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OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

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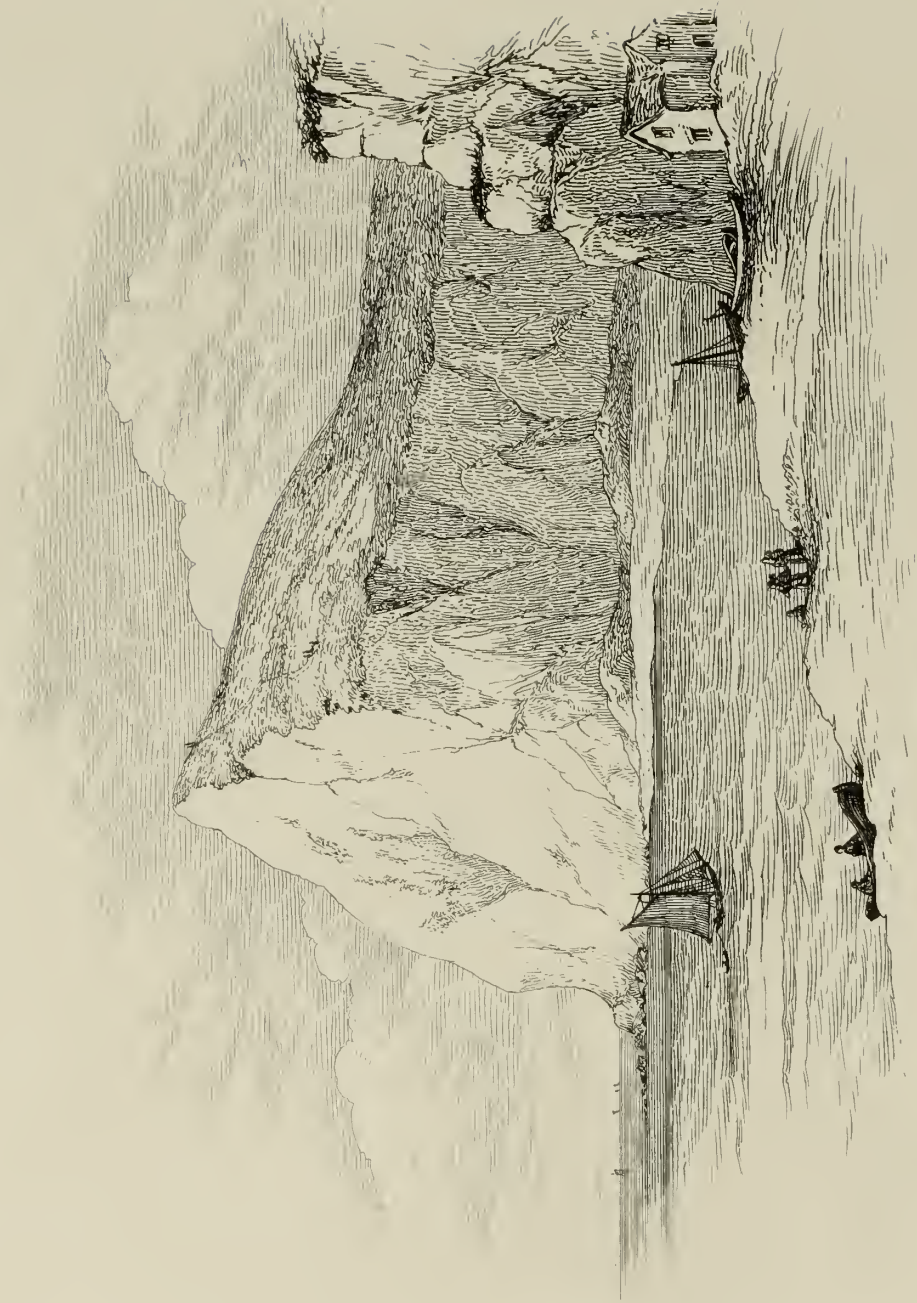
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SHAKESPEARE'S CLIFF DOVER.

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THE WORKS
OF
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE,

THE TEXT FORMED FROM

A new Collation of the early Editions:

TO WHICH ARE ADDED ALL

THE ORIGINAL NOVELS AND TALES ON WHICH THE PLAYS ARE FOUNDED;
COPIOUS ARCHÆOLOGICAL ANNOTATIONS ON EACH PLAY;
AN ESSAY ON THE FORMATION OF THE TEXT;
AND A LIFE OF THE POET:

BY

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AND OF THE COMITE DES ARTS ET MONUMENTS.

VOLUME XIV.

MACBETH. HAMLET.
KING LEAR.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS AND WOOD-ENGRAVINGS

BY

FREDERICK WILLIAM FAIRHOLT, ESQ., F.S.A.

AUTHOR OF 'COSTUME IN ENGLAND,' ETC.

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Macbeth.

INTRODUCTION.

THE story of Maebeth had been introduced on the English stage at least as early as the year 1600, for, in that year, Kempe, the actor, in his *Nine Daies Wonder* performed in a Daunce from London to Norwich, thus alludes to some play on the subject,—“still the search continuing, I met a proper upright youth, onely for a little stooping in the shoulders, all hart to the heele, a penny poet, whose first making was the miserable stolne story of Macdoel, or Macdobeth, or Macsome-what, for I am sure a Mac it was, though I never had the maw to see it.” The coneluding words clearly imply that Kemp alluded to some piece that had been represented on the stage. What was the nature of this production is unknown, the only other early notice of a drama on the subject being an exceedingly curious account of a performance of Shakspeare’s own tragedy at the Globe (*Glod*, MS.) in April, 1610, recorded by Dr. Simon Forman, who was present at its representation, in the following words,—“In Maekbeth at the Glod, 1610, the 20 of Aprill, Saturday, ther was to be observed firste howe Mackbeth and Bancko, two noblemen of Scotland, ridinge thorowe a wod, the stode befor them three women feiries or numphes, and saluted Mackbeth, sayinge three tyms unto him, Haille Mackbeth, king of Codon, for thou shall be a kinge, but shall beget no kinges, &c. Then said Bancko, What! all to Maekbeth and nothing to me? Yes, said the ninuphes,—haille to thee, Banko, thou shalt beget kinges, yet be no kinge; and so they deperted and cam to the Courte of Scotland to Dunkin,

king of Scotcs, and yt was in the dais of Edward the Confessor. And Dunkin bad them both kindly wellcome, and made Mackbeth forthwith Prince of Northumberland, and sent him hom to his own castell, and appointed Mackbeth to provid for him, for he wold sup with him the next dai at night, and did soe. And Mackebeth contrived to kill Dunkin, and thorowe the persuasion of his wife did that night murder the kinge in his own castell, beinge his guest; and ther were many prodigies seen that night and the dai before. And when Mackbeth had murdred the kinge, the blod on his handes could not be washed of by any means, nor from his wifes handes which handled the bloddi daggers in hiding them, by which means they became both moch amazed and affronted. The murder being knowen, Dunkin's two sons fled, the on to England, the (other to) Walles, to save themselves. They being fled, they were supposed guilty of the murder of their father, which was nothing so. Then was Mackbeth crowned kinge, and then he, for feare of Banko, his old companion, that he should beget kinges, but be no kinge himself, he contrived the death of Banko, and caused him to be murdred on the way as he rode. The next night, beinge at supper with his noblemen whom he had bid to a fcaste, to the which also Banco should have com, he began to speake of noble Banco, and to wish that he wer there. And as he thus did, standing up to drinck a carouse to him, the ghoste of Banco came and sate down in his cheier behind him; and he, turninge about to sit down again, sawe the goste of Banco, which fronted him so, that he fell into a great passion of fear and fury, utteringe many wordes about his murder, by which, when they hard that Banco was murdred, they suspected Mackbet. Then Mackdove fled to England to the kinges sonn, and soe they raised an army, and cam into Scotland, and at Dunscenanyse overthruve Mackbet. In the meane tyme, whille Mackdove was in England, Mackbet slewe Mackdoves wife and children, and after in the battelle Mackdove slewe Mackbet. Observe also howe Mackbetes quen did rise in the night in her slepe, and walked and talked and confessed all, and the doctor noted her wordes."

This exceedingly interesting notice of Macbeth is preserved in Dr. Forman's original manuscript in the Ashmolean collection at Oxford. There is nothing, however, to show that it was a new play in 1610, although most likely it was the first time that Dr. Forman had seen a performance of it. As to the date of the composition of the tragedy nothing very decisive can be

Mr. Macbeth at his death 1610 the 20
of April the day was to be observed first
for Macbeth and Banquo 2 noble men
of Scotland being coroners and for Ad-
before him 3 women for the 03 M. M. M. M.
And saluted Macbeth saying. I 3 s. y. m. b.
unto you. Hail Macbeth King of Scotland
for you shall be a King but shall beget
no Kinges. You send Banquo weat all
to Macbeth And saying to me. You
said for M. M. M. Hail to you Banquo
you shall beget Kinges yet be no Kinge
And so they departed & came to the Court
of Scotland to Dunbar King of Scots
and he was in the day of Edward the
Confessor. And Ambrinbad you both kind
ly wellcom. And made Macbeth forth
with the count of Ross in Scotland. and
sent you home to his own castle and ap-
pointed Macbeth to provide for you for
so word came to you you were dead at
night & did so. And Macbeth cou-
red to kill Dunbar & coroner's persuasi-
on of his wife did that night murder
the King in his own Castle being the
And you were many prodigious seen that
night the day before. And when Mac-
beth had murdered the King the blood on
his hands would not be washed off by any
means. nor from his winter's hand nor
could he be bludgeoned in France you
say you means the because both more ama-
zed & astonished. The murder being known
Dunbar's 2 sons fled yet on to England

asserted, beyond the all but certainty that it was produced after the accession of James. The allusion to the "two-fold balls and treble sceptres," and the favourable delineation of the character of Banquo, appear sufficient to establish the accuracy of this conclusion. It may also be thought tolerably certain that the tragedy was written and acted before the year 1607, if, as seems probable, there is an allusion to Banquo's ghost in the Puritan, 4to, 1607,—“we'll ha' the ghost i' th' white sheet sit at upper end o' th' table.” The story of Macbeth was too well-known for any deductions to be safely drawn from the allusions to it in the academical speeches made before King James at Oxford in the year 1605.

It is possible that Shakespeare may have been led to the selection of Macbeth for a subject by the popularity of one or more earlier dramas on the story, to which he may have been indebted for some of his materials. It is, however, certain that in the composition of the play he chiefly referred to the story of Macbeth as given in Holinshed's *Historie of Scotland*, ed. 1586, pp. 168-176. The following tragedy was first printed in the collective folio edition of 1623, and it was registered at the Stationers' Company in that year as one of Shakespeare's plays “as are not formerly entred to other men.” An alteration of Macbeth, made by Davenant, and first published in 1674, deserves no more than a passing notice.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DUNCAN, *King of Scotland.*

MALCOLM, }
DONALBAIN, } *his Sons.*

MACBETH, }
BANQUO, } *Generals of his Army.*

MACDUFF, }
LENOX, }
ROSSE, } *Thanes of Scotland.*
MENTETH, }
ANGUS, }
CATHNESS, }

FLEANCE, *Son to Banquo.*

SIWARD, *Earl of Northumberland, General of the English Forces.*

YOUNG SIWARD, *his Son.*

SEYTON, *an Officer attending Macbeth.*

Son to Macduff.

An English Doctor. A Scotch Doctor.

A Soldier. A Porter. An old Man.

LADY MACBETH.

LADY MACDUFF.

Gentlewomen attending Lady Macbeth.

HECATE, *and Witches.*

*Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants, and
Messengers.*

The Ghost of Banquo, and other Apparitions.

SCENE, in the end of the fourth Act, in England; through the rest
of the Play, in Scotland.

Act the First.

SCENE I.—*An open Place.*

Thunder and Lightning. Enter three Witches.

1 *Witch.* When shall we three meet again,
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

2 *Witch.* When the hurlyburly's done¹
When the battle's lost and won.

3 *Witch.* That will be ere the set of sun.

1 *Witch.* Where the place?

2 *Witch.* Upon the heath:

3 *Witch.* There to meet with Macbeth.

1 *Witch.* I come, Graymalkin!²

All. Paddock calls:³—Anon.—

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:

Hover through the fog and filthy air.

[*Witches vanish.*]

SCENE II.—*A Camp near Fores.*

*Alarum within. Enter King DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN,
LENOX, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Soldier.*

Dun. What bloody man is that? He can report,

As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.

Mal. This is the sergeant,
Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
'Gainst my captivity.—Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil,
As thou didst leave it.

Sold. Doubtful it stood ;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Maedonwald—
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him—from the western isles
Of Kernes and Gallowglasses⁴ is supplied ;
And Fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,⁵
Show'd like a rebel's whore : but all's too weak ;
For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name,—
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
Which smok'd with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion, earv'd out his passage,
Till he fae'd the slave ;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,⁶
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

Dun. O, valiant cousin ! worthy gentleman !

Sold. As whence the sun 'gins his reflexion
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring, whence comfort seem'd to come,
Discomfort swells. Mark, king of Seotland, mark :
No sooner justiee had, with valour arm'd,
Compell'd these skipping Kernes to trust their heels,
But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,
With furbish'd arms, and new supplies of men,
Began a fresh assault.

Dun. Dismay'd not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo ?

Sold. Yes ;
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overharg'd with double eraeks ;
So they doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe :
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,

Or memorize another Golgotha,⁷
I cannot tell.—

But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.

Dun. So well thy words become thee, as thy wounds :
They smack of honour both.—Go, get him surgeons.

[*Exit Soldier, attended.*]

Enter ROSSE and ANGUS.

Who comes here ?

Mal. The worthy thane of Rosse.

Len. What a haste looks through his eyes !
So should he look, that seems to speak things strange.⁸

Rosse. God save the king !

Dun. Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane ?

Rosse. From Fife, great king ;
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky⁹
And fan our people cold.
Norway himself, with terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict ;
Till that Bellona's bridegroom,¹⁰ lapp'd in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons,¹¹
Point against point, rebellious arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit : and, to conclude,
The victory fell on us ;—

Dun. Great happiness !

Rosse. That now
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition ;
Nor would we deign him burial of his men,
Till he disbursed at Saint Colmes' Inch¹²
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

Dun. No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest.—Go, pronounce his present death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

Rosse. I'll see it done.

Dun. What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE III.—*A Heath.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

1 *Witch.* Where hast thou been, sister ?

2 *Witch.* Killing swine.

3 *Witch.* Sister, where thou ?

1 *Witch.* A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And mounch'd, and mounch'd, and mounch'd: "Give me,"
quoth I:—

"Aroint thee, witch!"¹³ the rump-fed ronyon cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger:
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,¹⁴
And, like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

2 *Witch.* I'll give thee a wind.¹⁵

1 *Witch.* Thou art kind.

3 *Witch.* And I another.

1 *Witch.* I myself have all the other ;¹⁶
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card.¹⁷
I'll drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall, neither night nor day,
Hang upon his pent-house lid ;¹⁸
He shall live a man forbid.
Weary sev'n-nights, nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine:
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-toss'd.
Look what I have.

2 *Witch.* Show me, show me.

1 *Witch.* Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come.

[*Drum within.*]

3 *Witch.* A drum! a drum!
Macbeth doth come.

All. The weird sisters,¹⁹ hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:

Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace!—the charm's wound up.

Enter MACBETH and BANQUO.

Macb. So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Ban. How far is't call'd to Fores?—What are these,
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
That look not like th' inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her chappy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips:—You should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

Macb. Speak, if you can.—What are you?

1 *Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

2 *Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

3 *Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! that shalt be king hereafter.

Ban. Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair?—I' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace, and great prediction
Of noble having, and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow, and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg, nor fear,
Your favours, nor your hate.

1 *Witch.* Hail!

2 *Witch.* Hail!

3 *Witch.* Hail!

1 *Witch.* Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

2 *Witch.* Not so happy, yet much happier.

3 *Witch.* Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:

So, all hail, Macbeth, and Banquo!

1 *Witch.* Banquo, and Macbeth, all hail!

Macb. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more.
By Sinel's death, I know, I am thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,

A prosperous gentleman ; and to be king
 Stands not within the prospect of belief,
 No more than to be Cawdor. Say, from whence
 You owe this strange intelligence ? or why
 Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
 With such prophetic greeting ?—Speak, I charge you.

[Witches *vanish*

Ban. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
 And these are of them.—Whither are they vanish'd ?

Macb. Into the air ; and what seem'd corporal, melted
 As breath into the wind.—'Would they had stay'd !

Ban. Were such things here, as we do speak about,
 Or have we eaten on the insane root,²⁰
 That takes the reason prisoner ?

Macb. Your children shall be kings.

Ban. You shall be king.

Macb. And thane of Cawdor too : went it not so ?

Ban. To the self-same tune, and words. Who's here ?

Enter ROSSE and ANGUS.

Rosse. The king hath happily receiv'd, Macbeth,
 The news of thy success ; and when he reads
 Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
 His wonders and his praises²¹ do contend,
 Which should be thine, or his. Silenc'd with that,
 In viewing o'er the rest o' the self-same day,
 He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
 Nothing afraid of what thyself didst make,
 Strange images of death. As thiek as hail,²²
 Came post with post ; and every one did bear
 Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
 And pour'd them down before him.

Ang. We are sent,
 To give thee from our royal master thanks ;
 Only to herald thee into his sight,
 Not pay thee.

Rosse. And, for an earnest of a greater honour,
 He bade me from him call thee thane of Cawdor :
 In which addition, hail, most worthy thane,
 For it is thine.

Ban. What ! can the devil speak true ?

Macb. The thane of Cawdor lives : why do you dress me
In borrow'd robes ?

Ang. Who was the thane, lives yet ;
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combin'd
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not ;
But treasons capital, confess'd and prov'd,
Have overthrown him.

Macb. Glamis, and thane of Cawdor :
The greatest is behind.—Thanks for your pains.—
Do you not hope your children shall be kings,
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me,
Promis'd no less to them ?

Ban. That, trusted home,
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange :
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths ;
Win us with honest trifles, to betray us
In deepest consequence.—
Cousins, a word, I pray you.

Macb. Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.—
This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill ; cannot be good :—if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth ? I am thane of Cawdor :
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature ? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings.
My thought, whose murder yet is but phantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man,²³ that function
Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is,
But what is not.

Ban. Look, how our partner's rapt.

Macb. If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me,
Without my stir.

Ban. New honours come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould,
But with the aid of use.

Macb. Come what come may,
Time and the hour²⁴ run through the roughest day.

Ban. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

Macb. Give me your favour: my dull brain was wrought
With things forgotten.—Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are register'd where every day I turn
The leaf to read them.—Let us toward the king.—
Think upon what hath chanc'd; and at more time,
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.

Ban. Very gladly.

Macb. Till then, enough.—Come, friends.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—Fores. *A Room in the Palace.*

Flourish. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, and
Attendants.

Dun. Is execution done on Cawdor; are not
Those in commission yet return'd?

Mal. My liege,
They are not yet come back; but I have spoke
With one that saw him die, who did report,
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,
Implor'd your highness' pardon, and set forth
A deep repentance. Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it: he died
As one that had been studied in his death,
To throw away the dearest thing he ow'd,
As 'twere a careless trifle.

Dun. There's no art,
To find the mind's construction in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.—

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSSE, *and* ANGUS.

O worthiest eousin !

The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before,
That swiftest wing of reeompense is slow
To overtake thee : would thou hadst less deserv'd,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine ! only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

Macb. The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties : and our duties
Are to your throne and state, children, and servants ;
Which do but what they should, by doing every thing
Safe toward your love and honour.²⁵

Dun. Welcome hither :
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour
To make thee full of growing.—Noble Banquo,
Thou hast no less deserv'd, nor must be known
No less to have done so ; let me infold thee,
And hold thee to my heart.

Ban. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.

Dun. My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow.—Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know,
We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest, Maleolm ; whom we name hereafter,
The prince of Cumberland :²⁶ which honour must
Not, unaccompanied, invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers.—From hence to Inverness,
And bind us farther to you.

Macb. The rest is labour, which is not us'd for you :
I'll be myself the harbinger, and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach ;
So, humbly take my leave.

Dun. My worthy Cawdor !

Macb. The prince of Cumberland !—That is a step,

On which I must fall down, or else o'er-leap, [*Aside.*
 For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires !
 Let not light see my black and deep desires ;
 The eye wink at the hand ; yet let that be,
 Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [*Exit.*

Dun. True, worthy Banquo : he is full so valiant,
 And in his commendations I am fed ;
 It is a banquet to me. Let us after him,
 Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome :
 It is a peerless kinsman. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—Inverness. *A Room in MACBETH'S Castle.*

Enter Lady MACBETH, reading a letter.

Lady M. “They met me in the day of success ; and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them farther, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me, ‘Thane of Cawdor ;’ by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with, ‘Hail, king that shalt be !’ This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightest not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell.”

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor ; and shalt be
 What thou art promis'd.—Yet do I fear thy nature :
 It is too full o' the milk of human kindness,
 To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great ;
 Art not without ambition ; but without
 The illness should attend it : what thou wouldst highly,
 That wouldst thou holily ; wouldst not play false,
 And yet wouldst wrongly win : thou'dst have, great Glamis,
 That which cries, “Thus thou must do, if thou have it ;
 And that which rather thou dost fear to do,
 Than wishest should be undone.” Hie thee hither,
 That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,

And chastise with the valour of my tongue
 All that impedes thee from the golden round,
 Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
 To have thee crown'd withal.—

Enter an Attendant.

What is your tidings ?

Atten. The king comes here to-night.

Lady M. Thou'rt mad to say it.

Is not thy master with him ? who, wer't so,
 Would have inform'd for preparation.

Atten. So please you, it is true : our thane is coming.
 One of my fellows had the speed of him ;
 Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
 Than would make up his message.

Lady M. Give him tending :
 He brings great news. [*Exit Attendant.*] The raven himself
 is hoarse,²⁷

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
 Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
 That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
 And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
 Of direst cruelty ! make thick my blood,
 Stop up th' access and passage to remorse ;
 That no compunctious visitings of nature
 Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
 Th' effect and it ! Come to my woman's breasts,
 And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
 Wherever in your sightless substances
 You wait on nature's mischief ! Come, thick night,
 And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
 That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
 Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,²⁸
 To cry, " Hold, hold !"—

Enter MACBETH.

Great Glamis ! worthy Cawdor !
 Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter !
 Thy letters have transported me beyond

This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.

Macb. My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.

Lady M. And when goes hence ?

Macb. To-morrow, as he purposes.

Lady M. O ! never
Shall sun that morrow see.

Your face, my thane, is as a book, where men
May read strange matters : to beguile the time,
Look like the time ; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue : look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under it. He that's coming
Must be provided for ; and you shall put
This night's great business into my despatch,
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

Macb. We will speak farther.

Lady M. Only look up clear :
To alter favour ever is to fear.
Leave all the rest to me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*The Same. Before the Castle.*

*Hautboys and Torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN,
BANQUO, LENOX, MACDUFF, ROSSE, ANGUS, and Attendants.*

Dun. This castle hath a pleasant seat :²⁹ the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

Ban. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet,³⁰ does approve,
By his lov'd mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here : no jutty, frieze,³¹
Buttress, nor coigne of vantage,³² but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed, and procreant cradle :
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd,
The air is delicate.

Enter Lady MACBETH.

Dun. See, see! our honour'd hostess.—
The love that follows us³³ sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love: herein I teach you,
How you shall bid God yield us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

Lady M. All our service,
In every point twice done, and then done double,
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honours deep and broad, wherewith
Your majesty loads our house. For those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them
We rest your hermits.

Dun. Where's the thane of Cawdor?
We cours'd him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his purveyor; but he rides well,
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.

Lady M. Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt,
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.

Dun. Give me your hand;
Conduet me to mine host: we love him highly,
And shall continue our graeces towards him.
By your leave, hostess.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.—*The Same. A Room in the Castle.*

*Hautboys and Torches. Enter, and pass over the stage, a Sewer,³⁴
and divers Servants with dishes and service. Then, enter
MACBETH.*

Macb. If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if the assassination³⁵
Could trammel up the consequence, and eatch

With his surcease success ; that but this blow
 Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
 But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,—
 We'd jump the life to come.—But in these cases,
 We still have judgment here ; that we but teach
 Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
 To plague th' inventor. This even-handed justice
 Commends th' ingredients of our poison'd chalice
 To our own lips. He's here in double trust :
 First, as I am his kinsman and his subject ;
 Strong both against the deed : then, as his host,
 Who should against his murderer shut the door,
 Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
 Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
 So clear in his great office, that his virtues
 Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
 The deep damnation of his taking-off ;
 And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
 Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, hors'd
 Upon the sightless couriers of the air,³⁶
 Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
 That tears shall drown the wind.—I have no spur
 To prick the sides of my intent, but only
 Vaulting ambition, which o'er-leaps itself,
 And falls on the other,³⁷—

Enter Lady MACBETH.

How now ! what news ?

Lady M. He has almost supp'd. Why have you left the chamber ?

Macb. Hath he ask'd for me ?

Lady M. Know you not, he has ?

Macb. We will proceed no farther in this business :
 He hath honour'd me of late ; and I have bought
 Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
 Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
 Not cast aside so soon.

Lady M. Was the hope drunk,
 Wherein you dress'd yourself ? hath it slept since,
 And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
 At what it did so freely ? From this time,

Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour,
As thou art in desire? Would'st thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting I dare not wait upon I would,
Like the poor cat i' the adage?³⁸

Macb. Pr'ythee, peace.

I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.

Lady M. What beast was't, then,³⁹
That made you break this enterprize to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time, nor place,
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

Macb. If we should fail,—

Lady M. We fail!

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,⁴⁰
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep,—
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassel so convince,
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie, as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
Th' unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?⁴¹

Macb. Bring forth men-children only!

For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be receiv'd,
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two

Of his own chamber, and us'd their very daggers,
That they have done't?

Lady M. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?

Macb. I am settled; and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know. [*Exeunt.*

Notes to the First Act.

¹ *When the hurlyburly's done.*

Hurlyburly, that is, a tumultuous or tempestuous uproar. The term is common in English books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One of the earliest and best examples of it I have met with is the following in the Paraphrase of Erasmus upon the Newe Testamente, 1548,—“Veraily, when ye shall heare all the worlde to bee in a garboile of sedicions and of warres, many persones shall plaie the prophetes, and shall allege the ende of the world to approche. But be not ye any thyng feared with suche rumours, as though the last daie bee even than byanby at hande; For in dede suche thynges as these shall fortune, but the ende of the world cometh not even streight waie in the necke thereof; For these shall bee nothyng els but certain preambles of the said extreme distresse which shall bee to the evil sorte an uttre castyng awaie, and to the good it shall bee an examinacion or tryall, and a purifyng of them. As whan the bodye is towardes the poynte of dyng, the signes and tokens therof be strong diseases havng come up and growen in the same bodyes, through an unnaturall distemperature of the humours, so shall these terrible commocions and *hurleyburley* forshewe the ende of the world, which *hurleyburley* mans self doeth procure unto hymselfe by reason that he is infected with inordinate lustes and affections. Through mannes perversenesse shall the verai nature of thynges be shaken out of al due ordre and course, detestyng (as it wer) the malice of man, and strongly ensourgeyng for the redresse and avengemente of their ungraciousnesse. Which great uproares and garboile shall there bee arisynges of nacion against nacion and royalme against royalme.”

In the annexed woodcut, the devil is making a hurlyburly by beating furiously on a drum, under the latter there being a Lapland witch. some absurdity in witchcraft.



It is a curious illustration of

² *I come, Graymalkin!*

The representation of St. James in the witches' house (one of the set of prints taken from the painter called Hellish Breugel, 1566,) exhibits witches flying up and down the chimney on brooms:



and before the fire sit *grimalkin* and *paddock*, i. e. a *cat*, and a *toad*, with several *baboons*. There is a cauldron boiling, with a witch near it, cutting out the tongue of a snake, as an ingredient for the charm. A representation somewhat similar likewise occurs in *Newes from Scotland*, &c.—*Stevens*.

“— Some say, they [witches] can keepe devils and spirits, in the likeness of todes and cats.” *Scot's Discovery of Witchcraft*, [1584] book i. c. iv.—*Tollet*.

³ *Paddock calls.*

Paddock, that is, a toad. “Paddock, toode, *bufo*,” *Prompt. Parv.* Topsell, in his *Historie of Serpents*, 1608, speaks of a poisonous kind of frog so called.

⁴ *Of Kernes and Gallowglasses is supplied.*

We have the following description of *Kernes* and *Gallowglasses* in *Barnabie Riche's New Irish Prognostication*, p. 37: “The *Galloglas* succeedeth the Horseman, and hee is commonly armed with a scull, a shirt of maile, and a *Galloglas* axe: his service in the field is neither good against horsemen, nor able to endure an encounter of pikes, yet the Irish do make great account of them. The *Kerne* of Ireland are next in request, the very drosse and scum of the countrey, a generation of villaines not worthy to live: these be they that live by robbing and spoyling the poor countreyman, that maketh him many times to buy bread to give unto them, though he want for himself and his poore children. These are they that are ready to run out with everie rebell, and these are the verie hags of hell fit for nothing but for the gallows.”—*Boswell*.

⁵ *And Fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling.*

For *quarrel* the old edition reads *quarry*, which must be either a misprint or an antique form of the word *quarrel*, most likely the former, for Holinshed, Shakespeare's authority, uses the term with its right spelling. Macdonwald's own army could not be described as his “damned quarry.” See also Mr. Dyce's decisive note, pp. 451-2.

⁶ *From the navel to the chaps.*

The old reading is certainly the true one, being justified by a passage in Dido Queene of Carthage, by Thomas Nash, 1594:—

Then from the *navel* to the throat at once
He *ript* old Priam.

So likewise in an ancient MS. entitled the Boke of Huntyng, that is cleped Mayster of Game, cap. v.:—“Som men have sey hym slitte a man *fro the kne up to the brest*, and slee hym all starke dede at o strok.”—*Steevens*.

So, in Shadwell's Libertine: “I will rip you *from the navel to the chin*.”—*Boswell*.

⁷ *Or memorize another Golgotha.*

Though Greecian seas or shores me captiv'd quel'd,
With annuall votes and due solemnities,
And altar-decking gifts, I'd *memorize*.

Virgil, translated by Vicars, 1632.

⁸ *That seems to speak things strange.*

This alludes to the haste expressed in the countenance of the messenger; and signifies, Such is the aspect of one whose very look seems to tell strange tidings.—*Elwin*.

⁹ *Where the Norway banners flout the sky.*

Rosse, like the sergeant, describes the previous advantages of the rebels in the present tense, in order to set the royal victory in the strongest light of achievement. The Norway banners *flout* or *insult* the sky, whilst raised in the pride of expected victory. It refers to the bold display of *lawless ensigns* in the *face of heaven*. “*And fan our people cold*,” is metaphorically used for *chill them with apprehension*.—*Elwin*.

¹⁰ *Till that Bellona's bridegroom.*

The metaphor is incorrect, but there is no doubt that Shakespeare, by “Bellona's bridegroom,” refers to Macbeth, who is spoken of as wedded to War.

¹¹ *Confronted him with self-comparisons.*

Confronted him by comparing or measuring himself with him (Norway) in strict opposition, in arms and action; viz., point to point, and assailing arm to arm.—*Elwin*.

¹² *At Saint Colmes' Inch.*

Colmes'-inch, now called *Inchcomb*, is a small island lying in the Firth of Edinburgh, with an abbey upon it, dedicated to St. Columb; called by Camden *Inch Colm*, or *the Isle of Columba*. Some of the modern editors, without authority, read—“Saint Colmes'-kill Isle:” but erroneously; for *Colmes' Inch* and *Colm-kill* are two different islands; the former lying on the eastern coast, near the place where the Danes were defeated; the latter in the western seas, being the famous Iona, one of the Hebrides. Holinshed thus relates the whole circumstance: “The Danes that escaped, and got oone to their ships, obtained of Makbeth for a great summe of gold, that such of their friends as were slaine, might be buried in *Saint Colmes' Inch*. In memorie whereof many old sepulchres are yet in the said *Inch*, there to be seene graven with the armes of the

Danes." *Inch*, or *Inshe*, in the Irish and Erse languages, signifies an island. See Lhuyd's *Archæologia*.—*Steevens*.

¹³ *Aroint thee, witch!*

Aroint is a word of expulsion, or avoiding. Douce thinks there is no doubt that it signifies, *away! run!* and that it is of Saxon origin. See his *Illustrations*, i. 371. It occurs thrice in Shakespeare in this sense, applied in each instance to witches. The print published by Hearne, referred to by the commentators, seems scarcely applicable. The fourth folio reads *anoint*, a reading which some think is confirmed by a passage in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Queens*:—

Sisters, stay, we want our Dame;
Call upon her by her name.
And the charm we use to say,
That she quickly *aroint*, and come away.

But as the word is spelt *aroynt* three times in the early editions, we are not justified in proposing an alteration. Ray explains "*rynt ye*," *by your leave, stand handsomely*, and gives the Cheshire proverb, "*Rynt you, witch*, quoth Besse Locket to her mother." This proverbial saying positively connects *rynt* with *aroint*, and Wilbraham informs us that "*rynt thee*" is an expression used by milkmaids to a cow when she has been milked, to bid her to get out of the way, which is more likely to be correct than Ray's explanation. Boucher goes farther, and says, *aroint* is the word used in that county; but Ray's proverb is sufficient, and of good authority, because he does not appear to have had the Shakesperian word in view. The connexion between *aroint* and *rynt* being thus established, it is clear that the compound etymology proposed by Rodd, in Knight's *Shakspeare*, is inadmissible. A more plausible one is given in Nares's *Glossary*, in v. from the Latin *averrunco*, the participle of which may have been formed into *aroint*, in the same way that *punctum* has become *point*; *junctum*, *joint*, &c. See also Collier's *Shakespeare*, vii, 103, where the same conjecture is revived, and attributed to a more recent writer. The *a* may have been dropped, and Mr. Wilbraham's conjectural origin from *arowma* receives some confirmation from a passage quoted in Collier's *Hist. Dram. Poet.* ii, 289, where the form of that word is *aroine*; but perhaps we should there read *arome*.

¹⁴ *But in a sieve I'll thither sail.*

Reginald Scott, in his *Discovery of Witchcraft*, 1584, says it was believed that witches "could sail in an egg shell, a cockle or muscle shell, through and under the tempestuous seas." Again, says Sir W. D'Avenant, in his *Albovine*, 1629:—"He sits like a witch *sailing in a sieve*." Again, in *Newes from Scotland*: Declaring the damnable Life of Doctor Fian a notable Soreerer, who was burned at Edenbrough in Januarie last, 1591; which Doctor was Register to the Devill, that sundrie Times preached at North Baricke Kirke, to a Number of notorious Witches. With the true Examinations of the said Doctor and Witches, as they uttered them in the Presence of the Seottish King. Discovering how they pretended to bewitch and drowne his Majestie in the Sea coming from Denmarke, with other such wonderful Matters as the like hath not bin heard at anie Time. Published according to the Seottish Copie. Printed for William Wright:—"—and that all they together went to sea, each one in a *riddle* or *cive*, and went in the same very substantially with flaggons of wine, making merrie and drinking by the way in the same *riddles* or *cives*," &c.—*Steevens*.

¹⁵ *I'll give thee a wind.*

This free gift of a wind is to be considered as an act of sisterly friendship, for

witches were supposed to sell them. So, in *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, 1600 :—

— in Ireland and in Denmark both,
Witches for gold will *sell a man a wind*,
 Which in the corner of a napkin wrap'd,
 Shall blow him safe unto what coast he will.

Drayton, in his *Mooncalf*, says the same. It may be hoped, however, that the conduct of our witches did not resemble that of one of their relations, as described in an Appendix to the old translation of Marco Paolo, 1579 : “ — they demanded that he should *give them a winde* ; and he shewed, setting his hands *behinde*, from *whence the wind should come*,” &c.
 — *Stevens*.



The annexed cut, from one of Breugel's prints, exhibits, observes Mr. Fairholt, — “ a witch kneeling beside her magic cauldron raising a storm by blowing into a sieve. The vapour condenses into heavy clouds, and between them we see (in the original) trees uprooted, church steeples overthrown and ships wrecked, after the manner threatened by Shakespeare's witch.”

¹⁶ *I myself have all the other.*

According to ancient superstition, witches held possession of three winds, which, being tied in bags with three knots, enabled them to secure a successful voyage. The first to be unknit when they set sail, the second at sea, but the third not at all, for it included a contrary tempest. See Sandys' *Ovid*, p. 133. Hence she here speaks *of the three winds* as commanding all the points of the compass, and sufficing for all her purposes.— *Elwin*.

¹⁷ *I' the shipman's card.*

The compass, or, here, perhaps, the paper on which the points of the wind are marked. The term occurs in the same sense in the *Loyal Subject*, ed. Dyce, p. 56,—

The card of goodness in your minds, that shews ye
 When ye sail false ; the needle touch'd with honour,
 That through the blackest storms still points at happiness ;
 Your bodies the tall barks ribb'd round with goodness,
 Your heavenly souls the pilots ; thus I send you,
 Thus I prepare your voyage, sound before you,
 And ever, as you sail through this world's vanity,
 Discover shoals, rocks, quicksands, cry out to ye,
 Like a good master, “ Tack about for honour !”

¹⁸ *Hang upon his pent-house lid.*

Without money, how is a man unman'd? How mellancholly doth he sit, with his hat *like a pent-house over the shop of his eyes*.—*Poor Robin's Hue and Cry after Money*, 1689.

¹⁹ *The weird sisters.*

All authorities agree that "weird" (spelt *weyward* in the folio, 1623) is of Saxon origin, viz. from *wyrd*, which has the same meaning as the Latin *fatum*: "weird" is therefore fatal. In the ballad of the Birth of St. George, in Percy's Reliques, vol. iii. p. 275, edit. 1812, we meet with the expression of "The *weird* lady of the woods;" and the same word occurs twice in the old Scottish drama of Philotus, printed in 1603 and 1612, and reprinted in 1835 for the Bannatyne Club, by John Whitefoord Mackenzie, Esq. As Steevens remarks, Gawin Douglas, in his translation of the Æneid, calls the *Parcæ* "the weird sisters."—*Collier*.

²⁰ *Or have we eaten on the insane root.*

The root causing insanity, here referred to, is believed to be that of the hemlock. So, in the following passages cited by Steevens,—in Greene's *Never too Late*, 1616: "You gaz'd against the sun, and so blemished your sight; or else you have *eaten of the roots of hemlock*, that makes men's eyes *conceit unseen objects*." Again, in Ben Jonson's *Sejanus*:—

— they *lay that hold upon thy senses*,
As thou hadst snuft up *hemlock*.

²¹ *His wonders and his praises, &c.*

That is, the king's wonder and commendation of your deeds are so nearly balanced, they contend whether the latter should be prominently thine, or the wonder remain with him to the exclusion of any other thought.

²² *As thick as hail.*

The messengers came *as thick as hail*, replete with praises, and *pour'd them down* before him. The old copy has *tale*, an obvious blunder. The expression as thick as hail is found in nearly every writer of the time.

²³ *My single state of man.*

It should be observed, perhaps, that *double* and *single* anciently signified *strong* and *weak*, when applied to liquors, and perhaps to other objects. In this sense the former word may be employed by Brabantio:—

— a voice potential,
As *double* as the duke's;

And the latter, by the Chief Justice, speaking to Falstaff:—

Is not your wit *single*?

The *single* state of Macbeth may therefore signify his *weak* and *debile* state of mind.—*Steevens*.

So, in Jonson's *Every Man Out of his Humour*:—"But he might have altered the shape of his argument, and explicated them better in single scenes—That had been *single* indeed."—*Boswell*.

²⁴ *Time and the hour.*

Compare a similar phraseology used by Lodge, in his *Wit's Miserie*, 4to. Lond. 1596, p. 43,—"*Day and time* discovering these murders, the woman was apprehended, and examined by the justice, confessed the fact."

²⁵ *Safe toward your love and honour.*

Safe is here used in the sense of *conferring security*; as in the Epistle to the Philippians, iii. 1: "To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is *safe*." Macbeth is speaking with reference to his late defence of Duncan from the enmity that would have robbed him of *the affection and reverence of his subjects*; and the meaning of the sentence is, who do but what they should, by doing every thing that can be done, which *secures to you the love and honour that is your due*.—*Elwin*.

²⁶ *The prince of Cumberland.*

So, Holinshed, History of Scotland, p. 171: "Duncan having two sonnes, &c., he made the elder of them, called Malcolme, prince of *Cumberland*, as it was thereby to appoint him successor in his kingdome immediatelie after his decease. Mackbeth sorely troubled herewith, for that he saw by this means his hope sore hindered, (where, by the old laws of the realme the ordinance was, that if he that should succeed were not of able age to take the charge upon himself, he that was next of bloud unto him should be admitted,) he began to take counsel how he might usurpe the kingdome by force, having a just quarrel so to doe (as he tooke the matter,) for that Duncane did what in him lay to defraud him of all manner of title and claime, which he might, in time to come, pretend unto the crowne." The crown of Scotland was originally not hereditary. When a successor was declared in the life-time of a king, (as was often the case,) the title of *Prince of Cumberland* was immediately bestowed on him as the mark of his designation. *Cumberland* was at that time held by Scotland of the crown of England as a fief.—*Stevens*.

²⁷ *The raven himself is hoarse.*

The *informant* of Duncan's approach to the place where he is to die, is the *raven* that croaks his fatal entrance; and *being scarcely able to speak his message*, is termed a raven of *unusual hoarseness*, or one more than commonly ominous of death. Lady Macbeth's conception being engrossed in her purpose, connects what is only accidental with it.—*Elwin*.

²⁸ *Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark.*

This imagery may appear to modern readers somewhat inconsistent with the dignity of the subject, but there is no reason for suspecting any corruption. Malone considers with some probability that it was suggested by the coarse woollen curtain of his own theatre, through which probably, while the house was yet but half lighted, he had himself often *peeped*. That the players did sometimes "peep" through such a curtain appears from the Prologue to the Unfortunate Lovers, 1643.

²⁹ *This castle hath a pleasant seat.*

Seat here means *situation*. Lord Bacon says, "He that builds a faire house upon an *ill seat*, committeth himself to prison. Neither doe I reckon it an *ill seat*, only where the aire is unwholsome, but likewise where the aire is unequal; as you shall see many fine seats set upon a knap of ground invironed with higher hills round about it, whereby the heat of the sunne is pent in, and the wind gathereth as in troughs; so as you shall have, and that suddenly, as great diversitie of heat and cold, as if you dwelt in several places."—*Essays*, 2d edit. 4to. 1632, p. 257.—*Reed*.

³⁰ *The temple-haunting martlet.*

Barlet, old eds. The bird was sometimes called *marlet*, as in Withals' Dictionarie, 1586, so only one letter may have been wrongly printed. Corrected by Rowe.

³¹ *No jutty, frieze.*

The word *jutty* has been considered as an epithet to *frieze*; but this is a mistake. A comma should have been placed after *jutty*. A *jutty*, or *jetty*, (for so it ought rather to be written,) is a substantive, signifying that part of a building which shoots forward beyond the rest. See Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: "*Barbacane*. An outnooke or corner standing out of a house; a *jettie*."—"*Sporto*. A porch, a portal, a bay-window; or out-butting, or *jettie*, of a house that jetties out farther than anie other part of the house."—See also *Surpendue*, in Cotgrave's French Dict. 1611: "A *jettie*; an out-jetting room."—*Malone*.

³² *Nor coigne of vantage.*

That is, convenient corner, the corner stone at the external angle of a building. (A.-N.) "*Versura* is also the *coygne* or corner of an house or walle wherat men dooe turne," Elyot.

³³ *The love that follows us, &c.*

Duncan expresses that the love of others is sometimes troublesome to us; but, because of the kind intention it contains, we receive it with the thanks due to love: in saying which, I teach you how you should ask God's blessing upon me for giving trouble to you. It is an elegantly punctilious mode of saying that regard for Macbeth and his wife is the cause of his visit. "*God eyld*"—that is, *God yield*—is an old phrase, signifying *God reward*.—*Elwin*.

³⁴ *A Sewer.*

A *sewer* was an *officer* so called from his placing the dishes upon the table. *Asseour*, French; from *asseoir*, to *place*. Thus, in Chapman's version of the 24th Iliad:—

—Automedon as fit
Was for the reverend *sewer's* place; and all the browne joints serv'd
On wicker vessell to the board.—*Stevens*.

³⁵ *If the assassination, &c.*

To *trammel up*, is to *net up*. His *surcease* means his *stop*. *His* is used, as it frequently is, for *its*, and relates to *consequence*. Macbeth fears that the *consequence* which will proceed from the murder he designs to commit will take from him the *success* he desires from it; and he here suggests the conditions by which only this result could be frustrated, in a metaphorical idea of *netting up the consequence* so that it cannot go forth, and, by this arrest of it, *catching* at the same time the *success* at which the assassination aimed. The literal meaning of the passage is, *If the assassination could net up its own consequence, and catch with his* (the consequence's) *stop, success, &c.* That is, if the assassination could attain the result desired, and obviate all other effects of the murder, &c.—*Elwin*.

³⁶ *Upon the sightless couriers of the air.*

Sightless expresses the double distinction of *blind* and *invisible*; neither seeing nor being seen; avoiding anything, or avoidable. *The couriers, or messengers of the air*, are the winds—visitants of all parts of the compass; and pity,

or heaven's cherubim, are imagined by the excited conception of Macbeth as moved, by the mercilessness of his contemplated offence, to use these to convey the deed to the perceptions of all men.—*Elwin*.

³⁷ *And falls on the other.*

I cannot help thinking that here the sentence is interrupted by the sight of Lady Macbeth.

³⁸ *Like the poor cat i' the adage.*

“The cat loveth fish, but she loveth not to wet her paw—Le chat aime le poisson, mais il n'aime pas à mouiller la patte,” Holyband's French Littelton, 1609. “The cat would eat fish, and would not wet her feet,” proverb in Camden's Remaines, ed. 1629, p. 273. “The cat loveth well fish, but she is loath her feet to wet,” *ibid.*, p. 275.

³⁹ *What beast was't then, &c.*

Lady Macbeth, perceiving that the exalted character of the argument adduced by her husband renders it impregnable to reasoning, skilfully brings him from the moral position in which he was intrenching himself, by ridiculing that position itself by this powerfully-derisive antithesis:—If, as you imply, this enterprize be not the device of a *man*, what *beast* induced *you* to propose it?—*Elwin*.

⁴⁰ *To the sticking-place.*

That is, to a fixed spot whence it cannot escape from you. So, in the Gorgious Gallery of Gallant Inventions, 1578,—

Which flower out of my hand shall never passe,
But in my harte shall have a *sticking-place*.

⁴¹ *Of our great quell.*

Quell is commonly interpreted here to mean *murder*; but it is very improbable that Lady Macbeth should be represented, in this place, as thus characterizing, to her husband, their mutual deed, by its most startling and revolting appellation. To *quell* is to *subdue*, to *defeat*; and, by using this word as a neuter noun, she contrives to veil the heinous nature of their guilt, under an expression at once significative of triumph and of the magnitude of the obstacle subdued. It is equivalent to our great *defeating*, or the great *defeat we make*. So, in Hamlet:

Upon whose property and most dear *life*,
A damn'd *defeat* was made.——*Elwin*.

Act the Second.

SCENE I.—*The Same. The Hall of MACBETH'S Castle.*¹

Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE, with a torch before him.

Ban. How goes the night, boy?

Fle. The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

Ban. And she goes down at twelve.

Fle. I take't, 'tis later, sir.

Ban. Hold, take my sword.—There's husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out.—Take thee that too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep: mereiful powers!²
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts, that nature
Gives way to in repose!—Give me my sword.—

Enter MACBETH, and a Servant with a torch.

Who's there?

Macb. A friend.

Ban. What, sir! not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your officers.³
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess, and shut up
In measureless content.

Macb. Being unprepar'd,
Our will became the servant to defect,⁴
Which else should free have wrought.

Ban. All's well.
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters :
To you they have show'd some truth.

Macb. I think not of them :
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business.
If you would grant the time.

Ban. At your kind'st leisure.
Macb. If you shall cleave to my consent,⁵ when 'tis,
It shall make honour for you.

Ban. So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchis'd, and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsell'd.

Macb. Good repose the while !

Ban. Thanks, sir : the like to you.

[*Exeunt* BANQUO and FLEANCE.]

Macb. Go ; bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.— [*Exit* Servant.]

Is this a dagger, which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand ? Come, let me clutch thee :—
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.

Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling, as to sight ? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppres'd brain ?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going ;
And such an instrument I was to use.—
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest : I see thee still ;
And on thy blade, and dudgeon, gouts of blood,⁶
Which was not so before.—There's no such thing :
It is the bloody business, which informs
Thus to mine eyes.—Now o'er the one half world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep : witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings ; and wither'd murder,

Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
 Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
 With Tarquin's ravishing strides,⁷ towards his design
 Moves like a ghost.—Thou sure and firm-set earth,
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
 Thy very stones prate of my where-about,
 And take the present horror from the time,⁸
 Which now suits with it.—Whiles I threat, he lives :
 Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives. [*A bell rings.*
 I go, and it is done : the bell invites me.
 Hear it not, Duncan ; for it is a knell,
 That summons thee to heaven or to hell! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Same.**Enter Lady MACBETH.*

Lady M. That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold :
 What hath quench'd them hath given me fire.—Hark !—Peace !
 It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,⁹
 Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it.
 The doors are open ; and the surfeited grooms
 Do mock their charge with snores : I have drugg'd their
 possets,
 That death and nature do contend about them,
 Whether they live, or die.

Macb. [*Within.*] Who's there ?—what, ho !

Lady M. Alack ! I am afraid they have awak'd,
 And 'tis not done :—the attempt, and not the deed,
 Confounds us.—Hark !—I laid their daggers ready,
 He could not miss them.—Had he not resembled
 My father as he slept, I had done't.—My husband ?

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. I have done the deed.—Didst thou not hear a noise ?

Lady M. I heard the owl screeam, and the crickets cry.
 Did not you speak ?

Macb. When?

Lady M. Now.

Macb. As I descended?

Lady M. Ay.

Macb. Hark!

Who lies i' the second chamber?

Lady M. Donalbain.

Macb. This is a sorry sight. [*Looking on his hands.*]

Lady M. A foolish thought to say a sorry sight.

Macb. There's one did laugh i' s sleep, and one cried,
"murder!"

That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them;
But they did say their prayers, and address'd them
Again to sleep.

Lady M. There are two lodg'd together.

Macb. One cried, "God bless us!" and, "Amen," the other,
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
Listening their fear, I could not say amen,
When they did say God bless us.

Lady M. Consider it not so deeply.

Macb. But wherefore could not I pronounce amen?
I had most need of blessing, and "amen"
Stuck in my throat.

Lady M. These deeds must not be thought
After these ways: so, it will make us mad.

Macb. Methought, I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep,"—the innocent sleep;
Sleep, that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,¹⁰
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast;—

Lady M. What do you mean?

Macb. Still it cried, "Sleep no more!" to all the house:
"Glamis hath murder'd sleep,"¹¹ and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more!"

Lady M. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsieklly of things. Go, get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.—
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: go, carry them, and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

Macb. I'll go no more :
I am afraid to think what I have done ;
Look on't again, I dare not.

Lady M. Infirm of purpose !
Give me the daggers. The sleeping, and the dead,
Are but as pictures : 'tis the eye of childhood,
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal,
For it must seem their guilt.¹² [*Exit.—Knocking within.*]

Macb. Whence is that knocking ?—
How is't with me, when every noise appals me ?
What hands are here ? Ha ! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand ? No ; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnardine,¹³
Making the green one, red.

Re-enter Lady MACBETH.

Lady M. My hands are of your colour ; but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knock.*] I hear a knocking
At the south entry :—retire we to our chamber.
A little water clears us of this deed :
How easy is it then ! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended.—[*Knock.*] Hark ! more knocking.
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers.—Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

Macb. To know my deed,¹⁴ 'twere best not know myself.
Wake Duncan with thy knocking : I would thou couldst !
[*Knock.*]
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Same.*

Enter a Porter. [*Knocking within.*]

Porter. Here's a knocking, indeed ! If a man were porter of
hell-gate, he should have old turning the key. [*Knocking.*]

Knock, knock, knock. Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? —Here's a farmer,¹⁵ that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty: come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you'll sweat for't. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock. Who's there, in the other devil's name?—'Faith, here's an equivocator,¹⁶ that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O! come in, equivocator. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock, knock. Who's there?—'Faith, here's an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock. Never at quiet! What are you?—But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no farther: I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking.*] Anon, anon: I pray you remember the porter. [*Opens the gate.*]

Enter MACDUFF and LENOX.

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

Port. 'Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock;¹⁷
and drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things.

Macd. What three things does drink especially provoke?

Port. Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance. Therefore, much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to, and not stand to: in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him.

Macd. I believe, drink gave thee the lie last night.

Port. That it did, sir, i' the very throat on me: but I requited him for his lie; and, I think, being too strong for him, though he took up my legs sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.¹⁸

Macd. Is thy master stirring?—

Enter MACBETH.

Our knocking has awak'd him; here he comes.

Len. Good-morrow, noble sir !

Macb. Good-morrow, both !

Macd. Is the king stirring, worthy thane ?

Macb. Not yet.

Macd. He did command me to call timely on him :
I have almost slipp'd the hour.

Macb. I'll bring you to him.

Macd. I know, this is a joyful trouble to you ;
But yet, 'tis one.

Macb. The labour we delight in physics pain.
This is the door.

Macd. I'll make so bold to call,
For 'tis my limited service. [*Exit* MACDUFF.]

Len. Goes the king hence to-day ?

Macb. He does :—he did appoint so.

Len. The night has been unruly : where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down ;¹⁹ and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air ; strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible²⁰
Of dire combustion, and confus'd events,
New hatch'd to the woeful time. The obscure bird
Clamour'd the livelong night : some say, the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

Macb. 'Twas a rough night.

Len. My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

Re-enter MACDUFF.

Macd. O horror ! horror ! horror ! Tongue, nor heart,
Cannot conceive, nor name thee !

Macb. Len. What's the matter ?

Macd. Confusion now hath made his master-piece.
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building.

Macb. What is't you say ? the life ?

Len. Mean you his majesty ?

Macd. Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon.—Do not bid me speak :
See, and then speak yourselves.—Awake ! awake !—

[*Exeunt* MACBETH and LENOX.]

Ring the alarm-bell.—Murder, and treason!
 Banquo, and Donalbain! Malcolm, awake!
 Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
 And look on death itself!—up, up, and see
 The great doom's image!—Malcolm! Banquo!
 As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites
 To countenance this horror! Ring the bell.

[*Bell rings.*]

Enter Lady MACBETH.

Lady M. What's the business,
 That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
 The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!

Macd. O, gentle lady!
 'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:
 The repetition, in a woman's ear,

Enter BANQUO.

Would murder as it fell.—O Banquo! Banquo!
 Our royal master's murder'd!

Lady M. Woe, alas!
 What! in our house?

Ban. Too eruel, anywhere.
 Dear Duff, I pr'ythee, contradict thyself,
 And say, it is not so.

Re-enter MACBETH and LENOX.

Macb. Had I but died an hour before this chance,
 I had liv'd a blessed time, for from this instant
 There's nothing serious in mortality;
 All is but toys: renown and grace, is dead;
 The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
 Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.

Don. What is amiss?

Macb. You are, and do not know't:
 The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
 Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.

Macd. Your royal father's murder'd.

Mal. O! by whom?

Len. Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't.
Their hands and faces were all badg'd with blood;
So were their daggers, which, unwip'd, we found
Upon their pillows: they star'd, and were distracted.
No man's life was to be trusted with them.

Macb. O! yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.

Macd. Wherefore did you so?

Macb. Who can be wise, amaz'd, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
The expedition of my violent love
Out-ran the pauser reason.—Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin lac'd with his golden blood;
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature,
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd with gore.²¹ Who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage, to make 's love known?

Lady M. Help me hence, ho!

Macd. Look to the lady.

Mal. Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours?

Don. What should be spoken
Here, where our fate, hid in an auger-hole,
May rush, and seize us? Let's away: our tears
Are not yet brew'd.

Mal. Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.

Ban. Look to the lady.—

[*Lady MACBETH is carried out.*]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it farther. Fear and scruples shake us:
In the great hand of God I stand; and, thence,
Against the undivulg'd pretence I fight²²
Of treasonous malice.

Macd. And so do I.

All. So all.

Macb. Let's briefly put on manly readiness,
And meet i' the hall together.

All. Well contented.

[*Exeunt all but MAL. and DON.*]

Mal. What will you do? Let's not consort with them:
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

Don. To Ireland, I: our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer; where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.

Mal. This murderous shaft that's shot
Hath not yet lighted,²³ and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim: therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away. There's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Without the Castle.*

Enter ROSSE and an Old Man.

Old M. Threescore and ten I can remember well;
Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful, and things strange, but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings.

Rosse. Ah! good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's aet,
Threaten his bloody stage: by the clock 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp.
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,²⁴
When living light should kiss it?

Old Man. 'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at, and kill'd.

Rosse. And Duncan's horses—a thing most strange and
certain,—

Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would
Make war with mankind.

Old M. 'Tis said, they ate each other.

Rosse. They did so; to th' amazement of mine eyes,
That look'd upon't. Here comes the good Maeduff.—

Enter MACDUFF.

How goes the world, sir, now?

Macd. Why, see you not?

Rosse. Is't known, who did this more than bloody deed?

Macd. Those that Macbeth hath slain.

Rosse. Alas, the day!

What good could they pretend?

Macd. They were suborn'd.

Malcolm, and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled; which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.

Rosse. 'Gainst nature still:
Thrifless ambition, that will ravin up
Thine own life's means!—Then, 'tis most like,
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

Macd. He is already named, and gone to Scone
To be invested.

Rosse. Where is Dunean's body?

Macd. Carried to Colme-kill;²⁵
The sacred store-house of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

Rosse. Will you to Scone?

Macd. No, cousin; I'll to Fife.

Rosse. Well, I will thither.

Macd. Well, may you see things well done there:—adieu—
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

Rosse. Farewell, father.

Old M. God's benison go with you; and with those,
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes. [*Exeunt.*]

Notes to the Second Act.

¹ *The Hall of Macbeth's Castle.*

This seems the most likely to be the correct place of scene. Dr. Johnson demurs to it, observing that Banquo sees the sky; but this notion appears to be founded in error. He merely looks up to the large uncurtained window of the Hall, and, observing the pitchy darkness, knows that the candles of Heaven are put out.

² *Merciful powers, &c.*

Banquo has put from him his several weapons of defence ("Hold, take my sword:" . . . "take thee that too.") from horror at the particular use his dreams have prompted him to make of them; and although a heavy summons to sleep lies like lead upon him, he is resisting its influence to avoid the evil suggestions that intrude upon his repose. He resumes his sword upon hearing approaching footsteps.—*Elwin.*

³ *Sent forth great largess to your officers.*

Offices, old eds. There seems no doubt but that it is a misprint for *officers*, servants, for a largess could hardly be sent to the offices. The conclusion of this speech seems imperfect, some line or more being perhaps omitted. *Shut up*, enclosed.

⁴ *Our will became the servant to defect.*

This is obscurely expressed. The meaning seems to be:—"Being unprepared, our entertainment was necessarily *defective*, and we only had it in our power to show the King our *willingness* to *serve* him. Had we received sufficient notice of his coming, our zeal should have been more clearly manifested by our *acts*. *Which* refers, not to the last antecedent, *defect*, but to *will*.—*Malone.*

⁵ *If you shall cleave to my consent.*

As Macbeth's timidity in crime renders him desirous of an associate, he is sounding his way, to discover if Banquo will join him in the murder he purposes, and he designedly obscures his guilty question, though not so entirely but that Banquo (if he be inclined to participate with him) may easily apprehend his meaning. *If you shall hold to what I consent to do, when 'tis done, it shall be*

to your advantage. The answer he receives deters him from any further assay of the matter.—*Elwin.*

⁶ *And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood.*

Dudgeon, a handle of a dagger made of box, *dudgeon* being a name for the root of box, of which handles for daggers were frequently made, and hence called *dudgeon-hafted-daggers*, or sometimes *dudgeon-daggers*, or *dudgeons*. Hence, according to Gifford, anything homely was called *dudgeon*, wooden-handled daggers not being used by the higher rank of persons. *Dudgeon* wood is mentioned in the Book of Rates, p. 35, Brit. Bibl. ii. 402. *Gouts*, drops; *Gontle*, Fr.

⁷ *With Torquin's ravishing strides.*

This sentence is powerfully expressive of the noiseless advance of one whose whole mind is concentrated on an evil purpose. As the method of his action arises in order, in the apprehension of Macbeth, through his incessantly increasing excitement, *wariness* first presents itself to him, as necessary to his object, and then *celerity*; and the natural movement of *hasty caution* would invariably be by the gliding motion of lengthened steps. The original folio has *sides*, instead of *strides*; the emendation being made by Pope. It is confirmed by the synonymous term applied by Shakespeare to the motions of 'Tarquin, in the Rape of Lucrece:—"Into her chamber wickedly he stalks.—*Elwin.*

⁸ *And take the present horror from the time.*

Macbeth, under the influence of his own pernicious purposes, images night, in its darkness, as a season in which the dark thoughts and actions of evil only are in motion: and, with an absorbing sense of his great guilt, designates the *murder*, he now bends his steps to commit, as the *present horror*. With this apprehension of the unmitigated wickedness of his deed, he renders the natural fear of being overheard, by the expression of a spiritual dread lest the fixed and impassible earth should, through a terrible perception of his crime, purposely yield an echo to his tread, and, by betraying where he goes, frustrate his intention, at a time which is, in his troubled conception, so congenial to it. The term *horror* is again used substantively for an *horrible thing*, in the next scene, with reference to the murder of Duncan; and it also occurs, with a similar meaning, in King Lear:—



Kent. Is this the promis'd end?

Edg. Or image of that horror?
Elwin.

⁹ *The fatal bellman.*

As this allusion may be fairly considered an anachronism, no apology can be necessary for introducing a representation of the bellman of Shakespeare's own time from a rude woodcut attached to a black-letter ballad.

¹⁰ *Sleep, that knits up the ravel'd sleave of care.*

That is, the *unwoven* sleave. The image presented is, the much-used sleeve of Want, worn into loose

threads, through the need of the owner and the neglect of a painfully occupied mind.—*Elwin*.

¹¹ *Glamis hath murder'd sleep.*

This exclamation breaks from Macbeth, in the strong delirium of fearful remorse; a sensation which is here naturally and wonderfully expressed. Having, under one designation, *murdered sleep*, it exists no more for him under any *title* or *name* he can assume. Without heeding the interruption of Lady Macbeth, he has continued the current of thought in which his speech commenced:

Methought, I heard a voice cry, 'Sleep no more!'
'Macbeth does *murder sleep*,'

That is, *converts it into death*.—*Elwin*.

¹² *For it must seem their guilt.*

The double reference here made to *gilt*, *gilding*, and *guilt*, *criminality*, serves to exhibit most forcibly, in the ferocious levity of the expression, the strained and sanguinary excitement of Lady Macbeth's mind, under the twofold influence of recent drink and recent crime: I'll *gild* the faces of the grooms withal, for it must seem both their *gilt* and their *guilt*; that is, the *gilding* must appear to be the effect of their *guilt*.—*Elwin*.

¹³ *The multitudinous seas incarnadine.*

Others write it *incarnadine* :—

One shall ensphere thine eyes, another shall
Impearl thy teeth, a third thy white and small
Hand shall be snow, a fourth *incarnadine*
Thy rosie cheek. *Carew's Poems*, 1651. F 7.

The word was, for a time, thought peculiar to Shakespeare; but Lovelace is also quoted as using *incarnadine* as an adjective. See *Todd*. In the next line, Shakespeare surely meant only "making the green *sea* red." The other interpretation, which implies its making "the green (sea) one entire red," seems to me harsh and forced. The punctuation of the folios supports the more natural construction.—*Nares*.

¹⁴ *To know my deed, &c.*

This is said in reply to the final precept of Lady Macbeth's exhortation, "*Be not lost* so poorly in your thoughts;" the phrase, "*not know myself*," having this double import: With a knowledge of my deed, I were better *lost to the knowledge both of my nature and of my existence*.—*Elwin*.

¹⁵ *Here's a farmer, &c.*

¹⁵ That God hath made the curses of the poore effectuall upon such covetous corne-horders, even in recent remembrance, may appeare by this, that some of this cursed crue have become their own executioners, and in kindnesse have saved the hang-man a labour by haltering themselves, when, contrary to their expectation, the price of corne hath sodainly fallen: and this both in other countries, and among us, as divines of good reputation have delivered upon their owne knowledge.—*The Curse of Corne-horders*, 1631, p. 24.

¹⁶ *Here's an equivocator.*

Meaning a Jesuit: an order so troublesome to the state in Queen Elizabeth

and King James the First's time. The inventors of the execrable doctrine of *equivocation*.—*Warburton*.

¹⁷ *Till the second cock.*

Cockerowing. So, in *King Lear*: “— he begins at curfew, and walks till the first *cock*.” Again, in the *Twelfth Mery Jeste of the Widow Edith, 1573*:—

The time they pas merely til ten of the klok,
Yea, and I shall not lye, till after the first *cock*.—*Steevens*.

It appears, from a passage in *Romeo and Juliet*, that Shakspeare means that they were carousing till *three o'clock*:—

— The *second cock* has crow'd ;
The curfew-bell has toll'd: 'tis *three o'clock*.—*Malone*.

¹⁸ *I made a shift to cast him.*

To *cast him up*, to ease my stomach of him. The equivocation is between *cast* or *throw*, as a term of wrestling, and *cast* or *cast up*.—*Johnson*.

I find a similar play upon words, in an old comedy, entitled, the *Two Angry Women of Abingdon*, printed 1599: “— to-night he's a good huswife, he reels all that he wrought to-day, and he were good now to play at dice, for he *casts* excellent well.”—*Steevens*.

¹⁹ *Our chimneys were blown down.*

An anachronism, for there were no chimneys in *Macbeth's* time. One of the most primitive forms of the chimney is seen in the annexed engraving, copied by Mr. Fairholt from a medieval manuscript.



²⁰ *And prophecying with accents terrible.*

This is called a *prophesy* of events *new-hatched*, or already in existence, because the information is conveyed by *supernatural means*; and the events, though born, are as yet indistinguishable to those to whom this mystic intelligence is given.—*Elwin*.

²¹ *Their daggers unmannerly breech'd with gore.*

The lower extremity of any thing might be called the *breech*, as the *breech* of a gun, and Dr. Farmer has quoted a passage which proves that the handles of daggers were actually so termed. Instead therefore of concluding with him that Shakspeare had seen that passage, and mistaken it, we should use it to confirm the true explanation, which is this: “having their very hilt, or *breech*, covered with blood.”—*Nares*.

²² *Against the undivulg'd pretence I fight.*

“*Pretence*” is *intention, design*, a sense in which the word is often used by Shakspeare. So in the next scene, Rosse asks, “What good could they *pretend*?”—*Collier*.

²³ *Hath not yet lighted.*

The shaft has not yet fallen to the ground, and may, therefore, accomplish yet another murder.

²⁴ *Darkness does the face of earth intomb.*

After the murder of King Duffe, says Holinshed, "for the space of six moneths together there appeared no sunne by day, nor moone by night, in anie part of the realme, but still was the sky covered with continual clouds; and sometimes such outrageous winds arose with lightenings and tempests, that the people were in great fear of present destruction."—It is evident that Shakspeare had this passage in his thoughts.—*Malone.*

²⁵ *Carried to Colme-kill.*

This is the famous Iona, one of the western isles. Holinshed scarcely mentions the death of any of the ancient kings of Scotland, without taking notice of their being buried with their predecessors in Colme-kill.—*Steevens.*

Act the Third.

SCENE I.—Fores. *A Room in the Palace.*

Enter BANQUO.

Ban. Thou hast it now, King, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women promis'd; and, I fear,
Thou play'st most foully for't: yet it was said,
It should not stand in thy posterity;
But that myself should be the root, and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them,—
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope? But, hush; no more.

Senet sounded. Enter MACBETH, as King; Lady MACBETH, as Queen; LENOX, ROSSE, Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.

Macb. Here's our chief guest.

Lady M. If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all thing unbecoming.

Macb. To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.

Ban. Let your highness
Command upon me,¹ to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.

Macb. Ride you this afternoon?

Ban. Ay, my good lord.

Macb. We should have else desir'd your good advice—
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous—
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.²
Is't far you ride?

Ban. As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour, or twain.

Macb. Fail not our feast.

Ban. My lord, I will not.

Macb. We hear, our bloody cousins are bestow'd
In England, and in Ireland; not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention. But of that to-morrow;
When, therewithal, we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

Ban. Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon us.

Macb. I wish your horses swift, and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell.—

[*Exit BANQUO.*]

Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night, to make society
The sweeter welcome; we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone: while then, God be with you.

[*Exeunt Lady MACBETH, Lords, Ladies, &c.*]

Sirrah, a word with you. Attend those men
Our pleasure?

Atten. They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

Macb. Bring them before us.—[*Exit Atten.*] To be thus is
nothing,
But to be safely thus.—Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep, and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd: 'tis much he dares;
And to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour

To act in safety. There is none but he
 Whose being I do fear, and under him
 My genius is rebuk'd,³ as, it is said,
 Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters,
 When first they put the name of King upon me,
 And bade them speak to him; then, prophet-like,
 They hail'd him father to a line of kings.
 Upon my head they plac'd a fruitless crown,
 And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
 Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
 No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
 For Banquo's issue have I fil'd my mind,⁴
 For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;
 Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
 Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
 Given to the common enemy of man,
 To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
 Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,
 And champion me to the utterance!⁵—Who's there?

Re-enter Attendant, with two Murderers.

Now, go to the door, and stay there till we call.

[*Exit Attendant.*]

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

I Mur. It was, so please your highness.

Macb.

Well then, now

Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know,
 That it was he, in the times past, which held you
 So under fortune; which, you thought, had been
 Our innocent self. This I made good to you
 In our last conference; pass'd in probation with you,
 How you were borne in hand; how cross'd; the instruments;
 Who wrought with them; and all things else, that might,
 To half a soul, and to a notion craz'd,
 Say, "Thus did Banquo."

I Mur.

You made it known to us.

Macb. I did so; and went farther, which is now
 Our point of second meeting. Do you find
 Your patience so predominant in your nature,
 That you can let this go? Are you so gossell'd
 To pray for this good man, and for his issue,

Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave,
And beggar'd yours for ever?

1 *Mur.* We are men, my liege.

Macb. Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men,
As hounds, and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves, are cleped
All by the name of dogs: the valued file⁶
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The house-keeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him clos'd, whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike; and so of men.
Now, if you have a station in the file
Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say it,
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.

2 *Mur.* I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incens'd, that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

1 *Mur.* And I another,
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it, or be rid on't.

Macb. Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.

2 *Mur.* True, my lord.

Macb. So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,⁷
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life: and though I could
With bare-fac'd power sweep him from my sight,
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
Whom I myself struck down: and thence it is,
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.

2 *Mur.* We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.

1 *Mur.* Though our lives—

Macb. Your spirits shine through you. · Within this hour, at
most,

I will advise you where to plant yourselves,
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,⁸
The moment on't; for't must be done to-night,
And something from the palace; always thought,
That I require a clearness:⁹ and with him,—
To leave no rubs, nor botches, in the work—
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart:
I'll come to you anon.

2 *Mur.* We are resolv'd, my lord.

Macb. I'll call upon you straight: abide within.

[*Exeunt* Murderers.]

It is concluded: Banquo, thy soul's flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The Same. Another Room.*

Enter Lady MACBETH and a Servant.

Lady M. Is Banquo gone from court?

Serv. Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

Lady M. Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.

Serv. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*]

Lady M. Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter MACBETH.

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,

Using those thoughts, which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy,
Should be without regard: what's done, is done.

Macb. We have scotch'd the snake,¹⁰ not kill'd it:
She'll close, and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams,
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,
Whom we to gain our peace have sent to peace,¹¹
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him farther!

Lady M. Come on:
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.
Macb. So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you.
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo:
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue:
Unsafe the while,¹² that we must lave our honours
In these flattering streams, and make our faces
Vizards to our hearts, disguising what they are.

Lady M. You must leave this.
Macb. O! full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife.
Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleance live.

Lady M. But in them nature's copy's not eterne.¹³
Macb. There's comfort yet; they are assailable:
Then, be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight; ere to black Hecate's summons
The shard-borne beetle,¹⁴ with his drowsy hums,
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

Lady M. What's to be done?
Macb. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,¹⁵
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,
And with thy bloody and invisible hand,
Cancel, and tear to pieces, that great bond

Which keeps me pale!—Light thickens; and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood:¹⁶

Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.¹⁷

Thou marvell'st at my words; but hold thee still:
Things, bad begun, make strong themselves by ill.

So, pr'ythee, go with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Same. A Park, with a road leading to the
Palace.*

Enter Three Murderers.

1 *Mur.* But who did bid thee join with us?

3 *Mur.* Macbeth.

2 *Mur.* He needs not our mistrust; since he delivers
Our offices, and what we have to do,
To the direction just.

1 *Mur.* Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
Now spurs the lated traveller apace,
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
The subject of our watch.

3 *Mur.* Hark! I hear horses.

Ban. [*Within.*] Give us a light there, ho!

2 *Mur.* Then, 'tis he · the rest
That are within the note of expectation
Already are i' the court.

1 *Mur.* His horses go about.

3 *Mur.* Almost a mile; but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE, with a torch.

2 *Mur.* A light, a light!

3 *Mur.* 'Tis he.

1 *Mur.* Stand to't.

Ban. It will be rain to-night.

1 *Mur.* Let it come down.

[*Assaults BANQUO.*

Ban. O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou may'st revenge.—O slave!

[*Dies.* FLEANCE and Servant escape.¹⁸

3 *Mur.* Who did strike out the light?

1 *Mur.* Was't not the way?

3 *Mur.* There's but one down: the son is fled.

2 *Mur.* We have lost best half of our affair.

1 *Mur.* Well, let's away, and say how much is done.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Room of State in the Palace.*

*A Banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, Lady MACBETH,
ROSSE, LENOX, Lords, and Attendants.*

Macb. You know your own degrees; sit down: at first
And last, the hearty welcome.¹⁹

Lords. Thanks to your majesty.

Macb. Ourselves will mingle with society,
And play the humble host.

Our hostess keeps her state;²⁰ but in best time
We will require her welcome.

Lady M. Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;
For my heart speaks, they are welcome.

Enter first Murderer, to the door.

Macb. See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i' the midst.
Be large in mirth; anon, we'll drink a measure
The table round.—There's blood upon thy face.

Mur. 'Tis Banquo's then.

Macb. 'Tis better thee without, than he within.
Is he despatch'd?

Mur. My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

Macb. Thou art the best o' the cut-throats;

walkes to some room where they being
fled they were supposed guilty of the mur-
der of their father which was not true so
Then was Macbeth crowned King
and Banquo for feare of Banquo his old
Companion that he should betray him
but he no longer grew selfe he returned
the death of Banquo and caused him
to be murdered on the way as he said.
The next night being at supper with
his noble men whom he had bid to a
feast to see with also Banquo (and
himself) he began to speak of Macbeth
and to wish that he were dead. And
as he was doing standing by to Duncan
Cassius to him. The ghost of Banquo
came and sat down in his chair be-
hind him. And he murmured about to
sit down again sawe the ghost of Banquo
which troubled him so. that he fell in a
great passion of fear & fury. Wherupon
he said many wordes about his murder by
whom he said that Banquo was murdered
they suspected Macbeth
Then Macbeth departed to England to see King
James. And he did raise an Army and ran
into Scotland. and at Dunbar fought with
James Macbeth. In the mean while
Queen was in England Macbeth slew
Macduff with his children and after
the battell Macduff slew Macbeth
of some also some Macbeth Queen did die in
the night in her sleep & was buried and
suffered all these things noted for words of

Yet he is good, that did the like for Fleance :
If thou didst it, thou art the nonpareil.

Mur. Most royal sir, Fleance is 'scap'd.

Macb. Then comes my fit again : I had else been perfect ;
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad, and general as the easing air ;
But now, I am eabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in
To sauey doubts and fears.—But Banquo's safe ?

Mur. Ay, my good lord, safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head ;
The least a death to nature.

Macb. Thanks for that.—
There the grown serpent lies : the worm,²¹ that's fled,
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for the present.—Get thee gone : to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again. [*Exit* Murderer.]

Lady M. My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer : the feast is sold,
That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a making ;
'Tis given with welcome. To feed were best at home ;
From thence the sauce to meat is eeremony,
Meeting were bare without it.

Macb. Sweet remembrancer !—
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both !

Len. May it please your highness sit ?

[*The Ghost of BANQUO enters, and sits in MACBETH's place.*]

Macb. Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,
Were the grae'd person of our Banquo present ;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness,
Than pity for mischance !

Rosse. His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please it your highness
To grace us with your royal company ?

Macb. The table's full.

Len. Here is a place reserv'd, sir.

Macb. Where ?

Len. Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness ?

Macb. Which of you have done this ?

Lords. What, my good lord ?

Macb. Thou canst not say, I did it : never shake
Thy gory locks at me.

Rosse. Gentlemen, rise ; his highness is not well.

Lady M. Sit, worthy friends. My lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth : pray you, keep seat.
The fit is momentary ; upon a thought
He will again be well. If much you note him,
You shall offend him, and extend his passion ;²²
Feed, and regard him not.—Are you a man ?

Macb. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.

Lady M. O, proper stuff !
This is the very painting of your fear :
This is the air-drawn dagger, which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O ! these flaws, and starts,—
Impostors to true fear²³—would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authoriz'd by her grandam. Shame itself !
Why do you make such faces ? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

Macb. Pr'ythee, see there ! behold ! look ! lo ! how say you ?—
Why, what care I ? If thou canst nod, speak too.—
If charnel-houses, and our graves, must send
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites. [Ghost disappears.]

Lady M. What ! quite unmann'd in folly ?

Macb. If I stand here, I saw him.

Lady M. Fie ! for shame !

Macb. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' th' olden time,
Ere human statute purg'd the gentle weal ;
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
Too terrible for the ear : the times have been,
That when the brains were out the man would die,
And there an end ; but now, they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools. This is more strange
Than such a murder is.

Lady M. My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

Macb. I do forget.—
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends ;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all,
Then, I'll sit down.—Give me some wine : fill full.—

Re-enter Ghost.

I drink to the general joy of the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss ;
Would he were here ! to all, and him we thirst,
And all to all.

Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.

Macb. Avaunt ! and quit my sight. Let the earth hide thee !
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold ;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes,
Which thou dost glare with.

Lady M. Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom : 'tis no other ;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

Macb. What man dare, I dare :
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger ;²⁴
Take any shape but that,²⁵ and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble : or, be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword ;
If trembling I inhibit,²⁶ then protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow !

[*Ghost disappears.*

Unreal mockery, hence !—Why, so ;—being gone,
I am a man again.—Pray you, sit still.

Lady M. You have displac'd the mirth, broke the good
meeting,
With most admir'd disorder.

Macb. Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder ? You make me strange,²⁷
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine are blanch'd with fear.

Rosse. What sights, my lord ?

Lady M. I pray you, speak not : he grows worse and worse ;
Question enrages him. At once, good night :
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.

Len. Good night; and better health
Attend his majesty.

Lady M. A kind good night to all!

[*Exeunt* Lords and Attendants.]

Macb. It will have blood, they say; blood will have blood:
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak;
Augurs, and understood relations,²⁸ have
By magot-pies, and eoughs, and rooks, brought forth
The seeret'st man of blood.—What is the night?

Lady M. Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

Macb. How say'st thou,²⁹ that Maeduff denies his person,
At our great bidding?

Lady M. Did you send to him, sir?

Macb. I hear it by the way: but I will send.
There's not a one of them, but in his house
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,—
And betimes I will—to the weird sisters:
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,
All causes shall give way: I am in blood
Stept in so far, that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er.
Strange things I have in head, that will to hand,
Which must be acted, ere they may be scann'd.

Lady M. You laek the season of all natures, sleep.

Macb. Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
Is the initiate fear, that wants hard use:
We are yet but young in deed.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*The Heath.*

Thunder. Enter HECATE,³⁰ meeting the Three Witches.

1 *Witch.* Why, how now, Hecate! you look angrily.

Hec. Have I not reason, beldams as you are,
Saucy, and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffie with Maebeth,
In riddles, and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,

The close contriver of all harms,
 Was never call'd to bear my part,
 Or show the glory of our art?
 And, which is worse, all you have done
 Hath been but for a wayward son,
 Spiteful, and wrathful; who, as others do,
 Loves for his own ends, not for you.³¹
 But make amends now: get you gone,
 And at the pit of Acheron
 Meet me i' the morning: thither he
 Will come to know his destiny.
 Your vessels, and your spells, provide,
 Your charms, and every thing beside.
 I am for the air; this night I'll spend
 Unto a dismal and a fatal end:
 Great business must be wrought ere noon.
 Upon the corner of the moon
 There hangs a vaporous drop profound;
 I'll catch it ere it come to ground:
 And that, distill'd by magic sleights,
 Shall raise such artificial sprites,
 As by the strength of their illusion,
 Shall draw him on to his confusion.
 He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
 His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear;
 And, you all know, security
 Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

Song. [*Within.*] *Come away, come away,*³² &c.
 Hark! I am call'd: my little spirit, see,
 Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me.

[*Exit.*

1 *Witch.* Come, let's make haste: she'll soon be back again.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—Fores. *A Room in the Palace.*

Enter LENOX *and another Lord.*

Len. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
 Which can interpret farther: only, I say,
 Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan

Was pitied of Macbeth :—marry, he was dead ;
 And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late ;
 Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance kill'd,
 For Fleance fled. Men must not walk too late.
 Who cannot want the thought,³³ how monstrous
 It was for Malcolm, and for Donalbain,
 To kill their gracious father ? damned fact !
 How it did grieve Macbeth ! did he not straight,
 In pious rage the two delinquents tear,
 That were the slaves of drink, and thralls of sleep ?
 Was not that nobly done ? Ay, and wisely, too ;
 For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive,
 To hear the men deny 't. So that, I say,
 He has borne all things well ; and I do think,
 That had he Duncan's sons under his key,—
 As, an't please heaven, he shall not—they should find
 What 'twere to kill a father ; so should Fleance.
 But, peace !—for from broad words, and 'cause he fail'd
 His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear,
 Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell
 Where he bestows himself ?

Lord. The son of Duncan,
 From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
 Lives in the English court ; and is receiv'd
 Of the most pious Edward with such grace,
 That the malevolence of fortune nothing
 Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff
 Is gone, to pray the holy king upon his aid
 To wake Northumberland, and warlike Siward ;
 That by the help of these,—with Him above
 To ratify the work—we may again
 Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
 Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
 Do faithful homage, and receive free honours,
 All which we pine for now. And this report
 Hath so exasperate their king,³⁴ that he
 Prepares for some attempt of war.

Len. Sent he to Macduff ?

Lord. He did : and with an absolute, “ Sir, not I,”
 The cloudy messenger turns me his back,
 And hums, as who should say, “ You'll rue the time
 That clogs me with this answer.”

Len. And that well might
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England, and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accurs'd!

Lord. I'll send my prayers with him!

[*Exeunt.*]

Notes to the Third Act.

¹ *Let your highness command upon me.*

“Lay your,” Davenant. *Upon*, here signifies *over*, as in an old translation of a sentence in the New Testament: “He beheld the city, and wept *upon* it.” Banquo expresses his recognition of the general and perpetual supremacy of sovereignty in Macbeth:—Let your highness command *over* me; to the which fulness of command, my duties are *for ever* knit.—*Elwin*.

² *But we'll take tomorrow.*

Take.—This is the word of the original, which Steevens has very properly retained; although Malone changes it to *talk*. It is difficult to imagine a more unnecessary change. Who could doubt our meaning if we were to say, “Well, sir, if you cannot come this afternoon, we will *take* to-morrow?”—*Knight*.

³ *And, under him, my genius is rebuk'd.*

It was a prevailing notion, in the time of Shakespeare, that the spirit of one man was sometimes supernaturally controlled by that of another, beyond his power of resisting it; which is thus exemplified by Lord Bacon. “There was an Egyptian soothsayer, that made Antonius believe that his genius, which otherwise was brave and confident, was, in the presence of Octavius Cæsar, poor and cowardly: and therefore he advised him to absent himself as much as he could, and remove far from him. This soothsayer was thought to be suborned by Cleopatra, to make him live in Egypt and other remote places from Rome. Howsoever, the conceit of a predominant or mastering spirit of one man over another is ancient, and received still, even in vulgar opinion.”—Bacon's Works, vol. iv., p. 504.—*Elwin*.

⁴ *For Banquo's issue have I fil'd my mind.*

That is, *defiled* my mind. To file is often used for to *defile*, by elision of the preposition. We meet with it in Rowland's Looke to It, for Ile Stabbe Yee, 1604, “Ile *fyle* no hands upon thee.” Other authorities are needless.—*Collier*.

⁵ *And champion me to the utterance.*

This passage will be best explained by translating it into the language from whence the only word of difficulty in it is borrowed. “*Que la destinée se rend en lice, et qu’elle me donne un défi a l’outrance.*” A challenge, or a combat *a l’outrance*, to extremity, was a fixed term in the law of arms, used when the combatants engaged with an *odium internecinum*, an intention to destroy each other, in opposition to trials of skill at festivals, or on other occasions, where the contest was only for reputation or a prize. The sense therefore is: ‘Let fate, that has fore-doomed the exaltation of the sons of Banquo, enter the lists against me, with the utmost animosity, in defence of its own decrees, which I will endeavour to invalidate, whatever be the danger.—*Johnson.*

⁶ *The valued file.*

“The valued file” is the file or list where the value and peculiar qualities of every thing is set down, in contradistinction to what he immediately mentions, “the bill that writes them all alike.” *File*, in the second instance, is used in the same sense as in this, and with a reference to it: “Now if you belong to any class that deserves a place in the valued *file* of man, and are not of the lowest rank, the common herd of mankind, that are not worth distinguishing from each other.—*Stevens.*

⁷ *And in such bloody distance.*

Bloody distance denotes the *fatal space* between mortal antagonists in fight, which here figuratively represents *active antagonism* in feeling; and one, every minute of whose existence threatens to destroy that *which sits nearest the heart or life in desire*, is imaged by a foe in mortal combat, whose thrusts are incessantly directed *nearest to the heart, or most vital part of the body.*—*Elwin.*

⁸ *Acquaint you with the perfect spy o’ the time.*

Spy is here employed as a noun, derived from the verb to *spy*, and signifies *discovery by secrecy and artifice*. Macbeth expresses, I will acquaint you with the infallible *discovery by secret and cunning examination*, of the time of Banquo’s coming by.—*Elwin.*

⁹ *That I require a clearness.*

That is, you must manage matters so, that throughout the whole transaction I may stand clear of suspicion. So, Holinshed: “— appointing them to meet Banquo and his sonne *without the palace*, as they returned to their lodgings, and there to slea them, so that he would not have his house slandered, but that in time to come he might *cleare* himself.”—*Stevens.*

¹⁰ *We have scotch’d the snake.*

Scorch’d, old editions; corrected by Theobald. *Scotch*, to score or cut in a slight manner.

Dick, no more at this time, but *Nos-da diu catawby*, and all the recompence I can make thee for being like a Chancery declaration so tiring troublesome unto thee, is this, if thou wilt have the Doctour for an anatomie, thou shalt; doo but speake the word, and I am the man will deliver him to thee to be *scotcht* and carbonadoed: but in anie case, speake quickly, for heere he lies at the last gaspe of surrendering all his credit and reputation.—*Nash’s Have with You to Saffron Walden*, 1596.

¹¹ *Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace.*

The editor of the second folio wrongly changed "our *peace*," into "our *place*." Macbeth's entire frame is here shaken by an agonizing desire for *peace* of mind; and the pith of the sentence is, that it is better to be with the dead, because they have the *peace* of mind we desired to gain. The alteration destroys the force of the original antithesis, as the *dead* have not *place*. The whole tenor of the speech shows that it is not *place*, but *cessation of wild longings and apprehensions*, that is the point on which the thoughts of the speaker are riveted; and he is making a comparison (in this respect disadvantageous as regards himself) between his own case and that of Duncan; the sense of the line being, *Whom we, to gain our content, have helped to contentment*. He feels, that whatsoever be the object aimed at, *relief from the tortures of unsatisfied desire* is the ultimate motive of his action; and that he has obtained for Duncan, by the condition in which he has placed him, that rest of heart, which he was vainly seeking, by other means for himself. In short, as any mind would do, thus painfully and intensely strung, he recognizes, in his own sensations, the *abstract cause* of his actions, instead of contemplating the *material* upon which it had sought, but failed to gratify itself:—he forgets the *crown* in the strife in which its attainment has involved him.—*Elwin*.

¹² *Unsafe the while, &c.*

The sense of this passage (though clouded by metaphor and perhaps by omission,) appears to be as follows:—"It is a sure sign that our royalty is unsafe, when it must descend to flattery, and stoop to dissimulation."—*Steevens*.

¹³ *Nature's copy's not eterne.*

Nature's copy, is *the form of man, or of human nature*. So, in Lyly's *Euphues*:—"If the Gods thought no scorn to become Beastes, to obtaine their beste beloved, shall Euphues be so nice in changing his *copy* to gain his lady?" And again, in *Othello*:—"Thou cunning'st *pattern of excelling nature*." Lady Macbeth expresses, that in Banquo and his son the form of humanity is not eternal; that is, is destructible.—*Elwin*.

¹⁴ *The shard-borne beetle.*

The shard is the shell or hard outward covering of insects. The scales of an animal. "The shard-borne beetle," the beetle borne on by its shard. Some are of opinion that Shakespeare here means shard-born, born in a shard, or dung, and Harrison, p. 229, calls the beetle the *turdbug*.

For longe tyme it so befelle,
That with his swerd, and with his spere,
He might not the serpent dere;
He was so *sherded* all aboute,
It held all edge toole withoute.—*Gower*, ed. 1544, f. 103.

¹⁵ *Come, seeling night.*

Seeling, is *blinding*. It is literally explained, by Minsheu, *to sew up the eyelids*; and is a term in the vocabulary of falconry relating to a practice resorted to in the training of hawks.—*Elwin*.

¹⁶ *Makes wing to the rooky wood.*

Rooky, foggy, misty. It occurs twice in this sense in Pr. Parv.—"*Roky* or *mysty, nebulosus*;" and previously, "*Mysty* or *rooky* as the eyre." Grose also has it, spelt *rooky*. "*Rook*, a steam or vapour: *rooky*, misty or dark with steam

and vapour," Kennett's Glossary, MS. Lansd. 1033. "*Rooky*, misty, a variation of dialect for *reeky*," Ray's Collection of English Words, ed. 1691. Some critics prefer to explain *rooky wood*, the wood abounding in rooks, the terms crow and rook being often used interchangeably. It is difficult to say which explanation is the correct one.

