shakſpeare uſes the ſame expreſſion in *Macbeth*:

“ ——— and *shut up*
“ In meaſureleſs content.”

Again, in *All's well that ends well*:

“ Whoſe beſeſt ſtars do *shut us up* in wiſhes.” STEEVENS.

¹ — *in favour,*] In *look*, in *countenance*. JOHNSON.

² — *within the blank of his diſpleaſure,*] Within the *spot* of his anger. JOHNSON.

Iago.

Iago. Is my lord angry?

Emil. 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 air³;
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.

Des. I pry'thee, do so.—Something, sure, of state,—
[Exit IAGO.]

Either from Venice; or some unhatch'd practice⁴,
Made démonstrable 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. 'Tis ev'n so;
For let our finger ache, and it indues
Our other healthful members ev'n to that sense
Of pain⁵: Nay, we must think, men are not gods;
Nor of them look for such observances
As fit the bridal.—Beshrew me much, Emilia,
I was (unhandsome warrior as I am⁶)
Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;

3 — *I have seen the cannon,*

When it hath blown, &c.] In Iago's speech something is suppressed. He means to say, I have seen his ranks blown into the air, and his own brother puff'd from his side,—and mean while have seen him quite cool and unruffled. And can he now be angry? MALONE.

4 — *some unhatch'd practice,*] Some treason that has not taken effect. JOHNSON.

5 — *for let our finger ache, and it indues*

*Our other healthful members, ev'n to that sense
Of pain:*] I believe it should be rather, *Subdues our other healthful members to a sense of pain.* JOHNSON.

To *indue* appears to have signified in Shakspeare's time, to *tincture* or *embrace*, and is so used here. See p. 383, n. 7.

The words—*'Tis even so,* relate to what Desdemona has just conjectured. "*This is certainly the case; some state affair has disturbed him.*" MALONE.

6 — *(unhandsome warrior as I am)*] *Unhandsome warrior, is unfair assailable.* JOHNSON.

But now I find, I had suborn'd the witness,
And he's indited falsely.

Emil. 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.

Emil. 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!

Emil. 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.

Cas. I humbly thank your ladyship.

[*Exeunt DESDEMONA, and EMILIA.*]

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. Save you, friend Cassio!

Cas. What make you from home?
How is it with you, my most fair Bianca?
I'faith, 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?
Eight score eight hours? and lovers' absent hours,
More tedious than the dial eight score times?
O weary reckoning!

Cas. Pardon me, Bianca;
I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd;
But I shall, in a more continueate time,

7 — *in a more continueate time,*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622,
has—a more convenient time. MALONE.

A more continueate time is 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. i.

“ ————— breath'd, as it were,

“ To an untirable and continueate goodness.” STEEVENS.

Strike

Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,
 [giving her Desdemona's handkerchief,
 Take me this work out⁸.

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.

Cas. 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?
Cas. 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?
Cas. 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 you?⁹
Cas. 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.

⁸ *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.

⁹ *Why, I pray you?*] This and the following speech are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

Caf. 'Tis but a little way, that I can bring you,
For I attend here : but I'll fee you foon.

Bian. 'Tis very good ; I muft be circumftanc'd¹.

[*Exeunt.*

A C T IV. S C E N E I.

The fame.

Enter OTHELLO, and IAGO.

Iago. Will you think fo ?

Oth. Think fo, Iago ?

Iago. What,

To kifs in private ?

Oth. An unauthoriz'd kifs.

Iago. Or to be naked with her friend abed,
An hour, or more, not meaning any harm ?

Oth. Naked abed, Iago, and not mean harm ?

It is hyprocrify againft the devil² :

They that mean virtuously, and yet do fo,

The

¹ — *I muft be circumftanc'd.*] i. e. your civility is now grown conditional. WARBURTON.

Particular circumftances and your own convenience have, I fee, more weight with you than Bianca has. I muft be postponed to thefe confiderations. MALONE.

² *Naked abed, Iago, and not mean harm ?*

It is hyprocrify againft the devil :] This obfervation feems ftangely abrupt and unoccationed. We muft fuppofe that Iago had, before they appear in this fcene, been applying cafes of falfe 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 Romifh faint, Robert D'Arbriffel and his nuns : To this we muft fuppofe Othello here replies ; and like a good proteftant. For fo the fentiment does but fuit the character of the fpeaker, Shakspeare little heeds how thefe fentiments are circumftanced. WARBURTON.

Hypocrify againft the devil, means, hypocrify to cheat the devil. As common hypocrites cheat men, by feeming good, and yet living wickedly, thefe men would cheat the devil, by giving him flattering hopes,

The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven³.

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 said'st,—O, it comes o'er my memory,
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all⁴,—he had my handkerchief.

Iago. Ay, what of that?

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,

hopes, and at last avoiding the crime which he thinks them ready to commit. JOHNSON.

³ *The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven.*] As the devil makes a trial of their virtue by often throwing temptation in their way, so they presumptuously make a trial whether the divine goodness will enable them to resist a temptation which they have voluntarily created for themselves, or abandon them to the government of their passions. MALONE.

Shakspeare 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 backwards with their heeles, she did lay a crucifix between them.” FARMER.

⁴ *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

“Dees shake contagion from her sable wing.” MALONE.

Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
 Convinced or supplied them⁵, 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. Faith, 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 labour⁶.—First, to be hang'd, and then to confess:—I tremble at it. Nature would not

⁵ *W^o having, by their own importunate suit,
 Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,*

Convinced or supplied them,—] Mr. Theobald for *supplied* would read *suppled*; but the emendation evidently hurts, instead of improving, the sense; for what is *suppled*, but *convinced*, i. e. subdued. *Supplied* relates to the words—"voluntary dotage," as *convinced* does to "their own importunate suit." *Having by their importunancy conquered the resistance of a mistress, or, in compliance with her own request, and in consequence of her unsolicited fondness, gratified her desires.*

MALONE.

Convinced, 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 *convinces*

"The great assay of art." STEEVENS.

⁶ — *to confess and be hang'd*—] This is a proverbial saying. It is used by Marlowe in his *Jew of Malta*, 1633:

"Blame us not, but the proverb—*Confess, and be hang'd*."

It occurs again, in *The Travels of the 3 English Brothers*, 1607: 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.

invest,

invest herself in such shadowing passion⁷, without some instruction⁸. It is not words, that shake me thus:—
Pish!

⁷ — *shadowing passion*,] The modern editions have left out *passion*. JOHNSON.

⁸ — *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 alkusion, 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." Shakspeare 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 superiour Being, which superintends the order of nature and of life. Othello says, *Nature could not invest herself in such shadowing passion without instruction. It is not words that shake 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.

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 re-

Pish!—Noses, ears, and lips⁹:—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!

Enter CASSIO.

My lord, I say! Othello!—How now, Cassio?

Cas. What's the matter?

Iago. My lord is fallen into an epilepsy;
This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.

Cas. 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.]

lieve 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.

If Othello by the words *shadowing passion* alludes to his own feelings, and not to Cassio's dream, Dr. Warburton's interpretation, if we substitute *instruction* for *induction*, (which was introduced merely to usher in the image of an eclipse) is perhaps nearly correct. *Induction*, in Shakspeare's time, meant introduction, or prelude, (as in the instance quoted from *K. Richard III.*) and at no time signified *bringing over*, as Dr. Warburton interprets it.

MALONE.

⁹ *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

Auribus, et truncas inhonesto vulnere nares. STEEVENS.

How

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's 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 lie in those unproper beds¹,
Which they dare swear peculiar; your case is better.

O, 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,
To lip a wanton in a secure couch²,
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 patient list³.

¹ — in those unproper beds,] *Unproper*, for common. WARE.
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.” STEEVENS.

² — in a secure couch,] In a couch in which he is lulled into a false
security and confidence in his wife's virtue. A Latin sense. So, in *The
Merry Wives of Windsor*: “Though Page be a *secure* fool, and stands
so firmly on his wife's frailty,” &c. See also Vol. VIII. p. 259, n. 4.
MALONE.

³ *Confine yourself but in a patient list.*] Keep your temper within the
bounds of patience. So, in *Hamlet*:

“The ocean over-peering of his *list*,

“Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,” &c. COLLINS.

Again, in *King Henry V.* Act. V. sc. ii. “—you and I cannot be
confined within the weak *list* of a country fashion.”

Again, in *King Henry IV.* P. I:

“The very *list*, the very utmost bound,

“Of all our fortunes.” STEEVENS.

Whilst

Whilſt you were here, ere while mad with your grief⁴,
 (A paſſion moſt unſuiting 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 yourſelf⁵,
 And mark the ſleers, the gibes, and notable ſcorns,
 That dwell in every region of his face⁶;
 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;
 Or I ſhall ſay, you are all in all in ſpleen⁷,
 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,

⁴ — *ere while*, mad *with your grief*;) Thus the firſt quarto.
 The folio reads:

— *o'erwhelmed* with your grief. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *encave yourſelf*;) Hide yourſelf in a private place.