¹⁷ *Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.*

Shakspeare may mean not merely *sprites* or *demons*, but generally, robbers, murderers, animals of prey who prowl in the night, and other noxious visitants of the dark; such, for instance, as he alludes to in King Lear:

————— *things that love night*
 Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
 Gallow the very *wanderers of the dark*,
 And make them *keep their caves*.—*Anon.*

Preys is here made thus conspicuously plural, because it individualizes more pointedly the peculiar prey of each differing agent of evil; and so denotes that it comprehends within its meaning, every kind of prey, of every species of vicious power that the darkness favours.—*Elwin.*

¹⁸ *Fleance and Servant escape.*

Fleance, after the assassination of his father, fled into Wales, where, by the daughter of the Prince of that country, he had a son named Walter, who afterwards became Lord High Steward of Scotland, and from thence assumed the name of Walter Steward. From him, in a direct line, King James I. was descended; in compliment to whom our author has chosen to describe Banquo, who was equally concerned with Macbeth in the murder of Duncan, as innocent of that crime.—*Malone.*

¹⁹ *At first and last, the hearty welcome.*

I believe the true reading is: "*To first and last.*" All, of whatever degree, from the highest to the lowest, may be assured that their visit is well received.—*Johnson.*

I believe the old reading to be right, and the meaning is perhaps this. '*Once for all, you are welcome. From the beginning to the end of the feast dismiss all irksome restraint!*' and to convince them that he intends to dispense with superfluous ceremony on this occasion, he proceeds to *mingle with society, and play the humble host*, telling his guests to be *large in mirth*.—*Anon.*

²⁰ *Our hostess keeps her state.*

A *state* appears to have been a royal chair with a canopy over it. Or rather a raised platform on which the chair with a canopy was placed. So in Massinger's *Bondman*; Archidamus says to Timoleon:—

It is your seat: which with a general suffrage,
 As to the supreme magistrate, Sicily tenders,
 And prays Timoleon to accept. [Offering him the State.

And, again, in the Great Duke of Florence, "*The Ladies descend from the State.*"—*Anon.*

²¹ *The worm.*

Worm, that is, a serpent. So in a medieval English poem preserved in MS. in the University Library, Cambridge,—

With the grace of God Almyghte,
 Wyth the *worme* 3yt schalle y fyghte.

²² *And extend his passion.*

Passion here bears its two senses, of *suffering* and *anger*. You will, by offending him, prolong the *suffering* of his fit, and increase the *anger* he seems to express.—*Elwin*.

²³ *Impostors to true fear.*

Flaws are sudden gusts. Lady Macbeth would persuade her husband that his cause of terror is *merely fanciful*, by the argument that such brief and changing expressions of fear, as he exhibits, are only impostors compared with what its steady expression would be, if the Spirit of Banquo were *really present*.—*Elwin*.

²⁴ *The Hyrcan tiger.*

Sir William D'Avenant unnecessarily altered this to *Hircanian* tiger, which was followed by Theobald, and others. *Hircan* tigers are mentioned by Daniel, our author's contemporary, in his Sonnets, 1594:—

— restore thy fierce and cruel mind
To *Hircan tygers*, and to ruthless beares.—*Malone*.

Alteration certainly might be spared: in Riche's Second Part of Simonides, 4to. 1584, sign. C 1, we have—"Contrariwise these souldiers, like to *Hircan tygers*, revenge themselves on their own bowelles; some parricides, some fraticides, all homicides."—*Reed*.

²⁵ *Take any shape but that.*

The idea of some critics that the ghost is that of Duncan hardly requires notice. Macbeth would not have challenged the old King Duncan to a duel in the desert.

²⁶ *If trembling I inhibit, then protest me.*

Inhabit, old eds. The objection to the alteration, adopted in the text for want of something more satisfactory, is in the use of the verb *inhibit*, the ordinary sense of which is, to forbid. I suspect that there were two words in the original, the second being *it*, and the *inhab* some unaccountable corruption, perhaps for *evade*. "If trembling I evade it," that is, the meeting, a kind of loose construction very common in Shakespeare.

²⁷ *You make me strange, &c.*

To *owe*, here means to *own* or *possess*. The sense expressed is, You make me feel as strange or unnatural, the very disposition to fear, which belongs or is natural to me on beholding such sights, when I see you so wholly unaffected by them.—*Elwin*.

²⁸ *Augurs, and understood relations.*

That is, augurs, and such-like understood or intelligible connections between mankind and these things, have by their means discovered the most secret murderers. *Magot-pies* are *maggies*.—*Elwin*.

Minshew and Cotgrave both have *maggatapie* in several places; it is possible, therefore, that it was called *maggoty pie*, from its whimsical drollery in chattering, &c. quasi, comical pie, or fantastic pie.—*Nares*.

²⁹ *How say'st thou, &c.*

That is, What say you to the fact, that Macduff will not come at our command? This is Monck Mason's interpretation, supported by the reply of Lady Macbeth, who had said nothing about the matter, and asks, in ignorance.

whether Macduff had been sent to? Macbeth then proceeds to inform her what he had heard “by the way.”—*Collier*.

⁵⁰ *Enter Hecate.*

The Gothic and Pagan fictions were now frequently blended and incorporated. The Lady of the Lake floated in the suite of Neptune before Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth; Ariel assumes the semblance of a sea-nymph, and Hecate, by an easy association, conducts the rites of the weird sisters in Macbeth.—*T. Warton*.

⁵¹ *Loves for his own ends, not for you.*

The accuracy of this reading has not been suspected, but I am inclined to think that *loves* is an error for *lives*.

⁵² *Come away, come away, &c.*

This entire song, observes Malone, I found in a MS. dramatic piece, entitled, A Tragi-Coomodie called The Witch; long since acted &c. written by Thomas Middleton. The Hecate of Shakspeare has said—“I am for the air,” &c. The Hecate of Middleton (who, like the former, is summoned away by aerial spirits,) has the same declaration in almost the same words—

I am for aloft, &c.	
Song.]	Come away, come away :
	Heccat, Heccat, come away, &c. } <i>in the aire.</i>

⁵³ *Who cannot want the thought, how monstrous.*

To *want* is here used to signify *needful, compulsory desire*. The sentence expresses, Who cannot *desire, as a strong necessity of his nature*, to think such a crime monstrous. It is an impressive manner of saying, that there are none to whose disposition such a deed is not hideous and repugnant. A strong emphasis is required upon the word *want*, to give it the impression intended, and also upon *monstrous*; and as this necessarily detains the tones of the speaker upon the line, it supplies the rhythm.—*Elwin*.

⁵⁴ *Hath so exasperate their king.*

That is, Macbeth. *Their* refers to Malcolm and Macduff. The one has obtained protection of the English king, and the other is seeking from him assistance against Macbeth; and the report of this their distrust and hostility, has so exasperated *their king*, &c. The term distinguishes the king of Scotland from the king of England. It is usual to alter it, erroneously, into *the*: (*the king*.)—*Elwin*.

Act the Fourth.

SCENE I.—*A dark Cave. In the middle, a Cauldron.*

Thunder. Enter the Three Witches.

- 1 *Witch.* Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.
2 *Witch.* Thrice; and once the hedge-pig whin'd.
3 *Witch.* Harper cries,—'Tis time, 'tis time.

1 *Witch.* Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.—
Toad, that under cold stone,¹
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

2 *Witch.* Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake:
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

3 *Witch*. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf;
 Witches' mummy; maw, and gulf
 Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark;²
 Root of hemlock, digg'd i' the dark;
 Liver of blaspheming Jew;
 Gall of goat, and slips of yew,
 Silver'd in the moon's eclipse;
 Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips;
 Finger of birth-strangled babe,
 Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
 Make the gruel thiek and slab:
 Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,³
 For the ingredients of our cauldron.

All. Double, double toil and trouble;
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

2 *Witch*. Cool it with a baboon's blood;
 Then the charm is firm and good.

Enter HECATE.

Hec. O, well done! I commend your pains,
 And every one shall share i' the gains.

And now about the cauldron sing,
 Like elves and fairies in a ring,
 Enchanting all that you put in.

[*Music and a Song*. "Black spirits,"⁴ &c.]

2 *Witch*. By the pricking of my thumbs,
 Something wicked this way comes.—
 Open, locks, whoever knocks.

[*Knocking*.]

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. How now, you seeret, black, and midnight hags!
 What is't you do?

All. A deed without a name.

Macb. I conjure you, by that which you profess,—
 Howe'er you come to know it—answer me:
 Though you untie the winds, and let them fight
 Against the churches; though the yesty waves
 Confound and swallow navigation up;
 Though bladed eorn be lodg'd,⁵ and trees blown down;
 Though castles topple on their warders' heads;

Though palaces, and pyramids, do slope
 Their heads to their foundations ; though the treasure
 Of nature's german⁶ tumble all together,
 Even till destruction sicken, answer me.
 To what I ask you.

1 *Witch.* Speak.

2 *Witch.* Demand.

3 *Witch.* We'll answer.

1 *Witch.* Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
 Or from our masters' ?

Macb. Call 'em : let me see 'em.

1 *Witch.* Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
 Her nine farrow : grease, that's sweaten
 From the murderer's gibbet, throw
 Into the flame.

All. Come high, or low ;
 Thyself, and office, deftly show.

Thunder. Apparition of an armed Head.

Macb. Tell me, thou unknown power,—

1 *Witch.* He knows thy thought :
 Hear his speech, but say thou nought.

1 *App.* Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Maebeth ! beware Macduff ;
 Beware the thane of Fife.—Dismiss me :—enough. [*Descends.*]

Macb. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution thanks :
 Thou hast harp'd my fear aright.—But one word more :—

1 *Witch.* He will not be commanded. Here's another,
 More potent than the first.

Thunder. Apparition of a bloody Child.

App. Maebeth ! Macbeth ! Maebeth !—

Mac. Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.

App. Be bloody, bold, and resolute : laugh to scorn
 The power of man, for none of woman born
 Shall harm Macbeth.⁷ [*Descends.*]

Macb. Then live, Maeduff : what need I fear of thee ?
 But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
 And take a bond of fate : thou shalt not live ;
 That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
 And sleep in spite of thunder.—What is this,

Thunder. Apparition of a Child crowned, with a Tree in his Hand.

That rises like the issue of a king ;
And wears upon his baby brow the round
And top of sovereignty ?

All. Listen, but speak not to't.

App. Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no eare
Who ehafes, who frets, or where conspirers are :
Maebeth shall never vanquish'd be, until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him.

[*Descends.*

Macb. That will never be :
Who can impress the forest ; bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root ? sweet bodements ! good !
Rebellious dead,⁸ rise never, till the wood
Of Birnam rise ; and our high-plae'd Maebeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time, and mortal eustom.—Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing : tell me,—if your art
Call tell so much—shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom ?

All. Seek to know no more.

Macb. I will be satisfied : deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you ! Let me know.—
Why sinks that cauldron ? and what noise is this ?⁹ [*Hautboys.*

1 *Witch.* Show ! 2 *Witch.* Show ! 3 *Witch.* Show !

All. Show his eyes, and grieve his heart ;
Come like shadows, so depart.

A show of eight Kings, the last with a Glass in his Hand, BANQUO following.

Macb. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo : down !
Thy erown does sear mine eye-balls :—and thy hair,¹⁰
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first :—
A third is like the former :—Filthy hags !
Why do you show me this ?—A fourth ?—Start, eyes !
What ! will the line stretch out to the eraek of doom ?
Another yet ?—A seventh ?—I'll see no more :—
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass,

Which shows me many more ; and some I see,
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry.
Horrible sight !—Now, I see, 'tis true ;
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo¹¹ smiles upon me,
And points at them for his.—What ! is this so ?

I *Witch*. Ay, sir, all this is so : but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly ?—
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show the best of our delights.
I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round ;
That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music. The Witches dance, and vanish.*

Macb. Where are they ? Gone ?—Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar !—
Come in ! without there !

Enter LENOX.

Len. What's your grace's will ?

Macb. Saw you the weird sisters ?

Len. No, my lord.

Macb. Came they not by you ?

Len. No, indeed, my lord.

Macb. Infected be the air whereon they ride,
And damn'd all those that trust them !—I did hear
The galloping of horse : who was't came by ?

Len. 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word,
Macduff is fled to England.

Macb. Fled to England ?

Len. Ay, my good lord.

Macb. Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits :
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook,
Unless the deed go with it. From this moment,
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done.
The castle of Macduff I will surprise ;
Seize upon Fife ; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool ;

This deed I'll do, before this purpose cool :
 But no more sights.¹²—Where are these gentlemen ?
 Come ; bring me where they are.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Fife. *A Room in MACDUFF'S Castle.*

Enter Lady MACDUFF, her Son, and ROSSE.

L. Macd. What had he done to make him fly the land ?

Rosse. You must have patience, madam.

L. Macd. He had none :
 His flight was madness. When our actions do not,
 Our fears do make us traitors.

Rosse. You know not,
 Whether it was his wisdom, or his fear.

L. Macd. Wisdom ! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
 His mansion, and his titles, in a place
 From whence himself does fly ? He loves us not :
 He wants the natural touch ; for the poor wren,
 The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
 Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
 All is the fear, and nothing is the love :
 As little is the wisdom, where the flight
 So runs against all reason.

Rosse. My dearest coz,
 I pray you, school yourself : but, for your husband,
 He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
 The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much farther :
 But cruel are the times, when we are traitors,
 And do not know ourselves ;¹³ when we hold rumour
 From what we fear,¹⁴ yet know not what we fear,
 But float upon a wild and violent sea,
 And each way move¹⁵—I take my leave of you :
 Shall not be long but I'll be here again.
 Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
 To what they were before.—My pretty cousin,
 Blessing upon you !

L. Macd. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

Rosse. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,

It would be my disgrace, and your discomfort.

I take my leave at once.

[*Exit ROSSE.*]

L. Macd. Sirrah, your father's dead :

And what will you do now ? How will you live ?

Son. As birds do, mother.

L. Macd. What, with worms and flies ?

Son. With what I get, I mean ; and so do they.

L. Macd. Poor bird ! thou'dst never fear the net, nor lime,
The pit-fall, nor the gin.

Son. Why should I, mother ? Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.

L. Macd. Yes, he is dead : how wilt thou do for a father ?

Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband ?

L. Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

Son. Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

L. Macd. Thou speak'st with all thy wit :
And yet, i' faith, with wit enough for thee.

Son. Was my father a traitor, mother ?

L. Macd. Ay, that he was.

Son. What is a traitor ?

L. Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.

Son. And be all traitors that do so ?

L. Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be
hanged.

Son. And must they all be hanged, that swear and lie ?

L. Macd. Every one.

Son. Who must hang them ?

L. Macd. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools ; for there are liars
and swearers enow to beat the honest men, and hang up them.

L. Macd. Now God help thee, poor monkey ! But how wilt
thou do for a father ?

Son. If he were dead, you'd weep for him : if you would
not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

L. Macd. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st !

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Bless you, fair dame. I am not to you known,
Though in your state of honour I am perfect.
I doubt, some danger does approach you nearly :
If you will take a homely man's advice,

Be not found here ; hence, with your little ones.
 To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage,
 To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
 Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you !
 I dare abide no longer. [Exit Messenger.]

L. Macd. Whither should I fly ?
 I have done no harm ; but I remember now
 I am in this earthly world, where, to do harm
 Is often laudable ; to do good sometime
 Accounted dangerous folly : why then, alas !
 Do I put up that womanly defence,
 To say I have done no harm ?—What are these faces ?

Enter Murderers.

Mur. Where is your husband ?

L. Macd. I hope, in no place so unsanctified,
 Where such as thou may'st find him.

Mur. He's a traitor.

Son. Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd villain.¹⁶

Mur. What, you egg, [Stabbing him.]
 Young fry of treachery ?

Son. He has killed me, mothər :
 Run away, I pray you. [Dies.]
[Exit Lady MACDUFF, crying murder,
 and pursued by the Murderers.]

SCENE III.—England. *A Room in the King's Palace.*

*Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF.*¹⁷

Mal. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
 Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Macd. Let us rather
 Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
 Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom. Each new morn,
 New widows howl, new orphans ery ; new sorrows
 Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds

As if it felt with Scotland, and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolour.

Mal. What I believe, I'll wail ;
What know, believe ; and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will :
What you have spoke, it may be so, perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest : you have lov'd him well ;
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young ; but something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

Macd. I am not treacherous.

Mal. But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil,¹⁸
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon :
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose ;
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell :
Though all things foul¹⁹ would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

Macd. I have lost my hopes.

Mal. Perchance, even there, where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife, and child,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking ?—I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,
But mine own safeties : you may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

Macd. Bleed, bleed, poor country !
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dares not check thee ! wear thou thy wrongs ;
Thy title is affeer'd !²⁰—Fare thee well, lord :
I would not be the villain that thou think'st,
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot,

Mal. Be not offended :
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke ;
It weeps, it bleeds ; and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds : I think, withal,
There would be hands uplifted in my right ;
And here, from gracious England, have I offer

Of goodly thousands ; but, for all this,
 When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
 Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
 Shall have more vices than it had before,
 More suffer, and more sundry ways than ever,
 By him that shall succeed.

Macd. What should he be ?

Mal. It is myself I mean ; in whom I know
 All the particulars of vice so grafted,
 That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
 Will seem as pure as snow ; and the poor state
 Esteem him as a lamb, being compar'd
 With my confineless harms.

Macd. Not in the legions
 Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd
 In evils to top Macbeth.

Mal. I grant him bloody,
 Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
 Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
 That has a name ; but there's no bottom, none,
 In my voluptuousness : your wives, your daughters,
 Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up
 The cistern of my lust ; and my desire
 All continent impediments would o'er-bear,
 That did oppose my will. Better Macbeth,
 Than such an one to reign.

Macd. Boundless intemperance
 In nature is a tyranny : it hath been
 Th' untimely emptying of the happy throne,
 And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
 To take upon you what is yours : you may
 Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,²¹
 And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.
 We have willing dames enough ; there cannot be
 That vulture in you to devour so many
 As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
 Finding it so inclin'd.

Mal. With this, there grows
 In my most ill-compos'd affection such
 A stanchless avarice, that, were I king,
 I should cut off the nobles for their lands ;
 Desire his jewels, and this other's house :

And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more ; that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

Macd. This avarice
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root,
Than summer-seeming lust ;²² and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings : yet do not fear ;
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,
Of your mere own. All these are portable
With other graces weigh'd.

Mal. But I have none. The king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them ; but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.

Macd. O Scotland, Scotland !

Mal. If such a one be fit to govern, speak :
I am as I have spoken.

Macd. Fit to govern !
No, not to live.—O, nation miserable !
With an untitled tyrant, bloody-scepter'd,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accurs'd,
And does blaspheme his breed ?—Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king : the queen, that bore thee,
Oft'ner upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she lived. Fare thee well.
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have banish'd me from Scotland.—O, my breast !
Thy hope ends here.

Mal. Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wip'd the black scruples, reconcil'd my thoughts
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me

Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me
 From over-credulous haste ; but God above
 Deal between thee and me, for even now
 I put myself to thy direction, and
 Unspeak mine own detraction ; here abjure
 The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
 For strangers to my nature. I am yet
 Unknown to woman ; never was forsworn ;
 Scarcely have eoveted what was mine own ;
 At no time broke my faith ; would not betray
 The devil to his fellow, and delight
 No less in truth, than life : my first false speaking
 Was this upon myself. What I am truly
 Is thine, and my poor country's, to command :
 Whither, indeed, before thy here-approach,
 Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,
 Already at a point,²³ was setting forth.
 Now, we'll together ; and the chance of goodness
 Be like our warranted quarrel.²⁴ Why are you silent ?

Macd. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once,
 'Tis hard to reconcile.

Enter a Doctor.

Mal. Well ; more anon.—Comes the king forth, I pray you ?

Doct. Ay, sir : there are a crew of wretched souls,
 That stay his cure : their malady convinces
 The great assay of art ; but at his touch,
 Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand,
 They presently amend.

Mal. I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*]

Macd. What's the disease he means ?

Mal. 'Tis call'd the evil :
 A most miraculous work in this good king,
 Which often, since my here remain in England,
 I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
 Himself best knows ; but strangely-visited people,
 All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
 The mere despair of surgery, he eures ;
 Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
 Put on with holy prayers : and 'tis spoken,
 To the succeeding royalty he leaves

The healing benediction, With this strange virtue,
 He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
 And sundry blessings hang about his throne,
 That speak him full of grace.

Enter ROSSE.

Macd. See, who comes here ?

Mal. My countryman ; but yet I know him not.

Macd. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

Mal. I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
 The means that make us strangers !

Rosse. Sir, amen.

Macd. Stands Scotland where it did ?

Rosse. Alas, poor country !

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
 Be call'd our mother, but our grave ; where nothing,
 But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile :
 Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks that rent the air,
 Are made, not mark'd ; where violent sorrow seems
 A modern ecstasy : the dead man's knell
 Is there scarce ask'd, for who ; and good men's lives
 Expire before the flowers in their caps,
 Dying or ere they sicken.

Macd. O, relation,
 Too nice, and yet too true !

Mal. What is the newest grief ?

Rosse. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker.
 Each minute teems a new one.

Macd. How does my wife ?

Rosse. Why, well.

Macd. And all my children ?

Rosse. Well too.

Macd. The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace ?

Rosse. No ; they were well at peace, when I did leave them.

Macd. Be not a niggard of your speech : how goes it ?

Rosse. When I came hither to transport the tidings,
 Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
 Of many worthy fellows that were out ;
 Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
 For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot.
 Now is the time of help. Your eye in Scotland

Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.

Mal. Be it their comfort,
We are coming thither. Gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward, and ten thousand men :
An older, and a better soldier, none
That Christendom gives out.

Rosse. Would I could answer
This comfort with the like ! But I have words,
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch them.²⁵

Macd. What concern they ?
The general cause, or is it a fee-grief,²⁶
Due to some single breast ?

Rosse. No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe, though the main part
Pertains to you alone.

Macd. If it be mine,
Keep it not from me ; quickly let me have it.

Rosse. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound,
That ever yet they heard.

Macd. Humph ! I guess at it.

Rosse. Your castle is surpris'd ; your wife, and babes,
Savagely slaughter'd : to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,²⁷
To add the death of you.

Mal. Merciful heaven !—
What, man ! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows :
Give sorrow words ; the grief, that does not speak,
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break.

Macd. My children too ?

Rosse. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.

Macd. And I must be from thence !
My wife kill'd too ?

Rosse. I have said.

Mal. Be comforted :
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

Macd. He has no children.²⁸—All my pretty ones ?
Did you say, all ?—O, hell-kite !—All ?

What, all my pretty chickens, and their dam,²⁹
At one fell swoop?

Mal. Dispute it like a man.

Macd. I shall do so ;

But I must also feel it as a man :
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me.—Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff!
They were all struck for thee. Naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

Mal. Be this the whetstone of your sword : let grief
Convert to anger ; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

Macd. O ! I could play the woman with mine eyes,
And braggart with my tongue.—But, gentle Heavens,
Cut short all intermission ; front to front,
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland, and myself ;
Within my sword's length set him ; if he scape,
Heaven forgive him too !

Mal. This tune goes manly.³⁰
Come, go we to the king : our power is ready ;
Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments.³¹ Receive what cheer you may ;
The night is long that never finds the day. [*Exeunt.*]

Notes to the Fourth Act.

¹ *Toad, that under cold stone.*

Reference is here made to a habit, natural to the toad kind, of availing themselves of the cool shelter of a stone; and the metre is intentionally retarded, to mark that the witch modulates her tones, and slackens the movement of their round, to assimilate with the drowsy nature of the action specified.—*Elwin.*

² *Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark.*

The *gulf* is the *swallow*. *Ravin* is *prey*, or *food taken by violence*. And *ravined* here means gorged with such prey. The witches not only make use of what is thought to be vicious in nature, but also endeavour to obtain it when it has been most exerting its evil propensities; they therefore take the throat and stomach of the shark, just after it has glutted itself with prey.—*Elwin.*

³ *Add thereto a tiger's chaudron.*

Chaudron, i. e. *entrails*; a word formerly in common use in the books of cookery, in one of which, printed in 1597, I meet with a receipt to make a pudding of a calf's *chaldron*. Again, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, 1635: "Sixpence a meal, wench, as well as heart can wish, with calves' *chauldrons* and chitterlings." At the coronation feast of Elizabeth of York, queen of Henry VII. among other dishes, one was "a swan with *chaudron*," meaning sance made with its entrails. See Ives's *Select Papers*, No. 3. p. 140. See also Pegge's *Forme of Cury*, p. 66.—*Steerens.*

⁴ *Black spirits, &c.*

In Act III. Scene 5, we have the stage-direction, "*Sing within, Come away, come away, &c.*" In the same manner we have in this scene "*Music and a song, Black spirits, &c.*" In Middleton's *Witch* we find two songs, each of which begins according to the stage-direction. The second is called, A Charm Song about a Vessel:—

Black spirits and white, red spirits and gray;
Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may.
Titty, Tiffin, keep it stiff in;

Firedrake, Puckey, make it lucky ;
 Liard, Robin, you must bob in.
 Round, around, around, about, about ;
 All ill come running in, all good keep out !—*Knight*.

⁵ *Though bladed corn be lodg'd.*

Bladed corn, corn in the blade ; *lodg'd*, laid. The latter term is still in use in the provinces.

⁶ *Of Nature's German.*

The lection of the ancient text has here been modernly altered into *germins*, or seeds, to the annihilation of its true meaning, and the unspeakable depreciation of its force. Nature's *german* (or *germaine*, as it was formerly written,) are nature's kindred, or those who stand in the relation of brotherhood to one another ; that is, mankind in general. The treasure of nature's *german* is, therefore, the treasure, or the best of the human race. And Macbeth exhibits the violent selfishness, and ruthless character, of the apprehensions by which he is actuated, in the desire that these may so fall in mingled ruin, that destruction may be gorged to sickness, rather than his doubts should continue unresolved. Shakespeare frequently uses the term *nature* for *human nature* ; as in the following passage from *King Lear* :—

Crack *nature's* moulds, all *germins* spill at once,
That make ingrateful man.

And the same sentence contains the only instance of his use of the word *germaines* for *germins*, or *seeds* : and this single application of it, in that sense, is suggested by an association of ideas, habitual to his analogical style of thought, because he is there speaking of *seeds* of a *kindred nature* only. The conception of making Macbeth imagine *the treasure of nature's seeds* tumbling together, till destruction sickens, is comparatively feeble, and little appropriate ; as his thoughts are palpably occupied with the notion of such things as are upon the world's surface only, being cast down in confusion by a storm to be raised by the witches in the performance of their operations, of which this was supposed to be a needful accompaniment. Thus, in the *Muses' Looking-Glass*, 1638 :

I thought there was some *conjuring* abroad,
 'Tis such a terrible wind.—*Elwin*.

⁷ *None of woman born shall harm Macbeth.*

So, Holinshed : “ And surely hereupon he had put Macduff to death, but that a certeine witch, whom he had in great trust, had told him, that he should never be slaine with man borne of anie woman, nor vanquished till the wood of Bernane came to the castell of Dunsinane. This prophecie put all feare out of his heart.” —*Stevens*.

⁸ *Rebellious dead.*

So the old copies, and rightly. The modern readings, *rebellious head*, or *rebellion's head*, do not agree with the context ; for Macbeth, relying on the statements of the apparition, was firmly impressed with the belief that none of woman born could prevent his living “ the lease of nature.” Confiding in the literal truth of this prophecy, his fears were concentrated on the probable re-appearance of the dead, alluding more especially to the ghost of Banquo ; and these fears were then conquered by the apparent impossibility of the movement of Birnam wood to Dunsinane. The first prophecy relieves him from the fear of mortals ; the second from the fear of the dead.

⁹ *And what noise is this?*

Noise, in our ancient poets, is often literally synonymous for *music*. When Mr. Kemble revived this tragedy at Covent Garden, in 1803, this *noise* was represented by a *shriek*; a novelty quite inconsistent with the poet's intention.—*Anon.*

¹⁰ *And thy hair.*

The word *hair* was formerly used to express *breed*, *character*, or *condition*. Thus, in the *Family of Love*:—“— they say I am of the right hair.” This proverbial distinction, attached to the term, probably led the author to the selection of this physical distinction of the lineage from which the person was descended.—*Elwin.*

¹¹ *Blood-boltered.*

That is, matted with blood. It means more than *smear'd*, and refers to the clotted, matted blood of Banquo, who had “twenty trenched gashes on his head.” In the two early instances of the word, it clearly means matted or clotted; although the term may have a slight variation of meaning in its provincial sense. According to Sharp's MS. Warwickshire Glossary, snow is said to *balter* together, and Batchelor says, “hasty pudding is said to be *boltered* when much of the flower remains in lumps,” *Orthoepical Analysis*, 1809, p. 126.

¹² *But no more sights!*

I cannot bring myself to confide here in the accuracy of the text. *Sights* is altered to *flights* by Mr. Grant White, an emendation which is doubtful.

¹³ *And do not know ourselves, &c.*

This is excellently explained by Steevens,—“When we are led by our fears to believe every rumour of danger we hear; yet are not conscious to ourselves of any crime for which we should be disturbed by those fears.”

¹⁴ *When we hold rumour, &c.*

To *hold* here means, to *receive*, or *believe*. So, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*;—“I *hold* him but a fool.” The passage expresses, When we credit rumours of ill intentions toward us because they accord with our fear, although we have no definite knowledge of what we fear.—*Elwin.*

¹⁵ *And each way move.*

The old copy has, “Each way *and move*.” But the position of the conjunction *and* is thus so injurious to the sense, as to make its accidental transposition manifest; for this construction of the sentence actually leads the reader to the consideration of a contrary motion to that which the metaphor so pointedly indicates; which is, That men, being troubled in their thoughts by the violence and uncertainty which surrounds them, *alternate in their purposes this way and that*, as upon the waters of a troubled sea. This is the action upon which the mind is palpably intended to dwell, instead of being carried onward to the contemplation of a *forward* motion, which the unqualified addition of *and move* is calculated to suggest. The ancient meaning of the verb to *float*, as given by Minsheu, is, *to wave up and down*—*Elwin.*

¹⁶ *Thou ly'st, thou shag-hair'd villain.*

Formerly, *hair* was often written *hear*; and “*shag-heard*” was doubtless altered by a mistake of the transcriber, or the original compositor, to “*shag-ear'd*.”

King Midas, after his decision in favour of Pan, is the only human being on record to whom the latter epithet could be applied.—*A. Dyce.*

¹⁷ *Enter Malcolm and Macduff.*

The part of Holinshed's Chronicle which relates to this play, is no more than an abridgement of John Bellenden's translation of the Noble Clerk, Hector Boece, imprinted at Edinburgh, 1541. For the satisfaction of the reader, I have inserted the words of the first mentioned historian, from whom this scene is almost literally taken:—"Though Maleolme was verie sorrowfull for the oppression of his countriemen the Scots, in manner as Makduffe had declared, yet doubting whether he was come as one that ment unfeinedlie as he spake, or else as sent from Makbeth to betraie him, he thought to have some further triall, and thereupon dissembling his mind at the first, he answered as followeth:—I am trulie verie sorie for the miserie chanced to my countrie of Scotland, but though I have never so great affection to relieve the same, yet by reason of certaine incurable vices, which reign in me, I am nothing meet thereto. First, such immoderate lust and voluptuous sensualitie (the abhominable fountain of all vices) followeth me, that if I were made King of Scots, I should seek to defloure your maids and matrones, in such wise that my intemperancie should be more importable unto you than the bloudie tyrannic of Makbeth now is. Hereunto Makduffe answered: This surelie is a very evil fault, for manie noble princees and kings have lost both lives and kingdomes for the same; nevertheless there are women enow in Scotland, and therefore follow my counsell. Make thy selfe kinge, and I shall conveie the matter so wiselic, that thou shalt be satisfied at thy pleasure in such secret wise, that no man shall be aware thereof. Then said Malcolme, I am also the most avaritious creature in the earth, so that if I were king, I should seeke so manie waies to get lands and goods, that I would slea the most part of all the nobles of Scotland by surmized accusations, to the end I might injoy their lands, goods and possessions; and therefore to shew you what mischief may issue on you through mine unsatiabie covetousnes, I will rehearse unto you a fable. There was a fox having a sore place on him overset with a swarme of flies, that continuallie sucked out hir bloud: and when one that came by and saw this manner, demanded whether she would have the flies driven beside hir, she answered no; for if these flies that are already full, and by reason thereof sucke not verie eagerlie, should be chased awaie, other that are emptie and fellie an hungred, should light in their places, and sucke out the residue of my bloud farre more to my greivance than these, which now being satisfied doo not annoie me. Therefore saith Malcolme, Suffer me to remaine where I am, lest if I atteine to the regiment of your realme, mine unquenchable avaricee may prove such, that ye would thinke the displeasures which now grieve you, should seeme easie in respect of the unmeasurable outrage which might issue through my comming amongst you. Makduffe to this made answer, how it was a far woorse fault than the other: for avaricee is the root of all mischief, and for that crime the most part of our kings have been slaine, and brought to their finall end. Yet notwithstanding follow my counsell, and take upon thee the crowne. There is gold and riches inough in Scotland to satisfie thy greedie desire. Then said Malcolme again, I am furthermore inclined to dissimulation, telling of leasings, and all other kinds of deceit, so that I naturallie rejoise in nothing so much, as to betraie and deceive such as put anie trust or confidence in my words. Then sith there is nothing that more becommeth a prince than constancie, veritie, truth, and justice, with the other laudable fellowship of those faire and noble vertues which are comprehended onelie in soothfastnesse, and that lieng utterlie overthroweth the same, you see how unable I am to governe anie province or region: and therefore sith you have remedies to eloke

and hide all the rest of my other vices, I praie you find shift to cloke this vice amongst the residue. Then said Makduffe: "This is yet the woorst of all, and there I leave thee, and therefore saie; Oh ye unhappie and miserable Scottishmen, which are thus scourged with so manie and sundrie calamities ech one above other! Ye have one cursed and wicked tyrant that now reigneth over you, without anie right or title, oppressing you with his most bloudie crueltie. This other that hath the right to the crowne, is so replet with the inconstant behaviour and manifest vices of Englishmen, that he is nothing woorthie to injoy it: for by his owne confession he is not onlie avaritious and given to unsatiable lust, but so false a traitor withall, that no trust is to be had unto anie woord he speaketh. Adieu Scotland, for now I account my selfe a banished man for ever, without comfort or consolation: and with these words the brackish tears trickled downe his cheekes verie abundantlie. At the last, when he was readie to depart, Malcolme tooke him by the sleeve, and said: Be of good comfort, Makduffe, for I have none of these vices before remembered, but have jested with thee in this manner, onlie to prove thy mind: for divers times heretofore Makbeth sought by this manner of means to bring me into his hand, &c."—*Steevens*.

¹⁸ *A good and virtuous nature may recoil.*

Dr. Johnson has soundly explained this passage,—“A good mind may recede from goodness in the execution of a royal commission.” But the phrase here used also figures forth a king’s power of moral temptation, in a metaphorical adaptation of the idea of resistance being borne down by the charge of an imperial army.—*Elwin*.

¹⁹ *Though all things foul, &c.*

This is not very clear. The meaning, perhaps, is this:—“My suspicions cannot injure you, if you be virtuous, by supposing that a traitor may put on your virtuous appearance. I do not say that your virtuous appearance proves you a traitor; for virtue must wear its proper form, though that form be counterfeited by villainy.”—*Johnson*.

An expression of a similar nature occurs in *Measure for Measure*:—

——— Good alone

Is good; without a name vileness is so.—*M. Mason*.

²⁰ *Thy title is afeer’d!*

The title, old editions; corrected by Malone. The old copies spell the law term, “afeer’d,” *affeaed*. To *affeer*, in the proceedings of manor courts, is to *confirm*; and the meaning of the whole passage is,—“Great tyranny, be thou confident, for goodness dares not oppose thee: do what wrong thou wilt; thy title is confirmed.”—*Collier*.

²¹ *Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty.*

To *convey*, connected as it here is with the word *spacious*, not only expresses to *carry on pleasures, passing from one to another in an extensive area of variety*, but it also denotes, according to a familiar meaning of the term in the time of Shakespeare, to do it covertly, stealthily, and thievishly.—*Elwin*.

²² *Than summer-seeming lust.*

Summer-seeming has been here occasionally altered into *summer-seeding*, a term altogether irrelevant to Macduff’s train of argument, which aims not at characterizing *lust* with regard to its increase, but simply as to the degree of its hold upon the heart of man. He qualifies it as an annual weed, exhibiting itself only in the *summer* or *youth* of life, instead of enduring like the perennial

avarice, and extending its roots deeper by age. The term *summer-seeming* not only signifies that lust *bears a fair appearance in and to the summer of life alone*, but also hints at the delusive character of vice, in its show and promise of joyousness.—*Elwin*.

²³ *Already at a point.*

“At a point,” prepared. So, in the *Tales and Quicke Answeres*, very mery, and pleasant to Rede, n.d.,—“Have not I done well for thee? Thou arte clere quitte of the dette that was demanded of the, wherfore, give me my money, and God be with the. Bea, quod he. What, quod the laweer, thou nedest not to crie bea no longer, thy matter is dispatched, all is *at a poynt*, there resteth nothyng but to gyve me my wages that thou promysyddest. Bea, quod he agayne. I saye quod the man of lawe, crie bea no longer nowe, but gyve me my money.”

It is lost labour that thou doest; I will be *at a point*,
And to injoye these worldly joyes I jeopardde will a jo[i]nt.

The Conflict of Conscience, by *N. Woodes*, 1581.

²⁴ *Be like our warranted quarrel.*

Warranted means *made sure or certain*. Malcolm, having the power of contesting his rights assured to him, expresses enthusiastically, And may our chance of blessing or success, be as sure as our chance of fighting. The term *warranted* is used because it implies the *justice* of the contest, as well as its *certainty*.—*Elwin*.

²⁵ *Where hearing should not latch them.*

Latch, to catch, in a general sense. Thus, a latch to a door meant originally a catch to it; from the Saxon. We now use the verb only as derived from that noun; as, to fasten by the latch: but the old sense is said to be still current in the north.—*Nares*.

²⁶ *Or is it a fee-grief?*

A peculiar sorrow; a grief that hath a single owner. The expression is, at least to our ears, very harsh.—*Johnson*.

So, in our author's *Lover's Complaint*:—

My woeful self that did in freedom stand,
And was my own *fee-simple*.—*Malone*.

²⁷ *On the quarry of these murder'd deer.*

The quarry was the cutting up of the deer, and its arrangement for distribution amongst the parties entitled to the various parts. Hence, a heap of slain men or animals came to be so called.

²⁸ *He has no children.*

A question has been raised, by commentators, as to whether this is said, by Macduff, of Malcolm or Macbeth. But, independent of the unprovoked and improbable rudeness of making a reply *at* his accepted sovereign, instead of *to* his kindly intended address, it is evident that the phrase refers directly to the terms of Malcolm's proposal,—“Let's make us med'cines of our *great* revenge;” —Macduff intending to express that materials for such adequate revenge are wanting, as *Macbeth has no children* to meet the purpose.—*Elwin*.

²⁹ *What, all my pretty chickens, and their dam.*

The term *dam* would not now be employed in reference to a hen, but there

was nothing unusual in such a use of the word in Shakespeare's time. "Yonge chickens even from the damme," Eliotes Dictionarie, ed. Cooper, 1559.

³⁰ *This tune goes manly.*

Time, old eds. The words *time* and *tune* were not unfrequently misprinted for each other.

³¹ *Put on their instruments.*

That is, encourage, thrust forward us their instruments against the tyrant. So, in King Lear,—

That you protect this course, and *put it on*
By your allowance.

Again, in Chapman's version of the eleventh Iliad :—

For Jove makes Trojans *instruments*, and virtually then
Wields arms himself.—*Stevens*.

Act the Fifth.

SCENE I.—Dunsinane. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter a Doctor of Physic, and a waiting Gentlewoman.

Doct. I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

Gent. Since his majesty went into the field,¹ I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon it, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

Doct. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching. In this slumbry agitation,² besides her walking and other actual performances, what at any time have you heard her say?

Gent. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

Doct. You may, to me; and 'tis most meet you should.

Gent. Neither to you, nor any one, having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter Lady MACBETH, with a Taper.

Lo you! here she comes. This is her very guise, and upon my life fast asleep. Observe her: stand close.

Doct. How came she by that light?

Gent. Why, it stood by her : she has light by her continually ; 'tis her command.

Doct. You see, her eyes are open.

Gent. Ay, but their sense is shut.

Doct. What is it she does now ? Look, how she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is an accustomed action with her to seem thus washing her hands : I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady M. Yet here's a spot.

Doct. Hark ! she speaks. I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

Lady M. Out, damned spot ! out, I say !—One ; two : why, then, 'tis time to do't.—Hell is murky !—Fie, my lord, fie ! a soldier, and afraid ? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account ?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him ?

Doct. Do you mark that ?

Lady M. The thane of Fife had a wife : where is she now ?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean ?—No more o' that, my lord ; no more o' that : you mar all with this starting.

Doct. Go to, go to : you have known what you should not.

Gent. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that : Heaven knows what she has known.

Lady M. Here's the smell of the blood still : all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh ! oh ! oh !

Doct. What a sigh is there ! The heart is sorely charged.

Gent. I would not have such a heart in my bosom, for the dignity of the whole body.

Doct. Well, well, well,—

Gent. Pray God, it be, sir.

Doct. This disease is beyond my practice : yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep, who have died holily in their beds.

Lady M. Wash your hands, put on your night-gown ; look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried : he cannot come out on's grave.

Doct. Even so ?

Lady M. To bed, to bed : there's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done, cannot be undone : to bed, to bed, to bed.

[*Exit* Lady MACBETH.]

Doct. Will she go now to bed?

Gent. Directly.

Doct. Foul whisperings are abroad. Unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.
More needs she the divine, than the physician.—
God, God, forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her.—So, good night:
My mind she has mated,³ and amaz'd my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.

Gent. Good night, good doctor. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Country near Dunsinane.*

*Enter, with Drum and Colours, MENTETH, CATHNESS, ANGUS,
LENOX, and Soldiers.*

Ment. The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff.
Revenge burn in them; for their dear causes
Would, to the bleeding and the grim alarm,
Excite the mortified man.⁴

Ang. Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them: that way are they coming.

Cath. Who knows, if Donalbain be with his brother?

Len. For certain, sir, he is not. I have a file
Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son,
And many unrough youths,⁵ that even now
Protest their first of manhood.

Ment. What does the tyrant?

Cath. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies.
Some say, he's mad: others, that lesser hate him,
Do call it valiant fury; but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause⁶
Within the belt of rule.

Ang. Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach:

Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love: now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

Ment. Who, then, shall blame
His pester'd senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself, for being there?

Cath. Well; march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly ow'd:
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal;⁷
And with him pour we, in our country's purge,
Each drop of us.

Len. Or so much as it needs
To dew the sovereign flower, and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam. [*Exeunt, marching.*]

SCENE III.—Dunsinane. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter MACBETH, Doctor, and Attendants.

Macb. Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences have pronounc'd me thus:—
“Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee.”—Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures:
The mind I sway by, and the heart I bear,
Shall never sag with doubt,⁸ nor shake with fear.

Enter a Servant.

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-fac'd loon!
Where got'st thou that goose look?

Serv. There is ten thousand—

Macb. Geese, villain?

Serv.

Soldiers, sir.

Macb. Go, prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?

Serv. The English force, so please you.

Macb. Take thy face hence.—Seyton!—I am sick at heart,
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push
Will cheer me ever,⁹ or disseat me now.
I have liv'd long enough : my way of life¹⁰
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;¹¹
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have ; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud, but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.
Seyton!—

Enter SEYTON.

Sey. What is your gracious pleasure?

Macb. What news more?

Sey. All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.

Macb. I'll fight, till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.
Give me my armour.

Sey. 'Tis not needed yet.

Macb. I'll put it on.

Send out more horses, skirr the country round;¹²
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armour.—
How does your patient, doctor?

Doct. Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
That keep her from her rest.

Macb. Cure of that:¹³
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleansc the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff,¹⁴
Which weighs upon the heart?

Doct. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.

Macb. Throw physic to the dogs ; I'll none of it.—

Come, put mine armour on ; give me my staff.—
 Seyton, send out.—Doctor, the thanes fly from me.—
 Come, sir, despatch.—If thou could'st, doctor, cast
 The water of my land,¹⁵ find her disease,
 And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
 I would applaud thee to the very echo,
 That should applaud again.—Pull't off, I say.—
 What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,¹⁶
 Would scour these English hence?—Hear'st thou of them?

Doct. Ay, my good lord : your royal preparation
 Makes us hear something.

Macb. Bring it after me.—
 I will not be afraid of death and bane,
 Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.

[*Exit.*

Doct. Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
 Profit again should hardly draw me here.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*Country near Dunsinane : a Wood in view.*

*Enter, with Drum and Colours, MALCOLM, old SIWARD, and his
 Son, MACDUFF, MENTETH, CATHNESS, ANGUS, LENOX,
 ROSSE, and Soldiers marching.*

Mal. Cousins, I hope, the days are near at hand,
 That chambers will be safe.

Ment. We doubt it nothing.

Siw. What wood is this before us?

Ment. The wood of Birnam.

Mal. Let every soldier hew him down a bough,
 And bear't before him : thereby shall we shadow
 The numbers of our host, and make discovery
 Err in report of us.

Sold. It shall be done.

Siw. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
 Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
 Our setting down before't.

Mal. 'Tis his main hope ;
 For where there is advantage to be given,¹⁷
 Both more and less have given him the revolt,

And none serve with him but constrained things,
Whose hearts are absent too.

Macd. Let our just censures¹⁸
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.

Siv. The time approaches,¹⁹
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have, and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate ;
Towards which, advance the war. [*Exeunt, marching.*

SCENE V.—Dunsinane. *Within the Castle.*

Enter, with Drums and Colours, MACBETH, SEYTON, and Soldiers.

Macb. Hang out our banners on the outward walls ;
The cry is still, “ They come !” Our castle’s strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn : here let them lie,
Till famine and the ague eat them up.
Were they not forc’d with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home. What is that noise ?

[*A cry within, of Women.*

Sey. It is the cry of women, my good lord.

Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears.
The time has been, my senses would have cool’d
To hear a night-shriek ; and my fell of hair²⁰
Would at a dismal treatise rouse, and stir,
As life were in’t. I have supp’d full with horrors :
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.—Wherefore was that cry ?

Sey. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macb. She should have died hereafter :
There would have been a time for such a word.—
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,²¹
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time ;²²

And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death.²³ Out, out, brief candle!
 Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
 And then is heard no more: it is a tale
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
 Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger.

Thou com'st to use thy tongue; thy story, quickly.

Mess. Gracious my lord,
 I should report that which I say I saw,
 But know not how to do't.

Macb. Well, say, sir.

Mess. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
 I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
 The wood began to move.

Macb. Liar, and slave!

Mess. Let me endure your wrath, if't be not so.
 Within this three mile may you see it coming;
 I say, a moving grove.

Macb. If thou speak'st false,
 Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
 Till famine cling thee:²⁴ if thy speech be sooth,
 I care not if thou dost for me as much.—
 I pull in resolution;²⁵ and begin
 To doubt th' equivocation of the fiend,
 That lies like truth: "Fear not, till Birnam wood
 Do come to Dunsinane;"—and now a wood
 Comes toward Dunsinane.—Arm, arm, and out!—
 If this, which he avouches, does appear,
 There is nor flying hence, nor tarrying here.
 I 'gin to be a-weary of the sun,
 And wish th' estate o' the world were now undone.—
 Ring the alarum bell!—Blow, wind! come, wrack!
 At least we'll die with harness on our back.²⁶

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*The Same. A Plain before the Castle.*

Enter with Drums and Colours, MALCOLM, Old SIWARD, MACDUFF, &c., and their Army with Boughs.

Mal. Now near enough : your leafy screens throw down,
And show like those you are.—You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,
Lead our first battle : worthy Maeduff, and we,
Shall take upon's what else remains to do,
According to our order.

Siw. Fare you well.—
Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

Macd. Make all our trumpets speak ; give them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.

[*Exeunt. Alarums continued.*]

SCENE VII.—*The Same. Another Part of the Plain.*

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. They have tied me to a stake : I cannot fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the course.—What's he,
That was not born of woman ? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter Young SIWARD.

Yo. Siw. What is thy name ?

Macb. Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.

Yo. Siw. No ; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name,
Than any is in hell.

Macb. My name's Macbeth.

Yo. Siw. The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.

Macb. No, nor more fearful.

Yo. Siw. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant : with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight, and Young SIWARD is slain.*]

Macb. Thou wast born of woman :—
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born. [Exit.]

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. That way the noise is.—Tyrant, show thy face !
If thou be'st slain, and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kernes, whose arms
Are hir'd to bear their staves : either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword, with an unbatter'd edge,
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou should'st be ;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune !
And more I beg not. [Exit. Alarum.]

Enter MALCOLM and Old SIWARD.

Siw. This way, my lord.—The castle's gently render'd :
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight ;
The noble thanes do bravely in the war.
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.

Mal. We have met with foes
That strike beside us.

Siw. Enter, sir, the castle. [Exeunt. Alarum.]

Re-enter MACBETH.

Macb. Why should I play the Roman fool, and die
On mine own sword ? whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them.

Re-enter MACDUFF.

Macd. Turn, hell-hound, turn.

Macb. Of all men else I have avoided thee :
But get thee back ; my soul is too much charg'd
With blood of thine already.

Macd. I have no words ;
My voice is in my sword : thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out ! [*They fight.*

Macb. Thou lovest labour.
As easy may'st thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress, as make me bleed :
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable erests ;
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

Macd. Despair thy charm ;
And let the angel, whom thou still hast serv'd,
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripp'd.

Macb. Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man :
And be these juggling fiends no more believ'd,
That palter with us in a double sense ;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope.—I'll not fight with thee.

Macd. Then, yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time :
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
“ Here may you see the tyrant.”

Macb. I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou oppos'd, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last. Before my body
I throw my warlike shield : lay on, Macduff ;
And damn'd be him that first cries, “ Hold, enough.”
[*Exeunt, fighting.*

*Retreat. Flourish. Re-enter, with Drum and Colours, MALCOLM,
Old SIWARD, ROSSE, Thanes, and Soldiers.*

Mal. I would, the friends we miss were safe arriv'd.

Siw. Some must go off; and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

Mal. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

Rosse. Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt :
He only liv'd but till he was a man,
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.

Siw. Then he is dead ?

Rosse. Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow
Must not be measur'd by his worth, for then
It hath no end.

Siw. Had he his hurts before ?

Rosse. Ay, on the front.

Siw. Why then, God's soldier be he !
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death :²⁷
And so, his knell is knoll'd.

Mal. He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.

Siw. He's worth no more :
They say, he parted well, and paid his score,
And so, God be with him !—Here comes newer comfort.

Re-enter MACDUFF, with MACBETH'S Head.

Macd. Hail, king ! for so thou art. Behold, where stands
The usurper's cursed head : the time is free,
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,²⁸
That speak my salutation in their minds ;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine,—
Hail, king of Scotland !

All. Hail, king of Scotland ! [*Flourish.*]

Mal. We shall not spend a large expense of time,
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls ;²⁹ the first that ever Scotland
In such an honour nam'd. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,—
As calling home our exil'd friends abroad,
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny ;

Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher, and his fiend-like queen,
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands,
Took off her life;—this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,
We will perform in measure, time, and place.
So, thanks to all at once, and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

Notes to the Fifth Act.

¹ *Since his majesty went into the field.*

Did Shakespeare mean more, here, by Macbeth's going *into the field*, than his leaving his Castle for some time to superintend the fortifications of Dunsinane, and to inspect his troops, which are not to be supposed to have been confined *within* the fortress till Macbeth heard of the approach of Malcolm and his formidable army? The nobility were leaving him, and Rosse has said that he *saw the tyrant's power afoot*. His Majesty's presence *in the field* was therefore necessary in order to make serious preparation for the attack which he well knew was in contemplation. He was not *yet* "surrounded with besiegers," as Steevens states; he did not even know that the English force was advancing.—*Anon.*

² *In this slumbry agitation.*

"Slombrye, slepysshe, *pesant*," Palsgrave, 1530. "Here is the seat of soules, the place of sleepe and slumbry night," Phaer's Virgil, ed. 1600.

³ *My mind she has mated.*

Mated, astonished, confounded. "He hath utterly mated me," Palsgrave, 1530.

⁴ *Excite the mortified man.*

That is, their great causes of revenge would excite to answer the bloody and grim call to arms, even one who had mortified the deeds or members of the body. The expression is derived from the writings of St. Paul, Rom. viii. 13; Col. iii. 5.—*Elwin.*

⁵ *And many unrough youths.*

An odd expression. It means smooth-faced, unbearded. See the Tempest:—

—— till new-born chins

Be *rough* and razorable.

Again, in King John:—

This *unhair'd* sauciness, and boyish troops,

The king doth smile at.—*Malone.*

⁶ *He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause.*

That is, as a distempered body, swollen by disease, cannot be limited to its natural operations, or restricted to the dimensions prescribed as proper to health; so Macbeth's *cause* being evil, he is incapable of restraining its disordered influences within such appointed bounds, as may confine them within the compass of command. The metaphor is taken from the use of a diet-belt as a rule of regimen. The annotator writes *course*, instead of *cause*. Now the elements of a cause are defined and limited, constituting a present and completed idea. But what sense or propriety can be found in a figure which refers to *buckling a man's course*, which is future, indefinite, necessarily forward, *within a belt*? This may be coerced or impeded, but cannot be *belted*.—*Elwin*.

⁷ *Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal.*

Medicine, that is, physician. Shakspeare uses this word in the feminine gender, where Lafeu speaks of Helen in All's well that ends Well; and Florizel, in the Winter's Tale, calls Camillo "the *medecin* of our house."—*Steevens*.

I doubt whether Shakspeare meant more than that Malcolm was the *medicine* (the physic) that would restore the country's health.—*Anon*.

⁸ *Shall never sag with doubt.*

Sag, to hang down heavily, as oppressed by weight.

Sir Rowland Russet-coat, their dad, goes *sagging* everie day in his round gascoynes of white cotton.—*Pierce Penilesse*, 1592.

⁹ *This push will cheer me ever.*

Percy proposes to alter *cheer* to *chair*, but a push does not usually chair a person, though it may disseat him.

¹⁰ *My way of life.*

That is, my path of life. It is a common expression, which needs no alteration. "In way of youth I did enjoy one friend," Massinger.

¹¹ *Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf.*

Sear, dry or withered, a term particularly applied to the autumnal leaves. "O'er head sat a raven, on a *sere* bough," Jonson's Sad Shepherd.

¹² *Skirr the country round.*

To *skirr*, I believe, signifies to *scour*, to *ride hastily*. The word is used by Beaumont and Fletcher, in the Martial Maid:—

Whilst I, with this and this, well mounted, *skirr'd*
A horse troop, through and through.

Again, in King Henry V.:—

And make them *skirr* away, as swift as stones
Enforced from the old Assyrian slings.

Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Bonduca*:—

—— the light shadows,
That, in a thought, *scur* o'er the fields of corn,
Halted on crutches to them.—*Steevens*.

¹³ *Cure of that.*

So the first folio. The text was altered, by the editor of the second folio, into "Cure *her* of that;" a phrase inferior in adaptation and vigour to the original

sentence; for Macbeth mentally applies it to himself, and therefore generalizes both his command and his question. To this meaning the Doctor palpably replies; for he says not *herself*, as confining his reference to the *queen*, but "Therein the patient must minister to *himself*." The sense is, Cure *thou* of that. But the abbreviated form of the expression accords with the turbulence of Macbeth's mind, and the phrenzied hurry of his thoughts; and is also more emphatic.—*Elwin*.

¹⁴ *Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff.*

The duplication shows the idea more definitely oppressive; denoting the contemplation of the speaker to be chained to the one changeless sensation of his guilt, which enforces and holds his attention.—*Elwin*.

¹⁵ *Cast the water of my laud.*

"To cast the water" was the phrase in use for finding out disorders by the inspection of urine. So, in *Eliosto Libidinoso*, a novel, by John Hinde, 1606: "Lucilla perceiving, without *casting her water*, where she was pained," &c. Again, in the *Wise Woman of Hogsdon*, 1638: "Mother Nottingham, for her time, was pretty well skilled in *casting waters*."—*Steevens*.

¹⁶ *What rhubarb, seenna, or what purgative drug.*

Cyme, ed. 1623; *cæny*, eds. 1632, 1664; *senna*, ed. 1684. "Powder of *cene*" is mentioned in the *Seyng of Urynes*, printed by R. Wyer, n. d.

¹⁷ *For where there is advantage to be given.*

Adrantage is *convenience, opportunity*. The phrase *more and less* means *greater and less*. Thus, says Dr. Johnson, in the interpolated *Mandeville*, a book of that age, there is a chapter on *India the More and the Less*. Malcolm replies, in reference to the previous remark of Siward, that Macbeth has shut up himself and his followers in the castle, because in every case in which opportunity must be *given them*, both great and small have *given him* the revolt.—*Elwin*.

¹⁸ *Let our just censures, &c.*

Let our just decisions on the defection of Macbeth's followers, attend upon the actual result of the battle; and let us, in the meanwhile, be industrious soldiers. That is, let us not be negligent through security.—*Elwin*.

¹⁹ *The time approaches, &c.*

Siward here replies to Macduff's observation on the faultiness of Macbeth's soldiers, and on the activity of their own:—The time approaches that will enable us to decide, with that just judgment (of which you speak), both what advantages we may truly say we have in the disaffection of the enemy, and what we actually owe or possess in our own good soldiership.—*Elwin*.

²⁰ *And my fell of hair.*

My hairy part, my *capillitium*. *Fell* is *skin*. So, in *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, by George Chapman, 1654:—

— Where the lyon's hide is thin and scant,
I'll firmly patch it with a fox's *fell*.—*Steevens*.

²¹ *To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow.*

It is not impossible that Shakespeare may here have recollected a remarkable engraving in Barclay's *Ship of Fooles*, 1570, copied from that in the older Latin version of 1498.

They folowe the crows crye to their great sorowe,
Cras, cras, cras, to-morowe we shall amende,
 And if we mend not then, then shall we the next morowe,
 Or els shortly after we shall no more offende;
 Amende, mad foole, when God this grace doth sende;
 He is unwise which trusteth the crows songe,
 And that affirmeth that he shall live so longe.

The Ship of Fooles, translated by A. Barclay, 1570.

²² *To the last syllable of recorded time.*

This refers to *time prophetically recorded* as yet to come, and means *the day of judgment*. See Revelation, x. 5, 6: "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there should be time no longer."—*Elwin*.

²³ *The way to dusty death.*

Shakespeare was not the first to apply the epithet "dusty" to death. Anthony Copley, in his *Fig for Fortune*, 1596, has this line:—"Inviting it to *dusty death's* de-feature." There can be no doubt it is the right word, although the second

folio reads "*study* death," and Warburton would read *dusky*. None of the commentators appear to have found an instance of the coupling of the two words "dusty death."—*Collier*.

²⁴ *Till famine cling thee.*

Mr. Collier is certainly right in explaining *cling* to shrink, the meaning given by Kennett in MS. Lansd., 1033. It is from A. S. *clingan*. Kennett has also "*clung*, clinged or shrunk up;" and in Cooper's edition of Eliote's Dictionarie, 1559, is the following entry—" *Coriago*, the sicknesse of cattall whan they are *clounge*, that their skynnes dooe cleve fast to their bodies, hyde bounde." It should be observed that in the Craven Glossary, i., 79, *clung* is explained "hungry or empty, emaciated," which perhaps agrees still better with the context in the passage under consideration. On the whole, I should explain *cling* in this place "to wither," no single word better expressing the intended force of the threat.



Theo nessesche clay hit makith *clynge*.

Kyng Alisaunder, 915.

My bonys were stronge, and myghtyly made ;
But now thei *clynge*, and waxe all drye.

Seven Penetential Psalms, ed. Black, p. 29.

²⁵ *I pull in resolution.*

Macbeth has relied for support upon the prophecies concerning himself. Whatever resolution he has *put forth* in his acts was dependant upon this reliance; and finding these prophecies to be fallacious, he says, *I pull in* or *withdraw resolution*, and begin to doubt, &c. In connection with this expression, Monk Mason has quoted an appropriate expression from Fletcher's *Sea Voyage*:

————— and all my spirits,
As if they heard my passing bell go for me,
Pull in their powers, and give me up to destiny.—*Elwin*.

²⁶ *At least we'll die with harness on our back.*

Harness, armour. "On the fryday, which was Candlemasse daie (Feb. 2, 1553-4), the most parte of the householders of London, with the Maior and aldermen, were in harnesse; yea this day and other daies the justices, sergeants at the law, and other lawyers in Westminster-hal, pleaded in harnesse," Stowe's *Chronicle*.

²⁷ *I would not wish them to a fairer death.*

It is said, that, in the battle in which Macbeth was killed, Siward, Earl of Northumberland, vanquished the Scots; one of Siward's sons chanced to be slain; whereof, although the father had good cause to be sorrowful, yet when he heard that he died of a wound which he received in fighting stoutly, in the fore part of his body, and that with his face towards the enemy—I rejoice, saith he, even with all my heart; for I would not wish to my son, or to myself, any other kind of death.—*Holinshed's Chronicle*.

²⁸ *I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl.*

"Thy kingdom's pearl" means 'thy kingdom's wealth,' or rather ornament. So, J. Sylvester, *England's Parnassus*, 1600:—"Honour of cities, *pearle of kingdoms all*." Again, in Sir Philip Sydney's *Ourania*, by N. Breton, 1606:—

————— an earl,
And worthily then termed Albion's *pearl*.

John Florio, in a Sonnet prefixed to his *Italian Dictionary*, 1598, calls Lord Southampton—"bright *pearle* of peers."—*Malone*.

²⁹ *Henceforth be earls.*

Malcolm immediately after his coronation called a parlement at Forfair, in the which he rewarded them with lands and livings that had assisted him against Macbeth,—Manie of them that were before *thanes*, were at this time made *earles*, as Fife, Menteth, Atholl, Levenox, Murrey, Cathness, Rosse, and Angus.—*Holinshed*.

NOTE.

THE notes to this play by Mr. Elwin, the most able of any of its critics, which form so distinguishing and important a feature in the present edition, are extracted from a privately-printed book entitled *Shakespeare Restored*, 4to., *Norwich*, 1853, an anonymous work, but now known to have been written by Hastings Elwin, Esq., of Horstead House, near Norwich.

Hamlet.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE was an old English tragedy on the subject of Hamlet, which was in being at least as early as the year 1587, in the representation of which, an exclamation of the ghost, “Hamlet, revenge!” was a striking and well-remembered feature. This production is alluded to in Greene’s *Aradia* or *Menaphon*, 1587,—“I will turn back to my first text of studies of delight, and talk a little in friendship with a few of our trivial translators. It is a common practice now a-days, among a sort of shifting companions, that runne through every art, and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *Noverint*, whereto they were born, and busie themselves with the endeavors of art, that could scarcely latinize their neck-verse if they should have neede; yet English Seneca, read by candle-light, yeelds many good sentences, as *Bloud is a beggar*, and so forth: and, if you intreat him faire in a frosty morning, he will affoord you whole *Hamlets*, I should say, Handfuls, of tragical speeches. But O grief! *Tempus edax rerum*;—what is it that will last always? The sea exhaled by drops will in continuance be drie; and Seneca, let bloud line by line, and page by page, at length must needes die to our stage.” Another allusion occurs in Lodge’s *Wits Miserie*, 1596, p. 56,—“and though this fiend be begotten of his fathers own blood, yet is he different from his nature, and were he not sure that jealousie could not make him a cuckold, he had long since published him for a bastard:—you shall know him by this, he is a foule lubber, his tongue tipt with lying, his heart steeled against charity, he walks for the most part in black under colour of

gravity, and looks as pale as the visard of the ghost which cried so miserably at the Theator like an oister wife, *Hamlet, revenge.*” Again, in Decker’s *Satiro-mastix*, 1602,—“*Asinius.* ’Would I were hang’d, if I can call you any names, but captain and *Tucca.*—*Tucca.* No, fye’st, my name’s *Hamlet, revenge* :—Thou hast been at Paris Garden, hast not?—*Horace.* Yes, captain, I ha’ play’d *Zulziman* there;” with which may be compared another passage in *Westward Hoc*, 1607,—“I, but when light wives make heavy husbands, let these husbands play mad *Hamlet*; and crie *revenge.*” So, likewise, in Rowlands’ *Night Raven*, 1618,—“I will not cry, *Hamlet, Revenge* my greeves.” There is also reason to suppose that another passage in the old tragedy of *Hamlet* is alluded to in *Armin’s Nest of Ninnies*, 1608,—“ther are, as *Hamlet* saies, things cald whips in store.” It seems, however, certain that all the passages above quoted refer to a drama of *Hamlet* anterior to that by Shakespeare, and the same which is recorded in *Henslowe’s Diary* as having been played at Newington in 1594 by “my Lord Admeralle and my lorde Chamberlen men,”—“9 of June, 1594, receved at *Hamlet*, viij. s.” This older tragedy of *Hamlet* has unfortunately perished, and it will now probably never be ascertained whether Shakespeare derived his incidents from it, or whether he used a wretched prose translation of *Belleforest*, a popular romance called the *Historie of Hamblet*, the only known copy of which bears the date of 1608, but printed also most likely many years earlier. This curious relic is here given from a reprint made by Mr. Collier.

THE HISTORIE OF HAMBLET.—London; Imprinted by Richard Bradocke for Thomas Pavier, and are to be sold at his shop in Corne-hill, neere to the Royall Exchange. 1608.

The Argument.—It is not at this present, neither yet a small time since, that envy raigning in the worlde hath in such sort blinded men, that without respect of consanguinitie, friendship, or favour whatsoever, they forget themselves so much as that they spared not to defile their hands with the blood of those men, who by all law and right they ought chiefly to defend and cherish. For what other impression was it that entered into *Romulus* heart, when, under pretence of I know not what lawe, he defiled his hands with the blood of his owne brother, but the abhominable vice of desire to raigne? which, if in all the accurrences, prosperities, and circumstances thereof, it were well wayed and considered, I know not any man that had not rather live at his ease, and privately without charge, then, being feared and honored of all men, to beare all the charge and burden upon his shoulders; to serve and please the fantasies of the common people; to live continually in feare, and to see himself exposed to a thousand occasions of danger, and most commonly assailed and spoiled when hee thinkes verily to hold Fortune as slave to his fantasies and will, and yet buyes such and so great misery

for the vaine and fraile pleasures of this world, with the losse of his owne soule ; making so large a measure of his conscience, that it is not oncc mooved at any murther, treason, deceit, nor wickednes whatsoever he committed, so the way may be opened and made plaine unto him, whereby hec may attaine to that miserable felicitie, to command and governe a multitude of men (as I said of Romulus), who, by a most abhominable action, prepared himselfe a way to heaven (but not by vertue).

The ambitious and seditious Orator of Rome supposed the degrees and steps to heaven, and the wayes to vertue, to consist in the treasons, ravishments, and massacres committed by him that first layd the foundations of that citty. And not to leave the hystories of Rome, what, I pray you, incited Ancius Martinus to massacre Tarquin the Elder, but the desire of raigning as a king, who before had bin the onely man to move and sollicite the saide Tarquinius to bereave the right heires and inheritors thereof? What caused Tarquinius the Proud traiterously to imbrue his hands in the blood of Servius Tullius, his father in law, but onely that fumish and unbridled desire to be commander over the cittie of Rome? which practise never ceased nor discontinued in the said principall cittie of the empire, as long as it was governed by the greatest and wisest personages chosen and elected by the people ; for therein have been seen infinite numbers of seditions, troubles, pledges, ransommings, confiscations, and massacres, onely proceeding from this ground and principle, which entereth into mens hearts, and maketh them covet and desirous to be heads and rulers of a whole common wealth. And after the people were deprived of that libertie of election, and that the empire became subject to the pleasure and fantasie of one man, commanding al the rest, I pray you peruse their bookes, and read diligently their hystories, and do but looke into the meanes used by the most part of their kings and emperours to attaine to such power and authoritie, and you shall see how poysons, massacres, and secret murthers, were the meanes to push them forwards that durst not openly attempt it, or else could not compasse to make open warres. And for that the Hystory (which I pretend to shew unto you) is chiefly grounded upon treason, committed by one brother against the other, I will not erre far out of the matter ; thereby desiring to shew you, that it is and hath been a thing long since practised and put in use by men, to spill the blood of their neerest kinsmen and friends to attaine to the honour of being great and in authoritie ; and that there hath bin some, that being impatient of staying till their just time of succession, have hastened the death of their owne parents : as Absolon would have done to the holy king David, his father ; and as wee read of Domitian, that poysoned his brother Titus, the most curtious and liberall prince that ever swayed the empire of Rome. And God knowes we have many the like examples in this our time, where the sonne conspired against the father ; for that Sultan Zelin, emperour of Turkes, was so honest a man, that fearing Baiazeth, his father, would die of his naturall death, and that thereby he should have stayd too long for the empire, bereaved him of his life ; and Sultan Soliman, his successor, although he attempted not any thing against his father, yet being mooved with a certaine feare to bee deposed from his emperie, and bearing a hatred to Mustapha, his son (incited therunto by Rustain Bassa, whom the Jewes, enemies to the yong prince, had by gifts procured thereunto), caused him to be strangled with a bowe string, without hearing him (that never had offended his father) once speake to justifie his innocencie. But let us leave the Turkes, like barbarians as they are, whose throne is ordinarily established by the effusion of the blood of those that are neerest of kindred and consanguinitie to the empire, and consider what tragedies have bin plaid to the like effect in the memorie of our ancestors, and with what charitie and love the neerest kindreds and friends among them have bin intertained. One of

the other, if you had not the hystories extant before you, if the memorie were not in a manner fresh, and known almost to every man, I would make a long discourse thereof; but things being so cleare and evident, the truth so much discovered, and the people almost, as it were, glutted with such treasons, I will omit them, and follow my matter, to shew you that, if the iniquitie of a brother caused his brother to loose his life, yet that vengeance was not long after delayed; to the end that traitors may know, although the punishment of their trespasses committed be stayed for awhile, yet that they may assure themselves that, without all doubt, they shal never escape the puisant and revenging hand of God; who being slow to anger, yet in the ende doth not faile to shew some signes and evident tokens of his fearefull judgement upon such as, forgetting their duties, shed innocent blood, and betray their rulers, whom they ought chiefly to honour, serve, and reverence.

The Preface.—Although in the beginning of this Hystorie I had determined not to have troubled you with any other matter than a hystorie of our owne time, having sufficient tragicall matter to satisfie the minds of men; but because I cannot wel discourse thereof without touching many personages whom I would not willingly displease, and partly because the argument that I have in hand, seemed unto me a thing worthy to be offered to our French nobilitie, for the great and gallant accurrences therein set downe, I have somewhat strayed from my course, as touching the tragedies of this our age, and, starting out of France and over Neitherlanders countries, I have ventured to visit the hystories of Denmarke, that it may serve for an example of vertue and contentment to our nation (whom I specially seeke to please), and for whose satisfaction I have not left any flower whatsoever untasted, from whence I have not drawne the most perfect and delicate hony, thereby to bind them to my diligence herein; not caring for the ingratitude of the time present, that leaveth (as it were rejecteth) without recompence such as serve the common wealth, and by their travell and diligence honour their countrey and illustrate the realme of France: so that oftentimes the fault proceedeth rather from them, then from the great personages that have other affaires which withdraw them from things that seeme of small consequence. Withall, esteeming my selfe more than satisfied in this contentment and freedome which I now enjoy, being loved of the nobilitie, for whom I travell without grudging, favoured of men of learning and knowledge, for admiring and revrencing them according to their worthnesse, and honoured of the common people, of whom, although I crave not their judgment, as not esteeming them of abilitie to eternize the name of a worthy man, yet I account my selfe sufficiently happy to have attained to this felicitie, that few or no men refuse, or disdaine to reade my workes, many admiring and wondering thereat; as there are some that, provoked by envie, blame and condemne it. To whom I confesse my selfe much bound and beholding, for that by their meanes I am the more vigelant, and so by my travell much more beloved and honored then ever I was; which to mee is the greatest pleasure that I can enjoy, and the most abundant treasures in my coffers, wherewith I am more satisfied and contented then (if without comparision) I enjoyed the greatest treasures in all Asia. Now, returning to our matter, let us beginne to declare the Hystorie.

THE HYSTORIE OF HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARKE.

CHAP. I.—How Horvendile and Fengon were made Governours of the Province of Ditmarse, and how Horvendile marryed Geruth, the daughter to Roderick, chief K. of Denmark, by whom he had Hamlet: and how after his marriage his brother Fengon slewe him trayterously, and marryed his brothers wife, and what followed.

You must understand, that long time before the kingdome of Denmark

received the faith of Jesus Christ, and imbraced the doctrin of the Christians, that the common people in those dayes were barbarous and uncivill, and their princes cruell, without faith or loyaltie, seeking nothing but murther, and deposing (or at the least) offending each other, either in honours, goods, or lives; not caring to ransome such as they tooke prisoners, but rather sacrificing them to the cruell vengeance naturally imprinted in their hearts: in such sort, that if ther were sometime a good prince or king among them, who beeing adorned with the most perfect gifts of nature, would adict himselfe to vertue, and use courtesie, although the people held him in admiration (as vertue is admirable to the most wicked) yet the envie of his neighbors was so great, that they never ceased untill that vertuous man were dispatched out of the world. King Rodericke, as then raigning in Denmarke, after hee had appeased the troubles in the countrey, and driven the Sweathlanders and Slaveans from thence, he divided the kingdom into divers provinces, placing governours therein; who after (as the like happened in France) bare the names of Dukes, Marqueses, and Earls, giving the government of Jutie (at this present called Ditmarsse) lying upon the countrey of the Cimbrians, in the straight or narrow part of land that sheweth like a point or cape of ground upon the sea, which neithward bordereth upon the countrey of Norway, two valiant and warlike lords Horvendile and Fengon, sonnes to Gervendile, who likewise had beene governour of that province. Now the greatest honor that men of noble birth could at that time win and obtaine, was in exercising the art of piracie upon the seas, assaying their neighbours, and the countries bordering upon them; and how much the more they used to rob, pill, and spoyle other provinces, and ilands far adjacent, so much the more their honours and reputation increased and augmented: wherin Horvendile obtained the highest place in his time, beeing the most renouned pirate that in those dayes scoured the seas and havens of the north parts: whose great fame so mooved the heart of Collere, king of Norway, that he was much grieved to heare that Horvendile surmounting him in feates of armes, thereby obscuring the glorie by him already obtained upon the seas: (honor more than covetousnesse of richer (in those dayes) being the reason that provoked those barbarian princes to overthrow and vanquish one the other, not caring to be slaine by the handes of a victorious person). This valiant and hardy king having challenged Horvendile to fight with him body to body, the combate was by him accepted, with conditions, that hee which should be vanquished should loose all the riches he had in his ship, and that the vanquisher should cause the body of the vanquished (that should bee slaine in the combate) to be honourably buried, death being the prise and reward of him that should loose the battaile: and to conclude, Collere, king of Norway (although a valiant, hardy, and couragious prince) was in the end vanquishad and slaine by Horvendile, who presently caused a tombe to be erected, and therein (with all honorable obsequies fit for a prince) buried the body of king Collere, according to their auncient manner and superstitions in these dayes, and the conditions of the combate, bereaving the kings shippes of all their riches; and having slaine the kings sister, a very brave and valiant warriour, and over runne all the coast of Norway, and the Northern Ilands, returned home againe layden with much treasure, sending the most part thereof to his soveraigne, king Rodericke, thereby to procure his good liking, and so to be accounted one of the greatest favourites about his majestie.

The king, allured by those presents, and esteeming himselfe happy to have so valiant a subject, sought by a great favour and coutesie to make him become bounden unto him perpetually, giving him Geruth his daughter to his wife, of whom he knew Horvendile to bee already much inamored. And the more to honor him, determined himselfe in person to conduct her into Jutie, where the marriage was

celebrated according to the ancient manner: and to be briefe, of this marriage proceeded Hamblet, of whom I intend to speake, and for his cause have chosen to renew this present hystorie.

Fengon, brother to this prince Horvendile, who [not] onely fretting and despighting in his heart at the great honor and reputation wonne by his brother in warlike affaires, but solicited and provoked by a foolish jealousie to see him honored with royall aliance, and fearing thereby to bee deposed from his part of the government, or rather desiring to be onely governour, thereby to obscure the memorie of the victories and conquests of his brother Horvendile, determined (whatsoever happened) to kill him; which hee effected in such sort, that no man once so much as suspected him, every man esteeming that from such and so firme a knot of alliance and consanguinitie there could proceed no other issue then the full effects of vertue and courtesie: but (as I sayd before) the desire of bearing soveraigne rule and authoritie respecteth neither blood nor amitie, nor caring for vertue, as being wholly without respect of lawes, or majestie devine; for it is not possible that hee which invadeth the countrey and taketh away the riches of an other man without cause or reason, should know or feare God. Was not this a craftie and subtle counsellor? but he might have thought that the mother, knowing her husbands case, would not cast her sonne into the danger of death. But Fengon, having secretly assembled certain men, and perceiving himself strong enough to execute his interprise, Horvendile his brother being at a banquet with his friends, sodainely set upon him, where he slewe him as traiterously, as cunningly he purged himselfe of so detestable a murther to his subjects; for that before he had any violent or bloody handes, or once committed parricide upon his brother, hee had incestuously abused his wife, whose honour hee ought as well to have sought and procured as traiterously he pursued and effected his destruction. And it is most certaine that the man that abandoneth himselfe to any notorious and wicked action, whereby he becommeth a great sinner, he careth not to commit much more haynous and abhominable offences, and covered his boldnesse and wicked practise with so great subiltie and policie, and under a vaile of meere simplicitie, that beeing favoured for the honest love that he bare to his sister in lawe, for whose sake, hee affirmed, he had in that sort murdered his brother, that his sinne found excuse among the common people, and of the nobilitie was esteemed for justice: for that Geruth, being as courteous a princesse as any then living in the north parts, and one that had never once so much as offended any of her subjects, either commons or courtiers, this adulterer and infamous murtherer, slaunders his dead brother, that hee would have slaine his wife, and that hee by chance finding him upon the point ready to do it, in defence of the lady had slaine him, bearing off the blows, which as then he strooke at the innocent princesse, without any other cause of malice whatsoever. Wherein hee wanted no false witnesses to approove his act, which deposed in like sort, as the wicked calumniator himselfe protested, being the same persons that had born him company, and were participants of his treason; so that instead of pursuing him as a parricide and an incestuous person, al the courtiers admired and flattered him in his good fortune, making more account of false witnesses and detestable wicked reporters, and more honouring the calumniators, then they esteemed of those that seeking to call the matter in question, and admiring the vertues of the murdered prince, would have punished the massacres and bereavers of his life. Which was the cause that Fengon, boldned and incouraged by such impunitie, durst venture to couple himselfe in marriage with her whom hee used as his concubine during good Horvendiles life, in that sort spotting his name with a double vice, and charging his conscience with abhominable guilt, and two-fold impietie, as incestuous

adulterie and parricide murther: and that the unfortunate and wicked woman, that had received the honour to bee the wife of one of the valiantest and wiseth princes in the north, imbased her selfe 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 lawfull husband; which made divers men thinke that she had beene the causer of the murther, thereby to live in her adultery without controle. But where shall a man finde a more wicked and bold woman, then a great parsonage once having loosed the bands of honor and honestie? This princesse, who at the first, for her rare vertues and courtesies was honored of al men and beloved of her husband, as soone as she once gave eare to the tyrant Fengon, forgot both the ranke she helde among the greatest names, and the dutie of an honest wife on her behalfe. But I will not stand to gaze and mervaile at women, for that there are many which seeke to blase and set them foorth, in which their writings they spare not to blame them all for the faults of some one, or few women. But I say, that either nature ought to have bereaved man of that opinion to accompany with women, or els to endow them with such spirits, as that they may easily support the crosses they endure, without complaining so often and so strangely, seeing it is their owne beastlinesse that overthrowes them. For if it be so, that a woman is so imperfect a creature as they make her to be, and that they know this beast to bee so hard to bee tamed as they affirme, why then are they so foolish to preserve them, and so dull and brutish as to trust their deceitfull and wanton imbracings. But let us leave her in this extremitie of laciviousnesse, and proceed to shewe you in what sort the yong prince Hamblet behaved himselfe, to escape the tyranny of his uncle.

CHAP. II.—How Hamblet counterfeited the mad man, to escape the tyrannie of his uncle, and how he was tempted by a woman (through his uncles procurement) who thereby thought to undermine the Prince, and by that meanes to finde out whether he counterfeited madnesse or not: and how Hamblet would by no meanes bee brought to consent unto her, and what followed.

GERUTH having (as I sayd before) so much forgotten herself, the prince Hamblet perceiving himself to bee in danger of his life, as beeing abandoned of his owne mother, and forsaken of all men, and assuring himselfe that Fengon would not detract the time to send him the same way his father Horvendile was gone, to beguile the tyrant in his subtilties (that esteemed him to bee of such a minde that if he once attained to mans estate he wold not long delay the time to revenge the death of his father) counterfeiting the mad man with such craft and subtill practises, that hee made shewe as if hee had utterly lost his wittes: and under that vayne hee covered his pretence, and defended his life from the treasons and practises of the tyrant his uncle. And all though hee had beene at the schoole of the Romane Prince, who, because hee counterfeited himselfe to bee a foole, was called Brutus, yet hee imitated his fashions, and his wisdom. For every day beeing in the queenes palace, (who as then was more carefull to please her whom she loved, then ready to revenge the cruell death of her husband, or to restore her sonne to his inheritance), hee rent and tore his clothes, wallowing and lying in the durt and mire, his face all filthy and blacke, running through the streets like a man distraught, not speaking one worde, but such as seemed to proceede of madnesse and meere frenzie; all his actions and jestures beeing no other than the right countenances of a man wholly deprived of all reason and understanding, in such sort, that as then hee seemed fitte for nothing but to make sport to the pages and ruffling courtiers that attended in the court of his uncle and father-in-law. But the yong prince noted them well enough, minding one

day to bee revenged in such manner, that the memorie thereof should remaine perpetually to the world.

Beholde, I pray you, a great point of a wise and brave spirite in a yong prince, by so great a shewe of imperfection in his person for advancement, and his owne imbasing and despising, to worke the meanes and to prepare the way for himselfe to bee one of the happiest kings in his age. In like sort, never any man was reputed by any of his actions more wise and prudent then Brutus, dissembling a great alteration in his minde, for that the occasion of such his devise of foolishnesse proceeded onely of a good and mature counsell and deliberation, not onely to preserve his goods, and shunne the rage of the proude tyrant, but also to open a large way to procure the banishment and utter ruine of wicked Tarquinius, and to infranchise the people (which were before oppressed) from the yoake of a great and miserable servitude. And so, not onely Brutus, but this man and worthy prince, to whom wee may also adde king David, that counterfeited the madde man among the petie kings of Palestina to preserve his life from the subtill practises of those kings. I shew this example unto such, as beeing offended with any great personage, have not sufficient meanes to prevaile in their intents, or revenge the injurie by them receaved. But when I speake of revenging any injury received upon a great personage or superior, it must be understood by such an one as is not our soveraigne, againste whome wee maie by no meanes resiste, nor once practise anie treason nor conspiracie against his life: and hee that will followe this course must speake and do all things whatsoever that are pleasing and acceptable to him whom hee meaneth to deceive, practise his actions, and esteeme him above all men, cleane contrarve to his owne intent and meaning; for that is rightly to playe and counterfeite the foole, when a man is constrained to dissemble and kisse his hand, whome in hearte hee could wishe an hundred foote depth under the earth, so hee mighte never see him more, if it were not a thing wholly to bee disliked in a christian, who by no meanes ought to have a bitter gall, or desires infected with revenge. Hamblet, in this sorte counterfeiting the madde man, many times did divers actions of great and deepe consideration, and often made such and so fitte answeres, that a wise man would soone have judged from what spirite so fine an invention mighte proceede; for that standing by the fire and sharpning sticks like poyuards and prickes, one in smiling manner asked him wherefore he made those little staves so sharpe at the points? I prepare (saith he) piercing dartes and sharpe arrowes to revenge my fathers death. Fooles, as I said before, esteemed those his words as nothing; but men of quicke spirits, and such as hadde a deeper reache began to suspect somewhat, esteeming that under that kinde of folly there lay hidden a greate and rare subtilty, such as one day might bee prejudiciall to their prince, saying, that under colour of such rudenes he shadowed a crafty pollicy, and by his devised simplicitye, he concealed a sharp and pregnant spirit: for which cause they counselled the king to try and know, if it were possible, how to discover the intent and meaning of the yong prince; and they could find no better nor more fit invention to intrap him, then to set some faire and beawtifull woman in a secret place, that with flattering speeches and all the craftiest meanes she could use, should purposely seek to allure his mind to have his pleasure of her: for the nature of all young men, (especially such as are brought up wantonlie) is so transported with the desires of the flesh, and entreth so greedily into the pleasures therof, that it is almost impossible to cover the foul affection, neither yet to dissemble or hyde the same by art or industry, much lesse to shunne it. What cunning or subtilty so ever they use to cloak their pretence, seeing occasion offered, and that in secret, especially in the most inticing sinne that rayneth in man, they cannot chuse (being constrained by voluptuousnesse) but fall to naturall effect and working. To this end certaine

courtiers were appointed to leade Hamblet into a solitary place within the woods, whether they brought the woman, inciting him to take their pleasures together, and to imbrace one another, but the subtill practises used in these our daies, not to try if men of great account bee extract out of their wits, but rather to deprive them of strength, vertue and wisdom, by meanes of such devilish practitioners, and infernall spirits, their domestical servants, and ministers of corruption. And surely the poore prince at this assault had him in great danger, if a gentleman (that in Horvendiles time had been nourished with him) had not showne himselfe more affectioned to the bringing up he had received with Hamblet, then desirous to please the tirant, who by all meanes sought to intangle the sonne in the same nets wherein the father had ended his dayes. This gentleman bare the courtiers (appointed as aforesaide of this treason) company, more desiring to give the prince instruction what he should do, then to intrap him, making full account that the least shewe of perfect sence and wisdom that Hamblet should make would be sufficient to cause him to loose his life : and therefore by certain signes, he gave Hamblet intelligence in what danger hee was like to fall, if by any meanes hee 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 being one that from her infancy loved and favoured him, and would have been exceeding sorrowfull for his misfortune, and much more to leave his companie without injoying the pleasure of his body, whome shee loved more than herselfe. The prince in this sort having both deceived the courtiers, and the ladies expectation, that affirmed and swore that hee never oncc offered to have his pleasure of the woman, although in subtilty hee affirmed the contrary, every man there upon assured themselves that without all doubt he was distraught of his senses, that his braynes were as then wholly void of force, and incapable of reasonable apprehension, so that as then Fengons practise took no effect : but for al that he left not off, still seeking by al meanes to finde out Hamblets subtilty, as in the next chapter you shall perceive.

CHAP. III.—How Fengon, uncle to Hamblet, a second time to intrap him in his politick madnes, caused one of his counsellors to be secretly hidden in the queenes chamber, behind the arras, to heare what speeches passed between Hamblet and the Queen ; and how Hamblet killed him, and escaped that danger, and what followed.

AMONG the friends of Fengon, there was one that above al the rest doubted of Hamblets practises in counterfeiting the madman, who for that cause said, that it was impossible that so craftie a gallant as Hamblet, that counterfeited the foole, should be discovered with so common and unskillfull practises, which might easily bee perceived, and that to finde out his politique pretence it were necessary to invent some subtill and crafty meanes, more attractive, whereby the gallant might not have the leysure to use his accustomed dissimulation ; which to effect he said he knewe a fit waie, and a most convenient meane to effect the kings desire, and thereby to intrap Hamblet in his subtilties, and cause him of his owne accord to fall into the net prepared for him, and thereby evidently shewe his secret meaning. His devise was thus, that King Fengon should make as though he were to goe some long voyage concerning affaires of great importance, and that in the meane time Hamblet should be shut up alone in a chamber with his mother, wherein some other should secretly be hidden behind the hangings, unknowne either to him or his mother, there to stand and heere their speeches, and the complots by them to bee taken concerning the accomplishment of the dissembling fooles

pretence; assuring the king that if there were any point of wisdom and perfect sense in the gallant's spirit, that without all doubt he would easily discover it to his mother, as being devoid of all fear that she would utter or make known his secret intent, being the woman that had borne him in her bodie, and nourished him so carefully; and withall offered himselfe to be the man that should stand to harken and beare witness of Hamlet's speeches with his mother; that hee might not be esteemed a counsellor in such a case wherein he refused to be the executioner for the behoofe and service of his prince. This invention pleased the king exceeding well, esteeming it as the onely and soveraigne remedie to heale the prince of his lunacie; and to that ende making a long voyage, issued out of his pallace, and roode to hunt in the Forrest. Meane time the counsellor entred secretly into the queene's chamber, and there hid himselfe behind the arras, not long before the queene and Hamlet came thither, who being craftie and politike, 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 he should be understood, and by that meanes intercepted, used his ordinary manner of dissimulation, and began to come like a cocke beating with his armes, (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 sworde thrust it into the hangings, which done, pulled the counsellor (halfe dead) out by the heeles, made an end of killing him, and being slaine, cut his bodie in pieces, which he caused to be boyled, and then cast it into an open vaulte or privie, that so it mighte serve for foode to the hogges. By which meanes having discovered the ambushe, and given the inventer thereof his just rewarde, hee came againe to his mother, who in the meane time wepte and tormented her selfe to see all her hopes frustrate, for that what fault soever she had committed, yet was shee sore grieved to see her onely child made a meere mockery, every man reproaching her with his folly, one point whereof she had as then seene before her eyes, which was no small pricke to her conscience, esteeming that the gods sent her that punishment for joyning incestuously in marriage with the tyrannous murtherer of her husband, who likewise ceased not to invent all the means he could to bring his nephew to his ende, accusing his owne naturall indiscretion, as being the ordinary guide of those that so much desire the pleasures of the bodie, who shutting up the waie to all reason, respect not what maie ensue of their lightnes and great inconstancy, and how a pleasure of small moment is sufficient to give them cause of repentance during their lives, and make them curse the daye and time that ever any such apprehensions entred into their mindes, or that they closed their eyes to reject the honestie requisite in ladies of her qualitie, and to despise the holy institution of those dames that had gone before her, both in nobilitie and vertue, calling to mind the great prayes and commendations given by the danes to Rinde, daughter to king Rother, the chastest lady in her time, and withall so shamefast that she would never consent to marriage with any prince or knight whatsoever; surpassing in vertue all the ladies of her time, as shee herselfe surmounted them in beawtie, good behaviour, and comelines. And while in this sort she sate tormenting herselfe, Hamlet entred into the chamber, who having once againe searched every corner of the same, distrusting his mother as well as the rest, and perceiving himselfe to be alone, began in sober and discreet manner to speak unto her, saying,

What treason is this, O most infamous woman! of all that ever prostrated themselves to the will of an abhominable whore monger, who, under the vail of a dissembling creature, covereth the most wicked and detestable crime that man could ever imagine, or was committed. Now may I be assured to trust you, that like a vile wanton adul'tresse, altogether impudent and given over to her pleasure, runnes

spreading forth her armes joyfully to imbrace the trayterous villanous tyrant that murdered my father, and most ineestuously receivest the villain into the lawfull bed of your loyall spouse, imprudently entertaining him in steede of the deare father of your miserable and diseomforted soone, if the gods grant him not the grace speedilie to escape from a captivity so unworthie the degree he holdeth, and the rae and noble familie of his ancestors. Is this the part of a queene, and daughter to a king? to live like a brute beast (and like a mare that yieldeth her bodie to the horse that hath beaten hir companion awaye), to followe the pleasure of an abhominable king that hath murdered a farre more honest and better man then himself in massacring Horvendile, the honor and glory of the Danes, who are now esteemed of no force nor valour at all, since the shining splendure of knighthood was brought to an end by the most wickedest and cruellest villaine living upon earth. I, for my part, will never account him for my kinsman, nor once knowe him for mine unele, nor you my deer mother, for not having respect to the blud that ought to have united us so straightly together, and who neither with your honor nor without suspieion of consent to the death of your husband could ever have agreed to have marryed with his cruell enemy. O, queene Geruthe, it is the part of a bitch to couple with many, and desire acquaintanee of divers mastiffes: it is licentiousnes only that hath made you deface out of your minde the memory of the valor and vertues of the good king your husband and my father: it was an unbrideled desire that guided the daughter of Roderiek to imbrace the tyrant Fengon, and not to remember Horvendile (unworthy of so strange intertainment), neither that he killed his brother traiterously, and that shee being his fathers wife betrayed him, although he so well favoured and loved her, that for her sake he utterly bereaved Norway of her riches and valiant souldiers to augment the treasures of Roderiek, and make Geruthe wife to the hardyest prince in Europe: it is not the parte of a woman, much lesse of a princesse, in whome all modesty, eurtesse, compassion, and love ought to abound, thus to leave her deare ehild to fortune in the bloody and murtherous hands of a villain and traytor. Bruite beasts do not so, for lyons, tygers, ounces and leopards fight for the safety and defence of their whelpes; and birds that have beakes, claws, and wings, resist such as would ravish them of their yong ones; but you, to the contrary, expose and deliver mee to death, whereas ye should defend me. Is not this as much as if you should betray me, when you knowing the perversenes of the tyrant and his intents, ful of deadly counsell as touching the rae and image of his brother, have not once sought, nor desired to finde the meanes to save your child (and only son) by sending him into Swethland, Norway, or England, rather than to leave him as a pray to youre infamous adulterer? bee not offended, I praye you, Madame, if transported with dolour and griefe, I speake so boldely unto you, and that I respect you lesse then duetie requireth; for you, having forgotten mee, and wholly rejeeted the memorye of the deeeased K. my father, must not bee abashed if I also surpasse the bounds and limits of due consideration. Beholde into what distresse I am now fallen, and to what mischief my fortune, and your over great lightnesse, and want of wisdome have indued mee, that I am constrained to playe the madde man to save my life, in steed of using and praetising armes, following adventures, and seeking all meanes to make my selfe knowne to bee the true and undoubted heire of the valiant and vertuous king Horvendile. It was not without cause, and juste occasion, that my gestures, countenances, and words, seeme all to proceed from a madman, and that I desire to have all men esteeme mee wholly deprived of sence and reasonable understanding, because I am well assured, that he that hath made no conscience to kill his owne brother, (accustomed to murthers, and allured with desire of government without controll in his treasons), will not spare to save himselfe with the

like erneltie, 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 sences as nature hath bestowed them upon me; the bright shining elearnes therof I am forced to hide under this shadow of dissimulation, as the sun doth hir beams under some great cloud, when the wether in sommer time overcasteth. The face of a mad man serveth to cover my gallant countenancee, and the gestures of a fool are fit for me, to the end that guiding my self wisely therein, I may preserve my life for the Danes, and the memory of my late deeeased father; for the desire of revenging his death is so engraven in my heart, that if I dye not shortly, I hope to take such and so great vengeance, that these cuntryes shall for ever speake thereof. Neverthelesse, I must stay the time, meanes, and occasion, lest by making over great hast, I be now the cause of mine owne sodaine ruine and overthrow, 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 use craft and politike inventions, such as a fine witte can best imagine, not to discover his interprise; for seeing that by force I cannot effect my desire, reason alloweth me by dissimulation, subiltie, and seeret practises to proceed therein. To conclude, weepe not (madame) to see my folly, but rather sigh and lament your owne offence, tormenting your conscience in regard of the infamie that hath so defiled the ancient renowne and glorie that (in times past) honoured queene Geruth; for wee are not to sorrowe and grieve at other mens vices, but for our owne misdeedes, and great folloyes. Desiring you, for the surplus of my proceedings, above all things (as you love your owne life and welfare) that neither the king nor any other may by any meanes know mine intent; and let me alone with the rest, for I hope in the ende to bring my purpose to effect.

Although the queene perceived herselfe nearly touched, and that Hamlet mooved her to the quicke, where she felt herselfe interested, neverthelesse shee forgot all disdain and wrath, which thereby she might as then have had, hearing her selfe so sharply ehiden and reprooved, for the joy she then conceaved, to behold the gallant spirit of her sonne, and to thinke what she might hope, and the easier expect of his so great policie and wisdom. But on the one side she durst not lift up her eyes to beholde him, remembering her offence, and on the other side she would gladly have imbraceed her son, in regard of the wise admonitions by him given unto her, which as then quenched the flames of unbridled desire that before had moved her to affect K. Fengon, to ingraff in her heart the vertuous actions of her lawfull spouse, whom inwardly she much lamented, when she beheld the lively image and portraiture of his vertue and great wisdom in her ehilde, representing his fathers haughtie and valiant heart; and so, overcome and vanquished with this honest passion, and weeping most bitterly, having long time fixed her eyes upon Hamlet, as being ravished into some great and deepe contemplation, and as it were wholly amazed, at the last imbracing him in her armes (with the like love that a vertuous mother may or can use to kisse and entertaine her owne ehilde), shee spake unto him in this manner.

I know well (my sonne) that I have done thee great wrong in marrying with Fengon, the cruell tyrant and murtherer of thy father, and my loyall 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 hee made ready, if I should have refused to like of him, thou wouldest rather excuse then accuse me of lasciviousness or inconstaney, much lesse 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 my power to have resisted the tyrant, although it had beene with the losse of my blood, yea

and my life, I would surely have saved the life of my lord and husband with as good a will and desire as, since that time, I have often bene a meanes to hinder and impeach the shortning of thy life, which being taken away, I will no longer live here upon earth. For seeing that thy sences are whole and sound, I am in hope to see an easie meanes invented for the revenging of thy fathers death. Neverthelessse, mine owne sweet soone, if thou hast pittie of thy selfe, or care of the memorie of thy father (although thou wilt do nothing for her that deserveth not the name of a mother in this respect), I pray thee, carie thine affayres wisely : bee not hastie, nor over furious in thy interprises, neither yet advance thy selfe more then reason shall moove thee to effect thy purpose. Thou seest there is not almost any man wherein thou mayest put thy trust, nor any woman to whom I dare utter the least part of my secrets, that would not presently report it to thine adversarie, who, although in outward shew he dissembleth to love thee, the better to enjoy his pleasures of me, yet hee distrusteth and feareth mee for thy sake, and is not so simple to be easily perswaded that thou art a foole or mad ; so that if thou chance to doe any thing that seemeth to proceed of wisdom or policie (how secretly soever it be done) he will presently be informed thereof, and I am greatly afraide that the devils have shewed him what hath past at this present between us, (fortune so much pursueth and contrarieth our ease and welfare) or that this murther that now thou hast committed be not the cause of both our destructions, which I by no meanes will seeme to know, but will keepe secret both thy wisdom and hardy interprise ; beseeching the Gods (my good soone) that they, guiding thy heart, directing thy counsels, and prospering thy interprise, I may see thee possesse and enjoy that which is thy right, and weare the crowne of Denmarke, by the tyrant taken from thee ; that I may rejoyce in thy prosperitie, and therewith content my self, seeing with what courage and boldnesse thou shalt take vengeance upon the murtherer of thy father, as also upon all those that have assisted and favoured him in his murtherous and bloody enterprise. Madame (sayd Hamlet) I will put my trust in you, and from henceforth meane not to meddle further with your affayres, beseeching you (as you love your owne flesh and blood) that you will from hence forth no more esteeme of the adulterer, mine enimie whom I wil surely kill, or cause to be put to death, in despite of all the devils in hel : and have he never so manie flattering courtezans to defend him, yet will I bring him to his death, and they themselves also shall beare him company therein, as they have bin his perverse counsellors in the action of killing my father, and his companions in his treason, massacre and cruell enterprise. And reason requireth that, even as trayterously they then caused their prince to bee put to death, that with the like (nay well, much more) justice they should pay the interest of their felonious actions.

You know (Madame) how Hother your grandfather, and father to the good king Roderick, having vanquished Guimon, caused him to be burnt, for that the cruell villain had done the like to his lord Gevare, whom he betrayed in the night time. And who knoweth not that traytors and perjured persons deserve no faith nor loyaltie to be observed towards them, and that conditions made with murtherers ought to bee esteemed as cobwebs, and accounted as if they were things never promised nor agreed upon : but if I lay handes upon Fengon, it will neither be felonie nor treason, hee being neither my king nor my lord, but I shall justly punish him as my subject, that hath disloyaly behaved himselfe against his lord and soveraigne prince. And seeing that glory is the rewarde of the vertuous, and the honour and praise of those that do service to their naturall prince, why should not blame and dishonour accompany traytors, and ignominious death al those that dare be so bold as to lay violent hands upon sacred kings, that are friends and companions of the gods, as representing their majestie and persons.

To conclude, glorie is the crown of vertue, and the price of constancie; and seeing that it never accompanieth with infelicitie, but shunnueth cowardize and spirits of base and trayterous conditions, it must necessarily followe, that either a glorious death will be mine ende, or with my sword in hand, (laden with tryumph and victorie) I shall bereave them of their lives that made mine unfortunate, and darkened the beames of that vertue which I possessed from the blood and famous memory of my predecessors. For why should men desire to live, when shame and infamie are the executioners that torment their consciences, and villany is the cause that withholdeth the heart from valiant interprises, and diverteth the minde from honest desire of glorie and commendation, which indureth for ever? I know it is foolishly done to gather fruit before it is ripe, and to seeke to enjoy a benefit, not knowing whither it belong to us of right; but I hope to effect it so well, and have so great confidence in my fortune (that hitherto hath guided the action of my life) that I shall not dye without revenging my selfe upon mine enemie, and that himselfe shall be the instrument of his owne decay, and to execute that which of my selfe I durst not have enterprised.

After this, Fengon (as if hec had beene out some long journey) came to the court againe, and asked for him that had received the charge to play the intiligencer, to entrap Hamlet in his dissembled wisdom, was abashed to heare neither newes nor tydings of him, and for that cause asked Hamlet what was become of him, naming the man. The prince that never used lying, and who in all the answers that ever he made (during his counterfeit madnesse) never strayed from the trueth (as a generous minde is a mortal enemie to untruth) answered and sayd, that the counsellor he sought for was gone downe through the privie, where being choaked by the filthynesse of the place, the hogs meeting him had filled their bellies.

CHAP. IIII.—How Fengon the third time devised to send Hamblet to the king of England, with secret letters to have him put to death: and how Hamblet, when his companions slept, read the letters, and instead of them counterfeited others, willing the king of England to put the two messengers to death, and to marry his daughter to Hamblet, which was effected; and how Hamblet escaped out of England.

A MAN would have judged any thing, rather then that Hamblet had committed that murther, nevertheless Fengon could not content himselfe, but still his minde gave him that the foole would play him some trick of liegerdemaine, and willingly would have killed him, but he feared king Rodericke, his grandfather, and further durst not offend the queene, mother to the foole, whom she loved and much cherished, shewing great grieffe and heavynesse to see him so transported out of his wits. And in that conceit, seeking to bee rid of him, determined to finde the meanes to doe it by the ayde of a stranger, making the king of England minister of his massacreing resolution, choosing rather that his friende should defile his renowne with so great a wickednesse, then himselfe to fall into perpetuall infamie by an exploit of so great crueltie, to whom hee purposed to send him, and by letters desire him to put him to death.

Hamblet, understanding that he should be sent into England, presently doubted the occasion of his voyage, and for that cause speaking to the queene, desired her not to make any shew of sorrow or grieffe for his departure, but rather counterfeit a gladness, as being rid of his presence; whom, although she loved, yet she dayly grieved to see him in so pittifull estate, deprived of all sence and reason: desiring her further, that she should hang the hall with tapestrie, and make it fast with nayles upon the walles, and keepe the brands for him which hee had

sharpened at the points, then, when as he said he made arrowes to revenge the death of his father: lastly, he counselled her, that the yeere after his departure being accomplished, she should celebrate his funerals; assuring her that at the same instant she should see him returne with great contentment and pleasure unto her for that his voyage. Now, to beare him company were assigned two of Fengons faithfull ministers, bearing letters ingraved in wood, that contained Hamlets death, in such sort as he had advertised the king of England. But the subtile Danish prince (beeing at sea) whilst his companions slept, having read the letters, and knowne his uncles great treason, with the wicked and villainous mindes of the two courtyers that led him to the slaughter, raced out the letters that concerned his death, and in stead thereof graved others, with commission to the king of England to hang his two companions; and not content to turne the death they had devised against him upon their owne neckes, wrote further, that king Fengon willed him to give his daughter to Hamlet in marriage. And so arriving in England, the messengers presented themselves to the king, giving him Fengons letters; who having read the contents, sayd nothing as then, but stayed convenient time to effect Fengons desire, meane time using the Danes familiarly, doing them that honour to sit at his table (for that kings as then were not so curiously, nor solemnely served as in these our dayes,) for in these dayes meane kings, and lords of small revenewe are as difficult and hard to bee scene, as in times past the monarches of Persia used to bee: or as it is reported of the great king of Aethiopia, who will not permit any man to see his face, which ordinarily hee covereth with a vaile. And as the messengers sate at the table with the king, subtile Hamlet was so far from being merry with them, that he would not taste one bit of meate, bread, nor cup of beare whatsoever, as then set upon the table, not without great wondering of the company, abashed to see a yong man and a stranger not to esteeme of the delicate meates and pleasant drinkes served at the banquet, rejecting them as things filthy, evill of tast, and worse prepared. The king, who for that time dissembled what he thought, caused his ghests to be conveyed into their chamber, willing one of his secret servantes to hide himselfe therein, and so to certifie him what speeches past among the Danes at their going to bed.

Now they were no sooner entred into the chamber, and those that were appointed to attend upon them gone out, but Hamlets companions asked him, why he refused to eat and drinke of that which hee found upon the table, not honouring the banquet of so great a king, that entertained them in friendly sort, with such honour and courtesie as it deserved? saying further, that hee did not well, but dishonoured him that sent him, as if he sent men into England that feared to bee poysoned by so great a king. The prince, that had done nothing without reason and prudent consideration, answered them, and sayd: What, think you, that I wil eat bread dipt in humane blood, and defile my throate with the rust of yron, and use that meat that stinketh and savoureth of mans flesh, already putrified and corrupted, and that senteth like the savour of a dead carryon, long since cast into a valt? and how woulde you have mee to respect the king, that hath the countenance of a slave; and the queene, who in stead of great majestie, hath done three things more like a woman of base parentage, and fitter for a waiting gentlewoman then beseeming a lady of her qualitic and estate. And having sayd so, used many injurious and sharpe speeches as well against the king and queene, as others that had assisted at that banquet for the intertainment of the Danish ambassadors; and therein Hamblet said trueth, as hereafter you shall heare, for that in those dayes, the north parts of the worlde, living as then under Sathans lawes, were full of inchanters, so that there was not any yong gentleman whatsoever that knew not something therein sufficient to serve his

turne, if need required: as yet in those dayes in Gothland and Biarmy, there are many that knew not what the Christian religion permitteth, as by reading the histories of Norway and Gothland, you maie easilie perceiue: and so Hamlet, while his father lived, had bin instructed in that devilish art, whereby the wicked spirite abuseth mankind, and advertiseth him (as he can) of things past.

It toucheth not the matter herein to discover the parts of deination in man, and whether this prince, by reason of his over great melancholy, had received those impressions, devining that which never any but himselfe had before declared, like the philosophers, who discoursing of divers deep points of philosophic, attribute the force of those divinations to such as are saturnists by complexion, who oftentimes speake of things which, their fury ceasing, they then alreadye can hardly understand who are the pronouncers; and for that cause Plato saith, many deviners and many poets, after the force and vigour of their fier beginneth to lessen, do hardly understand what they have written, although intreating of such things, while the spirite of deination continueth upon them they doe in such sorte discourse thereof that the authors and inventers of the arts themselves by them alledged, commend their discourses and subtile disputations. Likewise I mean not to relate that which divers men beleeve, that a reasonable soul becometh the habitation of a meaner sort of devils, by whom men learn the secrets of things natural; and much lesse do I account of the supposed governors of the world fained by magicians, by whose means they brag to effect mervailous things. It would seeme miraculous that Hamlet shold divine in that sort, which after proved so true (if as I said before) the devil had not knowledg of things past, but to grant it he knoweth things to come I hope you shall never finde me in so grosse an error. You will compare and make equall derivation, and conjecture with those that are made by the spirit of God, and pronounced by the holy prophets, that tasted of that marvelous science, to whome onely was declared the secrets and wondrous workes of the Almighty. Yet there are some imposturious companions that impute so much divinitie to the devell, the father of lyes, that they attribute unto him the truth of the knowledge of thinges that shall happen unto men, alledging the confrence of Saul with the witch, although one example out of the Holy Scriptures, specially set downe for the condemnation of wicked man, is not of force to give a sufficient law to all the world; for they themselves confesse that they can devine, not according to the universal cause of things, but by signes borrowed from such like causes, which are all waies alike, and by those conjectures they can give judgement of thinges to come, but all this beeing grounded upon a weake support, (which is a simple conjecture) and having so slender a foundation, as some foolish or late expericence the fictions being voluntarie. It should be a great folly in a man of good judgment, specially one that imbraceth the preaching of the gospell, and seeketh after no other but the trueth thereof, to repose upon any of these likelihoods or writings full of deceit.

As touching magical operations, I will grant them somewhat therein, finding divers histories that write thereof, and that the Bible maketh mention, and forbiddeth the use thereof: yea, the lawes of the gentiles and ordinances of emperors have bin made against it in such sort, that Mahomet, the great hereticke and friend of the devell, by whose subtiltyes hee abused most part of the east countries, hath ordained great punishments for such as use and practise those unlawfull and damnable arts, which, for this time leaving of, let us returne to Hamlet, brought up in these abuses, according to the manner of his country, whose companions hearing his answer reproached him of folly, saying that hee could by no meanes show a greater point of indiscretion, then in despising that which is lawfull, and rejecting that which all men received as a necessary thing, and that hee had not grossely so forgotten himselfe as in that sort to accuse such and so excellent a

man as the king of England, and to slander the queene, being then as famous and wise a prince as any at that day reigning in the ilands thereabouts, to cause him to be punished according to his deserts; but he, continuing in his dissimulation, mocked him, saying that hee had not done any thing that was not good and most true. On the other side, the king being advertised thereof by him that stood to heare the discourse, judged presently that Hamlet, speaking so ambiguously, was either a perfect foole, or else one of the wisest princes in his time, answering so sodainly, and so much to the purpose upon the demaund by his companions made touching his behaviour; and the better to find the truth, caused the babler to be sent for, of whome inquiring in what place the corne grew whereof he made bread for his table, and whether in that ground there were not some signes or newes of a battaile fought, whereby humane blood had therein been shed? the babler answered that not far from thence there lay a field full of dead mens bones, in times past slaine in a battaile, as by the greates heapes of wounded sculles mighte well appeare, and for that the ground in that parte was become fertiler then other grounds, by reason of the fatte and humours of the dead bodies, that every yeer the farmers used there to have in the best wheat they could finde to serve his majesties house. The king perceiving it to be true, according to the yong princes wordes, asked where the hogs had bin fed that were killed to be served at his table? and answer was made him, that those hogs getting out of the said field wherein they were kepte, had found the bodie of a thiefe that had beene hanged for his demerits, and had eaten thereof: whereat the king of England beeing abashed, would needs know with what water the beer he used to drinke of had beene brued? which having knowne, he caused the river to be digged somewhat deeper, and therein found great store of swords and rustie armours, that gave an ill savour to the drinke. It were good I should heere dilate somewhat of Merlins prophesies, which are said to be spoken of him before he was fully one yeere old; but if you consider wel what hath alreddy been spoken, it is no hard matter to divine of things past, although the minister of Sathan therein played his part, giving sodaine and prompt answeres to this yong prince, for that herein are nothing but natural things, such as were wel known to be true, and therefore not needfull to dreame of thinges to come. This knowne, the king, greatly moved with a certaine curiositie to knowe why the Danish prince saide that he had the countenance of a slave, suspecting thereby that he reproached the basenes of his blood, and that he wold affirme that never any prince had bin his sire, wherin to satisfie himselfe he went to his mother, and leading her into a secret chamber, which he shut as soone as they were entred, desired her of her honour to shewe him of whome he was ingendred in this world. The good lady, wel assured that never any man had bin acquainted with her love touching any other man then her husband, sware that the king her husband onely was the man that had enjoyed the pleasures of her body; but the king her sonne, already with the truth of the Danish princes answers, threatned his mother to make her tell by force, if otherwise she would not confesse it, who for feare of death acknowledged that she had prostrated her body to a slave, and made him father to the king of England; whereat the king was abashed, and wholly ashamed. I give them leave to judge who esteeming themselves honeste than their neighbours, and supposing that there can be nothing amisse in their houses, make more enquirie then is requisite to know the which they would rather not have known. Neverthelessse dissembling what he thought, and biting upon the bridle, rather then he would deprive himselfe by publishing the lasciviousnes of his mother, thought better to leave a great sin unpunished, then thereby to make himselfe contemptible to his subjects, who peradventure would have rejected him, as not desiring to have a bastard to raigne over so great a kingdome.

But as he was sorry to hear his mothers confession, on the other side he tooke great pleasure in the subtilty and quick spirit of the yong prince, and for that cause went unto him to aske him, why he had reprov'd three things in his queene convenient for a slave, and savouring more of basenes then of royaltie, and far unfit for the majesty of a great prince? The king, not content to have receaved a great displeasure by knowing him selfe to be a bastard, and to have heard with what injuries he charged her whom hee loved best in all the world, would not content himselfe untill he also understood that which displeas'd him, as much as his owne proper disgrace, which was that his queen was the daughter of a chambermaid, and with all noted certaine foolish countenances she made, which not onely shewed of what parentage she came, but also that hir humors savored of the basenes and low degree of hir parents, whose mother, he assured the king, was as then yet holden in servitude. The king admiring the young prince, and behoulding in him some matter of greater respect then in the common sort of men, gave him his daughter in marriage, according to the counterfet letters by him devised, and the next day caused the two servants of Fengon to be executed, to satisfie, as he thought, the king's desire. But Hamlet, although the sport plesed him wel, and that the king of England could not have done him a greater favour, made as though he had been much offended, threatning the king to be revenged, but the king, to appease him, gave him a great sum of gold, which Hamlet caused to be molten, and put into two staves, made hollow for the same purpose, to serve his tourne there with as neede should require; for of all other the kings treasures he took nothing with him into Denmark but onely those two staves, and as soone as the yeere began to bee at an end, having somewhat before obtained licence of the king his father in law to depart, went for Denmarke; then, with all the speed hee could to returne againe into England to marry his daughter, and so set sayle for Denmarke.

CHAP. V.—How Hamlet, having escaped out of England, arrived in Denmarke the same day that the Danes were celebrating his funerals, supposing him to be dead in England; and how he revenged his fathers death upon his uncle and the rest of the courtiers; and what followed.

HAMLET in that sort sayling into Denmark, being arrived in the contry, entered into the pallace of his uncle the same day that they were celebrating his funerals, and going into the hall, procured no small astonishment and wonder to them all, no man thinking other but that hee had beene deade: among the which many of them rejoyced not a little for the pleasure which they knew Fengon would conceive for so pleasant a losse, and some were sadde, as remembering the honourable king Horvendile, whose victories they could by no meanes forget, much lesse deface out of their memories that which appertained unto him, who as then greatly rejoyced to see a false report spread of Hamlets death, and that the tyrant had not as yet obtained his will of the heire of Jutie, but rather hoped God would restore him to his sences againe for the good and welfare of that province. Their amazement at the last beeing tourned into laughter, all that as then were assistant at the funerall banquet of him whome they esteemed dead, mocked each at other for having beene so simply deceived, and wondering at the prince, that in his so long a voyage he had not recovered any of his sences, asked what was become of them that had borne him company into Greate Brittain? to whome he made answer (shewing them the two hollow staves, wherein he had put his molten golde, that the King of England had given him to appease his fury, concerning the murther of his two companions), and said, Here they are both. Whereat many that already knew his humours, presently conjectured that

hee had plaide some tricke of legerdemane, and to deliver himselfe out of danger, had throwne them into the pitte prepared for him; so that fearing to follow after them and light upon some evil adventure, they went presently out of the court. And it was well for them that they didde so, considering the tragedy acted by him the same daie, beeing accounted his funerall, but in trueth their last daies, that as then rejoyced for their overthrow; for when every man busied himselfe to make good cheare, and Hamlets arivall provoked them more to drinke and carouse, the prince himselfe at that time played the butler and a gentleman attending on the tables, not suffering the pots nor goblets to bee empty, whereby hec gave the noble men such store of liquor, that all of them being ful laden with wine and gorged with meate, were constrained to lay themselves downe in the same place where they had supt, so much their sences were dulled, and overcome with the fire of over great drinking (a vice common and familiar among the Almaines, and other nations inhabiting the north parts of the world) which when Hamlet perceiving, and finding so good opportunitie to effect his purpose and bee revenged of his enemies, and by the means to abandon the actions, gestures, and apparel of a mad man, occasion so fitly finding his turn, and as it were effecting it selfe, failed not to take hold therof, and seeing those drunken bodies, filled with wine, lying like hogs upon the ground, some sleeping, others vomiting the over great abundance of wine which without measure they had swallowed up, made the hangings about the hall to fall downe and cover them all over; which he nailed to the ground, being boorded, and at the ends thereof he stuck the brands, whereof I spake before, by him sharpned, which served for prickes, binding and tying the hangings in such sort, that what force soever they used to loose themselves, it was impossible to get from under them: and presently he set fire in the foure corners of the hal, in such sort, that all that were as then therein not one escaped away, but were forced to purge their sins by fire, and dry up the great abundance of liquor by them received into their bodies, all of them dying in the inevitable and merciless flames of the whot and burning fire: which the prince perceiving, became wise, and knowing that his uncle, before the end of the banquet, had withdrawn himselfe into his chamber, which stood apart from the place where the fire burnt, went thither, and entring into the chamber, layd hand upon the sword of his fathers murtherer, leaving his own in the place, which while he was at the banquet some of the courtiers had nailed fast into the scaberd, and going to Fengon said: I wonder, disloyal king, how thou canst sleep heer at thine ease, and al thy pallace is burnt, the fire thereof having burnt the greatest part of thy courtiers and ministers of thy cruelty, and detestable tirannies; and which is more, I cannot imagin how thou shouldst wel assure thy self and thy estate, as now to take thy ease, seeing Hamlet so neer thee armed with the shafts by him prepared long since, and at this present is redy to revenge the traiterous injury by thee done to his lord and father.

Fengon, as then knowing the truth of his nephews subtile practise, and hering him speak with stayed mind, and which is more, perceived a sword naked in his hand, which he already lifted up to deprive him of his life, leaped quickly out of the bed, taking holde of Hamlets sworde, that was nayled into the scaberd, which as hee sought to pull out, Hamlet gave him such a blowe upon the chine of the necke, that hee cut his head cleane from his shoulders, and as he fell to the ground sayd, This just and violent death is a just reward for such as thou art: now go thy wayes, and when thou comest in hell, see thou forget not to tell thy brother (whom thou trayterously slewest), that it was his sonne that sent thee thither with the message, to the cnde that beeing comforted thereby, his soule may rest among the blessed spirits, and quit mee of the obligation that bound me to pursue his vengeance upon mine owne blood, that seeing it was by thee that I

lost the chiefe thing that tyed me to this aliance and consanguinitie. A man (to say the trueth) hardie, couragious, and worthy of eternall comendation, who arming himself with a crafty, dissembling, and strange shew of beeing distract out of his wits, under that pretence deceived the wise, pollitike, and craftie, thereby not onely preserving his life from the treasons and wicked practises of the tyrant, but (which is more) by an new and unexpected kinde of punishment, revenged his fathers death many yeeres after the aet committed: in no such sort that directing his courses with such prudenee, and effecting his purposes with so great boldnes and constancie, he left a judgement to be decyded among men of wisdom, which was more eommendable in him, his constancy or magnanimitie, or his wisdom in ordring his affaires, according to the premeditable determination he had conceived.

If vengeance ever seemed to have any shew of justice, it is then, when pietie and affection constraineth us to remember our fathers unjustly murdered, as the things wherby we are dispensed withal, and which seeke the means not to leave treason and murther unpunished: seeing David a holy and just king, and of nature simple, courteous, and debonaire, yet when he dyed he charged his soone Salomon (that succeeded him in his throane) not to suffer certaine men that had done him injurie to escape unpunished. Not that this holy king (as then ready to dye, and to give account before God of all his actions) was earefull or desirous of revenge, but to leave this example unto us, that where the prince or countrey is interessed, the desire of revenge cannot by any meanes (how small soever) beare the title of condemnation, but is rather commendable and worthy of praise: for otherwise the good kings of Juda, nor others had not pursued them to death, that had offended their predecessors, if God himself had not inspired and ingraven that desire within their hearts. Hereof the Athenian lawes beare wnesse, whose custome was to erect images in remembrance of those men that, revenging the injuries of the commonwealth, boldly massaered tyrants and such as troubled the peace and welfare of the citizens.

Hamlet, having in this manner revenged himselfe, durst not presently declare his action to the people, but to the contrary determined to worke by policie, so to give them intelligence, what he had done, and the reason that drewe him thereunto: so that beeing accompanied with such of his fathers friends that then were rising, he stayed to see what the people would doe when they shoulde heare of that sodaine and fearefull action. The next morning the townes bordering there aboutes, desiring to know from whence the flames of fire proceeded the night before they had seene, came thither, and perceiving the kings pallace burnt to ashes, and many bodyes (most part consumed) lying among the ruines of the house, all of them were much abashed, nothing being left of the palace but the foundation. But they were much more amased to beholde the body of the king all bloody, and his head cut off lying hard by him; whereat some began to threaten revenge, yet not knowing against whom; others beholding so lamentable a spectacle, armed themselves, the rest rejoycing, yet not daring to make any shewe thereof; some detesting the crueltie, others lamenting the death of their Prince, but the greatest part calling Horvendiles murther to remembrance, acknowledging a just judgement from above, that had throwne downe the pride of the tyrant. And in this sort, the diversities of opinions among that multitude of people being many, yet every man ignorant what would be the issue of that tragedie, none stirred from thence, neither yet attempted to move any tumult, every man fearing his owne skinne, and distrusting his neighbour, esteeming each other to bee consenting to the massacre.

CHAP. VI.—How Hamlet, having slaine his Uncle, and burnt his Palace, made an Oration to the Danes to shew them what he done; and how they made him King of Denmark; and what followed.

HAMLET then seeing the people to be so quiet, and most part of them not using any words, all searching onely and simply the cause of this ruine and destruction, not minding to loose any time, but ayding himself with the commoditie thereof, entred among the multitude of people, and standing in the middle spake unto them as followeth.

If there be any among you (good people of Denmark) that as yet have fresh within your memories the wrong done to the valiant king Horvendile, let him not be mooved, nor thinke it strange to behold the confused, hydeous, and fearfull spectacle of this present calamitie: if there be any man that affecteth fidelitie, and alloweth of the love and dutie that man is bound to shewe his parents, and find it a just cause to call to remembrance the injuryes and wrongs that have been done to our progenitors, let him not be ashamed beholding this massacre, much lesse offended to see so fearfull a ruine both of men and of the bravest house in all this countrey: for the hand that hath done this justice could not effect it by any other meanes, neither yet was it lawfull for him to doe it otherwise, then by ruinating both sensible and unsensible things, thereby to preserve the memorie of so just a vengeance.

I see well (my good friends) and am very glad to know so good attention and devotion in you, that you are sorrie (before your eyes) to see Fencion so murdered, and without a head, which heeretofore you acknowledged for your commander; but I pray you remember this body is not the body of a king, but of an execrable tyrant, and a parricide most detestable. Oh Danes! the spectacle was much more hydeous when Horvendile your king was murdered by his brother. What, should I say a brother! nay, rather by the most abhominable executioner that ever beheld the same. It was you that saw Horvendiles members massacred, and that with teares and lamentations accompanied him to the grave; his body disfigured, hurt in a thousand places, and misused in ten times as many fashions. And who doubteth (seeing experience hath taught you) that the tyrant (in massacring your lawfull king) sought onely to infringe the ancient liberties of the common people? and it was one hand onely, that murdering Horvendile, cruelly dispoyled him of life, and by the same meanes unjustly bereaved you of your ancient liberties, and delighted more in oppression then to embrace the plesant countenance of prosperous libertie without adventuring for the same. And what mad man is he that delighteth more in the tyranny of Fencion then in the clemencie and renewed courtesie of Horvendile? If it bee so, that by clemencie and affabilitie the hardest and stoutest hearts are molified and made tractable, and that evill and hard usage causeth subjects to be outrageous and unruly, why behold you not the debonair cariage of the first, to compare it with the cruelties and insolencies of the second, in every respect as cruell and barbarous as his brother was gentle, meeke, and courteous? Remember, O you Danes, remember what love and amitie Horvendile shewed unto you; with what equitie and justice he swayed the great affaires of this kingdome, and with what humanitie and courtesie he defended and cherished you, and then I am assured that the simplest man among you will both remember and acknowledge that he had a most peaceable, just, and righteous king taken from him, to place in his throane a tyrant and murtherer of his brother: one that hath perverted all right, abolished the auncient lawes of our fathers, contaminated the memories of our ancestors, and by his wickednesse polluted the integritie of this kingdome, upon the necke thereof having placed the

troublesome yoke of heaue servitude, abolishing that libertie wherein Horvendile used to maintaine you, and suffered you to live at your ease. And should you now bee sorrie to see the ende of your mischiefes, and that this miserable wretch, pressed downe with the burthien of his offences, at this present payeth the usury of the parricide committed upon the body of his brother, and would not himselfe be the revenger of the outrage done to me, whom he sought to deprive of mine inheritance, taking from Denmark a lawfull successor, to plant a wicked stranger, and bring into captivitie those that my father had enfranchised and delivered out of misery and bondage? And what man is he, that having any sparke of wisdom, would esteem a good deed to be an injury, and account pleasures equal with wrongs and evident outrages? It were then great folly and temerity in princes and valiant commanders in the wars to expose themselves to perils and hazards of their lives for the welfare of the common people, if that for a recompence they should reape hatred and indignation of the multitude. To what end should Hother have punished Balder, if, in steed of recompence, the Danes and Swethlanders had banished him to receive and accept the successors of him that desired nought but his ruine and overthrowe? What is hee that hath so small feeling of reason and equitie, that would be grieved to see treason rewarded with the like, and that an cvill act is punished with just demerit in the partie himselfe that was the occasion? who was ever sorowfull to behold the murtherer of innocents brought to his end, or what man weepeth to see a just massacre done upon a tyrant, usurper, villaine, and bloody personage?

I perceiue you are attentive, and abashed for not knowing the author of your deliverance, and sorry that you cannot tell to whom you should bee thankfull for such and so great a benefit as the destruction of a tyrant, and the overthrow of the place that was the storehouse of his villanies, and the true receptacle of all the theeues and traytors in this kingdome: but beholde (here in your presence) him that brought so good an enterprize to effect. It is I (my good friends), it is I, that confesse I have taken vengeance for the violence done unto my lord and father, and for the subjection and servitude that I perceived in this countrey, whereof I am the just and lawfull successor. It is I alone, that have done this piece of worke, whercunto you ought to have lent me your handes, and therein have ayded and assisted me. I have only accomplished that which all of you might justly have effected, by good reason, without falling into any point of treason or felonie. It is true that I hope so much of your good willes towards the deceased king Horvendile, and that the remembrances of his vertues is yet so fresh within your memories, that if I had required your aide herein, you would not have denied it, specially to your naturall prince. But it liked mee best to doe it my selfe alone, thinking it a good thing to punish the wicked without hazarding the lives of my friends and loyall subjects, not desiring to burthen other mens shoulderes with this weight; for that I made account to effect it well inough without exposing any man into danger, and by publishing the same should cleane have overthrowne the device, which at this present I have so happily brought to passe. I have burnt the bodyes of the courtiers to ashes, being companions in the mischiefs and treasons of the tyrant; but I have left Fengon whole, that you might punish his dead carkasse (seeing that when hee lived you durst not lay hands upon him), to accomplish the full punishment and vengeance due unto him, and so satisfie your choller upon the bones of him that filled his greedy hands and coffers with your riches, and shed the blood of your brethren and friends. Bee joyfull, then (my good friends); make ready the nosegay for this usurping king: burne his abhominable body, boyle his lascivious members, and cast the ashes of him that hath beene hurtfull to all the world into the ayre: drive from you the sparkes of pitie, to the end that neither silver, nor christall cup, nor sacred tombe

may be the restfull habitation of the reliques and bones of so detestable a man : let not one trace of a parricide be seene, nor your countrey defiled with the presence of the least member of this tyrant without pity, that your neighbors may not smell the contagion, nor our land the polluted infection of a body condemned for his wickednes. I have done my part to present him to you in this sort ; now it belongs to you to make an end of the worke, and put to the last hand of dutie whereunto your severall functions call you ; for in this sort you must honor abhominable princes, and such ought to be the funerall of a tyrant, parricide, and usurper, both of the bed and patrimony that no way belonged unto him, who having bereaved his countrey of liberty, it is fit that the land refuse to give him a place for the eternal rest of his bones.

O my good friends, seeing you know the wrong that hath bin done unto mee, what my griefs are, and in what misery I have lived since the death of the king, my lord and father, and seeing that you have both known and tasted these things then, when as I could not conceive the outrage that I felt, what neede I recite it unto you ? what benefit would it be to discover it before them that knowing it would burst (as it were with despight) to heare of my hard chance, and curse Fortune for so much imbasing a royall prince, as to deprive him of his majesty, although not any of you durst so much as shew one sight of sorrow or sadnes ? You know how my father in law conspired my death, and sought by divers meanes to take away my life ; how I was forsaken of the queen my mother, mocked of my friends, and dispised of mine own subjects : hetherto I have lived laden with grieffe, and wholly confounded in teares, my life still accompanied with fear and suspicion, expecting the houre when the sharp sword would make an ende of my life and miserable anguishes. How many times, counterfeiting the mad man, have I heard you pittie my distresse, and secretly lament to see me disinherited ? and yet no man sought to revenge the death of my father, nor to punish the treason of my incestuous uncle, full of murthers and massacres. This charitie ministred comfort, and your affectionate complaints made me evidently see your good wills, that you had in memorie the calamity of your prince, and within your harts ingraven the desire of vengeance for the death of him that deserved a long life. And what heart can bee so hard and untractable, or spirit so severe, cruel, and rigorous, that would not relent at the remembrance of my extremities, and take pittie of an orphan child, so abandoned of the world ? What eyes were so voyd of moysture but would distill a field of tears, to see a poore prince assaulted by his owne subjects, betrayed by his mother, pursued by his uncle, and so much oppressed that his friends durst not shew the effects of their charitie and good affection ? O (my good friends) shew pittie to him whom you have nourished and let your harts take some compassion upon the memory of my misfortunes ! I speak to you that are innocent of al treason, and never defiled your hands, spirits, nor desires with the blud of the greate and vertuous king Horvendile. Take pittie upon the queen, sometime your sovereign lady, and my right honorable mother, forced by the tyrant, and rejoyce to see the end and extinguishing of the object of her dishonor, which constrained her to be lesse pitiful to her own blood, so far as to imbrace the murtherer of her own dear spouse, charging her selfe with a double burthen of infamy and incest, together with injuring and disannulling of her house, and the ruine of her race. This hath bin the occasion that made me counterfet folly, and cover my intents under a vaile of meer madnes, which hath wisdom and pollicy therby to inclose the fruit of this vengeance, which, that it hath attained to the ful point of efficacy and perfect accomplishment, you yourselves shall bee judges ; for touching this and other things concerning my profit, and the managing of great affairs, I refer my self to your counsels, and therunto am fully determined to yeeld, as being those that trample

under your feet the murtherers of my father, and despise the ashes of him that hath polluted and violated the spouse of his brother, by him massaered; that hath committed felony against his lord, traitcrously assailed the majesty of his king, and odiously thrall'd his contry under servitude and bondage, and you his loyall subjects, from whom he, bereaving your liberty, feared not to ad incest to parricide, detestable to al the world. To you also it belongeth by dewty and reason commonly to defend and protect Hamlet, the minister and executor of just vengeance, who being jealous of your honour and your reputation, hath hazarded himself, hoping you will serve him for fathers, defenders, and tutors, and regarding him in pity, restore him to his goods and inheritanees. It is I that have taken away the infamy of my contry, and extinguished the fire that imbraeced your fortunes. I have washed the spots that defiled the reputation of the queen, overthrowing both the tirant and the tyranny, and beguiling the subtilties of the craftiest deceiver in the world, and by that meanes brought his wickednes and impostures to an end. I was griev'd at the injurie committed both to my father and my native country, and have slaine him that used more rigorous eommandements over you, then was either just or convenient to be used unto men that have eommaunded the valiantest nations in the world. Seeing, then, he was such a one to you, it is reason that you aeknowledge the benefit, and thinke wel of for the good I had done your posterity, and admiring my spirit and wisdom, chuse me your king, if you think me worthy of the place. You see I am the author of your preservation, heire of my fathers kingdome, not straying in any point from his vertuous action, no murtherer, violent parricide, nor man that ever offended any of you, but only the vitions. I am lawfull successor in the kingdom, and just revenger of a crime above al others most grievous and punishable: it is to me that you owe the benefit of your liberty received, and of the subversion of that tyranny that so much afflicted you, that hath troden under feete the yoke of the tirant, and overwhelmed his throne, and taken the seepter out of the hands of him that abused a holy and just authoritie; but it is you that are to recompence those that have well deserved, you know what is the reward of so gréate desert, and being in your hands to distribute the same, it is of you that I demand the price of my vertue, and the recompence of my victory.

This oration of the yong prince so mooved the harts of the Danes, and wan the affections of the nobility, that some wept for pity, other for joy, to see the wisdom and gallant spirit of Hamlet; and having made an end of their sorrow, al with one consent proclaimed him king of Jutie and Chersonnese, at this present the proper country of Denmarke. And having eelebrated his coronation, and received the homages and fidelities of his subjects, he went into England to fetch his wife, and rejoiced with his father in law touching his good fortune; but it wanted little that the king of England had not aecomplished that which Fengon with all his subtilties could never attaine.

CHAP. VII.—How Hamlet, after his coronation, went into England; and how the king of England secretly would have put him to death; and how he slew the king of England, and returned againe into Denmarke with two wives; and what followed.

HAMLET, being in England, shewed the king what meanes hee had wrought to recover his kingdom; but when the king of England understood of Fengons death, he was both abashed and confused in his minde, at that instant feeling himselfe assailed with two great passions, for that in times past he and Fengon having bin companions together in armes, had given each other their faith and promises, by oath, that if either of them chanced to bee slaine by any man what-

soever, hee that survived (taking the quarrel upon him as his owne) should never cease till he were revenged, or at the leaste do his endeavour. This promise incited the barbarous king to massacre Hamlet, but the alliance presenting it selfe before his eies, and beholding the one deade, although his friend, and the other alive, and husband to his daughter, made him deface his desire of revenge. But in the end, the conscience of his oath and promise obtained the upper hand, and secretly made him conclude the death of his sonne in law, which enterprise after that was cause of his own death, and overrunning of the whole country of England by the eruelty and despight conceived by the king of Denmarke. I have purposely omitted the discourse of that battaile, as not much pertinent to our matter, as also not to trouble you with too tedious a discourse, being content to shew you the end of this wise and valiant king Hamlet, who revenging himselfe upon so many enemies, and discovering all the treasons practised against his life, in the end served for a sport to fortune, and an example to all great personages that trust overmuch to the felicities of this world, that are of small moment, and lesse continuance.

The king of England perceiving that hee could not easilie effect his desire upon the king, his son in lawe, as also not being willing to break the laws and rights of hospitality, determined to make a stranger the revenger of his injury, and so accomplish his oath made to F'ngon without defiling his handes with the blood of the husband of his daughter, and polluting his house by the traitorous massacring of his friend. In reading of this history, it seemeth, Hamlet should resemble another Hereules, sent into divers places of the world by Euristheus (solicited by Juno) where he knew any dangerous adventure, thereby to overthrow and destroy him; or else Bellerophon sent to Ariobatus to put him to death; or (leaving prophane histories) an other Urias, by king David appointed to bee placed in the fore front of the battaile, and the man that should bee first slain by the barbarians. For the king of Englands wife being dead not long before (although he cared not for marrying an other woman) desired his sonne in lawe to make a voyage for him into Seotland, flattering him in such sort, that he made him beleve that his singular wisdome caused him to preferre him to that ambassage, assuring himselfe that it were impossible that Hamlet, the subtillest and wisest prince in the worlde, should take any thing in the world in hand without effecting the same.

Now the queen of Seots beeing a maid, and of a haughty courage, despised marriage with al men, as not esteeming any worthy to be her companion, in such manner that by reason of this arrogant opinion there never came any man to desire her love but she caused him to loose his life: but the Danish kings fortune was so good, that Hermetrude (for so was the queens name) hearing that Hamlet was come thither to intreat a marriage between her and the king of England, forgot all her pride, and dispoiling herselfe of her sterne nature, being as then determined to make him (being the greatest prince as then living) her husband, and deprive the English princeesse of her spouse, whome shee thought fit for no men but herself; and so this Amazon without love, disdaining Cupid, by her free wil submitted her haughtie mind to her concupiscence. The Dane arriving in her court, desired she to see the old king of Englands letters, and mocking at his fond appetites, whose blood as then was half congealed, cast her eies upon the young and plesant Adonis of the North, esteeming her selfe happy to have such a pray fallen into her hands, wherof she made her ful account to have the possession: and to conclude, she that never had been overcome by the grace, courtesie, valor, or riches of anie prince nor lord whatsoever, was as then vanquished with the onelic report of the subtilties of the Dane; who knowing that he was already

fianced to the daughter of the king of England, spake unto him and said: I never looked for so great a blisse, neither from the gods nor yet from fortune, as to behold in my countries the most compleate prince in the North, and he that hath made himselfe famous and renowned through all the nations of the world, as well neighbours as strangers, for the only respect of his vertue, wisdom, and good fortune, serving him much in the pursuite and effect of diuers thinges by him undertaken, and thinke myselfe much beholding to the king of England (although his malice seeketh neither my aduancement nor the good of you, my lord) to do me so much honor as to send me so excellent a man to intreate of a marriage (he being olde, and a mortal enemy to me and mine) with mee that am such a one as every man seeth, is not desirous to couple with a man of so base quality as he, whom you have said to be the son of a slave. But on the other side, I marvel that the son of Horvendile, and grand-child to king Roderick, he that by his foolish wisdom and fained madnesse surmounted the forces and subtilties of Fencion, and obtained the kingdom of his adversary, should so much imbase himselfe (having otherwise bin very wise and wel advised in all his actions) touching his bedfellow; and hee that for his excellency and valor surpasseth humane capacity, should stoope so lowe as to take to wife her that, issuing from a servile race, hath only the name of a king for her father, for that the basenes of her blood will alwaies cause her to shewe what are the vertues and noble qualities of her ancestors. And you, my lord, said she, are you so ignorant as not to know that mariage should not bee measured by any foolish opinion of an outward beautie, but rather by vertues, and antiquitie of race, which maketh the wife to be honored for her prudence, and never degenerating from the integritie of his ancestors: exterior beauty also is nothing, where perfection of the mind doth not accomplish and adorn that which is outwardly seen to be in the bodie, and is lost by an accident and occurrence of small moment: as also such toys have deceived many men, and drawing them like enticing baits, have cast them headlong into the gulf of their ruine, dishonor, and utter overthrow. It was I to whom this advantage belonged, being a queen, and such a one as for nobility may compare my selfe with the greatest princes in Europe, being nothing inferiour unto any of them, neither for antiquitie of blood, nobilitie of parents, nor abundance of riches; and I am not only a queene, but such a one as that, receiuing whom I will for my companion in bed, can make him beare the title of a king, and with my body give him possession of a great kingdome, and goodly province. Think then, my Lord, how much I account of your alliance, who being accustomed with the sword to pursue such as durst imbolden themselves to win my love, it is to you only to whom I make a present both of my kisses, imbracings, scepter, and erown: what man is he, if he be not made of stone, that would refuse so preeious a pawn as Hermetrude, with the kingdome of Scotland? accept, sweete king, accepte this queene, who with so great love and amitie, desireth your so great profit, and can give you more contentment in one day then the princesse of England wold yeeld you pleasure during her life: although shee surpass me in beauty, her bloud beeing base it is fitter for such a king as you are to chuse Hermetrude, lesse beautiful but noble and famous, rather then the English lady with great beautie, but issuing from an unknown race, without any title of honor.

Now think if the Dane, hearing such forcible reasons and understanding that by her which he half doubted, as also moved with choller for the treason of his father in law, that purposely sent him thether to loose his life, and being welcomed, kist, and playd withal by this queen, yong and reasonable fair, if he were not easie enough to be converted, and like to forget the affection of his first wife, with this to enjoy the realme of Scotland, and so open the waie to become king

of all Greate Britain : that, to conclude, he marryed her, and led her with him to the king of Englands court, which moved the king from that time forward much more to seek the meanes to bereave him of his life ; and had surely done it, if his daughter, Hamlets other wife, more careful of him that had rejected her then of her fathers welfare, had not discovered the enterprize to Hamlet, saying : I know well, my Lord, that the allurements and perswasions of a bold and altogether shameles woman, being more lascivious then the chast imbracements of a lawful and modest wife, are of more force to intice and charm the senses of yong men ; but for my part, I cannot take this abuse for satisfaction, to leave mee in this sorte without all cause, reason, or precedent faulte once known in mee, your loyall spouse, and take more pleasure in the aliance of her who one day will be the cause of your ruine and overthrow. And although a just cause of jealousye and reasonable motion of anger, dispence with mee at this time to make no more account of you then you do of me, that am not worthy to be so scornfully rejected ; yet matrimoniall charitie shal have more force and vigour in my hart, then the disdaine which I have justly conceived to see a concubine hold my place, and a strange woman before my face enjoy the pleasures of my husband. This injury, my Lord, although great and offensive, which to revenge divers ladies of great renown have in times past sought and procured the death of their husbands, cannot so much restrain my good wil, but that [I] may not chuse but advertise you what treason is devised against you, beseeching you to stand upon your guard, for that my fathers onely seeking is to bereave you of your life, which if it happen, I shall not long live after you. Manie reasons induce me to love and cherish you, and those of great consequence, but especially and above all the rest, I am and must bee carefull of you, when I feele your child stirring in my wombe ; for which respecte, without so much forgetting yourselfe, you ought to make more account of me then of your concubine, whome I will love because you love her, contenting my selfe that your sonne hateth her, in regard of the wrong she doth to his mother ; for it is impossible that any passion or trouble of the mind whatsoever can quench those fierce passions of love that made me yours, neither that I shold forget your favours past, when loyallie you sought the love of the daughter of the king of England. Neither is it in the power of that thiefe that hath stoln your heart, nor my fathers choller, to hinder me from seeking to preserve you from the cruelty of your dissembling friend (as heeretofore by counterfetting the madman, you prevented the practises and treasons of your uncle Fengon), the complot being determind to be executed upon you and yours. Without this advertisement, the Dane had surely been slain, and the Scots that came with him ; for the king of England, inviting his son in law to a banquet, with greatest curtesies that a friend can use to him whom he loved as himself, had the means to intrap him, and cause him dance a pittiful galliard, in that sort to celebrate the marriage betweene him and his new lady. But Hamlet went thither with armour under his clothes, and his men in like sort ; by which means he and his escaped with little hurt, and so after that hapned the battaile before spoken of, wherein the king of England losing his life, his countrie was the third time sacked by the barbarians of the ilands and countrie of Denmark.

CHAP. VIII.—How Hamlet, being in Denmarke, was assailed by Wiglerus his Uncle, and after betrayed by his last wife, called Hermetrude, and was slaine : after whose death she marryed his enemy, Wiglerus.

HAMLET having obtained the victory against the king of England, and slaine him, laden with great treasures and accompanied with his two wives, set forward to saile into Denmarke, but by the way hee had intelligence that Wiglere, his

uncle, and some to Rodericke, having taken the royall treasure from his sister Geruth (mother to Hamlet) had also seized upon the kingdome, saying, that neither Horvendile nor any of his helde it but by permission, and that it was in him (to whom the property belonged) to give the charge therof to whom he would. But Hamlet, not desirous to have any quarrell with the sonne of him from whom his predecessors had received their greatnes and advancement, gave such and so rich presents to Wiglere, that he, being contented, withdrew himselfe out of the countrey and territories of Geruths sonne. But within certaine time after, Wiglere, desirous to keepe all the countrey in subjection, intyced by the conquest of Scanie and Sialandie, and also that Hermetrude (the wife of Hamlet, whom he loved more then himselfe) had secret intelligence with him, and had promised him marriage, so that he would take her out of the handes of him that held her, sent to defie Hamlet, and proclaimed open warre against him. Hamlet, like a good and wise prince, loving especially the welfare of his subjects, sought by all meanes to avoyde that warre; but againe refusing it, he perceivd a great spot and blemish in his honor, and, accepting the same, he knewe it would bee the ende of his dayes. By the desire of preserving his life on the one side, and his honor on the other side pricking him forward, but, at the last, remembering that never any danger whatsoever had once shaken his vertues and constancy, chose rather the necessitie of his ruine, then to loose the immortal fame that valiant and honourable men obtained in the warres. And there is as much difference betweene a life without honour and an honourable death, as glory and renowne is more excellent then dishonour and evil report.

But the thing that spoyled this vertuous prince was the over great trust and confidence hee had in his wife Hermetrude, and the vehement love hee bare unto her, not once repenting the wrong in that case done to his lawfull spouse, and for the which (peradventure that misfortune had never hapned unto him, and it would never have bin thought that she, whom he loved above all things, would have so villainously betrayed him), hee not once remembering his first wifes speeches, who prophesied unto him, that the pleasures hee seemed to take in his other wife would in the end be the cause of his overthrowe, as they had ravished him of the best part of his sences, and quenched in him the great prudence that made him admirable in all the countries in the ocean seas, and through all Germany. Now, the greatest grief that this king (besotted on his wife) had, was the separation of her whom he adored, and assuring himselfe of his overthrowe, was desirous either that she might beare him company at his death, or els to find her a husband that should love her (he beeing dead) as well as ever hee did. But the disloyall queene had already provided herself of a marriage to put her husband out of trouble and care for that, who perceivng him to be sad for her sake, when shee should have absented her selfe from him, she, to blind him the more and to discourage him to set forward to his owne destruction, promised to follow him whether soever he went, and to take the like fortune that befell to him, were it good or evil, and that so she would give him cause to know how much shee surpassed the English woman in her affection towards him, saying, that woman is accursed that feareth to follow and accompany her husband to the death; so that, to heare her speake, men would have sayd that shee had been the wife of Mithridates, or Zenobia queene of Palmira, shee made so greate a show of love and constancy. But by the effect it was after easily perceived howe vaine the promise of this unconstant and wavering princesse was; and howe uncomparable the life of this Scottish queene was to the vigor of her chastitie, being a mayd before she was marryed. For that Hamlet had no sooner entred into the field, but she found meanes to see Wiglere, and the battel begun, wherein the miserable Danish prince was slaine: but Hermetrude presently

yeelded her self, with all her dead husbands treasons, into the hand of the tyrant, who, more then content with that metamorphosis so much desired, gave order that presently the marriage (bought with the blood and treason of the sonne of Horvendile) should bee celebrated.

Thus you see that there is no promise or determination of a woman, but that a very small discommoditie of fortune mollifieth and altereth the same, and which time doeth not pervert; so that the misfortunes subject to a constant man shake and overthrowe the naturall slipperie loyaltie of the variable steppes of women, wholly without and any faithfull assurance of love, or true unfained constancy: for as a woman is ready to promise, so is shee heavy and slowe to performe and effect that which she hath promised, as she that is without end or limit in her desires, flattring her selfe in the diversitie of her wanton delights, and taking pleasure in diversitie and change of newe things, which as soone shee doth forget and growe weary off: and, to conclude, such shee is in all her actions, she is rash, covetous, and unthankfull, whatsoever good or service can bee done unto her. But nowe I perceive I erre in my discourse, vomitting such things unworthy of this sects; but the vices of Hermetrude have made mee say more then I meant to speake, as also the authour, from whence I take this Hystorie, hath almost made mee hold this course, I find so great a sweetnesse and liveliness in this kinde of argument; and the rather because it seemeth so much the truer, considering the miserable successe of poore king Hamlet.

Such was the ende of Hamlet, sonne to Horvendile, prince of Jutie; to whom, if his fortune had been equall with his inward and naturall giftes, I know not which of the auncient Greecians and Romans had been able to have compared with him for vertue and excellencie: but hard fortune following him in all his actions, and yet hee vanquishing the malice of his time with the vigour of constancy, hath left us a notable example of haughtie courage, worthy of a great prince, arming himselfe with hope in things that were wholly without any colour or shewe thereof, and in all his honorable actions made himselfe worthy of perpetuall memorie, if one onely spotte had not blemished and darkened a good part of his prayses. For that the greatest victorie that a man can obtaine is to make himselfe victorious and lord over his owne affections, and that restraineth the unbridled desires of his concupiscence; for if a man be never so princely, valiant, and wise, if the desires and inticements of his flesh prevaile, and have the upper hand, hee will imbase his credite, and, gasing after strange beauties, become a foole, and (as it were) incensed, dote on the presence of women. This fault was in the great Hercules, Sampson; and the wisest man that ever lived upon the earth, following this traine, therein impaired his wit; and the most noble, wise, valiant, and discreet personages of our time, following the same course, have left us many notable examples of their worthy and notable vertues.

But I beseech you that shall reade this Hystorie not to resemble the spider, that feedeth of the corruption that shee findeth in the flowers and fruites that are in the gardens, whereas the bee gathereth her hony out of the best and fayrest flower shee can finde: for a man that is well brought up should reade the lives of whoremongers, drunkards, incestuous, violent, and bloody persons, not to follow their steps, and so to defile himselfe with such uncleannesse, but to shunne paliardize, abstain the superfluties and drunkennesse in banquets, and follow the modestie, courtesie, and continencie that recommendeth Hamlet in this discourse, who, while other made good cheare, continued sober; and where all men sought as much as they could to gather together riches and treasure, hee, simply accounting riches nothing comparable to honor, sought to gather a multitude of vertues, that might make him equall to those that by them were esteemed as gods; having not as then received the lighte of the gspell, that men might see

among the barbarians, and them that were farre from the knowledge of one onelye God, that nature was provoked to follow that which is good, and those forward to imbrace vertue, for that there was never any nation, how rude or barbarous soever, that tooke not some pleasure to do that which seemed good, therby to win praise and commendations, which wee have said to be the reward of vertue and good life. I delight to speak of these strange histories, and of people that were unchristned, that the vertue of the rude people maie give more splendor to our nation, who seeing them so compleat, wise, prudent, and well advised in their actions, might strive not only to follow (imitation being a small matter), but to surmount them, as our religion surpasseth their superstition, and our age more purged, subtile, and gallant, then the season wherin they lived and made their vertues knowne.—*Finis.*

Shakespeare's tragedy of Hamlet was produced on the stage either in 1601 or 1602, as appears from the entry of it on the books of the Stationers' Company on 26 July, 1602,—“James Roberts.—Entred for his copie under the handes of Mr. Pasfeild and Mr. Waterson, warden, a booke called the Revenge of Hamlett, Prince (of) Denmarke, as yt was *latelie acted* by the Lo : Chamberleyne his servantes.” No copy of this date is known to exist, but a surreptitious and imperfect transcript of portions of the tragedy, taken probably in part from short-hand notes made at the theatre and partly completed from memory, appeared in the following year under the title of,—“The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke. By William Shake-speare. As it hath beene diuerse times acted by his Highnesse seruants in the Cittie of London : as also in the two Vniuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where. At London printed for N. L. and Iohn Trundell. 1603.” In the next year, 1604, N. L., who was Nicholas Ling, obtained by some means a playhouse copy of the tragedy, not a copy indeed in the state in which it left the hands of the author, but representing in the main the genuine words of Shakespeare. It was published under the following title,—“The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke. By William Shakespeare. Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie.—At London, Printed by I. R. for N. L. and are to be sold at his shoppe vnder Saint Dunstons Church in Flectstreet. 1604.” This impression was reissued in the following year, the title-page only being reprinted, and the sole alteration even in that being the substitution of 1605 for 1604. If the initials I. R. are those, as is most likely, of James Roberts, there must have been some friendly arrangement between him and Ling respecting the ownership of the copyright, which

certainly now belonged to the latter, as appears from the following entry on the books of the Stationers' Company, 19 November, 1607,—“Jo: Smythick. Entred for his copies under thandes of the wardens these bookes folowing whiche dyd belonge to Nicholas Lynge, viz., a booke called Hamlett,” &c. The copyright continued with Smethwick until his death in 1642, shortly after which event it was transferred, in the September of that year, to a Mr. Flesher. Smethwick issued an undated edition, printed possibly about the year 1609; another in 1611; and a third separate impression bearing the date of 1637.

The critical management of the text of this tragedy is surrounded by great perplexities. The text of the folio of 1623 omits much which is undoubtedly authentic found in the quarto of 1604, while it includes passages omitted in the latter, but of which parallelisms are to be traced in the spurious edition of 1603. Although the impression last mentioned cannot be considered an authority, there are small fragments peculiar to it, some of which may be attributed to the pen of the great dramatist. My strong and sad belief is that we have not the materials for the formation of a really perfect text; and that now at best we must be contented with a defective copy of what is in many respects the most noble of all the writings of Shakespeare. It is always asserted that the great dramatist was indifferent to literary fame, and that it is to this circumstance the lamentable state in which so much of his work has descended to us is to be attributed. Other views may, indeed, for a time have prevented a diligent attention to the publication of his writings; but there is nothing to show that he had not meditated a complete edition of them under his own superintendence while in his retirement at New Place. It would be a more reasonable supposition that the preparation of such an edition was prevented by his untimely death.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CLAUDIUS, *King of Denmark.*

HAMLET, *Son to the former, and Nephew to the present King.*

HORATIO, *Friend to Hamlet.*

POLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain.*

LAERTES, *his Son.*

VOLTIMAND,
CORNELIUS,
ROSENCRANTZ,
GUILDENSTERN, } *Courtiers.*

OSRICK, *a Courtier.*

Another Courtier.

A Priest.

MARCELLUS,
BERNARDO. } *Officers.*

FRANCISCO, *a Soldier.*

REYNALDO, *Servant to Polonius.*

A Captain. Ambassadors.

Ghost of Hamlet's Father.

FORTINBRAS, *Prince of Norway.*

Two Clowns, Grave-diggers.

GERTRUDE, *Queen of Denmark, and Mother to Hamlet.*

OPHELIA, *Daughter to Polonius.*

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Sailors, Messengers, and Attendants.

SCENE,—Elsinore.

Act the First.

SCENE I.—Elsinore. *A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO *on his Post.* *Enter to him* BERNARDO.

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold
Yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!¹

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 watch,² bid them make haste.

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Fran. I think I hear them.—Stand, ho! Who is there!

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O! farewell, honest soldier :

Who hath reliev'd you ?

Fran. Bernardo has my place.

Give you good night. [*Exit* FRANCISCO.]

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say.

What! is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marellus.

Hor. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

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 night ;

That, if again this apparition come,

He may approve our eyes,³ and speak to it.

Hor. Tush, tush! 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile ;

And let us once again assail your ears,

That are so fortified against our story,

What we two nights have seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,

And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,

When yond same star, that's westward from the pole,

Had made his course t' illumine that part of heaven

Where now it burns, Marellus, 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.⁴

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like:—it harrows me with fear, and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question 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 buried 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.

Ber. How now, Horatio! you tremble, and look pale.
 Is not this something more than fantasy?
 What think you on't?

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 th' ambitious Norway combated:
 So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,
 He smote the sledded Polacks⁵ on the ice.
 'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump at this dead hour,⁶
 With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know not;
 But in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
 This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down; and tell me, he that knows,
 Why this same strict and most observant watch
 So nightly toils the subject of the land?
 And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
 And foreign mart for implements of war?
 Why such impress of shipwrights,⁷ whose sore task
 Does not divide the Sunday from the week?
 What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
 Doth make the night joint labourer with the day?
 Who is't, that can inform me?

Hor. That can I;
 At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
 Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
 Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
 Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
 Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet—

For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—
 Did slay this Fortinbras ; who, by a seal'd compact,
 Well ratified by law and heraldry,
 Did forfeit with his life all those his lands,
 Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror :
 Against the which, a moiety competent
 Was gaged by our king ; which had return'd
 To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
 Had he been vanquisher ; as, by the same co-mart,⁸
 And carriage of the article design'd,⁹
 His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
 Of unimproved mettle¹⁰ hot and full,
 Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
 Shark'd up a list of landless resolute,¹¹
 For food and diet, to some enterprize
 That hath a stomach in't : which is no other—
 As it doth well appear unto our state—
 But to recover of us, by strong hand
 And terms compulsative, 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 romage¹² in the land.

Ber. I think, it be no other, but e'en so :
 Well may it sort, that this portentous figure
 Comes armed through our watch ; so like the king
 That was, and is, the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
 In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
 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 fire¹³ and dews of blood,
 Disasters in the sun ; and the moist star,¹⁴
 Upon whose influence Neptunc's empire stands,
 Was siek almost to dooms-day with eclipse :
 And even¹⁵ the like precurse of fierce events—
 As harbingers preceding still the fates,
 And prologue to the omen coming on—¹⁶
 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
 Unto our climatures and countrymen.—

Re-enter Ghost.

But, soft! behold! lo, where it comes again!
 I'll cross it, though it blast me.¹⁷—Stay, illusion!
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
 Speak to me:
 If there be any good thing to be done,
 That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
 Speak to me:
 If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
 Which happily foreknowing may avoid,
 O, speak!
 Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life¹⁸
 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.¹⁹

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partizan?²⁰

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 show of violence;
 For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
 And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started, like a guilty thing
 Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
 The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,²¹
 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 air,²²
 Th' extravagant and erring spirit²³ hies
 To his confine; and of the truth herein
 This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.²⁴
 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;
 The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,

No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is that 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 yond high eastern hill.
Break we our watch up ; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet ; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty ?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray ; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Same. A Room of State.*

*Enter the King, Queen, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES,
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
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,
Th' imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy,—
With an auspicious, and a dropping eye,²⁵
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,
Collegued with the dream of his advantage,

He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
 Importing the surrender of those lands
 Lost by his father, with all bands of law,
 To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.
 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 farther gait herein, in that the levies,
 The lists, and full proportions, are all made
 Out of his subject : and we here despatch
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway ;
 Giving to you no farther personal power
 To business with the king, more than the scope
 Of these dilated articles allow.

Farewell : and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. Vol. In that, and all things, will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing : heartily farewell.

[*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,²⁶
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
 What would'st thou have, Laertes ?

Laer. My dread lord,
 Your leave and favour to return to France ;
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
 To show 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 leave,
 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,²⁷ Laertes ; time be thine,
And thy best graces : spend it at thy will.—
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than kind. [*Aside.*

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you ?

Ham. Not so, my lord ; I am too much i'the sun.²⁸

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 lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust :
'Thou know'st, 'tis common ; all that live must die,
Passing through nature to cternity.

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,³⁰
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, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly : these, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play ;
But I have that within, which passeth show,
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father :
But, you must know, your father lost a father ;
That father lost, lost his ; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation, for some term,
To do obsequious sorrow : but to persever³¹
In obstinate condolement is a course
Of impious stubbornness ; 'tis unmanly grief :
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven ;
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd :
For what, we know, must be, and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we, in our pcevish opposition,
Take it to heart ? Fie ! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,

To reason most absurd, whose common theme
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
 From the first corse till he that died to-day,
 "This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth
 This unprevailing woc,³² 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
 Than that which dearest father bears his son,
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent
 In going back to school in Wittenberg
 It is most retrograde to our desire;
 And, we beseech you, bend you to remain
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, 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 health that Denmark drinks to-day,
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
 And the king's rouse the heaven shall bruit again,
 Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt* King, Queen, Lords, &c.]

POLONIUS and LAERTES.

Ham. O! that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
 Thaw, and resolve itself³³ into a dew;
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter.³⁴ 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 merely. 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 satyr:³⁵ so loving to my mother,
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven³⁶
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!

Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
 As if increase of appetite had grown
 By what it fed on; and yet, within a month,—
 Let me not think on't,—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
 A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears;³⁷—why she, even she,—
 O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,³⁸
 Would have mourn'd longer—married 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 married.—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
 you.³⁹

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?—
 Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord,—

Ham. I am very glad to see you; good even, sir.—
 But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so;
 Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
 To make it truster of your own report
 Against yourself: I know, you are no truant.
 But what is your affair in 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 follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats⁴⁰
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
'Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Ere ever I had seen that day, Horatio!—
My father,—methinks, I see my father.

Hor. O! where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, 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 again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw who?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father!

Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together, had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,⁴¹
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Armed at point, exactly, cap-a-pie,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd,
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly⁴² with the act of fear,
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
And I with them the third night kept the watch;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes. I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My lord, I did.

But answer made it none; yet once, methought,
It lifted up its head, and did address

Itself to motion, like as it would speak :
 But, even then, the morning cock crew loud,⁴³
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
 And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true ;
 And we did think it writ down in our duty,
 To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
 Hold you the watch to-night ?

All. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you ?

All. Arm'd, my lord ?

Ham. From top to toe ?

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face ?

Hor. O, yes, my lord ; he wore his beaver up.⁴⁴

Ham. What ! look'd he frowningly ?

Hor. A countenance more

In sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red ?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you ?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like,

Very like. Stay'd it long.

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar. Ber. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw it.

Ham. His beard was grizzled ? no ?

Hor. It was, as I have scen it in his life,
 A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night :
 Perchance, 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
 I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
 And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
 If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
 Let it be tenable in your silence still ;

And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue :
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well :
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

[*Exeunt* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

My father's spirit in arms ! 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.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in POLONIUS' House.*

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd ; farewell :
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that ?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood ;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute ;
No more.

Oph. No more but so ?

Laer. Think it no more :
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk ; but, as this temple waxes,⁴⁵
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now ;
And now no soil, nor cautel,⁴⁶ doth besmirch
The virtue of his will : but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own,
For he himself is subject to his birth :
He may not, as unvalued persons do,

Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
 The safety and the health of the whole state;⁴⁷
 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 deed;⁴⁸ which is no farther,
 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'd importunity.
 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.
 The chariest maid 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,
 Show 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 reed.

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 sail,⁴⁹

And you are stay'd for. There,—my blessing with you ;
 [*Laying his Hand on LAERTES' Head.*]

And these few precepts in thy memory
 Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
 Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar :
 The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel ;
 But do not dull thy palm⁵⁰ with entertainment
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
 Of entrance to a quarrel ; but, being in,
 Bear't, that th' opposed may beware of thee.
 Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice ;
 Take each man's censure, 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 most select and generous chief in that.⁵¹
 Neither a borrower, nor a lender be ;
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
 This above all,—to thine ownself be true ;
 And it must follow, as the night the day,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man.
 Farewell : my blessing season this in thee !⁵²

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you : go ; your servants tend.

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.

Laer. Farewell. [*Exit LAERTES.*]

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you ?

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? pooh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.⁵³
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,⁵⁴ you'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks.⁵⁵ I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a making,—
You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scanted of your maiden presence:
Set your entreatments at a higher rate,
Than a command to parley. For lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young;
And with a larger tether may he walk,
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows, for they are brokers
Not of that dye which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds,⁵⁶
The better to beguile. This is for all,—
I would not, in plain terms,⁵⁷ from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment leisure,
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.⁵⁸

Hor. It is a nipping, and an eager air.⁵⁹

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,⁶⁰ and takes his rouse.⁶¹
Keeps wassel,⁶² and the swaggering up-spring reels ;⁶³
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom ?

Ham. Ay, marry, is't :
But to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a eustom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel, east and west,
Makes us tradue'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 attribute.
So, oft it chanees in particuar men,
That for some vieious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth,—wherein they are not guilty,
Sinee nature cannot choose his origin—
By their o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason ;
Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausible manners ;⁶⁴—that these men,—
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect

Being Nature's livery, or Fortune's star,—⁶⁵
 Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,
 As infinite as man may undergo,
 Shall in the general censure take corruption
 From that particuar fault : the dram of eale⁶⁶
 Doth all the noble substance of a doubt,
 To his own scandal.

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord ! it comes.

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us !
 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,⁶⁷
 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 canonized bones, hearsed in death,⁶⁸
 Have burst their cerements ? why the sepulchre,
 Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,
 Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
 To east thee up again ? What may this mean,
 That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
 Making night hideous ; and we fools of nature,
 So horribly to shake our disposition,
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls ?
 Say, why is this ? wherefore ? what should we do ?

[*The Ghost beckons HAMLET.*

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, will I follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear ?
 I do not set my life at a pin's fee ;⁶⁹

And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again:—I'll follow it.

Hor. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,⁷⁰
And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive,⁷¹ 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 nerve. [Ghost beckons.
Still am I eall'd.—Unhand me, gentlemen,—

[Breaking from them.
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me:—
I say, away!—Go on, I'll follow thee.

[Exeunt Ghost and HAMLET.

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after.—To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him. [Exeunt.

SCENE V.—*A more remote Part of the Platform.*

Enter Ghost and HAMLET.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak!—I'll go no farther.

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 fires,⁷²
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away.⁷³ 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 spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand an-end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine:
But this eternal blazon must not be⁷⁴
To ears of flesh and blood.—List, list, O list!—
If thou didst ever thy dear father love,—

Ham. O God!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Ham. Murder?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation,⁷⁵ or the thoughts of love,
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 wharf,⁷⁶
Would'st thou not stir in this: now, Hamlet, hear.
'Tis given out, that sleeping in mine 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 prophetic soul! my uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—
O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming virtuous queen.
O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!

But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.

But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air:
Brief let me be.—Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,⁷⁷
And in the pores of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That, swift as quicksilver, 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,⁷⁸
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 despatch'd:
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd;⁷⁹
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:

O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury and damned incest.
 But, howsoever thou pursuest 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 shows the matin to be near,
 And gins to pale his uneffectual fire:⁸⁰
 Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me.

[*Exit.*

Ham. O, all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
 And shall I couple hell?—O fie!—Hold, hold, my heart;
 And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
 But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee?
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
 In this distracted globe. Remember thee?
 Yea, from the table of my memory⁸¹
 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,⁸²
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
 At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark:
 So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;⁸³
 It is,—“Adieu, adieu! remember me.”
 I have sworn't.

[*Writing.*

Hor. [*Within.*] My lord! my lord!

Mar. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet!

Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven seeure him!

Mar. [*Within.*] So be it!

Hor. [*Within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.⁸⁴

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'll 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. 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 i' 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 mine own poor part,
Look you, I'll 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 Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you :
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'er-master 't 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't.

Hor. In faith,

My lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, True-penny?⁸⁵

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 sword.⁸⁶

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. *Hic et ubique?* then, we'll shift our ground.—
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Never to speak of this that you have heard,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Well said, old mole! can'st 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 welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. But come;—
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,—
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic 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
That you know aught of me:—this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,
Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!^{s7}—So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you :
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, t' 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 spite !
That ever I was born to set it right.
Nay, come ; let's go together.

[*Exeunt*

Notes to the First Act.

¹ *Long live the king!*

“This sentence appears to have been the watch word.”—*Steevens*. Not exactly so. The common challenge in France used to be *Qui vive?* and the answer *Vive le Roi*, just like the common challenge in the park, “Who goes there? A friend.”—*Pye*.

² *The rivals of my watch.*

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 same 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 always used by Shakspeare for *associate*.—*Malone*.

³ *He may approve our eyes.*

That is, 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 eyewitnesses 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 king, that must *approve* the common saw:
Thou out of heaven’s benediction com’st
To the warm sun.—*Malone*.

⁴ *Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.*

The reason why the common people believed that ghosts were only to be addressed by scholars seems to have been, that the exorcisins of troublesome spirits were usually performed in Latin.—*Douce*.

⁵ *The sledded Polacks.*

Pollux, eds. 1603, 1604. Polacks, that is, Poles, inhabitants of Poland.

“Colleaguening himselfe to many potent princes, especially the mightie *Polacke*, heretofore the most mortall enemy to the Russie,” Sir Thomas Smithes *Voiage and Entertainment in Russia*, 1605.

Going to take water upon Tower Hill, we met with three *sleddes* standing there to carry my Lord Mouson and Sir H. Mildmay to the gallows and back again with ropes about their necks.—*Pepys’ Diary*, 1662.

⁶ *And jump at this dead hour.*

For *jump* in ed. 1604 the folio has *just*, but the terms were nearly synonymous. *Jump* is rather more expressive, implying coincidence of time to the very second. “He comes so jumpe, or in the very nicke to-day,” Terence in English, 1614. “He that compareth our instruments with those that were used in ancient tymes shall see them agree like dogges and cattes, and meete as *jump* as Germans lippes,”—Gosson’s *Schoole of Abuse*, 1579.

⁷ *Why such impress of shipwrights.*

It is not any where shewn that the *prest*-money for the retainer of soldiers, has any thing to do with shipwrights. The word seems to be here used in its ordinary signification, as in *Tr. and Cre. II. 1.* “No man is beaten *voluntary*. Ajax was here the *voluntary*, and you as under an *impress*.” Achil. But it is said to import a retainer from *Pret*, Fr.; as by the acceptance of what was called *prest*-money being bound to hold themselves in readiness to be employed.—*Caldecott*.

⁸ *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*. He has not scrupled so to write in *Cymbeline*,

—— to *mart*,

As in a Romish stew, &c.—*Steevens*.

⁹ *And carriage of the article design’d.*

Carriage is *import*; *design’d*, is *formed, drawn up between them*. Cawdrey in his *Alphabetical Table*, 1604, defines the verb *design* thus: “To marke out or appoint for any purpose.” See also Minsheu’s *Dict.* 1617: “To *designe* or shew by a token.” *Designed* is yet used in this sense in Scotland. The old copies have *deseigne*. The correction was made by the editor of the second folio.—*Malone*.

¹⁰ *Of unimproved mettle.*

The first quarto reads, ‘Of *inapproved*.’ ‘Of *unimproved* mettle hot and full;’ i. e. of *unimpeached* or *unquestioned* courage. To *improve* anciently signified to *impeach*, to *impugn*. Thus Florio: ‘Improbare, to *improove*, to impugn.’ The French have still *improver*, with the same meaning; from *improbare*, Lat. Numerous instances of *improve* in this sense may be found in the writings of Shakspeare’s time.—*Singer*.

¹¹ *Shark’d up a list of landless resolute.*

That is, “snapped up with the eager voracity of a shark, caught up from any or all quarters for a bellyful, a gang of sturdy beggars, sharpset, and of courage equal to any enterprise.”

That's but the scum and sediment of wit
Which *sharking* braines do into publike thrust.

Berkenhead's Comm. Verses to Cartwright, 1651.

The redundancy of "food and diet" may have been employed for the purpose of fixing in the mind the continuation of the metaphor in the use of the word *stomach*, here put in an equivocal sense, importing both courage and appetite. We have a similar play upon the word in *Two G. of V.*, where, on Julia's asking her waiting woman, with whom she had been peevish, whether it was near dinner time, she replies:—

I would it were,
That you might kill your *stomach* on your meat,
And not upon your maid.—*Caldecott.*

¹² *Romage.*

"*Romelynge*, prevy mustrynge. — Ruminatio. — Militatio. — Musitatio," *Promptuar. parvulor. clericor.* 4to. 1514. This rendering of the word applies closely to the military use or bearing of it in the text: but to *rummage* trunks or papers is in every day's use, for making a thorough ransack or search. Philips says, "It is originally a sea term, and properly signifies to remove goods out of a ship's hold, when there must be searching and tumbling about."—*Caldecott.*

¹³ *As, stars with trains of fire.*

Something has here probably dropped out, and there is no doubt but that the text is corrupt beyond the power of conjecture to set it right. *As stars* is probably a misprint for *asters*. Florio, ed. 1598, translates *stella*, "a starre, an *aster*, a planet."

And he that soong the eldest daughter of Troye,
In Fraunce hath made of her an *astre* divine.
Sowthern's Pandora, 4to. Lond. 1584.

¹⁴ *And the moist star.*

That is, the moon. So, in the Winter's Tale:—

Nine changes of the *watry star* have been
The shepherd's note.—

So, also, in Marlowe's Hero and Leander, 1598:—

Not that night-wand'ring, pale, and *watry star*, &c.—*Malone.*

¹⁵ *And even, &c.*

Not only such prodigies have been seen in Rome, but the elements have shown our countrymen like forerunners and foretokens of violent events.—*Johnson.*

¹⁶ *The omen coming on.*

"The omen coming on" is, *the approaching dreadful and portentous event.* So, in King 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.—*Malone.*

¹⁷ *I'll cross it, though it blast me.*

The person who crossed the spot on which a spectre was seen, became subjected to its malignant influence. Among the reasons given in a curious paper, printed in the third volume of Lodge's Illustrations of British History, p. 48, for sup-

posing the young earl of Derby (Ferdinando, who died April, 1594,) to have been bewitched, is the following: "On Friday there appeared a tall man *who twice crossed him swiftly*; and when the earl came to the place where he saw this man, he first fell sick."—*Blakeway*.

¹⁸ *If thou hast uphoarded in thy life.*

So, in Decker's *Knight's Conjuring, &c.* "— If any of them had bound the spirit of gold by any charmes *in caves*, or in iron fetters *under the ground*, they should *for their own soules quiet* (which *questionlesse else would whine up and down*) if not for the good of their children, release it."—*Steevens*.

¹⁹ *Stop it, Marcellus.*

We may presume that in this first scene a cock was heard to crow, in order to give the Ghost notice of the fit time for his departure, *Cock crows* being placed in the margin opposite the words 'Stop it, Marcellus.'—*Collier's Notes and Emendations, &c.* p. 418.

The *cock* used *to crow* when Garrick acted Hamlet, and perhaps also when that part was played by some of his successors; but now-a-days managers have done wisely in striking out the *cock* from the list of *Dramatis Personæ*.—*A. Dyce*.

²⁰ *Strike at it with my partizan.*

"The partizan," observes Mr. Fairholt, "may be described as a sharp two-edged sword placed on the summit of a staff for the defence of foot-soldiers against cavalry. One of the earliest examples is preserved in the collection at Goodrich Court, formed by Sir Samuel Meyrick; he dates it to the time of Edward the Fourth. It is the second of the two here engraved. The projections at the base of the blade afterwards became enlarged into scythe-shaped wings, as shewn in the other specimen, which is of the time of Queen Elizabeth."



²¹ *The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn.*

And now the cocke, the *morning's trumpeter*,
Play'd huntsup for the day star to appear.

Drayton, 4to. 1604.—*Steevens*.

The cocke, the country horologe that rings
The cheerefull *warning* to the *sunne's awake*,
Missing the *dawning* scantles in his wings.

Moses his Bush, Part II. 4to. 1630,
p. 157.—*Caldecott*.

²² *Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air.*

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*.

A Chorus in Andreini's drama, called *Adamo*, written in 1613, consists of spirits of fire, air, water, and hell, or subterraneous, being the exiled angels. "Choro di Spiriti ignei, aerei, acquatici, ed infernali," &c. These are the demons to which Shakspeare alludes. These spirits were supposed to controul the elements in which they respectively resided; and when formally invoked or commanded by a magician, to produce tempests, conflagrations, floods, and earthquakes. For thus says the Spanish *Mandeville* of *Miracles*, &c. 1600: "Those which are in the middle region of the ayre, and those that are under them nearer the earth, are those which sometimes out of the ordinary operation of nature doe moove the windes with greater fury than they are accustomed; and do, out of season, congeele the cloudes, causing it to thunder, lighten, hayle, and to destroy the grasse, corne, &c. &c.—Witches and negromancers worke many such like things by the help of those spirits," &c. *Ibid*. Of this school therefore was Shakspeare's *Prospero* in the *Tempest*.—*T. Warton*.

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 chearfully 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*.

²³ *The extravagant and erring spirit.*

It is remarkable that *stravagant* is the reading of the first quarto, which Steevens points out as used in the sense of *vagrant*. 'They took me up for a *stravagant*.' This is the '*stravagare*' of the Italians; 'to wander, to gad, or stray beyond or out of the way.' Thus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:—

And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,
At whose approach, ghosts *wandering* here and there
Troop home.

Erring is *erraticus*, straying or roving up and down. Mr. Douce has justly observed that the epithets *extravagant* and *erring* are highly poetical and appropriate, and seem to prove that Shakspeare was not altogether ignorant of the Latin language.—*Singer*.

Steevens points out two instances in Chapman's *Odyssey*, in which this word is used in the sense of *wandering* or *erratic*. Telemachus calls Ulysses "My *erring* father." *Odys*. IV. p. 55. "*Erring* Grecians we from Troy were turning homewards." We find the verb also in the sense of *rove* or *range*, in his *Batrachom*. p. 4.—

The cat and night-hawke, who much scathe confer
On all the outraies (foramen, τρωγλη) where for food I *erre*.

So "*erring* barbarian," *Othel*. I. 3. Iago: and the title page of John Boy's translation of a part of *Virgil* runs "Æneas his *errours*, or his voyage from Troy into Italy." 8vo. Steevens has also produced an instance of the word *extravagant*

in the sense in which *vagrant* is used in our criminal law: "They took me up for a 'stravagant,'" *Nobody and Somebody*, 1598. And in *Othello* we have the same ideas coupled in nearly the same expressions:—In an *extravagant* and *wheeling* stranger.—*Caldecott*.

²⁴ *It faded on the crowing of the cock.*

That is, "its shadowy appearance lost all of its distinctness: it melted into thin air: passed away, vanished, flitted." Jupiter, addressing the ghosts in *Cymb.* V. 4, says "Rise and *fade*." *Vado* is to flow or go, "as a river doth." Littleton's *Dict.* "Hinc. Angl. to vade or *fade*."—"Thy form's divine, no *fading*, *vading* flower."—Brathwaite's *Strappado for the Divell*, 12mo. 1515. p. 53. "O darknesse *fade* thy way from hence."—Barnabe Googe's Palengenius's *Zodiacke of Life*, 12mo. Steevens refers to Vit. Apoll. IV. 16. 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*. See "the first *cock*," *Lear*, III. 4. Edg.—*Caldecott*.

²⁵ *With an auspicious, and a dropping eye.*

So in ed. 1604; the folio repeating *one* in the places of *an* and *a*. The meaning is, to use the words of Caldecott, with joy baffled, and with one well-omen'd and smiling, and one clouded and weeping eye. A similar idea is pointed out by Steevens in *Wint. T.*: "She had *one eye* declined for the loss of her husband: *another* elevated that the oracle was fulfilled."

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*, Svo, 1616. Again, in Montaigne's *Essays*, 1603: "—they never saw any man there—with eyes *dropping*, or crooked and stooping through age." The reason of the change pointed out by Steevens was probably this: '*an* auspicious and *a* dropping eye might be one and the same;' the alteration marks them to be different.—*Malone*.

²⁶ *The head is not more native to the heart.*

The sense seems to be this: The head is not formed to be more useful to the heart, the hand is not more at the service of the mouth, than my power is at your father's service. That is, he may command me to the utmost, he may do what he pleases with my kingly authority.—*Steevens*.

By *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 connection between the heart and *head*. So, in *Coriolanus*, Act I. Sc. I.:—"Even to the court, the heart—to the seat of the brain."—*Malone*.

We meet with a thought resembling this in *Much Ado About Nothing*:

—— I will deal in this
As secretly, and justly, as your soul
Should with your body.—*Boswell*.

²⁷ *Take thy fair hour, &c.*

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*.

So, in King Henry VIII. :—

—— and bear the inventory

Of your *best graces* in your mind.—*Steevens.*

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.*

²⁸ *A little more than kin, and less than kind.*

This seems to have been in some sort proverbial. Thus, in *Mother Bombie*, 1594,—“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 Rowley’s *Search for Money*, 1609,—“Lets first question his descent. Is it from earth (of our owne kindred)? I would he were not so neere to us in kindred, then sure he would be neerer in kindnesse, and then we must conclude (comming from earth) that thither he must returne, and therefore is now on earth.”

²⁹ *I am too much i’ the sun.*

By a quibble, as Dr. Farmer ingeniously has suggested, between *sun* and *son*, it must mean, it is conceived, “I have too much about me of the character of expectancy, at the same time that I am prematurely torn from my sorrows, and thrown into the broad glare of the sun and day: have too much of the son and successor and public staging, without possession of my rights, and without a due interval to assuage my grief.” But a closer observer here says: “One part of Dr. Farmer’s conjecture is right: Hamlet means, that he had not *possession of his rights*; but there was no quibble between Sun (in the quartos spelt *Sonne*) and Son: the allusion is to the saying, “Out of God’s blessing into the warm Sun;” which means, “to be out of house and home;” or, at least, to be in a worse temporal condition than a man was, or should be. We have in *Lear*, II 2. Kent.—

Thou out of heaven’s benediction com’st
To the warm sun.

And so, “In very dede they were brought *from the good to the bad*, and *from Goddes blessyng* (as the proverbe is) *in to a warme sonne.*” Preface to Edmund Grindal’s *Profitable Doctrine*. 4to. 1555. 2 Phil. and Mary. And again, “For the supplanting of Taurinus he used more finesse. By such art he thought to have removed him, as we say, *out of God’s blessing into the warm sun.*” Raleigh’s *Hist. of the World*. Fo. 1677. p. 776. His being deprived of his right, i. e. his succession to the kingdom, Hamlet therefore might call “being *too much i’ the sun.*”—*Caldecott.*

³⁰ *Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother.*

For *good mother* there is the curious corruption, *coold mother*, in ed. 1604. The form of the ancient mourning cloak is seen in the annexed engraving taken from a monument of the fourteenth century, but I am not sure if one of this fashion were worn at other times than at funerals.

³¹ *But to persever.*

The ancient form and pronunciation of this verb, of which innumerable examples might be produced.



Leave yet at length, at length, for know this ever,
 'Tis no such sinne to erre, but to *persever*.

Marston's Dutch Courtezan, 4to. Lond. 1604.

Neither hath man in perpetuity bin,
 And shall on earth eternally *persever*
 By endlesse generation, running in
 One circuit; In corruption lasting ever.

Heywood's Great Britaines Troy, 1609.