JOHNSON.

⁶ *That dwell in every region of his face*;) The ſame uncommon
 expreſſion occurs again in *King Henry VIII*:

“ ——— The reſpite ſhook

“ The boſom of my conſcience——

“ ——— and made to tremble

“ The *region* of my breaſt.” MALONE.

⁷ *Or I ſhall ſay, you are all in all in ſpleen*;) I read:

Or I ſhall 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 *A Mid-ſummer-Night's Dream*:

“ That, in a *ſpleen*, unfolds both heaven and earth”,—

STEEVENS.

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;
And his unbookish jealousy⁸ must construe
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behaviour,
Quite in the wrong.—How do you now, lieutenant?

Cas. The worse, that you give me the addition,
Whose want even kills me.

Iago. Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure of't.
Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power, [*speaking lower.*]
How quickly should you speed?

Cas. Alas, poor caitiff!

Oth. Look, how he laughs already! [*Aside.*]

Iago. I never knew a woman love man so.

Cas. Alas, poor rogue! I think, i'faith, she loves me.

Oth. Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.
[*Aside.*]

Iago. Do you hear, Cassio?

Oth. Now he importunes him

To tell it o'er: Go to; well said, well said. [*Aside.*]

Iago. She gives out, that you shall marry her:

Do you intend it?

Cas. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. Do you triumph, Roman? do you triumph?⁹
[*Aside.*]

Cas. I marry her!—what? a customer¹! I prythee,

⁸ *And his unbookish jealousy—* Unbookish, for ignorant. WARB.

⁹ *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.

¹ *— 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.

bear

bear some charity to my wit; do not think it so unwholesome. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. So, so, so, so: They laugh, that win. [*Afide.*

Iago. 'Faith, the cry goes, that you shall marry her.

Caf. Pr'ythee, say true.

Iago. I am a very villain else.

Oth. Have you scored me²? Well. [*Afide.*

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.

[*Afide.*

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 hand³ she falls thus about my neck;—

² *Have you scored me?*] Have you made my reckoning? have you settled the term of my life? The old quarto reads—*scored* 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.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, we find:

“ ————— I know not

“ What *counts* harsh fortune *casts* upon my face,” &c.

But in the passage before us our poet might have been thinking of the ignominious punishment of slaves. So, in his *Rape of Lucrece*:

“ Worse than a *slavish wipe*, or birth-hour's blot.” MALONE.

3 — *by this hand*—] This is the reading of the first quarto.

STEEVENS.

Instead of which, the editor of the folio, or rather the licenser of plays, substituted—thither comes the bauble, *and* falls *me* thus, &c.

MALONE.

Oth.

Oth. Crying, O dear Cassio! as it were: his gesture imports it. [*Aside.*]

Caf. So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me; so haies, 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 another fitchew⁴! marry, a perfumed 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: where-soever you had it, I'll take out no work on't.

Caf. How now, my sweet Bianca? how now? how now?

Oth. By heaven, that should be my handkerchief! [*Aside.*]

Bian. An you'll come to supper to-night, you may: an you will not, comewhen you are next prepared for. [*Exit.*]

Iago. After her, after her.

Caf. 'Faith, I must, she'll rail in the street else.

Iago. Will you sup there?

Caf. 'Faith, 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?

⁴ — *fitchew*!—] A polecat. POPE.

Shaképeare has in another place mentioned the lust of this 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.

Iago.

Iago. Go to ; say no more. [Exit CASSIO.]

Oth. How shall I murder him, Iago ?

Iago. Did you perceive how he laugh'd at his vice ?

Oth. O, Iago !

Iago. And did you see the handkerchief ?

Oth. Was that mine ?

Iago. Yours, by this hand⁵ : and to see how he prizes the foolish woman, your wife ! she gave it him, and he hath given it his whore.

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 hand⁶. 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 condition⁷ !—

⁵ *Yours, by this hand, &c.*] This speech is not in the original quarto, 1622. MALONE.

⁶ — *No, my heart is turn'd to stone ; I strike it, and it hurts my hand.*] This thought, as often as it occurs to Shakspeare, is sure to be received, and as often counteracts his *parbos*. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act IV. sc. viii :

“ ——— 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.

* *O, she would sing the savageness out of a bear !*] So, in *Venus and Adonis* :

“ ——— when he hath sung,

“ *The tyger would be tame.*” MALONE.

⁷ *And then, of so gentle a condition !*] i. e. of so sweet a disposition. So, in *King Henry V* : “ Our tongue is rough, coz, and my condition is not smooth.” MALONE.

Iago.

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 offend⁸; 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.

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. God save you, worthy general!

Oth. With all my heart, sir⁹.

Lod. The duke and senators of Venice greet you.

Oth. I kiss the instrument of their pleasures. [*gives him a packet.*]

Des. And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico? [*opens the packet, and reads.*]

Iago. I am very glad to see you, signior;

Welcome to Cyprus.

⁸ If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend;] So, in *King Edward III.* a tragedy, 1596:

“Why then give sin a passport, to offend.” MALONE.

⁹ With all my heart, sir.] This does not relate to what *Lodovico* has just said, but is spoken by *Othello* while he salutes him.

MALONE.

Lod.

Lod. I thank you : How does lieutenant Cassio?

Iago. Lives, fir.

Def. Cousin, there's fallen between him and my lord
An unkind breach : but you shall make all well.

Oth. Are you sure of that ?

Def. 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 ?

Def. A most unhappy one ; I would do much
To atone them ¹, for the love I bear to Cassio.

Oth. Fire and brimstone !

Def. My lord ?

Oth. Are you wise ?

Def. 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.

Def. By my troth, I am glad on't.

Oth. Indeed ?

Def. My lord ?

Oth. I am glad to see you mad.

Def. How, sweet Othello ?

Oth. Devil !

Def. I have not deserv'd this.

[striking her.

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 !

If that the earth could teem with woman's tears ²,
Each

¹ — atone them,—] Make them one ; reconcile them. JOHNSON.
See Vol. VII. p. 272, n. 8. MALONE.

² *If that the earth could teem, &c.*] If women's tears could impregnate the earth. By the doctrine of equivocal generation, new animals were supposed producible by new combinations of matter. See Bacon. JOHNSON.

Shakspeare here alludes to the fabulous accounts of crocodiles. Each tear, says Othello, which falls from the false Desdemona, would generate a crocodile, the most deceitful of all animals, and whose own tears are proverbially

Each drop she falls ³ 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,
And turn again; and she can weep, sir, weep;
And she's obedient, as you say,—obedient,—
Very obedient;—Proceed you in your tears ⁴.—
Concerning this, sir,—O well-painted passion!
I am commanded home ⁵:—Get you away;

proverbially fallacious. "It is written", says Bullokar, "that he will weep over a man's head when he hath devoured the body, and then he will eat up the head too. Wherefore in Latin there is a proverb, *crocodili lacrymæ*, crocodile's tears, to signify such tears as are fained, and spent only with intent to deceive, or doe harme." *English Expofitor*, 8vo. 1616. It appears from this writer, that a dead crocodile, "but in perfect forme," of about nine feet long, had been exhibited in London, in our poet's time. MALONE.

³ *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.

⁴ — *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.

I think the old punctuation is the true one. MALONE.

⁵ *I am commanded home*:] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads, perhaps better:

I am commanded *here*—Get you away, &c.

The alteration, I suspect, was made, from the editor of the folio not perceiving that an abrupt sentence was intended. MALONE.

I'll send for you anon.—Sir, I obey the mandate,
And will return to Venice;—Hence, avaunt!—

[Exit DES.]

Cassio shall have my place⁶. And,—sir, to-night,
I do entreat that we may sup together.

You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus.—Goats and monkies⁷!

[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? whose solid virtue
The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,
Could neither graze, nor pierce⁸?

Iago.

⁶ *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.

⁷ *Goats and monkies!*] In this exclamation Shakspeare has shewn great art. *Iago*, in the first scene in which he endeavours to awaken *Othello's* 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 monkies.” 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 emphatick exclamation:—“*Iago's* words were but too true; now indeed I am convinced that they are as hot as “goats and monkies.” MALONE.

⁸ ——— whose solid virtue

The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,

Could neither graze nor pierce?] For *graze*, Dr. Warburton arbitrarily substituted *rase*; and Mr. Theobald, because “he could not for his heart see the difference between shot of *accident* and dart of *chance*,” instead of the latter word reads, *change*. I do not see the least ground for supposing any corruption in this passage. As *pierce* relates to the dart of *chance*, so *graze* is referred to the shot of *accident*. The expression is still used; we still say—he was grazed by a bullet.