He caused him to be called, and after that he had signified to him with divers words full of sharpness, the grief he had to see him fall into and *persever* in so mecommon a crime, he represented the deformity of it in such terms as were capable to reduce him to reason if he had been in a condition to hearken to them.—*Hymen's Prælubia*, 1658.

³² *This unprevailing woe.*

Unprevailing was anciently used in the sense of *unavailing*. Dryden, in his Essay on Dramatick Poetry, employs *prevail* for *avail*: “He may often *prevail* himself of the same advantages in English.” So, in his *Absalom and Achitophel*, 1st edition:—

Prevail yourself of what occasion gives,
 But try your title while your father lives.

In subsequent editions, probably thinking the word obsolete, he altered it to *avail*.—*Malone*.

³³ *And resolve itself.*

Resolve, to dissolve or melt. “This metall can nat be resolved without a marvayllous sharpe fyre,” Palsgrave, 1530.

Take aqua vite, gomme of Arabik, and vernesse, of iche iliche meeche, and let him stonde tyl the gomme be *resolvyd*.—*MS. xv. Cent.*

³⁴ *His canon.*

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*.

³⁵ *Hyperion to a satyr.*

That is, “beauty for deformity.” *Hyperion* must here be taken for *Apollo*, though this word has frequently been confounded with the sun; as from its etymon and the consideration, that both have ever been represented as models of beauty, might well have been: but *Hyperion* is, though “sometyme putte for the Sunne, the brother of Saturne, which governeth the course of the planettes; and therefore is named the father of the Soonne, the Moone, and the morowe.” *Biblioth. Eliotæ*. fo. 1559. *Phæbus* is also indifferently used for *Apollo* and the Sun; and *Phæbeos ortus* are the rising of the “morrow” or morn. See Adam's *Geography*. 8vo. 1797. p. 373.—*Caldecott*.

³⁶ *He might not beteem the winds of heaven.*

The obsolete and corrupted verb—*beteene*, (in the first folio) which should be written (as in all the quartos) *beteeme*, was changed to *let e'en* by Theobald; and with the aptitude of his conjecture succeeding critics appear to have been satisfied. *Beteeme*, however, occurs in the tenth book of Arthur Golding's version of

Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, 4to. 1587; and, from the corresponding Latin, must necessarily signify, to *vouchsafe*, *deign*, *permit*, or *suffer* :—

— Yet could he not *beteeme*
The shape of anie other bird than egle for to seeme.”

— nulla tamen alite verti
Dignatur, nisi quæ possit sua fulmina ferre.—V. 157.

Jupiter (though anxious for the possession of Ganymede) would not *deign* to assume a meaner form, or *suffer* change into an humbler shape, than that of the august and vigorous fowl who bears the thunder in his pounces. The existence and signification of the verb *beteem* being thus established, it follows, that the attention of Hamlet's father to his queen was exactly such as is described in the *Enterlude of the Life and Repentaunce of Marie Magdalaine*, &c. by Lewis Wager, 4to. 1567 :—

But evermore they were unto me very tender,
They would not suffer the wynde on me to blowe.—*Steevens*.

³⁷ *Like Niobe, all tears.*

Shakspeare might have caught this idea from an ancient ballad intituled the *Falling out of Lovers is the renewing of Love* :—

Now I, like weeping *Niobe*,
May wash my handes in teares, &c.

Of this ballad *Amantium iræ*, &c. is the burden.—*Steevens*.
Or from Whitney's *Emblems*, p. 13, 1586 :—

Of Niobe behoulde the ruthefulle plighte,
Bicause shee did dispise the powers devine,
Her children all weare slaine within her sighte,
And, while her selfe, with trickling teares did pine,
Shee was transform'de into a marble stone,
Which, yet with teares, doth seeme to waile and mone.—*Malone*.

³³ *A beast, that wants discourse of reason.*

This is finely expressed, and with a philosophical exactness. Beasts want not reason, but the *discourse of reason*, i. e. the regular inferring one thing from another by the assistance of universals.—*Warburton*.

Gifford, in a note on Massinger's *Unnatural Combat*, has ridiculed this note, and maintains that we should read—“discourse *and* reason.” But the phraseology of the text may be supported by numerous examples. Out of many collected by Malone, I will produce two. Our author himself uses the same language in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act. II. Sc. II. :—

— Is your blood
So madly hot that no *discourse of reason*—
Can qualify the same.

Sir John Davys in the preface to his *Reports*: “And this idea have I conceived of him, not out of mine own imagination, or weak *discourse of reason*, &c.” I will add but one more from Sir Henry Savile's translation of Tacitus's *Life of Agricola*, 1591, p. 242: “Agricola, though brought up in the field, upon a naturall wit, and *discourse of reason*.” Hamlet himself will best explain the phrase :

Sure he that made us with such large *discourse*,
Looking before and after.—

Brutes certainly have not what Warburton in his dashing language terms

reason, but they have faculties which philosophers in all ages have been puzzled to define. They have memory; and they have that degree of judgment which enables them to distinguish between two objects directly before them; as a dog knows his master from a stranger. Hamlet means to say that even their imperfect faculties, without an abstract knowledge of good or evil, would have made them capable of feeling such a loss as his mother had sustained, and of seeing the difference between his father and his uncle.—*Boswell*.

It is nothing but the want of *the discourse of reason* which doth breed this madnesse in mankinde, for where it reigneth, there can neither be want nor superfluitie, for it boundeth all things within a meane, and governeth with justice and judgement.—*A New Post with Sovereigne Salve to Cure the World's Madnes*, n. d.

³⁹ *I'll change that name with you.*

Hamlet means that he will change the name which Horatio has given himself, that of poor servant, to good friend; or, perhaps, as Johnson explains it,—I'll be your servant, you shall be my friend.

⁴⁰ *The funeral bak'd meats.*

The practice of making entertainments at funerals which prevailed in this and other countries, and which is not even at present quite disused in some of the northern counties of England, was certainly borrowed from the *cena feralis* of the Romans, alluded to in Juvenal's fifth satire, and in the laws of the twelve tables. It consisted of an offering of a small plate of milk, honey, wine, flowers, &c., to the ghost of the deceased. In the instances of heroes and other great characters, the same custom appears to have prevailed among the Greeks. With us the appetites of the living are consulted on this occasion. In the North this feast is called an *arval* or *arvil-supper*; and the loaves that are sometimes distributed among the poor, *arval-bread*. Not many years since one of these arvals was celebrated in a village in Yorkshire at a public-house, the sign of which was the family arms of a nobleman whose motto is *virtus post funera vivit*. The undertaker, who, though a clerk, was no scholar, requested a gentleman present to explain to him the meaning of these Latin words, which he readily and facetiously did in the following manner: *Virtus*, a parish clerk, *vivit*, lives well, *post funera*, at an *arval*.—*Douce*.

It was anciently the general custom to give an 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 sollemnly entered, nothing omitted which necessitie, i. e. the dictate of decorum or propriety, 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 buryed in an abbay.—*Collins*.

So Hayward's *Life of H. IV.* 4to. 1599, p. 135: "Then hce (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*.

When the seconde husband was dede,
The thyrde husbände dyde she wedde
In full goodly araye—
But as the devyll wolde,
Or the pyes were colde, &c.—*Boke of Mayd Emlyn*.

⁴¹ *In the dead vast and middle of the night.*

This is the line as it stands in the quarto, 1603; and if that edition had afforded us no other correction of a misprint in the other quartos and folios, its high value would, we think, have been established. Hitherto the reading has been, "In the dead *waist* and middle of the night;" the word *waist* having been printed *wast* or *waste* in all the old copies subsequent to that of 1603. Few corruptions could be more easy than for the compositor to substitute *w* for *v*. The word "vast" is here used in the same sense as in the *Tempest*, A. i. sc. 2,—

———— "urchins
Shall, for that *vast of night* that they may work,
All exercise on thee."

"Vast of night" means the *vacancy* or *void* of night; and in the line in our text, "the dead *vast* and middle of the night" is the silent vacancy of midnight. To take *wast* of the quarto, 1604, &c. in the sense of the *waist*, or middle of a person, is to impute mere tautology to Shakespeare, instead of the fine meaning derived from the supposition, that his reference is to the deserted emptiness and stillness of midnight.—*Collier*.

⁴² *Distill'd almost to jelly.*

So in eds. 1603, 1604; *bestil'd*, ed. 1623. *Distill*, to melt. "Melt thee, distill thee, turne to wax or snow," Sylvester's *Du Bartas*, ap. Dyce.

⁴³ *The morning cock crew loud.*

The moment of the evanescence of spirits was supposed to be limited to the crowing of the cock. This belief is mentioned so early as by Prudentius, *Cathem. Hymn. I. v. 40*, but some of his commentators prove it to be of much higher antiquity. It is a most inimitable circumstance in Shakspeare, so to have managed this popular idea, as to make the Ghost, which has been so long obstinately silent, and of course must be dismissed by the morning, begin or rather prepare to speak, and to be interrupted at the very critical time of the crowing of a cock. Another poet, according to custom, would have suffered his Ghost tamely to vanish, without contriving this start, which is like a start of guilt. To say nothing of the aggravation of the future suspense, occasioned by this preparation to speak, and to impart some mysterious secret. Less would have been expected, had nothing been promised.—*T. Warton*.

⁴⁴ *He wore his beaver up.*

Though *beaver* properly signified that part of the helmet which was *let down*, to enable the wearer to drink, Shakspeare 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 *English 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*.

So, in *Laud's Diary*: "The Lord Broke shot in the left eye, and killed in the place at Lichfield—his *beaver up*, and armed to the knee, so that a musket at that distance could have done him little harm."—*Farmer*.

The annexed specimen of the "beaver up" is taken by Mr. Fairholt from *Whitney's Emblems*, 1586.



⁴⁵ *But, as this temple waxes.*

That is, "as the body increases in bulk, the duties calling forth the offices and energies of the mind increase equally." The term *temple*, which signified a place appropriated to acts of religion, is never but on grave occasions applied to the body: nor generally, but where it is described as the sacred receptacle or depository of the soul; as in the Rape of Lucrece:—"His *soul's* fair *temple* is defaced." And,—“The outward shape,—The unpolluted *temple* of the *mind*.”—*Com.* 460.—*Caldecott.*

⁴⁶ *And now no soil, nor cautel.*

That is, "and now no spot, nor mental reservation, tarnishes the sincerity and clear purity of his intentions."—"Cautell, a crafty way to deceive," Minshieu. "Not letting to reprove him openly of breaking his faithfull promise, through whiche *cautel* the Gothes were deceyved." Arth. Goldyng's *Leon. Aretine's Warres betwene the Imperialles & Gothes.* 8vo. 1563. p. 93, b. See *Coriol.* IV. 1. Cor. and *Jul. Cæs.* II. 1. Bru. *Besmirch* is besmear or sully. See IV. 5. Laert.; & *II. V.* IV. 3. K. Hen. For *will* the folios give *feare*; but *will*, the reading of the quartos, appears plainly from its recurrence in the next line, to be the true one: and *fear* must have been the error of the compositor, whose eye caught it from the end of the same line.—*Caldecott.*

In which you should finde suche corrections, such frustrations, suche anticipations and *cautelles*, as the student had every daie neede of a newe memorie to consider of his new coated clause.—*Don Simonides, second part,* 1584.

⁴⁷ *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:—"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 *health*, instead of supplying it, for *safety* substituted a word of three syllables.—*Malone.* See also Mr. Dyce's note on this passage in his edition, p. 580.

⁴⁸ *May give his saying deed.*

That is, "as he, in that peculiar rank and class that he fills in the state, and the power and means thereto annexed, may enable himself to give his professions effect." See "the *deed* of *saying*." *Tim.* V. 1. Painter. "Speaking in *deeds*." *Tr. & Cr.* IV. 5. Ulyss.—*Caldecott.*

⁴⁹ *The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail.*

In a "fore and aft sail" of the present day, the "shoulder" is the *foremost upper* corner, and the *last part of the canvass* on which the wind fixes its influence when a vessel is "sailing by the wind," or even "off the wind." The "veriest lout" in the "after-guard" will appreciate the truthfulness and beauty of the metaphor.—*Anon.* This writer, under the initials A. L., considers that the allusion in the text proves Shakespeare to have been a "thorough sailor." In the second note following, Malone asserts that he was a capital herald. What was he not,—this myriad-minded Shakespeare?

⁵⁰ *But do not dull thy palm, &c.*

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.*

⁵¹ *Are most select and generous, chief in that.*

Thus the quarto 1604; and the folio, except that in that copy the word *chief* is spelt *cheff*. 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 Minsheu'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. *Chief*, however, may have been used as a substantive, for *note* or *estimation*, without any allusion to heraldry, though the word was perhaps originally *heraldick*. So, in Bacon's *Colours of Good and Evil*, 16mo. 1597: "In the warmer climates the people are generally more wise, but in the northern climates the wits *of chief* are greater." 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 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*.

I think the whole design of the precept shows that we should read:—"Are most select, and generous chief, in that." *Chief* may be an *adjective* used *adverbially*, a practice common to our author: *chiefly* generous. Yet it must be owned that the punctuation recommended is very stiff and harsh. I would, however, more willingly read:—

And they in France, of the best rank and station,
Select and generous, are most *choice* in that.

Let the reader, who can discover the slightest approach towards sense, harmony, or metre, in the original line,—

Are *of a* most select and generous chief, in that—

adhere to the old copies. *Of chief*, in the passage quoted from Bacon, is, I believe, a bald translation of the old French phrase—*de chef*, whatever, in the present instance, might be its intended meaning.—*Steevens*.

The genuine meaning of the passage requires us to point the line thus:—"Are most select and generous, chief in that," i. e., the nobility of France are select and generous above all other nations, and chiefly in the point of apparel; the richness and elegance of their dress.—*Ritson*.

⁵² *My blessing season this in thee.*

Hear one of the poet's contemporaries:—"To season, to temper wisely, to make more pleasant and acceptable."—*Baret*. This is the sense required, and is a better commentary than conjectures could supply. Thus in Act ii. Sc. I, Polonius says to Reynaldo, 'You may *season* it in the charge.' And in a former scene Horatio says:—"Season your admiration for a while."—*Singer*.

⁵³ *Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.*

Unsifted for *untried*. *Untried* signifies either *not tempted*, or *not refined*; *unsifted* signifies the *latter* only, though the sense requires the *former*.—*Warburton*.

⁵⁴ *Wringing it thus.*

Wrong it, ed. 1604. The *parenthesis* is closed at the wrong place; and we must have likewise a slight correction in the last verse. [*Wringing it*, &c.] Polonius is racking and playing on the word *tender*, till he thinks proper to correct himself for the licence; and then he would say—not farther to crack the wind of the phrase, by *twisting* it and *contorting* it, as I have done.—*Warburton*.

I believe the word *wrangling* has reference, not to the phrase, but to Ophelia; if you go on *wrangling it thus*, that is, *if you continue to go on thus wrong*. This is a mode of speaking perhaps not very grammatical, but very common; nor have the best writers refused it. “To sinner it or saint it,” is in Pope. And Rowe, “—— ‘Thus to *coy it*,—With one who knows you too.’” The folio has it—*Roaming it thus*. That is, *letting yourself loose to such improper liberty*. But *wrangling* seems to be more proper.—*Johnson*. Mr. Dyce, p. 581, considers that we should alter *wrong* to *running*.

⁵⁵ *Ay, springes to catch woodcocks.*

And as those excellent birds, whom Pliny could never have the wit to catch in all his *springes*, commonly called *woodcocks*, whereof there is great store in England, having all their feathers pluckt from their backs, and being turned out as naked as Plato’s cock was before all Diogenes his scholars.—*Decker’s Gulls Hornbook*, 1609.

⁵⁶ *Bawds.*

The old editions read *bonds*, altered as in the text by Theobald. Polonius, observes Monck Mason, had called Hamlet’s vows, *brokers*, but two lines before, a synonymous word to *bawds*, and the very title that Shakspeare gives to Pandarus, in his *Troilus and Cressida*. The words *implorators of unholy suits*, are an exact description of a *bawd*; and all such of them as are crafty in their trade, put on the appearance of sanctity, and are “not of that die which their investments show.”—*M. Mason*.

⁵⁷ *I would not, in plain terms.*

Polonius says, *in plain terms*, that is, not in language less elevated or embellished 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*.

⁵⁸ *It is very cold.*

Mr. Knight chooses to adopt from the folio, “Is it very cold?”—a reading which would greatly favour the opinion of those critics who contend that the madness of Hamlet was real, not assumed; for no man in his sound senses, just after remarking that the air bites shrewdly, would inquire if it were very cold.—*A. Dyce*.

⁵⁹ *And an eager air.*

Eager, sharp, as applied to the air. The same word, in a different but cognate sense, occurs in a subsequent scene.

⁶⁰ *The king doth wake to-night.*

Caldecott is the only commentator who has a note on “wake;”—“This term,” he says, “probably here imports more than simply *vigiliae*, and must have reference to such festivities as were used on the opening, consecration, or *wake-day* of our churches: ‘*encœnia templorum, in quibus noctem sæpe choreis pervi-*

ligem ducunt bacchantes.' Skinn.," &c. In the present passage, *wake* evidently means 'hold a late revel.' So, in poets of a much earlier date, we find the words *watch* and *watching* employed as equivalent to 'debauch at night;'—

Hatefull of harte he was to sobernes,
Cherishyng surfetes, *watche* and glotony, &c.

Lydgate's Fall of Prynces, b. ii. fol. L. ed. Wayland.

Withdraw your hand fro riotous *watchyng*.—*Id.* b. ix. fol. xxxi.

His hede was heuy for *watchynge* over nyghte.

Skelton's Bowge of Courte,—*Works*, i. 43, ed. Dyce.

So also in a tract of later date than the present play;—"Late *watchings* in taverns will wrinkle that face," *Wandering Jew*, 1640, sig. D.—*A. Dyce*.

What was the royal practise in Denmark near the time at which this play was written, may be seen in Howell's *Letters*:—"I made a Latin speech to the King of Denmark" (Christian IV. who acceded in 1588, and died 1649, uncle of Anne, Queen of King James), "on the embassy of my Lord of Leicester, who attended him at Rheynsburg, in Holsteinland. The King feasted my Lord once, and it lasted from eleven of the clock till towards the evening; *during which time the King began thirty-five healths*; the first to the Emperor, the second to his Nephew of England; and so went over all the kings and queens of Christendom, but he never remembered the Prince Palsgrave's health, or his Niece's, all the while. The King was *taken away at last in his chair*, but my Lord of Leicester bore up stoutly all the while; so that when there came two of the king's guard to take him by the arms, as he was going down the stairs, my lord shook them off, and went alone. The next morning I went to court for some dispatches; but the king was gone a hunting at break of day; but going to some other of his officers, their servants told me, without any appearance of shame, that their masters were drunk over-night; and so it would be late before they would rise."—Hamburgh, October, 1632, Svo. 1726. Sect. VI. 2, p. 236.—*Caldecott*.

⁶¹ *And takes his rouse.*

Rouse, a bumper. "Awake, thou noblest drunkard Bacchus; thou must likewise stand to me, if at least thou canst for reeling; teach me, you sovereign skinker, how to take the German's upsy-freeze, the Danish *rowsa*," Decker's *Gulls Hornbook*, 1609.

And because death should not terrifie him, they had given him many *rouses* and carowses of wine and beere; for it is the custome there to make such poore wretches drunke, wherby they may be sencelesse eyther of Gods mercy or their owne misery; but being prayed for by others, they themselves may die resolutely, or (to be feared) desperately.—*The Workes of Taylor, the Water-Poet*, 1630.

⁶² *Keeps wassel.*

Wassel, from the A.-S. *wæs hæl*, be in health. It was anciently the pledge word in drinking, equivalent to the modern *your health*. The term in later times was applied to any festivity or intemperance; and the wassail-bowl still appears at Christmas in some parts of the country. The liquor termed *wassail* in the provinces is made of apples, sugar, and ale.

Who so drynkes furst i-wys,

Wesseyle the mare dele.—*MS. Cantab.* ff. v. 48, f. 49.

The following curious old wassail song occurs in Bale's play of *Kynge Johan*,—

WASSAYLE, wassayle, out of the milke payle,
 Wassayle, wassayle as whyte as my nayle,
 Wassayle, wassayle in snowe, froste, and hayle,
 Wassayle, wassayle with partriche and rayle,
 Wassayle, wassayle that muche doth avayle,
 Wassayle, wassayle that never wyll fayle.

⁶³ *And the swaggering up-spring reels.*

It appears from the following passage in Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany, by Chapman, that the *up-spring* was a *German dance* :—

We Germans have no changes in our dances ;
 An *almain* and an *up-spring*, that is all.

Spring was anciently the name of a tune : so in Beaumont and Fletcher's Prophetess :—

—— we will meet him,
 And strike him such new *springs*—.

This word is used by G. Douglas in his translation of Virgil, and, I think, by Chaucer. Again, in an old Scots proverb : “ Another would play a *spring*, ere you tune your pipes.”—*Steevens*.

⁶⁴ *The form of plausible manners.*

This word seems to be used here in the sense of “ what generally recommends, is admired or applauded ;” and, as, under the loose usage of that day, was the case with *plausible* : “ such carriage in his apparell, gesture and conversation, as in his owne country is most *plausible* and best approved.” Dallington's *Method of Travell* from a view of France, as it stood 1598, 4to. sign. c. 2. In *All's well &c.* *plausible* has been twice used for admirable. I. 2. King. III. 1. Parolles.—*Caldecott*.

⁶⁵ *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 Antony and Cleopatra :—

The *scars* upon your honour therefore he
 Does pity as constrained *blemishes*,
 Not as deserv'd.—*Malone*.

The word *star* in the text signifies a *scar* of that appearance. It is a term of *farriery* : the *white star* or mark so common on the forehead of a dark coloured horse, is usually produced by making a *scar* on the place.—*Ritson*.

⁶⁶ *The dram of eale, &c.*

This passage appears to be hopelessly corrupt, no emendation yet proposed being in the least degree satisfactory, nor have I any plausible suggestion of my own to offer.

⁶⁷ *Thou com'st in such a questionable shape.*

“ So doubtful, that I will at least make inquiry to obtain a solution,” is a plain and obvious sense : but our author, even in his gravest passages, and in the very crisis of his heroe's fate, is accustomed to make them play upon words ; and as he has (*As you, &c.* III. 1. Ros.) used the adjective “ unquestionable ” in the sense

of "averse to parley," the commentators are agreed, that it must here, where it is connected with "speak," mean "provoking parley:" following Theobald's application of the verb.

Live you, or are you ought
That man may *question*.—*Macb.* III. 1. Macb.

And he had said before, Sc. 2.—

If it assume my noble father's *person*,
I'll *speak* to it.—*Caldecott*.

⁶⁸ *Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death.*

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 entombed *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 the expression "hearsed 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 cmbalming into the bargain. So that *death* is here used, by a metonymy of the antecedent for the consequents, for the rites of 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*.

⁶⁹ *I do not set my life at a pin's fee.*

That is, "the value, utmost worth, or absolute dominion (for such is *fee*) over that, which is worth next to nothing." "Life I'd throw down as frankly as a *pin*," *M. for M.* III. 1. Isab. 'Twas a familiar instance. "I wis, it were not *two pins hurt*, if you turnde a begging," Nash's *Almond for a Parrot*. 4to. Sign. B. 4. b. Gold and *fee* were the old terms for money and land. So Newton's Lemnie's *Touchstone of Complexions*, 12mo. 1581, p. 2. b.—"Nor house, nor land, nor gold nor *fee*." So Percy's *Reliq. passim*, and see "*fee* of grief." *Macb.* IV. 3. Macd.—*Caldecott*.

⁷⁰ *Deprive your sovereignty of reason.*

Deprive, that is, take away. "I deprive, I take away a thyng from one," Palsgrave, 1530. The meaning is, which might take away the sovereignty of your reason, the command of reason by which man is governed. "The naturall pronesse of youth to irregular liberty is such, as it is ever suggesting matter of innovation to the soveraigntie of reason," Braithwait's English Gentleman, 1630.

⁷¹ *Without more motive.*

That is, "of itself unaided, and without other or further suggestion, raises horrible and desperate conceits in the mind." The whole of this passage from the quartos, as well as the preceding lines,—

Tempt to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,—

shew the strong impression which this scenery had made upon our author's mind. It is Dover Cliff again; or the same image, recalling that picture to our own.—
Caldecott.

⁷² *Confin'd to fast in fires.*

So in ed. 1604; “confinde in flaming fire,” ed. 1603; “lasting fires,” Heath conj. Chaucer has a similar passage with regard to the punishments of hell, Parson's Tale, p. 193, Urry's edition: “And moreover the misese of hell, shall be in defaute of mete and drinke.”—*Smith.*

Nash, in his Pierce Penniless his 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 Persones 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 Devyll, bl. l. no date:—

Thou shalt lye in frost and *fire*
With sicknesse and *hunger*; &c.—*Caldecott.*

⁷³ *Are burnt and purg'd away.*

Gawin Douglas really changes the Platonic 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 purgit.”—— *Sixte Book of Eneados, fol. p. 191.—Farmer.*

Shakspeare might have found this expression in the Hystorie of Hamblet, F. 2, edit. 1608: “He set fire in the foure corners of the hal, in such sort, 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 mony vices
Contrakkit 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.*

⁷⁴ *But this eternal blazon must not be.*

That is, “such promulgation of the mysteries of eternity must not be made to beings of a day.” The term *eternal* is used with much license by our author. See “*eternal cell.*” V. 2. Fortinbr. and *Jul. Cæs.* I. 2. Cass. “*eternal devil.*” *Othel.* IV. 2. Emil. *eternal villain*; and “*eternal moment.*” *M. W. of W.* II. 1. Mrs. Ford.—*Caldecott.*

⁷⁵ *As swift as meditation, &c.*

That is, "as the course and process of thought generally, or the ardent emotions and rapid flights of love." We have "I'll make him fly *swifter than meditation*," in the prologue to *Wily Beguiled*. It was not improbably, therefore, a common saying.—*Caldecott*.

⁷⁶ *That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf.*

Shakspeare, apparently through ignorance, makes Roman Catholics of these Pagan Danes; and here gives a description of purgatory; but yet mixes it with the Pagan fable of Lethe's wharf. Whether he did it to insinuate to the zealous Protestants of his time, that the Pagan and Popish purgatory stood both upon the same footing of credibility, or whether it was by the same kind of licentious inadvertence that Michael Angelo brought Charon's bark into his picture of the Last Judgment, is not easy to decide.—*Warburton*.

"That *rots* itself in ease," &c. Thus the quarto 1604. The folio reads—'That *rots* itself,' &c. I have preferred the reading of the original copy. 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, *whose 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 *Lethes lake*.—*Malone*.

"That *rots* itself in ease, &c." The quarto reads—That *roots* itself. Pope follows it. Otway has the same thought:

—like a coarse and useless dunghill weed
Fix'd to one spot, and *rot* just as I grow.—*Steevens*.

⁷⁷ *The juice of cursed hebenon in a vial.*

Dr. Grey tells us, that *hebenon* or *hebon* was probably a transposition, or liquid poetical modification, of *henbane*: the most common kind of which (*hyoscyamus niger*) is certainly *narcotic*; and perhaps, if taken in any considerable quantity, might prove poisonous. Galen calls it cold in the third degree: by which, in the instance of this drug as well as opium, he seems not to mean that it is cold itself, but has the power of benumbing the faculties. Dioscorides ascribes to it the property of producing madness. These qualities have been confirmed in several cases stated 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. xviii*. Steevens in confirmation cites the *Barons' Wars*, p. 51. and Anton's *Philosopher's 4th Satire of Man*, 1616:—

The poisond *henbane*, whose *cold juice* doth kill.

And Marston's *Jew of Malta*, 1633.—

The blood of Hydra, Lerna's bane,
The *juice of hebon*, and Cocytus' breath!

But that it should, when administered in the manner stated, produce the consequences that Shakespeare describes, whether considered as *henbane*, a known poison, or the juice of the tree, *ebony*, supposed to be poisonous, must be taken altogether as a poetical license. See "the insane root." *Macb. I. 3. Banq.* It has here, however, been observed by Dr. Sherwen, that, though neither physi-

ology nor pathology know of any such effects produced by poison poured into the ear, the medical professors of that day believed that it might be so introduced into the system; and that the eminent surgeon, Ambrose Paré, our author's contemporary, was suspected of having, when he dressed the ear of Francis II., infused poison into it. Still it is by no means ascertained what was the operative drug, here alluded to; *ebony* or *henbane*. On the one hand, the necessities of the poet's measure certainly did not require that *hebenon* should be substituted for *henbane*. On the other, though the juice of *herbs*, or plants capable of easy pressure, is a language of obvious meaning, and as familiar as any that we know, "the juices of *trees*" is a phraseology hardly acknowledged. Dr. Sherwen informs us, that in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, *Hebenus* is described as a *large tree*; the couch of the god of sleep being made of its boards:—

Of *Hebenus*, that sleepe tree
The bordes all aboute bee.

And we have *Eben wood*. F. Q. 1. VII. 37. As to "leprous distilment" Malone cites Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, II. 142, speaking of "the qualities of *poison*, *distilling* thro the veins, till it reach even the heart."—*Caldecott*.

⁷⁸ *Like eager droppings into milk.*

Eager, sour. "Ëyger, *acer*," Huloet's *Abcedarium*, 1552. "*Acetosus*, eiger, sowre, tart," Eliotes *Dictionarie*, 1559. "*Acre*, eager, sharpe, tart, sower, unripe," Cotgrave.

⁷⁹ *Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd.*

Unhousel'd is without having received the sacrament. Thus in Hormanni *Vulgaria*, 1519:—"He is departed without shryfte and *housyll*." And in *Speculum Vitæ*, MS. it is a sin—

To receive nat once in the yeare
Howsel and schrifte with conscience elere.

Disappointed is the same as *unappointed*, and may be explained *unprepared*. A man well furnished for an enterprise is said to be well *appointed*. In *Measure for Measure*, Isabella addresses her brother, who is condemned to die, thus:—

Therefore your best *appointment* make with speed.

Unanel'd is without extreme unction. Thus in Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey*, edit. 1824, p. 324:—"Then we began to put him in mind of Christ's passion; and sent for the abbot of the place to *anneal* him." "The fyfth sacrament is *anoynying of seke men*, the whiche oyle is halowed of the bysshop, and mynstred by preestes that ben of lawfull age, in grete peryll of dethe: in lyghtnes and abatynge of theyr sikenes, yf God wyll that they lyve; and *in forgyveynge of their venyal synnes and releasyng of theyr payne*, yf they shal deye."—*The Festyval*, fol. 171.—*Singer*.

Is any man sick among you? let him bring the Priests of the Chureh, and let them pray over him, *anoiling* him with oile in the name of our Lord.—*James*, v. 14. Rhemish translation.

Therefore it is a third untruth which beginneth the second section that the church of God hath always used this unction upon this warrant of the Apostle, whereas the Church hath not always as much as used it, much less hath it used it for a Sacrament: but of the contrary part the Valentine Hereticks have used this *aneeling* as you doe, that is to say, (having received no grace or gift of healing no more than you) did notwithstanding annoynt those with oyle which were ready to dye.—*Annot. on the Rhem. Transl. by Cartwright*, p. 664.

⁸⁰ *And gins to pale his uneffectual fire.*

That is, shining without heat. To *pale* is a verb used by Lady Elizabeth Carew, in her Tragedy of Mariam, 1613:—

Death can *pale* as well
A cheek of roses, as a cheek less bright.

Again, in Urry's Chaucer, p. 368: "The sterre *paleth* her white cheres by the flambes of the sonne," &c. *Uneffectual fire*, I believe, rather means, fire that is no longer seen when the light of morning approaches. So, in Pericles, Prince of Tyre, 1609:—

—— like a *glow-worm*,—

The which hath fire in darkness, none in light.—*Stevens*.

Speaking strictly, *his* should be altered to *her*, the female only giving the light.

⁸¹ *Yea, from the table of my memory.*

This was not an unusual imagery, and perhaps originated from Proverbs, iii. 3,—“write them upon the table of thine heart.”

I figured on the table of my hart
The goodliest shape that the worlds eye admires.

Poems added to Sydney's Astrophel and Stella, ed. 1591.

They so deeply graved the same in the table of their mindes, that to this day it could never be raced out, like to a remembrance set in a marble stone, which continueth time out of minde.—*Deloney's Pleasant History of the Gentle Craft*, 1598.

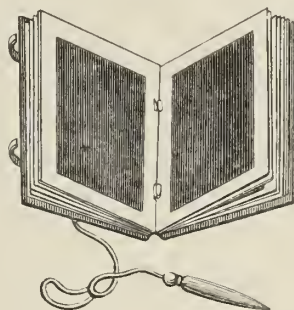
I have wiped away from the *table* of my remembrance all formes and effigies, that first, middle, and last, at all times, and above all thinges, I might prescribe fresh in my memorie your faithfull favours, so liberally and so freeely expended upon mee.—*Melton's Sixe-Fold Politician*, 1609.

⁸² *My tables,—meet it is, I set it down.*

It is remarkable that neither public nor private museums should furnish any specimens of these table-books, which seem to have been very common in the time of Shakspeare; nor does any attempt appear to have been made towards ascertaining exactly the materials of which they were composed. Certain it is, however, that they were sometimes made of slate in the form of a small portable book with leaves and clasps. Such a one is fortunately engraved in Gesner's treatise *De rerum fossilium figuris*, &c. Tigur. 1565, 12mo, which is not to be found in the folio collection of his works on natural history. The learned author thus describes it: “Pugillaris e laminis saxi nigri fissilis, cum stylo ex eodem.” His figure of it is here copied. To such a table-book the Archbishop of York seems thus to allude in the Second Part of King Henry IV., Act IV. Scene 1:—

And therefore will he *wipe his tables clean*,
And keep no tell-tale to his memory——

In the middle ages the leaves of these table-books were made of ivory. Mont-
xiv. 26



faucon has engraved one of them in the third volume of his *Antiquities*, plate exciv., the subject of which clearly shows that the learned writer has committed an error in ascribing them to remoter times. In Chaucer's *Sompnour's Tale* one of the friars is provided with

A pair of tables all of *ivory*,
And a pointel ypolished fetishly,
And wrote alway the names, as he stood,
Of alle folk that yave hem any good.

The Roman practice of writing on wax tablets with a stile was continued also during the middle-ages. In several of the monastic libraries in France specimens of wooden tables filled with wax and constructed in the fourteenth century were preserved. Some of these contained the household expenses of the sovereigns, &c., and consisted of as many as twenty pages, formed into a book by means of parchment bands glued to the backs of the leaves. One remaining in the abbey of St. Germain des préz at Paris, recorded the expenses of Philip le Bel, during a journey that he made in the year 1307, on a visit to Pope Clement V. A single leaf of this table-book is exhibited in the *Nouveau traité de diplomatique*, tom. i. p. 468.—*Douce*.

The remark as to the frequent use of table-books may be supported by many instances. So, in the Induction to the *Malcontent*, 1604: "I tell you I am one that hath seen this play often, and give them intelligence for their action: I have most of the jests of it here in my *table-book*." Again, in *Love's Sacrifice*, 1633:—

You are one loves courtship:
You had some change of words; 'twere no lost labour
To stuff your *table-books*.

Again, in *Antonio's Revenge*, 1602: Balurdo draws out his *writing-tables* and writes—"Retort and obtuse, good words, very good words." Again, in *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609:—"Let your *tables* befriend your memory; write," &c.—*Steevens*.

See also the Second Part of *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*.

I am in possession of three of these *table-books*: one printed in 1604, the date of the first edition of *Hamlet*: "Writing Tables, with a Kalendar for xxiii. Yeares, &c. The Tables made by Robert Triplet. London. Imprinted for the Companie of Stationers, 1604."—*Boswell*.

Takes care to have his pew plac'd best in sight,
In hast plucks forth his *tables* as to write
Some sermon-note, mean while docs only scrawl
Forgotten errands there, or nought at all.

Tate's Characters, 1691, p. 18.

I'll leave him at his prayers, and as I heard,
His last; and Fidus, you and I do know
I was his friend, and durst have been his foe,
And would be either yet; But he dares be
Neither yet. Sleep blots him out and takes in thee.

The mind, you know, is like a *Table-book*,
The old unwipt new writing never took.

Domne's Poems, p. 141.

⁸³ *Now to my word.*

The quarto 1603 has—' *Now to the words.*' By ' *Now to my word*' Hamlet means now to my *motto*, my word of remembrance; or as it is expressed by King Richard III. *word of courage*. Steevens asserted that the allusion is to the military *watchword*. A *word*, *mot*, or *motto*, was any short sentence, such as is inscribed on a token, or under a device or coat of arms. It was a common phrase. See Ben Jonson's Works, by Gifford, vol. ii. p. 102.—*Singer*.

⁸⁴ *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 Courtezan, and by many others among the old dramatic writers. It appears from these passages, that it was the falconer's call, as Sir T. Hanmer has observed. Again, in Tyro's Roaring Megge, planted against the Walls of Melancholy, &c. 4to. 1598:—

Yet, ere I journie, Ile go see the kyte :
Come, come, bird, come : pox on you, can you mute?—*Steevens*.

⁸⁵ *Art thou there, True-penny?*

True-penny, a jocular term for a merry hearty old fellow, and I suspect sometimes applied to a sexton. If so, Hamlet uses the term very appropriately. "What have we heere, old Trupenny come to towne to fetch away the living in his old greasy slops," Return from Parnassus, 1606. "Illo, ho, ho, ho! art there, old Truepeny," Malcontent, 1604.

I, I, my maisters, you may mocke on, as you see cause, but I warrant you the good olde *true-pennie*, Marprelate, is not so merrie: hee sits ruminating under an oake, or in the bottome of a haystacke, whose bloud shall be first spilte in the reformation of the Church.—*An Almond for a Parrat*, n. d.

⁸⁶ *Swear by my sword.*

Here the poet has preserved the manners of the ancient Danes, with whom it was *religion* to swear upon their swords. See Bartholinus, De causis contempt. mort. apud Dan.—*Warburton*.

I was once inclinable to this opinion, which is likewise well defended by Upton; but Garrick produced me a passage, I think, in Brantome, 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 her sword* to serve truth ever.

And in Hieronymo, the common butt of our author, and the wits of the time, says Lorenzo to Pedringano:—

Swear on this *cross*, that what thou say'st is true :
But if I prove thee perjur'd and unjust,
This very *sword*, whereon thou took'st thine oath.
Shall be a worker of thy tragedy.

To these authorities may be added from Holinshed, p. 664: "Warwick kissed the *cross* of King 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, when 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, in Decker's comedy of *Old Fortunatus*, 1600:—

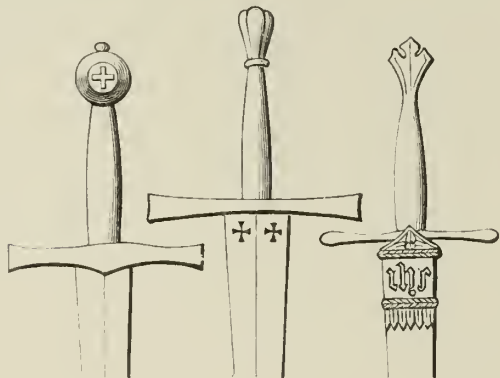
He has sworn to me on the *cross* of his pure Toledo.

Again, in his *Satiromastix*: "By the *cross* of this sword and dagger, captain, you shall take it." In the soliloquy of Roland addressed to his sword, the *cross* on it is not forgotten: "—capulo eburneo candidissime, *cruce* aurea splendidissime," &c. Turpini Hist. de Gestis Caroli Mag. cap. 22. Again, in an ancient MS. of which some account is given in a note on the first scene of the first Act of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, the oath taken by a *master of defence* when his degree was conferred on him, is preserved, and runs as follows: "First you shall swear (so help you God and halidome, and by all the christendome which God gave you at the fount-stone, and by the *cross* of this sword which doth represent unto you the *cross* which our Saviour suffered his most payneful death upon,) that you shall upholde, maynteyne, and kepe to your power all soch articles as shall be heare declared unto you, and receve in the presence of me your maister, and these the rest of the maisters, my brethren heare with me at this tyme."—*Steevens*.

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*.

In consequence of the practice of occasionally swearing by a sword, or rather by the cross or upper end of it, the name of *Jesus* was sometimes inscribed on the handle or some other part. Such an instance occurs on the monument of a crusader in the vestry of the church at Winchelsea. See likewise the tomb of John duke of Somerset engraved in Sandford's *Genealogical history*, p. 314, and Gough's *Sepulchral monuments*, Pref. cexiii. Introd. cxlviii. vol. i. p. 171, vol. ii. p. 362.—*Douce*.

Mr. Fairholt furnishes three good examples, with the following note,—“The figure formed by the guard of the sword, at the junction of hilt and blade, bore sufficient resemblance to a cross to be used for it in cases of emergency; but it was also usual to engrave crosses upon them, as in the first figure where one appears on the knob of the handle; in the second, small crosses are upon the blade. Both these swords are of late thirteenth or early fourteenth century work, the first found in the Thames; the second in Lord Londesborough's armoury. Scabbards were also decorated with crosses, or the sacred monogram I·H·S, as in the third figure, copied from



Stothard's monumental effigies, where it appears upon a knight of the fifteenth century."

⁸⁷ *Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!*

The skill displayed in Shakspeare's management of his Ghost, is too considerable to be overlooked. He has rivetted our attention to it by a succession of forcible circumstances:—by the previous report of the terrified centinels,—by the solemnity of the hour at which the phantom walks,—by its martial stride and discriminating armour, visible only *per incertam lunam*, by the glimpses of the moon,—by its long taciturnity,—by its preparation to speak, when interrupted by the morning cock,—by its mysterious reserve throughout its first scene with Hamlet,—by his resolute departure with it, and the subsequent anxiety of his attendants,—by its conducting him to a solitary angle of the platform,—by its voice from beneath the earth,—and by its unexpected burst on us in the closet. Hamlet's late interview with the spectre, must in particular be regarded as a stroke of dramattick artifice. The phantom might have told his story in the presence of the Officers and Horatio, and yet have rendered itself as inaudible to them, as afterwards to the Queen. But suspense was our poet's object; and never was it more effectually created, than in the present instance. Six times has the royal semblance appeared, but till now has been withheld from speaking. For this event we have waited with impatient curiosity, unaccompanied by lassitude, or remitted attention. The Ghost in this tragedy, is allowed to be the genuine product of Shakspeare's strong imagination. When he afterwards avails himself of traditional phantoms, as in Julius Cæsar, and King Richard III. they are but inefficacious pageants; nay, the apparition of Banquo is a mute exhibitor. Perhaps our poet despaired to equal the vigour of his early conceptions on the subject of preter-natural beings, and therefore allotted them no further eminence in his dramas; or was unwilling to diminish the power of his principal shade, by an injudicious repetition of congenial images.—*Stevens.*

Act the Second.

SCENE I.—*A Room in POLONIUS'S House.*

Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO.

Pol. Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said: very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers¹ are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; 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 it.²
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus,—“I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him:”—do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. “And, in part, him; but,” you may say, “not well:
But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild,
Addicted so and so;”—and there put on him

What forgeries you please ; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him : take heed of that ;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing :—you may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith no ; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontineney :
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 savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord,—

Pol. Wherefore should you do this ?

Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift ;
And, I believe, it is a feteh of warrant.
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i'the working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assur'd,
He eloses with you in this consequence :
“ Good sir,” or so ; or “ friend,” or “ gentleman,”—
According to the phrase, or the addition,
Of man, and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this,—he does—
What was I about to say ?—By the mass, I was
About to say something :—where did I leave ?

Rey. At eloses in the consequence,
As “ friend or so,” and “ gentleman.”

Pol. At, closes in the consequence,—ay, marry ;
He closes 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's 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,³ 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 yourself.

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his music.

Rey. Well, my lord.

[*Exit.*]

Enter OPHELIA.

Pol. Farewell !—How now, Ophelia ? what's the matter ?

Oph. Alas, my lord ! I have been so affrighted !

Pol. With what, in the name of God ?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,
 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,
 That it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
 And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
 And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
 He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
 For out o' doors he went without their help,
 And to the last bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me: I will go seek the king.
 This is the very ecstasy of love;
 Whose violent property fordoes itself,
 And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
 As oft as any passion under heaven,
 That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—
 What! have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord; but, as you did command,
 I did repel his letters, and denied
 His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
 I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
 I had not quoted him:° I fear'd, he did but trifle,
 And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
 By heaven, it is as proper to our age
 To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
 As it is common for the younger sort
 To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
 This must be known;° which, being kept close, might move
 More grief to hide, than hate to utter love. [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,
 Sith nor th' exterior nor the inward man
 Resembles that it was. What it should be,
 More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
 So much from the understanding of himself,
 I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
 That, being of so young days brought up with him,
 And since so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,
 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 thus,
 That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you ;
 And, sure I am, two men there are not living,
 To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
 To show us so much gentry and good will,
 As to expend your time with us a while,
 For the supply and profit of our hope,
 Your visitation shall receive such thanks
 As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
 Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
 Put your dread pleasures more into command
 Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey ;
 And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,
 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* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and some
 Attendants.]

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Th' ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king:
And I do think,—or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do—that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O! speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to th' ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt, it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty 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 impotency,
Was falsely borne in hand,—sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he in brief obeys,
Receives rebuke from Norway, and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give th' assay of arms⁷ against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee;
And his commission to employ those soldiers,

So levid as before, against the Polaek :
 With an entreaty, herein farther shown,
 That it might please you to give quiet pass
 Through your dominions for this enterprize ;
 On such regards of safety, and allowanee,
 As therein are set down.

[*Giving a Paper.*]

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 together :
 Most welcome home.

[*Exeunt VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.*]

Pol. This business is well ended.
 My liege, and madam ; to expostulate^s
 What majesty should be, what duty is,
 Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,
 Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
 Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
 And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
 I will be brief. Your noble son is mad :
 Mad call I it ; for, to define true madness,
 What is't, but to be nothing else but mad :
 But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.
 That he is mad, 'tis true : 'tis true 'tis pity,
 And pity 'tis 'tis true : a foolish figure ;
 But farewell it, for I will use no art.
 Mad let us grant him, then ; and now remains,
 That we find out the cause of this effect ;
 Or rather say, the eause of this defect,
 For this effect defective comes by eause :
 Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
 Perpend.

I have a daughter ; have, while she is mine ;
 Who, in her duty and obedienee, mark,
 Hath given me this. Now gather, and surmise.
 —“To the ceestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified
 Ophelia,”—
 That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase ; “beautified” is a vile phrase ;
 but you shall hear.—Thus :

“In her excellent white bosom, these,” &c.—

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; 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 best! believe it. Adieu.

Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst
 this machine is to him,¹⁰ Hamlet.”

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me;
 And more above, hath his solicitings,
 As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
 All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
 Receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful, and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
 When I had seen this hot love on the wing,—
 As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
 Before my daughter told me—what might you,
 Or my dear majesty, your queen here, think,
 If I had play'd the desk,¹¹ or table-book;
 Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb;
 Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
 What might you think? no, I went round to work,
 And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
 “Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy star;
 This must not be:” and then I precepts gave her,
 That she should lock herself from his resort,
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
 And he, repulsed, a short tale to make,
 Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;
 Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;
 Thence to a lightness; and by this declension,
 Into the madness wherein now he raves,
 And all we wail 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. 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 farther?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together,¹²
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him :
Be you and I behind an arras, then :
Mark the encounter ; if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

Enter HAMLET, reading.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes
reading.

Pol. Away ! I do beseech you, both away.
I'll board him presently :—O ! give me leave.—

[*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*

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.¹⁵

Pol. Not I, my lord ?

Ham. Then, I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord ?

Ham. Ay, sir : to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one
man picked 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 carrion,¹⁴—Have you a daughter ?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing; but not as your daughter¹⁵ may conceive:—friend, look to't.

Pol. [*Aside.*] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter:—yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fish-monger. He is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered 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; 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 of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for you yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

Pol. Though this be madness, yet there is 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 pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. God save you, sir!

[*To* POLONIUS.]

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

Guil. Mine honour'd lord!—

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not overhappy ;
On fortune's cap we are not the very button.¹⁶

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe ?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours ?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of fortune ? O ! most true ; she is a strumpet. What news ?

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is dooms-day near ; but your news is not true. Let me question more in particu- lar : 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.

Ros. Then, is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one ; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one of the worst.

Ros. 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.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one : 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God ! I could be bounded in a nut-shell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition ; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. 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 bodies, and our monarchs, and outstretched 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 sort 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 Elsinore ?

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 halfpenny. 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. Why any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Ros. What say you? [To GUILDENSTERN.]

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you. [Aside.]—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 late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o’erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears nothing to me, but 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; no, 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 entertainment¹⁷ the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way,¹⁸ and hither are they coming to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome ; his majesty shall have tribute of me : the adventurous knight shall use his foil, and target : the lover shall not sigh gratis : the humorous man shall end his part in peace : the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o' the sere ;¹⁹ and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.—What players are they ?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chanees it, they travel ? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think, their inhibition comes²⁰ by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city ? Are they so followed ?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it ? Do they grow rusty ?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace : but there is, sir, an ery of children,²¹ little eyases, that cry out on the top of question,²² and are most tyrannically elapped for't : these are now the fashion ; and so berattle the common stages—so they call them—that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What ! are they children ? who maintains them ? how are they escoted ?²³ Will they pursue the quality²⁴ no longer than they can sing ? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players—as it is most like, if their means are no better—their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession ?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides ; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them to controversy : there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is it possible ?

Guil. O ! there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away ?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord ; Hercules, and his load too.

Ham. It is not very strange ;²⁵ for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those, that would make mowes at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. '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 comply with you in this garb,²⁶ lest my extent to the players,—which, I tell you, must show 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 southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.²⁷

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 swathing-clouts.

Ros. Haply, he's the second time come to them ; for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players ; mark it.—You say right, sir : 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, buz !²⁸

Pol. Upon my honour,—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass,—

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited : Seneca cannot be too heavy,²⁹ nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ,³⁰ and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O Jephthah, 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 Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, 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,”

And then, you know,

“It came to pass, as most like it was.”³¹—

The first row of the pious ehanson³² will show you more; for look, where my abridgment comes.³³

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 valanced³⁴ since I saw thee last: com'st thou to beard me in Denmark?—What! my young lady and mistress! By-'r-lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven, than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a ehopine.³⁵ Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring.³⁶—Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: 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 eaviare to the general:³⁷ but it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters eried in the top of mine—an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, onc said, there were no sallets in the lines,³⁸ to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indiet the author of affectation, but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I ehiefly loved: 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it espeeially, 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,³⁹ like the Hyrcanian beast,”

—'tis not so ; it begins with Pyrrhus.
 “The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,
 Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
 When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
 Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
 With heraldry more dismal ; head to foot
 Now is he total gules ; horridly trick'd
 With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons ;
 Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
 That lend a tyrannous and a damned light
 To their lord's murder : Roasted in wrath and fire,
 And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
 With eyes like carbuncles,⁴⁰ the hellish Pyrrhus
 Old grandsire Priam seeks :”—
 So proceed you.

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken ; with good accent, and good discretion.

1 Play. “Anon he finds him
 Striking too short at Greeks : his antique sword,
 Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
 Repugnant to command. Unequal match'd,
 Pyrrhus at Priam drives ; in rage, strikes wide ;
 But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
 The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
 Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
 Stoops to his base ; and with a hideous crash
 Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear : for, lo ! his sword
 Which was declining on the milky head
 Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick :
 So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood ;
 And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
 Did nothing.

But, as we often see, against some storm,
 A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
 The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
 As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
 Doth rend the region ; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
 Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work,
 And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
 On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
 With less remorse than 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,⁴¹ or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps.—Say on: come to Hecuba.

1 Play. "But who, O! who had seen the mobled queen."⁴²—

Ham. The mobled queen?

Pol. That's good; "mobled queen" is good.

1 Play. "Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the flames
With bisson rheum; a elout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'erteemed loins,
A blanket, in th' 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 malieious 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 milch the burning eyes⁴³ of heaven,
And passion in the gods."

Pol. Look, whether he has not turned 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 bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstracts, 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, sirs. [*Exit POLONIUS, with some of the Players.*]

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. [*Exit Player.*] My good friends, [*To Ros. and GUIL.*] I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

Ham. Ay, so, good bye to you.—Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that 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 wann'd;
Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
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 Hecuba,⁴⁴
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion,⁴⁵
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appal 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-dreams,⁴⁶ unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property, and most dear life,
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i'the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this? Ha!
Swounds! I should take it; for it cannot be,
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter,⁴⁷ or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain !
O, vengeance !

Why, what an ass am I ! This is most brave ;

That I, the son of a dear murder'd,⁴⁸

Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,

Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,

And fall a cursing, like a very drab,

A scullion !

Fie upon't ! foh ! About my brain ! I have heard,⁴⁹

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,

Have by the very cunning of the scene

Been struck so to the soul, that presently

They have proclaim'd their malefactions ;

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak

With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players

Play something like the murder of my father,

Before mine uncle : I'll observe his looks ;

I'll tent him to the quick : if he do blench,⁵⁰

I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,

May be the devil : and the devil hath power

T' assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and, perhaps,

Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,

As he is very potent with such spirits,

Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds

More relative than this : the play's the thing,

Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[*Exit.*

Notes to the Second Act.

¹ *Danskers.*

Danskers, Danes. *Danske* is common for *Danish*, but I have met with no example of the substantive. “*Danske Corineus, English Albion,*” Life and Death of Sir John Oldcastle, 1601.

² *Than your particular demands will touch it.*

That is, than such inquiry into particulars is likely to reach. *Then*, taken in its now sole accepted sense, would give a clear meaning: but *than* at that time was almost ever, as in the old copies it is here, spelt *then*: and by that spelling was meant to be so used here.—*Caldecott.*

³ *You have me.*

That is, you understand or comprehend me.

⁴ *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 *I had not quoted him.*

Quote, to observe, to estimate. Thus in the *Isle of Gulls*, a comedy, by John Day, 1606.

—— 'twill be a scene of mirth
For me to *quote* his passions, and his smiles.

To *quote* on this occasion undoubtedly means to *observe*. Again, in Drayton's *Mooncalf*:—

This honest man the prophecy that noted,
And things therein most curiously had *quoted*,
Found all these signs, &c.

Again, in the *Woman Hater*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, the intelligencer says,—“I'll *quote* him to a tittle,” i. e. I will mark or observe him. To *quote*,

as Mr. M. Mason observes, is invariably used by Shakspeare in this sense.—*Steevens*.

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, which frequently occurs in these plays. In Minsheu's Dict. 1617, we find, "To *quote*, mark, or note, a *quotus*. Numeris enim scribentes sententias suas *notaut* et distinguunt." See also, Cotgrave's Dict. 1611: "Quoter. To *quote* or *marke* in the margent; to note by the way."—*Malone*.

⁶ *This must be known.*

That is, 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. Sir T. Hanmer reads:—"More grief to *hide hate*, than to utter love."—*Johnson*.

⁷ *To give th' assay of arms.*

Malone refers to the custom of *taking the assay* of wine, &c. before it was drunk by princes and other great persons, to ascertain that it was not poisoned. But the expression in the text has nothing to do with that custom, *To give the assay of arms* is 'to attempt or essay any thing in arms, or by force. *Aecingi armis.*'—*Singer*.

⁸ *To expostulate.*

That is, to show by discussion, to put the pros and cons, to answer demands upon the question. *Expose* is an old term of similar import. About to be separated. *Tr. § Cr. IV. 4*:—"Nay, we must use *expostulation* kindly." "Pausanias had now opportunity to visit her and to *expostulate* the favourable deceit, whereby she had caused his jealousy," Stanley's *Aurora*, 8vo. 1650. p. 44.—*Caldecott*.

⁹ *The most beautified Ophelia.*

Polonius calls *beautified* a vile phrase, and so it is, but it was at least a common one in those times, particularly in the addresses of letters. "To the most *beautified* lady, the Lady Elizabeth Carey," is the address of a dedication by Nash. "To the most *beautified* lady, the Lady Anne Glemham," R. L. inscribes his *Diella*, consisting of poems and sonnets, 1596. The examples wherein a person is said to be *beautified* with particular endowments seem hardly apposite.—*Nares*.

¹⁰ *Whilst this machine is to him.*

These words will not be ill explained by the conclusion of one of the Letters of the Paston Family, vol. ii. p. 43: "— for your pleasure, *whyle my wylls be my owne.*" The phrase employed by Hamlet seems to have a French construction. *Pendant que cette machine est à lui.* To be *one's own man* is a vulgar expression, but means much the same as Virgil's—*Dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus.*—*Steevens*.

¹¹ *If I had play'd the desk, &c.*

That is, "had I merely minuted this in my mind, locking it up in the treasury of my memory, as in a desk, for future use; or had I dealt with the active ener-

gies of body and mind, as with the eyes when yielding to repose, and suffered its bearings in silence to pass unnoticed; or had contemplated it with a careless eye as a thing frivolous and unworthy of regard." The enforcing of an idea by the use of synonymes or reduplication of similar terms, is common to our author with those of his age. The identical instance is given by Malone from his Rape of Lucrece:—

And in my hearing be you *mute and dumb*.

See "*loop'd and window'd ruggedness*," *Lear*, III. 4. L. In the folios *winking* was substituted for *working*, the reading of the quartos. Between the two words there is not much to choose: and whether from the critical character of that age it is to be considered, that the change was made in consequence of such a nicety as the recurrence of the word *work*, only two lines below (went round to *work*) is left for the reader to say.—*Caldecott*.

¹² *Four hours together*.

For hours, Tyrwhitt. I formerly was inclined to adopt this 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*.

¹³ *You are a fishmonger*.

Perhaps a joke was here intended. *Fishmonger* was a cant term for a *wencher*. So, in Barnaby Rich's Irish Hubbub: "Senex fornicator, an old *fishmonger*."—*Malone*.

¹⁴ *Being a god, kissing carrion*.

Old copies—"a *good* kissing carrion." The editors seeing Hamlet counterfeit madness, thought they might safely put any nonsense into his mouth. But this strange passage, when set right, will be seen to contain as great and sublime a reflection as any the poet puts into his hero's mouth throughout the whole play. We will first give the true reading, which is this: "For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a *god*, kissing carrion——." As to the sense we may observe, that the illative particle (for) shows the speaker to be reasoning from something he had said before: what that was we learn in these words, "to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one picked out of ten thousand." Having said this, the chain of ideas led him to reflect upon the argument which libertines bring against Providence from the circumstance of abounding *evil*. In the next speech, therefore, he endeavours to answer that objection, and vindicate Providence, even on a supposition of the fact, that almost all men were wicked. His argument in the two lines in question is to this purpose,—'But why need we wonder at this abounding of evil? For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, which though a god, yet shedding its heat and influence upon carrion——' Here he stops short, lest talking too consequentially the hearer should suspect his madness to be feigned; and so turns him off from the subject, by enquiring of his daughter. But the inference which he intended to make, was a very noble one, and to this purpose. If this (says he) be the case, that the effect follows the thing operated upon (*carrion*) and not the thing operating (a *god*), why need we wonder, that

the supreme cause of all things diffusing its blessings on mankind, who is, as it were, a dead carrion, dead in original sin, man, instead of a proper return of duty, should breed only corruption and vices? This is the argument at length; and is as noble a one in behalf of Providence as could come from the schools of divinity. But this wonderful man had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors *say*, but with what they *think*. The sentiment too is altogether in character, for Hamlet is perpetually moralizing, and his circumstances make this reflection very natural. The same *thought*, something diversified, as on a different occasion, he uses again in *Measure for Measure*, which will serve to confirm these observations:—

The tempter or the tempted, who sins most?
Not she; nor doth she tempt: but it is I
That lying by the violet in the sun,
Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,
Corrupt by virtuous season.

And the same kind of expression is in *Cymbeline*:—"Common-kissing Titan."—*Warburton*.

¹⁵ *But as your daughter &c.*

The folio reads—'Conception is a blessing, but *not* as your daughter may conceive.' Steevens thinks that there is a play upon words here, as in the first scene of *King Lear*:—

Kent. I cannot *conceive* you, sir.

Glo. Sir, this young fellow's mother *could*.

But the simple meaning may be, 'though conception in general be a blessing, yet as your daughter may chance to conceive that it may be a calamity, every thing being so corrupt or sinful in the world;' he therefore counsels Polonius not to let his daughter 'walk i' the sun,' i. e. be too much exposed to the corrupting influence of the world. The abrupt transitions and obscurities of Hamlet's language are intended to give Polonius a notion of his insanity.—*Singer*.

¹⁶ *On fortune's cap we are not the very button.*



"The flat cap," observes Mr. Fairholt, 'became very prevalent during the reign of Henry VII., and was in constant use by the middle classes during the early part of the seventeenth century. The cut copied from tapestry of Henry the seventh's era, shews the flaps then constantly appended to it, turned up and secured by a strap and button. It is obvious that such a button might be of the most costly material, or enriched by jewels, according to the wealth of the wearer.'

¹⁷ *Lenten entertainment.*

The fare in Lent was not very substantial some centuries ago, and accordingly our ancestors seemed to have used the adjective *Lenten* constantly in a sense of deterioration. "A Lenten lover, a bashfull, modest, or maidenly woer, one thats afraid to touch his mistresse," Cotgrave, in v. *Caresme*. *Lenten-fig*, a dried fig, a raisin. *Lenton-stuff*, provision for Lent. A ballad by Elderton under this title commences as follows:—

Lenton Stuff ys cum to the towne,
The clensynge weeke cums quicklye:

Yow knowe well inowghe yow must kneele downe,
 Cum on, take ashes trykly,
 That nether are good fleshe nor fyshe,
 But dyp with Judas in the dyshe,
 And keepe a rowte not worthe a ryshe.—*MS. Ashmole* 48, f. 115.

¹⁸ *We coted them on the way.*

To cote, to pass or overtake. "Now, sir, after much travel we singled a buck; I rode that same time upon a roan gelding, and stood to intercept from the thicket; the buck broke gallantly; my great swift being disadvantaged in his slip was at the first behind; marry, presently *coted* and outstrip'd them, when as the hart presently descended to the river, and being in the water, profer'd and reprofer'd, and profer'd again," *Return from Parnassus*, 1606.

"A cote is," says Blome, "when the greyhound goeth end-ways by his fellow, and gives the hare a turn," *Gentleman's Recreation*, fol. 1686, ii. 98.

¹⁹ *Whose lungs are tickled o' the seare.*

Light of the seare is equivalent to light-heeled, loose in character. *Tickle of the sear*, wanton, immodest. "The clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are *tickled o' the seare*," i. e., those whose lungs are wanton, or excited to laughter by coarse ribaldry. That this is the correct explanation there cannot, I imagine, be the slightest doubt. "Discovering the moods and humors of the vulgar sort to be so loose and *tickle of the seare*," *Howard's Defensative*, 1620, ap. Douce, ii. 230.

She that is fayre, lusty, and yonge,
 And can comon in termes wyth fyled tonge,
 And wyll abyde whysperynge in the eare,
 Thyinke ye her tayle is not *lyght of the seare*.
Commune Secretary and Jalowsye, n. d.

²⁰ *Their inhibition comes &c.*

This passage probably refers to the limiting of public theatrical performances to the two theatres, the Globe on Bankside, and the Fortune in Golden Lane, in 1600 and 1601. The players, by a "late innovation," were "inhibited," or forbidden, to act in or near "the city," and therefore "travelled," or *strolled*, into the country. See *History of Engl. Dram. Poetry and the Stage*, vol. i. p. 311, &c.—*Collier*.

²¹ *An eyry of children, little cyases.*

Eyry is the appropriate term for the nest of an eagle, hawk, or any other bird of prey. See *Walton's Angler*, p. 12. And see an instance of a grant, in which the "harts and hinds, wild boars and their kinds, and all *aries* of hawks" are reserved. *Hutchinson's Hist. of Cumberland*, i. 523. And see an instance of a petit serjeantry held in Cumberland, "by keeping the king's *aeries* of goshawks." *Blount's Jocular Tenures, &c.* p. 165. The same is mentioned by *Burn and Nicolson, Hist. of Cumberland*, i. 22. "It may be felonie to take some that bee of a wild nature; as to take young pigeons, or young hawkes out of their *aeries*, or nests, before they can flie."—*Lambarde's Justice of Peace*, p. 274.

Yon sun-bred *ayery*, whose immortal birth
 Bears you aloft beyond the sight of earth; &c.
The Owl: Drayton, iv. 1307.

I found the pheasant that the hawk doth fear,
Seeking for safety bred his *ayery* there.—*Ib.* iv. 1312.

And where the phoenix *airies*.—*Ib.* 1467.

In the Latinity of the middle ages, this term is very constantly expressed by *aria*, or *Aerea*; and in Fr. by *aire*. Thus “Unusquisque liber homo habeat in boscis suis *aereas* accipitrum, &c.” See a *grant of King John in Matt. Paris*, p. 260, 42; and see *Aery*, in *Kelham's Norm. Dict.* Watts, in his Glossary to *Matthew Paris*, and Spelman likewise, both refer it either to the Germ. *ey*, an egg; a nest being, properly, a receptacle of eggs: and to this opinion Junius also inclines. Shakespear, intending to lash the fashion that prevailed in his time, of running to see plays performed by children of the chapel, says, “there is an *aiery* of children, little *eyases*, that ery out, &c.” *Eyases* are clearly, nestlings; young birds just out of the *ey*, or egg. *Hamlet*, ii. 2. It is, moreover, well known, that in the *Forme of Cury*, and other old writers, eggs are often called *eyren* or *ayren*.—*Boucher*.

The first yeare of her trade she is an *eyesse*, seratches and cries to draw on more affection; the second, soare the third, a ramage whoore: the fourth and fift, she's an intermewer, preies for herselfe, and ruffles all she reaches: from thence to tenne shee beares the name of white whoore, for then her blood forsakes her with salt rheumes, and now she has mewd three coates.—*Overbury's New and Choise Characters*, 1615.

The hawke that commeth at the first eall will never prove stedfast on the stand. The *niese* that will be reclaimed to the fist at the first sight of the lure, will bate at every bush.—*Alcida Greenes Metamorphosis*, 1617.

²² *That cry out on the top of question.*

That is, “recite at the highest piteh of the voice; as in asking a *question* we generally close with a high note, the key in which children usually declaim throughout; and of course in a tone unrelieved and unvaried.” In this scene *Hamlet*, upon the introduction of the Players, uses almost the same language, “*cried in the top of my judgment:*” i. e. surpassed, exceeded, surmounted, overtopped mine: and *Laertes*, in correspondent terms, sets out a similar idea. “*Stood challenger on mount of all the age.*” IV. 7. And *Solomon* uses the language of the text: “*Wisdom crieth without: she uttereth her voice in the top of high places.*”—*Caldecott*.

²³ *How are they escoted?*

Escoted, paid. From *scot*, a contribution, which is formed, as *Du Cange* says, from the Anglo-Saxon, *scat*, money. See his Glossary, in *Eseotum* and *Scot*: hence *seot* and *lot*.—*Nares*.

²⁴ *Will they pursue the quality.*

Will they follow the *profession* of players no longer than they keep the voices of boys, and sing in the choir? 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 *Gosson'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*.

²⁵ *It is not very strange.*

I do not wonder that the new players have so suddenly risen to reputation, my uncle supplies another example of the facility with which honour is conferred upon new claimants.—*Johnson*.

²⁶ *Let me comply with you in this garb.*

Hammer, with his usual temerity, changed *comply* to *compliment*, and Steevens has contented himself with saying that he means 'to *compliment* with,' here and in a passage in the fifth act, 'He did *comply with* his dug before he sucked it,' where that sense would be even more absurd. He evidently never looked at the context. Hamlet has received his old schoolfellows with somewhat of the coldness of suspicion hitherto, but he now remembers that this is not courteous: He therefore rouses himself to give them a proper reception, 'Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore.—*Your hands*. Come then, the appurtenance of welcome is *fashion* and *ceremony*: let me *embrace* you in this *fashion*: lest I should seem to give you a less courteous reception than I give the players, to whom I must behave with at least exterior politeness.' That to *comply with* was to *embrace* will appear from the following passages in Herrick:—

—— witty Ovid, by
Whom fair Corinna sits, and doth *comply*,
With iv'ry wrists, his laureat head, and steeps
His eye in dew of kisses, while he sleeps.

Again:—

—— a rug of carded wool
Which, sponge-like, drinking in the dull
Light of the moon, seem'd to *comply*,
Cloud-like, the dainty deity.—*Singer*.

²⁷ *I know a hawk from a handsaw.*

This is a very old proverbial saying, in which the term *handsaw* is generally supposed to be a corruption of *hernshaw*, but no evidence in support of this conjecture has been produced, the phrase always occurring in the form given in the text. It is not necessary to believe that the supposition is correct, the wildest incongruities being often found in proverbial phrases of this description.

²⁸ *Buz, buz.*

"Buz, buz!" are, I believe, only interjections employed to interrupt Polonius. Ben Jonson uses them often for the same purpose, as well as Middleton in *A Mad 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*.

²⁹ *Seneca cannot be too heavy, &c.*

The tragedies of Seneca were translated into English by Thomas Newton, and others, and published first separate, at different times, and afterwards all together in 1581. One comedy of Plautus, viz. the *Menæchmi*, was likewise translated and published in 1595.—*Steevens*.

I believe the frequency of plays performed at public schools, suggested to Shakspeare the names of Seneca and Plautus as dramatic authors.—*T. Warton*.

Prefixed to a map of Cambridge in the Second Part of *Braunii Civitates, &c.* is an account of the University, by Gulielmus Soonus, 1575. In this curious

memoir we have the following passage: "Januarium, Februarium, et Martium menses, ut noctis tædix fallant in spectaeulis populo exhibendis ponunt tanta elegantia, tanta actionis dignitate, ea vocis et vultus moderatione, ea magnificentia, ut si *Plautus* aut *Terentius*, aut *Seneca* reviviseret mirarentur suas ipsi fabulas, majoremque quam cum inspectante popul. Rom. agerentur, voluptatem credo caperent. Euripidem vero, Sophoclem et Aristophanem, etiam Athenarum suarum tæderet."—*Steevens*.

³⁰ *For the law of writ.*

Writ for *writing*, a common abbreviation, which is not yet obsolete: we still say holy *writ*, for the sacred writings. I should not have noticed this, but that there have been editors who thought that we should read, 'the law of *wit*.' The quarto of 1603 reads, 'for the law *hath* writ.' The modern editions have pointed this passage in the following manner:—'Scene individable, or poem unlimited; Seneca cannot be too heavy nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.' I have adhered to the pointing of the quarto, because it appears to me that the *law* and the *liberty* of *writing* relates to Seneca and Plautus, and not to the players.—*Singer*.

³¹ *It came to pass, as most like it was.*

These are quotations from the first stanza of the ballad of "Jephthah, Judge of Israel," in Percy's *Reliques*, vol. i. p. 193. edit. 1812. Steevens informs us, that in the books belonging to the Stationers' Company, there are two entries of this ballad. Among others, "A ballet intituled the Songe of Jephthah's Doughter," &c. 1567, vol. i. fol. 162. Again: "Jessa Judge of Israel," p. 93, vol. iii. Dec. 14, 1624. Malone conjectured that there had been an English drama written on the subject, and it appears from Henslowe's Diary that such was the fact, for in May, 1602, Henry Chettle was paid money on account of a tragedy called *Jefftha*.—*Collier*. The ballad itself is still preserved in black-letter under the title of, "A proper new Ballad intituled Jepha Judge of Israel," two copies of which I have seen that differ slightly from each other. The first stanza runs as follows,—

I have read that many years agoe,
When Jepha, judge of Israel,
Had one fair daughter and no more,
Whom he loved passing well.
And as by lot, God wot,
It came to passe most like it was,
Great warrs there should be,
And who should be the chiefe, but he, but he.

³² *The pious chanson.*

This is Malone's selection from three readings, every one of which may be said to be genuine—that is, to have been written by the author. The first was "godly ballet." This appears in the earliest quarto, 1603. The next was "pious chanson." This appears in the quartos of 1604 and 1605. The ballet alluded to was on a scripture subject, the story of Jephtha. But both these expressions appeared to border on profaneness, and in the quarto of 1611 we find a third reading, "pons chanson," which is also the reading of the folios. Whether, in regard to what was the latest intention of the Poet, or to propriety, the third and latest reading ought to have been adopted by the modern editors, the term "pons chanson," when rightly understood, being a very appropriate term by which to designate the kind of composition which is here spoken of. If "pons chanson" were to be understood as Pope and others have considered it, as

A proper new ballad, intituled, Jephthah Judge of Israel.



I Read that many years agoe,
When Jephthah Judge of Israel,
Had one faire Daughter and no more,
Whom he loved so passing well.
And as by lot God wot,
It came to passe most like it was,
Great wars there should be,
and who should be the chiefe, but he, but he.

When Jephthah was appointed now,
chiefe Captaine of the company,
To God the Lord he made a vow,
if he might have the victory,
At his return to burn
For his offering the first quick thing,
Should meet with him then,
from his house when he came agen, agen.

It chanced to these wars were done,
and home he came with victory,
His Daughter out of doores did run,
to meet her Father speedily,
And all the way did play
To Taber and Pipe, and many a tripe,
And notes full high.
for joy that he was so nigh so nigh.

When Jephthah did perceibe and see
his Daughter fitm and for most ly,
He rent his cloths and tore his haire,
and shrieked out most piteously.
For thou art she (quoth he)
Hath brought me low, alas for woe,
And troubled me so,
that I cannot tell what to do to doe.

For I have made a vow (quoth he)
which must not be diminished,
A sacrifice to God on high,
my promise must be finished,
As you have spoke, provoke,
No further care but to prepare,
Your will to fulfill,
according to Gods will Gods will.

For silence God hath given you might,
to overcome your Enemies,
Let me be offered up as right,
for to perform all promises,
And this let he quoth she,
As thou hast said be not afraid,
Although it be I.
keep promise with God on high on high.

But Father do so much for me,
as let me goe to Wildernesse,
There to be walle my virginity,
three months to bemoan my heavynesse,
And let there go some moe,
Like Daids with me, content quoth he,
And sent her away,
to mourn till her latter day her day.

And when that time was come and gone,
that she should sacrificed be,
This Virgin sacrificed was,
for to fulfill all promises,
As some say for aye:
The Virgins there thre times a year,
Like sorrow fulfill,
for the Daughter of Jephthah still, still, still.

Printed for F. Coles T. Vere, and VV Gilbertson.

meaning only "ballads sung on bridges," it would appear to every one, as it has appeared to the later editors, a weak and inefficient expression, unworthy of the poet. But in fact, in France, the trivial ballad, such as that referred to, is called in ordinary discourse a *pons chanson*, or a *chanson du Pont Neuf*. "Vaudevilles, ou *Chansons du Pont Neuf*, les chansons communes qui se chantent parmi le peuple avec une grande facilité, et sans art: *Trivialis cantilena*."—*Dictionnaire de Trevoux*, voce *Chanson*.—*Douce*.

³³ *My abridgement comes.*

An abridgement was a dramatic performance; probably from the prevalence of the historical drama, in which the events of years were so *abridged* as to be brought within the compass of a play. In this place, however, the sense is disputable. But this interpretation is strengthened by a subsequent passage, in which Hamlet calls the players "the abstract and brief chronicles of the time;" *abridgement*, however, is not repeated there, as is erroneously said in a note of Steevens on the first passage.—*Nares*.

³⁴ *Thy face is valanced.*

To valance, to ornament with drapery. Shakespeare uses the word allegorically, applied to a face being *valenced* or fringed with a beard.

After followed his three aydes, every of them under a pavilion of crymosyn damaske, and purple poudred with H. and K. of fync golde, *valenced* and frynged with golde of damaske.—*Hall, Henry VIII.* f. 10.

³⁵ *By the altitude of a chopine.*

A chopine was a high elog or elog patten, or light framework covered with leather, and worn under the shoe. Chopines were not used in this country excepting on fancy occasions, but they were common in Venice, Spain, and other places. "These matters of great princes were played upon lofty stages, and the actors thereof ware upon their legges buskins of leather called *Cothurni*, and other solemne habits, and for a speciall preheminance did walke upon those high eorked shoes or pantoffles, which now they call in Spaine and Italy *Shoppini*," *Art of English Poesy*, 1589. The annexed engraving of a lady wearing a chopine is copied from a woodcut in *Bulwer's English Gallant*, 1653.

The following account occurs in *Coryat's Crudities*, 1611, p. 261:—"There is one thing used of the Venetian women, and some others dwelling in the cities and townes subject to the signiory of Venice, that is not to be observed (I thinke) amongst any other women in Christendome; which is so common in Venice, that no woman whatsoever goeth without it, either in her house or abroad; a thing made of wood, and covered with leather of sundry colors, some with white, some redde, some yellow. It is called a *chapiney*, which they weare under their shoes. Many of them are curiously painted; some also I have seen fairely gilt: so uncomely a thing (in my opinion) that it is pittie this foolish eustom is not cleane banished and exterminated out of the citie. There are



many of these chapineys of a great heighth, even halfe a yard high, which maketh many of their women that are very short seeme much taller then the tallest women we have in England. Also I have heard that this is observed amongst them, that by how much the nobler a woman is, by so much the higher are her chapineys. All their gentlewomen, and most of their wives and widowes that are of any wealth, are assisted and supported eyther by men or women when they walke abroad, to the end they may not fall. They are borne up most commonly by the left arme, otherwisc they might quickly take a fall. For I saw a woman fall a very dangerous fall as she was going downe the staires of one of the little stony bridges with her high chapineys alone by herselfe; but I did nothing pittie her, because shee wore such frivolous, and (as I may truely terme them) ridiculous instruments, which were the occasion of her fall; for both I myselfe, and many other strangers, as I have observed in Venice, have often laughed at them for their vaine chapineys." The commentators have not given this passage at length, but it deserves to be fully transcribed, for it undoubtedly furnishes us with the most curious account of the chopine that has yet been pointed out.

Why doe you rob us of our ruffes, of our eare rings, carkanets, and mamilions, of our fannes and feathers, our busks and French bodies, nay, of our maskes, hoods, shadowes and *shapynas*.—*Hæc Vir, or the Womanish Man*, 1620.

The Italian in her high *chopeene*,
 Scotch lasse and lovely froe too,
 The Spanish donna, French madam,
 He doth not feare to goe to.

Heywood's Challenge for Beautie, 1636.

Yet the next Holy-day, before Sun-rising, being watchfull (mine ears spurred, as it were, and my senses broad-waking), I might hear some persons stalking before my Chamber-door; which paces, seeming to me by the sound and noise to be of *Chapins*, so altered me, that, naked as I was, I leap'd out of my bed, and opened the door, but so unluckily, that I could but onely get a sight of my Mistris with her back turned, as she went past me.—*Gerardo, the Unfortunate Spaniard*, 1653.

I add the following from Douce,—In Raymond's Voyage through Italy, 1648, a work which is said to have been partly written by Dr. Bargrave, prebendary of Canterbury, the following curious account of the *chopine* occurs: "This place (Venice) is much frequented by the walking may poles, I meane the women. They weare their coats halfe too long for their bodies, being mounted on their *chippeens*, which are as high as a man's leg, they walke between two handmaids, majestickly deliberating of every step they take. This fashion was invented and appropriated to the noble Venetians wives, to bee constant to distinguish them from the courtesans, who goe covered in a vaile of white taffety." James Howell, speaking of the Venetian women, says, "They are low and of small statures for the most part, which makes them to rayse their bodies upon high shoes called *chapins*, which gave one occasion to say that the Venetian ladies were made of three things, one part of them was wood, meaning their chapins, another part was their apparrell, and the third part was a woman; The Senat hath often endcavour'd to take away the wearing of those high shooes, but all women are so passionately delighted with this kind of state that no law can weane them from it."

"Some have supposed that the jealousy of Italian husbands gave rise to the invention of the *chopine*. Limojon de Saint Didier, a lively French writer on the republic of Venice, mentions a conversation with some of the doge's counselors of state on this subject, in which it was remarked that smaller shocs would

certainly be found more convenient; which induced one of the counsellors to say, putting on at the same time a very austere look, *pur troppo commodi, pur troppo*. The first ladies who rejected the use of the chopine were the daughters of the Doge Domenico Contareno, about the year 1670. It was impossible to set one foot before the other without leaning on the shoulders of two waiting women, and those who used them must have stalked along like boys in stilts. The chopine or some kind of high shoe was occasionally used in England. Bulwer in his *Artificial Changeling*, p. 550, complains of this fashion as a monstrous affectation, and says that his countrywomen therein imitated the Venetian and Persian ladies. In Sandys's *Travels*, 1615, there is a figure of a Turkish lady with chopines; and it is not improbable that the Venetians might have borrowed them from the *Greek* islands in the Archipelago. We know that something similar was in use among the ancient Greeks. Xenophon in his *œconomics*, introduces the wife of Ischomachus, as having high shoes for the purpose of increasing her stature. They are still worn by the women in many parts of Turkey, but more particularly at Aleppo. As the figure of an object is often better than twenty pages of description, one is here given from a real Venetian chopine."



³⁶ *Cracked within the ring.*

It is to be observed, that there was a ring or circle on the coin, within which the sovereign's head was placed; if the crack extended from the edge beyond this ring, the coin was rendered unfit for currency. Such pieces were hoarded by the usurers of the time, and lent out as lawful money. Of this we are informed by Roger Fenton, in his *Treatise of Usury*, 1611, 4to, p. 23. "A poore man desireth a goldsmith to lend him such a summe, but he is not able to pay him interest. If such as I can spare (saith the goldsmith) will pleasure you, you shall have it for three or foure moneths. Now, hee hath a number of light, clipt, *crackt* peeces (for such he useth to take in change with consideration for their defects:) this summe of money is repaid by the poore man at the time appointed in good and lawfull money. This is usurie." And again, "It is a common custome of his [the usurer's] to buy up *crackt angels* at nine shillings the piece. Now sir, if a gentleman (on good assurance) request him of mony, Good sir (saith hee, with a counterfait sigh) I would be glad to please your worship, but my *good* mony is abroad, and that I have, I dare not put in your hands. The gentleman thinking this conscience, where it is subtilty, and being beside that in some necessity, ventures on the *crackt angels*, some of which cannot flie, for soldering, and paies double interest to the miser under the cloake of honesty."—Lodge's *Wil's Miserie*, 1596, 4to, p. 28. So much for the cracked gold. The cracking of the *human voice* proceeded from some alteration in the larynx, which is here compared to a ring. As metaphors are sometimes double, the present may be of that kind. A piece of cracked metal is spoiled for the *ringing of it*; so the human voice, when cracked, may be said to lose the clearness of its *tone*. All Steevens's quotations, except the last, are obscene, and none of them apply to Hamlet's simile.—*Douce*.

³⁷ *'Twas caviare to the general.*

Caviare is said to be the pickled roes of certain fish of the sturgeon kind, called in Italy *caviale*, and much used there and in other Catholic countries.

Great quantities were prepared on the river Volga formerly. As a dish of high seasoning and peculiar flavour it was not relished by the *many*, i. e. the *general*. A fantastic fellow, described in Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, is said to be learning to eat macaroni, periwinkles, French beans, and *caviare*, and pretending to like them.—*Singer*.

³⁸ *There were no sallets in the lines.*

Such is the reading of the old copies. I know not why the later editors continued to adopt the alteration of Pope, and read,—no *salt*, &c. Pope's alteration may indeed be in some degree supported by the following passage in Decker's *Satiromastix*, 1602: "—a prepar'd 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 Jests*, &c. "—for junkets, joci; and for curious *sallets*, sales."—*Steevens*.

³⁹ *The rugged Pyrrhus.*

Seymour's observations on this speech are in general just; and I agree with him that "there can hardly be a serious doubt that the praise bestowed on it by Hamlet himself is sincere;" but the reason he gives for this is erroneous, that "he must be mad, not in craft, but reality, if he had deliberately selected, for the purpose of probing the king's conscience, a composition that was nothing but contemptible bombast." But the play from whence this speech is supposed to be taken, was not that which Hamlet selected to be played before the court.—*Pye*.

⁴⁰ *With eyes like carbuncles.*

That is, jewels, resembling coals. "Noah, shutte uppe in the ark used, as some curious braines have conjectured, a *carbuncle* or some other radiant precious stone to give light." M. Ant. de Dominis's *Sermon*, 4to. 1617. p. 69. See *Par. Lost*, IX. 500.—*Caldecott*.

⁴¹ *He's for a jig.*

"*Frottola*, a countrie gigge, or round, or countrie song, or wanton verse," Florio's *Worlde of Wordes*, 1598. "I have often seene after the finishing of some worthy tragedy or catastrophe in the open theaters, that the sceane after the epilogue hath beene more blacke (about a nasty bawdy *jigge*) then the most horrid sceane in the play was," Dekker's *Strange Horse-Race*, 1613.

Most commonly, when the play is done, you shall have a jigge or dance of all treads; they mean to put their legs to it as well as their tongs; they make men wonder when they have done for they all elappe their hands.—*Lupton's London and the Countrey Carbonadoed*, 1632.

⁴² *Had seen the mobled queen.*

Such is the reading of the fol. 1632, and also of the quartos and 1603, in every instance in which the word occurs. *Inobled*, the word in our folio, is in this place unmeaning; and was probably a misprint. A woman's cap of that form, which ties under the chin, is called a *mob*. It was formerly written *mob* or *mab* indifferently. It means here covered up or muffled; of which last term Holt White conceives it to be a depravation; as in Shirley's *Gent. of Venice*, quoted by Dr. Farmer, we find—"The moon does *mobble* up herself," and from Ogilby's *Fables*, Part, II. he instances: "*Mobbled* nine days in my considering cap." In his *North Country Words*, Ray says, that "to *mab* is to dress carelessly. *Mabs* are slatterns." And Warburton quotes Sandys: "Their heads and faces (the Turkish women) are *mabled* in fine linen, that no more is to be seen of them than their eyes."—*Caldecott*.

When they go abroad they wear over all long gowns of violet cloth or scarlet, tyed close before, the large sleeves hanging over their hands; having buskins on their legs, and their heads and faces so *mabled* in fine linnen, that no more is to be seen of them than their eyes: nor that of some, who look as through the sight of a bever.—*Sandys's Travells*, p. 54.

To speak a word or two of their women: the elder *mabble* their heads in linnen, with the knots hanging down behind.—*Ibid.* p. 116.

⁴³ *Made milch the burning eyes of heaven.*

That is, would have drawn tears from them. *Milche-hearted*, in Huloet's *Abcedarium*, 1552, is rendered *lemosus*; and in *Bibliotheca Eliotæ*, 1545, we find "*lemosi*, they that *wepe* lyghtly." The word is from the Saxon.—*Douce*.

⁴⁴ *What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba.*

It is plain Shakspeare alludes to a story told of Alexander the cruel tyrant of Phœrae in Thessaly, who seeing a famous tragedian act in the *Troades* of Euripides, was so sensibly touched that he left the theatre before the play was ended; being ashamed, as he owned, that he who never pitied those he murdered, should weep at the sufferings of *Hecuba* and *Andromache*. See *Plutarch* in the *Life of Pelopidas*.—*Upton*.

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*.

⁴⁵ *And the cue for passion.*

The cue is the *hint* or *prompt word*, a technical phrase among players; it is the word or sign given by the prompter for a player to enter on his *part*, to begin to speak or act. 'A prompter (says Florio), one who keepes the booke for the plaiers, and teacheth them, or schollers their *cue*,' i. e. their *part*; and this will explain why it is used in other places, as in *Othello*, for *part*:—

Were it my *cue* to fight, I should have known it
Without a *prompter*.—*Singer*.

⁴⁶ *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-lanthorn*. At the beginning of Arthur Hall's translation of the second book of Homer's *Iliad*, 1581, we are told of Jupiter, that—

John dreaming God he callde to him, that God, chiefe God of il,
Common cole carrier of every lye, &c.

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.—*Steevens*.

Let Vulcan be the scorne of men and gods,
Geered at and mockt as much as *John a Nods*.

The Newe Metamorphosis, 1600, MS.

This is singular, indeede, sayes the World: I long to heere of this dry, poore John. His name is John, indeede, saies the cinnick; but neither John a nods, nor *John a dreames*, yet either as you 'take it, for he is simply simple without tricks, not sophisticated like your tobacco to tast strong, but as nature aloud him he had his talent. Whereat the World so tickled her spleene that she was agog, clap[ped] her hands for joy, and saies she was deeply satisfied, and cryed more.—*Armin's Nest of Ninnies*, 1608.

⁴⁷ *To make oppression bitter.*

In the Perkins MS., *oppression* is altered to *transgression*, but, observes Mr. Dyce, could the Manuscript-corrector be so obtuse as not to perceive that "lack gall to make *oppression* bitter," means "lack gall to make me feel the bitterness of oppression?"

⁴⁸ *The son of a dear murder'd.*

So in ed. 1604 and ed. 1623, but in some editions the word *father* is added after *dear*. The "dear departed" is still a common phrase, and the ellipsis in the text was I suspect in consonance with the phraseology of Shakespeare's time.

⁴⁹ *I have heard, &c.*

Shakespeare here probably had in his mind a story very familiar to the audience of his day, thus narrated in Heywood's Apology for Aetors, 1612,—"*A Strange Accident happening at a Play.*—At Lin, in Norfolke, the then Earl of Sussex players acting the old History of Fryer Franeis, and presenting a woman who, insatiately doting on a young gentleman (the more securely to enioy his affection) mischievously and secretly murdered her husband, whose ghost haunted her; and at divers times in her most solitary and private contemplations, in most horrid and fearefull shapcs appeared, and stood before her. As this was acted, a townes-woman (till then, of good estimation and report) finding her conscience (at this presentment) extremely troubled, suddenly skritchd and cryd out—'Oh, my husband, my husband! I see the ghost of my husband fiercely threatening and menacing me.' At which shrill and unexpected out-cry, the people about her moov'd to a strange amazement, inquired the reason of her clamour, when presently, un-urged, she told them that, seven yeares ago, she, to be possest of such a gentleman (meaning [naming?] him), had poysoned her husband, whose fearefull image personated itselfe in the shape of that ghost: whereupon the murdress was apprehended, before the justices further examined, and by her voluntary confession after eondemned. That this is true, as well by the report of the actors as the records of the towne, there are many eye-witnesses of this accident yet living vocally to confirme it."

⁵⁰ *If he do blench.*

Shakespeare seems to use *blench* in the sense of, *to wink, to glance*.

And thus thinkende I stonde still

Without *blenchinge* of mine eie.—*Gower*, ed. 1554, f. 128.

Act the Third.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Castle.*

*Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, and
GUILDENSTERN.*

King. And can you, by no drift of conference,
Get from him, why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess, he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But with a crafty madness keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way: of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy

To hear of it. They are about the court ;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true :
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties,
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart ; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd.

Good gentlemen, give him a farther edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too ;
For we have elosely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia :¹

Her father, and myself—lawful espials²—
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 th' affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you.—
And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness ; so shall I hope, your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit* Queen.]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here.—Graecious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves.—Read on this book ; [*To* OPHELIA.
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness.—We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too much prov'd,—that, with devotion's visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.]

King. O ! 'tis too true :
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience !
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
O heavy burden !

Pol. I hear him coming : let's withdraw, my lord.
 [*Exeunt King and POLONIUS.*]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be ; that is the question :—
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune ;
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,³
 And by opposing end them ?—To die,—to sleep,—
 No more ;—and, by a sleep, to say we end
 The heart-ache, 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 ;
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,⁴
 Must give us pause. There's the respect
 That makes calamity of so long life :
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus make⁵
 With a bare bodkin ?⁶ who would fardels bear,⁷
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
 But that the dread of something after death,—
 The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
 No traveller returns,⁸—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
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
 And enterprises of great pith and moment,
 With this regard their currents turn awry,
 And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now !
 The fair Ophelia.—Nymph,⁹ in thy orisons
 Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my lord,
 How does your honour for this many a day ?

Ham. I humbly thank you ; well, well, 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, your honesty should
admit no discourse to your beauty.

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 likeness : 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 inoculate 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 me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious ; with
more offences at my beek, than I have thoughts to put them in,
imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What
should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth ?
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. Farewell.

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. Farewell.

Oph. Heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too,¹⁰ well enough: God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to; I'll no more on't: it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

[*Exit* HAMLET.]

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword:
Th' expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
Th' observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth,
Blasted with cestasy. 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 disclose,¹¹
Will be some danger: which for to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down. He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something settled matter in his heart;

Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well: but yet do I believe,
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief: let her be round with him,
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.*

SCENE 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 your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O! it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings;¹² who, for the most part, are capable of nothing¹³ but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant;¹⁴ it out-herods Herod:¹⁵ pray you avoid it.

1 Play. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word,¹⁶ the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is,

to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one must, in your allowance, o'er-weigh a whole theatre of others. O! there be players, that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely,¹⁷ that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted, and bellowed, 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 reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham. O! reform it altogether. And let those, that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh, too; though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it.¹⁸ 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. We will, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

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 clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?

No ; let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
 And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,¹⁹
 Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear ?
 Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
 And could of men distinguish, her election
 Hath seal'd thee for herself : for thou hast been
 As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing ;
 A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
 Hast ta'en with equal thanks : and bless'd are those,
 Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,
 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,²⁰ 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 seest that act a-foot,
 Even with the very comment of thy soul
 Observe mine uncle : if his occulted guilt
 Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
 And my imaginations are as foul
 As Vulcan's stithy.²¹ Give him heedful note ;
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
 And, after, we will both our judgments join
 In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord ;
 If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
 And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play : I must be idle ;
 Get you a place.

*Danish March. A Flourish. Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS,
 OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and Others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet ?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith ; of the camelion's dish : I eat the
 air, promise-crammed. You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet : these words
 are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now.—My lord, you played once in the university, you say? [*To* POLONIUS.]

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him²³ to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol. O ho! do you mark that? [*To the King.*]

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at* OPHELIA'S Feet.]

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think, I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God! your only jig-maker. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how eheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black,²⁴ for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by'r-lady, he must build ehurehes then, or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse; whose epitaph is, "For, O! for, O! the hobby-horse is forgot."²⁵

Trumpets sound. The dumb Show²⁶ follows.

Enter a King and Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him. She kneels, and makes show 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 awhile : but in the end accepts his love. [Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my lord ?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho ;²⁷ it means mischief.

Oph. Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow : the players cannot keep counsel ; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant ?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you will show him : be not you ashamed to show, 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 eumeny,
We beg your hearing patiently."

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the poesy of a ring ?²⁸

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King and a Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart²⁹ gone round
Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orb'd ground ;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,
About the world have times twelve thirties been ;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done.
But, woe is me ! you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,

Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must ;
 For women'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 great, 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 powers their functions leave to do :
 And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
 Honour'd, belov'd ; and, haply, one as kind
 For husband shalt thou—

P. Queen. O, confound the rest !
 Such love must needs be treason in my breast :
 In second husband let me be accurst ;
 None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

Ham. [*Aside.*] Wormwood, wormwood.

P. Queen. The instances, that second marriage move,
 Are base respects of thrift, but none of love :
 A second time I kill my husband dead,
 When second husband kisses me in bed.

P. King. I do believe you think what now you speak,
 But what we do determine oft we break.
 Purpose is but the slave to memory,
 Of violent birth, but poor validity ;
 Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,
 But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
 Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
 To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt :
 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 destroy :
 Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament ;
 Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
 This world is not for aye ; nor 'tis not strange,
 That even our loves should with our fortunes change ;
 For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
 Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
 The great man down, you mark his favourite flies ;
 The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies :
 And hitherto doth love on fortune tend,

For who not needs shall never lack a friend ;
 And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
 Directly seasons him his enemy.
 But, orderly to end where I begun,
 Our wills and fates do so contrary run,
 That our devices still are overthrown ;
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own :
 So think thou wilt no second husband wed,
 But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light !
 Sport and repose loek from me, day and night !
 To desperation turn my trust and hope !
 An anchor's cheer in prison be my seope !³⁰
 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,—

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 roek thy brain ;
 And never come mischance between us twain ! [Exit.]

Ham. Madam, how like you this play ?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O ! but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument ? Is there no offence
 in't ?

Ham. No, no ; they do but jest, poison in jest : no offence
 i'the world.

King. What do you call the play ?

Ham. The mouse-trap. Marry, how ? Tropieally.³¹ This
 play is the image of a murder done in Vienna : Gonzago is the
 duke's name ; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon : 'tis a
 knavish piece of work ; but what of that ? your majesty, and we
 that have free souls, it touehes us not : let the galled jade wince,
 our withers are unwrung.

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

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 worse.

Ham. So you must take your husbands.—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 Heeate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the Poison into the Sleeper's Ears.*]

Ham. He poisons him i'the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago : the story is extant, and written in very choicè Italian. You shall see anon, how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What ! frightened with false fire ?

Queen. How fares my lord ?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light !—away !

All. Lights, lights, lights !

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO.*]

Ham. Why, let the stricken 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 feathers, (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me³²) with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes,³³ get me a fellowship in a cry of players,³⁴ sir ?

Hor. Half a share.³⁵

Ham. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear !
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself ; and now reigns here
A very, very—pajock.

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio! I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning,—

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come; some music! come; the recorders!

For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike,—he likes it not, perdy.—

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Come; some music!

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir,—

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer, to signify this to his 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 command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter. My mother, you say,—

Ros. 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.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any farther trade with us?³⁷

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.³⁸

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, but bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but "while the grass grows,"³⁹—the proverb is something musty.

*Enter the Players, with Recorders.*⁴⁰

O! the recorders:—let me see one.—To withdraw with you:—⁴¹ why do you go about to recover the wind of me,⁴² as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord! if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. It is as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony: I have not the skill.

Ham. Why look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ.

yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood! do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me,⁴³ 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 weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

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 bent [*aside*].—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 churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
 Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
 And do such bitter business as the day
 Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.—
 O, heart! lose not thy nature; let not ever
 The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
 Let me be cruel, not unnatural.
 I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
 My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
 How in my words soever she be shent,
 To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*]

SCENE 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 despatch,
 And he to England shall along with you.
 The terms of our estate may not endure
 Hazard so dangerous, as doth hourly grow
 Out of his lunacies.

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.

Ros. 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 weal 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 wheel,
 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 boisterous ruin. Never alone
 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. and Guil. We will haste us.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.]

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
 Behind the arras I'll convey myself,⁴⁴
 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 partial, should o'erhear
 The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
 I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
 And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

O! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;

It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
 A brother's murder!—Pray can I not,
 Though inclination be as sharp as will:
 My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
 And, like a man to double business bound,
 I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
 And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
 Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
 Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
 To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy,
 But to confront the visage of offence?
 And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—
 To be forestalled, 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 th' offence?
 In the corrupted currents of this world,
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
 And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
 Buys out the law; but 'tis not so above:
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
 To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
 Try what repentance can: what can it not?
 Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
 O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
 O limed soul, that struggling to be free,
 Art more engaged! 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, yea, now he is praying;
 And now I'll do't;—and so he goes to heaven,
 And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd:

A villain kills my father ; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread ;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May,
And how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven ?
But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him ; and am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage ?
No.

Up, sword ; and know thou a more horrid hent.
When he is drunk, asleep or in his rage ;
Or in th' incestuous pleasures of his bed ;
At gaming, swearing ; or about some act,
That has no relish of salvation in't ;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn'd, and black,
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays :
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

The King rises and advances.

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below :
Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A 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 here.¹⁵
Pray you, be round with him,

Ham. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother !

Queen. I'll warrant you :
Fear me not :—withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*POLONIUS hides himself.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother! what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come; you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go; you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;

And,—would it were not so!—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge:
You go not, till I set you up a glass

Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me.
Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help! help! help!

Ham. How now! a rat? [*Draws.*] Dead for a dueat, dead.

[HAMLET makes a pass through the Arras.⁴⁶

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.

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell. [*To POLONIUS.*

I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune:

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.—

Leave wringing of your hands. Peace! sit you down,

And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,

If it be made of penetrable stuff;

If damned custom have not braz'd it so,

That it is 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 rose
 From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
 And sets a blister there ; makes marriage vows
 As false as dicers' oaths : O ! such a deed,
 As from the body of contraction 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 act.

Queen. Ah me ! what act,
 That roars so loud, and thunders in the index ?⁴⁷

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this ;⁴⁸
 The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
 See, what a grace was seated on this brow :
 Hyperion's curls ; the front of Jove himself ;
 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ;
 A station like the herald Mereury,⁴⁹
 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;
 A combination, and a form, indeed,
 Where every god did seem to set his seal,
 To give the world assurance of a man.
 This was your husband : look you now, what follows.
 Here is your husband ; like a mildew'd ear,
 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ?
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
 And batten on this moor ?⁵⁰ Ha ! have you eyes ?
 You cannot call it, love ; for, at your age,
 The hey-day in the blood 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 motion ; but, sure, that sense
 Is apoplex'd ; for madness would not err,
 Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd.
 But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
 To serve in such a difference. What devil was't,
 That thus hath eozen'd you at hoodman-blind ?⁵¹
 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense
 Could not so mope.

O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
 And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame,
 When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
 Since frost itself as actively both burn,
 And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet! speak no more!
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
 And there I see such black and grained spots,
 As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
 In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed;⁵²
 Stew'd in corruption; honeying, and making love
 Over the nasty sty;—

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 tithe
 Of your precedent lord:—a vice of kings!⁵³
 A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
 That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
 And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more!

Enter Ghost.

Ham. A king of shreds and patches.—
 Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
 You heavenly guards!—What would you, gracious figure?

Queen. Alas! he's mad.

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
 That, laps'd in time and passion,⁵⁴ lets go by
 Th' 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 works.
 Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady ?

Queen. Alas ! how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with th' incorporal air do hold discourse ?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep ;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in th' alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,⁵⁵
Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son !
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look ?

Ham. On him, on him !—Look you, how pale he glares !
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable.⁵⁶—Do not look upon me ;
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects : then, what I have to do
Will want true colour ; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this ?

Ham. Do you see nothing there ?

Queen. Nothing at all ; yet all, that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear ?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there ! look, how it steals away !
My father, in his habit as he liv'd !
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal ! [*Exit Ghost.*]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain :
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy !

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness,
That I have utter'd : bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word, which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks :
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven ;
Repent what's past ; avoid what is to come,
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue ;
For in the fatness of these pursy times,

Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo, for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night; but go not to mine uncle's bed:
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster custom,⁵⁷ who all sense doth eat
Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this;
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on: refrain to-night;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And master the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
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 me,
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 lady.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;⁵⁸
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'Twere good, you let him know;
For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,⁵⁹
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense, and seeresy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,

Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions⁶⁰ in the basket ereep,
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 England; you know that.

Queen. Alack!

I had forgot: 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. 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 marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petar,⁶¹ and it shall go hard,
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon. O! 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.—
This man shall set me packing:
I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.—
Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most seeret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally; HAMLET dragging in POLONIUS.*]

Notes to the Third Act.

¹ *May here affront Ophelia.*

“*Affrontare*, to affront, to encounter,” Florio’s *Worlde of Wordes*, 1598. So, in the *Devil’s Charter*, 1607 :—“*Affronting* that port where proud Charles should enter.” Again, in Sir W. D’Avenant’s *Cruel Brother*, 1630 :—“In sufferance *affronts* the winter’s rage?”—*Steevens*.

² *Lawful espials.*

That is, lawful *spies*. ‘An *espiall* in warres, a scoutwatche, a *beholder*, a viewer.’—*Baret*. See *King Henry VI. Part 1. Act i. Sc. 4*, p. 26. An *espy* was also in use for a *spy*. The two words are only found in the folio.—*Singer*.

³ *Or to take arms against a sea of troubles.*

Whatsoever it be (which hardly at the length can be depainted) that after a *sea of troubles* we injoy in this life, it seemes to me to be apparell, that defends our flesh from the harme of the elements, and feedes our spirit with vaine glory; drinke and meat that nourishes our body: sleepe, which strengthens and restores nature: the joy of the flesh, that glads the hart, and preserves the species: and mony, that obtaines and gives us every thing.—*The Passenger of Benvenuto*, 1612.

⁴ *When we have shuffled off this mortal coil.*

That is, turmoil, bustle. A passage resembling this, occurs in a poem entitled *A Dofull Discours of Two Strangers, a Lady and a Knight*, published by Churchyard, among his *Chippes*, 1575 :—

Yea, *shaking off this sinfull soyle*,—Me thincke in cloudes I see,
Among the perfite chosen lambs,—A place preparte for mee.”—*Steevens*.

⁵ *When he himself might his quietus make.*

This is an Exchequer term. The mention of the law’s delay had introduced the idea of proceedings in the courts of law, which led him to think of the Ex-

chequer. It is the word which denotes that an accomptant is *quit*, and has been used from the original institution of these courts. It refers especially to delay. Many an accomptant in that court has longed for his *quietus*. He might himself make it says the poet with so insignificant an instrument as a bodkin, the meanest kind of pointed weapon. I do not find that he uses *quietus* in any other play, but he has *audit* and other Exchequer terms. In one of the Sonnets (126) we have *quietus*, and, what is remarkable, four other words which may be considered exchequer terms within the compass of two lines.—*Hunter*.

The allusion is to the term *quietus est*, used in settling accounts at exchequer audits. Thus Webster in his *Dutchess of Malfy* :—

You had the trick in audit time to be sick,
Till I had sign'd your *quietus*.

And, more appositely, in Sir Thomas Overbury's character of a *Franklin* :—
'Lastly to *end* him, he cares not when his end comes; he needs not feare his audit, for his *quietus* is in heaven.'—*Singer*.

Will you have patience, and you shall heare me expressely and roundly give him his *quietus est*. To the first, wherein he concludes I am not able to answere him, because I have defer'd it so long; I answere that it followes not, insomuch as many men that are able to pay their debts doo not alwaies discharge and pay them presently at one push; and secondly, or to the second lye, where he sayth and I doo answere him it is nothing since I have been a whole age about it.—*Nash's Have with you to Saffron Walden*, 1596.

⁶ *With a bare bodkin.*

A *bodkin* was the ancient term for a *small dagger*. So, in the Second Part of the *Mirroure for Knighthood*, 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*; and in the *Muses' Looking-Glass*, by *Randolph*, 1638 :—

Apho. A rapier's but a *bodkin*.

Deil. And a *bodkin*

Is a most dang'rous weapon; since I read
Of Julius Cæsar's death, I durst not venture
Into a taylor's shop, for fear of *bodkins*.

Again, in the *Custom of the Country*, by *Beaumont and Fletcher* :

—— Out with your *bodkin*,
Your pocket dagger, your stiletto—.

Again, in *Sapho and Phao*, 1591 : “—— there will be a desperate fray between two, made at all weapons, from the brown bill to the *bodkin*.” Again, in *Chaucer*, as he is quoted at the end of a pamphlet called the *Serpent of Division*, &c. whereunto is annexed the *Tragedy of Gorboduc*, &c. 1591 :—

With *bodkins* was Cæsar Julius
Murdered at Rome of Brutus Crassus.—*Stevens*.

What juglyng was there upon the boordes!
What thurstyng of knyves throughe many a nose!
What bearinge of formes, what holdinge of swordes,
And puttyng of *botkyns* throughe legge and hosc!—*Old Play*.

⁷ *Who would fardels bear.*

“Randle Holme, the Chester Herald,” observes Mr. Fairholt, “in his quaint work on heraldry, has a direct illustration of this passage; in noting the distinction between the pack of the pedlar and the porter—the porter’s pack reacheth over his head, and so answerable below; but the pedlar’s is a small truss, bundle, or *fardel*, not exceeding the middle of his head, as in this figure.”

⁸ *From whose bourn no traveller returns.*

That is, returns to earth as a mortal; for as to the act of returning, Hamlet has had ocular demonstration of that. Douce quotes the following passages from Cranmer’s Bible,—“Afore I goe thither, from *whence I shall not turne againe*, even to the lande of darknesse and shadowe of death; yea into that darke cloudie lande and deadlye shadowe whereas is no order, but terrible feare as in the darknesse.”—“The way that I must goe is at hande, but *whence I shall not turne againe*.”

⁹ *Nymph.*

It has been doubted if the title of *Nymph*, applied to any other than a water-deity, were in use in Shakespeare’s time. It occurs, however, applied to the heroine, in Lodge’s romance of *Rosalynde*, 1590.

¹⁰ *I have heard of your prattlings too.*

This is according to the quarto; the folio, for *prattlings*, has *prattlings*, and for *pace*, has *pace*, which agrees with what follows, *you jig, you amble*. Probably the author wrote both. I think the common reading best.—*Johnson*.

That the reading of the folio is mere nonsense and confusion, Mr. Knight has shewn by his attempt to explain it,—by making the words “you lisp and nickname God’s creatures” refer to “prattlings” in the earliest portion of the speech, while “you jig, you amble,” which precede those words, are made to refer to “pace,” standing later in the speech than “prattlings”! And that the quartos exhibit the right reading, we have a confirmation in the earliest of them all, that of 1603.—*A. Dyce*.

¹¹ *And the disclose.*

This was the technical term. So, in the *Maid of Honour*, by Massinger:—

One aerie with proportion ne’er *discloses*
The eagle and the wren.—*Malone*.

Disclose, (says Randle Holme, in his *Academy of Armory and Blazon*, book ii. ch. ii. p. 238,) is when the young just peeps through the shell. It is also taken for laying, *hatching*, or bringing forth young: as “she *disclosed* three birds.” Again, in the fifth act of the play now before us:—“Ere that her golden couplets are *disclos’d*.”—*Stevens*.

¹² *To split the ears of the groundlings.*

The groundlings were the spectators in the pit, which was sunk below the level of the stage, and seldom had any artificial floor. 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* judgements; they will hiss any thing that mounts above their *grounded* capacities.” Again, in *Lady Alimony*, 1659: “Be your stage-curtains artificially drawn, and so covertly shrowded that the squint-eyed

groundling may not peep in?" In our early play-houses the pit had neither floor nor benches. Hence the term of *groundlings* for those who frequented it. The *groundling*, in its primitive signification, means a fish which always keeps at the bottom of the water.—*Steevens*.

¹³ *Are capable of nothing, &c.*

That is, have a capacity for nothing but dumb shows; *understand* nothing else. So, in Heywood's History of Women, 1624: "I have therein imitated our *historical* and comical poets, that write to the stage; who, lest 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."—*Malone*.

"—inexplicable dumb shows." I believe the meaning is, *shows, without words to explain them*.—*Johnson*. Rather, I believe, shows which are too confusedly conducted to explain themselves. I meet with one of these in Heywood's play of the Four Prentices of London, 1615, 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 express: &c.

Then follow the *dumb shows*, 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 show*.—*Steevens*.

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 George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmersh, the order of these dumb shows 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 shows 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.—*Malone*.

¹⁴ *Whipped for o'er-doing Termagant.*

Termagaunt (says Dr. Percy) is the name given in the old romances to the god of the Sarazens; in which he is constantly linked with *Mahound* or *Mohammed*. Thus, in the legend of Syr Guy, the Soudan swears:—

So helpe me *Mahowne* of might,
And *Termagaunt* my God so bright.

So also, in Hall's first Satire:—

Nor fright the reader with the Pagan vaunt
Of mightie *Mahound*, and greate *Termagaunt*.

Again, in Marston's 7th Satire:—

— let whirlwinds and confusion teare
The center of our state; let giants reare
Hill upon hill; let westerne *Termagant*
Shake heaven's vault, &c.

Termagant is also mentioned by Spenser in his Fairy Queen, and by Chaucer in the Tale of Sir Topas; and by Beaumont and Fletcher, in King or No King, as follows: "This would make a saint swear like a soldier, and a soldier like *Termagant*." Again, in the Picture, by Massinger:—

— a hundred thousand Turks
Assail'd him, every one a *Termagaunt*.—*Stevens*.

And now I am entered into a discourse of this brave abject, or subject, you must understand that this fellow, is a merry, a mad, and a subsidie hangman, to whom our Tyburne tatterdemalian, or our Wapping winde-pipe stretcher, is but a ragganuffin, not worth the hanging: for this *teare-throat Termagant* is a fellow in folio, a commander of such great command, and of such greatnesse to command, that I never saw any that in that respect could countermand him.—*The Workes of Taylor the Water-Poet*, 1630.

¹⁵ *It out-herods Herod.*

The violence of Herod in the old mysteries may be best exemplified by some extracts from the Chester or Coventry plays. One of the latter may truly be said on the present occasion to completely *out-herod* the others. It exhibits the fury of the monarch to so much advantage, that every zealous amateur of theatrical manners must be gratified with the following extracts. His majesty's entrance is announced by a herald in the vilest French jargon that can be conceived. He commences by enjoining silence on the part of the spectators, and ends with sending them all to the devil. "La gran deaboly vos unport." He then makes a speech, which begins in bad Latin, and thus proceeds:—

I am the myghtyst conquerowre that ever walkid on grownd,
For I am evyn he that made bothe hevin and hell,
And of my myghte power holdith up the world rownd;
Magog and Madroke bothe thes did I confownde,
And in this bryght bronde there bonis I brak on sunder,
That all the wyde worlde on those rappis did wonder.
I am the cawse of this grett lyght and thunder;
Yt ys throgh my fure that the soche noyse doth make;
My feyrefull contenance the cloudis so doth incumber,
That oftymes for drede therof the verre yerth doth quake.
Loke when I with males this bryght brond doth shake,
All the whole world from the north to the sowthe,
I ma them dystroie with won worde of my mouthe.
To recownt unto you myn incwmerabull substance,
Thatt were to moche for any teng to tell;
For all the whole orent ys under myn obbeydeance,
And prince am I of purgatorre and chef capten of hell;
And thase tyrances trayturs be foree ma I compell

Myne enemys to vanquese, and evyn to duste them dryve,
 And with a twynke of myn iec not won to be left alyve.
 Behald my contenance and my colour,
 Bryghter than the sun in the meddis of the dey.
 Where can you have a more grettur sueeur
 Then to behold my person that ys so gaye ?
 My faweun and my fassion with my gorgis araye ?
 He that had the grace allwey theron to thynke,
 Lyve the myght allwey withowt othur meyte or drynke ;
 And thys my tryomfande fame most hylist doth abownde
 Throgh owt this world in all reygeons abroad,
 Reysemelyng the favour of that most myght Mahownd.
 From Jubytor be desent and cosyn to the grett God,
 And namyd the most reydowndid kyng Eyrodde,
 Wyeche that all pryncis hath undr subjeccion,
 And all their whole powar undur my proteccion ;
 And therefore my hareode, here called Caleas,
 Warne thow evvyry porte that noo schyppis aryve ;
 Nor also aloond stranger throgh my realme pas,
 But the for there truage do pay markis fyve.
 Now spedc the forthe hastele,
 For the that wyll the contraire,
 Upon a galowse hangid schal be,
 And be Mahownde of me they gett noo grace.

When he hears of the flight of the messengers, he exclaims,—

I stampe, I stare, I loke all abowt,
 Myght I them take I schuld them bren at a glede,
 I ren, I rawe, and now I am wode,
 A that these velen trayturs hath mard this my mode
 The schal be hangid yf I ma cum them to.

The stage direction is, “Here *Erode* ragis in the pagond and in the strete also.” He consults with his knights on putting the children to death ; and on their dissuading him from it as likely to excite an insurrection, he says,—“A rysyng, owt, owt, owt.”—“There *Erode* ragis ageyne and then seyth thus :—

Out velen wrychis har apon you I cry,
 My wyll utturly loke that yt be wrought,
 Or apon a gallowse bothe you schall dye
 Be Mahownde most myghtyst that me dere hath boght.”

At length the knights consent to slay the children, and Herod says,—“And then wyll I for fayne trypp lyke a doo.” The bodies of the children are brought to him in carts ; but he is told that all his deeds are come to nothing, as the child whom he particularly sought after had escaped into Egypt. He once more falls into a violent passion, orders his palfrey to be saddled, and hurries away in pursuit of the infant. Here the piece ends. It was performed by the taylors and shearmen in the year 1534 ; but the composition is of much greater antiquity.—*Douce*.

¹⁶ *Suit the action to the word, &c.*

To come to rhetoricke : it not onely emboldens a scholler to speake, but instructs him to speake well, and with judgement to observe his commas, colons, and full poynts ; his parentheses, his breathing spaces, and distinctions ; to keepe a decorum in his countenance, neither to frowne when he should smile, nor to

make unseemly and disguised faces in the delivery of his words; not to stare with his eies, draw awry his mouth, confound his voice in the hollow of his throat, or teare his words hastily betwixt his teeth; neither to buffet his deske like a mad man, nor stande in his place like a livelesse image, demurely plodding, and without any smooth and formal motion. It instructs him to fit his phrases to his action, and his action to his phrase, and his pronuntiation to them both.—*Heywood's Apology for Actors*, 1612.

¹⁷ *Not to speak it profanely.*

That is, “entering his protest that he did not mean to speak profanely by saying, that there could be any such thing as a journeyman Creator,” he says—“the voice and carriage of these execrable mimics is so unnatural, so vile a copy of their original; that, not to speak it profanely, I have thought in what they exhibited, from the sample they gave (so far as they were specimens of their workmanship,) that Nature’s journeymen had been making men; inasmuch as such as these could not have been the handywork of God.” But *profane* was certainly at that time very generally used for any thing gross, licentious, or indelicate. See Braban. to Iago, *Othel.* I. 1. Malone observes, that, in *Lear*, Kent speaks of Nature’s *trade* of making man, II. 2. Kent. & Cornw.: and for the then notion that she kept a workshop to form mankind, cites Lyly’s *Womane in the Moone*, 1597: “They draw the curtains from before that workshop, where stands an image clad, and some unclad.”—*Caldecott*.

¹⁸ *In the fool that uses it.*

After these words there is a very curious addition in ed. 1603, which I am inclined to think ought to be in the text,—“And then you have some again that keep one suit of jests, as a man is known by one suit of apparel; and gentlemen quote his jests down in their tables before they come to the play; as thus: *Cannot you stay till I eat my porridge?* and *You owe me a quarter’s wages;* and *My coat wants a cullison;* and *Your beer is sour;* and blabbering with his lips; and thus keeping in his cinque-pace of jests, when, God knows, the warm clown cannot make a jest unless by chance as the blind man catcheth a hare.”

¹⁹ *And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee.*

That is, “kneel, bend the projection of the knee, where *thriving* or emolument may follow sycophancy.” *Pregnant* is bowed, swelled out, presenting themselves, as the form of pregnant animals—

Hath the *pregnant* instruments of wrath,
Prest for this blow. *Pericl.* IV. Chor.

See II. 2. Polon. & *Tw.* N. 2. Viola. And “crouching marrow.” *Tim.* V. 5. Alcib.—*Caldecott*.

²⁰ *I will wear him in my heart’s core.*

Oh, I would weare her in my heart’s heart-gore,
And place her on the continent of starres.

Scoloker’s Daiphantus, or the Passions of Love, 1604.

²¹ *As Vulcan’s stithy.*

It is written *stithy* in the quartos. The folio of 1632 reads *stith*. The words *stithy*, *stithe*, and *stith*, were the same, and used indifferently to express either the iron to work upon, or the *locus ignis*, the forge, or the workshop; though in later times *stith* has been confined to the sense of “anvil,” and *stithy* to that of “the shop.” Baret, in his *Alv.* fo. 1580, writes *stithie*, and refers to anvile, which he renders “Incus, *ακμων*, without bellows, anvils, or *stithées*, sans enclumes et soufflets.” In Arth. Golding’s *Jul. Solinus*, 4to. 1587, ch. 64,

stythes is his translation of *incudibus*: and such must be the sense of the verb in our author, *Tr. & Cr.* IV. 5.—“Now, by the *forge* that *stithied* Mars’s helm.” Hector. The word itself was written any way. Huloet has *stilh*. Junius, Skinner, Holyoke, Littleton, have *stithy*. The Promptuar. parvulor. “*Stythe*, *incus*.” The Ortus Vocabulor. “*Incus*, an anvelde or *stedy*,” 1514. “*Stad*, *smidstad*, *incus*. Angl. *stiddy*, *stithie*.” *Thre’s Gloss*. “*Stad* (from *sta*, stare) locus, unde focus: quasi diceret locum ignis.” *Ib.*—*Caldecott*.

²² *I was killed i’ the Capitol.*

This, it is well known, was not the case; for Cæsar, we are expressly told by Plutarch, was killed in *Pompey’s portico*. But our poet followed the received opinion, and probably the representation of his own time, in a play on the subject of Cæsar’s death, previous to which he wrote. The notion that Julius Cæsar was killed in the Capitol is as old as the time of Chaucer:—

This Julius to the *capitolie* wente
Upon a day as he was wont to gon,
And in the *capitolie* anon him hente
This false Brutus, and his other soon,
And sticked him with bodekins anon
With many a wound, &c. *The Monkes Tale.*—*Malone*.

²³ *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.”—*Stevens*.

²⁴ *Let the devil wear black, &c.*

Shakespeare’s intention was most likely to make Hamlet here speak incoherently. If this be not the case, some sort of meaning may be elicited in this way,—nay, then let the devil wear black, for even I will have a suit of mourning; if I wear one, the devil himself may. “The colour sables or blacke,” Cotgrave. So, in Massinger,—

A cunning grief,
That’s only faced with sables for a shew,
But gaudy hearts.

²⁵ *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*

In the celebration of May-day, besides the sports now used of hanging a pole with garlands, and dancing round it, formerly a boy was dressed up representing Maid Marian; another like a friar; and another rode on a *hobby-horse*, with bells jingling, and painted streamers. After the reformation took place, and precisians multiplied, these latter rites were looked upon to savour of paganism; and then Maid Marian, the friar, and the poor *hobby-horse*, were turned out of the games. Some who were not so wisely precise, but regretted the disuse of the *hobby-horse*, no doubt, satirized this suspicion of idolatry, and archly wrote the epitaph above alluded to. Now Moth, hearing Armado groan ridiculously, and cry out *But oh! but oh!*—humorously pieces out his exclamation with the sequel of this epitaph.—*Theobald*.

But looke you, who here comes: John Hunt, the hobby-horse, wanting but three of an hundred; ’twere time for him to forget himselfe, and sing but, O, nothing but, O, the hobbie-horse is forgotten!—*Old Meg of Herefordshire for a Mayd Marian*, 1609.

²⁶ *The dumb show.*

Hamlet has previously described the bad player as “capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows.” Mute exhibitions, during the time of Shakspeare, and before and after, were often introduced to exhibit such circumstances as the limits of a play would not admit to be represented. In some plays the order of these dumb shows is minutely described; and they generally represent scenes which are not offered to the understanding in the dialogue. We presume, however, that Shakspeare, in the instance before us, had some stage authority for making the dumb show represent the same action that is indicated in the dialogue. His dramatic object here is evident: he wanted *completely* to catch the conscience of the King; and thus, before the actors come to the murder of Gonzago, the King is alarmed, and asks, “Have you heard the argument? is there no offence in it?”—*Knight*.

I cannot say that I am satisfied with this explanation, although it is certainly ingenious. If the king had seen the dumb show, he must have known that there was offence in it. Is it allowable to direct that the King and Queen are whispering confidentially to each other during the dumb show, and so escape a sight of it?

²⁷ *This is 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 stuff into their ears and nostrills.” See also, Florio’s Italian Dictionary, 1598, in v. *Acciapinare*: “To *miche*, to *shrug* or *sneak in some corner*.” Where our poet met with the word *mallecho*, which in Minsheu’s Spanish Dictionary, 1617, is defined *malefactum*, I am unable to ascertain. In the folio, the word is spelt *malicho*. *Mallico* (in the quarto) is printed in a distinct character, as a proper name.—*Henley*.

Then will we not come *miching* thus by night,
But charge the towne, and winne it by day-light.

The Famous Historie of Captaine Stukeley, 1605.

²⁸ *Or the posy of a ring.*

These were necessarily brief, e. g., I cannot show, the love I. O.—God above, increase our love.—God’s blessing be, with thee and me.—Let love abide, till death divide. These posies are from existing specimens of rings of the Shaksperian period.

Fie, Father, how simply and vulgarly you talk! In troth, I’m asham’d of you! Had the Grand Cyrus begun with Mandana a’ this manner, or else Aruns with Celia, w’ad had a fine romanee no doubt of it *no longer then the posie of a wedding ring*.—*Flecknoe’s Damoselles a la Mode, 1667.*

²⁹ *Phæbus’ cart.*

Cart, a car, not necessarily a burlesque form of the word.—“A *cart* or a charret. *Currus. Plaustrum.*” Whittintoni *Lucubrationes*, 4to. 1527. Steevens cites Ch. *Knight’s Tale*, Tyrwhitt, v. 2024.—

The blissful Phœbus bricht,
The lamp of joy, the heavens gemme of licht,
The golden *eairt*, and the ethereal King.

K. James's Reules and Cautellis of Scottis Poesie, 1584.—*Caldecott*.

This speech of the Player King appears to me as a burlesque of the following passage in the Comicall Historie of Alphonsus, by R. G. 1599:—

Thrise ten times Phœbus with his golden beames
Hath compassed the circle of the skie,
Thrise ten times Ceres hath her workemen hir'd,
And fild her barnes with frutefull crops of corne,
Since first in priesthood I did lead my life.—*Todd*.

³⁰ *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 Wynken de Worde: "We have robbed and killed nonnes, holy *aunkers*, preestes, clerkes," &c. Again: "the foxe will be an *aunker*, for he begynneth to preche." Again, 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 yeres pining in an anchor's cheyre,
To win some parched shreds of minivere.—*Steevens*.

The old copies read—*And anchor's cheer*. The correction was made by Theobald.—*Malone*.

³¹ *The mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically.*

Hamlet calls the play the *Mouse-trap*, with reference to the design with which it was performed. It was to *catch* the conscience of the King. *Tropically* is *trapiçally* in the earliest quarto, an idle, unmeaning word, except that we may see a faint shade of meaning in the play being a *figurative* representation of an actual deed, and this, combined with the opportunity of playing on the word *trap*, is the true reason that we meet with this word thus oddly introduced. Gonzago is here a *duke*, but everywhere else he is a *king*. How is this? The original quarto explains it. The character was a *duke* throughout as the play was originally written, and when *king* was to be substituted for *duke* this passage remained by some accident uncorrected. Shakespeare has been censured for giving the name Baptista to a woman. I have seen a few instances in which the name was borne by women in England. Shakespeare was not solicitous about it. It had a feminine termination: that was enough. He has given it to a man in the Taming of the Shrew.—*Douce*.

³² *If the rest of my fortunes 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*, 1614: "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 Dansiker, 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 call'd A Christian turn'd Turk.—*Steevens*.

But if the god of warre abroad should range,
And catch these men that long to see a change,
You then should see them all within one day,
For very feare of death to *turne Turke away*.

King's Halfe-Pennyworth of Wit, 1613.

They have a law in Turkey that, if a Christian do strike a Turk, he must either *turn Turk*, or lose his right arm, which law did cause us to endure many stripes with patience.—*Shirley's Travels in Persia*, MS.

³³ *With two Provincial roses on my razed shoes.*

Race, *rase*, and *raze*, are the same word, as *raze* nearly is: and signify, as may be seen in *Cotgrave* and *Minsheu*, to streak or stripe, to dash, or obliterate. It means here *slashed*, i. e. with cuts and openings, says *Steevens*, who quotes *Stubbs's Anatomy of Abuses*, 1595. “*Razed*, carved, cut, and stitched.” He adds, that *Bulwer*, in his *Artificial Changeling*, speaks of gallants who pink and *raze* their satten, damask, and Duretto skins. The word, though differently spelt, is used in nearly the same signification in *Markham's Country farm*, p. 585: “—baking all (i. e. wafer cakes) together between two irons, having within them many *raced* and checkered draughts after the manner of small squares.”—*Caldecott*.

Concerning shoe roses either of silke or what stuffe soever, they were not then (in the reign of queen Elizabeth) used nor known; nor was there any garters above the price of five shillings a payre altho at this day (James I) men of meane rank weare garters and shoe roses of more than five pounds price.—*Stowe*, ed. 1631.

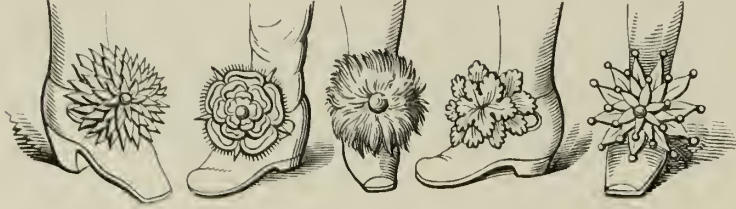
Oh, the fine excuses of wit, or rather folly, late businesse over night makes you keepe your beds in the morning, when indeed it is for lacke of meate to dinner, and perhaps no great banquet at supper, when a crust and an orange, a sallad and a cup of sack makes a feast for a bravo; then, after all, a strech, and a yaune, and a pipe of tobacco, weare bootes for want of shooes, or else that the garters and the *roses* are at pawne.—*Breton's Courtier and Countryman*, 1618.

Provincial and *provincial*, are the same words. *Warton* thinks roses of *Provence*, formerly much cultivated, are here meant; but *Douce* says, “there is no evidence to shew that *Provence* was ever remarkable for its roses; but it is well known, that *Provins*, in *La Basse Brie*, about forty miles from Paris, was very celebrated for their growth: of which the best cataplasms are said to have been made. According to tradition, it was imported from Syria. It is probably this kind, which, in our old herbals, is called the Great Holland or *Province* rose.” *Illustrat.* II. 247. *Johnson* observes, 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:—

Gil-de-Roy was a bonny boy,
Had roses tull his shoon.—*Caldecott*.

I did never beleeve the Popes *transubstantiation*, but now I see charitie is transubstantiated into brave apparrell, when we shall see him that in a hat-band, a scarfe, a payre of garters, and in *roses for his shoe-strings*, will bestow more money, then would have bought his great grandfather a whole suite of apparrell to have served him for Sun-dayes.—*Rich's Honestie of this Age*, proving that the

World was never honest till now, 1611. The annexed specimens of shoe-roses are selected by Mr. Fairholt from portraits of the time of Elizabeth and James I.



³⁴ *In a cry of players.*

It was usual to call a *pack* of hounds a *cry*; from the French *meute de chiens*: it is here humorously applied to a *troop* or *company* of players. It is used again in *Coriolanus*: Menenius says to the citizens, 'You have made good work, you and your *cry*.' In the very curious catalogue of the Companies of Bestys, given in the *Boke of St. Albans*, many equally singular terms may be found, which seem to have exercised the wit and ingenuity of our ancestors; as a *thraue* of throsers, a *scull* or *shoal* of monks, &c.—*Singer*.

³⁵ *Half a share.*

The actors in our author'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.

In a poem entitled *I Would and I Would Not*, by B. N., 1614, the writer makes a player utter a wish to possess *five shares* in every play; but I do not believe that any performer derived so great an emolument from the stage, unless he were also a proprietor. The speaker seems to wish for excellence that was never yet attained, (to be able to act every part that was ever written,) that he might gain an emolument *superior* to any then acquired by the most popular and successful actor:—

I would I were a player, and could act
 As many partes as came upon a stage,
 And in my braine could make a full compact
 Of all that passeth betwixt youth and age;
 That I might have *five shares* in every play,
 And let them laugh that bear the bell away.—*Malone*.

³⁶ *A very, very,—pajock.*

A *pajock*, or peacock, metaphorically for a person who struts about with an unmerited display of ornamental dress or dignity, Hamlet using a mild term, whereas Horatio suggests that the obvious rhyme of *ass* would have been more appropriate. Mr. Dyce observes that the lower classes in the north of Scotland call the peacock the *peajock*, and indeed there can be little doubt but that the word in the text is a similarly corrupted form.

Such perfumed *peacocks* be worthles men dignified, though sometimes the visible dignity of persons doth attract sluggish or obstinate beholders with unanimity or terror.—*Stephens' Essayes and Characters*, 1615.

³⁷ *Have you any further trade with is?*

Behold this fletyng world how al things fade
 Howe evry thyng doth passe and weare awaye;

Eche state of lyfe by comon course and *trade*
 Abydes no tyme, but hath a passyng daye.
An Epytaphe of the Death of N. Grimaold.

³⁸ *By these pickers and stealers.*

That is, by these hands: the phrase is taken from our church catechism, where the catechumen, in his duty to his neighbour, is taught to keep his hands from *picking and stealing*.—*Whalley*.

“*Pyker* or lytell thefe.” *Promptuar. parvulor.* “Furtificus. a *picker* or privie stealer.” *Biblioth. Eliote*, fo. 1559. “A great *pyker* makes a profer to a stronge thefe. Furax gradum facit ad insignem latronem,” *Vulgaria Hormanni*. 4to, 1530, signat. iiii. 3, b. “After whiche sorte of bourdyng our feloe myndyng to signifie that Cicero was a bryber and a previe theef, in stede of Tullius called hym Tollius (for tollere is to take awaye) as thecves and *pickers* dooe take awaye by embesleyng.” Nic. Udall’s *Erasmus’s Apopthegm.* 12mo. 1542, fo. 323. “We say that a theft or *pickerie* is done with a good grace, when the cautels and subtilities of thieves and thieving is well observed.” G. North’s *Philbert’s Philosopher of the Court*, 18mo. 1575, p. 95. “Every extortioner, every *picker*, every robber.” Barnabe Rich’s *Honestie of this Age*, 4to. 1616, p. 4. “We call small theft *pickery*.” Mackenzie’s *Institut. of the law of Scotland*, 8vo. 1694, p. 157.—*Caldecott*.

³⁹ *While the grass grows.*

The remainder of this old proverb is preserved in Whetstone’s *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578:—“*Whylst grass doth growe*, oft sterves the seely steede.” Again, in the *Paradise of Daintie Devises*, 1578:—

To whom of old this proverbe well it serves,
While grass doth growe, the silly horse he starves.

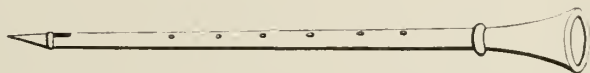
Hamlet means to intimate, that whilst he is waiting for the succession to the throne of Denmark, he may himself be taken off by death.—*Malone*.

⁴⁰ *Enter the Players, with Recorders.*

A recorder was a kind of flageolet. The following story is very common in old jest books, and told of various persons.

A merrie recorder of London mistaking the name of one Pepper, call’d him Piper: whereunto the partie excepting, and saying, Sir, you mistake, my name is Pepper, not Piper; hee answered, Why, what difference is there, I pray thee, between Piper in Latin and Pepper in English? is it not all one? No, Sir, reply’d the other, there is even as much difference betweene them as is between a Pipe and a *Recorder*.

“One payre virginalls,
 vj. cushions, two vialls, one
 raser, one citterne, one *re-*
recorder and flute and musick
 bookes,” Inventory, 1625,
 Stratford-on-Avon MSS.



⁴¹ *To withdraw with you.*

The two royal emissaries at first only request that the prince would “vouchsafe them a word;” and they then acquaint him with the king’s rage, and the queen, his mother’s, command to visit her. They then, *by a waving of the hand, or some such signal*, as the exclamation of Hamlet denotes, intimate, that he should remove to some more retired quarter. Although aware that the above, their

only proper business, could not require any private communication, he at first, in gentle expostulation, reproaches them; but presently recollecting their insidious aims, and feeling at the same time, as an indignity, the freedom taken in thus beckoning him to withdraw, he in a moment assumes a different tone; and, with the most galling sneer and interrogatory, heaps upon them the utmost contempt and contumely.—*Caldecott*.

⁴² *To recover the wind of me.*

This is a term which has been left unexplained. It is borrowed from hunting, as the context shows; and means, to take advantage of the animal pursued, by getting to the windward of it, that it may not scent its pursuers. ‘Observe how the wind is, that you may set the net so as the hare and wind may come together; if the wind be sideways it may do well enough, but never if it blow over the net into the hare’s face, for he will scent both it and you at a distance.’—*Gentleman’s Recreation*.—*Singer*.

⁴³ *Though you can fret me.*

A *fret* is the stop or key of a musical instrument, and consequently here is a play on words, and a double meaning. Hamlet says, though you can vex me, you cannot impose on me; though you can stop the instrument, you cannot play on it.—*Douce*.

Hee’le tell you of well fretting of a lute,
Even til you fret; and of the harmonie.

Skialetheia, or a Shadowe of Truth, 1598.

⁴⁴ *Behind the arras I’ll convey myself.*

Arras was a superior kind of tapestry, so named from Arras, the capital of Artois in the French Netherlands, which was celebrated for its manufacture. In the rooms of old houses hung with arras, there were generally large spaces between the hangings and the walls, and these were frequently made hiding places in the old plays.

⁴⁵ *I’ll silence me e’en here.*

That is, I’ll be silent. Hammer alters *silence* to *sconce*, an alteration which, says Mr. Dyce, “cannot be called an improbable one,” the corresponding words in ed. 1603 being, “He shrowde myselfe behinde the arras.”

⁴⁶ *Hamlet makes a pass through the arras.*

Sir John Harington, in a letter dated in October, 1601, gives the following singular and interesting account of the demeanour of Queen Elizabeth at that period,—“I humbly thank you for that venison I did not eat, but my wife did it much commendation. For six weeks I left my oxen and sheep, and venturd to Court, where I find many lean kinded beastes and some not unhorned. Much was my comfort in being well received, notwithstanding it is an ill hour for seeing the Queen. The madeaps are all in riot, and much evil threatend. In good soothe I feard her Majestie more than the rebel Tyrone, and wishd I had never received my Lord of Essex’s honour of knighthood. She is quite disfavoured, and unattird, and these troubles waste her muehe. She disregardeth every costlie cover that comethe to her table, and taketh little but manchet and sueory potage. Every new message from the city doth disturb her; and she frowns on all the Ladies. I had a sharp message from her brought by my Lord Buehurst, namely thus, “Go tell that witty fellow, my godson, to get home; it is no season now to foole it here.” I liked this as little as she dothe my knighthood, so took to my bootes and returnd to the plow in bad weather. I must not say much even by

this trustie and sure messenger, but the many evil plots and designs hath overcome all her Highness sweet temper. She walks much in her privy chamber, and stamps with her feet at ill news, *and thrusts her rusty sword at times into the arras in great rage.* My Lord Buchurst is much with her, and few else since the city business; but the dangers are over, and yet she always keeps a sword by her table."

⁴⁷ *And thunders in the index.*

Edwards observes, that the *indexes* of many old books were at that time inserted at the beginning, instead of the end, as is now the custom. This observation I have often seen confirmed. So, in Othello, Act II. Sc. VII.: "— an *index* and obscure *prologue* to the history of lust and foul thoughts."—*Steevens.*

Bullokar, in his *Expositor*, Svo. 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.*

⁴⁸ *Look here, upon this picture, and on this.*

Malone tells us, that in a print prefixed to Rowe's edit. of 1709, the two royal portraits are exhibited as half lengths, hanging in the queen's closet. There can be little doubt that such was the furniture of the stage in our author's day, and that the respective portraits were pointed out by the finger in representation: and such, probably, continued to be the course down to the death of Betterton. In modern practice miniatures are produced from the neck and pocket. The "pictures in little" of that age, of which, in common with his contemporaries, our author speaks in II. 2. (Hamlet to Rosenc.) might have been as commodiously used for this purpose as modern miniatures; but by this process the audience are not permitted to judge of what they hear, to make any estimate of the comparative defects and excellencies even of the features: and as to the "station" or imposing attitude, "the combination and the form," it is impossible, in so confined a space, that these could be presented to each other; that of these, even the parties themselves should be able to form any adequate idea. Completely to do away another objection, viz. the improbability that Hamlet should have about him his uncle's picture, a Bath actor once suggested the snatching of it, while earnest in the discussion, from his mother's neck.—*Caldecott.*

⁴⁹ *A station like the herald Mercury.*

To show that "station" means here *the act of standing* (or *manner of standing, attitude*), Theobald and Steevens quote our author's Antony and Cleopatra, act iii. sc. 3.—Other writers have employed the word in the same sense: so Fletcher:—

What a strange scene of sorrow is express'd
In different postures, in their looks and *station!*
A common painter, eyeing these, to help
His dull invention, might draw to the life, &c.—*A. Dyce.*

⁵⁰ *And batten on this moor.*

Batten, to feed or fatten. "Thus they batten here, but the divell will gnaw their bones for it," Armin's Nest of Ninnies, 1608.

⁵¹ *Hoodman-blind.*

Blind-man's buff. See Florio, pp. 26, 301, 480; Nomenclator, p. 298;
XIV. 36

Cotgrave, in v. *Capifou*, *Cline-mucette*, *Sarate*; Cooper, 1559, in v. *Mya*. It



is called *Hob man blind* in the two *Angrie Women of Abington*, p. 113, and *Hoodwink* by Drayton. "The hoodwinke play, or hoodmanblinde, in some plaees called the blindmanbuff," Baret's *Alvearie*, 1580, H. 597. "Hoodman-blind, or blind-man-buff," *Porta Linguarum*, 1640. The annexed engraving of two persons engaged in this pastime is from an illuminated manuscript of the fourteenth century.

⁵² *In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed.*

Enseamed, greasy, rank, gross. It is a term borrowed from falconry. It is well known that the *seam* of any animal was the fat or tallow; and a hawk was said to be *enseamed* when she was too fat or gross for flight. By some confusion of terms, however, 'to *enseam* a hawk' was used for 'to purge her of glut and grease;' by analogy it should have been *unseam*. Beaumont and Fletcher, in the *False One*, use *inseamed* in the same manner: 'His lechery *inseamed* upon him.' It should be remarked, that the quarto of 1603 reads *incestuous*; as does that of 1611.—*Singer*.

⁵³ *A vice of kings.*

This character, which Douce says (*Illustrat.* II. 251) "belonged to the old moralities," is said, by Mr. Warton, as introduced here, to mean "a fantastie and factitious image of majesty, a mere puppet of royalty:" as in the *Wise Vieillard* "Idolles and Statues, artificially moved by *vices* and gynnes" 4to. 1631. sig. H. And see 2 *H. IV.* III. 2. Falst. and *Tw. N.* IV. 2. Clown, and *Wint. T.* I. 2. Cam.—"An instrument to *vice* you to't." Although there has been much controversy, and a great deal of confusion, introduced upon this subject, it is perfectly clear that the Virtues and Vices were constantly personified in our Mysteries and Moralities; and equally so, that when this species of scenic representation gave place to a better order of things, a *Vice* was retained upon the stage: not indeed as one of the Characters of the piece, not as one of the *Personæ Dramatis*, but between the scenes in interludes to make merriment and engage attention, while the actors (the stage being yet ill regulated) were preparing the succeeding parts of the representation. That this was so in comedies and tragedies, and therefore in theatrical representations generally, is shewn in Puttenham's *Arte of Poesie*, p. 21. (See 1 *H. IV.* III. 2. Falst.) To this Interlude the Faree has succeeded; but scenes such as those, in which the Vice so comically figured, however out of place and character in tragedy, as well as unnecessary to the actor's convenience, after the stage became better managed, were yet so familiar and acceptable to the audience, that to this cause, to the powerful operation of this principle, we must ascribe the introduction of the Gravediggers in this play.—*Caldecott*.

⁵⁴ *Laps'd in time and passion.*

Johnson explains this—'That having suffered *time* to *slip* and *passion* to *cool*, let's go by,' &c. This explanation is confirmed by the quarto of 1603:—

Do you not come your tardy son to elide,
That I thus long have let revenge slip by.—*Singer*.

⁵⁵ *Like life in excrements.*

Hair and feathers were formerly termed excrements. "And albeit hayre

were of itself the most abject excrement that were, yet should Poppæas' hayre be reputed honourable," Chapman's Justification of a Strange action of Nero, 1629.

⁵⁶ *Would make them capable.*

"Their passions then so swelling in them, they would have made *auditors of stones*, rather than." *Arcadia*, lib. v.—*Steevens*.

Capable is intelligent, apt to conceive. "The woman to whom you had given understanding to be *capable* of the properness of his speech." Lord's *Discourse of the Banians*, 4to. 1630, p. 9. See *L. L. L.* IV. 2. Holof.—*Caldecott*.

⁵⁷ *That monster, custom, &c.*

That is, "that monster, custom, who devours all sense, all just and correct feeling [being also] the evil genius of [our] propensities or habits, is, nevertheless, in this particular, a good angel." Boswell thinks it means "a devil in his usual habits." And it has been suggested, that if a comma were placed after *habits*, the sense would be—"A monster or devil, who makes mankind insensible to the quality of actions, which are habitual." Though this passage is much in our author's manner, the folios do not seem to us to have omitted any thing that could better have been spared.—*Caldecott*.

⁵⁸ *Call you, his mouse.*

A common term of endearment. Alleyn, the actor, used to address his wife,—"my good sweete mouse."

⁵⁹ *From a paddock, from a bat, a gib.*

A paddock, that is, a toad. In the provinces the term is also applied to a frog. "In Kent we say to a child, your hands are as cold as a paddock," MS. Lansd. 1033. To bring haddock to paddock, i. e. to outrun one's expenses. It is used as a term of contempt in the following passage:—

Boys now blaberyn bostynge of a baron bad,
In Bedlem is born be bestys, suche bost is blowe ;
I xal prune that *paddok* and prevyn hym as a pad,
Scheldys and sperys shalle I there sowe. *Coventry Mysteries*, p. 164.

A gib was a common name for a cat. Chaucer, in the Romaunt of the Rose, speaks of "gibbe our cat."

⁶⁰ *To try conclusions.*

To *try conclusions* is to *try experiments*. So, in Heywood's Golden Age, 1611:—

—— since favour
Cannot attain thy love, I'll *try conclusions*.

Again, in the Lancashire Witches, 1634:—

Nay then I'll *try conclusions* :
Mare, mare, see thou be,
And where I point thee, carry me.—*Steevens*.

So quarto R. Quarto H. and folio read—*confusions*.—*Malone*.

⁶¹ *Hoist with his own petar.*

Hoist, for *hoised* ; as *past*, for *passed*. In Fletcher's Fair Maid of the Inn, we have a similar image :

—— 'Twas he
Gave heat unto the injury, which returned
Like a *petar* ill-lighted into th' bosom
Of him gave fire to't.—*Boswell*.

⁶² *I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.*

A line somewhat similar occurs in King Henry VI. P. III. :—"I'll throw thy body in another room——." The word *guts* was not anciently so offensive to delicacy as it is at present; but was used by Lyly (who made the *first* attempt to polish our language) in his serious compositions. So, in his *Mydas*, 1592: "Could not the treasure of Phrygia, not 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*. Stanyhurst often has it in his translation of Virgil, 1582:—*Pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit exta.* "She weenes her fortune by *guts* hoate smoakyc to conster." Again, in Chapman's version of the sixth Iliad:—

—— in whose *guts* the king of men imprest
His ashen lance.—*Steevens.*

The term *guts* is one of those words which the silly caprice of fashion has invested with an imaginary coarseness. I have seen a letter written about a century ago in which a lady of rank, addressing a gentleman, speaks of her *guts* with the same nonchalance with which we should now write *stomach*.

Act the Fourth.

SCENE I.—*The Same.*

Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves :
You must translate ; 'tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son ?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.—

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

Ah, my good lord, 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 his 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 haunt,¹

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 ore
 Among a mineral of metals base,²
 Shows 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 ;
 And let them know, both what we mean to do,
 And what's untimely done : so, haply, slander,—
 Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
 As level as the cannon to his blank,
 Transports his poison'd shot,—may miss our name,
 And hit the woundless air.—O, come away !
 My soul is full of discord, and dismay.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the Same.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. —— Safely stowed.—[*Ros. &c. within.* Hamlet !
 lord Hamlet !]—But soft !—what noise ? who calls on Hamlet ?
 O ! here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body ?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis ; that we may take it thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what ?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own.
Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what replication should
be made by the son of a king ?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord ?

Ham. Ay, sir ; that soaks up the king's countenance, his
rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best
service in the end : he keeps them, like an ape doth nuts, in
the corner of his jaw, first mouthed, to be last swallowed : when
he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and,
sponge, you shall be dry again.³

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it : a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish
ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go
with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king,⁴ but the king is not with
the body. The king is a thing—

Guil. A thing, my lord !

Ham. Of nothing : bring me to him. Hide fox, and all
after.⁵ [*Exeunt.*

SCENE 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, th' 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 GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper! Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table: that's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress⁶ 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 quickness : therefore, prepare thyself.
 The bark is ready, and the wind at help,⁷
 Th' 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 Eng-
 land !—Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother : father and mother is man and wife, man
 and wife is one flesh ; and so, my mother. Come, for England.

[*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot ; tempt him with speed aboard :
 Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night.
 Away, for every thing is seal'd and done,
 That else leans on th' 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 process, which imports at full,
 By letters conjuring to that effect,
 The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England ;
 For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
 And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,
 Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

[*Exit.*

SCENE 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
 Claims 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 ;^s
 And let him know so.

Cap. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go softly on. [Exeunt FORTINBRAS and FOREES.]

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, &c.

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these ?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purpos'd, sir,

I pray you ?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who

Commands them, sir ?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
 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 th' imposthume of much wealth and peace,
 That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
 Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.

Cap. God be wi'you, sir. [Exit Captain.]

Ros. Will't please you go, my lord ?

Ham. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

How all occasions do inform against me,
 And spur my dull revenge ! What is a man,
 If his chief good, and market of his time,
 Be but to sleep, and feed ? a beast, no more.
 Sure, he, that made us with such large discourse,
 Looking before and after, gave us not

That capability and godlike reason,
 To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
 Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
 Of thinking too precisely on th' event,—
 A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,
 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 :
 Witness 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 argument,
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I, then,
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
 Excitements of my reason, and my blood,
 And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
 That for a fantasy, and trick of fame,
 Go to their graves like beds ; fight for a plot
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause ;
 Which is not tomb enough, and continent,
 To hide the slain?—O ! from this time forth,
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth !

[*Exit.*]SCENE V.—Elsinore. *A Room in the Castle.**Enter Queen, HORATIO, and a Gentleman.**Queen.* I will not speak with her.*Gent.* She is importunate ; indeed, distract :
Her mood will needs be pitied.*Queen.* What would she have ?*Gent.* She speaks much of her father ; says, she hears,

There's tricks i' the world ; and hems, and beats her heart ;
 Spurns enviously at straws ; speaks things in doubt,
 That carry but half sense : her speech is nothing,
 Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
 The hearers to collection ; they aim at it,
 And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts ;
 Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
 Indeed would make one think, there might be thought,
 Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Hor. 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may strew
 Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Queen. Let her come in. [*Exit* HORATIO.]
 To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
 Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss :
 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* [Singing.]
From another one ?
By his cockle hat and staff,⁹
And his sandal shoon.¹⁰

Queen. Alas, sweet lady ! what imports this song ?

Oph. Say you ? nay, pray you, mark.

He is dead and gone, lady, [Singing.]
He is dead and gone ;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

O, ho !

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia,—

Oph. Pray you, mark.

White his shroud as the mountain snow, [Singing.]

Enter King.

Queen. Alas ! look here, my lord.

Oph. Larded with sweet flowers ;
Which bewept to the grave did go,
With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady ?

Oph. Well, God'ild you ! They say, the owl was a baker's daughter.¹¹ Lord ! we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table !

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this ; but when they ask you what it means, say you this :

*To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,*¹²
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine :
Then, up he rose, and don'd his clothes,
*And dupp'd the chamber door ;*¹³
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

King. Pretty Ophelia !

Oph. Indeed, la ! without an oath, I'll make an end on't :

*By Gis, and by Saint Charity,*¹⁴
Alack, and fie for shame !
Young men will do't, if they come to't,
By cock, they are to blame.
Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promis'd me to wed ;

He answers,—

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 would lay him i'the cold ground. My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach ! Good night, ladies ; good night, sweet ladies : good night, good night. [*Exit.*]

King. Follow her close ; give her good watch, I pray you.

[*Exit* HORATIO.]

O ! this is the poison of deep grief ; it springs
All from her father's death. And now, behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude !

When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
 But in battalions. First, her father slain ;
 Next, your son gone ; and he most violent author
 Of his own just remove : the people muddied,
 Thiek and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
 For good Polonius' death ; and we have done but greenly,
 In hugger-mugger to inter him :¹⁵ 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 brother is in seeret come from Franee,
 Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in elouds,
 And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
 With pestilent speeches of his father's death ;
 Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
 Will nothing stick our person to arraign
 In ear and ear. O, my dear Gertrude ! this,
 Like to a murdering pieee,¹⁶ in many places
 Gives me superfluous death. [A noise within.]

Queen.

Alaek ! what noise is this ?

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Attend !

Where are my Switzers ? Let them guard the door.
 What is the matter ?

Gent. Save yourself, my lord ;
 The ocean, overpeering of his list,
 Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
 Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
 O'erbears your officers ! The rabble eall him, lord ;
 And, as the world were now but to begin,
 Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
 The ratifiers and props of every word,¹⁷
 They ery, " Choose we ; Laertes shall be king !"
 Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the elouds,
 " Laertes shall be king, Laertes king !"

Queen. How eheerfully on the false trail they ery !
 O ! this is counter, you false Danish dogs.¹⁸

King. The doors are broke.

[Noise within.]

Enter LAERTES, armed; 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 bastard;
Cries, cuckold, to my father; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will.¹⁹—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?

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, sweepstake, 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-rendering pelican,²⁰
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 sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce,
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter OPHELIA.

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by 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;²¹ and, where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. *They bore him barefac'd on the bier;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny:²²
And in his grave rain'd mang 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, an you call him a-down-a.*
Oh, how the wheel becomes it!²³ 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;²⁴ pray you,
love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.²⁵

Laer. A document in madness: thoughts and remembrance
fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you,²⁶ and columbines²⁷:—there's rue

for you ; and here's some for me : we may call it herb of grace o'Sundays :²⁸—you may wear your rue with a difference :²⁹—There's a daisy :³⁰ I would give you some violets ; but they withered all when my father died.—They say, he made a good end,—

*For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,*³¹— [Sings.

Laer. Thought and affliction, 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.

*His beard was as white as snow,*³²

All flaxen was his poll ;

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan :

God ha' mercy on his soul !

And of all Christian souls ! 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,
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall ;

And where th' offence is, let the great axe fall.

I pray you, go with me.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 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 bless you, sir.*Hor.* Let him bless 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 overlooked 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 compelled valour; and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me, like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou would'st fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosenerantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell;

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.*]

SCENE 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 criminal 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 unsinew'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's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him ;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Work like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces ; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost,
A sister driven into desperate terms ;
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,³³
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 danger,

And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more :
 I loved your father, and we love ourself ;
 And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,——
 How now, what news ?

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet.
 This to your majesty : this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet ! who brought them ?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say ; I saw them not :
 They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them
 Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.—
 Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*]

[*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 occasions 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'm 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 ruled 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 voyage,³⁴ and that he means
 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 eall it, accident.

Laer. 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 siege.

Laer. What part is that, my lord ?

King. A very riband in the eap of youth,³⁵
Yet needful too ; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables, and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness.—Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—
I have seen myself, and serv'd against the French,
And they can well on horsebaek ; 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 incorps'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast : so far he topp'd my thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman, was't ?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamord.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well : he is the brooch, indeed,
And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you ;
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exereise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he eried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you : the scrimers of their nation,³⁶
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 time;
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it,
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
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,³⁷
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer.
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed,
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i'the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder 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 excellency,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you in fine together,
And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't;
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,

So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
 Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
 Collected from all simples that have virtue
 Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
 That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point
 With this contagion, that if I gall him slightly,
 It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this;
 Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,
 May fit us to our shape. 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 proof. Soft!—let me see:—
 We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,—
 I ha't:
 When in your motion you are hot and dry,—
 As make your bouts more violent to that end—
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have preferr'd him
 A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,³⁸
 Our purpose may hold there. But stay! what noise?

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet queen!

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
 So fast they follow.—Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aseant the brook,
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
 Therewith fantastie garlands did she make
 Of erow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,³⁹
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,⁴⁰
 But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
 There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
 Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
 When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
 And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up;
 Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes;
 As one incapable of her own distress,

Or like a creature native and indu'd
 Unto that element :⁴¹ but long it could not be,
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
 To muddy death.

Laer. Alas ! then, is she drown'd ?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
 And therefore I forbid my tears : but yet
 It is our triek ; nature her eustom holds,
 Let shame say what it will : when these are gone,
 The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord !
 I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
 But that this folly drowns it.

[*Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude.
 How much I had to do to ealm his rage !
 Now fear I, this will give it start again ;
 Therefore, let's follow.

[*Exeunt.*

Notes to the Fourth Act.

¹ *And 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, in Warner’s Albion’s England, 1602, b. v. ch. xxvi. :—

And from the smith of heaven’s wife allure the amorous *haunt*.

The place where men assemble, is often poetically called the *haunt of men*. So, in Romeo and Juliet:—

We talk here in the publick *haunt* of men.—*Steevens*.

² *Among a mineral of metals base.*

A *mineral* Minsheu 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*.—*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.” Again, in Hall’s Virgidemiarum, lib. vi. :—

Shall it not be a wild fig in a wall,
Or fired brimstone in a *minerall*.—*Steevens*.

³ *And, sponge, you shall be dry again.*

He’s but a *sponge*, and shortly needs must leese
His wrong-got juice, when greatnes’ fits shall *squeese*
His liquor out. *Marst. Sat. 7*.—*Steevens*.

When princes (as the toy takes them in the head) have used courtiers as *sponges to drinke* what juice they can from the poore people, they take pleasure afterwards to *wring them out* into their owne cisternes.—*R. C’s Henr. Steph. Apology for Herodotus*, Fo. 1608. p. 81.

Vespasian, when reproached for bestowing high office upon persons most rapacious, answered, “that he served his turne with such officers as with *sponges*,

which, when they had drunke their fill, were then fittest to be *pressed*.”—Barnabe Rich’s *Faultes, faults and nothing else but faults*, 4to. 1606, p. 44, b. See *Suetonius*, *Vespas.* c. 16.—*Caldecott*.

⁴ *The body is with the king, &c.*

This may mean, “the king is not yet cut off from life and sovereignty: his carkass remains to the king; but the king is not with the body or carkass, that you seek: the king is not with Polonius.” But Hamlet, whose meaning is, not merely to baffle these persons (not intituled to approach and question him with so little respect), but also to make allusions to matters, of which he could not, with prudence or safety to himself, speak openly, returns answers necessarily enigmatical. A more natural meaning is suggested; “The image raised, the impression made upon the King’s fears by the fate of Polonius makes his body or carcase present to the fancy of the king; who knew and has said that “it had been so with him, had he been there:” but the King is not with the body, i. e. is not lying with Polonius, as Hamlet wished him to be, and would have said, had his situation made such an avowal safe.” Others interpret, plainly enough, if admissibly, “The body is with the king,” i. e. intombed or in the other world with the late, the real king: but the King, i. e. he who now wears the Crown, the usurper, “is not with the body.”—*Caldecott*.

⁵ *Hide fox, and all after.*

Hide-fox, a game, supposed to be the same as *Hide and Seek*. It was, perhaps, the same as the game of *Fox* mentioned by Cotgrave, in v. *Lamibaudichon*, “a word used among boyes in a play (much like our Fox) wherein he to whom tis used must runne, and the rest indevor to catch him.”

Not usynge but refusynge suche foolyshe toyes,
As commonly are used in these dayes of boyes,
As hoopynge and halowynge, as in *huntynge the foxe*,
That men it hearynge deryde them with mockes.

The Schoole of Vertue, 1557.

⁶ *How a king may go a progress.*

Alluding to the royal journeys of state, always styled *progresses*; a familiar idea to those who, like our author, lived during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I.—*Steevens*.

⁷ *At help.*

That is, at hand, ready,—ready to help or assist you. Similar phraseology occurs in *Pericles*, Prince of Tyre:—

— I’ll leave it
At careful nursing.—*Steevens*.

⁸ *In his eye.*

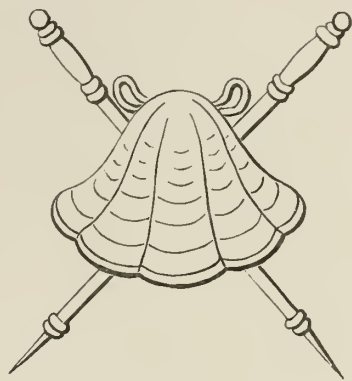
In his eye, means, ‘in his presence.’ The phrase appears to have been formularly. See the Establishment of the Household of Prince Henry, A. D. 1610: “Also the gentleman-usher shall be careful to see and informe all such as doe service *in the Prince’s eye*, that they perform their duties,” &c. Again, in The Regulations for the Government of the Queen’s Household, 1627: “—— all such as doe service *in the Queen’s eye*.”—*Steevens*.

⁹ *By his cockle hat and staff.*

“I will give thee a palmer’s *staff* of yvorie, and a *scallop shell* of beaten gold.”—*G. Peele’s Old Wive’s Tule*, 1595.—*Steevens*.

The coekle shell was usually worn in the front of the hat. Under these articles of a pilgrim or palmer's dress, love intrigues were frequently conducted. The disguise afforded opportunities; and its devotional character, and the romance of the thing, was congenial to a lover's mind: and thence a pilgrimage naturally formed stories for ballads, and plots for novels: and Warburton has also observed, that most of the principal of these places of devotional resort being beyond the seas, or on the coasts, the coekle-shell, as announcing or denoting their object, became a badge of the vocation of these devotees.—*Caldecott*.

"The coekle-hat and staff," observes Mr. Fairholt, "was so peculiarly the badge of pilgrimage, that it has been adopted as the only symbols on a sculptured stone in the Cathedral at Dijon; commemorating the foundation of a mass on the festival of St. James of Compostella in the year 1577. They have been copied in our engraving from an original sketch made in 1846. To the coekle-shell is appended the loops by which they were fastened to the hat of the pilgrim; and the *bourdon* or staff is provided with a spike to secure its hold in travelling over a hilly country."



¹⁰ *And his sandal shoon.*

He that hath left the hosiers crafte,
And fall to making *shone*;
The smith that shall to painting fall,
His thirfte is well nigh done.

A Mery Jest of a Sergeaunt, n. d.

¹¹ *They say, the owl was a baker's daughter.*

There is here an allusion to a popular legend, which has been preserved by tradition. A version of it formerly current in Herefordshire is thus related in a periodical of the year 1804,—“A certain fairy, disguised as an old distressed woman, went to a baker's shop, and begged some dough of his daughter, of whom she obtained a very small piece. This she farther requested leave to bake in the oven; where it swelling to the size of a large loaf, the baker's daughter refused to let her have it. She, however, gave the pretended beggar another piece of dough, but still smaller than the first: this swelled in the oven even more than the other, and was in like manner retained. A third and still smaller piece of dough came out of the oven the largest of all, and shared the same fate. The disguised fairy, convinced of the woman's covetousness by this repeated experiment, no longer restrained her indignation; she resumed her proper form, and struck the culprit with her wand, who immediately flew out of the window in the shape of an owl.”

Another version is told by Douce as current in Gloucestershire,—“Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were baking, and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough into the oven to bake for him; but was reprimanded by her daughter, who, insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately afterwards began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon the baker's daughter cried out, ‘Heugh, heugh,

heugh!—which owl-like noise probably induced Our Saviour for her wickedness to transform her into that bird. This story is often related to children to deter them from such illiberal behaviour to poor people.” The same story appears to be alluded to in Fletcher’s *Nice Valour*, iii. 3, ed. Dyce, p. 334,—

Fair mischiefs! give me a nest of *owls*, and take ’em!
 Happy is he, say I, whose window opens
 To a brown *baker’s* chimney! he shall be sure there
 To hear the bird sometimes after twilight.

In the inventory of the goods at Kenilworth Castle, taken in 1588, mention is made of “the picture of the Baker’s Daughter.” I have very little doubt but that a story of the baker’s daughter was a popular one in Warwickshire in the time of Shakespeare. I am told that there is in existence an old ballad entitled, “A Ballad of a Dolefull White Owlett that was begotten of a merrie Baker of Olde Coventrie,” but I have not succeeded in obtaining a sight of it, or proofs of its genuineness.

¹² *To-morrow is Saint Valentine’s day.*

This song alludes to the custom of the first girl seen by a man on the morning of this day being considered his Valentine or true-love. The custom continued until the last century, and is thus graphically alluded to by Gay,—

Last Valentine, the day when birds of kind
 Their paramours with mutual chirpings find,
 I early rose, just at the break of day,
 Before the sun had chas’d the stars away:
 A-field I went, amid the morning dew,
 To milk my kine (for so should house-wives do).
 Thee first I spied, and the first swain we see,
 In spite of Fortune, shall our true love be.

The custom of the different sexes choosing themselves mates on St. Valentine’s Day, February 14th, the names being selected either by lots, or methods of divination, is of great antiquity in England. The name so drawn was the *valentine* of the drawer.

Thow it be ale or other wyn,
 Godys blescyng have he and myn,
 My none gentyl *Volontyn*,
 Good Tomas the frere.—*MS. Harl.* 1735, f. 48.

¹³ *And dupp’d the chamber door.*

To *dup* is to *do up*, as to *don* is to *do on*, to *doff* to *do off*, &c. Thus in *Damon and Pythias*, 1582:—‘The porters are drunk, will they not *dup* the gate to day?’ The phrase probably had its origin from *doing up* or lifting the latch. In the old cant language to *dup* the *gyger* was to open the door. See Harman’s *Caveat for Cursetors*, 1575.—*Singer*. “To *dup*, *doup*, or doe open, to open the door,” *Wills.*, M.S. Lansd. 1033. It now generally signifies to *do up*, to fasten.

¹⁴ *By Gis, and by St. Charity.*

Gis is a corrupted form of *Jesus*, but had lost any profane signification in its familiar use in former days. The allegorical personage, *Charity*, was recognized in the list of saints.

What is that, gossip, said she. Nay, *by Gisse*, I will not tell it to any man alive.—*Scogin’s Jest*s, p. 22.

And, by the way, for sweete Saint Charitie,
He begs his largies of th' outlandish hives.

Cutwode's Caltha Poetarum, or the Bumble Bee, 1599.

Good Sir John, for sweet *Saint Charitie*, say one Ave Marie, or one pater-noster, and let my poore husbandes corpes be covered, though it be but with one handfull of holy ground.—*Deloney's Second Part of the Gentle Craft, 1598.*

¹⁵ *In hugger-mugger to inter him.*

“*Dinascoso*, secretly, hiddenly, in hugger-mugger,” Florio’s Worlde of Wordes, 1598. “As good, seere, as would make any hungry man, and a’were in the vilest prison in the world, eat, and he had any stomach : One word, sir Quintilian, in *hugger-mugger* ; here is a sentleman of yours, master Peter Flash, is tesirous to have his blue coat pull’d over his ears, and—” Satiromastix. “Monstrum alere : to practise mischiefe in *hugger-mugger*,” Withals’ Dictionary, ed. 1634, p. 564.

I do but stay here to talk three or four cold words in *hugger-mugger* with the Blind Beggar’s daughter, and I’ll ride down into Norfolk with you.—*The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green, 1659.*

¹⁶ *Like to a murdering piece.*

A murdering-piece, or *murderer*, was a small piece of artillery ; in French *meurtrière*. It took its name from the loopholes and embrasures in towers and fortifications, which were so called. The portholes in the forecastle of a ship were also thus denominated. ‘*Meurtriere, c’est un petit canonniere, comme celles des tours et murailles, ainsi appellé, parceque tirant par icelle a desceu, ceux ausquels on tire sont facilement meurtri.*’—*Nicot.* ‘*Visiere meurtriere, a port-hole for a murdering-piece in the forecastle of a ship.*’—*Cotgrave.* Case shot, filled with small bullets, nails, old iron, &c. was often used in these *murderers*. This accounts for the raking fire attributed to them in the text, and in Beaumont and Fletcher’s Double Marriage :—

—— like a *murdering-piece*, aims not at me,
But all that stand within the dangerous level.—*Singer.*

¹⁷ *The ratifiers and props of every word.*

Word is term, and means appellation or title ; as *lord* used before, and *king* afterwards : and in its more extended sense, must import “every human establishment.” The sense of the passage is,—“As far as antiquity ratifies, and custom makes every term, denomination, or title known, they run counter to them, by talking, when they mention kings, of their right of chusing and of saying who shall be king or sovereign.”—*Caldecott.*

¹⁸ *O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.*

Hounds run *counter* when they trace the trail backwards.—*Johnson.*

Thus the deep mouth’d Thunder after fruitlesse paine
In *hunting counter* fals to’s lappe againe.

Bancroft's Epigr. 4to. 1639, l. 99.

Puttenham, in describing “an importune and shrewd wife,” whom he calls “overthwart Jone,” has the verb :—

So shrewd she is for God, so cunning and so wise,
To *counter* with her goodman, and all by contraries.

Arte of Engl. Poesie, 4to. 1589, p. 176.

See *Com. of Err. IV. 2. Dro. S.*—*Caldecott.*

¹⁹ *Acts little of his will.*

We may illustrate this passage by an anecdote of Queen Elizabeth, related in *Englandes Mourning Garment*, by Henry Chettle. While her Majesty was on the river, near Greenwich, a shot was fired by accident, which struck the royal barge, and hurt a waterman near her. "The French ambassador being amazed, and all crying Treason, Treason! yet she, with an undaunted spirit, came to the open place of the barge, and bad them never feare, for if the shot were made at her, they durst not shoote againe: such majestie had her presence, and such boldnesse her heart, that she despised all feare; and was as all princes are, or should be; so full of divine fullnesse, that guiltie mortalitie durst not beholde her but with dazeled eyes."—*Boswell*.

²⁰ *And, like the kind 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?

Again, in the play of King Leir, 1605:—

I am as kind as is the *pelican*,
That kils itselfe, to save her young ones lives.

It is almost needless to add that this account of the bird is entirely fabulous.—*Steevens*.

²¹ *Nature is fine in love.*

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. *Fine*, however, sometimes signifies *artful*. So, in *All's Well that Ends Well*: "Thou art too *fine* in thy evidence."—*Steevens*.

²² *Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny.*

Many songs were sung to this burden. The following is taken from Ravenscroft's *Briefe Discourse*, 4to. 1614,—

Love, for such a cherry lip,
Would be glad to pawne his arrowes;
Venus heere, to take a sip,
Would sell her doves and teeme of sparrowes—
But shee shall not so,
Hey no, nony nony no:
None but I this lip must owe,
Hey nony, nony nony no.

Did Jove see this wanton eye,
 Ganimed should wayte no longer :
 Phebe heere one night to lye,
 Would change her face, and looke much yonger,
 But shee shall not &c.

²³ *O, how the wheel becomes it.*

The *wheel* is the *burthen* of a ballad, from the Latin *rota*, a *round*, which is usually accompanied with a burthen frequently repeated. Thus also in old French, *roterie* signified such a *round* or *catch*, and *rotuenge*, or *rotuhenge*, the *burthen* or *refrain* as it is now called. Our old English term *refrette*, ‘the foote of the dittie, a verse often interlaced, or the burden of a song,’ was probably from *refrain*; or from *refresteler*, to pipe over again. It is used by Chaucer in the Testament of Love. This term was not obsolete in Cotgrave’s time, though it would now be as difficult to adduce an instance of its use as of the *wheel*, at the same time the quotation, will show the *down* of a ballad was another term for the *burthen*. ‘Refrain, the *refret*, burthen, or *downe* of a ballad.’ All this discussion is rendered necessary, because Steevens unfortunately forgot to note from whence he made the following extract, though he knew it was from the preface to some black letter collection of songs or sonnets:—‘The song was accounted a good one, though it was not moche graeed with the *wheele*, which in no wise accorded with the subject matter thereof.’ Thus also Nicholas Breton, in his *Toyes for Idle Head*, 1577:—

That I may sing full merrily
 Not heigh ho *wel*, but care away.—*Singer*.

²⁴ *There’s rosemary, that’s for remembrance.*

Rosemary, conceived to have the power of strengthening the memory, and prescribed in old medical books for that purpose, was an emblem of remembrance, and of the affection of lovers; and thence, probably, was worn at weddings, as it also was at funerals.

There’s *rosemarie*; the Arabians justifie
 (Physitions of exceeding perfect skill)
 It comforteth the braine and *memorie*.

Chester’s *Dialogue betw. Nature and the Phœnix*, 1601.

Rosemary is for *remembrance*
 Betweene us daie and night;
 Wishing that I might alwaies have
 You present in my sight.

Handful of delites, &c. 16mo. 1584, in a “Nosegaie alwaies sweet for lovers to send for tokens of love.”

“Shee hath given thee a nosegay of flowers, wherein, as a top-gallant for all the rest, is set in *rosemary for remembrance*.”—*Greene’s Never too late*, 1616.

Will I be *wed* this morning,
 Thou shalt not be there, nor once be graced with
 A piece of *rosemary*.—*Ram Alley*, 1611.

“I meet few but are stuck with *rosemary*; every one asked me, who was to be *married*.”—*Noble Spanish Soldier*, 1634.

“What is here to do? wine and cakes, and *rosemary* and nosegaies? what, a *wedding*?”—*The Wit of a Woman*, 1604.—*Steevens and Malone*.

We shall add, “My mother hath stolne a whole pecke of flower for a bride cake, and our man hath sworne he will steale a brave *Rosemary Bush*, and I have

spoken for ale that will make a cat speake.”—*Nich. Breton's Poste*, &c. 4to. 1637. “The bride-laces, that I give at my wedding, will serve to tye *rosemary* to.” *The Honest Whore*, sign. K 3, b. and see *II. II. IV. II. 3.* Lady Percy. And see “to rain upon remembrance *Rosemary* and *Romeo*.”—*Ro. and Jul.* II. 4. Nurse.—*Caldecoll*.

²⁵ *There is pansies, that's for thoughts.*

Thus are my thoughts fed with fancies, and, to be brief, my life is lengthned out by fancies; then, madam, blame me not if I like penses well, and thinke nothing if I set no other flowre in my nosegay. And truly, lord Meribates, answered Eriphila, you and I are of one mind, I meane in choice of flowres, but not, sir, as it is called a pense, or as you descant on fancie, but as we homely huswives call it, hearts-ease, for of all contents I thinke this the greatest; for in naming this word hearts-ease, I banish as with a charme the frownes of fortune, and the follies of love, for the partie that is toucht by the inconstancy of the one, or the vanitic of the other, cannot boast hee meaneth hearts-ease: seeing then it breedeth such rest unto the minde, and such quiet to the thoughts, we will both weare this flowre as a favour, you as a pense, but I as hearts-ease.”—*Alcida Greenes Metamorphosis*, 1617.

²⁶ *There's fennel for you.*

The following curious verses on the virtues of fennel are extracted from an excessively rare work, the *Castell of Courtesie*, by James Yates, 4to. Lond. 1582, fol. 46,—

In garden brave, whenas I view'd and saw
There every herbe that nature had bedeckt,
And every flower so fresh and red as haw,
I stode in choyse of which I should elect;
Yet could I none there finde that did me please
So much as two, by whom I have found ease.
And fennill first for sight hath done me good,
Whose water stil'd did ease my pricking eies,
Reviv'd my heart and cheer'd my fainting blood,
And made me laugh when head was ful of cries.
What say you now? can you expulsse my clause?
May I not praise? yes, sir, when I have cause.
Yes, sure, this hearbe I like and like againe,
And if I had a garden as some have,
I would much plant, and take therein greate paine,
To have in store for such as will it crave.
Yet some will say that fennill is to flatter:
They over reache, their tongues too much do clatter.

²⁷ *And columbines.*

I know not of what *columbines* were supposed to be emblematical. They are again mentioned in *All Fools*, by Chapman, 1605:—

What's that?—a *columbine*?

No: that *thankless* flower grows not in my garden.

Gerard, however, and other herbalists, impute few, if any, virtues to them; and they may therefore be styled *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 *Caltha Poetarum*, 1599, it should seem as if this flower was the emblem of cuckoldom:—

— the blue *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 Linnæus's *Genera*, 684. The *columbine* was emblematical of forsaken lovers:

The *columbine* in tawny often taken,
Is then ascribed to such as are forsaken.
Browné's Britannia's Pastorals, b. i. song ii. 1613.—*Holt White*.

²⁸ *We may call it herb of grace o' Sundays.*

The following passage from Greene's *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, will furnish the best reason for calling *rue* herb of grace o' Sundays: "— some of them smil'd and said, *Rue* was called *Herbegrace*, which though they scorned in their youth, they might wear in their age, and that it was never too late to say *miserere*."—*Henley*.

²⁹ *You may wear your rue with a difference.*

The slightest variation in the bearings, their position or colour, constituted a different coat in heraldry; and between the ruth and wretchedness of guilt, and the ruth and sorrows of misfortune, it would be no difficult matter to distinguish. "If he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him *bear it for a difference* between himself and his horse."—*M. ado &c. I. 1. Beatr.*—*Caldecott*.

³⁰ *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*.

³¹ *For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.*

This is part of an old song, mentioned likewise by Beaumont and Fletcher, in the *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*.

The "Courtly new ballad of the princely wooing of the faire maid of London, by King Edward," is also "to the tune of *Bonny sweet Robin*."—*Ritson*.

³² *His beard was as white as snow.*

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 in 1605, Act III. :—

His head as white as milke,
All flaxen was his haire,
But now he is dead,
And laid in his bed,
And never will come againe.—*Steevens*.

³³ *Whose worth, if praises may go back again.*

That is, whose merits, if the report of them may, where she can never return, be here re-echoed, stood (on the highest ground, and in the fullest presence of the age) like a champion for their mistress, to give a general challenge in support of her excellenc.—*Caldecott.*

³⁴ *As checking at his voyage.*

The phrase is from falconry; and may be justified from the following passage in Hinde's *Eliosto Libidinoso*, 1606: "— For who knows not, quoth she, that this hawk, which comes now so fair to the fist, may to-morrow *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 erowes, &c.—*Steevens.*

"As *checking at his voyage.*" Thus the folio. The quarto 1604 exhibits a corruption similar to that mentioned in n. 3, p. 448. It reads:—"As *the king* at his voyage."—*Malone.*



³⁵ *A very riband in the cap of youth.*

"The wealthier classes," observes Mr. Fairholt, "frequently decorated the simple flat-cap with aiguillettes, strings of pearl, jewels, and bows of silken ribbon. The latter being a comparatively cheap decoration was often used on the caps of young persons. Our example is copied from a German woodcut dated 1583."

³⁶ *The scrimers of their nation.*

"*Escrimeur*, a feneer, a maister of fenee," Cotgrave, ed. 1611.

³⁷ *Like a spendthrift sigh.*

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.—*Johnson.*

Hence they are called, in King Henry VI.—*blood-consuming sighs.* Again, in Pericles, 1609:—

Do not *consume* your *blood* with *sorrowing.*

The idea is enlarged upon in Fenton's *Tragical Discourses*, 1579: "Why stayer you not in tyme the source of your scorching *sighes*, that have already drayned your body of his wholesome humoures, appoynted by nature to gyve sucke to the entrals and inward 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 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 case which it affords. His similes, as I have frequently had occasion to observe, seldom run on four feet.—*Malone*.

³⁸ *Your venom'd stuck.*

“Your venom'd *stuck*,” is, your venom'd *thrust*. *Stuck* was a term of the fencing-school. So, in *Twelfth-Night*: “— and he gives me the *stuck* 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.”—*Sec Florio's Italian Dict.* 1598: “*Stoccata*, a foynce, a thrust, a *stoccado* given in fence.”—*Malone*.

³⁹ *And long purples.*

By *long purples* 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 Sussex it is still called *dead men's hands*; and that in Lyte's *Herbal*, 1578, its various names, too gross for repetition, are preserved. *Dead men's thumbs* are mentioned in an ancient bl. l. ballad, entitled the Deceased Maiden Lover:—

Then round the meddowes did she walke,
Catching each flower by the stalke,
Such as within the meddowes grew;
As *dead mans thumbe*, and hare-bell blew.—*Steevens*.

One of the grosser names of this plant Gertrude had a particular reason to avoid:—*the rampant widow*.—*Malone*.

⁴⁰ *That liberal shepherds give a grosser name.*

That, to which free spoken shepherds, &c. Puttenham, speaking in his *Arte of Engl. Poesie* of the Figure, Parisia or the Licentious, says, when the “intent is to declare in broad and *liberal* speeches, which might breede offence or scandall, he will seeme to bespeake pardon before hand, wherby licentiousness may be the better borne withall.” 4to. 1589, p. 199. “He gives her *liberall* scandal a deafe eare,” Heywood's *Britaine's Troy*, p. 107. *Malone* cites Field's *Woman's a Weathercock*, 1612:—

— Next that, the fame
Of your neglect, and *liberal*-talking tongue,
Which breeds my honour an eternal wrong.

Sec Othel. II. 1. Desd.—*Caldecott*.

⁴¹ *And indu'd unto that element.*

That is, “with qualities naturally adapted to.” *Malone* says, our old writers used *induct* and *endowed* indiscriminately. “To *indue*,” says *Minshieu* in his *Dict.* “*sæpissime 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 Dict.* 1611, *instruire* is interpreted “to fashion, to furnish with.” So *Othel.*—

For let our finger ache and it *endues*
Our other healthful members, ev'n to that sense
Of pain. III. 4. Desd.

where it means fashions, moulds, adapts by communicating or imparting congenial sensations; makes to participate of.—*Caldecott*.

Act the Fifth.

SCENE I.—*A Church Yard.*

Enter two Clowns, with Spades,¹ &c.

1 *Clo.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clo.* I tell thee, she is; and therefore make her grave straight:² the crowner hath set on her, and finds it Christian burial.

1 *Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 *Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

1 *Clo.* 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 perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1 *Clo.* 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 *Clo.* But is this law?

1 *Clo.* Ay, marry, is't; erowner's-quest law.³

2 *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

1. *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st; and the more pity, that great folk shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even-christian.⁴ Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.⁵

2 *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clo.* Why, he had none.

1 *Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digged: could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself——⁶

2 *Clo.* Go to.

1 *Clo.* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clo.* 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 *Clo.* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.⁷

2 *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clo.* To't.

2 *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.

1 *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker: the houses that he makes, last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; feteh me a stoop of liquor. [Exit 2 Clown.]

A ditty or sonnet made by the lorde Marb
in tyme of the noble queene Marrye.
representinge the fimage of deathe,

I loathe that I dyd love: In yong that I thought sweete
at tyme requyrite for my beere: mee think theye are not meete:

My luste they doo mee leave, my fanyeb all are flodde,
and trarke of tyme, begyn to weare, yonge seares in my head.

For the wyte stealinge sepe, eate rlande mee wyte, eib ryme:
And luste yong, awaye the leape, at there ead byn none fyre.