MALONE.

To *graze* is not merely to touch superficially, [as Dr. Warburton has stated,] but to strike not directly, not so as to bury the body of of the thing striking in the matter struck.

Theobald trifles, as usual. *Accident* and *chance* may admit a subtle distinction; *accident* may be considered as the act, and *chance*

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,
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.

A Room in the Castle.*

Enter OTHELLO and EMILIA.

Oth. You have seen nothing then?

Emil. Nor ever heard; nor ever did suspect.

Oth.

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.

* *A Room in the Castle.*] There are great difficulties in ascertaining the place of this scene. Near the close of it, Iago says to Desdemona, "Go in, and weep not," which would lead us to place it in the court before Othello's castle. These words may indeed be explained to mean, "Go into the supper-room" (though I do not think that the meaning): but immediately afterwards Roderigo enters, and converses with Iago, which decisively ascertains the scene not to be in Othello's house: for Roderigo, who had given the first intelligence to Brabantio, of his daughter's flight, and had shortly afterwards drawn his sword on Othello and his partisans, certainly would not take the liberty of walking into his house at pleasure.

Oth. Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.

Emil. But then I saw no harm; and then I heard
Each syllable, that breath made up between them.

Oth. What, did they never whisper?

Emil. Never, my lord.

Oth. Nor send you out o' the way?

Emil. Never.

Oth. To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor
nothing?

Emil. Never, my lord.

Oth. That's strange.

Emil. 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 wives⁹
Is foul as slander.

Oth. Bid her come hither;—go.— [Exit Emilia.
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 EMILIA, with DESDEMONA.

Des. My lord, what is your will?

Oth. Pray, chuck, come hither.

On the other hand, what Othello says early in the scene to Emilia,
“Leave procreants alone, and shut the door;”
and his subsequent address to her as he goes out, as decisively point
out a room in Othello's castle as the place of the scene; and compel
us to place the several interlocutors there, however inconsistent with
Roderigo's entry, and Iago's address to Desdemona.

The truth is, that our poet and his audience, in this instance as in
many other, were content, from want of scenery, to consider the
very same spot, at one and the same time, as the outside and inside
of a house. See Vol. VII. p. 122, n. 7, and *The Historical Account
of the English Stage, &c.* Vol. I. Part II. p. 74. MALONE.

⁹ — of their wives—] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads—
of her sex. MALONE.

Des.

Des. What is your pleasure ?

Oth. Let me see your eyes ;

Look in my face.

Des. What horrible fancy's this ?

Oth. Some of your function, mistress ; [to Emil.

Leave procreants alone, and shut the door ;

Cough, or cry—hem, if any body come :

Your mystery, your mystery ;—nay, dispatch.

[Exit EMILIA.

Des. Upon my knees, what doth your speech import ?

I understand a fury in your words,

But not the words¹.

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 ?

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 kinds of fores, 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 part of my soul

A drop of patience : but (alas !) to make me

¹ But not the words.] This line is added out of the first edition.

A fixed figure, for the time of scorn²
 To point his slow unmoving finger at,—
 O! O!

Yet could I bear that too; well, very well:

But

² — *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 *Soliman 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 Shakspeare 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*?”

However, in support of the reading of the old copies, it may be observed, that our authour 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* may likewise derive some support from Shakspeare's 104th Sonnet, in which this very thought is expressed:

“ Ah! yet doth beauty, like a *dial-band*,

“ *Steal from his figure*, and no *pace* perceiv'd;

“ So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,

“ Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceiv'd.”

In the clocks of the last age there was, I think, in the middle of the dial-plate a figure of time, which, I believe, was in our poet's thoughts, when he wrote the passage in the text.

The

But there, where I have garner'd up my heart³ ;
 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 !—turn thy complexion there⁴ !
 Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin ;
 Ay, there, look grim as hell !

Des. 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 weed⁵,

Who

The *finger* of the dial was the technical phrase. So, in *Albovine King of the Lombards*, by D'Avenant, 1629 :

“ Even as the *slow finger of the dial*

“ Doth in its *motion circular remove*

“ To distant figures,—.”

D'Avenant was a great reader of Shakspeare, and probably had read his plays, according to the fashion of the time, in the folio, without troubling himself to look into the quarto copies.

Unmoving is the reading of the quarto, 1622. The folio reads—*and moving* ; and this certainly agrees with the image presented and its counterpart, better than *unmoving*, which can be applied to a clock, only by licence of poetry, (*not appearing to move*,) and as applied to *scorn*, has but little force : to say nothing of the superfluous epithet *slow* ; for there needs no ghost to tell us, that that which is *unmoving* is *slow*. *Slow* implies some sort of motion, however little it may be, and therefore appears to me to favour the reading of the folio.

I have given the arguments on both sides, and, from respect to the opinion of others, have printed *unmoving*, though I am very doubtful whether it was the word intended by Shakspeare. The quarto, 1622, has—*fingers* ; the folio—*finger*. MALONE.

³ — *garner'd up my heart* ;] That is, *treasured up* ; the *garner* and the *fountain* are improperly conjoined. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *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 bell*. The old editions and the new have it,

I bere look grim as bell.

I was written for *ay*, and not since corrected. JOHNSON.

Here in the old copies was manifestly an error of the press. See the line next but one above. Mr. Theobald made the correction. 1

MALONE.

⁵ — *O thou weed*,] Dr. Johnson has, on this occasion, been unjustly censured for having stifled 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'ft so sweet,
That the sense aches at thee,—'Would, thou had'ft
ne'er been born!

Def. Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed?

Oth. Was this fair paper⁶, this most goodly book,
Made to write whore upon? What committed!
Committed⁷!—O thou public commoner!
I should make very forges of my cheeks,
That would to cinders burn up modesty,
Did I but speak thy deeds.—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!

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.

The quarto, 1622, reads:

“O thou *black* weed, *why* art so lovely fair?

“*Thou* smell'ft so sweet, that the sense aches at thee,” &c.

MALONE.

⁶ Was this fair paper, &c.] Massinger 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.

⁷ Committed!] This, and the three following lines, are omitted in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

This word in Shakspeare's time, beside 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 Thomas Overbury's CHARACTERS, (*A Very Woman*) 1614: “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*, P. I.

“———— if all *committers* stood in a rank,

“They'd make a lane, in which your shame might dwell.”

MALONE.

* *The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets,*] So, in *The Merchant of Venice*:

“Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind.” MALONE.

Def.

Des. By heaven, you do me wrong.

Oth. Are not you a strumpet?

Des. No, as I am a christian:

If to preserve this vessel for my lord⁸,
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,

Re-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. Why, with my lord, madam?

Des. Who is thy lord¹?

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
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets,—remember;—
And call thy husband hither.

Emil. Here is a change indeed! [*Exit.*

⁸ *If to preserve this vessel for my lord,*] This expression, as well as many others, our authour has borrowed from the sacred writings: “—to possess his vessel in sanctification.”—I Thess. iv. 4. MALONE.
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.

Des.

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 abuse²?

Re-enter EMILIA, *with* IAGO.

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?

Emil. 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.

Emil. He call'd her, whore; a beggar, in his drink,
Could not have laid such terms upon his callet³.

Iago. Why did he so?

² —on my great'st abuse?] This is the reading of the quarto, 1622, which Dr. Johnson thought preferable to the reading of the folio—*on my least misuse.* MALONE.

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 *Magnetick Lady*:

“The wearing the *callot*, the politic hood.”

The word is likewise found in *Cocke Lorettes Bote*, a satyre, bl. l. printed by Wynkyn de Worde; no date:

“Yf he call her *calar*, she calleth hym knave agayne.”

STEEVENS.

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.

I meet this word in *The Translation of Ariosto*, 1591:

“And thus this old ill-favour'd spiteful *callet*—.”

Harrington, in a note on that line, says that “*callet* is a nickname used to a woman,” and that “in Irish it signifies a *witch*.”

I have no faith in Dr. Grey's etymology of this word, *Calote* is a eois or light cap, worn by others beside country girls. MALONE.

Des.

Des. I do not know; I am sure, I am none such.

Iago. Do not weep, do not weep; Alas, the day!

Emil. Has 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.

Emil. I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some cogging cozening slave, to get some office,
Have 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!

Emil. 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 likelihood?
The Moor's abus'd by some most villainous knave⁴,
Some base notorious⁵ knave, some scurvy fellow:—
O, heaven, that such companions⁶ thou'dst unfold;
And put in every honest hand a whip,
To lash the rascal⁷ naked through the world,
Even from the east to the west!

Iago. Speak within door⁸.

⁴ —*some most villainous knave,*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads—*some outrageous knave.* MALONE.

⁵ —*notorious* —] For *gross*, not in its proper meaning for *known*.

JOHNSON.

⁶ —*such companions* —.] *Companion*, in the time of Shakspeare, 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.