My myse doo not deliget: mee, at see dyde before,
my eande and penne are not in holte, at they came bene of yore:

For reason mee demyot: all yongly ydes ryme
and dape by dape on mee see rryet: leavys of sear toyt betyme.

The wrinkles in my browe: my frowne in my face
suyte bympinge age eate ranye eim none weare yong, myt yere eim plare.

The rebinger of deate: to mee I see eim ryde,
the ronye, the roulde, the gappinge breate doo byde mee to pryde,

A pukeape, and a spade, and the ruydinge seete,
a ronse of rlaye for too bee made for suring a yost most meete

My think I seare rlanke, that knylle the ransfull boll,
and dyd mee leave my weare rante, one nature mee rompell

My keepert knitt the knott: that yong doo longee to storne,
of mee that shall be rlane for yote, at ead none be bornt,

It eib myt I yong yere rype: most badye of longed yd be rmane
to them, I yalde the ranton rype: that better maye it beare.

Loe here the bare sedde stull: by moke bare signot I knowe,
that stoopinge age awaye fall pull, that yongfull yeres dyd some,

For beavotie myt eor bande: the rrooked rard eate rromyge,
and shipped mee into the londe, from weense I frst was rromyge

and you that byde beginde: eand you none oger rryte,
but ab of rlaye yndent made by kinde, so fall yee tunc to dyste,

finit

I Clown digs, and sings.

*In youth, when I did love, did love,⁸
Methought it was very sweet,
To contract, O! the time, for, ah! my behove,
O, methought, there was nothing meet.*

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that 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.

I Clo. *But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intill the land,
As if I had never been such.* [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,⁹ that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches, one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say, "Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it, might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so, and now my lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked 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 them?¹⁰ mine ache to think on't.

I Clo. *A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,¹¹ [Sings.
For and a shrouding sheet:¹²
O! a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.* [Throws up another scull.

Ham. There's another: why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillts,¹³ his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sence 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 statutes,¹⁴ his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box, and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow.—Whose grave's this, sir?

1 Clo. Mine, sir.—

*O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.* [Sings.]

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

1 Clo. You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and 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 liest.

1 Clo. 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1 Clo. For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

1 Clo. For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

1 Clo. One, that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card,¹⁵ or equivocation will undo us. By the lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so pieked,¹⁶ 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 Clo. Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

1 Clo. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that. It was

the very day that young Hamlet was born ; he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry ; why was he sent into England ?

1 Clo. Why, because he was mad : he shall recover his wits there ; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why ?

1 Clo. 'Twill not be seen in him there ; there, the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad ?

1 Clo. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely ?

1 Clo. 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground ?

1 Clo. Why, here in Denmark : I have been sexton here, man and boy, twenty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i'the earth ere he rot ?

1 Clo. 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die,—as we have many pocky eorses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in—he will last you some eight year, or nine year ; a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another ?

1 Clo. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while, and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a scull now ; this scull hath lain you i'the earth a dozen years.¹⁷

Ham. Whose was it ?

1 Clo. A whoreson mad fellow's it was : whose do you think it was ?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1 Clo. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue ! a poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same scull, sir, was Yorick's scull, the king's jester.

Ham. This ?

[*Takes the Scull.*]

1 Clo. 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 abhorred in my imagination it is ! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed 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 chapfallen ? Now, get you to my

lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander looked o'this fashion i'the earth?¹⁸

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah! [*Puts down the Scull.*

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 into 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 Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay,¹⁹
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O! that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall t' expel the winter's flaw!

But soft! but soft! aside:—here comes the king,

Enter Priests, &c. in Procession; the Corpse of OPHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners following; King, Queen, their Trains, &c.

The queen, the courtiers. Who is that they follow,
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken,
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo its own life: 'twas of some estate.

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. Her obssequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warrant: her death was doubtful;
And but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd,

Till the last trumpet ; for charitable prayers,
 Shards, flints, and pebbles,²⁰ should be thrown on her ;
 Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,²¹
 Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
 Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done ?

I Priest. No more be done.

We should profane the service of the dead,
 To sing a *requiem*, and such rest to her
 As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i'the earth ;
 And from her fair and unpolluted flesh,
 May violets spring !—I tell thee, churlish priest,
 A ministering angel shall my sister be,
 When thou liest howling.

Ham. What ! the fair Ophelia ?

Queen. Sweets to the sweet : farewell. [*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 to 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 awhile,
 Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.

[*Leaping into the Grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
 Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
 To o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head
 Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he, whose grief
 Bears such an emphasis ? whose phrase of sorrow
 Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand,
 Like wonder-wounded hearers ? this is I,
 Hamlet the Dane.

[*Leaping 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. Gentlemen,—

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 eyelids 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. Swounds! show me what thou'lt do:
Woul't weep? woul't fight? woul't fast? woul't tear thyself?
Woul't drink up Esill?²² eat a crocodile?
I'll do't.—Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface 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 aeres 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 diselos'd,²³
His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir:
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hereules himself do what he may,
The eat will mew, and dog will have his day.

[*Exit.*]

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.—

[*Exit HORATIO.*]

[*To LAERTES.*] Strengthen your patience in our last night's
speech;
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 thereby shall we see ;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Castle.*

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, sir : 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 sleep : methought, I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes.²⁴ Rashly,—
And prais'd be rashness for it,—let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall ; and that should teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me,²⁵ 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 unfold
Their grand commission ; where I found, Horatio,
O 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 life,—
That on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is't possible ?

Ham. Here's the commission : read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed ?

Hor. I beseech you.

Ham. Being thus benetted round with villains,—
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play,—I sat me down,

Devis'd a new commission ; wrote it fair.
 I once did hold it, as our statist^s do,²⁶
 A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
 How to forget that learning ; but, sir, now
 It did me yeoman's service.²⁷ 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,
 As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities,²⁸
 And many such like as's of great charge,²⁹—
 That on the view and know of these contents,
 Without debatement further, more or less,
 He should the bearers put to sudden death,
 Not shriving-time allow'd.

Hor. How was this seal'd ?

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
 I had my father's signet in my purse,
 Which was the model of that Danish seal ;
 Folded the writ up in form of the other ;
 Subscrib'd it ; gave't th' impression ; plac'd it safely,
 The changeling never known. 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, man, they did make love to this employment :
 They are not near my conscience ; their defeat
 Does by their own insinuation grow.
 'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
 Between the pass and fell incensed points
 Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this !

Ham. Does it not, think thee, stand me now upon—
 He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother ;
 Popp'd in between th' election and my hopes ;
 Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
 And with such cozenage—is't not perfect conscience,
 To quit him with this arm ? and is't not to be damn'd,
 To let this canker of our nature come
 In further evil ?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England,
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short : the interim is mine ;
And a man's life 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 court his favours :
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace ! who comes here ?

Enter OSRICK.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome baek to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly ?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious, for 'tis a vice to know
him. He hath much land, and fertile : let a beast be lord of
beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess : 'tis a chough ;
but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. 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.

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold : the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry, and hot for my
complexion.

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord ; it is very sultry,—as 'twere,—I
cannot tell how.—But 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—

[HAMLET moves him to put on his Hat.

Osr. Nay, in good faith ; for mine ease, in good faith.³⁰ Sir,
here is newly come to court, Laertes ; believe me, an absolute
gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society,
and great showing : indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the
card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the con-
tinent of what part a gentleman would sec.

Ham. Sir, his confinement³¹ suffers no perdition in you ; though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetic of memory ; and it but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article ; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror ; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir ? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath ?

Osr. Sir ?

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue ? You will do't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman ?

Osr. Of Laertes ?

Hor. His purse is empty already ; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know, you are not ignorant—

Ham. I would, you did, sir ; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me.—Well, sir.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence ; but to know a man well were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon ; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.

Ham. What's his weapon ?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons : but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses : against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so.³² 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 margin, ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry a canuon 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 imponed, as you call it ?

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits : he hath laid on twelve for nine ; and that would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How, if I answer, no ?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall : if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me, let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can ; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I deliver you so ?

Ham. To this effect, sir ; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship. [*Exit.*

Ham. Yours, yours.—He does well to commend it himself ; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.³³

Ham. He did comply with his dug³⁴ before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same breed, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter, a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fand and winnowed opinions ;³⁵ and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, 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 entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me.

[*Exit* Lord.]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so : since he went into France, I have been in continual practice ; I shall win at the odds. 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 gaingiving, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it : I will forestall 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 betimes. Let be.

Enter King, Queen, LAERTES, Lords, OSRICK, and Attendants
with Foils, &c.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts the Hand of LAERTES into
that of HAMLET.*]

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir : I've done you wrong ;
But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd

With sore distraction. What I have done,

That might your nature, honour, and exception,

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes ? Never, Hamlet :

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,

And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,

Then Hamlet does it not ; Hamlet denies it.

Who does it then ? His madness. If't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd ;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,

Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,

And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this ease, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour,
I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.—
Give us the foils; come on.

Laer. Come; one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i'the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

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 side.

King. I do not fear it: I have seen you both;
But since he is 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.*]

Osrick. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoops of wine upon that table.—
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath:
And in the cup an union shall he throw,³⁶
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, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well:—again.

King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health.—Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound; and Cannon shot off within.*

Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.
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 breath.—

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 but dally:

I pray you, pass with your best violence.

I am afeard, you make a wanton of me.

Laer. Say you so? come on.

[*They play.*

Osr. Nothing, neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET; then, in scuffling they
change Rapiers,³⁷ and HAMLET wounds LAERTES.*

King. Part them! they are incens'd.

Ham. Nay, come again. [*The Queen falls.*

Osr. Look to the queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides.—How is it, my lord?

Osr. How is it, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osrick;
I'm 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 of life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated, and envenom'd. The foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me: lo! here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd;
I can no more. The king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point
Envenom'd too!—Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the King.*]

All. Treason! treason!

King. O! yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion:—is the union here?
Follow my mother. [*King dies.*]

Laer. He is justly serv'd;
It is a poison temper'd by himself.—
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee;
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*]

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!—
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time,—as this fell sergeant, Death,³⁸
Is strict in his arrest—O! I could tell you,—
But let it be.—Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st: report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it:
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:
Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man,
Give me the cup: let go; by heaven I'll have it.—
O God!—Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me.
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,

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 ?

Os. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. O ! I die, Horatio ;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit :
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 occurrents,³⁹ more and less,
Which have solicited—The rest is silence. [Dies.]

Hor. Now cræks a noble heart.—Good night, sweet prince ;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest !
Why does the drum come hither ? [March within.]

Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors, and Others.

Fort. Where is this sight ?

Hor. What is it ye would see ?
If aught of woe, or wonder, cease your search.

Fort. This quarry cries on havoc.—O proud death !
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck ?

1 Amb. The sight 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 Rosenerantz and Guildenstern are dead.
Where should we have our thanks ?

Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it th' ability of life to thank you :
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polaek wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be plac'd 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 acts,⁴⁰

Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,
 Of deaths put on by cunning, and forc'd cause,
 And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
 Fall'n on the inventors' heads : all this can I
 Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
 And call the noblest to the audience.
 For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune :
 I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
 Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
 And from his mouth whose voice will draw no more :
 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' music, and the rites of war,
 Speak loudly for him.—
 Take up the bodies.—Such a sight as this
 Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
 Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[*A dead March.*

[*Exeunt marching : after which, a Peal of
 Ordnance is shot off.*

Notes to the Fifth Act.

¹ *Enter two Clowns, with spades, &c.*

Until within a very recent period, it was customary for one of the grave-diggers to preface his labours by divesting himself of about a dozen waistcoats, an operation which always created great merriment, and which perhaps had come down by tradition from the players of Shakespeare's own time. The Doctor, in the Dutchess of Malfi, according to a stage direction in ed. 1708, "puts off his four cloaks, one after another," a similar stratagem to create the laughter of the audience.

² *Therefore, make her grave straight.*

Dr. Johnson thought this meant "From East to West, in a direct line parallel to the church; not from North to South, athwart the regular line." The frequency of the above mode of expression in Shakspeare's plays sufficiently indicates that if he had alluded to the mode of burial contended for by Dr. Johnson, he would have adopted some other. It has occurred upwards of a hundred times already in the sense of *immediately*. Nor would it be easy to show that to make a grave *straight*, or in a direct line, was to make it East and West; or that it was the designation of Christian burial. The first clown rather adverts to the *place* where the grave should be made than to its *form*. Suicides were buried on the North side of the church, in ground purposely *unconsecrated*. Much of this scene has been imitated in the *Valiant Welshman*, by R. A. [q. Robert Armin] 1663. See Act IV.—*Douce*.

³ *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 subtilities, arising from 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 Grey.—*Sir J. Hawkins*.

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 author's study was probably not much encumbered with old French Reports.—*Malone*.

Thus he forswore the wicked deed
Of his dear wives untimely end;
Quoth the people, let's conclude with speed,
That for the *crowner* we may send.

Strange News from Westmoreland. n.d.

⁴ *More than their even-christian.*

Even-christian, that is, a fellow-Christian, or neighbour.

In the whilke es forbodene us alle manere of lesynges, false consperacye and false sweryng, whare thurghe oure *evene-Cristyne* may lese thayre catelle.—*MS. Lincoln A. i. 17, f. 215.*

⁵ *They hold up Adam's profession.*



The notion of Adam being a gardener was a favourite one throughout the middle ages, and also in Shakspeare's time. The annexed engraving is copied from a sculpture of the fourteenth century at Rouen, in which Adam is represented gardening and Eve spinning.

⁶ *Confess thyself.*

“And be hanged,” the clown I suppose would have said. This was a common proverbial expression. See *Othello*, Act IV. Scene I. He might, however, have intended to say *confess thyself an*

ass.—*Malone*. Considering the context, the last suggestion seems to me the most probable.—*Pye*.

⁷ *Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.*

If it be not sufficient to say, with Dr. Warburton, that this 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* a while and turne my steeds to meat.

Again, in P. Holland's translation of Pliny's Natural History, p. 593 :
 " — in the evening, and when thou dost *unyoke*."—*Steevens*.

⁸ *In youth, when I did love, did love.*

The clown here and afterwards sings disjointed scraps from a poem called, "the aged Lover renounceth Love," written by the Earl of Surrey about the year 1540. The whole poem is here given,—

I loth that I did love,
 In youth that I thought swete :
 As time requires for my behove,
 Methinkes they are not mete.

My lustes they do me leave
 My fansies all are fled :
 And tract of time begins to weave,
 Gray heares upon my head.

For age with steling steps,
 Hath clawde me with his crowch :
 And lusty life away she leapes,
 As there had bene none such.

My muse doth not delight
 Me as she did before :
 My hand and pen are not in plight,
 As they have bene of yore.

For reason me denies,
 This youthly idle rime :
 And day by day to me she cries,
 Leave of these toyes in time.

The wrinkles in my brow,
 The furrowes in my face :
 Say limping age wyll hedge me now,
 Where youth must geve him place.

The harbenger of death,
 To me I se him ride :
 The cough, the cold, the gasping breath,
 Doth bid me to provide,

A pikeax and a spade,
 And eke a shrowding shete,
 A house of clay for to be made,
 For such a gest most mete.

Methinkes I heare the clarke,
 That knoles the carefull knell :
 And bids me leave my wofull warke,
 Ere nature me compell.

My kepers knit the knot,
 That youth did laugh to scorne :
 Of me that clene shalbe forgot,
 As I had not bene borne.

Thus must I youth geve up,
 Whose badge I long did weare :
 To them I yeld the wanton cup,
 That better may it beare.

Lo here the bared scull
 By whose balde signe I know :
 That stouping age away shall pull,
 What youthfull yeres did sow.

For beautie with her hand
 These croked cares hath wrought :
 And shipped me into the land,
 From whence I first was brought.

And ye that bide behinde,
 Have ye none other trust :
 As ye of claye were cast by kinde,
 So shall ye wast to dust.

⁹ *Cain's jawbone, that did the first murder !*

This is supposed by some to be a curious allusion to the art of the Shakesperian era, when Cain was commonly represented as using the jawbone of the animal which had been the sacrifice, to murder his brother, as represented in the annexed engraving copied from one in the first English translation of the old Testament by Miles Coverdale printed in 1535. There can, however, I think be little doubt but that the passage in the text merely refers to the jawbone of Cain, that did the first murder.



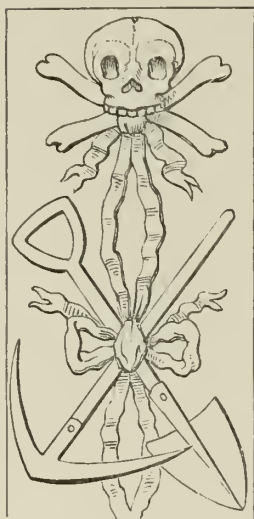
¹⁰ *But to play at loggats with them ?*

Loggats was an old game forbidden by statute in Henry VIII.'s time. It is

thus played, according to Steevens. A stake is fixed in the ground; those who play throw loggats at it, and he that is nearest the stake wins. *Loggats* or *loggets* are also small pieces or logs of wood, such as the country people throw at fruit that cannot otherwise be reached. "*Loggats*, little logs or wooden pins, a play the same with nine-pins, in which boys, however, often made use of bones instead of wooden pins," MS. Gloss.

To wrastle, play at stooleball, or to runne,
To pich the Barre, or to shoote off a Gunne,
To play at *Loggets*, Nine-holes, or Ten-pinnes;
To try it out at Foot-ball by the shinnes.

The Letting of Humors Blood in the Head-Vaine, 1611.



¹¹ *A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade.*

"These were among the familiar emblems of mortality used in grave-yards of the Poet's era. The bone-house of the church of St. Olave, Hart St., London, was decorated with a curiously carved framework, executed in the early part of the seventeenth century; the engraving exhibits as much as will illustrate the line of the Sexton's Song. The original has been destroyed in the course of "improvements" made within the last five years," note by Mr. Fairholt.

¹² *For and a shrouding sheet.*

For and, equivalent, as Mr. Dyce has shown, to *and eke*. Mr. Dyce quotes a canting song in Decker's *English Villanies*, ed. 1632,—

The boyle was vp, we had good lucke,
In frost *for and* in snow.

¹³ *His quiddits now, his quillets.*

Quiddits are quirks, or subtle questions; and *quilletts* are nice and frivolous distinctions. The etymology of this last foolish word has plagued many learned heads. I think that Blount, in his *Glossography*, clearly points out *quodlibet* as the origin of it. Bishop Wilkins calls a *quillet* 'a frivolousness;' and Coles in his *Latin Dict. res frivola*. I find the quarto of 1603 has *quirks* instead of *quiddits*.—*Singer*.

¹⁴ *With his statutes, &c.*

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*.

A recovery with *double voucher* is the one usually suffered, and is so denominated from *two* persons (the latter of whom is always the common cryer, or some such inferior person,) being successively *voucher*, or called upon, to warrant the tenant's title. Both *finés* and *recoveries* are fictions of law, used to convert an estate tail into a fee simple. *Statutes* are (not acts of parliament, but) *statutes-merchant* and *staple*, particular modes of *recognizance* or acknowledgement for securing *debts*, which thereby become a charge upon the party's land. *Statutes* and *recognizances* are constantly mentioned together in the covenants of a purchase deed.—*Ritson*.

Assurance in that. A quibble is intended. Deeds, which are usually written on parchment, are called the common *assurances* of the kingdom.—*Malone*.

¹⁵ *We must speak by the card.*

The *card* is the paper on which the different points of the compass were described. *To do any thing by the card*, is, *to do it with nice observation*.—*Johnson*.

¹⁶ *The age is grown so picked.*

Picked is *curious*, over nice. Thus in the Cambridge Dict. 1594:—‘*Conquisitus, exquisite, and picked, perfite, fine, dainty, curious.*’ See King John, Act i. Sc. 1. The substantive *pickedness* is used by Ben Jonson for *nicety in dress*. *Discoveries*, vol. vii. Whalley’s edit. p. 116: “— too much *pickedness* is not manly.”—*Tyrwhitt*.

Again, in Nashe’s Apologie of Pierce Penniless, 1593: “— he might have showed a *picked* effeminate carpet knight, under the fictionate person of *Hermaphroditus*.”—*Malone*.

¹⁷ *A dozen years.*

I have ventured to alter the text here by the aid of ed. 1603, in order to avoid a chronological difficulty, and, for a similar reason, to alter *thirty* to *twenty* in a preceding speech. It must be recollected that Hamlet is alluded to in the first act as a very young man.

¹⁸ *Alexander looked o’ this fashion i’ the earth.*

He told the King and the ladies plainly speaking of death and of the skulls and bones of dead men and women, how there is no difference; that nobody could tell that of the great Marius or Alexander from a pyouner; nor, for all the pains the ladies take with their faces, he that should look in a charnel-house could not distinguish which was Cleopatra’s, or fair Rosamond’s, or Jane Shore’s.—*Pepys*, 25 Mar. 1664.

¹⁹ *Imperious Cæsar, dead, and turn’d to clay.*

So the quartos. The folio, “*imperial*,” which Mr. Collier and Mr. Knight adopt. *Malone* observes; “The editor of the folio substituted *imperial*, not knowing that *imperious* was used in the same sense. . . There are other instances in the folio of a familiar term being substituted in the room of a more ancient word.” The right reading, whether the passage be or be not a quotation is, in all probability, *imperious*; which in Shakespeare’s time was the usual form of the word. So in the Countess of Pembroke’s *Tragedie of Antonie* (translated from the French), 1595,—

The scepters promis’d of *imperious* Rome.

Even in Fletcher’s *Prophetess*, written long after *Hamlet*, we have,—

’tis *imperious* Rome,

Rome, the great mistress of the conquer’d world.—*A. Dyce*.

²⁰ *Shards, flints, and pebbles.*

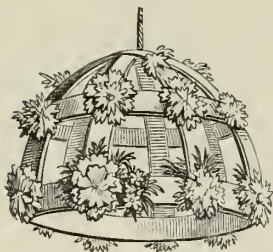
Shards, i.e., broken pieces of earthenware, pot-sherds, something shorn off. “*Skærf*, fragmen. Suio-goth. testa. *scherf*. Belg. Angli *f in d* mutant. *Shardes* of an earthen pot. fragmentum testæ ruptæ.” “*Skard*, fractura hiatus. A. S. *secard* Angl. *sheard*, *shard*; and *scarr*, cicatrix. *Shardes* Angl. est testa fracta.” Ihre’s *Gloss. Suiog.* *Shards*, *scare*, and *shreds*, are all derived, says Tooke, from the Sax. verb to divide or separate. *Divers. of Purley*, II. 173. : and consistently

therewith, *sheard*, *shard*, and *shern* are used in the sense of fragment, shell, scale, or sheath, of insects' wings, and dung. "A *sharde*, or broken piece of a tyle. Testa." Wythals's *shorte Dict.* 4to. 1568, fo. 32, b. "*Shardes*, or pieces of stones, broken or *shattered*." Sub voce *Rubble*. *Baret*. Ritson cites *Job*, ii. 8.—*Caldecott*.

²¹ *Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants.*

For *rites*, *crants*, the reading of the quartos, is adopted by the modern editors: upon which Johnson says, "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 to be provincial, and perhaps not understood, changed to a term more intelligible, but less proper. *Maiden rites* give no certain or definite image. He might have put *maiden wreaths* or *maiden garlands*, but he perhaps bestowed no thought upon it; and neither genius nor practice will always supply a hasty writer with the most proper diction." Tollet adds, in *Minsheu's Dict.*, see *Beades*, where *roosen krants* means *sertum rosarium*; and such is the name of a character in this play. And Steevens observes, the names *Rosenkrants* and *Gyldenstiern* occur frequently in Rostgard's *Deliciæ Poetarum Danorum*.—*Caldecott*.

Mr. Fairholt accompanies the annexed woodcut with the following exceedingly interesting communication,—“I made this sketch of a funeral garland in 1844, when it was suspended in St. Albans Abbey. It was then very old, and I was told by the sexton that such garlands were once commonly borne before the bodies of unmarried women to the grave, and suspended in the church afterwards, but that the custom had ceased twenty years before this time. The substructure was formed of wooden hoops, to which were affixed rosettes of colored paper; and flowers, real and artificial, covered the whole; when I saw it nothing



but the remains of the artificial decorations remained; but the sexton explained to me that the whole had been originally thickly covered with flowers. In the general restorations and cleansing of the Abbey, which took place shortly afterwards, this garland, and some other vestiges of funeral trophies, were removed from the walls, nor have I met with another example elsewhere, so rapidly have our old village customs disappeared during the last half century.”

²² *Woo't drink up Esill?*

So in ed. 1604. *Vessels*, ed. 1603; *Esile*, ed. 1623. The name of the river alluded to is perhaps either the Oesil in Denmark, or that called Isell or Issell, the latter mentioned more than once by both Drayton and Stowe; obscure streams certainly, but the reading is hardly to be rejected on that account, for the name would be at least as familiar to an Elizabethan audience as that of the mountain of Ossa mentioned in the same speech. Shakespeare, in all probability, adopted both names from the older play of Hamlet. Some editors prefer to read *eisel*, a common term for vinegar, but Hamlet, turning from the ordinary feats of a lover, seems now to be alluding to impossibilities, such as drinking a river dry, or eating a crocodile. If the reading *eisel* be selected, it will of course be remembered that the particle *up* would be redundant, a mode of construction very common in the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. On the whole, however,

I cannot but believe that the poet here alludes to a river, and to a grave task such a one as is suggested by Chaucer,—

He underfongeth a grete peine,
That undertaketh to drink up Seine.

²³ *When that her golden couplets are disclos'd.*

To *disclose* was anciently used for to *hatch*. So, in the Booke of Huntyng, Hawkyng, Fyshing, &c. bl. l. no date: "First they ben eges; 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 *hatched* her *couplets*, (for she lays no more than *two* eggs,) she never quits her nest, except for a few moments in quest of a little food for herself; as all her young require in that early state, is to be kept warm, an office which she never entrusts to the male.—*Steevens*.

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 warmth of the hen, to protect them from the chilliness of the ambient air, for a considerable time after they are hatched.—*Heath*.

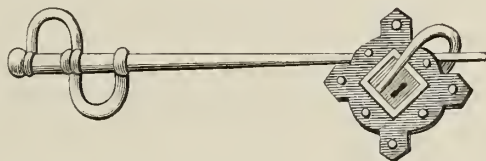
The word *disclose* has already occurred in a sense nearly allied to *hatch*, in this play:—

And I do doubt, the hatch and the *disclose*
Will be some danger.—*Malone*.

²⁴ *Worse than the mutines in the bilboes.*

Mutines, mutineers. The *bilboes* was a kind of stocks used at sea for the purpose of punishing offenders. See Howell, sect. 6.

The pore feloe was into the *bilboes*, he being the first upon whom any punyshment was shewd.—*MS. Addit 500S*.



²⁵ *My sea-gown scarf'd about me.*

Malone has told us that the *sea-gown* appears to have been the usual dress of seamen in Shakspeare's time; but not a word of what it was like. 'Esclavine (says Cotgrave), a sea-gowne, a coarse high collar'd and shortsleeved gowne, reaching to the mid-leg, and used mostly by seamen and sailors.'—*Singer*.

²⁶ *As our statist do.*

A *statist* is a *statesman*. So, in Shirley's *Humorous Courtier*, 1640: "—— that he is wise, a *statist*." Again, in Ben Jonson's *Magnetick 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*.

"I have in my time, (says Montaigne) seene some, who by writing did earnestly get both their titles and living, to disavow their apprentissage, marre their pen, and affect the ignorance of *so vulgar a qualitie*." *Florio's translation*, 1603, p. 125.—*Ritson*.

So, in the *Woman Hater*, by Fletcher:—"Gent. 'Tis well: and you have learned to write a bad hand, that the readers may take pains for it.—Your lordship hath a secretary that can write fair when you purpose to be understood."—*Boswell*.

²⁷ *It did me yeoman's service.*

The meaning, I believe, is, *This yeomanly qualification was a most useful servant, or yeoman, to me*; i. e. did me eminent service. The ancient *yeomen* were famous for their military valour. "These were the good archers in times past, (says Sir Thomas Smith,) and the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France."—*Steevens*.

²⁸ *And stand a comma 'tween their amities.*

That is, continue the passage or intercourse of amity between them, and prevent the interposition of a period to it: we have the idea, but used in a contrary sense, in an author of the next age. "As for the field, we will cast lots for the place, &c. but I feare the point of the sword will *make a comma* to your cunning," Nich. Breton's *Packet of Letters*, 4to. 1637, p. 23. In the *Scornful Lady* we have something like this mode of expression:—"No denial—must *stand between* your person and the business."—*Caldecott*.

²⁹ *And many such like as's of great charge.*

Asses heavily loaded. A quibble is intended between *as* the conditional particle, and *ass* the beast of burthen. That *charg'd* anciently signified *loaded*, may be proved from the following passage in *The Widow's Tears*, by Chapman, 1612:—"Thou must be the *ass charg'd with crowns*, to make way."—*Johnson*.

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 perhaps 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 *ass bears gold*,
To groan and sweat under the business.—*Julius Cæsar*.

Again, in *Measure for Measure*:—

—— like an *ass*, 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* in the midland counties is 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*. So, in the *Return from Parnassus*, in a dialogue between Academicus and Echo:—

Acad. —— What is the reason that
I should not be as fortunate as he?
Echo. *Asse* he.

So also, in *Lilly's Mother Bombie*: "*Sti.* But as for Regio,—*Memp.* As for Dromio,—*Half.* *Asse* for you all four."—*Malone*.

Again, in the *Chronicle History of King Lear*,—

"*Second Watchman.* *Asse* for example.

First Watchman. I hope you do not call me *Asse* by craft, neighbour."—*Boswell*.

³⁰ *For my ease, in good faith.*

This seems to have been the affected phrase of the time. Thus, in Marston's *Malcontent*, 1604: "I beseech you, sir, be covered.—No, in good faith *for mine ease.*" And in other places.—*Farmer.*

It appears to have been the common language of ceremony in our author's time. "Why do you stand *bareheaded?*" (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.*

³¹ *Sir, his definement &c.*

Raw, ed. 1623. Mr. Collier is the only editor who has noticed that the quarto of 1604 has *yaw*; and it is clear from the context that it is the genuine reading. Nothing, I think, can be more certain than that the passage should stand thus;—"though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and *it* [which was often mistaken by our early printers for "yet," perhaps because it was written "yt"] but *yaw* neither in respect of his quick sail."

"To *yaw* (as a ship), huc illuc vacillare, capite nutare." Coles's *Dict.* The substantive *yaw* occurs in Massinger;—

O, the *yaws* that she will make!
Look to your stern, dear mistress, and steer right,
Here's that will work as high as the Bay of Portugal.

where Gifford remarks; "A *yaw* is that unsteady motion which a ship makes in a great swell, when, in steering, she inclines to the right or left of her course."—*A. Dyce.*

³² *As girdle, hangers, and so.*

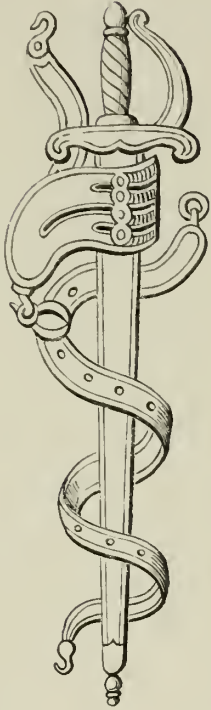
Under this term were comprehended four graduated straps, &c. that hung down in a belt on each side of its receptacle for the sword. I write this, with a most gorgeous belt, at least as ancient as the time of James I. before me. It is of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, and had belonged to the Somerset family. In Massinger's *Fatal Dowry*, Liladam (who, when arrested as a gentleman, avows himself to have been a tailor,) says:

———— This rich sword
Grew suddenly out of a tailor's bodkin;
These *hangers* from my vails and fees in hell: &c.

i. e. the tailor's *hell*; the place into which shreds and remnants are thrown. So in the *Birth of Merlin*, 1662:—"He has a fair sword, but his *hangers* are fallen." Pope mistook the meaning of this term, conceiving it to signify—*short pendulous broad swords.*—*Steevens.*

That part of the girdle or belt by which the sword was suspended, was in our poet's time called *the hangers.* *Minsheu*, 1617: "The *hangers* 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, "Item, One *payre* of girdle and *hangers*, of silver purple, and cullored silke.—Item, One *payre* of girdles and *hangers* upon white sattene." *The hangers* ran into an oblique direction from the middle of the forepart of

the girdle across the left thigh, and were attached to the girdle behind.—*Malone.*



“The hanger,” observes Mr. Fairholt, “was a broad piece of leather cut into straps and decorated with stitched work, which was hung to the girdle by a hook and through which the sword was suspended. It was an improvement on the older fashion of thrusting the sword through the girdle, inasmuch as sword and hanger could be unhooked and detached immediately. It was a fashion that began and was very extensively adopted in Elizabeth’s reign, and the portraits of gentlemen and warriors of that period exhibit many examples of highly-enriched hangers, formed of velvet and decorated with gold and silver lace, or needlework. The entire apparatus for securing the sword to the soldier’s waist, is best shown in our engraving, which is copied from a sculpture in the palace of the old Dukes of Burgundy at Dijon. It is one of two swords on each side the staircase leading to the Hall of Justice there. The girdle is here entwined round the blade of the sword. The hanger is attached by a hook, and the various hooks and rings used in securing it is very clearly shown. It is the best example extant of this peculiar fashion and was sketched from the original in August, 1857.”

³³ *This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.*

Another peculiarity of this bird was also proverbially remarked; namely, that the young ones run out of the shell with part of it sticking upon their heads. It was generally used to express great forwardness. Thus Horatio says it of Osrick, meaning to call him a child, and a fine forward one.

— Forward *lapwing*!

He flies with the shell on his head.—*White Devil.*

Such as are bald and barren beyond hope
Are to be separated and set by
For ushers to old countesses: and coachmen
To mount their boxes reverently, and drive
Like *lapwings* with a shell upon their heads
Therow the streets.—*B. Jons. Staple of News*, iii. 2.

The bald head being uncovered, would make that appearance.—*Nares.*

³⁴ *He did comply with his dug.*

That is, was complaisant with, treated it with apish ceremony. There is a passage in an old author, which so closely resembles the foregoing, that we may conceive the idea, and partly the phrase itself, to have been caught, or rather copied, by Shakespeare from thence. “Flatterie hath taken such habit in man’s affections, that it is in moste men altera natura: yea, *the very sucking babes hath a kind of adulation towards their nurses for the dugge.*” Ulpian Fulwel’s *Arte of Flatterie*, 4to. 1579. Preface to the Reader. It appears to us, that both this passage, and the present drama must have been very familiar to E. S.; who in a Sermon, 4to. 1624, dedicated to Williams, Bishop of Lincoln and Lord

Keeper, and entitled *Anthropophagus*, immediately after the mention of Flatterers as *hic et ubique* like Hamlet's Ghost, has these words: "this contagious quality of Adulation and *Flattery* hath so perverted the nature of man in this age, and *hath taken such habit in his affections, that it is in most men altera natura*; very hard to be removed: *yea, the very sucking babes have a kind of flattery towards their nurses for the dug.*" p. 14.; and from Copley's *Fig for Fortune*, 1596, Malone shews the use of *recomply* in the sense of "returning compliments:"

Then stept I to the man of mysteries
With careful *compliment* least to offend:
When he eftsoones with reverend arise
Did *recomplie* me like a perfect friend.—*Caldecott.*

³⁵ *The most fand and winnowed opinions.*

Old editions read *foud*, the alteration *fand*, that is, fann'd, having been made by Warburton. *Fanned* and *winnowed* seems right to me. Both words, *winnowed*, *fand* and drest, 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.*

³⁶ *And in the cup an union shall he throw.*

In some editions:—"And in the cup an *onyx* shall he throw." This is a various reading in several of the old copies; but *union* seems to me to be the true word. If I am not mistaken, neither the *onyx*, nor *sardonyx*, are jewels which ever found place in an imperial crown. An *union* is the finest sort of pearl, and has its place in all crowns, and coronets. Besides, let us consider what the King says on Hamlet's giving Laertes the first hit:—

Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this *pearl* is thine;
Here's to thy health.

Therefore, if an *union* be a *pearl*, and an *onyx* a gem, or stone, quite differing in its nature from *pearls*; the King saying, that Hamlet has earned the *pearl*, I think, amounts to a demonstration that it was an *union* pearl, which he meant to throw into the cup.—*Theobald.*

"And in the cup an *union* shall he 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 Expositor*, 1616, and Florio's *Italian Dictionary*, 1598, in v.—*Malone.*

So, in Soliman and Perseda:—"Ay, were it Cleopatra's *union*." The *union* is thus mentioned in P. Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History*: "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 Nobody*, 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.

It may be observed, however, that *pearls* were supposed to possess an exhila-

rating quality. Thus, Rondelet, lib. i. de Testac. c. xv. : “*Uniones quæ à conchis, &c. valde cordiales sunt.*”—*Steevens.*

³⁷ *In scuffling, they change rapiers.*

Instead of the clumsy and indistinct method by which the weapons are changed, for it generally escapes the most attentive eye, Seymour proposes the mode which at once would be probable and obvious. “It is common,” he says, “in the exercise of the sword for one combatant to disarm the other, by throwing with a thrust and strong parry the foil out of his hand; and Hamlet, having done this, might, agreeably with the urbanity of his nature, have presented his foil to Laertes, while he stooped to take up that of his adversary, and Laertes, who was only half a villain, could not have hesitated to accept the perilous accommodation, and indeed had not time allowed him to avoid it.”

³⁸ *As this fell sergeant, Death.*

That is, bailiff, or sheriff’s officer.

— when that *fell arrest,*
Without all bail shall carry me away,—*Sonn. 74.*

So *Dubartas*: “Death, dread Serjeant of th’ eternal Judge.” So favourite



an image was this and so familiar, that we find it no less in the pulpit than on the stage. “Death’s warrants run very high; “*Non omittas propter ullam libertatem.*” Attach them wherever thou findest them. No places are privileged from the arrests of death. When once this *Serjeant, Death*, hath arrested them, (that bold, that inexorable, that impartial *Serjeant, Death*) execution will be granted out against them.” Sydenham’s *World’s Vanity. A Sermon.* 4to. 1651, p. 102. — Caldecott. The inexorable type of Death is well represented in any of the engravings in the Dance of Death, one of which is here given.

³⁹ *With the occurrents.*

Occurrents, incidents. “Whiles these things thus passe in the East, Constantius keeping his winter at Arles, after he had set forth his stage-playes and Circean games with sumptuous furniture and provision, upon the sixth day before the Ides of October, which made up the thirtieth yeare of his Empire, peising all strange *occurrents* with a very heaive hand, and entertaining what doubtfull or false matter soever was presented unto him, as evident and truely knowne.”—*Ammianus Marcellinus, translated by Holland, 1609.*

⁴⁰ *Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts.*

Carnal is a word used by Shakspeare as an adjective to *carnage*.—*Ritson.*

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 *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*.

It has not been thought necessary to insert in this edition a reprint of the corrupted text of ed. 1603, the rather as it is so readily accessible to all readers in the extremely accurate and valuable edition of the impressions of 1603 and 1604, placed in juxta-position, by Mr. S. Timmins, 8vo. 1860.

King Lear.

INTRODUCTION.

THE legendary story of King Lear, so familiar to the public of Shakespeare's time as then a component part of English history, was dramatised at least as early as the year 1593 or 1594; for Henslowe records a performance of Lear by "the Quenes men and my lord of Sussex togeather" in April, 1593, and in April, 1594. The entries, however, are so given that it is by no means certain he did not intend in both entries the year which commenced, under the old system, with 1593-4. The probability is that it was originally produced early in 1594, for in the May of that year there was entered to Edward White, on the books of the Stationers' Company, "a booke entituled the moste famous Chroniele historye of Leire kinge of England, and his three daughters." No edition of this date is known to exist, the earliest printed copy which has been discovered bearing the title of, "the true chroniele history of King Leir, and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordella. As it hath bene divers and sundry times lately aeted. London, Printed by Simon Stafford for John Wright, and are to bee sold at his shop at Christes church dore, next Newgate-market, 1605." We have no information as to the period when White disposed of the copyright, but it would seem from the following entries on the Stationers' registers respecting the edition of 1605 that Leake had some interest in the work,—“8 May, 1605. *Simon Stafford*—entred for his copie, under thandes of the wardens, a booke called the Tragecall Historie of Kinge Leir and his three

daughters, as yt was latelie acted. . . . *John Wright*—entred for his copie by assignment from Simon Stafford, and by consent of Mr. Leake, the Tragicall Hist: of King Leire and his Three Daughters, provided that Simon Stafford shall have the printinge of this booke.” Shakespeare obtained the chief portion of his materials from this early drama. The only other undoubted source of any part of the plot of his Lear is the tale of the Paphlagonian King, upon which is founded the history of Gloucester and his sons so wonderfully amalgamated by Shakespeare with the tale of Lear. This story is related in Sir Philip Sydney’s *Arcadia*, in a chapter which is described as,—“*The pitifull state and storie of the Paphlagonian unkinde King, and his kind sonne; first related by the son, then by the blind father. The three Princes assaulted by Plexirtus and his traine: assisted by their King of Pontus and his troupes. Plexirtus succoured and saved by two brothers, that vertuously loved a most vicious man. Beseeged by the new King, he submitteth, and is pardoned. The two Princes depart to aide the Queene of Lycia.*” The tale itself runs as follows,—“It was in the kingdome of Galacia, the season being, as in the depth of winter, very eold, and as then sodainely growne to so extreame and foule a storme, that never any winter, I thinke, brought foorth a fowler child; so that the princes were even compelled by the haile, that the pride of the winde blew into their faces, to seeke some shrowding place within a certaine hollow rocke offering it unto them, they made it their shield against the tempests furie. And so staying there till the violence thereof was passed, they heard the speach of a couple, who not perceiving them, being hidde within that rude canapy, helde a straunge and pitifull disputation which made them steppe out; yet in such sort, as they might see unseene. There they perceaved an aged man, and a young, scarcely come to the age of a man, both poorely arayed, extremely weather beaten; the olde man blinde, the young man leading him: and yet, through all those miseries, in both these seemed to appeare a kind of noblenesse not sutable to that affliction. But the first words they heard, were these of the old man. Well Leonatus, said he, since I cannot perswade thee to lead me to that which should end my grieffe, and thy trouble, let me now entreat thee to leave me; feare not, my miserie cannot be greater then it is, and nothing doth become me but miserie; feare not the danger of my blind steps, I cannot fall worse then I am. And doo not, I pray thee, doo not obstinately continue to infect thee with my

Simon Stafford Entered for his Copie under hand
of the Wardens of the Bookes called
the Tragedy of King Lear
and his Copie of the same
of the same title of the same

8 May (1605.)

by d

Jo: Walshe Entered for his Copie by assignment
from Simon Stafford and by consent
of Mr Leake the Chirurgicall Chir.
of King Lear and his Copie
of the same title of the same
Simon Stafford shall have the
printing of the same

by d

1609. 5. Feb
26. Nov

Mr. Walshe
Jo: Walshe Entered for his Copie under hand of
the Bookes called King Lear
a book called. Mr William Shakespeares
his Tragedy of King Lear as it was
played before the Kings maiestie at
Westminster upon St Stephens Church
at Westmster last by his maiesties
playing usually called the Globe and
the same

by d

29 Juny 1624. At Paris.

Mr Alder. Assigned out to him the copy of that
of Mr Walshe in the Tragedy of King Lear
mentioned by consent of account
Lear and his daughters.
to wite might pastime

wretchednes. But flie, flie from this region, onely worthy of me. Deare father, answered he, doo not take away from me the onely remnant of my happinesse ; while I have power to doo you service, I am not wholly miserable. Ah my sonne, said he, and with that he groned, as if sorrow strave to breake his harte, how evill fits it me to have such a sonne, and how much doth thy kindnesse upbraide my wickednesse. These dolefull speeches, and some others to like purpose, well shewing they had not bene borne to the fortune they were in, moved the princes to goe out unto them, and aske the younger what they were. Sirs, answered he, with a good grace, and made the more agreable by a certaine noble kinde of pitiousnes, I see well you are straungers, that know not our miserie so well here knowne, that no man dare know but that we must be miserable. In deede, our state is such, as though nothing is so needfull unto us as pittie, yet nothing is more daungerous unto us, then to make our selves so knowne as may stirre pittie. But your presence promiseth, that cruelty shall not overrunne hate. And if it did, in truth our state is soncke below the degree of feare. This old man, whom I leade, was lately rightfull prince of this countrie of Paphlagonia, by the hard-harted ungratefulnes of a sonne of his, deprived, not onely of his kingdome, whereof no forraine forces were ever able to spoyle him, but of his sight, the riches which nature graunts to the poorest creatures. Whereby, and by other his unnaturall dealings, he hath bin driven to such grieffe, as even now he would have had me to have led him to the toppe of this rocke, thence to cast himselfe headlong to death : and so would have made me, who received my life of him, to be the worker of his destruction. But, noble gentlemen, said he, if either of you have a father, and feele what duetifull affection is engrafted in a sonnes hart, let me intreate you to convey this afflicted Prince to some place of rest and securitie. Amongst your worthie actes it shall be none of the least, that a king, of such might and fame, and so unjustly oppressed, is in any sort by you relieved. But before they could make him answere, his father began to speake ;—Ah, my sonne, said he, how evill an historian are you, that leave out the chiefe knotte of all the discourse ; my wickednes, my wickednes. And if thou doest it to spare my eares, the onely sense nowe left me proper for knowledge, assure thy selfe thou dost mistake me ; and I take witness of that sunne which you see ; with that he cast up his blinde eyes, as if he would hunt for

light ; and wish my selfe in worse ease then I do wish my selfe, which is as evill as may be, if I speake untruely ; that nothing is so welcome to my thoughts, as the publishing of my shame. Therefore, know you, gentlemen, to whom from my harte I wish that it may not prove ominous foretoken of misfortune to have mette with such a miser as I am, that whatsoever my sonne—O God, that truth binds me to reproch him with the name of my sonne !—hath said, is true. But, besides those truthes, this also is true ; that, having had in lawful mariage, of a mother fitte to beare royall children, this sonne, such one as partly you see, and better shall knowe by my shorte declaration, and so enjoyed the expectations in the world of him, till he was growen to justifie their expectations—so as I needed envie no father for the chiefe comfort of mortalitie, to leave an other oncs-selfe after me—I was caried by a bastarde sonne of mine—if, at least, I be bounde to believe the words of that base woman my concubine, his mother—first to mislike, then to hate, lastly, to destroy, to doo my best to destroy, this sonne, I thinke you thinke, undeserving destruction. What waies he used to bring me to it, if I should tell you, I should tediously trouble you with as much poysonous hypocrisie, desperate fraude, smoothe malice, hidden ambition, and smiling envie, as in any living person could be harbored. But I list it not, no remembrance—no, of naughtines—delights me, but mine owne : and, me thinks, the accusing his traines might in some manner excuse my fault, which certainly I loth to doo. But the conclusion is, that I gave order to some servants of mine, whom I thought as apte for such charities as my selfe, to leade him out into a forrest, and there to kill him. But those theeves, better natured to my sonne then my selfe, spared his life, letting him goe, to learne to live poorely ; which he did, giving himselfe to be a private souldier, in a countrie hereby. But as he was redy to be greatly advaunced for some noble peeces of service which he did, he hearde newes of me ; who, dronke in my affection to that unlawfull and unnaturall sonne of mine, suffered my self so to be governed by him, that all favors and punishments passed by him, all offices, and places of importance, distributed to his favourites ; so that ere I was aware, I had left my self nothing but the name of a king ; which he shortly wearie of too, with many indignities—if any thing may be called an indignity which was laid upon me—threw me out of my seat, and put out my eies ; and then, proud in his tyrannie,

let me goe, neither imprisoning, nor killing me; but rather delighting to make me feeble my miserie; miserie, indeed, if ever there were any; full of wretchednes, fuller of disgrace, and fullest of guiltines. And as he came to the crowne by so unjust meanes, as unjustlie he kept it, by force of stranger souldiers in cittadels, the nestes of tyranny, and murderers of libertie; disarming all his own countrimen, that no man durst shew himself a well-willer of mine; to say the trueth, I think, few of them being so, considering my cruell follie to my good sonne, and foolish kindnes to my unkinde bastard; but if there were any who fell to pitie of so great a fall, and had yet any sparkes of unstained duety left in them towards me, yet durst they not shewe it, scarcely with giving me almes at their doores; which yet was the onelie sustenance of my distressed life, no bodie daring to shewe so much charitie, as to lende me a hande to guide my darke steppes; till this sonne of mine—God knowes, woorthie of a more vertuous, and more fortunate father—forgetting my abhominable wrongs, not reeking danger, and neglecting the present good way he was in doing himselfe good, came hether to doo this kind office you see him performe towards me, to my unspeakable griefe; not onely because his kindnes is a glasse, even to my blind eyes, of my naughtines, but that above all griefes, it grieves me he should desperatly adventure the losse of his soule-deserving life for mine, that yet owe more to fortune for my deserts, as if he would eary muddle in a chest of christall. For well I know, he that now raigeth, how much soever, and with good reason, he despiseth me, of all men despised; yet he will not let slippe any advantage to make away him, whose just title, ennobled by courage and goodnes, may one day shake the seate of a never seure tyrannie. And for this cause I eraved of him to leade me to the toppe of this roeke, indeede I must confesse, with meaning to free him from so serpentine a companion as I am. But he finding what I purposed, onelie therein since he was borne, shewed himselfe disobedient unto me. And now, gentlemen, you have the true storie, which I pray you publish to the world, that my mischievous proceedinges may be the glorie of his filiall pietie, the onely reward now left for so great a merite. And if it may be, let me obtaine that of you, which my sonne denies me: for never was there more pity in saving any, then in ending me; both because therein my agonies shall ende, and so shall you preserve this excellent young man, who els wilfully followes his

owne ruine. The matter, in it self lamentable, lamentably expressed by the old prince—which needed not take to himselfe the gestures of pitie, since his face could not put of the markes thereof—greatly moved the two princes to compassion, which could not stay in such hearts as theirs without seeking remedie. But by and by the occasion was presented: for Plexirtus—so was the bastard called—came thether with fortie horse, onely of purpose to murder this brother; of whose coming he had soone advertisement, and thought no eyes of sufficient credite in such a matter, but his owne; and therefore came him selfe to be actor, and spectator. And as soone as he came, not regarding the weake, as he thought, garde of but two men, commaunded some of his followers to set their handes to his in the killing of Leonatus. But the young prince, though not otherwise armed but with a sworde, how falsely soever he was dealt with by others, would not betray himselfe; but bravely drawing it out, made the death of the first that assaulted him, warne his fellowes to come more warily after him. But then Pyrocles and Musidorus were quickly become parties, so just a defence deserving as much as old friendship, and so did behave them among that companie, more injurious then valiant, that many of them lost their lives for their wicked maister. Yet, perhaps had the number of them at last prevailed, if the king of Pontus, lately by them made so, had not come unlooked for to their succour. Who, having had a dreame which had fixt his imagination vehemently upon some great daunger, presently to follow those two princes whom he most deerey loved, was come in all hast, following as well as he could their tracke with a hundreth horses in that countrie, which he thought, considering who then raigned, a fit place inough to make the stage of any tragedie. But then the match had ben so ill made for Plexirtus, that his ill-led life, and worse-gotten honour, should have tumbled together to destruction; had there not come in Tydeus and Telenor, with fortie or fiftie in their suit, to the defence of Plexirtus. These two were brothers, of the noblest house of that country, brought up from their fancie with Plexirtus; men of such prowesse, as not to know feare in themselves, and yet to teach it others that should dealc with them; for they had often made their lives triumph over most terrible daungers; never dismayed, and ever fortunate; and truely no more settled in their valure, then disposed to goodnessc and justice, if either they had lighted on a better friend, or could have learned to

make friendship a child, and not the father vertue. But bringing up rather then choise having first knit their minds unto him—indeed, craftie inough, eyther to hide his faultes, or never to shew them, but when they might pay home—they willingly held out the course, rather to satisfie him, then al the world; and rather to be good friendes then good men; so, as though they did not like the evill he did, yet they liked him that did the evill; and, though not councellors of the offence, yet protectors of the offender. Now, they having heard of this sodaine going out, with so small a company, in a country full of evil-wishing minds toward him, though they knew not the cause, followed him; till they found him in such case as they were to venture their lives, or else he to loose his; which they did with such foree of minde and bodie, that truly I may justly say, Pyrocles and Musidorus had never till then found any that could make them so well repeate their hardest lesson in the feates of armes. And briefly so they did, that, if they overcame not, yet were they not overcome, but earied away that ungratefull maister of theirs to a place of securitie; howsoever the princes laboured to the contrary. But this matter being thus far begun, it became not the constancie of the princes so to leave it; but in all hast making forces both in Pontus and Phrygia, they had in fewe dayes lefte him but only that one strong place where he was. For feare having bene the onely knot that had fastned his people unto him, that once untied by a greater force, they all scattered from him, like so many birdes, whose cage had bene broken. In which season the blind king, having in the chief cittie of his realme set the crowne upon his sonne Leonatus head, with many teares, both of joy and sorrow, setting forth to the whole people his owne fault and his sonnes vertue, after he had kist him, and forst his sonne to aaccept honour of him, as of his newe-become subject, even in a moment died, as it should seeme; his hart, broken with unkindnes and affliction, stretched so farre beyond his limits with this excesse of eomfort, as it was able no longer to keep safe his roial spirits. But the new king, having no lesse lovingly performed all duties to him dead then alive, pursued on the siege of his unnatural brother, as much for the revenge of his father, as for the establishing of his owne quiet. In which seige, truly I cannot but acknowledge the prowessse of those two brothers, then whom the princes never found in all their travell two men of greater habilitie to performe, nor of habler skill for conduct. But

Plexirtus, finding that, if nothing els, famine would at last bring him to destruction, thought better by humbleness to creepe, where by pride he could not march. For certainly so had nature formed him, and the exercise of craft conformed him to all turnings of sleights, that, though no man had lesse goodnes in his soule then he, no man could better find the plaeces whence arguments might grow of goodnesse to another ; though no man felt lesse pitie, no man could tel better how to stir pitie ; no man more impudent to deny, where proofes were not manifest ; no man more ready to confesse with a repenting maner of aggravating his owne evil, where denial would but make the fault fowler. Now, he tooke this way, that, having gotten a passport for one, that pretended he would put Plexirtus alive into his hands, to speak with the king his brother, he him selfe, though much against the minds of the valiant brothers, who rather wished to die in brave defence, with a rope about his necke, barefooted, came to offer himselfe to the discretion of Leonatus. Where what submission he used, how cunningly in making greater the faulte he made the faultines the lesse, how artificially he could set out the torments of his owne conscience, with the burdensome comber he had found of his ambitious desires ; how finely seeming to desire nothing but death, as ashamed to live, he begged life in the refusing it, I am not cunning enough to be able to expresse : but so fell out of it, that though, at first sight, Leonatus saw him with no other eie then as the murderer of his father ; and anger already began to paint revenge in many colours, ere long he had not only gotten pitie, but pardon ; and if not an excuse of the fault past, yet an opinion of a future amendment ; while the poore villaines—chiefe ministers of his wickednes, now betrayed by the author therof,—were delivered to many cruell sorts of death ; he so handling it, that it rather seemed, he had rather come into the defence of an unremediable mischief already committed, then that they had done it at first by his consent. In such sort the princes left these reoneiled brothers, Plexirtus in all his behaviour carrying him in far lower degree of service than the ever-noble nature of Leonatus would suffer him, and taking likewise their leaves of their good friend the king of Pontus, who returned to enjoy their benefite, both of his wife and kingdome, they privately went thence, having onely with them the two valiant brothers, who would needs accompanie them through divers plaeces ; they foure dooing aetes more dangerous, though

21.º May 1639.
Mr. Fletcher. Entered over unto him by vertue
of a note under the hand and
seale of Mr. Butcher, subscribed
by both the wardens and also
by order of a full Court holden the
Eleventh day of May last. All
the Estate right title & interest
with the said Mr. Butcher hath in
these Copies and parts of Copies
following (vizt.) *saluo iure* —
ruinfrang } *C.º. 17.º.*

The history of King Lear. by ^{William} ~~John~~ Shakespeare

22.º Aprilio 1640.
Mr. Oulton. Entered for his Copies by order of
a full Court holden the
day of Anno D. in
All these Copies following which
lately did belong unto Mr. —
tho his mother in Law deceased
saluo iure & *ruinfrang* } *C.º. 17.º.*
Lear & his 3. daughters

9th of April 1655.
Mr. W. Gilbertson Entered for his Copies by vertue of an Assize
and the cause & state of Edward Wright the books
or Copies following. *vizt.*
1 The Tragical history of King Lear, & his
3 Daughters.

lesse famous, because they were but privat chivalries ; till hearing of the faire and vertuous Queen Erona of Lycia, besieged by the puissant king of Armenia, they bent themselves to her succour, both because the weaker, and weaker as being a ladie, and partly, because they heard the king of Armenia had in his company three of the most famous men living for matters of armes that were knowne to be in the worlde. Whereof one was the Princee Plangus—whose name was sweetened by your breath, peerlesse ladie, when the last daie it pleased you to mention him unto me,—the other two were two great princes, though holding of him, Barzanes and Euardes, men of giant-like both hugenes and force ; in which two espeially the trust the king had of vitory was reposed. And of them, those two brothers Tydeus and Telenor, suffieient judges in warlike matters, spake so high commendations, that the two young princes had even a youthfull longing to have some triall of their vertue. And, therefore, as soone as they were entred into Lyeia, they joyned themselves with them that faithfully served the poore queene, at that time besieged ; and, ere long, animated in such sort their almost overthrowne harts, that they went by force to relieve the towne, though they were deprived of a great part of their strength by the parting of the two brothers, who were sent for in all haste to returne to their old friend and maister, Plexirtus, who, willingly hood-winking themselves from seeing his faultes, and binding themselves to beleeve what he said, often abused the vertue of courage to defend his fowle vice of injustice. But now they were sent for to advaunce a conquest he was about ; while Pyrocles and Musidorus pursued the deliverie of the Queene Erona.”

It appears nearly certain that the old drama of 1594 and this tale are the only direct sources for the plot of Shakespeare's play. The story of Lear appeared in so many books, and must have been so familiar to the great dramatist, it is unnecessary to assume that trifling incidents were adopted from any particuar version of the history, unless, as is the case with the two sources just alluded to, the obligation is apparent. The elder drama is accessible in the common reprint made by Steevens from the only known edition of 1605. In April, 1655, the copyright of this play was entered to William Gilbertson “by vertue of an assignment under the hand and seale of Edward Wright ;” but it does not appear to have been republished in the seventeenth century. There is another entry in the Stationers' Registers, under the

date of April the 22nd, 1640, an explanation of which is rather difficult. On that day was entered to one Mr. Oulton a copy of "Lear and his three daughters," which, it is stated, "lately did belong unto Mrs. Aldee, his mother-in-law deceased." This entry certainly refers neither to the elder play nor to Shakespeare's. It may possibly have reference to some prose version of the story of Lear.

There is an old black-letter ballad entitled, a Lamentable Song of the Death of King Leir and his Three Daughters, which is chiefly founded on the story as related by Holinshed, but written also with a recollection of Shakespeare's tragedy. This ballad was probably issued early in the seventeenth century, although no copy of so ancient a date is now known to exist. It cannot of course be reckoned amongst the materials used by Shakespeare, unless it be supposed, as it is by some critics, to be anterior at least to the year 1608. It is far more likely to have been written in consequence of the popularity of the tragedy.

Shakespeare's tragedy of Lear was not written until after the appearance of Harsnet's Declaration, in 1603, for the names of some of the fiends mentioned by Edgar in the course of his assumed madness are undoubtedly taken from that work. It is not unlikely that the old play of Lear was issued in 1605 in consequence of the popularity of Shakespeare's drama, produced perhaps in that year, and in consequence of a copy of the latter not being obtainable. However this may be, it is at least certain that Shakespeare's tragedy was acted before the Court at Whitehall on December 26th, 1606, as appears from the following entry on the books of the Stationers' Company under the date of 26 November, 1607,—“Na. Butter, Jo. Busby—Entred for their copie under thandes of Sir Geo: Buek, knight, and wardens, a booke called, Mr. William Shakespeare his historye of Kinge Lear, as yt was played before the kinges majestie at Whitehall uppon St. Stephans night at Christmas last, by his majesties servantes playinge usually at the Globe and the Banksyde.” Two editions, both printed for Nathaniel Butter, appeared in the following year, 1608. The rarest of these, and the one generally considered to be the earliest, bears the following title,—“M. William Shak-speare: His True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King Lear and his three Daughters. With the unfortunate life of Edgar, sonne and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his sullen and assumed

humor of Tom of Bedlam : As it was played before the Kings Maiestie at Whitehall upon S. Stephans night in Christmas Hollidayes. By his Maiesties servants playing usually at the Gloabe on the Bancke-side. London. Printed for Nathaniel Butter, and are to be sold at his shop in Pauls Church-yard at the signe of the Pide Bull neere St. Austins Gate. 1608." The other edition of the same date has precisely the same title, with the exception that the place of sale is omitted in the imprint,—“M. William Shake-speare, his True Chronicle History of the life and death of King Lear, and his three Daughters. With the unfortunate life of Edgar, sonne and heire to the Earle of Glocester, and his sullen and assumed humour of Tom of Bedlam. As it was plaid before the Kings Maicsty at White-Hall, up-pon S. Stephans night, in Christmas Hollidaies. By his Maiesties Servants, playing usually at the Globe, on the Banckside. Printed for *Nathaniel Butter*. 1608.” In the title-pages of both editions, Shakespeare’s name is printed very conspicuously in a single line at the top—*M. William Shak-speare* in the first, and *M. William Shake-speare* in the second; a circumstance which seems to justify Mr. Collier’s conclusion from it of the popularity the great dramatist had then attained. In the first copy of the date of 1608, the signatures of the text run from B. to L. 4; in the second, from A. 2 to L. 4. It has been generally stated that there were three distinct impressions of the date of 1608, but a careful examination of every available copy has convinced me that this is not the case. It has, however, elicited the singular fact that while all the copies of the second impression of 1608 exactly correspond, no two copies of the first have yet been found which contain precisely the same text, although evidently printed from one set of forms. It appears that the forms used for the first impression were kept standing, and that alterations were made upon the printing of each small issue of copies. The tragedy was not reprinted between 1608 and 1623, and the copy in the folio appears to have been taken from a playhouse transcript, in which large portions of the drama were omitted. It contains, however, a few passages not found in the quartos. A late reprint from the second quarto of 1608 appeared in 1655, “printed by Jane Bell, and are to be sold at the East-end of Christ Church. 1655.” This edition was no doubt a piratical one, for Butter assigned his interest in Shakespeare’s tragedy to Mr. Flesher in May, 1639,—“21^o Maij, 1639. *Mr. Flesher*—assigned over

unto him by vertue of a note under the hand and seale of Mr. Butter, subscribed by both the wardens, and alsoe by order of a full court holden the eleventh day of May last, all the estate, right, title and interest which the said Mr. Butter hath in the history of King Lear by William Shakspeare." This Flesher held the copyright of the play when it was altered by Tate, whose barbarous version was "printed for E. Flesher" in 1681.

The text of King Lear is necessarily in an unsatisfactory state, there being no reasonable choice but to form an eclectic text from the quartos and folios, neither of which contain accurate copies of the author's manuscript. It may be feared that there are defects of omission and arrangement which in all probability will never be corrected; and that this tragedy, noble as it is in its present state, is not that perfect masterpiece which left the hands of its author.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

LEAR, *King of Britain.*

King of France.

Duke of Burgundy.

Duke of Cornwall.

Duke of Albany.

Earl of Kent.

Earl of Gloster.

EDGAR, *Son to Gloster.*

EDMUND, *Bastard Son to Gloster.*

CURAN, *a Courtier.*

OSWALD, *Steward to Goneril.*

Old Man, Tenant to Gloster.

Physician.

Fool.

An Officer, employed by Edmund.

Gentleman, Attendant on Cordelia.

A Herald.

Servants to Cornwall.

GONERIL,	}	<i>Daughters to Lear.</i>
REGAN,		
CORDELIA,		

Knights of Lear's train, Officers, Messengers, Soldiers, and Attendants.

SCENE,—Britain.

Act the First.

SCENE I.—*A Room of State in King LEAR'S Palace.*

Enter KENT, GLOSTER, and EDMUND.

Kent. I thought, the king had more affected the duke of Albany, than Cornwall.

Glo. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom,¹ it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for equalities are so weighed, that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.²

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glo. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to it.

Kent. I cannot conceive you.

Glo. Sir, this young fellow's mother could; whereupon she grew round-womb'd, and had, indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

Glo. But I have a son, sir, by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: though this knave came somewhat saucily into the world, before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair, there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged.—Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edm. No, my lord.

Glo. My lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My serviecs to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Glo. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again.—
The king is coming. [*Sennet within.*]

Enter LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN,
CORDELIA, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloster.

Glo. I shall, my liege. [*Exeunt* GLOSTER *and* EDMUND.]

Lear. Mean-time we shall express our darker purpose.
Give me the map there.—Know, that we have divided,
In three, our kingdom; and 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age,
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburden'd crawl toward death.—Our son of Cornwall,
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy,
Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd.—Tell me, my daughters,—
Since now we will divest us, both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state—
Which of you, shall we say, doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge.—Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.

Gon. Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter;
Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour:³
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found;
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cor. What shall Cordelia do? Love, and be silent. [*Aside.*]

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,

With shadowy forests, and with champains rich'd,
 With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
 We make thee lady : to thine and Albany's issue
 Be this perpetual.—What says our second daughter,
 Our dearest Regan, wife of Cornwall? Speak.

Reg. I am made of that self metal as my sister,
 And prize me at her worth.⁴ In my true heart
 I find, she names my very deed of love ;
 Only she comes too short, that I profess
 Myself an enemy to all other joys,
 Which the most precious square of sense possesses,⁵
 And find, I am alone felicitate
 In your highness' love.

Cor. Then, poor Cordelia !
 And yet not so ; since, I am sure, my love's
 More richer than my tongue.⁶

[*Aside.*

Lear. To thee, and thine, hereditary ever,
 Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom ;
 No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
 Than that conferr'd on Goneril.—Now, our joy,
 Although the last, not least ; to whose young love
 The vines of France, and milk of Burgundy,
 Strive to be interest'd ;⁷ what can you say, to draw
 A third more opulent than your sisters ? Speak.

Cor. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing ?

Cor. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing will come of nothing : speak again.

Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
 My heart into my mouth : I love your majesty
 According to my bond ; nor more, nor less.

Lear. How ? how, Cordelia ? mend your speech a little,
 Lest you may mar your fortunes.

Cor. Good my lord,
 You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me : I
 Return those duties baek as are right fit,
 Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
 Why have my sisters husbands, if they say,
 They love you, all ? Haply, when I shall wed,
 That lord, whose hand must take my plight, shall carry
 Half my love with him, half my care and duty :

Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

Lear. But goes this with thy heart?

Cor. Ay, good my lord.

Lear. So young, and so untender?

Cor. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so: thy truth, then, be thy dower;
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night,
By all the operation of the orbs,
From whom we do exist, and cease to be,
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me,
Hold thee from this for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
As thou my sometime daughter.

Kent. Good my liege,—

Lear. Peace, Kent!

Come not between the dragon and his wrath.
I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery.—Hence, and avoid my sight!^s—

[*To CORDELIA.*]

So be my grave my peace, as here I give
Her father's heart from her!—Call France.—Who stirs?
Call Burgundy.—Cornwall, and Albany,
With my two daughters' dowers digest the third:
Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
I do invest you jointly with my power,
Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
That troop with majesty,—Ourself, by monthly course,
With reservation of an hundred knights,
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
Make with you by due turns. Only, we still retain
The name, and all th' additions to a king;
The sway, revenue, execution of the rest,
Beloved sons, be yours: which to confirm,
This coronet part between you. [*Giving the Crown.*]

Kent. Royal Lear,

Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
 Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
 As my great patron thought on in my prayers,—

Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from the shaft.

Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade⁹
 The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly,
 When Lear is mad.—What would'st thou do, old man?
 Think'st thou,¹⁰ that duty shall have dread to speak,
 When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's bound,
 When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom;
 And in thy best consideration eheck
 This hideous rashness: answer my life my judgment,
 Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least;
 Nor are those empty-hearted, whose low sound
 Reverbs no hollowness.

Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.

Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
 To wage against thine enemies;¹¹ nor fear to lose it,
 Thy safety being the motive.

Lear. Out of my sight!

Kent. See better, Lear; and let me still remain
 The true blank of thine eye.¹²

Lear. Now, by Apollo,—

Kent. Now, by Apollo, king,
 Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.

Lear. O, vassal! reereant!

[*Laying his hand upon his Sword.*]

Alb. Corn. Dear sir, forbear.

Kent. Do;
 Kill thy physieian, and the fee bestow
 Upon the foul disease. Revoke thy gift;
 Or, whilst I can vent elamour from my throat,
 I'll tell thee, thou dost evil.

Lear. Hear me, reereant!
 On thine allegianee hear me.
 Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,—
 Which we durst never yet—and, with strain'd pride,
 To come betwixt our sentenee and our power,—
 Which nor our nature nor our place can bear—
 Our potency made good,¹³ take thy reward.
 Five days we do allot thee for provision
 To shield thee from diseases of the world,

And on the sixth to turn thy hated back
 Upon our kingdom : if on the tenth day following,
 Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
 The moment is thy death. Away ! By Jupiter,
 This shall not be revok'd.

Kent. Fare thee well, king : since thus thou wilt appear,
 Freedom lives hence,¹⁴ and banishment is here.—
 The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid, [*To CORDELIA.*
 That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said !—
 And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
[*To REGAN and GONERIL.*
 That good effects may spring from words of love.—
 Thus Kent, O princes ! bids you all adieu ;
 He'll shape his old course in a country new. [*Exit.*

Flourish. *Re-enter* GLOSTER ; *with* FRANCE, BURGUNDY, *and*
 Attendants.

Glo. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.

Lear. My lord of Burgundy,
 We first address toward you, who with this king
 Hath rivall'd for our daughter : what, in the least,
 Will you require in present dower with her,
 Or cease your quest of love ?

Bur. Most royal majesty,
 I crave no more than hath your highness offer'd,
 Nor will you tender less.

Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
 When she was dear to us, we did hold her so ;
 But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands :
 If aught within that little seeming substance,
 Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
 And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
 She's there, and she is yours.

Bur. I know no answer.

Lear. Will you, with those infirmities she owes,
 Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
 Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
 Take her, or leave her ?

Bur. Pardon me, royal sir ;
 Election makes not up on such conditions.¹⁵

Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that made me,
I tell you all her wealth.—For you, great king, [To FRANCE.
I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate: therefore, beseech you
T' avert your liking a more worthier way,
Than on a wretch whom nature is asham'd
Almost t' acknowledge hers.

France. This is most strange,
That she, that even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
Most best, most dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favour. Sure, her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree,
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fall'n into taint: which to believe of her,
Must be a faith that reason, without miracle,
Could never plant in me.

Cor. I yet beseech your majesty,—
If for I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not, since what I well intend,
I'll do't before I speak—that you make known
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,¹⁶
No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour;
But even for want of that for which I am richer,
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
That I am glad I have not, though not to have it,
Hath lost me in your liking.

Lear. Better thou
Hadst not been born, than not to have pleas'd me better.

France. Is it but this? a tardiness in nature,
Which often leaves the history unspoke,
That it intends to do?—My lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love is not love,
When it is mingled with respects, that stand
Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.

Bur. Royal Lear,
Give but that portion which yourself propos'd,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Nothing : I have sworn ; I am firm.

Bur. I am sorry, then, you have so lost a father,
That you must lose a husband.

Cor. Peace be with Burgundy :
Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.

France. Fairest Cordelia, thou art most rich, being poor,
Most choicè, forsaken, and most lov'd, despis'd,—
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon :
Be it lawful, I take up what's east away.
Gods, gods ! 'tis strange, that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflam'd respect.—
Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France :
Not all the dukes of waterish Burgundy
Shall buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me.—
Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind :
Thou lovest here, a better where to find.

Lear. Thou hast her, France : let her be thine, for we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
That face of hers again :—therefore, be gone
Without our grace, our love, our benison.—
Come, noble Burgundy.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt* LEAR, BURGUNDY, CORNWALL,
ALBANY, GLOSTER, and Attendants.]

France. Bid farewell to your sisters.

Cor. Ye jewels of our father,¹⁷ with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you : I know you what you are ;
And, like a sister, am most loath to call
Your faults as they are nam'd. Love well our father :
To your professed bosoms I commit him ;
But yet, alas ! stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So, farewell to you both.

Gon. Prescribe not us our duty.

Reg. Let your study
Be to content your lord, who hath receiv'd you
As Fortune's alms :¹⁸ you have obedience seanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

Cor. Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides ;
Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.¹⁹
Well may you prosper !

France.

Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt* FRANCE and CORDELIA.]

Gon. Sister, it is not little I have to say of what most nearly appertains to us both. I think, our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That's most certain, and with you; next month with us.

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it hath not been little: he always loved our sister most, and with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off, appears too grossly.

Reg. 'Tis the infirmity of his age; yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash; then, must we look to receive from his age, not alone the imperfections of long-engrafted condition, but, therewithal, the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him, as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is farther compliment of leave-taking between France and him. Pray you, let us hit together: if our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

Reg. We shall farther think of it.

Gon. We must do something, and i' the heat. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Earl of GLOSTER's Castle.*

Enter EDMUND, *with a letter.*

Edm. Thou, Nature, art my goddess;²⁰ to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom,²¹ and permit
The curiosity of nations²² to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base,
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?

Who in the lusty stealth of nature take
 More composition and fierce quality,
 Than doth within a dull, stale, tired bed,
 Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
 Got 'tween asleep and wake?—Well then,
 Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
 Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund,
 As to the legitimate. Fine word,—legitimate!
 Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
 And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
 Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:—
 Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Kent banish'd thus! And France in choler parted!
 And the king gone to-night! prescribed his power!²³
 Confin'd to exhibition! All this done
 Upon the gad!²⁴—Edmund, How now! what news?

Edm. So please your lordship, none. [*Putting up the Letter.*]

Glo. Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

Glo. What paper were you reading?

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glo. No! What needed, then, that terrible despatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see: come; if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me: it is a letter from my brother, that I have not all o'er-read; and for so much as I have perused, I find it not fit for your o'erlooking.

Glo. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Glo. Let's see, let's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.

Glo. [*Reads.*] “This policy, and reverence of age, makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us, till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny, who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that

of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, EDGAR."—Humph!—Conspiracy!—"Sleep till I waked him,—you should enjoy half his revenue."—My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in?—When came this to you? Who brought it?

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord; there's the cunning of it: I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

Glo. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

Glo. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; but, I hope, his heart is not in the contents.

Glo. Hath he never heretofore sounded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord: but I have often heard him maintain it to be fit, that sons at perfect age, and fathers declined, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Glo. O villain, villain!—His very opinion in the letter!—Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish!—Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him. Abominable villain!—Where is he?

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother, till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you shall run a certain course; where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no other pretence of danger.

Glo. Think you so?

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and that without any farther delay than this very evening.

Glo. He cannot be such a monster.

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Glo. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him.—Heaven and earth!—Edmund, seek him out; wind me into

him, I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself to be in a due resolution.²⁵

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently, convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Glo. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects. Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason, and the bond cracked between son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the king falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves!—Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing: do it carefully.—And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his offence, honesty!—'Tis strange. [*Exit.*]

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune—often the surfeit of our own behaviour—we make guilty of our disasters, the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools, by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers,²⁶ by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence, and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. An admirable evasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of stars! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail, and my nativity was under *ursa major*; so that, it follows, I am rough and lecherous.—Tut! I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing. Edgar—

Enter EDGAR.

and pat he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy: my cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o'Bedlam.²⁷—O! these eclipses do portend these divisions. Fa, sol, la, mi.²⁸

Edg. How now, brother Edmund! What serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself with that?

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of, succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolution of ancient amities; divisions in state; menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. Come, come; when saw you my father last?

Edg. The night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him, by word, or countenance?

Edg. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself, wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence, till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure, which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That's my fear. I pray you, have a continent forbearance, till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak. Pray you, go: there's my key.—If you do stir abroad, go armed.

Edg. Armed, brother?

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best; I am no honest man, if there be any good meaning towards you: I have told you what I have seen and heard, but faintly; nothing like the image and horror of it. Pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business.— [Exit EDGAR.
A credulous father, and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none, on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy!—I see the business.—
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me's meet, that I can fashion fit. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Duke of ALBANY'S Palace.*

Enter GONERIL, and OSWALD her Steward.

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

Osw. Ay, madam.

Gon. By day and night he wrongs me : every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other,
That sets us all at odds : I'll not endure it.
His knights grew riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle.—When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him ; say, I am sick :
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well ; the fault of it I'll answer.

Osw. He's coming, madam ; I hear him. [Horns within.]

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows ; I'd have it come to question :
If he distaste it, let him to my sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-ruled. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities,
That he hath given away !—Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again ;²⁹ and must be us'd
With checks ; as flatteries, when they are seen, abus'd.
Remember what I have said.

Osw. Well, madam.

Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among you.
What grows of it, no matter ; advise your fellows so :
I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak :—I'll write straight to my sister,
To hold my course.—Prepare for dinner. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in the Same.**Enter KENT, disguised.*

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech diffuse,³⁰ my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I raz'd my likeness.—Now, banish'd Kent,
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,—
So may it come!—thy master, whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labours.

Horns within. Enter LEAR, Knights, and Attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner: go, get it ready.
[*Exit an Attendant.*] How now! what art thou?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess? What wouldest thou with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise, and says little; to fear judgment; to fight when I cannot choose, and to eat no fish.³¹

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject, as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldest thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Whom wouldest thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance, which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing; nor so old, to dote on her for any thing: I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me: if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet.—Dinner, ho! dinner!—Where's my knave? my fool? Go you, and call my fool hither.

Enter OSWALD.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter?

Osw. So please you,— [*Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clodpole back.—Where's my fool, ho?—I think the world's asleep.—How now! where's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me, when I called him?

Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not!

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgment, your highness is not entertained with that eeremonious affection as you were wont: there's a great abatement of kindness appears, as well in the general dependants, as in the duke himself also, and your daughter.

Lear. Ha! sayest thou so?

Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent, when I think your highness wronged.

Lear. Thou but rememberest me of mine own conception. I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity, than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness: I will look farther into't.—But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the fool hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well.—Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her.—Go you, call hither my fool.—

Re-enter OSWALD.

O! you sir, you sir, come you hither. Who am I, sir?

Osw. My lady's father.

Lear. My lady's father! my lord's knave: you whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

Osw. I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal?

[*Striking him.*

Osw. I'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripped neither, you base foot-ball player.³²

[*Tripping up his Heels.*

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou servest me, and I'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away! I'll teach you differences: away, away! If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry; but away! Go to: have you wisdom? so.

[*Pushes OSWALD out.*

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there's earnest of thy service.

[*Giving KENT Money.*

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too:—here's my coxcomb.

[*Giving KENT his Cap.*

Lear. How now, my pretty knave! how dost thou?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. Why? For taking one's part that's out of favour.—Nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold shortly: there, take my coxcomb.³³ Why, this fellow has banished two on's daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will: if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb.—How now, nuncle!³⁴ Would I had two coxcombs,³⁵ and two daughters!

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. If I gave them all my living, I'd keep my coxcombs myself. There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.³⁶

Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.

Fool. Truth's a dog must to kennel: he must be whipped out, when the lady brach³⁷ may stand by the fire and stink.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me.

Fool. Sirrah, I'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nunele.—

Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest,
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,
Set less than thou throwest ;
Leave thy drink and thy whore,
And keep in-a-door,
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.

Lear. This is nothing, fool.

Fool. Then, 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer ; you gave me nothing for't. Can you make no use of nothing, nunele ?

Lear. Why, no, boy ; nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. Pr'ythee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to : he will not believe a fool.

Lear. A bitter fool !

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet one ?

Lear. No, lad ; teach me.

Fool. That lord, that counsell'd thee
To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me ;
Do thou for him stand :
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear ;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy ?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away, that thou wast born with.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

Fool. No, 'faith ; lords and great men will not let me : if I had a monopoly out,³⁸ they would have part on't, and loads too : they will not let me have all fool to myself ; they'll be snatching.—Give me an egg, nunele, and I'll give thee two crowns.

Lear. What two crowns shall they be?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i' the middle, and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou elovest thy crown i' the middle, and gavest away both parts, thou borest thine ass on thy back³⁹ o'er the dirt: thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown, when thou gavest thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipped that first finds it so.

*Fools had ne'er less grace in a year;*⁴⁰ [Singing.
For wise men are grown foppish;
And know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish.

Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, ever since thou madest thy daughters thy mothers: for, when thou gavest them the rod and putt'st down thine own breeches,

*Then they for sudden joy did weep,*⁴¹ [Singing.
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among.

Pr'ythee, nuncle, keep a school-master that can teach thy fool to lie: I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipped.

Fool. I marvel, what kin thou and thy daughters are: they'll have me whipped for speaking true, thou'lt have me whipped for lying; and sometimes I am whipped for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o'thing than a fool; and yet I would not be thee, nuncle: thou hast pared thy wit o'both sides, and left nothing i' the middle. Here comes one o' the parings.

Enter GONERIL.

Lear. How now, daughter! what makes that frontlet⁴² on? Methinks, you are too much of late i'the frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow, when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure.⁴³ I am better than thou art now: I am a fool; thou art nothing.— Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue! so your face [*To GON.*] bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum:

He that keeps nor crust nor erum,
 Weary of all, shall want some.—

That's a shealed peascod.⁴⁴

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd fool,
 But other of your insolent retinue
 Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth
 In rank, and not-to-be-endured, riots. Sir,
 I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
 To have found a safe redress, but now grow fearful,
 By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
 That you protect this course, and put it on,
 By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
 Would not scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
 Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,
 Might in their working do you that offence,
 Which else were shame, that then necessity
 Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For you trow, nuncle,

The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
 That it had its head bit off by its young.

So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. I would, you would make use of your good wisdom,
 Whereof I know you are fraught, and put away
 These dispositions, which of late transform you
 From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse?
 —Whoop, Jug! I love thee.⁴⁵

Lear. Does any here know me?—Why, this is not Lear:
 does Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
 Either his notion weakens, or his discernings are lethargied.—
 Sleeping or waking?—Ha! sure 'tis not so.—Who is it that can
 tell me who I am?—Lear's shadow? I would learn that; for
 by the marks of sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should
 be false persuaded I had daughters.

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the favour
 Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
 To understand my purposes aright,
 As you are old and reverend, should be wise.
 Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
 Men so disorder'd, so debauch'd and bold,
 That this our court, infected with their manners,

Shows like a riotous inn : epicurism and lust
 Make it more like a tavern or a brothel,
 Than a grac'd palace. The shame itself doth speak
 For instant remedy : be, then, desir'd
 By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
 A little to disquantity your train ;
 And the remainder, that shall still depend,
 To be such men as may besort your age,
 Which know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils !—
 Saddle my horses ; call my train together.—
 Degenerate bastard ! I'll not trouble thee :
 Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people ; and your disorder'd rabble
 Make servants of their betters.

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents,—O, sir ! [*To ALB.*] are you
 come ?
 Is it your will ? Speak, sir.—Prepare my horses.
 Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
 More hideous, when thou show'st thee in a child,
 Than the sea-monster !

Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.

Lear. Detested kite ! thou liest : [*To GONERIL.*]
 My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
 That all particulars of duty know,
 And in the most exact regard support
 The worships of their name.—O, most small fault !
 How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show,
 Which, like an engine,⁴⁶ wrench'd my frame of nature
 From the fix'd place, drew from my heart all love,
 And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear !
 Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in, [*Striking his head.*]
 And thy dear judgment out !—Go, go, my people.

Alb. My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant
 Of what hath mov'd you.

Lear. It may be so, my lord.—
 Hear, nature, hear ! dear goddess, hear !
 Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
 To make this creature fruitful !

Into her womb convey sterility !
 Dry up in her the organs of increase ;
 And from her derogate body⁴⁷ never spring
 A babe to honour her ! If she must teem,
 Create her child of spleen ; that it may live,
 And be a thwart⁴⁸ disnatur'd⁴⁹ torment to her !
 Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth ;
 With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks ;
 Turn all her mother's pains, and benefits,
 To laughter and contempt ; that she may feel
 How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
 To have a thankless child !—Away ! away !

[*Exit.*]

Alb. Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this ?

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause ;
 But let his disposition have that scope
 That dotage gives it.

Re-enter LEAR.

Lear. What ! fifty of my followers, at a clap,
 Within a fortnight ?

Alb. What's the matter, sir ?

Lear. I'll tell thee.—Life and death ! [*To GONERIL.*] I am
 ashamed,
 That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus :
 That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
 Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs upon thee !
 Th' untented woundings⁵⁰ of a father's curse
 Pierce every sense about thee !—Old fond eyes,
 Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck you out,
 And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
 To temper clay.—Ha !
 Let it be so :—I have another daughter,
 Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable :
 When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
 She'll flay thy wolfish visage. Thou shalt find,
 That I'll resume the shape, which thou dost think
 I have cast off for ever. [*Exeunt LEAR, KENT, and Attendants.*]

Gon. Do you mark that, my lord ?

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
 To the great love I bear you,—

Gon. Pray you, content.—What, Oswald, ho!
You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master. [*To the Fool.*]

Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear! tarry, and take the fool with thee.

A fox, when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter;
So the fool follows after.

[*Exit.*]

Gon. This man hath had good counsel.—A hundred knights!

'Tis politic, and safe, to let him keep
At point a hundred knights: yes, that on every dream,
Each buz, each faney, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
And hold our lives in mercy.—Oswald, I say!—

Alb. Well, you may fear too far.

Gon. Safer than trust too far.

Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be taken: I know his heart.
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister:
If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
When I have show'd th' unfitness,—how now, Oswald?

Re-enter OSWALD.

What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

Osw. Ay, madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse:
Inform her full of my particu'lar fear;
And thereto add such reasons of your own,
As may compact it more. Get you gone,
And hasten your return. [*Exit Osw.*] No, no, my lord,
This milky gentleness, and course of yours,
Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attask'd⁵¹ for want of wisdom,
Than prais'd for harmless mildness.

Alb. How far your eyes may pierce, I cannot tell:
Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

Gon. Nay, then—

Alb. Well, well; the event.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*Court before the Same.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.

Lear. Go you before to Gloster⁵² with these letters. Acquaint my daughter no farther with any thing you know, than comes from her demand out of the letter. If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there before you.

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered your letter. [*Exit.*

Fool. If a man's brains were in's heels, were't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then, I pr'ythee, be merry; thy wit shall not go slipshod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see, thy other daughter will use thee kindly; for though she's as like as this, as a crab is like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

Lear. What canst tell, boy?

Fool. She will taste as like this, as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' the middle on's face.

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose; that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong.—

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house?

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put his head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a ease.

Lear. I will forget my nature.—So kind a father!—Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight?

Fool. Yes, indeed. Thou wouldest make a good fool.

Lear. To take it again perforee!—Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How's that?

Fool. Thou shouldst not have been old before thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!
Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!—

Enter Gentleman.

How now! Are the horses ready?

Gent. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy.

Fool. She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter. [*Exeunt.*

Notes to the First Act.

¹ *In the division of the kingdom.*

There is something of obscurity or inaccuracy in this preparatory scene. The king has already divided his kingdom, and yet when he enters he examines his daughters, to discover in what proportions he should divide it. Perhaps Kent and Gloster only were privy to his design, which he still kept in his own hands, to be changed or performed as subsequent reasons should determine him.—*Johnson.*

A needless note. It is clear that his two councillors, Kent and Gloster, are talking of the division he has proposed in the secrecy of his council board, and afterwards he opens his hidden (*darke*) meaning to those whom it concerned (his sons and daughters), before ignorant of it.—*Anon.*

² *Of either's moiety.*

The strict sense of the word *moiety* is *half, one of two equal parts*; but Shakspeare commonly uses it for *any part or division* :—

Methinks my *moiety* north from Burton here,
In quantity equals not one of yours :

and here the *division* was into *three parts*.—*Steevens.*

Heywood likewise uses the word *moiety* as synonymous to *any part or portion* : “I would willingly part with the greatest *moiety* of my own means and fortunes,” *Hystory of Women*, 1624. See Henry IV. Part I. Act III. Sc. I.—*Malone.*

³ *No less than life,*

So, in Holinshed : “—he first asked Gonorilla the eldest, how well she loved him; who calling hir gods to record, protested that *she loved him more than her own life*, which by right and reason should be most decre unto hir. With which answer the father being well pleased, turned to the second, and demanded of hir how well she loved him; who answered (confirming hir saieings with great othes,) that she loved him more than toong could expresse, and farre above all other creatures of the world. Then called he his youngest daughter Cordeilla before him, and asked hir, what account she made of him; unto whom she made this

answer as followeth: Knowing the great love and fatherlie zcale that you have alwaies born towards me, (for the which I maie not answere you otherwise than I thinke and as my conscience leadeth me,) I protest unto you that I have loved you ever, and will continuallie (while I live) love you as my natural father. And if you would more understand of the love I bear you, ascertain yourself, that so much as you have, so much you are worth, and so much I love you, and no more.”—*Malone*.

⁴ *And prize me at her worth.*

Regan says that she is of the same metal as her sister, and begs to be prized at her worth, that is, equal with her as being inspired with the same degree of love.

⁵ *Which the most precious square of sense possesses.*

Square, compass, and hence metaphorically, comprehension. “The square of reason, and the mind’s clear eye,” Sterline’s *Parænesis*, 1604.

What should such an idle silly coxcombe as thyselſe doe otherwise, and all those that resemble thee? which neither see, nor attend, neither aspire nor hope, know nor see no further then their owne interests, after which *square* they measure all things.—*The Passenger of Benvenuto*, 1612.

⁶ *More vicher than my tongue.*

Dr. Warburton would have it *their* tongue, meaning her sisters’, which would be very good sense. Dr. Johnson is content with the present reading, but gives no explanation. Cordelia means to say, “My love is greater than my powers of language can express.” In like manner she soon afterwards says, “I cannot heave my heart into my mouth.”—*Douce*.

⁷ *Strive to be interest’d.*

So, in the Preface to Drayton’s *Polyolbion*: “— there is searce any of the nobilitie, or gentry of this land, but he is some way or other by his blood *interested* therein.” Again, in Ben Jonson’s *Sejanus*:—

Our sacred laws and just authority
Arc *interest’d* therein.

To *interest* and to *interesse*, are not, perhaps, different spellings of the same verb, but are two distinct words, though of the same import; the one being derived from the Latin, the other from the French *interessier*.—*Steevens*.

There are likewise publike employments wherein gentlemen upon occasion may be *interested*, which extend themselves to military affaires.—*Brathwait’s English Gentleman*, 1630.

⁸ *To Cordelia.*

As Heath supposes, *to Kent*. For in the next words Lear sends for France and Burgundy to offer Cordelia without dowry.—*Steevens*.

M. Mason observes, that Kent did not yet deserve such treatment from the King, as the only words he had uttered were “Good my liege.”—*Reed*.