⁷ —*the rascal* —] Thus the quarto, 1622; folio—*rascals*. Emilia first wishes that all base fellows were detected, and then that heaven would put a whip in every honest hand to punish in a signal manner that villainous knave, particularly in her thoughts, who had abused the too credulous Moor. MALONE.

⁸ *Speak within door.*] Do not clamour so as to be heard beyond the house. JOHNSON.

Emil.

Emil. O, fie upon him ! some such squire he was,
That turn'd your wit the seamy side without²,
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 kneel¹ :—
If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
Either in discourse of thought², 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 chide with you³.

Des. If 'twere no other,—

Iago. It is but so, I warrant you.

[*Trumpets.*

² — *the seamy side without :*] That is, *inside out.* JOHNSON.

¹ *Here I kneel, &c.*] These words, and the following lines of this speech, are omitted in the quarto, 1622. MALONE.

² *Either in discourse of thought, or actual deed ;*] Thus the old copies. So, in *Hamlet* :

“ O heaven ! a beast, that wants *discourse of reason*,
“ Would have mourn'd longer.”

The modern editors, following Mr. Pope, read—*discourse, or thought.*
MALONE.

³ *And he does chide with you.*] This line is from the quarto, 1622.
STEEVENS.

To *chide with* was the phraseology of the time. We have, I think, the same phrase in one of our poet's *Sonnets.* MALONE.

Hark,

Hark, how these instruments summon to supper!
And the great messengers of Venice stay⁴:
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't me with some device, Iago; and rather (as it seems to me now) keep't 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 suffer'd.

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 has received them, and return'd me expectations and comforts of sudden respect and acquittance⁵; 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 my-

⁴ *And the great messengers of Venice stay:]* Thus the quarto. The folio reads:

The messengers of Venice stay the meat. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *and acquittance;*] This is the reading of the original quarto, 1622. The folio reads—*and acquaintance.*

Acquittance is requital. So, in *K. Henry V.*

“ And shall forget the office of our hand

“ Sooner than 'quittance of desert and merit.”

See also *Hamlet*, p. 405, n. 6. MALONE.

self known to Desdemona: If she will return me 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 judgment⁶. 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 commission⁷ 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 takes 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?

⁶ — *your suspicion is not without wit and judgment.*] Shakspeare knew well, that most men like to be flattered on account of those endowments in which they are most deficient. Hence Iago's compliment to this *snipe* on his sagacity and shrewdness. MALONE.

⁷ — *there is especial commission* —] Shakspeare probably wrote—*a special*. MALONE.

Iago.

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 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 amazed 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^s : about it.

Rod. I will hear further reason for this.

Iago. And you shall be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III.

Another 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.

^s — *and the night grows to waste :*] I suppose Iago means to say, that it is near midnight. Perhaps we ought to print *waisf*. Both the old copies, the quarto, 1622, and the folio, 1623, read—*wast*, which was the old spelling of *waisf*. So *Hamlet* :

“ In the dead *wast* [*waisf*] and middle of the night.”

See the note on that passage, p. 208, n. 2.

So also, in *The Puritan*, a comedy, 1607 :

“ _____ ere the day

“ Be spent to the girdle, thou shalt be free.”

The words, however, may only mean—*the night is wasting away.*

MALONE.

Oth.

Oth. Will you walk, fir?—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.

Des. I will, my lord. [*Exeunt OTH. LOD. and Attend.*]

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. Dismiss me!

Des. It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia, Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu: We must not now displease him.

Emil. 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.

Emil. I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.

Des. All's one:—Good father^o! how foolish are our minds!—

If I do die before thee, pr'ythee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.

Emil. Come, come, you talk.

Des. My mother had a maid, call'd—Barbara;
She was in love; and he, she lov'd, prov'd mad,
And did forsake her¹: she had a song of willow,

^o — *Good father!*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1622, reads—*all's one, good faith.* MALONE.

¹ — *and he, she lov'd, prov'd mad, And did forsake her:*] 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.

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; I have much to do,
 But to go hang my head² all at one side,
 And sing it like poor Barbara. Pr'ythee, dispatch.

Emil. Shall I go fetch your night-gown?

Des. No, unpin me here.—

This Lodovico is a proper man.

Emil. A very handsome man.

Des. He speaks well.

Emil. I know a lady in Venice, would have walk'd
 barefoot to Palestine, for a touch of his nether lip.

Des. *The poor soul³ sat sighing⁴ by a sycamore tree,
 Sing all a green willow; [singing.
 Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
 Sing willow, willow, willow:*

² — I have much to do,

*But to go hang my head—] I have much ado to do any thing but
 hang my head. We might read:*

Not to go hang 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 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.

These words, and all that follows, to *Nay that's not next*, inclusively, are not in the original quarto, 1622; and appeared first in the folio. The remaining lines of the song also appeared first in that copy.

MALONE.

³ *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.

⁴ — *sat sighing —] The folio reads—singing.* The passage, as has been already observed, is not in the original copy printed in 1622. The reading of the text is taken from a quarto of no authority printed in 1630. *Sighing*, as Mr. Steevens has observed, is also the reading in the black-letter copy of this ballad in the Pepys Collection, which Dr. Percy followed. See the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. I. 192.

MALONE.

*The fresh streams⁵ ran by her, and murmur'd her means;
Sing willow, &c.*

*Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the stones;
Lay by these:*

Sing willow, willow, willow;

Pr'ythee, hie thee; he'll come anon.—

Sing all a green willow must be my garland.

2.

*Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve⁶,—
Nay, that's not next.—Hark! who is it that knocks?*

Emil. It is the wind.

*Des. I call'd my love, false love⁷; but what said he
then?*

Sing willow, &c.

If I court no women, you'll couch with no men⁸.

*So, get thee gone; good night. Mine eyes do itch;
Doth that bode weeping?*

Emil. 'Tis neither here nor there.

⁵ *The fresh streams, &c.*] These lines are formed with some additions from two couplets of the original song:

“*The cold streams ran by him, his eyes wept apace;*

“*O willow, &c.*

“*The salt tears fell from him, which drowned his face;*

“*O willow, &c.*

“*The mute birds fate by him, made tame by his moans;*

“*O willow, &c.*

“*The salt tears fell from him, which soften'd the stones.*”

⁶ *Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve,*] In the original:

“*Let nobody blame me, her scorn I do prove,*

“*O willow, &c.*

“*She was born to be fair; I to die for her love.*” MALONE.

⁷ *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.

⁸ —*you'll couch with no men.*] This verb is found also in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, 1634:

“*——— O, if thou couch*

“*But one night with her,—.*” MALONE.

Des.

THE MOOR OF VENICE. 611

Des. I have heard it said so⁹.—O, these men, these men!—

Dost thou in conscience think,—tell me, Emilia,—
That there be women do abuse their husbands
In such gross kind?

Emil. There be some such, no question.

Des. Would'st thou do such a deed for all the world?

Emil. Why, would not you?

Des. No, by this heavenly light!

Emil. Nor I neither, by this heavenly light;
I might do't as well i' the dark.

Des. Would'st thou do such a deed for all the world?

Emil. The world is a huge thing: 'Tis a great price
For a small vice.

Des. Good troth, I think thou would'st not.

Emil. By my 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 the whole world,—Why, who would not make her
husband a cuckold, to make him a monarch? I should
venture purgatory for't.

Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong
For the whole world.

Emil. 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.

Emil. 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 husbands' faults,
If wives do fall: Say, that they slack their duties,
And pour our treasures into foreign laps*;

⁹ *I have heard it said so.*] This, as well as the following speech, is omitted in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

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.

* *And pour our treasures into foreign laps;*] So, in one of our author's poems:

“ Robb'd other beds' revenues of their rents.” MALONE.

Or else break out in peevish jealousies,
 Throwing restraint upon us; or, say, they strike us,
 Or scant our former having³ 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 them⁴: 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 so⁵.

Des. Good night, good night: Heaven me such usage
 send⁶,
 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:

³ — *our former having*—] Our former allowance of expence.

JOHNSON.

⁴ — *have sense like them*:] *Sense* is used here, as in *Hamlet*, for *sensation* or *sensual appetite*. See p. 336. n. 2. MALONE.

⁵ — *instruct us so*.] This passage, as has been already observed, is not in the quarto, 1622. The reading of the text is that of the folio, 1623. The modern editors, following an alteration made by the editor of the second folio, read—*instruct us so*. Our poet, for the sake of rhyme, often uses an uncommon phraseology; I have therefore adhered to the authentick copy. MALONE.

⁶ — *heaven me such usage send*.] *Such uses* 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.
 Wear

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. [retires to a little distance.

Rod. I have no great devotion to the deed ;
And yet he has given me satisfying reasons :—
'Tis but a man gone :—forth, my sword ; he dies.

[goes to his stand.

Iago. I have rubb'd this young quat almost to the sense,
And he grows angry⁷. Now, whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain⁸ : Live Roderigo,
He calls me to a restitution large
Of gold, and jewels, that I bobb'd from him⁹,

⁷ I have 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 *gud-
geon* can be *rubbed* to much *sense*, but that a man grossly 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* ! inconti-
nence is plagued in all creatures in the world."

Again, in Decker's *Gul's Hornbook*, 1609 : "—whether he be a
yong quat of the first yeeres revennew, or some austere and fullen-faced
Reward," &c.

Such another thought occurs in Ben Jonson's *Catiline* :

" ——— must have their disgraces still new *rubbed*,

" To make them smart," &c. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *my gain* :] The quartos read—*my game*. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *that I bobb'd from him*,] That I *fool'd* him out of. A *bob*
formerly signified a mock, or jeer. Coles renders it in his Dictionary,
‡679, by *fanna*, as he does *bobb'd* by *illusus*. MALONE.

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.

[*rushes from his post, and makes a pass at Cassio.*

Cas. That thrust had been mine enemy indeed,
 But that my coat is better than thou think'st ;
 I will make proof of thine.

Rod. O, I am slain ! [draws, and wounds Roderigo. *[falls.*

[*Iago rushes from his post, cuts Cassio behind in the leg¹, and exit.*

Cas. I am maim'd for ever :—Help, ho ! murder !
 murder ! *[falls.*

Enter OTHELLO, at a distance.

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 apace² :—Strumpet, I come :
 Forth of my heart³ those charms, thine eyes, are blotted ;
 Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be spotted.

[*Exit OTHELLO.*

Enter

¹ — *in the leg,*] Iago maims Cassio in the leg, in consequence of what he has just heard him say, from which he supposed that his body was defended by some secret armour. MALONE.

² *And your fate hies apace :*] Thus the first quarto. The second quarto and the folio read—*And your unblest fate hies.* STEEVENS.

³ *Forth of my heart, &c.*] Thus the first quarto. The folio reads, *For off :* perhaps the true reading is, *For off, &c.* STEEVENS.

For

Enter LODOVICO, and GRATIANO, at a distance.

Caf. What, ho! no watch? no passage⁴? murder!
murder!

Gra. 'Tis some mischance; the cry is very direful.

Caf. O, help!

Lod. Hark!

Rod. O wretched villain!

Lod. Two or three groans;—it is a heavy night⁵:
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 on
murder⁶?

Lod.

For off is the conjectural reading introduced by the editor of the second folio, and is one of a thousand proofs of capricious alterations made in that copy, without any regard to the most ancient editions. The original reading is undoubtedly the true one. So, in *Mount Tabor, or Private Exercises of a penitent Sinner*, 1639: "— whilst all this was acting, there came *forth* of another door at the farthest end of the stage, two old men," &c.

Again, as Mr. Henley has observed, in *K. Richard III.*

"—— I cloath my naked villainy

"With old odd ends, stolen *forth* of holy writ."

Again, *ibidem*:

"Faith, none, but Humphrey Hour, that call'd your grace

"To breakfast once, *forth* of my company." MALONE.

4 — *no passage?*—] No passenger? nobody going by? JOHNSON.

So, in the *Comedy of Errors*:

"Now in the stirring *passage* of the day." STEEVENS.

5 — *a heavy night*:] A thick cloudy night, in which an ambuſſa may be commodiously laid. JOHNSON.

So, in *Measure for Measure*:

"Upon the *heavy* middle of the night." STEEVENS.

6 — *whose noise is this, that cries on murder?*] Thus the quarto, 1622, and the folio, 1623; and such was the phraseology of Shakespeare's age. So, in *Eastward Ho*, a comedy, 1605:

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 Rod.*]

Rod. O damn'd Iago! O inhuman dog!—O! O! O!

Iago. Kill men i' the dark!—Where be these bloody thieves?—

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?

Caf. My leg is cut in two.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid!—

Light, gentlemen;—I'll bind it with my shirt.

“Who cries on murder? lady, was it you?”

That line is a parody on one in *The Spanish Tragedy*.—The editor of the second folio, who altered whatever he did not understand, for *cries on* substituted *cries out*, and has been followed by all the modern editors. MALONE.

Enter

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 garter⁷; 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 countryman,

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?

⁷ Lend me a garter, &c.] This speech is omitted in the first quarto.
STEEVENS.

* To be a party in this injury.] Thus the folio. The quarto,
1622, reads—to bear a part in this. MALONE.

Caf. None in the world; nor do I know the man.

Iago. [*to Bianca.*] What, look you pale?—O, bear him
out o' the air.— [*Cassio and Rod. are borne off.*

Stay you, good gentlewoman⁸:—look you pale, mis-
tress?—

Do you perceive the gawtness⁹ of her eye?—

Nay, if you stare¹, 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 matter,
husband?

Iago. Cassio hath here been set on in the dark,
By Roderigo, and fellows that are scap'd;
He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

Emil. Alas, good gentleman! alas, good Cassio!

Iago. This is the fruit of whoring.—Pr'ythee, Emilia,
Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night²:—

⁸ — *good gentlewoman:*] Thus the quarto, 1622. The folio reads
—*gentlemen.* That the original is the true reading, may be collected
from the situation and feelings of the parties on the scene. No reason
can be assigned why *Lodovico* and *Gratiano* should immediately quit
the spot where they now are, before they had heard from *Iago* further
particulars of the attack on Cassio, merely because Cassio was borne
off: whereas, on the other hand, his mistress, Bianca, who has been
officially offering him assistance, would naturally endeavour to ac-
company him to his lodgings. MALONE.

⁹ — *the gawtness—*] So the folio. The quartos read, *jestures.* STEEV.

¹ *Nay, if you stare,*] So the folio. The quartos read, *stirre.*

STEEVENS.

² — *Pr'ythee, Emilia,*

Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to night:] In the last scene of
the preceding act *Iago* informs *Roderigo*, that Cassio was to sup with
Bianca; that he would accompany Cassio to her house, and would
take care to bring him away from thence between twelve and one.
Cassio too had himself informed *Iago*, in Act IV. sc. i. that he would
sup with Bianca, and *Iago* had promised to meet him at her house.
Perhaps, however, here *Iago* chose to appear ignorant of this fact,
conscious that he had way-laid Cassio, and therefore desirous of being
thought ignorant of his motions during the evening. MALONE.

What,

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.

Emil. Fie, fie upon thee, strumpet!

Bian. I am no strumpet; but of life as honest, As you that thus abuse me.

Emil. 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.—

Emilia, run you to the citadel, And tell my lord and lady what has happ'd.—

Will you go on, I pray?—This is the night, [Aside.
That either makes me, or fordoes³ me quite. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

A Bed-chamber: DESDEMONA in bed, asleep. A light burning.

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,— Let me not name it⁴ to you, you chaste stars!—

It

³ — or fordoes me quite.] To *for*do is to undo, to ruin, to destroy. STEEVENS.

See p. 244, n. 6. MALONE.

⁴ *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 (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.

Shakspeare seems to have had the following verse in the fifth chapter of Jeremiah in view: “They overpass the deeds of the wicked; they judge not *the cause, the cause* of the fatherless;—shall not my soul

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 men⁵.
Put out the light, and then put out the light⁶:
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,

I can

soul be avenged on such as this?" In imitation of this the poet meant, if his interrupted expressions were completed, to say, "It is the cause, the cause of *virtue and chastity*, which I am going to maintain: my soul, *this is the offence thou hast to avenge*: but let me not name the offence to you, ye chaste stars; it is the cause of *chastity*, and she must die, else she'll betray more men. *Justice demands it from me.*

ANONYMUS.

5 *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.

6 *Put out the light, and then put out the light:*] This is one of the passages to which I alluded in a note on *As you like it*, Vol. III. p. 233, n. 5; in which by a modern regulation our poet's words have obtained a meaning, which in my opinion was not in his thoughts. Mr. Upton was the first person who introduced the conceit in this line, which has been adopted since his book appeared, by pointing it thus:

Put out the light, and then—Put out the light! &c.

His explanation is as follows. "*I'll put out the light, and then—*strangle her, he was going to say; but this recalls a thousand tender thoughts to his troubled soul: he stops short; *If I quench the taper, how easy is it to restore its former light*; but O Desdemona, if I once put out thy light," &c.

On this Dr. Warburton grounded the following note:

"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."

I entirely agree with Dr. Farmer, that this regulation gives a spirit to this passage that was not intended. The poet, I think, meant merely to say,—"*I will now put out the lighted taper which I hold, and then put out the light of life*;" and this introduces his subsequent reflection and comparison, just as aptly, as supposing the latter words of the line to be used in the same sense as in the beginning of it, which cannot be done without destroying that equivoque and play of words of which Shakspeare was so fond.