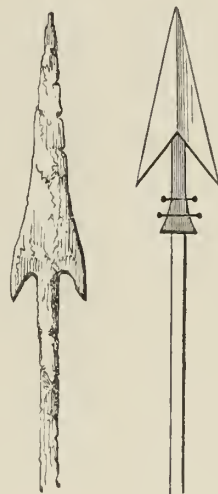
Surely such quick transitions or inconsistencies, whichever they are called, are perfectly suited to Lear’s character. I have no doubt that the direction now given is right. Kent has hitherto said nothing that could extort even from the choleric king so harsh a sentence, having only interposed in the mildest manner. Afterwards indeed, when he remonstrates with more freedom, and calls Lear a madman, the King exclaims—“Out of my sight!”—*Malone*.

⁹ *Though the fork invade the region of my heart.*

“The form of the earliest arrowheads found in England,” observes Mr. Fairholt, “is generally lozenge-shaped; but instances occur in very ancient tumuli of *barbed* arrowheads, as shewn in the first engraving. The second example is copied from Cottonian MS. Tiberius C. 6, to which the date of the tenth century has been assigned. It is the best representation of the Anglo-Saxon arrow we possess, and very curious in its details.”

¹⁰ *Think'st thou, &c.*

I have given this passage according to the old folio, from which the modern editions have silently departed, for the sake of better numbers, with a degree of insincerity, which, if not sometimes detected and censured, must impair the credit of ancient books. One of the editors, and perhaps only one, knew how much mischief may be done by such alterations. The quarto agrees with the folio, except that for *reserve thy state*, it gives, *reverse thy doom*, and has *stoops*, instead of *falls to folly*. The meaning of *answer my life my judgment*, is, *Let my life be answerable for my judgment*, or, *I will stake my life on my opinion*. The reading which, without any right, has possessed all the modern copies, is this :



—— to plainness honour
Is bound, when majesty to folly falls.
Reserve thy state; with better judgment check
This hideous rashness; with my life I answer,
Thy youngest daughter, &c.

I am inclined to think that *reverse thy doom* was Shakspeare's first reading, as more apposite to the present occasion, and that he changed it afterwards to *reserve thy state*, which conduces more to the progress of the action.—*Johnson*.

Reserve was formerly used for *preserve*. So, in our poet's 52d Sonnet:—“*Reserve* them for my love, not for their rhymes.” But I have followed the quartos.—*Malone*.

¹¹ *To wage against thine enemies.*

That is, I never regarded my life as my own, but merely as a thing of which I had the possession, not the property; and which was entrusted to me as a pawn or pledge, to be employed in *waging* war against your enemies. ‘*To wage*,’ says Bullokar, ‘to *undertake*, or give security for performance of any thing.’ The expression *to wage against* is used in a letter from Guil. Webbe to Robt. Wilmot, prefixed to *Tancred and Gismund*, 1592:—‘You shall not be able to *wage against* me in the charges growing upon this action.’ Geo. Wither, in his verses before the *Polyolbion*, says:—

Good speed befall thee who hath *wag'd* a task
That better censures and rewards doth ask.—*Singer*.

¹² *The true blank of thine eye.*

The *blank* is the *mark* at which men shoot. ‘See better,’ says Kent, ‘and let me be the mark to direct your sight, that you err not.’—*Singer*.

¹³ *Our potency made good, take thy reward.*

Lear accuses Kent of an exorbitant pride, such as neither his nature nor his elevated station can endure. He then continues,—our potency asserted, notwithstanding thy futile attempt, take the reward of thy audacity, banishment, on penalty of death if you return. *Made* is the reading of all the old editions with one exception, that of the second quarto, which reads *make*.

¹⁴ *Freedom lives hence.*

Friendship, 4to. eds. Jennens considers that *friendship* is more properly opposed to *banishment*, driven away from our friends. The latter word has been construed as here meaning, the absence of an independent mind; but this is surely an unnecessary refinement.

¹⁵ *Election makes not up.*

Election makes not up, I conceive, means, *Election comes not to a decision*; in the same sense as when we say, “I have *made up* my mind on that subject.” In *Cymbeline* this phrase is used, as here, for *finished*, *completed* :—

—— Being scarce *made up*,
I mean, to man, &c.

Again, in *Timon of Athens* :—

—— remain assur'd,
That he's a *made up* villain.—*Malone*.

¹⁶ *Murder, or foulness.*

The expression *murder* in this line has been thus defended,—the king of France has just before said, “Sure her offence must be of such *unnatural* degree that *monsters* it,” that is, makes a monster of it—it can be nothing short of some crime of the deepest die—and therefore ‘murder’ does not seem so much out of place in the mouth of Cordelia. Nevertheless, most readers will agree with Mr. Dyce in considering the original reading a very suspicious one. *Nor other foulness*, Perkins, MS.

¹⁷ *Ye jewels of our father.*

The jewels, old eds. The old reading makes sense, but *the* and *ye* being constantly written the same in MSS., there can be little hesitation in adopting the latter reading, which seems to improve the sentence.

¹⁸ *As Fortune's alms.*

At, old eds. The alteration is by Capell. I do not conceive the meaning of the phrase—“*At fortune's alms*.” “*As fortune's alms*” may, perhaps, signify—As a matter of little value or importance, such as are commonly bestowed by way of alms.—*Eccles*.

¹⁹ *Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.*

The quartos read :—“Who *covers* faults, at last *shame them* derides.” The former editors read with the folio :—“Who *covers* faults at last with shame derides.”—*Steevens*.

M. Mason believes the folio, with the alteration of a letter, to be the right reading :—

Time shall unfold what plaited cunning hides,
Who *covert* faults at last with shame derides.

The word *who* referring to *time*. In the third Act, Lear says:—

——— Caitiff, shake to pieces,
That under *covert*, and convenient seeming,
Hast practis'd on man's life.—*Reed*.

In this passage Cordelia is made to allude to a passage in Scripture—Prov. xxviii. 13: “He that *covereth* his sins shall not *prosper*: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.”—*Henley*.

²⁰ *Thou, Nature, art my goddess.*

Edmund speaks of *nature* in opposition to *custom*, and not (as Dr. Warburton supposes) to the existence of a *God*. Edmund means only, as he came not into the world as *custom* or *law* had prescribed, so he had nothing to do but to follow *nature* and her laws, which make no difference between legitimacy and illegitimacy, between the eldest and the youngest. To contradict Dr. Warburton's assertion yet more strongly, Edmund concludes this very speech by an invocation to heaven:—“Now *gods* stand up for bastards!”—*Steevens*.

This invocation, however, seems by its levity to support, not to overthrow, Warburton's opinion. The gods appear rather to be derided than invoked. It matters not had Shakespeare chosen to make an unnatural and ungrateful son an atheist also, since he has pictured his conduct as so impious.

²¹ *Stand in the plague of custom.*

Shakespeare seems to mean by this expression: Wherefore should I remain in a situation where I shall be plagued and tormented only in consequence of the contempt with which custom regards those who are not the issue of a lawful bed?—*Steevens*.

This is not altogether the meaning of Edmund, because he cites for a reason of the contempt of the world, not merely his illegitimacy, but his juniority, so that the plague is here also the infectious rule of custom, that bids the younger yield to the elder, a decree he determines wickedly to evade by becoming the only son.

²² *The curiosity of nations.*

Curiosity, in the time of Shakspeare, was a word that signified *an over-nice scrupulousness* in matters, dress, &c. In this sense it is used in Timon: “When thou wast (says Apemantus) in thy gilt and thy perfume, they mocked thee for too much *curiosity*.” Baret, in his *Alvearie*, or *Quadruple Dictionary*, 1580, interprets it, *piked diligence: something too curious, or too much affected*: and again in this play of King Lear, Shakspeare seems to use it in the same sense, “which I have rather blamed as my own jealous *curiosity*.” *Curiosity* is the old reading, which Theobald changed into *courtesy*, though the former is used by Beaumont and Fletcher, with the meaning for which I contend. It is true, that Orlando, in *As You Like it*, says: “The *courtesy* of nations allows you my better;” but Orlando is not there inveighing against the law of primogeniture, but only against the unkind advantage his brother takes of it, and *courtesy* is a word that fully suits the occasion. Edmund, on the contrary, is turning this law into ridicule; and for such a purpose, the *curiosity of nations* (i. e. the idle, nice distinctions of the world,) is a phrase of contempt much more natural in his mouth, than the softer expression of—*courtesy of nations*.—*Steevens*.

²³ *Prescrib'd his power.*

Subscrib'd, quarto eds. The folio has *prescribed*, which better suits the passage. All the rest are acts done against the king. To *subscribe*, submit, or

yield up his power, must have been his own act; but his power *prescribed*, limited, circumscribed, suits with all the rest, as done injuriously to him, and therefore should seem to be the right reading.—*Nares*.

²⁴ *All this done upon the gad.*

To do upon the gad, is, to act by the sudden stimulation of caprice, as cattle run madding when they are stung by the gad fly.—*Johnson*.

Done upon the gad is *done suddenly*, or, as before, while the *iron is hot*. A *gad* is an *iron bar*. So, in I'll never Leave Thee, a Scottish song, by Allan Ramsay:—"Bid iceshogles hammer red *gads* on the studdy." The statute of 2 and 3 Eliz. 6, c. 27, is a "Bill against false forging of iron *gadds*, instead of *gadds* of steel."—*Ritson*.

²⁵ *I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution.*

The Earl, between his regard for a son whom he tenderly loves, and the evidence produced by Edmund of his undutiful behaviour, is in a state of perplexity and the most doubtful anxiety. Therefore he entreats Edmund to make use of all his art and contrivance to discover the real disposition of Edgar. To obtain the knowledge of this truth he makes use of an expression which is of the same import with one often used upon similar, or indeed, slighter, occasions.—"To know the truth of this or that matter, I would give all I am worth in the world; for then I shall know what to do." And this is, I think, the true meaning of—*unstate myself to be in a due resolution*.—*Davies*.

²⁶ *Knaves, thieves, and treachers.*

The modern editors read—*treacherous*; but the reading of the first copies, which I have restored to the text, may be supported from most of the old contemporary writers. So, in Doctor Dodypoll, a comedy, 1600:—"How smooth the cunning *treacher* look'd upon it!" Again, in Every Man in his Humour:—"Oh, you *treachour*!" Again, in Robert Earl of Huntingdon, 1601:—"Hence, *trecher* as thou art." Again, in the Bloody Banquet, 1639:—"To poison the right use of service—a *trecher*." Chaucer, in his Romaunt of the Rose, mentions "the false *treacher*," and Spenser often uses the same word.—*Steevens*.

Treacher, the reading of the first folio, I believe to be right; but Steevens ought to have mentioned that all the quartos read *trecherers*.—*Boswell*.

²⁷ *With a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam.*

A Tom of Bedlam, or an Abraham Man, is described in the Fraternitie of Vacabondes, 1575, as "he that walketh bare-armed and bare-legged, and fayneth hymselfe mad, and caryeth a packe of wool, or a stycke with baken on it, or such lyke toy, and nameth himself poore Tom." Aubrey, in his Nat. Hist. Wilts, Royal Soc. MS., p. 259, relates the following anecdote concerning Sir Thomas More:—"Where this gate now stands (at Chelsea) was, in Sir Thomas More's time, a gate-house, according to the old fashion. From the top of this gate-house was a most pleasant and delightfull prospect, as is to be seen. His lordship was wont to recreate himself in this place, to apricate and contemplate, and his little dog with him. It so happened that a Tom ô Bedlam gott up the staires when his lordship was there, and came to him, and cryed, "leap, Tom, leap," offering his lo. violence to have thrown him over the battlements. His lo. was a little old man, and in his gown, and not able to make resistance, but having presentnesse of witt, seyde, "Let's first throw this little dog over." The Tom ô Bedlam threw the dog down. "Pretty sport," sayde the Lord Chancelour, "goe down, and bring it up, and try again." Whilest the mad-man went down for the dog, his lordship made fast the dore of the staires, and called for help, otherwise he had

lost his life by this unexpected danger." To this Aubrey appends the following note: "Till the breaking out of the civill warres Tom ô Bedlams did travell about the countrey; they had been poore distracted men that had been putt into Bedlam, where recovering to some sobernesse, they were licentiated to goe a begging, e. g. they had on their left arm an armilla of tinn printed in some workes, about four inehes long; they could not gett it off. They wore about their necks a great horn of an oxe in a string or bawdrie, which when they came to an house for almes, they did wind; and they did putt the drink given them into this horn, whereto they did putt a stopple. Since the warres I doe not remember to have seen any one of them." In a later hand is added, "I have seen them in Worcestershire within these thirty years, 1756."

Neither will hee abhor to justifie them by his owne practise against all opposers. He travailes up and downe like *Tom of Bedlam*, under the title of mad rascall, witty rogue, or notable mad slave; and these attributes bee a more effectuall oratory to applaud his humour, then a direct commendation.—*Stephens' Essayes and Characters*, 1615.

²⁸ *Fa, sol, la, mi.*

The commentators, not being musicians, have regarded this passage perhaps as unintelligible nonsense, and therefore left it as they found it, without bestowing a single conjecture on its meaning and import. Shakspeare however shows by the context that he was well acquainted with the property of these syllables in solmisation, which imply a series of sounds so unnatural, that ancient musicians prohibited their use. The monkish writers on musick say, *mi contra fa est diabolus*: the interval *fa mi*, including a *tritonus*, or sharp 4th, consisting of three tones without the intervention of a semi-tone, expressed in the modern seale by the letters F G A B, would form a musical phrase extremely disagreeable to the ear. Edmund, speaking of eclipses as portents and prodigies, compares the dislocation of events, the *times being out of joint*, to the unnatural and offensive sounds, *fa, sol, la, mi.*—*Burney*.

The words *fa, sol, &c.* are not in the quarto. The folio, and all the modern editions, read corruptly *me* instead of *mi*. Shakspeare has again introduced the gamut in the *Taming of the Shrew*.—*Malone*.

²⁹ *Old fools are babes again, &c.*

Dr. Johnson ridiculed Theobald for calling these lines, which are found only in the quartos, "fine;" but whether fine or not, they carry out the character of Goneril in a Shaksperian manner. Old fools are babes again, and must be managed by checks. The rest of the line, after the word *checks*, loses its reference to the child, and merely alludes to the old man as King used to be flattered, which flatteries, being felt by him, are abused. I have very little doubt, however, but that here there is either an omission or a gross corruption.

Since writing this, I observe that Mr. Dyce recommends the following punctuation,—“With checks as flatteries,—when they are seen abused,”—“as” meaning ‘as well as,’—a simple and clear explanation, which almost appears to justify the correctness of the original text; and yet I cannot but think there is a line omitted.

³⁰ *That can my speech diffuse.*

The full passage in Stow (which is borrowed from Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey*) stands thus: “and [Wolsey] speaking merilie to one of the gentlemen there, being a Welshman, said, Rice (quoth he), speake you Welsh to them: I doubt not but that thy speech shall bee more *diffuse* to him, than his French shall be to thee,” *Annales*, p. 533, ed. 1615. When this passage was cited by Tollet in a

note on the Merry Wives of Windsor, act iv. sc. 4, he was not aware that “diffuse to him” means, ‘difficult for him to understand.’ “*Dyffuse* harde to be vnderstande, *diffuse*.” Palsgrave’s *Lesclar. de la Lang. Fr.* 1530, fol. lxxxvi. (Table of Adiect.).

But oft yet by it [logick] a thing playne, bright and pure,
Is made *diffuse*, vnknownen, harde and obscure.

Barclay’s Ship of Fooles, fol. 53, ed. 1570.

These poetes of aunycyente;—They ar to *diffuse* for me.

Skelton’s Phyllyp Sparowe,—*Works*, i. 74, ed. Dyce.

The quotation from Stow (or rather Cavendish) is, therefore, hardly to the purpose. Kent does not wish to render his speech *difficult to be understood*, but merely to disorder it, to disguise it, as he had disguised his person.—*A. Dyce*.

Some modern writers have *diffuse*, which they found in the fourth folio, instead of *defuse*, the reading of the older copies, and this word *diffuse* they justify by other examples of it in Shakspeare: but all this while the general sense of the speech is forgot, which to our conception is this—If I can but deface my speech by a strange accent as effectually as I have defaced my person by a strange attire, then *my good intent may carry*, &c.—*Capell*.

³¹ *And to eat no fish.*

In Queen Elizabeth’s time the Papists were esteemed, and with good reason, enemies to the government. Hence the proverbial phrase of, *He’s an honest man, and eats no fish*; to signify *he’s a friend to the government and a Protestant*. The eating fish, on a religious account, being then esteemed such a badge of popery, that when it was enjoined for a season by act of parliament, for the encouragement of the fish-towns, it was thought necessary to declare the reason; hence it was called *Cecil’s fast*. To this disgraceful badge of popery Fletcher alludes in his *Woman-hater*, who makes the courtezan say, when Lazarillo, in search of the umbrano’s head, was seized at her house by the intelligencers for a traitor: “Gentlemen, I am glad you have discovered him. He should not have eaten under my roof for twenty pounds. And sure I did not like him, when he *called for fish*.” And Marston’s *Dutch Courtezan*: “I trust I am none of the wicked that *eat fish a Fridays*.”—*Warburton*.

Fish was probably then, as now, esteemed the most delicate and costly part of an entertainment, and therefore Kent, in the character of an humble and discreet dependant, may intend to insinuate that he never desires to partake of such luxuries. That eating fish on a religious account was not a badge of popery, may be shewn by what is related of Queen Elizabeth in Walton’s *Life of Hooker*; that she would never eat flesh in Lent without obtaining a licence from her little black husband (Archbishop Whitgift).—*Blakeway*.

To Warburton’s note on this passage, which is a very good one, it may be added that such was the dislike to fish after the reformation that the legislature were so apprehensive of the neglect of the fisheries, and the scarcity of other food, that an act of parliament was made to compel all persons to have fish at their tables on Wednesdays and Fridays, declaring, at the same time, that it did not arise from any superstitious motive. Fish is now so universally a favourite food, wherever it can be procured, that there is no cause to enforce this law, which is yet unrepealed. This does not appear to have been the case so lately even as the beginning of the eighteenth century; for in a little poem of King’s called the *Vestry*, we find—

On Wednesdays only fast by parliament;
And Friday is a proper day for fish.

At the table of the king's chaplains, which followed the custom of the old kitchen, fish was only served on Wednesdays and Fridays.—*Pye*.

There is no occasion to seek for any other sense in these words, than—that he was a jolly fellow, and no lover of such meagre diet.—*Capell*.

³² *You base foot-ball player.*

The representation of this game is copied by Mr. Fairholt from a French etching of the same size dated 1647.



³³ *There, take my coxcomb.*

Coxcomb, that is, *cock's comb*. The cap of the licensed fool, as Nares observes, was often terminated at the top with a *cock's* head and *comb*, and some of the feathers. Hence it was often used for the cap itself, as in the present instance. The annexed example is taken by Mr. Fairholt from a small ivory figure of a fool preserved in the museum of the Hotel Cluny at Paris. Minshieu, in his *Dictionary*, 1627, says "Natural ideots and fools, have, and still do accustom themselves to weare in their cappes cockes feathers, or a hat *with a neck and head of a cocke on the top*, and a bell thereon, &c."



Mr. Fairholt adds the following note,—“It was a fashion certainly as old as the middle of the fourteenth century, to decorate the head of the domestic fool with a comb, like that of a cock; but frequently the apex of the hood took the form of the neck and head of a cock; as in the specimen here given from the tapestry still preserved at Nancy, which was used to line the tent of Charles the bold of Burgundy; and is a work of the latter part of the 14th century. That it was also the custom to decorate the hood of the female fool in the same manner is proved by the second cut, copied from the Troyes Dance of Death, 1499.”



³⁴ *How now, nuncle?*

Nuncle, a familiar contraction of *mine uncle*; as *ningle*, &c. It seems that the customary appellation of the licensed fool to his superiors was *uncle*, or *nuncle*. In Beaumont and Fletcher's *Pilgrim*, when Alinda assumes the character of a fool, she uses the same language. She meets Alphonso, and calls him *nuncle*; to which he replies, by calling her *naunt*: by a similar change of *aunt*. *Pilgr.* iv. 1.—*Nares*.

In these latter times, she should have gone to sea, but there were not men to be gotten to man her, so for a shift they were faine to furnish her with kinred, *nunkles*, and couzins.—*The Works of John Taylor the Water-Poet*, 1630.

³⁵ *Would I had two coxcombs.*

Two fools eaps; intended, as it seems, to mark double folly in the man that gives all to his daughters.—*Johnson*.

This seems to be inaccurate. The fool assigns the first eap to Lear for having given up half his kingdom to one daughter, and the second, for not withholding the remaining half from the other.—*Henley*.

³⁶ *Beg another of thy daughters.*

The fool assigns Lear his coxcomb to show him the opinion of the world, and bids him ask another of his daughters to teach him that even they who have benefited by his gift would appropriate one to him, as considering him as great a simpleton as he is acknowledged by those who have reaped no advantage by his folly.

³⁷ *When the lady brach.*

It seems from the commentary of Ulitius upon Gratius, from Caius de Canibus Britannicis, from *bracco*, in Spelman's Glossary, and from Markham's Country Contentments, that *brache* originally meant a bitch. Ulitius, p. 163, observes, that bitches have a superior sagacity of nose:—"fœminis (canibus) sagacitatis plurimum inesse, usus docuit;" and hence, perhaps, any hound with eminent quickness of scent, whether dog or bitch, was called *brache*.—*Steevens*.

He'le venter on a lion in his ire;
 Curst Choller was his damme, and Wrong his sire;
 This Choller is a *brache* that's very old,
 And spends her mouth too much to have it hold.
Wither's Shepheard's Hunting, 1615.

³⁸ *If I had a monopoly out.*

A satire on the gross abuses of monopolies at that time; and the corruption and avarice of the courtiers, who commonly went shares with the patentee.—*Warburton*.

The modern editors, without authority, read—"—— a monopoly *on't*——." Monopolies were in Shakspeare's time the common objects of satire. So, in Decker's Match Me in London, 1631: "—Give him a court loaf, stop his mouth with a *monopoly*." Again, in Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks, 1611: "A knight that never heard of smock fees! I would I had a *monopoly* of them, so there was no impost on them." Again, in the Birth of Merlin, 1662: "—— So foul a monster would be a fair *monopoly* worth the begging." In the books of the Stationers' Company, I meet with the following entry. "John Charlewoode, Oct. 1587: lycensed unto him by the whole consent of the assistants, the *onlye* ymprinting of all manner of billes for plaiers." Again, Nov. 6, 1615, the liberty of printing *all* billes for fencing was granted to Purfoot.—*Steevens*.

While I am with it, it takes impression from my faee; but can I make it so mine, that it shall be of no use to any other? will it not do his office to you, or you, and as well to my groom as to myself? *Brother, monopolies are cried down.* Is it not madness for me to believe, when I have conquer'd that sort of chastity, the great countess, that if another man of my making and metal shall assault her, her eyes and ears should lose their function, her other parts their use; as if nature made her all in vain, unless I only had stumbled into her quarters?—*The Widow's Pears.*

³⁹ *Thou borest thine ass on thy back.*

Mr. Fairholt sends me this note and illustration,—“This allusion is to the most popular of the fables attributed to Esop, the well-known tale of the old man and his ass. Hans Sachs the cobbler poet of Nuremburg published a rhyming paraphrase, as a broadsheet about the middle of the sixteenth century. It was illustrated by a woodcut in six compartments giving the various adventures of the fable; that here copied is a direct illustration of Shakespeare’s line.”



⁴⁰ *Fools had ne'er less grace in a year.*

There never was a time when fools were less in favour; and the reason is, that they were never so little wanted, for wise men now supply their place. Such I think is the meaning.—*Johnson*,

Less grace. So the folio. Both the quartos read—*less wit*. In *Mother Bombie*, a comedy by Lyly, 1594, we find, “I think gentlemen *had never less wit in a year*.” I suspect therefore the original to be the true reading.—*Malone*.

⁴¹ *Then they for sudden joy did weep.*

When Tarquin first in court began,
And was approved king,
Some men for sodden joy gan weep,
And I for sorrow sing.

Heywood's Rape of Lucrece, 1608.

⁴² *What makes that frontlet on?*

A *frontlet*, or forehead cloth, was worn by ladies of old to prevent wrinkles. So in George Chapman’s *Hero and Leander*, *ad finem* :—

E’en like the *forehead cloth* that in the night,
Or when they sorrow ladies us’d to wear.

Thus also in *Zepheria*, a collection of Sonnets, 4to. 1594 :—

But now, my sunne, it fits thou take thy set
And vayle thy face with *frownes* as with a *frontlet*.

And in Lyly’s *Euphues and his England*, 1580 :—‘The next day coming to the gallery where she was solitary walking, with her *frowning cloth*, as sicke lately of the sullens,’ &c.—*Singer*.

⁴³ *Now thou art an O without a figure.*

The Fool means to say, that Lear, “having pared his wit on both sides, and left nothing in the middle,” is become a mere cypher; which has no arithmetical value, unless preceded by some figure. In the *Winter’s Tale* we have the same allusion reversed :—

— and therefore, like a cypher,
 Yet standing in rich place, I multiply,
 With one—we thank you,—many thousands more
 Standing before it.—*Malone*.

⁴⁴ *That's a sheald peascod.*

That is, now a mere husk, which contains nothing. The outside of a king remains, but all the intrinsic parts of royalty are gone: he has nothing to give.—*Johnson*.

“That's a sheald peascod.” The robing of Richard II.'s effigy in Westminster Abbey is wrought with *peascods open*, and the *peas out*; perhaps an allusion to his being once in full possession of sovereignty, but soon reduced to an empty title. See Camden's Remains, 1674, p. 453, edit. 1657, p. 340.—*Tollet*.

⁴⁵ *Whoop, Jug! I love thee.*

Jug was the old nick-name for Joan, and it was also a term of endearment. Edward Alleyn, the player, writing to his wife in 1593, says,—“and, Jug, I pray you lett my orayng-tawny stokins of wolen be dyed a newe good blak against I com hom, to wear in the winter.”

If I be I, and thou be'st one,
 Tell me, sweet *Jugge*, how spell'st thou *Jone*.

Cotgrave's Wits Interpreter, 1671, p. 116.

⁴⁶ *Like an engine.*

Edwards conjectures that by an *engine* is meant the *rack*. He is right. To *engine* is, in Chaucer, to *strain* upon the *rack*; and in the following passage from the Three Lords of London, 1590, *engine* seems to be used for the same instrument of torture:—

From Spain they come with *engine* and intent
 To slay, subdue, to triumph, and *torment*.

Again, in the Night-Walker, by Beaumont and Fletcher:—“Their souls shot through with adders, torn on *engines*.”—*Steevens*.

⁴⁷ *Her derogate body.*

Her derogate body means—the body of her derogate, her that is a scandal to nature, that *derogates* from her honour in being of her production, and yet a thing of such vileness.—*Capell*.

⁴⁸ *Thwart.*

Thwart as a noun adjective is not frequent in our language; it is however to be found in *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578: “Sith fortune *thwart* doth crosse my joys with care.” The quarto reads, a *thourt disveturd* torment, which I apprehend to be *disfeatur'd*.—*Henderson*.

Thwart as an adjective is twice found in *Paradise Lost*:—

Which else to several spheres thou must aseribe,
 Mov'd contrary with *thwart* obliquities.

“The slant lightning, whose *thwart* flame driven down kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine.” In this place it signifies—*perverse, mischievous*.—*Eccles*.

⁴⁹ *Disnatur'd.*

That is, wanting in natural affection.

I am not so *disnatured* a man,
Or so ill borne to disesteem her love.

Daniel's Hymen's Triumph, Works, G g. 8.

⁵⁰ *The untented woundings.*

Untented wounds, means wounds in their worst state, not having a *tent* in them to digest them; and may possibly signify here such as will not admit of having a tent put into them for that purpose. Our author quibbles on this practice in surgery, in *Troilus and Cressida*:—

Patr. Who keeps the *tent* now?

Ther. The surgeon's box or the patient's *wound*.

One of the quartos reads, *unintender*.—*Steevens*.

⁵¹ *Attask'd.*

Alapt, the quartos of 1608; *at task*, ed. 1623; *attuskt* in some copies of the first quarto, but my copies of both first and second quarto read *alapt*. *Attask'd*, that is, taxed. If the word *alapt* be correct, it probably agrees with the context if explained in the same way as *attask'd*; and the term *alapat*, in the following passage, seems used in a similar sense. All editors, I believe, reject *alapt*. The following work is erroneously paged, which I mention in case any one compares the original.

And because the secret and privy boosome vices of nature are most offensive, and though least seene, yet most undermining enemies, you must redouble your endeavor, not with a wand to *alapat* and strike them, onely as lovers, loath to hurt, so as like a snake they may growe together, and gette greater strength againe.—*Melton's Sixe-fold Politician*, p. 125.

⁵² *Go you before to Gloster.*

The word *Gloucester* is to be understood of the town of that name, as is evident from the words, *be there before you*: It is made the residence of Regan and Cornwall to give likelihood to the action of an ensuing scene, their late quitting of it and evening visit to Gloster in a castle of his residence, which we may suppose in its neighbourhood; Earls in old time had some dominion in the counties that gave them their titles, and resided there usually.—*Capell*.

Act the Second.

SCENE I.—*A Court within the Castle of the Earl of GLOSTER.*

Enter EDMUND and CURAN, meeting.

Edm. Save thee, Curan.

Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice, that the duke of Cornwall, and Regan his duchess, will be here with him to-night.

Edm. How comes that?

Cur. Nay, I know not. You have heard of the news abroad? I mean, the whispered ones, for they are yet but ear-bussing arguments.

Edm. Not I: pray you, what are they?

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the dukes of Cornwall and Albany?

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*]

Edm. The duke be here to-night? The better! Best!

This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queazy question,
Which I must act.—Briefness, and fortune, work!—
Brother, a word;—deseend:—brother, I say;

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches.—O sir! fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid:
You have now the good advantage of the night.—
Have you not spoken 'gainst the duke of Cornwall?
He's coming hither; now, i' the night, i' the haste,
And Regan with him: have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the duke of Albany?
Advise yourself.

Edg. I am sure on't, not a word.

Edm. I hear my father coming.—Pardon me;
In cunning, I must draw my sword upon you:
Draw: seem to defend yourself. Now 'quit you well.
Yield:—come before my father;—Light, ho! here!—
Fly, brother;—Torches! torches!—So, farewell.—

[*Exit EDGAR.*]

Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion

[*Wounds his arm.*]

Of my more fierce endeavour: I have seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport.¹—Father! father!
Stop, stop! No help?

Enter GLOSTER, and Servants with Torches.

Glo. Now, Edmund, where's the villain?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand auspicious mistress.—

Glo. But where is he?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.

Glo. Where is the villain, Edmund?

Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could—

Glo. Pursue him, ho!—Go after.—[*Exit Serv.*] By no means,
—what?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;
But that I told him, the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend;
Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father;—sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood

To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
 With his prepared sword he charges home
 My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm :
 But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
 Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to th' encounter,
 Or whether gasted by the noise I made,²
 Full suddenly he fled.

Glo. Let him fly far :
 Not in this land shall he remain uncaught ;
 And found—dispatch.—The noble duke my master,
 My worthy arch³ and patron, comes to-night :
 By his authority I will proclaim it,
 That he, which finds him, shall deserve our thanks,
 Bringing the murderous coward to the stake ;
 He, that conceals him, death.

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
 And found him pight to do it,⁴ with curst speech
 I threaten'd to discover him : he replied,
 “Thou unpossessing bastard ! dost thou think,
 If I would stand against thee, would the reposal
 Of any trust, virtue, or worth, in thee
 Make thy words faith'd ? No : what should I deny,—
 As this I would ; ay, though thou didst produce
 My very character—I'd turn it all
 To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice :
 And thou must make a dullard of the world,
 If they not thought the profits of my death
 Were very pregnant and potential spurs
 To make thee seek it.”

Glo. Strong and fasten'd villain !⁵
 Would he deny his letter ?—I never got him. [*Tucket within.*
 Hark ! the duke's trumpets. I know not why he comes.—
 All ports I'll bar ; the villain shall not scape ;
 The duke must grant me that : besides, his picture
 I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
 May have due note of him ; and of my land,
 Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
 To make thee capable.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, *and* Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend ! since I came hither,—
 Which I can call but now—I have heard strange news.

Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short,
Which can pursue th' offender. How dost, my lord?

Glo. O, madam! my old heart is crack'd, it's crack'd.

Reg. What! did my father's godson seek your life?
He whom my father nam'd? your Edgar?

Glo. O, lady, lady! shame would have it hid.

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tend upon my father?

Glo. I know not, madam: 'tis too bad, too bad.—

Edm. Yes, madam, he was of that consort.

Reg. No marvel, then, though he were ill affected:
'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,
To have th' expense and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them; and with such cautions,
That if they come to sojourn at my house,
I'll not be there.

Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.—
Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.

Edm. 'Twas my duty, sir.

Glo. He did bewray his practice;⁶ and receiv'd
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Corn. Is he pursued?

Glo. Ay, my good lord.

Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm: make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please.—For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours:
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.

Edm. I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.

Glo. For him I thank your grace.

Corn. You know not why we came to visit you,—

Reg. Thus out of season, threading dark-ey'd night.
Occasions, noble Gloster, of some poize,
Wherein we must have use of your advice.
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home: the several messengers

From hence attend despatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom, and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use.

Glo. I serve you, madam.
Your graces are right welcome.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Before GLOSTER'S Castle.*

Enter KENT and OSWALD, severally.

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend : art of this house ?

Kent. Ay.

Osw. Where may we set our horses ?

Kent. I' the mire.

Osw. Pr'ythee, if thou love me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Osw. Why, then I care not for thee.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfeld,⁷ I would make thee care for me.

Osw. Why dost thou use me thus ? I know thee not.

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Osw. What dost thou know me for ?

Kent. A knave, a rascal, an eater of broken meats ; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave ;⁸ a lily-liver'd, action-taking knave, a whoreson glass-gazing, super-serviceable, finical rogue ; one-trunk-inheriting slave ; one that wouldst be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch : one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deniest the least syllable of thy addition.

Osw. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one, that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee.

Kent. What a brazen-faced varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me. Is it two days since I tripped up thy heels, and beat thee, before the king ? Draw, you rogue ; for, though it be night, yet the moon shines : I'll make a sop o' the moonshine of you :⁹ [*Drawing his Sword.*] Draw, you whoreson cullionly barber-monger, draw.

Osw. Away! I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you raseal: you come with letters against the king, and take Vanity, the puppet's part,¹⁰ against the royalty of her father. Draw, you rogue, or I'll so earbonado your shanks:—draw, you raseal; come your ways.

Osw. Help, ho! murder! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave: stand, rogue, stand; you neat slave,¹¹ strike. [Beating him.]

Osw. Help, ho! murder! murder!

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, EDMUND, *and* Servants.

Edm. How now! What's the matter?

Kent. With you, goodman boy, if you please: come, I'll flesh you; come on, young master.

Glo. Weapons! arms! What's the matter here?

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives:

He dies, that strikes again. What is the matter?

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the king.

Corn. What is your difference? speak.

Osw. I am scaree in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirred your valour. You eowardly raseal, nature diselaims in thee:¹² a tailor made thee.¹³

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, sir: a stone-eutter, or a painter, could not have made him so ill, though they had been but two hours at the trade.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Osw. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spar'd, At suit of his grey beard,—

Kent. Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary letter!¹⁴—My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub the wall of a jakes with him.—Spare my grey beard, you wagtail?

Corn. Peace, sirrah!

You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword, Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these, Like rats, oft bite the holy eords atwain Which are too intrinse¹⁵ t'unloose; smooth every passion

That in the natures of their lords rebels ;
 Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods ;
 Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks¹⁶
 With every gale and vary of their masters,
 Knowing nought, like dogs, but following.—
 A plague upon your epileptic visage !
 Smile you my specches, as I were a fool ?
 Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
 I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.¹⁷

Corn. What ! art thou mad, old fellow ?

Glo. How fell you out ? say that.

Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy,
 Than I and such a knave.

Corn. Why dost thou call him knave ? What's his offence ?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor hers.

Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain :
 I have seen better faces in my time,
 Than stand on any shoulders that I see
 Before me at this instant.

Corn. This is some fellow,
 Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
 A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb,
 Quite from his nature : he cannot flatter, he ;
 An honest mind and plain,—he must speak truth :
 An they will take it, so ; if not, he's plain.
 These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
 Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends,
 Than twenty silly ducking observants,
 That stretch their duties nicely.

Kent. Sir, in good sooth, in sincere verity,
 Under th' allowance of your grand aspect,
 Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
 On flickering Phœbus' front,—

Corn. What mean'st by this ?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so
 much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer : he that beguiled you in
 a plain accent was a plain knave ; which, for my part, I will not
 be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to 't.

Corn. What was the offence you gave him ?

Osw. I never gave him any :
 It pleas'd the king, his master, very late,

To strike at me, upon his misconstruction ;
 When he, compact, and flattering his displeasure,
 Tripp'd me behind ; being down, insulted, rail'd,
 And put upon him such a deal of man,
 That worthied him, got praises of the king
 For him attempting who was self-subdu'd ;
 And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,¹⁸
 Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues, and cowards,
 But Ajax is their fool.¹⁹

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks !
 You stubborn ancient knave,²⁰ you reverend braggart,
 We'll teach you—

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn.
 Call not your stocks for me ; I serve the king,
 On whose employment I was sent to you :
 You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
 Against the grace and person of my master,
 Stocking his messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks !
 As I have life and honour, there shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon, till night, my lord ; and all night too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
 You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same colour
 Our sister speaks of.—Come, bring away the stocks.

[*Stocks brought out.*²¹

Glo. Let me beseech your grace not to do so.
 His fault is much, and the good king his master
 Will check him for't : your purpos'd low correction
 Is such, as basest and contemned'st wretches,
 For pilferings and most common trespasses,
 Are punish'd with. The king must take it ill,
 That he, so slightly valued in his messenger,
 Should have him thus restrain'd.

Corn. I'll answer that.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse,
 To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
 For following her affairs.—Put in his legs.—

[*KENT is put in the Stocks.*

Come, my lord, away. [*Exeunt all except GLOSTER and KENT.*

Glo. I am sorry for thee, friend ; 'tis the duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd, nor stopp'd : I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray, do not, sir. I have watch'd, and travell'd hard ;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels :
Give you good morrow !

Glo. The duke's to blame in this : 'twill be ill taken. [*Exit.*]

Kent. Good king, that must approve the common saw :—
Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
To the warm sun.²²

Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter.—Nothing almost sees miracles,
But misery :²³—I know, 'tis from Cordelia ;
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course ; and shall find time²⁴
From this enormous state,—seeking to give
Losses their remedies.—All weary and o'er-watch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.
Fortune, good night ; smile once more ; turn thy wheel !

[*He sleeps.*]

SCENE III.—*A Part of the Heath.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd ;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free ; no place,
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
Does not attend my taking. While I may scape,
I will preserve myself ; and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape,
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast : my face I'll grime with filth,
Blanket my loins, elf all my hair in knots,²⁵
And with presented nakedness out-face
The winds, and persecutions of the sky.

The country gives me proof and precedent
 Of Bedlam beggars,²⁶ who, with roaring voices,
 Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
 Pins, wooden pricks,²⁷ nails, sprigs of rosemary ;
 And with this horrible object, from low farms,
 Poor pelting villages,²⁸ sheep-cotes and mills,
 Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
 Enforce their charity.—Poor Turlygod!²⁹ poor Tom!
 That's something yet :—Edgar I nothing am.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*Before GLOSTER'S Castle.*

Enter LEAR, Fool, *and a Gentleman.*

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,
 And not send back my messenger.

Gent. As I learn'd,
 The night before there was no purpose in them
 Of this remove.

Kent. Hail to thee, noble master !

Lear. Ha !
 Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime ?

Kent. No, my lord.

Fool. Ha, ha ! look ; he wears cruel garters.³⁰ Horses are
 tied by the head ; dogs, and bears, by the neck ; monkeys by
 the loins, and men by the legs : when a man is over-lusty at
 legs, then he wears wooden netherstocks.³¹

Lear. What's he, that hath so much thy place mistook,
 To set thee here ?

Kent. It is both he and she ;
 Your son and daughter.

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. No, no ; they would not.

Kent. Yes, they have.

Lear. By Jupiter, I swear no.

Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.

Lear. They durst not do't ;
They could not, would not do't : 'tis worse than murder,
To do upon respect such violent outrage.³²
Resolve me with all modest haste which way
Thou might'st deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress, salutations ;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,³³
Which presently they read : on whose contents,
They summoned up their meiny,³⁴ straight took horse ;
Commanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer ; gave me cold looks :
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd mine,—
Being the very fellow which of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness—
Having more man than wit about me, drew :
He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries.
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.

Fool. Winter's not gone yet, if the wild geese fly that way.

Fathers, that wear rags,
Do make their children blind ;
But fathers, that bear bags,
Shall see their children kind.
Fortune, that arrant whore,
Ne'er turns the key to the poor.—

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours for thy daughters, as thou canst tell in a year.

Lear. O, how this mother³⁵ swells up toward my heart !
Hysterica passio ! down, thou climbing sorrow !
Thy element's below.—Where is this daughter ?

Kent. With the earl, sir ; here, within.

Lear. Follow me not :
Stay here. [Exit.

Gent. Made you no more offence than what you speak of ?

Kent. None.

How chance the king comes with so small a train?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' the stocks for that question, thou hadst well deserved it.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no labouring i' the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes, but blind men; and there's not a nose among twenty³⁶ but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold, when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That, sir, which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form,
Will pack when it begins to rain,
And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the fool will stay,
And let the wise man fly:
The knave turns fool that runs away,³⁷
The fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learn'd you this, fool?

Fool. Not i' the stocks, fool?

Re-enter LEAR, with GLOSTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary?

They have travell'd hard to-night? Mere fetehes,
The images of revolt and flying off.

Feteh me a better answer.

Glo. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremovable and fix'd he is
In his own course.

Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!—
Fiery? what quality? Why, Gloster, Gloster,
I'd speak with the duke of Cornwall and his wife.

Glo. Well, my good lord, I have informed them so.

Lear. Inform'd them ! Dost thou understand me, man ?

Glo. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall ; the dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands her service :

Are they informed of this ? My breath and blood !—

Fiery ? the fiery duke ?—Tell the hot duke, that—

No, but not yet ;—may be, he is not well :

Infirmity doth still neglect all office,

Whereto our health is bound ; we are not ourselves,

When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind

To suffer with the body. I'll forbear ;

And am fallen out with my more headier will,

To take the indispos'd and sickly fit

For the sound man.—Death on my state ! wherefore

[*Looking on* KENT.]

Should he sit here ? This act persuades me,

That this remotion of the duke and her

Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.

Go, tell the duke and 's wife, I'd speak with them,

Now, presently : bid them come forth and hear me,

Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum,

Till it ery—" Sleep to death."

Glo. I would have all well betwixt you.

[*Exit.*]

Lear. O me ! my heart, my rising heart !—but, down.

Fool. Cry to it, nunele, as the cockney did to the eels,³⁸ when
she put them i' the paste alive ; she rapp'd 'em o' the coxeombs
with a stiek, and eried, " Down, wantons, down : " 'twas her
brother, that in pure kindness to his horse buttered his hay.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, *and* Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn.

Hail to your graec !

[KENT *is set at liberty.*]

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are ; I know what reason
I have to think so : if thou shouldst not be glad,

I would divoree me from thy mother's tomb,

Sepulchring an adultress.—O ! are you free ?

[*To* KENT.]

Some other time for that.—Beloved Regan,

Thy sister's naught : O Regan ! she hath tied

Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here.³⁹—

[*Points to his Heart.*]

I can scarce speak to thee : thou'lt not believe,
With how deprav'd a quality—O Regan !

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience. I have hope,
You less know how to value her desert,
Than she to scant her duty.⁴⁰

Lear. Say, how is that ?

Reg. I cannot think, my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation : if, sir, perchance,
She hath restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her !

Reg. O, sir ! you are old ;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine : you should be rul'd, and led
By some discretion, that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return :
Say, you have wrong'd her, sir.

Lear. Ask her forgiveness ?

Do you but mark how this becomes the house :⁴¹

“ Dear daughter, I confess that I am old ;

Age is unnecessary :⁴² on my knees I beg,

That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.”

[*Kneeling.*]

Reg. Good sir, no more : these are unsightly tricks.
Return you to my sister.

Lear. Never, Regan.

She hath abated me of half my train ;
Look'd black upon me ; struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart.—
All the stor'd vengeance of heaven fall
On her ungrateful top ! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs,⁴³ with lameness !

Corn. Fie, sir, fie !

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes ! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blast her pride !

Reg. O the blest gods ! So will you wish on me,
When the rash mood is on.

Lear. No, Regan; thou shalt never have my curse :
 Thy tender-hefted nature⁴⁴ shall not give
 Thee o'er to harshness : her eyes are fierce ; but thine
 Do comfort, and not burn. 'Tis not in thee
 To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
 To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes ;⁴⁵
 And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
 Against my coming in : thou better know'st
 The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
 Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude ;
 Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
 Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg. Good sir, to the purpose.

Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks ? [*Tucket within.*

Corn. What trumpet's that ?

Enter OSWALD.

Reg. I know't, my sister's : this approves her letter,
 That she would soon be here.—Is your lady come ?

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
 Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.—
 Out, varlet, from my sight !

Corn. What means your grace ?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant ? Regan, I have good hope
 Thou didst not know on't.—Who comes here ? O heavens !

Enter GONERIL.

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
 Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
 Make it your cause ; send down, and take my part !—
 Art not asham'd to look upon this beard ?— [*To GONERIL.*
 O Regan ! wilt thou take her by the hand ?

Gon. Why not by the hand, sir ? How have I offended ?
 All's not offence, that indiscretion finds,
 And dotage terms so.

Lear. O sides ! you are too tough :
 Will you yet hold ?—How came my man i' the stocks ?

Corn. I set him there, sir ; but his own disorders
 Deserv'd much less advancement.

Lear. You ! did you ?

Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me :
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return to her ? and fifty men dismiss'd ?
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' the air ;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl.—
Necessity's sharp pinch !—Return with her ?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot.—Return with her ?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter⁴⁶
To this detested groom. [*Looking at OSWALD.*]

Gon. At your choice, sir.

Lear. I pr'ythee, daughter, do not make me mad :
I will not trouble thee, my child ; farewell.
We'll no more meet, no more see one another ;
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter ;
Or, rather, a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine : thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee ;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it :
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove.
Mend, when thou canst ; be better, at thy leisure :
I can be patient ; I can stay with Regan,
I, and my hundred knights.

Reg. Not altogether so :
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my sister ;
For those that mingle reason with your passion,
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.

Lear. Is this well spoken ?

Reg. I dare avouch it, sir. What ! fifty followers ?
Is it not well ? What should you need of more ?
Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger

Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one house,
Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those that she calls servants, or from mine?

Reg. Why not, my lord? If then they chane'd to slack you,
We could control them. If you will come to me,—
For now I spy a danger—I entreat you
To bring but five and twenty: to no more
Will I give place, or notice.

Lear. I gave you all—

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries,
But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number. What! must I come to you
With five and twenty? Regan, said you so?

Reg. And speak't again, my lord; no more with me.

Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd,
When others are more wicked; not being the worst,
Stands in some rank of praise.—I'll go with thee: [*To GONERIL.*
Thy fifty yet doth double five and twenty,
And thou art twice her love.

Gon. Hear me, my lord.

What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house, where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?

Reg. What need one?

Lear. O! reason not the need; our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true need,—
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both:
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger.
O! let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks—No, you unnatural hags,

I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall—I will do such things,—
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think, I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep:—

I have full cause of weeping; but this heart

[*Storm heard at a distance.*

Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,⁴⁷

Or ere I'll weep.—O, fool! I shall go mad.

[*Exeunt* LEAR, GLOSTER, KENT, and Fool.

Corn. Let us withdraw, 'twill be a storm.

Reg. This house is little: the old man and 's people
Cannot be well bestow'd.

Gon. 'Tis his own blame; hath put himself from rest,
And must needs taste his folly.

Reg. For his particular, I'll receive him gladly,
But not one follower.

Gon. So am I purpos'd.
Where is my lord of Gloster?

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Corn. Follow'd the old man forth.—He is return'd.

Glo. The king is in high rage.

Corn. Whither is he going?

Glo. He calls to horse; but will I know not whither.

Corn. 'Tis best to give him way; he leads himself.

Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.⁴⁸

Glo. Alack! the night comes on, and the bleak winds
Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about
There's scarce a bush.

Reg. O, sir! to wilful men,
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors:
He is attended with a desperate train,
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abus'd, wisdom bids fear.

Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord; 'tis a wild night:
My Regan counsels well. Come out o' the storm. [*Exeunt.*

Notes to the Second Act.

¹ *Drunkards do more than this in sport.*

Have I not been *drunk* for your health, eat glasses, drunk urine, *stabbed arms*, and done all offices of protested gallantry for your sake? — *Marston's Dutch Courtezan.*

² *Or whether gasted by the noise I made.*

Gasted, frightened. "I gasted hym as sore as he was these twelve monethes," *Palsgrave*, 1530.

³ *My worthy arch and patron.*

Arch, i. e. *Chief*; a word now used only in composition, as *arch-angel*, *arch-dnke*. So, in Heywood's *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody*, 1613:—"Poole, that *arch* of truth and honesty."—*Steevens.*

⁴ *And found him pight to do it.*

Pight is *pitched*, fixed, settled. *Curst* is severe, harsh, vehemently angry. So, in the old morality of *Lusty Juventus*, 1561:—

Therefore my heart is surely *pyght*
Of her alone to have a sight.

Thus, in *Troilus and Cressida*:—

———— tents

Thus proudly *pight* upon our Phrygian plains.—*Steevens.*

⁵ *Strong and fasten'd villain.*

Thus the quartos. The folio reads—*O strange* and fasten'd villain. *Strong* is *determined*. Of this epithet our ancestors were uncommonly fond. Thus in the ancient metrical romance of *The Sowdon of Babyloyne*, MS.:—

And my doghter that bore *stronge*
Ibronte shal be, &c.

The same term of obloquy is many times repeated by the hero of this poem.—*Steevens*.

⁶ *He did bewray his practice.*

To *bewray* is to *reveal* or *discover*. See Minsheu's Dictionary, 1617, in v. "To *bewraie*, or disclose, a Goth. *bewrye*."—*Malone*.

So, in the Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon, 1601:—"We were *bewray'd*, beset, and forc'd to yield." Again, in the Devil's Charter, 1607:—

Thy solitary passions should *bewray*
Some discontent—.

Practice is always used by Shakspeare for *insidious mischief*. So, in Sidney's Arcadia, book ii. :—"his heart fainted and gat a conceit, that with *bewraying* this *practice*, he might obtaine pardon." The quartos read—*betray*.—*Steevens*.

⁷ *If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold.*

Lipsbury pinfold, that is, Lipsbury pound. The sentence in which it occurs has the form of a proverbial saying; but no trace of its origin or direct signification has yet been discovered. Capell was very confident that he knew the meaning of it: "It is not come to knowledge where *Lipsbury* is, but this we may know, and that with certainty, *that it was some village or other fam'd for boxing*, that the boxers fought in a ring, or enclos'd circle, and that this ring was called—*Lipsbury pinfold*: this may satisfy as to the sense; and inquiry may help to further particulars, those that wish for them." *Notes on Lear*, p. 155. This would be well guessed, if any such place as *Lipsbury* had ever existed. *Lipsbury pinfold* may, perhaps, like *Lob's pound*, be a coined name; but with what allusion, does not appear. It is just possible that it might mean the teeth, as being the pinfold within the *lips*. The phrase would then mean, "If I had you in my teeth." But it remains for some more fortunate inquirer to discover what is really meant. No various reading of the passage comes to the aid of the critic in this place.—*Nares*.

⁸ *Three-suited . . . worsted-stocking knave.*

Three-suited knave might mean, in an age of ostentatious finery like that of Shakspeare, one who had no greater change of raiment than *three suits* would furnish him with. So, in Ben Jonson's Silent Woman:—"wert a pitiful fellow, and hadst nothing but *three suits of apparel*:" or it may signify a fellow *thrice-sued at law*, who has *three suits* for debt standing out against him. A *one-trunk-inheriting slave* may be a term used to describe a fellow, the whole of whose possessions are confined to *one coffer*, and that too *inherited* from his father, who was no better provided, or had nothing more to bequeath to his *successor in poverty*; a *poor rogue hereditary*, as Timon calls Apemantus. A *worsted-stocking knave* is another reproach of the same kind. The stockings in England, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, as I learn from Stubb's Anatomie of Abuses, printed in 1595, were remarkably expensive, and scarce any other kind than silk were worn, even, as this author says, by those who had not above forty shillings a year wages. So, in an old comedy, called the Hog hath Lost its Pearl, 1614, by R. Taylor:—"good parts are no more set by in these times, than a good leg in a *woollen stocking*." Again, in the Captain, by Beaumont and Fletcher:—

Green sicknesses and serving-men light on you,
With greasy breeches, and in *woollen stockings*.

Again, in the Miseries of inforc'd Marriage, 1607, two sober young men came

to claim their portion from their elder brother, who is a spendthrift, and tell him : “ Our birth-right, good brother : this town craves maintenance ; *silk stockings* must be had,” &c. Silk stockings were not made in England till 1560, the second year of Queen Elizabeth’s reign. Of this extravagance Drayton takes notice, in the 16th Song of his *Polyolbion* :—

Which our plain fathers erst would have accounted sin,
Before the costly coach and *silken stock* came in.—*Steevens*.

This term of reproach also occurs in the *Phœnix*, by Middleton, 1607 : “ *Mettreza Auriola* keeps her love with half the cost that I am at ; her friend can go afoot, like a good husband ; walk in *worsted stockings*, and inquire for the sixpenny ordinary.”—*Malone*.

A *hundred-pound gentleman* is a term of reproach used in Middleton’s *Phœnix*, 1607.—*Steevens*.

Action-taking knave, i. e. a fellow, who, if you beat him, would bring an action for the assault, instead of resenting it like a man of courage.—*M. Mason*.

Glass-gazing.—This epithet none of the commentators have explained ; nor am I sure that I understand it. In *Timon of Athens*, “ the *glass-fac’d flatterer* ” is mentioned, that is, says Dr. Johnson, “ he that shows in his own look, as by reflection, the looks of his patron.” *Glass-gazing* may be licentiously used for one enamoured of himself ; who gazes often at his own person in a glass.—*Malone*.

Addition, i. e. titles. The Statute 1 Hen. V. ch. 5, which directs that in certain writs a description should be *added* to the name of the defendant, expressive of his estate, mystery, degree, &c. is called the statute of *Additions*.—*Malone*.

⁹ *I’ll make a sop o’ the moonshine of you.*

This is equivalent to our modern phrase of making *the sun shine through any one*.—*Warburton*.

This ludicrous phrase imports that he should lay the person he speaks to upon his back on the earth, like a *sop* in a dripping-pan, for the moon-beams to baste him.—*Capell*.

Perhaps here an equivoque was intended. In the *Old Shepherd’s Kalendar*, among the dishes recommended for *Prymetyne*, “ One is *egges in moneshine*.”—*Farmer*.

Again, in some verses within a letter of Howell’s to Sir Thomas How :—

Could I those whitely stars go nigh,
Which make the milky way i’ th’ skie.
I’d poach them, and as *moonshine* dress,
To make my *Delia* a curious mess.—*Steevens*.

It is certain that an equivoque is here intended by an allusion to the old dish of *eggs in moonshine*, which was eggs broken and boiled in salad oil till the yolks became hard. They were eaten with *slices* of onions fried in oil, butter, verjuice, nutmeg and salt.—*Douce*.

¹⁰ *Take vanity the puppet’s part.*

There is no allusion here to the character of Vanity of the old moralities. The puppet vanity is the steward’s mistress, Goneril, whose part he has come to take against Lear at the court of her sister Regan.

¹¹ *You neat slave.*

Neat slave may mean you base cowherd, or it may mean, as Steevens suggests, you *finical* rascal, you assemblage of *foppery and poverty*. See Cotgrave, in

Mirloret, Mistoudin, Mondinet; by which Sherwood renders a *neate fellow*.—*Singer*.

¹² *Nature disclaims in thee.*

So the quartos and the folio. The modern editors read, without authority: “—— nature disclaims *her share* in thee.” The old reading is the true one. So, in R. Brome’s *Northern Lass*, 1633:—“—— I will *disclaim in* your favour hereafter.” Again, in the *Case is Alter’d*, by Ben Jonson. 1609:—“Thus to *disclaim in* all th’ effects of pleasure.” Again:—“No, I *disclaim in* her, I spit at her.” Again, in Warner’s *Albion’s England*, 1602, b. iii. chap. xvi.:—“Not these, my lords, make me *disclaim in* it which all pursue.”—*Steevens*.

Nay, more, I told his son, brought, hid him here,
Where he might hear his father pass the deed;
Being persuaded to it by this thought, sir,
That the unnaturalness, first, of the act,
And then his father’s oft *disclaiming in* him.

Ben Jonson’s Volpone or the Fox.

¹³ *A tailor made thee.*

Polo pickes uppe a pretty prolling trade,
That hath him prouder then his master made;
But yet, when all is done, the world mistakes him,
For not his mony, but the tailor makes him.

Epigrams by H. Parrot, 4to. Lond. 1608.

¹⁴ *Thou unnecessary letter.*

Zed is here probably used as a term of contempt, because it is the last letter in the English alphabet, and as its place may be supplied by S. and the Roman alphabet has it not; neither is it read in any word originally Teutonick. In Baret’s *Alvearie, or Quadruple Dictionary*, 1580, it is quite omitted, as the author affirms it to be rather a syllable than a letter. C (as Dr. Johnson supposed) cannot be the unnecessary letter, as there are many words in which its place will not be supplied with any other, as *charity, chastity, &c.*—*Steevens*.

This is taken from the grammarians of the time. Mulcaster says, “Z is much harder amongst us, and seldom seen:—S is become its *lieutenant general*. It is lightlie expressed in English, saving in foren enfranchisements.”—*Farmer*.

¹⁵ *Intrinsē.*

The quartos read, to *intrench*; the folio, t’*intrince*. Perhaps *intrinsē*, for so it should be written, was put by Shakspeare for *intrinsecate*, which he has used in *Antony and Cleopatra*:—

—— Come, mortal wretch,
With thy sharp teeth this knot *intrinsecate*
Of life at once untie.

I suspect that the poet meant to write *too intrinsē*; that is, *too intricate*, or too much *intrammelled*. See Florio in v. *intrecciare*; or *intrique* for *intricated*, as we find it in Phillips’s *World of Words*.—*Singer*.

¹⁶ *And turn their halcyon beaks.*

The *halcyon* is the bird otherwise called the *king-fisher*. The vulgar opinion was, that this bird, if hung up, would *vary* with the wind, and by that means show from what point it blew. So, in Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta*, 1633:—

But how now stands the wind?
Into what corner peers my *halcyon’s bill*?

M. William Shak-speare:

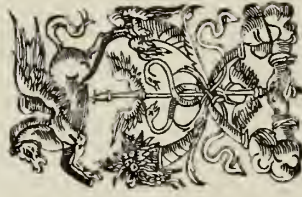
HIS

True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King L E A R and his three Daughters.

With the unfortunate life of Edgar, Sonne and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his fullen and assumed humor of TOM of Bedlam:

As it was played before the Kings Maiesie at Whitehall upon S. Stephens night in Christmas Holidays.

By his Maiesties seruants playing vfually at the Gloabe on the Bancke-side.



L O N D O N,
Printed for Nathaniel Butter, and are to be sold at his shop in Pauls Church-yard at the signe of the Pide Bull neere St. Austins Gate. 1608.

M. VWilliam Shake-speare,

HIS

True Chronicle History of the life and death of King Lear, and his three Daughters.

With the unfortunate life of E D G A R, sonne and heire to the Earle of Glocester, and his fullen and assumed humour of TOM of Bedlam.

As it was plaid before the Kings Maiesie at White-Hall, vpon S. Stephens night in Christmas Holidays.

By his Maiesties Seruants, playing vfually at the Gloabe on the Banck-side.



Printed for Nathaniel Butter.
1608.

Again, in Storer's Life and Death of Thomas Wolsey, Cardinall, a poem, 1599:—

Or as a *halcyon* with her turning brest,
Demonstrates wind from wind, and east from west.

Again, in the Tenth Booke of Notable Things, by Thomas Lupton,—“A lytle byrde called the Kings Fysher, being hanged up in the ayre by the neck, his nebbe or byll wyll be alwayes dyrect or strayght against the winde.”—*Stevens*.

¹⁷ *I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.*

Camelot, a town in Somersetshire, now called *Camel*, near South-Cadbury: much celebrated as one of the places at which King Arthur kept his court. The ancient *Camelot* was on a hill of that name, according to Selden: “By South-Cadbury is that *Camelot*, a hill of a mile compass at the top, four trenches circling it, and twixt every of them an earthen wall; the content of it within, about twenty acres, full of ruins and reliques of old buildings.” *Note the last, on Polyolbion*, B. 3. Leland exclaims, on seeing it, “*Dii boni! quot hic profundissimarum fossarum! quot hic egestæ terræ valla! quæ demum præcipitia! atque ut paucis finiam, videtur mihi quidem esse et naturæ et artis miraculum.*” Cited by *Selden. ib.*

Like *Camelot*, what place was ever yet renown'd,
Where, as at Caerleon oft', he kept his table round?

Drayton, Polyolb. Song iii. page 715.

It is often mentioned with Winchester, which was another residence of that famous king:—“This round table he kept in divers places, especially at Carlion, Winchester, and *Camalet* in Somersetshire,” *Stow's Annals*, Sign D. 6.

The old translator of the romance of *Morte Arthure* mistook it for the Welsh name of *Winchester*:—“It swam downe the stream to the citie of *Camelot*, that is, in English, Winchester,” 1634, Sign K Part 1st. bl. let. In the editor's prologue to the same book, we find it removed into Wales:—“And yet a record remaineth in witness of him in Wales, in the towne of *Camelot*.” Shakespeare alludes to it in a less historical character, as famous for geese, which were bred on the neighbouring moors.—*Nares*.

I cannot fancy, with *Nares* and others, that there is in the text the slightest allusion to the birds called geese, excepting of course a metaphorical one.

¹⁸ *In the fleshment of this dread exploit.*

A young soldier is said to *flesh* his sword, the first time he draws blood with it. *Fleshment*, therefore, is here metaphorically applied to the first act of service, which Kent, in his new capacity, had performed for his master; and, at the same time, in a sarcastick sense, as though he had esteemed it an heroick exploit to trip a man behind, that was actually falling.—*Henley*.

¹⁹ *But Ajax is their fool.*

That is,—such a plain, blunt, brave fellow as Ajax was, is the person these rascals always chuse to make their butt, and put their tricks upon.—*Heath*.

²⁰ *You stubborn ancient knave.*

Miscreant knave, both editions of 1608, at least in the copies in my possession. In some copies of the first impression, it is printed *ausrent*. Although Kent was but forty-eight, that was considered a great age in former days, and he might with propriety have been termed “ancient.”

²¹ *Stocks brought out.*

In the folio the stage-direction, *Stocks brought out*, is placed two lines earlier, as it no doubt stood in the prompter's book, that the stocks might be in readiness; and so it is given by the modern editors, without any regard to Cornwall's speech.—*A. Dyce.*

This kind of exhibition was familiar to the ancient stage. In Hick Scorer, which was printed in the reign of Henry VIII. Pity is put into the *stocks*, and left there until he is freed by Perseverance and Contemplacyon. It should be remembered that formerly in great houses, as lately in some colleges, there were moveable *stocks* for the correction of the servants.—*Singer.*

Holme describes the stocks, "a prison or place of security to keep safe all such as the constable finds to be night-walkers, common drunkards and swearers, that have no money, and such like; also petty thieves, strippers of hedges, robbers of hen-roosts, and light-fingered persons, who can let none of their masters or mistresses goods or cloaths lye before them; also wandring rogues, gipsies, and such as love begging better than labour."

And twenty of thes odur ay in a pytt,
In *stokkes* and feturs for to sytt.

MS. Cantab. Ff. ii. 38, f. 233.

And if from the *stocks* I can keep out my feet,
I fear not the Compter, King's Bench, nor the Fleet.

Academy of Compliments, 1671, p. 281.



The annexed engraving of a man in the stocks is taken by Mr. Fairholt from an illuminated MS.

²² *To the warm sun.*

In allusion to the common old English proverb, "he goes out of God's blessing to the warm-sun," from good to worse, or, rather, perhaps equivalent to

the now common phrase, "out of the frying pan into the fire," states which really give little choice,

By changing my masters, I escaped the thunder, and came into the tempest. I had mended the matter well by coming out of God's blessing into the warm sun, for my present master was such a one as I can hardly describe.—*Kirkman's Unlucky Citizen, 1673.*

²³ *Nothing almost sees miracles, but misery.*

Scarcely any but the miserable perceive miracles, or discover a divine Providence in events.

²⁴ *And shall find time &c.*

There is much in this monologue that I do not at all understand. It is probable that the text of it is corrupt, and that there are some omissions. I add the notes of Steevens and Malone.

I confess I do not understand this passage, unless it may be considered as *divided parts of Cordelia's letter*, which he is reading to himself by moonlight: it certainly conveys the sense of what she would have said. In reading a letter, it is natural enough to dwell on those circumstances in it that promise the change

in our affairs which we most wish for; and Kent having read Cordelia's assurances that she will find a time to free the injured from the *enormous* misrule of Regan, is willing to go to sleep with that pleasing reflection uppermost in his mind. But this is mere conjecture.—*Steevens*.

In the old copies these words are printed in the same character as the rest of the speech. I have adhered to them, not conceiving that they form any part of Cordelia's letter, or that any part of it is or can be read by Kent. He wishes for the rising of the sun, that he *may* read it. I suspect that two half lines have been lost between the words *state* and *seeking*. This *enormous state* means, I think, the confusion subsisting in the state, in consequence of the disorder which had arisen between the Dukes of Albany and Cornwall; of which Kent hopes Cordelia will avail herself. He says, in a subsequent scene—

———— There is division,
Although as yet the face of it be eover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall.

In the modern editions, after the words *under globe*, the following direction has been inserted: "*Looking up to the moon.*" Kent is surely here addressing, not the moon, but the sun, which he has mentioned in the preceding line, and for whose rising he is impatient, that he may read Cordelia's letter. He has just before said to Gloster, "Give you *good morrow!*" The *comfortable* beams of the moon, no poet, I believe, has mentioned. Those of the sun are again mentioned by Shakspeare in *Timon of Athens*:—"Thou *sun*, that *comfort'st*, burn!"—*Malone*.

²⁵ *Elf all my hair in knots.*

Hair thus knotted, was vulgarly supposed to be the work of *elves* and fairies in the night. So, in *Romeo and Juliet*:—

—— plats the manes of horses in the night,
And bakes the *elf-locks* in foul sluttish hairs,
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.—*Steevens*.

²⁶ *Of Bedlam beggars.*

Harman, in his *Caveat for common Cursitars* 1566, observes Mr. Fairholt, has given an excellent specimen of a genuine Bedlam beggar, which he copied from life; and is here reproduced in facsimile from his book. This beggar was named Nicholas Gennings, and appeared half-clothed in filthy rags, pretending to be a victim to the falling sickness, and to have been recently discharged from Bedlam, where he asserted he had been confined for a year and a half.

Randle Holme, in his *Academy of Arms and Blazon*, b. iii. c. 3, has the following passage descriptive of this class of vagabonds:—"The *Bedlam* is in the same garb, with a long staff, and a cow or ox-horn by his side; but his cloathing is more fantastick and ridiculous; for, being a madman, he is madly decked and dressed all over with rubins, feathers, cuttings of cloth, and what not? to make him seem a mad-man, or one distracted, when he is no other than a dissembling knave." In the *Bell-man of London*, by Deeker, 5th edit. 1640, is another account of one of these characters, under the title of an



Abraham-Man: “— he swears he hath been in Bedlam, and will talke frantickely of purpose: you see *pinnes* stuck in sundry places of his naked flesh, especially in his *armes*, which paine he gladly puts himselfe to, only to make you believe he is out of his wits. He calls himselfe by the name of *Poore Tom*, and comming near any body cries out, *Poor Tom is a-cold*. Of these *Abraham-men*, some be exceeding merry, and doe nothing but sing songs fashioned out of their own braines: some will dance, others will doe nothing but either laugh or weepe: others are dogged, and so sullen both in loke and speech, that spying but a small company in a house, they boldly and bluntly enter, *compelling* the servants through feare to give them what they demand.” Again, in *O per se O*, &c. Being an Addition, &c. to the Bellman’s Second Night-walke, &c. 1612: “Crackers tyed to a dogges tayle make not the poore curre runne faster, than these *Abram* ninnies doe the silly *villagers* of the country, so that when they come to any doore a begging, nothing is denied them.” To *sham Abraham*, a cant term, still in use among sailors and the vulgar, may have this origin.—*Steevens*.

It was the custom with cheating beggars formerly, and, I believe, is not yet out of practice with them, to raise artificial sores on their bodies to move compassion, by burning crow’s-foot, spear-wort, and salt together, which, being clapped at once on the place, fretted the skin; then with a linen rag, which sticks close, they tear off the skin and strew on a little powder of arsenic, which gives it an ugly and ill-favoured look: these sores are, in the canting phrase, called *elegms*. Hypocrisy is of all nations and all ages: The practice of the religious cheats in the East Indies, at this day, is to drive a piece of iron through some part of the body, which for a time gives great pain to the sufferer: these rascals on this account are held so sacred, that nobody dares offend them.—*Davies*.

²⁷ *Wooden pricks.*

Rightly explained *skewers*. Greene, in his admirable satire, *a Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, speaking of the tricks played by the butchers in his time, makes one of his characters exclaim, “I pray you, goodman Kilcalfe, have you not your artificial knaveries to set out your meate with *pricks*?” The brewers and bakers come in also for their share of abuse.—*Douce*.

²⁸ *Poor pelting villages.*

That Wednesday I a weary way did passe,
Raine, wind, stones, dirt, and dabbling dewie grasse,
With here and there a *pelting* scattered *village*,
Which yeilded me no charity or pillage.—*Taylor’s Workes*, i. 124.

²⁹ *Poor Turlygod.*

Seemingly a name for the sort of beggar described in the preceding lines, which Shakespeare calls a *bedlam-beggar*: I cannot persuade myself that this word, however similar in meaning, has any real connexion with *turlupin*, notwithstanding the authority of Warburton and Douce. It seems to be an original English term, being the too remote in form from the other, to be a corruption from it.—*Nares*.

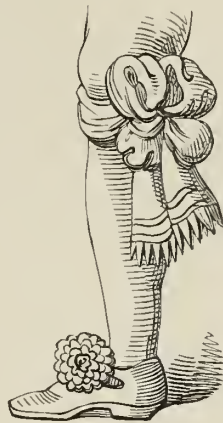
³⁰ *He wears cruel garters!*

Cruel was a kind of fine worsted. “Cruel, *licium, filium*,” Coles. The word was obvious to the punster, and is unmercifully used by the older dramatists. In the Rates of the Custome House, 1582, occurs, “cruel, caddas, or worsted ribbon.” A *crewel night-cap* is mentioned in Beaumont and Fletcher’s *Scornful Lady*, act ii. Sc. 1. “White crule” is mentioned in a wardrobe account, dated 1536, *Archæologia*, ix. 249, which is, I suppose, the same material,—“item, for making

of a coat of green cloth, with a hood to the same, fringed with white erule, lined with frize and buckram, for our fool aforesaid." Hose of erewel, called *Mantua hose*, continued to be imported into this country as late as 12 Charles II. In an inventory in MS. Addit. 6702, temp. Elizabeth, is the entry, "erule fringe and laee for my wyves petieote, ij.s. viij.d."

Then another door opening rearward, there came puffing out of the next room a villanous lieutenant without a band, as if he had been new cut down, like one at Wapping, with his *cruel* garters about his neck, which fitly resembled two of Derrick's necklaces.—*The Blacke Booke*, 1604.

A pun similar to that in the text is in one of L'Estrange's anecdotes,— "A greate zelote for the Cause, would not allow the Parliament's army to be *beaten* in a certaine fight, but confest he did beleeeve they might be *worsted*. To which linsy-wolsey expression, a merry Cavalcere reply'd, "Take heede of that, for *worsted* is a *cruell* peece of stuffe." "The garters of the Elizabethan age," observes Mr. Fairholt, "were small scarfs swathed about the leg, and tied in large bows with fringed terminations. They were often costly. The middle classes aped their superiors in finery, and when they could not obtain silk or velvet, were compelled to wear eruel garters."



³¹ *He wears wooden nether stocks.*

That is, he is set in the stocks. *Nether-stocks*, stockings; that is, *lower stocks*. The breeches were the *upper-stocks*. Thus, *haut-da-chausses*, and *bas-de-chausses*, were the old French names for those two parts of dress; the latter having retained the abbreviated name of *bas*. The reason is, that the whole was originally in one, like the present pantaloons, under the name of *chausse*, made *hose* in English. Thus Cotgrave:—"*Chause*; f. A hose, a stocking, or *nether-stock* (*bas de chause*), also a breek, or breech, in which sense it is most commonly plural (*haut de chausses*)."—*Nares*.

³² *To do upon respect such violent outrage.*

'To do, upon respect, such violent outrage,' I think, means 'to do such violent outrage *deliberately*, or *upon consideration*.' *Respect* is frequently used for *consideration* by Shakspeare. Cordelia says, in the first scene:—

Since that *respects* of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.

And in Hamlet:—

———— There's the *respect*
That makes calamity of so long life.

I cannot think that *respect* here means a *respected person*, as Johnson supposed; or that it is intended for a personification, as Malone asserts.—*Singer*.

³³ *Spite of intermission.*

"Spite of intermission, is 'without pause, without suffering time to intervene.' So, in Macbeth:—

———— gentle heaven,
Cut short all *intermission*, &c.—*Steevens*.

"Spite of intermission" perhaps means in spite of, or without regarding, that

message which *interrened*, and which was entitled to precedent attention. "Spite of intermission," however, may mean, in spite of being obliged to pause and take breath, after having *panted forth* the salutation from his mistress. In Cawdrey's Alphabetical Table of Hard Words, 1604, *intermission* is defined, "*foreslowing, a pausing or breaking off.*"—*Malone*.

³⁴ *They summon'd up their meiny.*

Meiny, a company of followers, or household attendants; an army. (*A.N.*) Still in use in the North of England. "*Meny*, a family," Kennett. MS. Lansd. 1033.

He had with hyme a *meyné* there,
 As he had ellys where,
 Of the rounde table the kynghtes alle,
 With myrth and joye yn hys halle.—*MS. Rawlinson C. 86.*
 Marrok thoght utturly
 To do the quene a velanyc,
 Hys luste for to fulfyller;
 He ordeygynd hym a companye
 Of hys owne *meynye*,
 That wolde assente hym tulle.—*MS. Cantab. Ff, ii. 38, f. 73.*

³⁵ *O, how this mother ſe.*

Lear here affects to pass off the swelling of his heart ready to burst with grief and indignation, for the disease called the *Mother*, or *Hysterica Passio*, which, in our author's time, was not thought peculiar to women only. In Harsnet's Declaration of Popish Impostures, Richard Mainy, Gent. one of the pretended demoniacks, deposes, p. 263, that the first night that he came to Denham, the seat of Mr. Peckham, where these impostures were managed, he was somewhat evill at ease, and he grew worse and worse with an old disease that he had, and which the priests persuaded him was from the possession of the devil, viz. "The disease I spake of was a spice of the *Mother*, wherewith I had bene troubled . . . before my going into Fraunce: whether I doc rightly term it the *Mother* or no, I knowe not . . . When I was sicke of this disease in Fraunce, a Scottish doctor of physick then in Paris, called it, as I remember, *Virtiginem Capitis*. It riseth . . . of a winde in the bottome of the belly, and proceeding with a great swelling, causeth a very painfull collicke in the stomack, and an extraordinary giddines in the head." It is at least very probable, that Shakspeare would not have thought of making Lear affect to have the *Hysterick Passion*, or *Mother*, if this passage in Harsnet's pamphlet had not suggested it to him, when he was selecting the other particulars from it, in order to furnish out his character of Tom of Bedlam, to whom this demoniacal gibberish is admirably adapted.—*Percy*.

In p. 25 of the above pamphlet it is said, "Ma: Maynie had a spice of the *Hysterica passio*, as seems, from his youth, he himsele termes it the *Moother*."—*Ritson*.

³⁶ *There's not a nose among twenty.*

The word *twenty* does not, I think, refer solely to the noses of the blind men. The Fool says that Kent deserves to be put in the stocks for his silly question, for not looking which way the wind blows, for being too simple. He says that all men who follow their noses are led by their eyes, blind men excepted. Kent, according to his notion, has not used his eyes, and therefore he deserved the stocks. Not a nose of any kind but smells him that is stinking; and he infers

that Kent had neither used his eyes to see, nor his nose to smell; in short, had not made use of his senses.

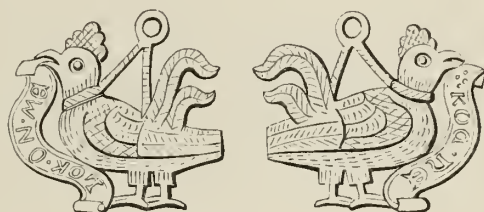
³⁷ *The knave turns fool, that runs away.*

I cannot think that the alterations here suggested by Johnson and Capell are necessary, but on the contrary that the text as it stands exhibits more profundity in the Fool's remark than is at first apparent. Having shown the wise selfishness of the worldly man, and the fidelity of the simple one, he follows with a refinement, observing,—nevertheless, the knave, to give the wise man his proper title, turns fool who runs away, for, after all, he is really the fool who chooses not to act justly and uprightly; and again, although the knave become a fool by his treason, yet the fool does not become a knave by remaining, although even he might be thought a fool.

³⁸ *As the cockney did to the eels.*

The term cockney was used in various senses, amongst others in that of a cook, which may be the meaning here, although I rather incline to the belief that the reference is to some absurd tale of a London cockney well known in Shakespeare's time. In Minsheu's *Ductor in Linguas*, published in 1617, the origin of this word is thus explained:—"That a citizen's son riding with his father out of London into the country, and being a novice and merely ignorant how corn and cattle increased, asked, when he heard a horse neigh, what the horse did? His father aswered, the horse doth neigh. Riding further, he heard a cock crow, and said, doth the *cock neigh* too?"

Mr. Fairholt sends me the following curious note,—“a curious instance of the early use of the word cockney occurs on a leaden sign of the fourteenth century in the Museum of London Antiquities collected by C. Roach Smith, F.S.A. It is an evident burlesque on the *signacula* worn by Pilgrims after visiting saintly shrines. It represents a cock with a label issuing from his mouth inscribed on one side LOK · ON · ME, and on the other the word KOC · NE (Look on me, Cockney!). It is furnished with a loop for suspension, such signs being usually worn upon the hat.”



³⁹ *Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here.*

That Prometheus is alluded to here is highly probable: but instead of his representative Lear, the *vulture unkindness* is tied; to signify an incessant and unmerited preying upon the heart she is “*tied*” to.—While these words are spoken, that “*mother*” that “*Hysterica-passio*” rises a second time, and strangles speech; which goes brokenly on, for the words “*deprav'd a quality*” would naturally be followed by—*she*, i. e. Goneril, *is*.—*Capell*.

Roderick is of opinion that there is something very hard and unnatural in this expression, of “*tying unkindness to his heart*;” and two attempts have been made at emendation, but sure, most unnecessarily. The expression to me appears far from being deficient either in elegance, or strength, and denotes the sense, the corroding resentment of ingratitude to be so *fixed*, so *fastened* to his heart, that it cannot be thence removed. The same writer conceives *unkindness* here to have the force of—*unnaturalness*;—*kind* and *nature*, in the old writers, being synonymous.—*Eccles*.

⁴⁰ *Than she to scant her duty.*

Some of the critics have proposed to read *scan*, and Johnson asserts that even *scant* may have the meaning of *scan*; but as Steevens justly observes, *scant* means to be deficient or wanting in duty, the exact thing that is implied in the text.—*Pye*.

⁴¹ *Do you but mark how this becomes the house.*

This is one of the lines that *mark* Shakespeare, and the expression is worthy of his genius: Fathers are not only the heads of a house or a family, but its representatives; they are *the house*; what affects them affects the rest of its body: Regan, therefore, is called upon, to observe an action in which she is concerned, and then pronounce her opinion of it; and she does accordingly shew herself hurt by it, declares it *unsightly*, unbecoming her and her father, i. e. *the house*.—*Capell*.

⁴² *Age is unnecessary.*

That is, an useless article, superfluous, a thing which is not wanted. So, in *As You Like It*, *needless stream*, a stream that needs no supply.

⁴³ *You taking airs.*

To take, to blast, as if by witchcraft. The term is still current in the West of England. “Taken, as chyldernes lymmes be by the fayries, *faée*,” Palsgrave. In an old MS. collection of receipts is one “for to make a man hole that kechith cold in his slepe that he ys ny *take* :” and another “for a man that ys *take* in his slepe.”

A horse which is bereft of his feeling, moving or stirring, is said to be *taken*, and in sooth so he is, in that he is arrested by so villainous a disease, yet some farriers, not well understanding the ground of the disease, conster the word *taken* to bee striken by some plannet or evill spirit, which is false, for it proceedeth of too great abundance of fleme and choler, simboliz’d together. The cure is thus. Let him blood in his spur-vains, and his breast vaines, and then by foulding him in abundant number of cloaths, drive him into an extreme sweat, during which time of his sweating, let one chafe his legs with oyle de bay, then after he hath sweat the space of two houres, abate his cloaths moderatly, and throughly after he is dry, annoint him all over with oyle petroleum, and in twice or thrie dressing him he will be sound.—*Markham*, *ap. Topsell’s Beasts*, 1607, p. 351.

⁴⁴ *Thy tender-hefted nature.*

Hefted seems to mean the same as *heaved*. *Tender-hefted*, i. e. whose bosom is agitated by tender passions. The formation of such a participle, I believe, cannot be grammatically accounted for. Shakspeare uses *hefts* for *hevings* in the *Winter’s Tale*, Act II. Both the quartos however read, “tender-*hefted* nature;” which may mean a nature which is governed by gentle dispositions. *Hest* is an old word signifying *command*. So, in *The Wars of Cyrus*, &c. 1594:—“Must yield to *hest* of others that be free.” *Hefted* is the reading of the folio.—*Steevens*.

⁴⁵ *To scant my sizes.*

To contract my allowances or proportions settled. A sizer is one of the lowest rank of students at Cambridge, and lives on a stated allowance. *Sizes* are certain portions of bread, beer, or other victuals, which in publick societies are set down to the account of particular persons: a word still used in colleges. So, in the *Return from Parnassus*:—“You are one of the devil’s fellow-commoners; one

that *sizeth* the devil's butteries.—Fiddlers, set it on my head; I use to *size* my musick, or go on the score for it.”—*Steevens*.

⁴⁶ *Sumpter.*

A sumpter was a horse which carried furniture, &c. on his back. It was more commonly termed a sumpter-horse.

But, for you have not furniture
 Beseeming such a guest,
 I bring his owne, and come myselve
 To see his lodging drest.
 With that two *sumpters* were discharg'd,
 In which were hangings brave,
 Silke coverings, curtens, carpets, plate,
 And al such turn should have.—*Percy's Reliques*, p. 78.

⁴⁷ *Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws.*

Flaws anciently signified *fragments*, as well as mere *cracks*. Among the Saxons it certainly had that meaning, as may be seen in Somner's Dict. Saxon. The word, as Bailey observes, was 'especially applied to the breaking off *shivers* or thin pieces from precious stones.'—*Singer*.

⁴⁸ *Entreat him by no means to stay.*

“Storme begins” is here a manuscript stage direction in a copy of the first edition of 1608, in the handwriting of one contemporary or nearly so with Shakespeare.

Act the Third.

SCENE I.—*A Heath.*

A Storm, with Thunder and Lightning. Enter KENT, and a Gentleman, meeting.

Kent. Who's here, beside foul weather?

Gent. One minded, like the weather, most unquietly.

Kent. I know you. Where's the king?

Gent. Contending with the fretful elements ;
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the eurl'd waters 'bove the main,¹
That things might echange or cease : tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of :
Strives in his little world of man to out-seorn
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
This night, wherein the eub-drawn bear would eough,
The lion and the belly-pinehed wolf
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all.

Kent. But who is with him?

Gent. None but the fool, who labours to outjest
His heart-struck injuries.

Kent. Sir, I do know you,

And dare, upon the warrant of my art,²
 Commend a dear thing to you. 'There is division,
 Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
 With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
 Who have—as who have not, that their great stars
 Thron'd and set high?—servants, who seem no less,
 Which are to France the spies and speculations
 Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen,
 Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes,³
 Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
 Against the old kind king; or something deeper,
 Whereof, perchance, these are but furnishings;—
 But, true it is, from France there comes a power
 Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
 Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
 In some of our best ports, and are at point
 To show their open banner.—Now to you:
 If on my credit you dare build so far
 To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
 Some that will thank you, making just report
 Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
 The king hath cause to plain.
 I am a gentleman of blood and breeding,
 And from some knowledge and assurance offer
 This office to you.

Gent. I will talk further with you.

Kent. No, do not.

For confirmation that I am much more
 Than my out wall, open this purse, and take
 What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia,—
 As fear not but you shall—show her this ring,
 And she will tell you who that fellow is
 That yet you do not know. [*Thunder.*] Fie on this storm!
 I will go seek the king.

Gent. Give me your hand. Have you no more to say?

Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet;
 That, when we have found the king, in which your pain
 That way, I'll this, he that first lights on him,
 Holloa the other. [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Part of the Heath. Storm continues.*

Enter LEAR and Fool.

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
 You cataracts and hurricanoes spout,
 Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
 You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
 Vaunt-couriers⁴ to oak-cleaving thunder-bolts,
 Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
 Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
 Crack nature's moulds, all germins spill at once,
 That make ingrateful man!

Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water⁵ in a dry house is better
 than this rain-water out o' door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy
 daughter's blessing: here's a night pities neither wise men nor
 fools.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyfull! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
 Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters;
 I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
 I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
 You owe me no subscription:⁶ then, let fall
 Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
 A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man.
 But yet I call you servile ministers,
 That will with two pernicious daughters join
 Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
 So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!

Fool. He that has a house to put 's head in has a good head-
 piece.

The cod-piece that will house,
 Before the head has any,
 The head and he shall louse;—
 So beggars marry many.
 The man that makes his toe
 What he his heart should make,
 Shall of a corn cry woe,
 And turn his sleep to wake.

—for there was never yet fair woman, but she made mouths in a glass.

Enter KENT.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience ;
I will say nothing.

Kent. Who's there ?

Fool. Marry, here's grace, and a cod-piece ;⁷ that's a wise man, and a fool.

Kent. Alas, sir ! are you here ? things that love night,
Love not such nights as these ; the wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their eaves. Since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard : man's nature cannot carry
Th' affliction, nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp'd of justice :⁸ hide thee, thou bloody hand ;
Thou perjur'd, and thou simular of virtue
That art incestuous : caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practis'd on man's life : close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace.—I am a man,
More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Alack, bare-headed !⁹
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel ;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest :
Repose you there, while I to this hard house,—
More hard than is the stone whereof 'tis rais'd,
Which even but now, demanding after you,
Denied me to come in, return, and force
Their scanted courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.—
Come on, my boy. How dost, my boy ? Art cold ?
I am cold myself.—Where is this straw, my fellow ?
The art of our necessities is strange,

That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.
 Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
 That's sorry yet for thee.

Fool. *He that has a little tiny wit,—* [Sings.
With heigh, ho, the wind and the rain,—
Must make content with his fortunes fit ;
For the rain it raineth every day.

Lear. True, my good boy.—Come, bring us to this hovel.
 [Exeunt LEAR and KENT.]

Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtezan.—I'll speak a
 propheey ere I go :

When priests are more in word than matter ;
 When brewers mar their malt with water ;
 When nobles are their tailors' tutors ;¹⁰
 No hereties burn'd, but wenches suitors :
 When every case in law is right ;
 No squire in debt, nor no poor knight ;
 When slanders do not live in tongues,
 Nor cutpurses come not to throngs ;
 When usurers tell their gold i' the field,
 And bawds and whores do churches build ;
 Then shall the realm of Albion¹¹
 Come to great confusion :
 Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
 That going shall be us'd with feet.

This propheey Merlin shall make ; for I live before his time.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—*A Room in GLOSTER'S Castle.*

Enter GLOSTER and EDMUND.

Glo. Alack, alack ! Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing.
 When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took
 from me the use of mine own house ; charged me, on pain of
 their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for
 him, nor any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage, and unnatural !

Glo. Go to ; say you nothing. There is division between the dukes, and a worse matter than that. I have received a letter this night ;—'tis dangerous to be spoken ;—I have locked the letter in my closet. These injuries the king now bears will be revenged home ; there is part of a power already footed : we must incline to the king. I will seek him, and privily relieve him : go you, and maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived. If he ask for me, I am ill, and gone to bed. If I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king, my old master, must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund ; pray you, be careful. [*Exit.*

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke Instantly know ; and of that letter too. This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me That which my father loses ; no less than all : The younger rises, when the old doth fall. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A Part of the Heath, with a Hovel.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord ; good my lord, enter : The tyranny of the open night's too rough For nature to endure. [*Storm still.*

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Wilt break my heart ?¹²

Kent. I'd rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much, that this contentious storm Invades us to the skin : so 'tis to thee ; But where the greater malady is fix'd, The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear ; But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea, Thou'dst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind's free, The body's delicate : the tempest in my mind Doth from my senses take all feeling else, Save what beats there.—Filial ingratitude ! Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand, For lifting food to't ?—But I will punish home.—

No, I will weep no more.—In such a night
To shut me out!—Pour on; I will endure :—
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!—
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,—
O! that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Pr'ythee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease:
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more.—But I'll go in:
In, boy; go first.—[*To the Fool.*] You houseless poverty,—
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.—[*Fool goes in.*
Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O! I have ta'en
Too little care of this. Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou may'st shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.

Edg. [*Within.*] Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor
Tom! [The Fool runs out from the Hovel.

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle; here's a spirit. Help me!
help me!

Kent. Give me thy hand.—Who's there?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit: he says his name's poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i' the straw?
Come forth.

Enter EDGAR, disguised as a Madman.

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me!—
Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.—
Humph! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.¹³

Lear. Hast thou given all to thy two daughters?
And art thou come to this?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul
fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and
whirlpool, over bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under
his pillow,¹⁴ and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge;
made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over

four-ineded bridges, to eourse his own shadow for a traitor.— Bless thy five wits!¹⁵ Tom's a-eold.—O! do de, do de, do de.—Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes.—There could I have him now,—and there,—and there,—and there again, and there. *[Storm continues.]*

Lear. What! have his daughters brought him to this pass?—

Could'st thou save nothing? Didst thou give them all?

Fool. Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all shamed.