There

I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me :—but once put out thy light⁶,

There are few images which occur more frequently in his works than this. Thus, in *K. Henry VI.* P. III. the dying Clifford says,

“ Here burns my candle out, ay, here it dies.”

Again, in *Macbeth* :

“ Out, out, brief candle !”

Again, in *K. Henry VIII.* :

“ This candle burns not clear ; ’tis I must snuff it ;

“ Then out it goes.”

Again, in his *Rape of Lucrece* :

“ Fair torch, burn out *thy light*, and lend it not

“ To darken her, whose *light* excelleth thine !”

Let the words—*put out her light*, stand for a moment in the place of—*darken her*, and then the sentence will run—*Burn out thy light, fair torch, and lend it not to put out her light, whose light is more excellent than thine*. In the very same strain, says Othello, “ let me first extinguish the light I now hold, and then put out the light of life. But how different in effect and importance are these two acts ! The extinguished taper can be lighted again, but the light of life, when once extinguished, can never, alas, be relumined.”

The question is not, which regulation renders the passage most elegant and spirited, but what was the poet’s idea.—I believe, however, that Shakspeare wrote—and then put out *thy light* ; and the reading of the original copy in a subsequent line, “ — but once put out *thine*,” seems to me to countenance this emendation.

In *The Merchant of Venice* the word *light* is used with equal ambiguity :

“ Let me give *light*, but let me not be *light*.” MALONE.

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.

Again, in an unpublished play, called *The Second Maidens Tragedy*, by George Chapman, licensed by Sir George Buc, October 31st, 1611, (now in the library of the Marquis of Lansdown, who honoured me with the use of it) :

“ ——— O soul of cunning,

“ Came that arch subtilty from thy lady’s counsel,

“ Or thine own sudden craft ? confess to me

“ How oft thou hast been a bawd to their close actions,

“ Or all thy light goes out.” STEEVENS.

⁶ — put out thy light,] Thus the folio. The quarto reads—put out thine. STEEVENS.

Thou

Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature⁷,
 I know not where is that Promethean heat,
 That can thy light relume⁸. When I have pluck'd thy
 rose⁹,

I cannot give it vital growth again,
 It needs must wither:—I'll smell it on the tree.—

[*kissing her.*]

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: This sorrow's heavenly¹
 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,

⁷ *Tbcu cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,*] So, in *Palmerin D'Oli-
 wa*, 1588, P. I. “—those that beheld her, esteemed her for the
 chiefest piece of workmanship that ever Nature framed.” REED.

⁸ *That can thy light relume.*] Thus the folio. The quarto 1622,
 for *relume* has—*return*. The modern editors, following the quarto print-
 ed in 1630, read—*relumine*.

Our poet has *illumine*, for *illuminate*, in *Hamlet*:

“Had made his course, to *illumine* that part of heaven,

“Where now it burns.” MALONE.

⁹ —*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.

¹ —*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
 Shakspeare 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 fabu-
 lous history of the crocodile, the second from a passage in the scripture.

STEEVENS.

“Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth.” MASON.

Unreconcil'd

Unreconcil'd as yet to heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.

Des. Alas, my lord, what may you mean by that?

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 soul².

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. Humph!

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 loving³.

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;

² *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.

³ *That death's unnatural, that kills for loving.*] This thought is likewise found in *The Legend of Orpheus and Eurydice*, a poem, by H. L. 16mo. 1597:

“ Unnatural, which kill where you should kisse.”

Again, in our poet's *K. Richard III.*

“ It is a quarrel most unnatural,

“ To be reveng'd on him that loveth thee.” MALONE.

Send

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.

Oth. Yes, presently:

Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;

For to deny each article with oath,

Cannot remove, nor choke, the strong conception

That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

Des. Then, Lord 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 sacrifice⁴:

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 thee⁵.

⁴ *A murder, which I thought a sacrifice:]* This line is difficult. *Thou hast harden'd my heart, and makest me kill thee with the rage of a murderer, when I thought to have sacrific'd 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 dismiss 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 revision of this dreadful scene. It is not to be endured. JOHNSON.

Thy heart, is the reading of the original quarto, 1622. MALONE.

⁵ *That he hath—us'd thee.]* The quarto, 1622, exhibits this line thus:

That he hath—~~us'd thee~~. MALONE.

Des. How? unlawfully?

Oth. Ay.

Des. He will not say so.

Oth. No, his mouth is stopp'd;

Honest Iago hath ta'en order for't⁶.

Des. My fear interprets then,—What, is he dead?

Oth. Had all his hairs been lives⁷, my great revenge

Had stomach for them all.

Des. Alas! he is betray'd, and I undone.

Oth. Out, strumpet! Weep'st 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 done,

There is no pause⁸.

Des. But while I say one prayer.

Oth. It is too late⁹.

[*He smother's her.*

Emil.

⁶ — *batb* 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.

Again, in *Dido Queen of Carthage*, by Marlowe and Nashe, 1594:

“ I will take order for that presently.” MALONE.

⁷ *Had all bis hairs been lives,*—] This thought appears to have been very common, as it occurs frequently in dramatic performances prior to Shakspeare'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.

King and no King, as appears from Sir Henry Herbert's papers, was produced in 1611. See Vol. I. P. II. *Historical Account of the English Stage*. MALONE.

⁸ *Being done*,

There is no pause.] The first quarto omits this speech.

STEEVENS.

⁹ *It is too late.*] After this speech of Othello, the elder quarto adds an invocation from Desdemona, consisting only of the sacred name thrice repeated. As this must be supposed to have been uttered while

Emil. [*within.*] My lord, my lord! what ho! my lord,
my lord!

Oth. 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.

Emil. [*within.*] What ho! my lord, my lord!

Oth. Who's there?

Emil. [*within.*] O, good my lord, I would speak a word
with you.

Oth. Yes;—'tis Emilia:—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 wife¹:
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.

Emil. [*within.*] I do beseech you I may speak with you,
O, good my lord!

Oth. I had forgot thee: O, come in, Emilia:—
Soft,—by and by:—Let me the curtains draw.—

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 in consequence of the statute of
the 3d 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.
The statute was necessary; for not only the ancient moralities, but
the plays (those of *Chapman* in particular) abound with the most wan-
ton and shocking repetitions of a name which never ought to be men-
tioned in such an irreverend manner on the stage. STEEVENS.

The alteration was undoubtedly made by the Master of the Revels.

MALONE.
¹ *My wife! my wife! what wife?—I have no wife:*] “*Filium
unicum adolescentulum habeo: ah! quid dixi habere me? imo habui,
Chreme.*” *Ter. Heautont.* STEEVENS.

Where

Where art thou? What's the matter with thee now?

[unlocks the door.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. O, my good lord, yonder's foul murder done.

Oth. What? now?

Emil. 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.

Emil. Cassio, my lord, has kill'd a young Venetian,
Call'd—Roderigo.

Oth. Roderigo kill'd!

And Cassio kill'd?

Emil. No, Cassio is not kill'd.

Oth. Not Cassio kill'd? Then murder's out of tune,
And sweet revenge grows harsh.

Des. O, falsely, falsely murder'd²!

Emil.

² *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 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:

—*sc, sc* 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,

Emil. Alas! what cry is that?

Oth. That! what?

Emil. 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.

Emil. O, who hath done
This deed?

Des. Nobody; I myself; farewell:

Commend me to my kind lord; O, farewell. [*dies.*

Oth. Why, how should she be murder'd?

Emil. Alas, who knows?

Oth. You heard her say herself, it was not I.

Emil. She said so; I must needs report the truth.

Oth. She's, like a liar, gone to burning hell;
'Twas I that kill'd her.

Emil. O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil!

Oth. She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore³.

Emil. Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.

Oth. She was false as water⁴.

Emil. Thou art rash as fire, to say
That she was false; O, she was heavenly true!

————— I'll not shed her blood,
Not 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 V.: "Did'st hear a cry, said'st thou? Yes, sir, like unto a man that had been *strangled* an hour, and could not speak." STEEVENS.

The Alchemist was first represented in the year 1610, and this passage is found in the original copy printed in that year. MALONE.

³ *She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.*] *Folly* signifies here, as in the sacred writings, *depravity of mind*. So, in our author's *Rape of Lucrece*:

"Her sad behaviour feeds his vulture *folly*." MALONE.

⁴ — *false as water.*] As water, that will support no weight, nor keep any impression. JOHNSON.

Oth.

Oth. 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.

Emil. My husband?

Oth. Thy husband.

Emil. That she was false to wedlock?

Oth. 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.

Emil. My husband?

Oth. Ay, 'twas he that told me first⁵;
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.

Emil. My husband?

Oth. What needs this iteration⁶, woman?
I say, thy husband.

Emil. O mistress, villainy hath made mocks with love⁸!
My husband say, that she was false?

Oth. He, woman;
I say, thy husband; Dost understand the word?
My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.

Emil. 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,

Oth. Ha!

⁵ — *that told me first*;] The folio reads,—that told me *on her* first. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *iteration*,] The folio reads—*iterance*. STEEVENS.

⁷ *Emil.*] The first quarto omits this and the following speech.

STEEVENS.

⁸ — *villainy hath made mocks with love!*] *Villainy* has taken advantage to *play upon* the weakness of a violent passion. JOHNSON.

I have sometimes thought that these words might mean, that “villainy hath play'd on its object under a pretence of kindness.” So, in *Macbeth*:

“—— the surfeited grooms

“Do mock their charge with snores.”

But in this I have very little confidence. MALONE.

Emil. Do thy worst:
This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven,
Than thou wast worthy her.

Oth. Peace, you were best.

Emil. Thou hast not half the power to do me harm,
As I have to be hurt⁹. 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 has kill'd my mistress; Murder! murder!

Enter MONTANO, GRATIANO, *and* IAGO.

Mon. What is the matter?—How now, general?

Emil. O, are you come, Iago? you have done well,
That men must lay their murders on your neck.

Gra. What is the matter?

Emil. 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.

Emil. But did you ever tell him, she was false?

Iago. I did.

Emil. 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?

⁹ *Thou hast not half the power to do me harm,
As I have to be hurt.*] She means to say, *I have in this cause
power to endure more than thou hast power to insist.* JOHNSON.

This sentiment is more expanded in *K. Henry VIII.*

“—I am able now, methinks,

“ (Out of a fortitude of soul I feel,)

“ To endure more miseries and greater far,

“ Than my weak-hearted enemies dare offer.”

Again, in *K. Henry VI.* P. II.

“ More can I bear than you dare execute.”

Of this last line there is no trace in the old play on which Shakspeare
formed the Second Part of *K. Henry VI.* MALONE.

Iago.

Iago. With Cassio, mistress; Go to, charm your tongue¹.

Emil. I will not charm my tongue; I am bound to speak;

My mistress here lies murder'd in her bed².

All. O heavens forefend!

Emil. And your reports have set the murder on.

Oth. Nay, stare not, masters; it is true, indeed.

Gra. 'Tis a strange truth.

Mon. O monstrous act!

Emil. 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.

Emil. 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! [*hanging over his wife.*]

Emil. 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:

¹ — *charm your tongue.*] By this expression, *Charm your tongue*, the poet means 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, in *King Henry VI.* P. II.

“Peace, wilful boy, or I will *charm your tongue.*”

So, Ben Jonson, in *Cynthia's Revels*:

“—*charm your skipping tongue.*”

Again, in Spenser's *Faery 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.

² *My mistress, &c.*] This line, and the following six speeches, are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

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 fight would make him do a desperate turn;
Yea, curse his better angel from his side,
And fall to reprobation³.

Oth. 'Tis pitiful: but yet Iago knows,
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame
A thousand times committed⁴; Cassio confess'd it:

And

³ *Yea, curse his better angel from his side,*

And fall to reprobation.] So, in our author's 144th Sonnet:

"————— my female evil

"Tempteth my better angel from my side." MALONE.

⁴ *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 hath the act of shame

A thousand times committed;—

And again:

'Tis not a year or two shews us a man.] I am not convinced 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

And she did gratify his amorous works
 With that recognizance and pledge of love
 Which I first gave her; I saw it in his hand;
 It was a handkerchief^s, an antique token
 My father gave my mother.

Emil.

“ Act III. sc. iii. 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 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*.” STEEVENS.

5 *It was a handkerchief, &c.*] Othello tells his wife, Act III. sc. iv:

— that handkerchief

Did an Ægyptian to my mother give.

And here he says:

It was a 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 *hands*, not *hearts*.”

could not be inserted before the middle of the year 1611. FARMER.

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

If

Emil. O heaven! O heavenly powers!

Iago. Come, hold your peace.

Emil. 'Twill out, 'twill out:—I hold my peace, fir? no;
No, I will speak as liberal as the air⁶;
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.

Emil. I will not. [Iago offers to stab his wife.

Gra. Fie!

Your sword upon a woman?

Emil. 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!

Emil. She give it Cassio! no, alas; I found it,
And I did give it my husband.

Iago. Filth, thou liest.

Emil. 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 Emilia, then runs out.

Oth. Are there no stones in heaven,

same scene, and repeats an absurd speech of the Moor 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.

⁶ *No I will speak as liberal as the air;*] The quarto, 1622, reads:

I'll be in speaking liberal as the air.

The folio:

No, I will speak as liberal as the north.

The text is formed out of the two copies. MALONE.

Liberal, is free, under no controul. This quality of the North-wind is mentioned in *Vittoria Corombona*, &c. 1612:

“And let th' irregular North wind sweep her up.”

Again, in *Feronimo*, i. e. the first part of the *Spanish Tragedy*, 1605:

“Now let your bloods be liberal as the sea.” STEEVENS.

But

But what serve for the thunder?—Precious villain!

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.

Mon. '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 MON. 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*⁸.—

⁷ *Are there no stones in heaven,*

But what serve for the thunder?] Othello does not want a thunder-bolt for Iago. He only asks, if there are no lesser degrees of chastisement more proportioned to 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*, 1607:

“ Is here no thunder left? or is't kept up

“ In stock, for heavier vengeance?”

Shakspeare 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?

“ — quum fulmina torques,

“ Nec quicquam horremus? cæcique in nubibus ignes

“ Terrificant animos, et inania murmura miscent?” STEEV.

The meaning, I think, is, Has not Heaven one supernumerary bolt, to hurl directly at the head of this atrocious villain? Must all the stores of its arsenal be reserved for common and ordinary thunder, which, though sometimes destructive, is in the usual course of nature not specifically pointed at a particular object?

“ ———— Magne regnator deûm,

“ Tam lentus audis scelera? tam lentus vides?

“ Ecquando sævâ fulmen emittes manu,

“ Si nunc serenum est?—

“ Cur dextra, divûm rector atque hominum, vacat

“ Tua, nec trifulcâ mundus ardescit face?

“ In hunc tones, hunc figas.” MALONE.

⁸ *And die in musick, &c.*] This, and the two former lines of the speech, are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

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 temper⁹;—
 O, here it is:—Uncle, I must come forth.

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:

⁹ —*the ice-brook's temper;*] The quarto, 1622, has *Ise brookes*, which is only the old spelling of *Ice-brooke's*, the reading of the folio. Sir William Blackstone doubts whether *ice-brooks* are usual in the climate of Spain. How that fact may be, I know not; and I am confident Shakspeare did not inquire. MALONE.

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 qualities of the waters, they were indebted for their stubborn temper:

Sævo Bilbilin optimam metallo
 Et ferro Plateam suo fonantem,
 Quam fluëtu tenui sed inquieto
 Armerum 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.

A better

A better never did itself sustain
 Upon a soldier's thigh¹: I have seen the day,
 That, with this little arm, and this good sword,
 I have made my way through more impediments
 Than twenty times your stop:—But, O vain boast!
 Who can control his fate? 'tis not so now.—
 Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd²
 Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,
 And very sea-mark of my utmost fail.
 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 wench³!
 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!

¹ *A better never did itself sustain*

Upon a soldier's thigh:] So, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, 1634:

“ ————— On his thigh a sword

“ Hung by a curious baldrick, when he frowns,

“ To seal his will by; *better, on my conscience,*

“ *Never was soldier's friend.*” MALONE.

² — *though you do see me weapon'd*;] This uncommon participle is used by Sidney in his *Arcadia*. MALONE.

³ — *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 *wench*,e, 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 *wensche* stoutlye rencounter durst with men.” STEEV.

Enter

Enter *LODOVICO, MONTANO, CASSIO, carried in a chair,*
and *Officers, with IAGO, prisoner.*

Lod. Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

Oth. That's he, that was Othello; here I am.

Lod. Where is that viper? bring the villain forth.

Oth. I look down towards his feet⁴;—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 die⁵.

Lod. O thou Othello, that wast once so good,
Fall'n in the practice⁶ of a cursed 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 cause⁷.

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.

⁴ — *towards his feet*;—] To see if, according to the common opinion, his feet be cloven. JOHNSON.

⁵ *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.

⁶ — *in the practice*—] In the *snare*, by the *stratagem*. JOHNSON.
See Vol. VIII. p. 564, n. 2. MALONE.

⁷ *Dear general, I never gave you cause.*] Our poet, probably without knowing it, has used the words of *The Spanish tragedy*, 1605:

“ Hieronimo, I never gave thee cause?” MALONE.

Lod.

Lod. What? not to pray?

Gra. Torments will ope your lips.

Oth. Well, thou dost best.

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.

Oth. O villain!

Caf. 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^s
Came in and satisfied him.

Oth. O the pernicious caitiff!—

How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's?

Caf. 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.

Oth. O fool! fool! fool!

Caf. 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,

^s — *in the interim*—] The first copy has—in the *nick*. It was, I suppose, thought upon revisal, that *nick* was too familiar. JOHNSON.

* — *confess'd, but even now,*] The quarto, 1622, reads—*confess'd it even now*. The folio—*confess'd it, but even now*. The word *it* was manifestly caught by the compositor's eye glancing on the subsequent line. MALONE.

That

That can torment him much, and hold him long,
It shall be his: You shall close prisoner rest,
'Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian state:—Come, bring him away.

Oth. Soft you; a word or too, 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,
Speak of me as I am⁹; 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; of one, whose hand,
Like the base Júdean, threw a pearl away
Richer than all his tribe¹; of one, whose subdu'd eyes,
Albeit

⁹ *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.

¹ — *of one, whose hand,*

Like the base Júdean, threw a pearl away

Richer than all his tribe;] Thus the folio. The first quarto, 1622, reads—*Indian*. Mr. Theobald therefore is not accurate in the following note, in his account of the old copies. MALONE.

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 *dunghill-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 Shakspeare never done this, but in this single instance? I am satisfied, in his *Julian*, 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

Albeit unused to the melting mood *,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees

Their

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 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 Spenser, of whom our author was a studious imitator.

THEOBALD.

The elder quarto reads *Judian*, and this is certainly right. And by the *Judian* is meant Herod, whose usage to Mariamne is so opposite 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 out-herod Herod.”

The metaphorical term of a *pearl* for a fine woman, is so common as scarce to need examples. In *Troilus and Cressida*, a lover says of his mistress,

“ There she lies a PEARL.

And again,

“ Why she is a *pearl*, whose price,” &c. WARBURTON.

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 *furiis agitatus 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

* — whose *subdu'd* eyes

Albeit unused to the melting mood,] So, in our poet's 30th Sonnet:

“ Then can I drown an eye unus'd to flow.” MALONE.

Their med'cinable gum²: Set you down this:
And say, besides,—that in Aleppo once,

Where

destroyed an innocent wife; circumstances so parallel, as hardly to admit of that variety which we generally find in one allusion, which is meant 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 pugna pharetrata Camilla.

“ At circum lectæ comites,” &c.

we find them, nine lines after, compared to the Amazons themselves, to Hypolyta 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 remembered. I have read in some book, as ancient as the time of Shakspeare, 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

² Their med'cinable gum:] Thus the folio. The original quarto, 1622, reads—*medicinal*. I have preferred the reading of the folio, because the word occurs again in *Much ado about nothing*: “—any impediment will be *medicinal* to me.” i. e. salutary. MALONE.

Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk³
Beat a Venetian, and traduc'd the state,

I took

of the city, by proclamation, to meet him on the Rialto, where he once more expos'd 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 in 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 scattered remains of that vindictive nation.

Shakspeare'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 Shakspeare, 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

³ *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. ANONYMUS.

I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
And smote him—thus.

[Stabs himself.
Lod.

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 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 obtruded on the publick. A time however may arrive, when a complete body of variations being printed, our readers may luxuriate in an ample feast of *sbats* and *wobiches*; and thenceforward it may be prophesied, 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*.” Shakspeare seems to allude to *Herod* in the play of *Marianne*:

“I had but one inestimable jewel—

“Yet I in suddaine cholour cast it downe,

“And dasht it all to pieces.”— FARMER.

The words quoted by Dr. Warburton from *Hamlet* do not prove what they are adduced for. The *Herod* there alluded to was a character in one of the ancient *Mysteries*.

The last paragraph but one in Mr. Steevens's note was added by him in his edition printed in 1778, and relates to that edition.

I once thought that the accent here given to *Judean* was a strong objection to this reading: and that the word must have been *Judean*, or *Judean*, (as a derivative from *Judææ*) which would not suit the metre. But the objection was founded on a mistake; for derivative words

Lod. O bloody period!

Gra. All, that is spoke, is marr'd.

Oth. I kifs'd thee, 'ere I kill'd thee;—No way but
this, [falling upon Desdem.

Killing myself, to die upon a kifs⁴. [Dies.

Caf. This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon;
For he was great of heart.

Lod. O Spartan dog⁵,
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!

words of this kind were thus accented in Shakspeare's time. Thus, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, we have in the old copies "an Epicurian rascal," which ascertains the pronunciation of that word to have been different formerly from what it is now. The word is thus spelt by North also in his translation of Plutarch. Again, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

"Keep his brains fuming, Epicúrean cooks."

So in *Hamlet*, we have the *Némean* lion (which is written in the old copy *Nemian*).

Those who would adopt the original reading, *Indian*, may urge in its support that the pearl naturally brings the people of the East to Shakspeare's mind; the connexion in his time being considered so strong, that a contemporary author has distinguished the inhabitants of *India* by an epithet founded on the circumstance of their abounding in pearls:

"— where the bright sun with his neighbour beams

"Doth early light the *pearled Indians*."

Cornelia, a tragedy, by T. Kyd, 1594.

On the other hand, the word *tribe* is strongly in favour of the reading of the text, and I have now no doubt that it is the true one.

Webster in his *Appius and Virginia* appears to have had this passage in his thoughts:

"— Had your lordship yesterday

"Proceeded, as 'twas fit, to a just sentence,

"The apparel and the *jewels* that she wore,

"*More worth than all her tribe*, had then been due

"Unto our client." MALONE.

⁴ *Killing myself, to die upon a kifs.*] So, in the Second Part of Marlow's *Tamburlain*, 1590:

"Yet let me kisse my lord before I dye,

"And let me dye with kissing of my lord." STEEVENS.

⁵ *O Spartan dog!*] The dogs of Spartan race were reckoned among those of the most fierce and savage kind. HANMER.

The Spartan dogs in our poet's contemplation, were *blood-bounds*. See Vol. III. p. 514. MALONE.

Look

Look on the tragick loading of this bed ; [to Iago.
 This is thy work : the object poisons fight ;—
 Let it be hid.—Gratiano, keep the house,
 And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,
 For they succeed to you—To you, lord governor,
 Remains the censure of this hellish villain⁶ ;

⁶ — To you, lord governor,

Remains the censure of this hellish villain ;] Rymer, who had neither vigour of imagination to make a poet, nor strength of judgment to make a critick, as appears from his *Edgar*, and his *Remarks on Shakspeare*, had yett 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, dissembling, 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 critick 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 dramatick 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 majority ; 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 Shakspeare stands clear of this impertinent criticism.

WARBURTON.

— *the censure* —] i. e. the sentence. STEEVENS.

See Vol. IV. p. 149, n. 8. MALONE.

The

The time, the place, the torture,—O inforce it!
 Myself will straight aboard; and, to the state,
 This heavy act with heavy heart relate? [Exeunt.]

[*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 Shakspeare'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 to be repeated, exhibit a strong picture of a weak mind betrayed by unlawful desires to a false friend; and the virtue of Æmilia 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.

To Dr. Johnson's admirable and nicely discriminative character of *Othello*, it may seem unnecessary to make any addition; yet I cannot forbear to conclude our commentaries on this transcendent poet with the fine eulogy which the judicious and learned Lowth has pronounced

on him, with a particular reference to this tragedy, perhaps the most perfect of all his works :

“ In his viris [tragediæ Græcæ scilicet scriptoribus] accessio quædam Philosophiæ erat Poetica facultas : neque sane quisquam adhuc Poësin ad fastigium suum ac culmen evexit, nisi qui prius in intima Philosophia artis suæ fundamenta jecerit.

“ Quod si quis objiciat, nonnullos in hoc ipso pœseos genere excelluisse, qui nunquam habiti sunt Philosophi, ac ne literis quidem præter cæteros imbuti ; sciat is, me rem ipsam quærere, non de vulgari opinione aut de verbo laborare : *qui autem tantum ingenio consecutus est, ut naturas hominum, vimque omnem humanitatis, causasque eas, quibus aut incitatur mentis impetus aut retunditur, penitus perspectas habeat, ejusque omnes motus oratione non modo explicet, sed effingat, planeque oculis subjiciat ; sed excitet, regat, commoveat, moderetur ; eum, etsi disciplinarum instrumento minus adjutum, eximie tamen esse Philosophum arbitrari.* Quo in genere affectum Zelotypiæ, ejusque causas, adjuncta, progressiones, affectus, in una SHAKSPEARI nostri fabula, copiosius, subtilius, accuratius etiam veriusque pertractari existimo, quam ab omnibus omnium Philosophorum scholis in simili argumento est unquam disputatum.” MALONE.

THE END OF THE NINTH VOLUME.