Lear. Now, all the plagues, that in the pendulous air Hang fated o'er men's faults, light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters.—

Is it the fashion, that disearded fathers Should have thus little merey on their flesh? Judieious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillieock sat on Pillicoeck-hill:¹⁶—
Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

Fool. This eold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' the foul fiend. Obey thy parents; keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom's a-eold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curled my hair, wore gloves in my eap,¹⁷ served the lust of my mistress's heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven: one, that slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it. Wine loved I deeply; dice dearly;¹⁸ and in woman, out-paramoured the Turk: false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes, nor the rustling of silks, betray thy poor heart to woman: keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from leanders' books, and defy the foul fiend.—Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind; says suum, mun, ha no nonny. Dolphin my boy,¹⁹ my boy; sessa!²⁰ let him trot by.

[Storm still continues.]

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odated man, is no more but such a poore bare forked Animall as thou art, off off you leadings, come on bee true.

Foole. Prithe Nunckle be content, this is a naughty night to swim in, now a little fire in a wild field, were like an old leachers heart, a small sparke, all the rest in bodie cold, looke here comes a walking fire.

Enter Gloster.

Edg. This is the foule fiend *Sriherdegibis*, hee begins at cur-pheew, and walks till the first cocke, he gins the web, the pin-queues the eye, and makes the harte lip, mildewes the white wheate, and hurts the poore creature of earth, swithald footed thrice the old a nellthu night more and her ninefold bid her, O light and her troth plight and a rint thee, with a rint thee.

Kent. How fares your Grace?

Lear. Whats hee?

Kent. Whose there, what i'st you seeke?

Glof. What are you there? your names?

Edg. Poore *Tom*, that eats the swimming frog, the tode, the tode pold, the wall-wort and the water, that in the furie of his heart, when the foule fiend rages, eats cow-dung for falllets, swallows the old ratt, and the ditch dogge, drinks the greene mantle of the standing poole, who is whipt from tithing to tithing, and stock-punisht and imprisoned, who hath had three futes to his backe, fixe shirts to his bodie, horse to ride, and weapon to weare.

But mife and rats, and such small Deere,

Hath beene *Toms* foode for seuen long yeare-

Beware my follower, peace snulbug, peace thou fiend.

Glof. What hath your Grace no better company?

Edg. The Prince of darkenes is a Gentleman, *modo* he's cald and ma hu---

Glof. Our flesh and bloud is growne so vild my Lord, that it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poore *Toms* a cold.

Glof. Go in with me, my dutie canot suffer to obay in all your daughters hard commaunds, though their iniunction be to barre my doores, and let this tyranous night take hold vpon you, yet haue I venter'd to come seeke you out, and bring you where both food and fire is readie.

Lear.

The Historie of King Lear.

odated man, is no more but such a poore bare forked Animall as thou art, off off you lendings, come on

Foole. Prithe Nunckle be content, this is a naughty night to swim in, now a little fire in a wild field, were like an old leachers heart, a small sparke, all the rest in bodie cold, looke here comes a walking fire.

Enter Gloster.

Edg. This is the foule fiend *Siberdegibek*, hee begins at cur-pheew, and walks till the first cocke, he giues the web, & the pin, squemes the eye, and makes the hare lip, mildewes the white wheate, and hurts the poore creature of earth, swithald footed thrice the old, he met the night mare and her ninefold bid her, O light and her troth plight and arint thee, witch arint thee.

Kent. How fares your Grace?

Lear. Whats hee?

Kent. Whose there, what i'st you seeke?

Glof. What are you there? your names?

Edg. Poore *Tom*, that eats the swimming frog, the tode, the tod pole, the wall-newt, and the water, that in the furie of his heart, when the foule fiend rages, eats cow-dung for falllets, swallows the old ratt, and the ditch dogge, drinks the greene mantle of the standing poole, who is whipt from tithing to tithing, and stock-punisht and imprisoned, who hath had three futes to his backe, fixe shirts to his bodie, horse to ride, and weapon to weare.

But mife and rats, and such small Deere,

Hath beene *Toms* foode for seuen long yeare-

Beware my follower, peace snulbug, peace thou fiend.

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Lear.

Lear. Why, thou wert better in thy grave, than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies.—Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the eat no perfume.—Ha! here's three on's are sophisticated: thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal²¹ as thou art.—Off, off, you lendings.—Come; unbutton here.—
[*Tearing off his clothes.*]

Fool. Pr'ythee, nunele, be contented; 'tis a naughty night to swim in.²²—Now, a little fire in a wild field were like an old leecher's heart; a small spark, all the rest on's body cold.—Look! here comes a walking-fire.²³

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet:²⁴ he begins at eurfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin,²⁵ squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

*Saint Withold footed thrice the old;*²⁶
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

Kent. How fares your grace?

Enter GLOSTER, with a Torch.

Lear. What's he?

Kent. Who's there? What is't you seek?

Glo. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt, and the water;²⁷ that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat, and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tything to tything, and stoeked, punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his baek, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear,—

*But mice and rats, and such small deer,*²⁸
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Beware my follower.—Peace, Smolkin!²⁹ peace, thou fiend!

Glo. What! hath your grace no better company?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman ;
Mudo he's call'd, and Mahu.

Glo. Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile,
That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.

Glo. Go in with me. My duty cannot suffer
To obey all your daughters' hard commands :
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out,
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher.—
What is the cause of thunder ?

Kent. Good my lord, take his offer : go into the house.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.—
What is your study ?

Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.

Kent. Importune him once more to go, my lord,
His wits begin t' unsettle.

Glo. Canst thou blame him ?
His daughters seek his death.—Ah, that good Kent !—
He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man !—
Thou say'st, the king grows mad : I'll tell thee, friend,
I am almost mad myself. I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood ; he sought my life,
But lately, very late : I lov'd him, friend,
No father his son dearer : true to tell thee,
The grief hath craz'd my wits. What a night's this !

[*Storm continues.*]

I do beseech your grace,—

Lear. O ! cry you mercy, sir—
Noble philosopher, your company.

Edg. Tom's a-cold.

Glo. In fellow, there, into the hovel : keep thee warm.

Lear. Come, let's in all.

Kent. This way my lord.

Lear. With him :

I will keep still with my philosopher.

Kent. Good my lord, soothe him ; let him take the fellow.

Glo. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirrah, come on ; go along with us.

Lear. Come, good Athenian.

Glo. No words, no words :

Hush.

Edg. Child Rowland to the dark tower came,³⁰

His word was still,—*Fie, foh, and fum,*³¹

I smell the blood of a British man.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A Room in GLOSTER'S Castle.*

Enter CORNWALL and EDMUND.

Corn. I will have my revenge, ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This is the letter which he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee earl of Gloster. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

Edm. [*Aside.*] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully.—[*To him.*] I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*A Chamber in a Farm-House, adjoining the Castle.*

Enter GLOSTER, LEAR, KENT, Fool, and EDGAR.

Glo. Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits has given way to his impatience.—The gods reward your kindness! [*Exit GLOSTER.*]

Edg. Frateretto calls me, and tells me, Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. Pr'ythee, nuncle, tell me, whether a madman be a gentleman, or a yeoman?

Lear. A king, a king!

Fool. No: he's a yeoman, that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman, that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come whizzing in upon them:—

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He's mad, that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's heels,³² a boy's love, or a whore's oath.

Lear. It shall be done; I will arraign them straight.—
Come, sit thou here, most learned justiceer;— [*To EDGAR.*]
Thou, sapient sir, sit here. Now, you she foxes!—

Edg. Look, where he stands and glares —
Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam?

Come o'er the bourn, Bessy to me: ³³—

Fool. Her boat hath a leak,

And she must not speak

Why she dares not come over to thee.

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hopdaneer cries in Tom's belly for two white herring.³⁴ Croak not, blaek angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amaz'd:
Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first.—Bring in the evidence.—
 Thou robed man of justice, take thy place;— [To EDGAR.
 And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity, [To the Fool.
 Bench by his side.—You are o' the commission,
 Sit you too. [To KENT.

Edg. Let us deal justly.

*Sleepest, or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?*³⁵
Thy sheep be in the corn;
*And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,*³⁶
Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Pur! the cat is grey.

Lear. Arraign her first; 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

Fool. Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.³⁷

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
 What store her heart is made on.—Stop her there!
 Arms, arms, sword, fire!—Corruption in the place!
 False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

Kent. O pity!—Sir, where is the patience now,
 That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. [Aside.] My tears begin to take his part so much,
 They'll mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all,
 Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them.—Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,
 Tooth that poisons if it bite;
 Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel, grim,
 Hound, or spaniel, brach, or lym;
 Or bobtail tike, or trundle-tail,³⁸
 Tom will make them weep and wail:
 For with throwing thus my head,
 Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Do, de, de, de. See, see! Come, march to wakes and fairs,
 and market towns.—Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.³⁹

Lear. Then, let them anatomize Regan, see what breeds about

her heart. Is there any cause in nature, that makes these hard hearts?—You, sir, [*To EDGAR.*] I entertain you for one of my hundred; only, I do not like the fashion of your garments: you will say, they are Persian attire; but let them be changed.

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here, and rest awhile.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise: draw the curtains. So, so, so: we'll go to supper i' the morning: so, so, so.

Fool. And I'll go to bed at noon.

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Come hither, friend: where is the king my master?

Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.

Glo. Good friend, I prythee take him in thy arms; I have o'er-heard a plot of death upon him. There is a litter ready; lay him in't, And drive toward Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master: If thou should'st dally half an hour, his life, With thine, and all that offer to defend him, Stand in assured loss. Take up, take up; And follow me, that will to some provision Give thee quick conduct.

Kent. Oppress'd nature sleeps:—
This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews,⁴⁰
Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard eue.—Come, help, to bear thy master;
Thou must not stay behind. [*To the Fool.*]

Glo. Come, come, away.
[*Exeunt KENT, GLOSTER, and the Fool,*
bearing off the King.]

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers, suffers most i' the mind,
Leaving free things, and happy shows behind;
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend, makes the king bow:
He childed, as I father'd!—Tom, away!
Mark the high noises; and thyself bewray,
When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,

In thy just proof, repeals and reconciles thee.
 What will hap more to-night, safe seape the king !
 Lurk, lurk.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE VII.—*A Room in GLOSTER'S Castle.*

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, *and* Servants.

Corn. Post speedily to my lord your husband ; show him this letter :—the army of France is landed.—Seek out the traitor Gloster. [*Exeunt some of the Servants.*

Reg. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

Corn. Leave him to my displeasure.—Edmund, keep you our sister company : the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation : we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister :—farewell, my lord of Gloster.

Enter OSWALD.

How now ! Where's the king ?

Osw. My lord of Gloster hath convey'd him hence :
 Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
 Hot questrists after him,⁴¹ met him at gate ;
 Who, with some other of the lord's dependants,
 Are gone with him towards Dover, where they boast
 To have well-armed friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress.

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

[*Exeunt* GONERIL, EDMUND, *and* OSWALD.

Corn. Edmund, farewell.—Go, seek the traitor Gloster.
 Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.

[*Exeunt other Servants.*

Though well we may not pass upon his life
 Without the form of justice, yet our power
 Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men
 May blame, but not control. Who's there ? The traitor ?

Re-enter Servants, with GLOSTER.

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.

Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.⁴²

Glo. What mean your graces?—Good my friends, consider
You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.

Corn. Bind him, I say. [Servants *bind him.*

Reg. Hard, hard.—O filthy traitor!

Glo. Unmerciful lady as you are, I am none.

Corn. To this chair bind him.—Villain thou shalt find—

[REGAN *plucks his Beard.*

Glo. By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.

Reg. So white, and such a traitor!

Glo. Naughty lady,
These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken, and accuse thee. I am your host:
With robbers' hands my hospitable favours
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?

Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?

Reg. Be simple-answer'd, for we know the truth.

Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?

Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king?
Speak.

Glo. I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
And not from one oppos'd.

Corn. Cunning.

Reg. And false.

Corn. Where hast thou sent the king?

Glo. To Dover.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at
peril—

Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him answer that.

Glo. I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover?

Glo. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stiek boarish fangs.

The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
 In hell-black night endured, would have buoy'd up,
 And quench'd the stelled fires ;
 Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.
 If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,
 Thou should'st have said, " Good porter, turn the key,"
 All cruels else subscrib'd : but I shall see
 The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See it shalt thou never.—Fellows, hold the chair.—
 Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.⁴³

Glo. He, that will think to live till he be old,
 Give me some help!—O cruel ! O ye gods !

Reg. One side will moek another ; the other too.

Corn. If you see vengeance,—

Serv. Hold your hand, my lord.
 I have serv'd you ever since I was a child,
 But better service have I never done you,
 Than now to bid you hold.

Reg. How now, you dog !

Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
 I'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean ?

Corn. My villain ! [*Draws and runs at him.*

Serv. Nay then, come on, and take the chance of anger.
[*Draws. CORNWALL is wounded.*

Reg. Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus !

Serv. O, I am slain!—My lord, you have one eye left
 To see some mischief on him.—O ! [*Dies.*

Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it.—Out, vile jelly !
 Where is thy lustre now ?

Glo. All dark and comfortless.—Where's my son Edmund ?
 Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,
 To quit this horrid act.

Reg. Out, treacherous villain !
 Thou call'st on him that hates thee : it was he
 That made the overture of thy treason to us,
 Who is too good to pity thee.

Glo. O my follies ! Then Edgar was abus'd.—
 Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him !

Reg. Go, thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
 His way to Dover.—How is't, my lord ? How look you ?

Corn. I have receiv'd a hurt.—Follow me, lady.
 Turn out that eyeless villain :—throw this slave

Upon the dunghill.—Regan, I bleed apace :
Untimely comes this hurt. Give me your arm.

[*Exit* CORNWALL, *led by* REGAN ;—Servants *unbind*
GLOSTER, *and lead him out.*

1 *Serv.* I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man comes to good.

2 *Serv.* If she live long,
And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.

1 *Serv.* Let's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would : his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.

2 *Serv.* Go thou : I'll fetch some flax, and whites of eggs,⁴⁴
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help him !

[*Exeunt severally.*

Notes to the Third Act.

¹ *Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main.*

The *main* seems to signify here the *main land, the continent*. So, in Bacon's War with Spain: "In 1589, we turned challengers, and invaded the *main* of Spain." This interpretation sets the two objects of Lear's desire in proper opposition to each other. He wishes for the destruction of the world, either by the winds blowing the land into the waters, or raising the waters so as to overwhelm the land.—*Steevens*.

² *Upon the warrant of my art.*

Thus the quartos. The folio—"my *note*."—"The warrant of my *art*" seems to mean—on the strength of my *skill* in physiognomy.—*Steevens*.

On the strength of that art or skill, which teaches us "to find *the mind's construction in the face*." The passage in Macbeth from which I have drawn this paraphrase, in which the word *art* is again employed in the same sense, confirms the reading of the quartos. The folio reads—upon the warrant of my *note*; i. e. says Dr. Johnson, "my observation of your character."—*Malone*.

³ *Either in snuffs or packings of the dukes.*

Snuffs are dislikes, and *packings* underhand contrivances. So, in Henry IV. Part I.: "Took it in *snuff*;" and in King Edward III. 1599:—"This *packing* evil, we both shall tremble for it." Again, in Stanyhurst's Virgil, 1582:—"With two gods *packing* one woman silly to cozen." We still talk of *packing* juries; and Antony says of Cleopatra, that she had "*pack'd* cards with Cæsar."—*Steevens*.

⁴ *Vaunt-couriers.*

Avant couriers, Fr. This phrase is not unfamiliar to other writers of Shakspeare's time. It originally meant the foremost scouts of an army. So, in Jarvis Markham's English Arcadia, 1607:—"— as soon as the first *vancurrer* encountered him face to face." Again, in the Tragedy of Mariam, 1613:—"Might to my death, but the *vaunt-currier* prove." Again, in Darius, 1603:—"Th' *avant-courours*, that came for to examine."—*Steevens*.

In the Tempest "Jove's lightnings" are termed more familiarly—"— the *precursors* o' the dreadful thunder-claps—."—*Malone*.

⁵ *Court holy-water.*

Court holy-water is insincere complimentary language. "To fill one with hopes, or court holy-water," Florio, p. 215. "*Eau beniste de court*, court holic-water; fawning, soothing, smoothing, flatterie, faire (but false) words," Cotgrave, ed. 1611.

Now for tongues of truth, let me tell you, fayre words make fooles faine, and *court-holywater* will scarce wash a foule shirt cleane, except it come from such a fountain as every man must not dip his finger in.—*Breton's Courtier and Countryman*, 1618.

⁶ *You owe me no subscription.*

Subscription, for *obedience*. So, in Rowley's *Search for Money*, 1609, p. 17: "I tell yee besides this he is an obstinat wilfull fellow, for since this idolatrous adoration given to him here by men, he has kept the scepter in his own hand and commands every man: which rebellious man now seeing (or rather indeed too obedient to him) inclines to all his hests, *yields no subscription*, nor will he be commanded by any other power," &c.—*Reed*.

⁷ *Here's grace and a codpiece, &c.*

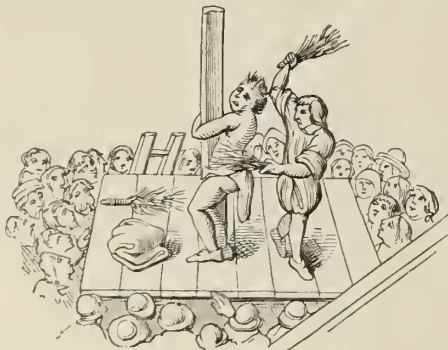
Shakspeare has with some humour applied the above name to the fool, who, for obvious reasons, was usually provided with this unseemly part of dress in a more remarkable manner than other persons. To the custom Gayton thus alludes, when speaking of the decline of the stage: "No fooles with *Harry codpieces* appeare," *Festivous notes upon Don Quixote*, p. 270.—*Douce*.

Whoever wishes to be acquainted with this particular, relative to dress, may consult Bulwer's *Artificial Changeling*, where such matters are amply discussed. It is mentioned, however, in Tyro's *Roaring Megge*, 1598:—

Tyro's round breeches have a cliffe behind;
And that same perking longitude before,
Which for a *pin-case* antique plowmen wore.

Ocular instruction may be had from the armour shown as John of Gaunt's in the Tower of London. The same fashion appears to have been no less offensive in France. See Montaigne, chap. xxii. The custom of sticking pins in this ostentatious piece of indecency was continued by the illiberal warders of the Tower, till forbidden by authority.—*Steevens*.

Byshop Gardener, seeing one of his men wait at the boord with a monstrous great *codpeece* prick't full of pinnes on the top, tooke a peece of bread, and crumbled it towards him, saying: 'Cob, cob; come, cob, cob.'—*Copley's Wits, Fits and Fancies*, 1614.

⁸ *Unwhipp'd of justice.*

Mr. Fairholt sends the following note,—“a curious contemporary illustration of this old mode of punishment is afforded by the emblematic print of Justice surrounded by all her terrors, which was engraved by H. Cock, about the middle of the sixteenth century. The culprit after mounting the scaffold is affixed to a post in the centre; the executioner vigorously using a rod in each hand; and having an extra one, ready lying on the floor, should it be needed.”

⁹ *Alack, bare-headed!*

Kent's faithful attendance on the old king, as well as that of Perillus, in the old play which preceded Shakspeare's, is founded on an historical fact. Lear, says Geoffrey of Monmouth, "when he betook himself to his youngest daughter in Gaul, waited before the city where she resided, while he sent a messenger to inform her of the misery he was fallen into, and to desire her relief to a father that suffered both hunger and nakedness. Cordeilla was startled at the news, and wept bitterly, and with tears asked him, how many men her father had with him. The messenger answered he had none but *one man*, who had been his armour-bearer, and was staying with him without the town."—*Malone*.

¹⁰ *No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors.*

In the original manuscript regulations of the stews in Southwark, still preserved in the Bodleian Library, MS. e Mus. 229, is the following,—“item, that no stueholder kepe noo womman withynne his hows that hath any sikenes of *brennyng*, but that she be putte out.”

If it be Mars well disposed, by continuall tertian fevers, by flixes of blood, by carbuncles and pestilences, by impustumes comming of cholericke matters, *burnings* by too much using of women. If he be very evill disposed, it maketh him to be hanged and strangled, or smothered, or otherwise killed in his bedde, or on his horse.—*Old Book on Astrology*.

¹¹ *Then shall the realm of Albion.*

These lines are taken from Chaucer. Puttenham, in his Art of Poetry, 1589, quotes them as follows:—

When faith fails in priestes saws,
And lords hests are holden for laws,
And robbery is tane for purchase,
And letchery for solace,
Then shall the realm of Albion
Be brought to great confusion.—*Steevens*.

¹² *Wilt break my heart?*

Steevens thought that Lear does not address this question to Kent, but to his own bosom. “Taking the words of Lear by themselves (says Pye), the sense and punctuation proposed by Steevens is very judicious; but is confuted by what Kent answers, who must know how Lear spoke it; and there seems no sort of reason why, as is suggested, he should affect to misunderstand him. Nothing is more natural than for a person absorbed in the contemplation of his own misery, to answer offers of assistance that interrupt him with petulance.”—*Singer*.

¹³ *Go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.*

So, in the introduction to the Taming of the Shrew, Sly says, “go to thy cold bed and warm thee.” A ridicule, I suppose, on some passage in a play as absurd as the Spanish Tragedy.—*Steevens*.

This line is a sneer on the following one spoken by Hieronimo in the Spanish Tragedy, Act II. :—“What outcries pluck me from my naked bed.”—*Whalley*.

“Humph! go to thy *cold* bed, and warm thee.” Thus in the quartos. The editor of the folio, 1623, I suppose, thinking the passage nonsense, omitted the word *cold*. This is not the only instance of unwarrantable alterations made even in that valuable copy. That the quartos are right, appears from the Induction to the Taming of the Shrew, where the same words occur.—*Malone*.

¹⁴ *That hath laid knives under his pillow.*

He recounts the temptations by which he was prompted to suicide; the opportunities of destroying himself, which often occurred to him in his melancholy moods.—*Johnson.*

Shakspeare found this charge against the fiend, with many others of the same nature, in Harsnet's Declaration, and has used the very words of it. Infernal spirits are always represented as urging the wretched to self-destruction. So, in Dr. Faustus, 1604:—

Swords, poisons, halters, and envenom'd steel,
Are laid before me to dispatch myself.—*Steevens.*

The passage in Harsnet's book which Shakspeare had in view, is this:—“This Examinant further sayth, that one Alexander, an apothecarie, having brought with him from London to Denham on a time a new *halter*, and two blades of *knives*, did leave the same upon the gallerie floore, in her maisters house.—A great search was made in the house to know how the said halter and knife-blades came thither,—till Ma. Mainy in his next fit said, it was reported that the *devil* layd them in the gallerie, that *some of those that were possessed, might either hang themselves with the halter, or kill themselves with the blades.*” The kind of temptation which the fiend is described as holding out to the unfortunate, might also have been suggested by the story of Cordila, in the *Mirroure for Magistrates*, 1575, where *Despaire* visits her in prison, and shows her various instruments by which she may rid herself of life:—

And there withall she spred her garments lap assyde,
Under the which a thousand things I sawe with eyes;
Both knives, sharpe swords, poynadoes all bedyde
With bloud, and poysons prest, which she could well devise.—*Malone.*

¹⁵ *Bless thy five wits.*

Five wits were undoubtedly the five senses. Thus in Larke's Book of Wisdom, “And this knowledge descendeth and cometh of the *five corporal senses and wits* of the persons, as the eyes, understanding, and hearing of the ears, smell of the nose, taste of the mouth,” and more plainly in King Henry the Eighth's Primer, 1546, “My *five wits* have I fondly misused and spent, in hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, and also feeling, which thou hast given me to use unto thy honour and glory, and also to the edification and profit of my neighbours.”—*Douce.*

¹⁶ *Pillicock sat on Pillicock's hill.*

This is no doubt a line from some popular ballad. As for the meaning of Pillicock, consult Florio, in v. *Pivolo*. There is an old nursery rhyme, no doubt traditional from considerable antiquity, commencing,—“Pillicock, Pillicock, sat on a hill.”

¹⁷ *Wore gloves in my cap.*

That is, his mistress's favours: which was the fashion of that time. So, in the play called *Campaspe*: “Thy men turned to women, thy soldiers to *lovers*, *gloves worn in velvet caps*, instead of plumes in graven helmets.”—*Warburton.*

It was anciently the custom to wear *gloves* in the hat on three distinct occasions, viz. as the favour of a mistress, the memorial of a friend, and as a mark to be challenged by an enemy. Prince Henry boasts that he *will pluck a glove from the commonest creature*, and fix it in his helmet; and Tucca says to Sir Quintilian, in Decker's *Satiromastix*: “—Thou shalt wear her *glove* in thy worshipful

hat, like to a leather brooch :” and Pandora in Lyly’s *Woman in the Moon*, 1597 :—

—— he that first presents me with his head,
Shall wear my *glove* in favour of the deed.

Portia, in her assumed character, asks Bassanio for his *gloves*, which she says she will *wear for his sake* : and King Henry V. gives the pretended *glove* of Alençon to Fluellen, which afterwards occasions his quarrel with the English soldier.—*Steevens*.

¹⁸ *Dice dearly.*

The character of dice does not appear to have varied for centuries before Shakespeare’s period and up to the present day. The poet was in such matters indifferent to archæology, and therefore a



woodcut copied from a contemporary work on gambling may be admissible.

¹⁹ *Dolphin my boy.*

Dolphin, my boy, my boy,—Cease, let him trot by ;
It seemeth not that such a foe—From me or you would fly.

This is a stanza from a very old ballad written on some battle fought in France, during which the King, unwilling to put the suspected valour of his son the *Danphin*, i. e. *Dolphin* (so called and spelt at those times,) to the trial, is represented as desirous to restrain him from any attempt to establish an opinion of his courage on an adversary who wears the least appearance of strength ; and at last assists in propping up a dead body against a tree for him to try his manhood upon. Therefore, as different champions are supposed to cross the field, the King always discovers some objection to his attacking each of them, and repeats these two lines as every fresh personage is introduced :—“ *Dolphin, my boy, my boy,*” &c. The song I have never seen, but had this account from an old gentleman, who was only able to repeat part of it, and died before I could have supposed the discovery would have been of the least importance to me.—As for the words, *says suum, mun*, they are only to be found in the first folio, and were probably added by the players, who, together with the compositors, were likely enough to corrupt what they did not understand, or to add more of their own to what they already concluded to be nonsense.—*Steevens*.

Coke cries out, in *Bartholomew Fair* :—“ *God’s my life !—He shall be *Danphin my boy* !*”—*Farmer*.

²⁰ *Sessa.*

A word occurring thrice in Shakespeare, but I believe no where else. I have little doubt that the conjecture of Dr. Johnson is right, that it was used for the French *cessez*, cease, though I do not believe that it was ever common : and clearly has no connexion with our expression, *so, so*.—*Nares*.

²¹ *Such a poor, bare, forked animal.*

Forked, applied to a man’s legs. See Cotgrave in v. *Fourchure* ; and an illustration in the Chinese character for a man.



²² *This is a naughty night to swim in.*

-If you have *naughty* ink, put to it a little of the same powder.—*Cotgrave’s Wits Interpreter*, 1671, p. 101.

You shall know good and pure azure from sophisticated and *naughty* azure, if some of it be laid upon a hot burning iron, and if then it will not be burned, neither any little stone is found therein, then it is pure and perfect.—*Lupton's Thousand Notable Things*.

²³ *Here comes a walking fire.*

Some have thought the ignis fatuus to arise from a viscous exhalation, which being kindled in the air, reflects a sort of thin flame in the dark without any sensible heat. I know not whether the learned reader will think himself much edified with the following account of the ignis fatuus in a curious old book, entitled a *Helpe to Discourse*, 12mo. Lond. 1633, in question and answer: “*Q.* What fire is that that sometimes followes and sometimes flyeth away? *A.* An ignis fatuus, or a *walking fire* (*one whereof keepes his station this time near Windsor*), the pace of which is caused principally by the motion of the ayre enforcing it.”—*Brand*.

²⁴ *This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet.*

The name of this fiend, though so grotesque, was not invented by Shakspeare, but by those who wished to impose upon their hearers the belief of his actual existence: this and most of the fiends mentioned by Edgar being to be found in Bishop Harsnet's book, among those which the Jesuits, about the time of the Spanish invasion, pretended to cast out, for the purpose of making converts. The principal scene of this farce was laid in the family of Mr. Edmund Peckham, a Catholic. Harsnet published his account of the detection of the imposture, by order of the privy council. “*Frateretto, Fliberdigibet, Hoberdidance, Tocobatto*, were four devils of the round or morrice . . . These four had forty assistants under them, as themselves doe confesse.” *Flebergibbe* is used by Latimer for a sycophant; and Cotgrave explains *Coquette* by a *Flebergibet* or *Titifill*.—*Singer*.

²⁵ *He gives the web and the pin.*

In allusion to a kind of excrescence in the ball of the eye.

Untill some quack-salver or other can picke out that *pin and webbe* which is stucke into both his eyes.—*A Knight's Conjuring*, 1607.

For a *pin or web* in the eye. Take two or three lice out of one's head, and put them alive into the eye that is grieved, and so close it up, and most assuredly the lice will suck out the web in the eye, and will cure it, and come forth without any hurt.—*The Countess of Kent's Choice Manual*, ed. 1676, p. 75.

²⁶ *Saint Withold footed thrice the old.*

Old, the common pronounciation of *Wold*, as may be instanced in the village of *Wold*, which is generally so corrupted; as also *Orlingbury Wold*, and *Yardley Wold*; the latter of which has the following rhyme connected with it:—“The wind blows cold—Upon *Yardley Old*.” Both the quarto and folio editions of Shakspeare have *Old*, for *Wold*, in *King Lear*, iii. 4; and Spelman writes *Burton upon Olds*, which proves this orthography to be archaic rather than vulgar.—*Baker's Northamptonshire Glossary*.

“My hill and *oulds*,” *Drayton*.

²⁷ *The wall-newt and the water.*

That is, the *water-newt*. This was the phraseology of Shakspeare's time. “He was a wise man and a merry,” was the common language. So *Falstaff* says to *Shallow*, “he is your serving-man, and your *husband*,” i. e. *husband-man*. *Rowe* repeated the word *newt*.—*Malone*.

²⁸ *But mice, and rats, and such small deer.*

This well-known couplet is from the old English metrical romance of Bevis of Hamtoun, who was confined in a dungeon for seven years, and, as stated in the Cambridge MS. of that tale,—

Ratons and myse, and soche smale dere,
That was hys mete that vij. yere.

²⁹ *Peace, Smolkin, &c.*

“The names of other punie spirits cast out of Trayford were these: Hilco, *Smolkin*, Hillio,” &c. *Harsnet*, p. 49. “The prince of darkness is a gentleman;” This is spoken in resentment of what Gloster had just said—“Has your grace no better company?”—*Steevens*.

Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.—So, in Harsnet's Declaration, *Maho* was the chief devil that had possession of Sarah Williams; but another of the possessed, named Richard Mainy, was molested by a still more considerable fiend called *Modu*. See the book already mentioned, p. 268, where the said Richard Mainy deposes: “Furthermore it is pretended . . . that there remaineth still in mee the prince of all other devils, whose name should be *Modu*.” He is elsewhere called “the prince *Modu*.” So, p. 269: “When the said priests had dispatched their business at Hackney (where they had been exorcising Sarah Williams) they then returned towards mee, upon pretence to cast the great Prince *Modu* . . . out mee.”—*Steevens*.

In the Goblins, by Sir John Suckling, a catch is introduced which concludes with these two lines:—

The prince of darkness is a gentleman:
Mahu, *Mahu* is his name.

I am inclined to think this catch not to be the production of Suckling, but the original referred to by Edgar's speech.—*Reed*.

³⁰ *Child Rowland to the dark tower came.*

The “child” of the old romances was a youth trained to arms, whether knight or squire. Child Rowland was a character familiar to Shakespeare's public, who is also jocularly alluded to by Ben Jonson, *Masques*, fol. ed., p. 6. “A mere hobby-horse she made Child Rowland,” *Woman's Prize*, ed. Dyce, p. 129. Child Rowland was, it seems, the youngest son of King Arthur.

If the story of Rowland, published by Mr. Jamieson, is to be trusted, it would seem that the great dramatist was indebted to a ballad of the time. This position would, however, compel us to adopt the belief that the words of the giant are also taken from the ballad; a supposition to which I am unwilling to assent. In fact, I believe that Edgar quotes from two different compositions, the first line from a ballad on Rowland, the second from Jack and the Giants. “And Rowland into the castle came” is a line in the second ballad of Rosmer Hafmand, or the Merman Rosmer, in the Danish *Kæmpe Viser*, p. 165. The story alluded to above may be briefly given as follows.

The sons of King Arthur were playing at ball in the merry town of Carlisle, and their sister, “Burd Ellen” was in the midst of them. Now it happened that Child Rowland gave the ball such a powerful kick with his foot that “o'er the kirk he gar'd it flee.” Burd Ellen went round about in search of the ball, but what was the consternation of her brothers when they found that she did not return, although “they bade lang and ay langer,”—

They sought her east, they sought her west,
 They sought her up and down ;
 And wae were the hearts in merry Carlisle,
 For she was nae gait found.

At last her eldest brother went to the Warlock or Wizard Merlin, and asked him if he knew where his sister, the fair Burd Ellen, was. "The fair Burd Ellen," said the Warlock Merlin, "is carried away by the fairies, and is now in the castle of the King of Elfland; and it were too bold an undertaking for the stoutest knight in Christendom to bring her back." The brother, however, insisted upon undertaking the enterprise, and after receiving proper instructions from Merlin, which he failed in observing, he set out on his perilous expedition, and was never more seen.

The other brothers took the same course, and shared a similar fate, till it came to the turn of Child Rowland, who with great difficulty obtained the consent of his mother, for Queen Guinever began to be afraid of losing all her children. Rowland, having received her blessing, girt on his father's celebrated sword Excaliber, that never struck in vain, and repaired to Merlin's cave. The wizard gave him all necessary instructions for his journey and conduct, the most important of which were that he should kill every person he met with after entering the land of Faerie, and should neither eat nor drink of what was offered him in that country, whatever his hunger or thirst might be; for if he tasted or touched in Elfland he must remain in the power of the elves, and never see middle-earth again.

Child Rowland faithfully promised to observe the instructions of Merlin, and he accordingly went to Elfland, where he found, as the wizard had foretold, the king's horseherd feeding his horses. "Canst thou tell me," said Rowland, "where the castle of the king of Elfland is?" "I cannot," replied the horseherd, "but go a little further, and thou wilt come to a cowherd, and perhaps he will know." When he had made this answer, Rowland, remembering his instructions, took his good sword, and cut off the head of the horseherd. He then went a little further, and met with a cowherd, to whom he repeated the same question, and obtained the same answer. Child Rowland then cut off a cowherd's head, and having pursued exactly the same course with a shepherd, goatherd, and a swineherd, he is referred by the last to a hen-wife, who, in reply to his question, said, "Go on yet a little farther till you come to a round green hill, surrounded with terraces from the bottom to the top: go round it three times widershins (the contrary way to the course of the sun), and every time say, 'Open door, open door, and let me come in!' and the third time the door will open, and you may go in." Child Rowland immediately cut off the hen-wife's head in return for her intelligence, and following her directions, a door in the hill opened, and he went in. As soon as he entered, the door closed behind him, and he traversed a long passage, which was dimly but pleasantly lighted by crystallized rock, till he came to two wide and lofty folding-doors, which stood ajar. He opened them, and entered an immense hall, which seemed nearly as big as the hill itself. It was the most magnificent apartment in all the land of Faerie, for the pillars were of gold and silver, and the keystones ornamented with clusters of diamonds. A gold chain hung from the middle of the roof, supporting an enormous lamp composed of one hollowed transparent pearl, in the midst of which was a large magical carbuncle that beautifully illumined the whole of the hall. At the upper end of the hall, seated on a splendid sofa, under a rich canopy, was his sister the Burd Ellen, "keming her yellow hair wi' a silver kemb," who immediately perceiving him, was sorrow-struck at the anticipation of his being destroyed by the king of Elfland,—

And hear ye this, my youngest brither,
 Why badena ye not at hame?
 Had ye a hunder and thousand lives,
 Ye canna brook ane o' them.

And she informs him that he will certainly lose his life if the king finds him in the hall. A long conversation then took place, and Rowland tells her all his adventures, concluding his narrative with the observation that, after his long journey, he is *very hungry*.

On this the Burd Ellen shook her head, and looked sorrowfully at him; but, impelled by her enchantment, she rose up, and procured him a golden bowl full of bread and milk. It was then that the Child Rowland remembered the instructions of the Warlock Merlin, and he passionately exclaimed, "Burd Ellen, I will neither eat nor drink till I set thee free!" Immediately this speech was uttered, the folding-doors of the hall burst open with tremendous violence, and in came the king of Elfland,—

With, Fe, fi, fo, fum,
 I smell the blood of a Christian man!
 Be he dead, be he living, wi' my brand
 I'll clash his harns frae his harn-pan!

"Strike, then, Bogle, if thou darest," exclaimed the undaunted Child Rowland, and a furious combat ensued, but Rowland, by the help of his good sword, conquered the elf-king, sparing his life on condition that he would restore to him his two brothers and sister. The king joyfully consented, and having disenchanted them by the anointment of a bright red liquor, they all four returned in triumph to merry Carlisle.

³¹ *His word was still,—Fie, foh, and fum.*

The original source of these popular words is unknown. They are alluded to in Peele's *Old Wives Tale*, 1595,—“Fee, fa, fum,—Here is the Englishman,—Conquer him that can.” Again, in Nash's *Have With You to Saffron Walden*, or Gabriell Harvey's *Hunt is Up*, 1596,—“O, 'tis a precious apothegmaticall pedant, who will finde matter inough to dilate a whole daye of the first invention of, *Fy, fa, fum*, I smell the bloud of an Englishman.” The probability is that the distich quoted by Nash and Shakespeare belongs to some early version of the tale of Jack and the Giants. The earliest known edition of this story bears the date of 1711, a mistake, I believe from the character of the type, for 1771 or, possibly, 1741, but it is certainly not so old as the date given, 1711. In this edition, the lines quoted by Edgar are given as follows, and it will be perceived they are nearer the words in Shakespeare than those in later copies quoted by the commentators:—

Fe, fi, fo, fum,
 I smell the blood of an English Man:
 Be he alive, or be he dead,
 I'll grind his bones to make me bread.

³² *A horse's heels.*

Health, old eds. Though *health* will certainly do, it has probably been substituted for *heels*, by some person who regarded it as an improved reading. There are several proverbs of this kind. That in the text has not been found elsewhere, and may be the invention of Shakspeare. The Italians say, *Of a woman beware before, of a mule beware behind, and of a monk beware on all sides*; the French, *Beware of a bull's front, of a mule's hinder parts, and of all sides of a*

woman. In Samuel Rowlands' excellent and amusing work, entitled *The choice of change, containing the triplicity of divinitie, philosophie, and poetrie*, 1585, 4to, we meet with this proverbial saying, "Trust not 3 thinges, dogs teeth, horses feete, womens protestations."—*Douce*.

³³ *Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me.*

Bourn, a brook; a rivulet. (*A.-S.*) Hence, *water*, as explained by Kennett, MS. Lausd. 1033; and also, to wash or rinse. According to Aubrey, Royal Soe. MS. p. 61, "in South Wilts they say such or such a *bourn*, meaning a valley by such a river."

The song alluded to in the text was a favourite one in the sixteenth century, and more than one moralization of it has been preserved. It appears from Wager's comedy, "The longer thou livest the more Foole thou art," printed about the year 1570, that the burden of the song was,—

Com over the boorne, Besse,
My little pretie Besse,
Com over the boorne, Besse, to me.

³⁴ *For two white herring.*

A white herring was a fresh herring, opposed to a dry, or *red* herring. Steevens explained it a pickled or Dutch herring, and referred to the Northumberland Household Book, p. 8; but there *three* are ordered for a young lord or lady's breakfast, and *four* for my lord's, which no lord or lady could possibly eat. In Warner's *Antiquitates Culinariae*, they are therefore rightly explained "fresh herrings," *Prelim. Disc.* p. 50.—*Nares*.

³⁵ *Sleepest, or wakest thou, jolly shepherd.*

In the Interlude of the Four Elements, &c. printed by Rastell, 1519, Ignorance sings a song composed of the scraps of several others. Among them is the following line, on which Shakspeare may have designed a parody:—"Sleepyst thou, wakyst thou, Geffery Coke."—*Steevens*.

Compare also the poem of King Arthur and the King of Cornwall, printed from the Perey MS. by Sir F. Madden,—

And when he came to the King's chamber,
He eold of his eurtisie;
Sayes, "sleep you, wake yow, noble K: Arthur?
And ever Jesus watch yee!"
Nay I am not sleeping, I am waking,
These were the words said hee,
For thee I have card, how hast thou fared,
Oh! gentle knight, let me see.

³⁶ *For one blast of thy minikin mouth.*

Minikin, small, delicate, elegant. "To *minikin* Nan," Tusser, p. xxv. "A *minikin*, a fine mincing lass," Kennett, MS. "A *minikin* wench, a smirking lasse," Florio, p. 315.

³⁷ *Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.*

A common old proverbial phrase, the exact meaning of which has not been satisfactorily explained, but which perhaps may be gathered from the following example.

Ante hoe te eornua habere putabam, I cry you merey, I tooke you for a joynd stoole.—*Withals' Dictionary*, ed. 1634, p. 553.

The Music to the Song of, "Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me", from a Manuscript of the sixteenth Century in the British Museum.

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper. It consists of seven systems of music, each with a vocal line and a lute line. The notation is in a historical style, featuring a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written in a cursive hand below the notes. The first system is marked 'Allegro' and the last system is marked 'Ad. mor.'.

Allegro

Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me, come o'er the bourn, Bessy

to me, to me, to me, to me, to me, to me.

to me, to me, to me, to me, to me, to me.

to me, to me, to me, to me, to me, to me.

to me, to me, to me, to me, to me, to me.

Ad. mor.

to me, to me, to me, to me, to me, to me.

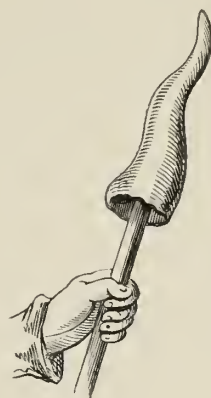
to me, to me, to me, to me, to me, to me.

³⁸ *Or bobtail like, or trundle-tail.*

A tike was a common sort of dog. "Tykes they had of all sorts," Cotton's Works, 1734. A trundle-tail was a dog with a curling tail. A lym was a bloodhound.

³⁹ *Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.*

On this speech Dr. Johnson has remarked that men who begged under pretence of lunacy, used formerly to carry a horn and blow it through the streets. To account for Edgar's horn being *dry*, we must likewise suppose that the lunatics in question made use of this utensil to drink out of, which seems preferable to the opinion of Steevens, that these words are "a proverbial expression, introduced when a man has nothing further to offer, when he has said all he has to say," the learned commentator not having adduced any example of its use. An opportunity here presents itself of suggesting a more correct mode of exhibiting the theatrical dress of Poor Tom than we usually see, on the authority of Randle Holme in his most curious and useful work the Academy of Armory, book III. ch. iii. p. 161, where he says that the *Bedlam* has "a long staff and a cow or ox-horn by his side; his cloathing fantastic and ridiculous; for being a madman, he is madly decked and dressed all over with rubins, feathers, cuttings of cloth, and what not, to make him seem a madman or one distracted, when he is no other than a dissembling knave." It is said that about the year 1760 a poor idiot called *Cude Yeddy*, went about the streets of Hawick in Scotland habited much in the above manner, and rattling a cow's horn against his teeth. Something like this costume may be seen in the portrait of that precious knave *Mull'd Sack*, who carries a *drinking horn* on his staff. See the annexed engraving.—*Douce*.



⁴⁰ *Thy broken sinews.*

So the old editions. Theobald alters *sinews* to *senses*. I follow Mr. Dyce in restoring the old reading, but is the verb to balm or sooth likely to be applied to sinews?

⁴¹ *Hot questrists after him.*

Questrist, a person who goes in quest of another. *Questrists* is the reading of the folio. *Questlers* has been proposed as an emendation, but no alteration seems necessary. The quarto has *questrits*, which, though an evident corruption, confirms *questrists*.—*Nares*.

⁴² *Bind fast his corky arms.*

Dry, withered, husky arms. As Shakspeare appears from other passages of this play to have had in his eye Bishop Harsnet's Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures, &c. 1603, 4to. it is probable, that this very expressive, but peculiar epithet, *corky*, was suggested to him by a passage in that very curious pamphlet: "It would pose all the cunning exorcists, that are this day to be found, to teach an old *corkie* woman to writhe, tumble, curvet, and fetch her morice gamboles, as Martha Bressier (one of the possessed mentioned in the pamphlet) did."—*Percy*.

⁴³ *Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.*

In Selimus, Emperor of the Turks, one of the sons of Bajazet *pulls out the eyes* of an Aga on the stage, and says—

Yes, thou shalt live, but never see that day,
Wanting the tapers that should give thee light.

[*Pulls out his eyes.*

Immediately after, his hands are cut off. I have introduced this passage to show that Shakspeare's drama was not more sanguinary than that of his contemporaries.—*Steevens.*

In Marston's Antonio's Revenge, 1602, Piero's tongue is torn out on the stage.—*Malone.*

⁴⁴ *I'll fetch some flax, and whites of eggs.*

Steevens asserted that this passage was ridiculed by Ben Jonson in the Case is Altered. Gifford has shown that it was only a common allusion to a method of stanching blood practised in the poet's time by every barber-surgeon and old woman in the kingdom.—*Singer.*

Act the Fourth.

SCENE I.—*The Heath.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air, that I embrace:
The wretch, that thou hast blown unto the worst,
Owes nothing to thy blasts.—But who comes here?—

Enter GLOSTER, led by an old Man.

My father, poorly led?—World, world, O world!¹
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. O my good lord! I have been your tenant, and
your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Glo. Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone:
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. Alack, sir! you cannot see your way.

Glo. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes:
I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seen,
Our means secure us;² and our mere defeets
Prove our commodities.—Ah! dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath,
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say I had eyes again!

Old Man. How now! Who's there?

Edg. [*Aside.*] O gods! Who is't can say, "I am at the
worst?"

I am worse than e'er I was.

Old Man. 'Tis poor mad Tom.

Edg. [*Aside.*] And worse I may be yet: the worst is not
So long as we can say, "This is the worst."³

Old Man. Fellow, where goest?

Glo. Is it a beggar-man?

Old Man. Madman, and beggar too.

Glo. He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm: my son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard more since.
As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;
They kill us for their sport.

Edg. [*Aside.*] How should this be?—
Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Angering itself and others. [*To him.*] Bless thee, master!

Glo. Is that the naked fellow?

Old Man. Ay, my lord.

Glo. Then, pr'ythee, get thee gone. If, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Whom I'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, sir! he is mad.

Glo. 'Tis the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;
Above the rest, be gone.

Old Man. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will.

[*Exit.*]

Glo. Sirrah; naked fellow.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.—[*Aside.*] I cannot daub it farther.⁴

Glo. Come hither, fellow.

Edg. [*Aside.*] And yet I must.—[*To him.*] Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.

Glo. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path. Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good wits: bless thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend! Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once;⁵ of lust, as Obidicut; Hobbididance, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; and Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing,⁶ who since possesses chambermaids and waiting-women.⁷ So, bless thee, master!

Glo. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heaven's plagues Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched, Makes thee the happier:—Heavens, deal so still! Let the superfluous, and lust-dieted man, That slaves your ordinance,⁸ that will not see Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly; So distribution should undo excess, And each man have enough.—Dost thou know Dover?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glo. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head Looks fearfully in the confined deep:⁹ Bring me but to the very brim of it, And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear, With something rich about me: from that place I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm:
Poor Tom shall lead thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Before the Duke of ALBANY'S Palace.*

Enter GONERIL and EDMUND; OSWALD meeting them.

Gon. Welcome, my lord: I marvel, our mild husband Not met us on the way.—Now, where's your master?

Osw. Madam, within; but never man so chang'd. I told him of the army that was landed; He smil'd at it: I told him, you were coming;

His answer was, "The worse:" of Gloster's treachery,
 And of the loyal service of his son,
 When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot,
 And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out.
 What most he should dislike, seems pleasant to him;
 What like, offensive.

Gon. Then, shall you go no farther.

[*To EDMUND.*]

It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
 That dares not undertake: he'll not feel wrongs,
 Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
 May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
 Hasten his musters, and conduct his powers:
 I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
 Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
 Shall pass between us: ere long you are like to hear,
 If you dare venture in your own behalf,
 A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;

[*Giving a Favour.*]

Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak,
 Would stretch thy spirits up into the air.—
 Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon.

My most dear Gloster!

[*Exit EDMUND.*]

O, the difference of man, and man!
 To thee a woman's services are due:
 My fool usurps my body.¹⁰

Osw.

Madam, here comes my lord.

[*Exit OSWALD.*]

Enter ALBANY.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.

Alb.

O Goneril!

You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
 Blows in your face.—I fear your disposition:
 That nature, which contemns its origin,
 Cannot be border'd certain in itself;¹¹
 She that herself will sliver and disbranch
 From her material sap, perforce must wither,
 And come to deadly use.

Gon. No more : the text is foolish.¹²

Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile ;
 Filths savour but themselves. What have you done ?
 Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd ?
 A father, and a gracious aged man,
 Whose reverence the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
 Most barbarous, most degenerate ! have you madded.
 Could my good brother suffer you to do it ?
 A man, a prince, by him so benefited ?
 If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
 Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
 It will come,
 Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
 Like monsters of the deep.

Gon. Milk-liver'd man !
 That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs ;
 Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
 Thine honour from thy suffering ; that not know'st,
 Fools do those villains pity,¹³ who are punish'd
 Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy drum ?
 France spreads his banners in our noiseless land ;
 With plumed helm¹⁴ thy slayer begins threats ;
 Whilst thou, a moral fool, sitt'st still, and criest,
 " Alack ! why does he so ? "

Alb. See thyself, devil !
 Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
 So horrid, as in woman.

Gon. O vain fool !

Alb. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame,
 Be-monster not thy feature. Were it my fitness
 To let these hands obey my blood,
 They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
 Thy flesh and bones : howe'er thou art a fiend,
 A woman's shape doth shield thee.

Gon. Marry, your manhood now !—

Enter a Messenger.

Alb. What news ?

Mess. O, my good lord ! the duke of Cornwall's dead ;
 Slain by his servant, going to put out
 The other eye of Gloster.

Alb. Gloster's eyes!

Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enrag'd,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead,
But not without that harmful stroke, which since
Hath pluck'd him after.

Alb. This shows you are above,
You justieers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge!—But, O poor Gloster!
Lost he his other eye?

Mess. Both, both, my lord.—
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;
'Tis from your sister.

Gon. [*Aside.*] One way I like this well;
But being widow, and my Gloster with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life. Another way,
The news is not so tart. [*To him.*] I'll read and answer. [*Exit.*]

Alb. Where was his son, when they did take his eyes?

Mess. Come with my lady hither.

Alb. He is not here.

Mess. No, my good lord; I met him back again.

Alb. Knows he the wickedness?

Mess. Ay, my good lord; 'twas he inform'd against him,
And quit the house, on purpose that their punishment
Might have the freer course.

Alb. Gloster, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,
And to revenge thine eyes.—Come hither, friend:
Tell me what more thou knowest. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The French Camp near Dover.*

Enter KENT, and a Gentleman.

Kent. Why the king of France is so suddenly gone back,
know you the reason?

Gent. Something he left imperfect in the state,
Which since his coming forth is thought of; which
Imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger,
That his personal return was most requir'd,
And necessary.

Kent. Whom hath he left behind him general?

Gent. The Marshal of France, Monsieur la Far.

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any demonstration
of grief?

Gent. Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek: it seem'd, she was a queen
Over her passion, who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.

Kent. O! then it mov'd her.

Gent. Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears
Were like a better day:¹⁵ those happy smilets,
That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd.—In brief, sorrow
Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all
Could so become it.

Kent. Made she no verbal question?

Gent. 'Faith, once, or twice, she heav'd the name of "father"
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried, "Sisters! sisters!—Shame of ladies! sisters!
Kent! father! sisters! What? i' the storm? i' the night?
Let pity not be believed!"—There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moisten'd:¹⁶ then, away she started
To deal with grief alone.

Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us, govern our conditions;
Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since?

Gent. No.

Kent. Was this before the king return'd?

Gent. No, since.

Kent. Well, sir, the poor distress'd Lear's i' the town,
Who sometime, in his better tunc, remembers

What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.

Gent. Why, good sir?

Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him; his own unkindness,

That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters: these things sting
His mind so venomously, that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.

Gent. Alack, poor gentleman!

Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not?

Gent. 'Tis so they are afoot.

Kent. Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear,
And leave you to attend him. Some dear cause
Will in concealment wrap me up awhile:
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
Along with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Same. A Tent.*

Enter CORDELIA, Physician, *and* Soldiers.

Cor. Alack! 'tis he: why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea: singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter,¹⁷ and furrow weeds,
With harlocks, hemloek, nettles, cuekoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining eorn.—A eentury send forth;
Seareh every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an Officer.*]—What can man's
wisdom,

In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He, that helps him, take all my outward worth.

Phy. There is means, madam:
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.

Cor. All bless'd secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! be aident, and remediate,
In the good man's distress!—Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. News, madam :
The British powers are marching hitherward.

Cor. 'Tis known before ; our preparation stands
In expectation of them.—O dear father !
It is thy business that I go about,
Therefore great France
My mourning, and important tears, hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right.
Soon may I hear, and see him !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A Room in GLOSTER'S Castle.*

Enter REGAN and OSWALD.

Reg. But are my brother's powers set forth ?

Osw. Ay, madam.

Reg. Himself in person there ?

Osw. Madam, with much ado :

Your sister is the better soldier.

Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your lord¹⁸ at home ?

Osw. No, madam.

Reg. What might import my sister's letter to him ?

Osw. I know not, lady.

Reg. 'Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.

It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes being out,
To let him live : where he arrives he moves
All hearts against us. Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity of his misery, to despatch

His nighted life ; moreover, to desery
The strength o' the enemy.

Osw. I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.

Reg. Our troops set forth to-morrow : stay with us ;
The ways are dangerous.

Osw. I may not, madam ;
My lady charg'd my duty in this business.

Reg. Why should she write to Edmund ? Might not you
Transport her purposes by word ? Belike,
Something—I know not what.—I'll love thee much ;
Let me unseal the letter.¹⁹

Osw. Madam, I had rather—

Reg. I know your lady does not love her husband,
I am sure of that ; and, at her late being here,
She gave strange œiliads, and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund. I know, you are of her bosom.

Osw. I, madam ?

Reg. I speak in understanding : y' are, I know it ;
Therefore, I do advise you, take this note :
My lord is dead ; Edmund and I have talk'd,
And more convenient is he for my hand,
Than for your lady's.—You may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this ;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her :
So, fare you well.

If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

Osw. Would I could meet him, madam : I would show
What party I do follow.

Reg. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*The Country near Dover.*

Enter GLOSTER, and EDGAR dressed like a Peasant.

Glo. When shall I come to the top of that same hill ?

Edg. You do climb up it now : look, how we labour.

Glo. Methinks, the ground is even.

Edg. Horrible steep :
Hark ! do you hear the sea ?

Glo. No, truly.

Edg. Why, then your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.

Glo. So may it be, indeed.
Methinks, thy voice is alter'd ; and thou speak'st
In better phrase, and matter, than thou didst.

Edg. Y' are much deceiv'd : in nothing am I chang'd,
But in my garments.

Glo. Methinks, y' are better spoken.

Edg. Come on, sir ; here's the place : stand still. — How
fearful,

And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low !
The crows, and choughs, that wing the midway air,
Show scarce so gross as beetles : half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire ;²⁰ dreadful trade !
Methinks, he seems no bigger than his head.
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice ; and yond' tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her coek ;²¹ her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge,
That on th' unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high.—I'll look no more ;
Lest my brain turn, and the defieient sight
Topple down headlong.

Glo. Set me where you stand.

Edg. Give me your hand ; you are now within a foot
Of th' extreme verge : for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.²²

Glo. Let go my hand.
Here, friend, is another purse ; in it, a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking : fairies, and gods,
Prosper it with thee ! Go thou farther off ;
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Now fare you well, good sir.

Glo. With all my heart.

Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his despair,
Is done to eure it.

Glo. O, you mighty gods !
This world I do renounce, and in your sights
Shake patiently my great affliction off :

If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff, and loathed part of nature, should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him!—
Now, fellow, fare thee well.

Edg.

Gone, sir : farewell.—

[*He leaps, and falls along.*²³

And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft : had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past.—Alive, or dead?
Ho, you sir ! friend !—Hear you, sir ?—speak !
Thus might he pass indeed ;—yet he revives.
What are you, sir ?

Glo.

Away, and let me die.

Edg. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fathom down preeipitating,
Thou'dst shiver'd like an egg : but thou dost breathe ;
Hast heavy substance ; bleed'st not ; speak'st ; art sound.
Ten masts at each²⁴ make not the altitude,
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell :
Thy life's a miraele. Speak yet again.

Glo. But have I fallen, or no ?

Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a height ; the shrill-gorg'd lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard : do but look up.

Glo. Alack ! I have no eyes.—

Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit,
To end itself by death ? 'Twas yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.

Edg.

Give me your arm :

Up :—so ;—how is't ? Feel you your legs ? You stand.

Glo. Too well, too well.

Edg.

This is above all strangeness.

Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you ?

Glo.

A poor unfortunate beggar.

Edg. As I stood here below, methought, his eyes
Were two full moons ; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd,²⁵ and wav'd like the enridged sea :
It was some fiend ; therefore, thou happy father,

Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee.

Glo. I do remember now : henceforth I'll bear
Affliction, till it do cry out itself,
“ Enough, enough !” and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man ; often 'twould say,
“ The fiend, the fiend :” he led me to that place.

Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts.—But who comes here ?

Enter LEAR, fantastically dressed with wild Flowers.

The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
His master thus.

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining ; I am the king
himself.

Edg. O, thou side-piercing sight !

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect.—There's your press-
money.²⁶ That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper :²⁷
draw me a clothier's yard.—Look, look ! a mouse. Peace,
peace !—this piece of toasted cheese will do't.—There's my
gauntlet ; I'll prove it on a giant.—Bring up the brown bills.²⁸—
O, well flown, bird !²⁹—i' the clout, i' the clout : hewgh !—Give
the word.

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glo. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha ! Goneril !—with a white beard !³⁰—They flatter'd
me like a dog ; and told me, I had white hairs in my beard, ere
the black ones were there. To say “ ay,” and “ no,” to every
thing I said “ ay” and “ no” to was no good divinity.³¹ When
the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter,
when the thunder would not peace at my bidding, there I found
'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their
words : they told me I was every thing ; 'tis a lie, I am not
ague-proof.

Glo. The trick of that voice I do well remember :
Is't not the king ?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king :
When I do stare, see, how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life : what was thy cause ?—
Adultery.—

Thou shalt not die : die for adultery? No :
 The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly
 Does leecher in my sight.
 Let copulation thrive ; for Gloster's bastard son
 Was kinder to his father, than my daughters
 Got 'tween the lawful sheets.
 To't, luxury, pell-mell, for I lack soldiers.—
 Behold yond' simpering dame,
 Whose face between her forks presageth snow ;
 That minees virtue,³² and does shake the head
 To hear of pleasure's name ;
 The fitehew, nor the soiled horse,³³ goes to't
 With a more riotous appetite.
 Down from the waist they are centaurs,
 Though women all above :
 But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
 Beneath is all the fiends : there's hell, there's darkness, there is
 the sulphurous pit, burning, sealding, steneh, consumption ;—
 fie, fie, fie! pah ; pah! Give me an ounce of eivet, good
 apothecary, to sweeten my imagination : there's money for
 thee.

Glo. O, let me kiss that hand !

Lear. Let me wipe it first ; it smells of mortality.

Glo. O ruin'd piece of nature ! This great world
 Shall so wear out to nought.—Dost thou know me ?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny
 at me ?³⁴ No, do thy worst, blind Cupid ; I'll not love.—Read
 thou this challenge : mark but the penning of it.

Glo. Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.

Edg. I would not take this from report ; it is,
 And my heart breaks at it.

Lear. Read.

Glo. What ! with the ease of eyes ?

Lear. O, ho ! are you there with me ? No eyes in your head,
 nor no money in your purse ? Your eyes are in a heavy ease,
 your purse in a light : yet you see how this world goes.

Glo. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad ? A man may see how this world goes,
 with no eyes. Look with thine ears : see how yond' justice
 rails upon yond' simple thief. Hark, in thine ear : change
 places ; and, handy-dandy,³⁵ which is the justiee, which is the
 thief ?—Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar ?

Glo. Ay, sir.

Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou might'st behold the great image of authority: a dog's obey'd in office.—

Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!
 Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;
 Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind
 For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.
 Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
 Robes, and furr'd gowns, hide all. Plate sin with gold,
 And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks:
 Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.
 None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able 'em:³⁶
 Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
 To seal th' accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;
 And, like a scurvy politician, seem
 To see the things thou dost not.—Now, now, now, now:
 Pull off my boots: harder, harder; so.

Edg. O, matter and impertinency mix'd!
 Reason in madness!

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
 I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloster:
 Thou must be patient. We came crying hither:
 Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air
 We wawl, and cry.³⁷ I will preach to thee: mark me.

Glo. Alack! alack the day!

Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
 To this great stage of fools.—This' a good block?³⁸—
 It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe
 A troop of horse with felt:³⁹ I'll put it in proof;
 And when I have stolen upon these sons-in-law,
 Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill.

Enter a Gentleman with Attendants.

Gent. O! here he is: lay hand upon him.—Sir,
 Your most dear daughter—

Lear. No rescue? What! a prisoner? I am even
 The natural fool of fortune.—Use me well;
 You shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons,
 I am cut to the brains.

Gent. You shall have any thing.

Lear. No seconds? All myself?
 Why, this would make a man, a man of salt,⁴⁰
 To use his eyes for garden water-pots,⁴¹
 Ay, and laying autumn's dust.

Gent. Good sir,—

Lear. I will die bravely,
 Like a smug bridegroom. What! I will be jovial.
 Come, come; I am a king, my masters, know you that?

Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. Then there's life in it. Nay, an you get it, you shall
 get it by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa. [*Exit: Attendants follow.*]

Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
 Past speaking of in a king!—Thou hast one daughter,
 Who redeems nature from the general curse
 Which twain have brought her to.

Edg. Hail, gentle sir!

Gent. Sir, speed you: what's your will?

Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?

Gent. Most sure, and vulgar: every one hears that,
 Which ean distinguish sound.

Edg. But, by your favour,
 How near's the other army?

Gent. Near, and on speedy foot; the main descry
 Stands on the hourly thought.

Edg. I thank you, sir: that's all.

Gent. Though that the queen on special cause is here,
 Her army is mov'd on.

Edg. I thank you, sir. [*Exit Gent.*]

Glo. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me:
 Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
 To die before you please!

Edg. Well pray you, father.

Glo. Now, good sir, what are you?

Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows;
 Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
 Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
 I'll lead you to some biding.

Glo. Hearty thanks;
 The bounty and the benison of heaven
 To boot, and boot!

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy!
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes.—Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember:—the sword is out
That must destroy thee.

Glo. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to it. [*EDGAR interposes.*]

Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
Lest that th' infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without varther 'casion.

Osw. Let go, slave, or thou diest.

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor volk pass.
And eh'ud ha' been zwagger'd out of my life, 'twould not ha'
been zo long as 'tis by a vortnight. Nay, come not near the
old man; keep out, ehe vore ye,⁴² or Ise try whether your
eostard or my bat be the harder. Ch'll be plain with you.

Osw. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Ch'll piek your teeth, zir. Come; no matter vor your
foins. [*They fight; and EDGAR knocks him down.*]

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me.—Villain, take my purse.
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body;
And give the letters, which thou find'st about me,
To Edmund earl of Gloster: seek him out
Upon the British party:—O, untimely death! [*Dies.*]

Edg. I know thee well: a serviceable villain;
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress,
As badness would desire.

Glo. What! is he dead?

Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you.—
Let's see his poekets: these letters, that he speaks of,
May be my friends.—He's dead; I am only sorry
He had no other death's-man.—Let us see:—
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not:
To know our enemies' minds, we rip their hearts,
Their papers is more lawful.

[*Reads.*] “ Let our reecipocal vows be remembered. You

have many opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered. There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror; then am I the prisoner, and his bed my gaol, from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour.

“Your (wife, so I would say)
 “affectionate servant,
 “GONERIL.”

O, undistinguish'd space of woman's will!⁴³
 A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;
 And the exchange, my brother!—Here, in the sands,
 Thence I'll rake up,⁴⁴ the post unsanctified
 Of murderous lechers; and in the mature time,
 With this ungracious paper strike the sight
 Of the death-practis'd duke. For him 'tis well,
 That of thy death and business I can tell.

Glo. The king is mad: how stiff is my vile sense,
 That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
 Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract;
 So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
 And woes, by wrong imaginations, lose
 The knowledge of themselves. [Drum afar off.]

Edg. Give me your hand:
 Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum.
 Come, father; I'll bestow you with a friend. [Exeunt.]

SCENE VII.—*A Tent in the French Camp.* LEAR on a Bed, asleep; Doctor, Gentleman, and Others, attending: Enter CORDELIA and KENT.

Cor. O thou good Kent! how shall I live and work,
 To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
 And every measure fail me.

Kent. To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'er-paid.
 All my reports go with the modest truth;
 Nor more, nor clipp'd, but so.

Cor. Be better suited:
 These weeds are memories of those worsen hours.
 I pr'ythee, put them off.

Kent. Pardon me, dear madam;

Yet to be known shortens my made intent
My boon I make it, that you know me not,
Till time and I think meet.

Cor. Then be 't so, my good lord.—How does the king?
[*To the Physician.*]

Doct. Madam, sleeps still.

Cor. O, you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
Th' untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changed father!⁴⁵

Doct. So please your majesty,
That we may wake the king? he hath slept long.

Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?⁴⁶

Gent. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep,
We put fresh garments on him.

Doct. Good madam, be by when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.

Cor. Very well. [*Music.*]

Doct. Please you, draw near.—Louder the music there.

Cor. O my dear father! Restoration, hang
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms, that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!

Kent. Kind and dear princess!

Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Had challeng'd pity of them. Was this a face
To be expos'd against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross lightning? to watch—poor perdu!⁴⁷—
With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
'Tis wonder, that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all.—He wakes; speak to him.

Doct. Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.

Cor. How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?

Lear. You do me wrong, to take me out o' the grave.—
Thou art a soul in bliss, but I am bound

Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

Cor. Sir, do you know me ?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know. When did you die ?

Cor. Still, still, far wide.

Doct. He's scarce awake : let him alone awhile.

Lear. Where have I been ? Where am I ?—Fair day-light ?—
I am mightily abus'd.—I should even die with pity
To see another thus.—I know not what to say.—
I will not swear, these are my hands :—let's see ;
I feel this pin prick. Would I were assur'd
Of my condition !

Cor. O ! look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me.—
No, sir, you must not kneel.

Lear. Pray, do not mock me :
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more or less ;
And, to deal plainly,
I fear, I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks, I should know you, and know this man ;
Yet I am doubtful, for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is ; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments ; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me,
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. And so I am, I am.

Lear. Be your tears wet ? Yes, 'faith. I pray, weep not :
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know, you do not love me ; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong :
You have some cause, they have not.

Cor. No cause, no cause.

Lear. Am I in France ?

Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Doct. Be comforted, good madam : the great rage,
You see, is eur'd in him ; and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.⁴³
Desire him to go in : trouble him no more,
Till farther settling.

Cor. Will't please your highness walk ?

Lear. You must bear with me :
Pray you now forget and forgive : I am old, and foolish.

[*Exeunt* LEAR, CORDELIA, Doctor, and Attendants.

Gent. Holds it true, sir, that the duke of Cornwall was so slain ?

Kent. Most certain, sir.

Gent. Who is conductor of his people ?

Kent. As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloster.

Gent. They say, Edgar, his banished son, is with the earl of Kent in Germany.

Kent. Report is changeable. 'Tis time to look about ; the powers o' the kingdom approach apace.

Gent. The arbitrement is like to be bloody. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,
Or well or ill, as this day's battle's fought. [*Exit.*

Notes to the Fourth Act.

¹ *World, world, O world!*

O world! if reverses of fortune and changes such as I now see and feel, from ease and affluence to poverty and misery, did not show us the little value of life, we should never submit with any kind of resignation to the weight of years, and its necessary consequence, infirmity and death.—*Malone*.

² *Our means secure us.*

The term *means* is here used for *want of means*, the low state of our means. This usage is not unusual in writers of the time.

³ *As long as we can say, This is the worst.*

That is, while we live; for while we yet continue to have a sense of feeling, something worse than the present may still happen. What occasioned this reflection was his rashly saying, in the beginning of this scene—

———— To be worst,

The lowest, and most dejected thing of fortune, &c.

The wretch, that thou hast blown unto the worst, &c.—*Warburton*.

⁴ *I cannot daub it further.*

That is, disguise it further. So, in King Richard III.:—"So smooth he *daub'd* his vice with show of virtue." Again, in one of the Paston Letters, vol. iii. p. 173: "— and saith to her, there is good craft in *dawbing*." The quartos read, "I cannot *dance* it further."—*Steevens*.

⁵ *Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once.*

The rest of this speech is omitted in the folio. In Harsnet's book, 1603, already quoted, we have an extract from the account published by the exorcists themselves, viz. "By commaundement of the exoreist . . . the devil in Ma. Mainy confessed his name to be Modu, and that he had besides himself *seaven other spirits*, and all of them captains, and of great fame." "Then Edmundes (the exorcist) began againe with great earnestness, and all the company cried out,

&c. . . . so as both that wicked prince Modu *and his company* might be cast out." This passage will account for "five fiends having been in poor Tom at once."—*Percy*.

There does not appear much which is elucidatory in the above note. In the citation from Harsnet mention is made of seven devils, which, emanating from priests, has no doubt reference to the seven devils of Scripture. Perhaps those of Edgar have more allusion to the five senses, or wits, as he has called them, each of which is troubled by a separate devil.

⁶ *Of mopping and mowing.*

"If she have a little helpe of the mother, epilepsie, or cramp, to teach her role her eyes, wrie her mouth, gnash her teeth, starte with her body, hold her armes and handes stiffe, make antike faces, grinne, *mow and mop* like an ape,—then no doubt—the *young girle* is owle-blasted and *possessed*," *Harsnet's Declaration*, p. 136.—*Malone*.

Hollow dead eies, and most ilfavourde feature,
Mopping and mowing, like an olde she-ape.

Breton's Pilgrimage to Paradise, 1592.

Here followes now another (character) that one paire of couples might serve them both; it is the *fantasticke*, one that is so neere akin to the foole, that they cannot marry without a licence from the Pope; he hath robd a Jacke Napes of his gesture, marke but his countenance how he *mops*, how he *mowes*, and how he streines his lookes.—*My Ladies Looking-glasse*, by *Barnabe Rich*, 1616, p. 51.

⁷ *Who since possesses chamber-maids and waiting-women.*

Shakspeare has made Edgar, in his feigned distraction, frequently allude to a vile imposture of some English jesuits, at that time much the subject of conversation; the history of it having been just then composed with great art and vigour of style and composition by Dr. S. Harsnet, afterwards archbishop of York, by order of the privy-council, in a work intituled, A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures to withdraw Her Majesty's Subjects from their Allegiance, &c. Practised by Edmunds, alias Weston, a Jesuit, and divers Romish Priests his wicked Associates: printed 1603. The imposture was in substance this. While the Spaniards were preparing their armada against England, the jesuits were here busy at work to promote it, by making converts: one method they employed was to dispossess pretended demoniacks, by which artifice they made several hundred converts amongst the common people. The principal scene of this farce was laid in the family of one Mr. Edmund Peckham, a Roman-catholick, where Marwood, a servant of Antony Babington's (who was afterwards executed for treason), Trayford, an attendant upon Mr. Peckham, and Sarah and Friswood Williams, and Anne Smith, *three chambermaids* in that family, came into the priests' hands for cure. But the discipline of the patients was so long and severe, and the priests so elate and careless with their success, that the plot was discovered on the confession of the parties concerned, and the contrivers of it deservedly punished. The five devils here mentioned, are the names of five of those who were made to act in this farce upon the *chamber maids and waiting-women*; and they were generally so ridiculously nick-named, that Harsnet has one chapter "on the strange names of their devils; lest, (says he,) meeting them otherwise by chance, you mistake them for the names of tapsters or jugglers."—*Warburton*.

The passage is omitted in the folio, because I suppose as the story was forgotten, the jest was lost.—*Johnson*.

⁸ *That slaves your ordinance.*

The language of Shakspeare is very licentious, and his words have often meanings remote from the proper and original use. To *slave* or *beslave* another is to *treat him with terms of indignity*: in a kindred sense, to *slave the ordinance*, may be, to *slight* or *ridicule* it.—*Johnson*.

To *slave an ordinance*, is to treat it as a *slave*, to make it subject to us, instead of acting in obedience to it. So, in Heywood's *Brazen Age*, 1613:—

—— none

Could *slave* him like the Lydian Omphale.

Again, in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, by Massinger:—“ —— that *slaves* me to his will.”—*Steevens*.

Heywood, in his *Pleasant Dialogues and Dramas*, 1637, uses this verb in the same sense:—

What shall I do? my love I will not *slave*

To an old king, though he my love should crave.

Again, in Marston's *Malcontent*, 1604:—“ O powerful blood, how dost thou *slave* their soul!”

“That *slaves* your ordinance,” is the reading of the folio. All the quartos have—“That *stands* your ordinance;” perhaps for *withstands*. *Stands*, however, may be right:—*that abides* your ordinance. The poet might have intended to mark the criminality of the *lust-dieted man* only in the subsequent words, “that will not see, because he doth not feel.”—*Malone*.

⁹ *Looks fearfully in the confined deep.*

So the folio. The quartos read—*Looks firmly*. Rowe and all the subsequent editors for *in* read *on*. I see no need of change. Shakspeare considered the sea as a *mirrour*. To look *in* a glass, is yet our colloquial phraseology.—*Malone*.

In for *into*. We still say that a window *looks into* the garden or the stable-yard.—*Steevens*.

¹⁰ *My fool usurps my body.*

So the folio. The second quarto of 1608 reads, “My foot usurps my head.” Different copies of the first edition of 1608 read,—“My foot usurps my body”—“a fool usurps my bed.”

¹¹ *Cannot be border'd certain in itself.*

The sense is—That nature which is arrived to such a pitch of unnatural degeneracy as to contemn its origin, cannot from thenceforth be restrained within any certain bounds whatever, but is prepared to break out in the most monstrous excesses every way, as occasion or temptation may offer.—*Heath*.

This implies that none have any *certain* assurance that such a *nature* will confine itself within such bounds as humanity and womanhood prescribe to it.—*Capell*.

¹² *The text is foolish.*

By this expression the lady insinuates that she considers what her husband had said as—a preachment, and laughs at it, but the derision is not perceived, if, as by some modern editors, the words *the text* are omitted.—*Capell*.

¹³ *Fools do those villains pity.*

She means, that *none but* fools would pity those villains, who are prevented from executing their malicious designs, and punished for their evil intention. It

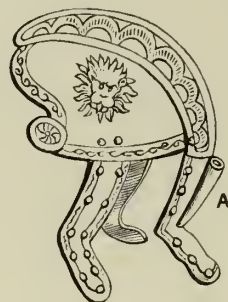
is not clear whether this fiend means her father, or the King of France. If these words were intended to have a retrospect to Albany's speech, which the word *pity* might lead us to suppose, Lear must be in her contemplation; if they are considered as connected with what follows—"Where's thy drum?" &c. the other interpretation must be adopted. The latter appears to me the true one; and perhaps the punctuation of the quarto, in which there is only a comma after the word *mischiefs*, ought to have been preferred.—*Malone*.

¹⁴ *With plumed helm.*

Mr. Fairholt sends the following note,—“The custom of wearing large plumes of feathers in the helmet, had reached to extravagance in the early part of the



sixteenth century, and continued until the decadence of the Tournament. They were, however, chiefly used in state ceremonies; the engraving here copied from the Triumph of the Emperor Maximilian, I, of Germany, (circa 1519), is a good specimen of the full-blown splendour of this portion of military costume. The helmet was provided



with a socket for the plume, but sometimes an additional steel casing was made to fit the back-part of the helmet with bars to screw down upon it. The Londesborough armoury supplies us with a curious specimen of such a plume-holder; the socket for the feather is seen at A.”

¹⁵ *Were like a better day.*

A better way, old eds. Corrected by Theobald.

¹⁶ *And clamour moisten'd.*

Cordelia had at first broke out into exclamations; then followed the tears with which when she had moistened these exclamations (for the words under consideration are an ablative absolute) she retired to the farther indulgence of her griefs in private.—*Heath*.

This may be interpreted two ways: *Clamour* in Shakspeare's usage, may stand for the exclamations preceding; and Cordelia be said, in the language of poetry, to *moisten* them with tears that followed them instantly; or it may be put with more boldness for a grief ready to burst out into *clamour*, which she *moistened*, allayed by her tears, as winds are allayed by rain.—*Capell*.

The expression would, perhaps, be somewhat improved and rendered more natural, if *moistened* be understood as a verb neuter—*became moist*, and *clamour* as its nominative case.—*Eccles*.

It is not impossible but Shakspeare might have formed this fine picture of Cordelia's agony from holy writ, in the conduct of Joseph; who, being no longer able to restrain the vehemence of his affection, commanded all his retinue from his presence; and then *wept aloud*, and discovered himself to his brethren.—*Theobald*.

¹⁷ *Crown'd with rank fumiter, &c.*

Fumiter, the herb fumitôry, or *fumaria officinalis* of Linnæus; in the class diadelphia, and order hexandria. An officinal plant. Shakespeare calls it rank, because it grows freely and luxuriantly among corn, where it is a troublesome weed. Harlock is a plant, supposed to be mentioned by Shakespeare, where the old reading was *har-dock*. But the one name is no more to be found in the old botanists than the other. So far there is no choice; but a passage from Drayton turns the scale:—

The honey-suckle, the *harlocke*,
The lilly, and the lady-smocke.

Todd conjectures, not improbably, that *harlock* may be a corruption of *charlock*, which is the wild mustard, a very common weed in fields.—*Nares*.

Cuckow-flowers—certainly used in the above passage, if the reading be right, for cowslips; which is supported by the knowledge that *cocu*, or *herbe cocu*, had that meaning in French. See Cotgrave in those words.—*Ibid*.

¹⁸ *Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home.*

The folio reads, *your lord*; and rightly. Goneril not only converses with Lord Edmund, in the Steward's presence, but prevents him from speaking to, or even seeing her husband.—*Ritson*.

This question the quartos and modern editions have made a very idle one, by reading *lady* for *lord*; for what imported it to Regan to know whether Goneril was spoke with *at home*? the matter that she dreaded might as well pass by the way, and in that she knew that Edmund accompanied her: the answer given to it increases her jealousy; the abrupt manner of his being sent off, without executing what he had in commission, viz. to concert measures with Albany, has the appearance of an intention to conceal him, and of something private between him and the lady, whose purposes she is bent upon anticipating, and therefore speaks openly; sending, as it should seem, by the steward, a ring to Edmund;—"If you do find him, pray you, give him this!" with license to tell all to his mistress, as well what she had done as said.—*Capell*.

It is, indeed, surprising that so many of the editors should, by the reading followed, seem to have forgotten that Edmund and Goneril had set out together from Gloster's castle, where Regan was: that he had accompanied her to her home, and been there bid *welcome* by her. Since, however, he was dismissed by her before Albany had appeared, Regan might with propriety make this inquiry respecting the latter.—*Eccles*.

¹⁹ *Let me unseal the letter, &c.*

"I know not well why Shakespear gives the steward, who is a mere factor of wickedness, so much fidelity. He now refuses the letter, and afterwards, when he is dying, thinks only how it may be safely delivered."—*Johnson*. Surely when Dr. Johnson made this note he did not recollect the character Edgar gives of this steward after he is dead:—

As duteous to the vices of thy mistress
As badness could require.

Fidelity in agents of wickedness is, I fear, not so uncommon as to be unfit for the general probability of dramatic manners.—*Pye*.

²⁰ *Hangs one that gathers samphire.*

"*Cretamus*, an herbe growynge on the sea rockes, whiche we call sampere; it is of some called *creta marina*; the leaves are kepte in brine or salte to be eaten

with fleshe as a sauce," Elyot's Dictionarie, 1559. The samphire is not now gathered from Shakespeare's cliff, but from the rocks nearer to Folkestone.

"*Samphire* grows in great plenty on most of the sea-cliffs in this country: it is terrible to see how people gather it, hanging by a rope several fathom from the top of the impending rocks as it were in the air," *Smith's Hist. of Waterford*, p. 315, edit. 1774.

²¹ *Diminish'd to her cock.*

Cock, a small boat. According to the ancient fishing customs of Brighton, co. Sussex, (MS. temp. Eliz.), *cock-fare* employed "small boates called cokes, of between two ton and six ton, between October and the middle of December," sometimes "with maste and sayle," and sometimes without.

²² *Would I uot leap upright.*

Warburton very plausibly conjectured *outright*; Dr. Farmer doubted whether that word existed at the time, though it may be found several times in Shakespeare. Steevens showed that, in the usage of Chaucer's time, *upright* meant *supine*, which is clearly nothing to the purpose. If *upright* is to remain, the meaning must be "for all the world I would not even attempt to leap straight up, for fear of not succeeding;" and whoever, on the edge of a precipice, shall attempt to leap any way, except *from* it, will, I think, feel the same apprehension. With respect to the sense of *supine*, it was not quite obsolete in Shakespeare's time, as Steevens quotes an almanack of 1591, which attributes certain complaints to the custom of "lying too much *upright*." *Mal. Suppl.* i. p. 261.—*Nares*.

²³ *He leaps, and falls along.*

Gloster certainly does not "leap," till after Edgar has said "Gone, sir: farewell." Mr. Knight rightly explains "Gone, sir;"—"Gloster has previously told Edgar, 'go thou further off;' and when Gloster again speaks to him, he says, 'Gone, sir.'"—*A. Dyce*.

²⁴ *Ten masts at each.*

That is, *drawn out* at length, or *each added* to the other. '*Eche*, exp. *draw out*, A. S. *Skinner, Etymolog.* Thus Chaucer, in the House of Fame, b. iii. v. 975:—

— gan somewhat *to eche*
To this tiding in his speche.

And in Troilus and Cresseide, b. i. v. 706:—

As doen these fooles, that hir sorrowes *eche*.

Pope changed this to *attacht*; Johnson would read *on end*; Steevens proposes *at reach*.—*Singer*.

²⁵ *Horus whelk'd.*

Whelk'd, I believe, signifies, *varied with protuberances*. So, in King Henry V. Fluellen speaking of Bardolph: "— his face is all bubukles, and *whelks*," &c.—*Steevens*.

Twisted, convolved. A welk or whilk is a small shell-fish. Drayton in his *Mortimeriados*, 4to. 1596, seems to use this participle in the sense of *rolling* or *curled*:—

The sunny palfreys have their traces broke,
And setting fire upon the *welk'd* shrouds
Now through the heaven flie gadding from the yoke.—*Maloue*.

Compare the description of "Elde" in Chaucer's *Romaunt of the Rose*—

All woxen was her bodye unwelde,
And drye and dwynede all for elde;
A foule *forwelked* thinge was she,
That whilom round and softe had be.

²⁶ *There's your press-money.*

It is evident from the whole of this speech, that Lear fancies himself in a battle: but, "There's your press-money" has not been properly explained. It means the money which was paid to soldiers when they were retained in the King's service: and it appears from some antient statutes, and particularly 7 Henry VII. c. 1; and 3 Henry VIII. c. 5. that it was felony in any soldier to withdraw himself from the King's service after receipt of this money, without special leave. On the contrary, he was obliged at all times to hold himself *in readiness*. The term is from the French "prest," *ready*. It is written *prest* in several places in King Henry VIIIth's Book of household expences still preserved in the Exchequer. This may serve also to explain the following passage in Act V. Sc. II.: "And turn our *imprest* lances in our eyes;" and to correct Whalley's note in Hamlet, Act. I. Sc. I.: "Why such *impress* of shipwrights?"—*Douce*.

²⁷ *Like a crow-keeper.*

A crow-keeper is a boy employed to scare crows from new-sown land. Besides lustily whooping, he carries an old gun from which he cracks a little powder, and sometimes puts in a few small stones, but seldom hits, and still seldomer kills a crow. In Shakspeare's time, it seems that the *crow-keeper* carried a bow, and doubtless "handled" it with as much awkwardness and as little success as the modern boy manages his gun. Tusser, speaking of keeping the birds from newly-sown lands, has these lines:

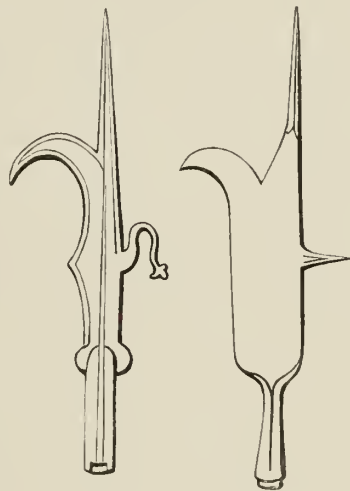
Then stir about, Nieol, with arrow and bow,
Take penny for killing of every crow.—*Forby*.

²⁸ *Bring up the brown bills.*

These long-popular weapons of the foot soldier, observes Mr. Fairholt, were constructed to thrust at mounted men, or cut and damage their horse-furniture; sometimes they were provided with a side-hook to seize a bridle, as in our first specimen from the Meyrick collection; it is of the early part of the 16th century. The later form of the brown bill, which it retained until its disuse, is seen in the second example; the hooked blade was used as a bridle-cutter.

²⁹ *O well-flown, bird.*

The notes are at variance as to whether Lear alludes to archery or falconry. Certainly to the latter. In an old song on hawking, set for four voices by Thomas Ravenscroft, *O well flown* is a frequent address to the hawk.—*Douce*.



³⁰ *With a white beard!*

These words are found only in the folio. It is hardly requisite to fill up the context of a disjointed raving. Ha! Goneril!—to be so unfilial to a father with

a white beard, to an aged father, the age of the parent aggravating the crime of the daughter. In a former part of the tragedy he says to Goneril,—“art not asham'd to look upon this beard,” meaning his venerable white beard.

³¹ *To say ay and no, &c.*

To say ay and no to every thing I said. Ay and no too was no good divinity.—Besides the inaccuracy of construction in this passage it does not appear how it could be flattery to dissent from, as well as to assent to, every thing he said. The following reading was suggested to me by an ingenious friend, by only a change in the pointing and the omission of a single letter, “To say ay and no, to every thing I said ay and no to, was no good divinity.”—*Pye*.

³² *That minces virtue.*

That is, puts on an outward affected seeming of virtue. See Cotgrave in v. *Mineux-se*. He also explains it under ‘*Faire la sadinette, to mince it, nicefie it, be very squeamish, backward, or coy.*’—*Singer*.

³³ *Nor the soiled horse.*

Soiled horse is a term used for a horse that has been fed with hay and corn in the stable during the winter, and is turned out in the spring to take the first flush of grass, or has it cut and carried in to him. This at once cleanses the animal, and fills him with blood.—*Stevens*.

³⁴ *Dost thou squiny at me?*

To *squiny* is to look askint. The word is used by our poet’s fellow-comedian, Robert Armin, in *A Nest of Ninnies, &c.* 4to. 1609: “The world—*squinies* at this, and looks as one scorning.”—*Malone*.

Squiny.—This word is used for one looking askance, or under the eyelids, as it is called, a kind of magpie-ish look. “I don’t like she, she do *squiny* so.”—*Cornish Glossary*.

³⁵ *Handy-dandy.*

This game is now played as follows:—a child hides something in one hand, and then places both fists endways on each other, crying,—“Handy-dandy riddledy ro,—Which will you have, high or low?” Or, sometimes, the following distich,—“Handy-dandy, Jack-a-dandy,—Which good hand will you have?” The party addressed either touches one hand, or guesses in which one the article (whatever it may be) is placed. If he guesses rightly, he wins its contents; if wrongly, he loses an equivalent. Some versions read *handy-pandy* in the first of these, with another variation, that would not now be tolerated. This is one of the oldest English games in existence, and appears to be alluded to in *Piers Ploughman*, ed. Wright, p. 69:

Thanne wowed Wrong—Wisdom ful yerne,
To maken pees with his pens,—Handy-dandy played.

Chapman, in the *Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, 1598, gives the distich as follows,—“handy dandy, prickly prandy, which hand will you have?” Florio, in his *World of Words*, ed. 1611, p. 57, translates *bazzicière*, “to shake between two hands, to play handie-dandic.” Miege, in his *Great French Dictionary*, 1688, says, “Handy-dandy, a kind of play with the hands, *sorte de jeu de main*;” and Douce, ii. 167, quotes an early MS., which thus curiously mentions the game: “They hould safe your children’s patrymony, and play with your majestie, as men play with little children at *handye-dandye, which hand will you have*, when they are disposed to keep anythinge from them.” Some of the commentators have mistaken the character of the game, from having adopted Coles’s erroneous interpretation of *micare digitis*. Sometimes the game is played by a sort of sleight of

hand, changing the article rapidly from one hand into the other, so that the looker-on is often deceived, and induced to name the hand into which it is apparently thrown. This is what Shakespeare alludes to by changing places.

Pope, in his *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*, says that the game of handy-dandy is mentioned by Plato; but if, as I suppose, he refers to a well-known passage in the *Lysis*, the allusion appears somewhat too indistinct to warrant such an assertion,—*αστρα γαλιζοντας τε δη και κεκοσμημενους απαντας. οι μεν ουν πολλοι εν τη αυλη επαιζον εξω. οι δε τινες του αποδυτηριου εν γωνια ηρτιαζον αστραγαλοις παμπολλοις, εκ φορμισκων τινων προαιρουμενοι.* A passage, however, in Julius Pollux, ix. 101, referring to this, is rather more distinct, and may allude to one form of the game.—*Και μην και αρτιαζειν, αστραγαλους εκ φορμισκων καθαιρομενους εν τῷ αποδυτηριῷ τους παιδας, ὁ Πλατων εφη. το δε αρτιαζειν εν αστραγαλων πλμβει κεκρυμμενων ὑπο των χειρων, μαντιαν ειχε των αρτιων η και περιπτων. ταυτο δε τουτο και κναμοις, η καρνοις τε και αμυγδαλαις, οι δε και αργυριῷ πρραττειν ηξιουν,* a passage which Meursius, *de Ludis Græcorum*, ed. 1625, p. 5, thus partially translates, “*nempe ludentes sumptis in manu talis, fabis, nucibus, amygdalis, interdum etiam nummis, interrogantes alterum divinare jubebant.*” Here we have the exact game of handy-hand, which is, after all, the simple form of the odd and even of children.

³⁶ *I'll able them.*

Able, to warrant, to answer for. “Gods my patience? did you looke forsooth that Juno should have sent you meate from her owne trencher in reward of your widdowes teares? you might sit and sigh first till your heart-strings broke, *Ile able 't,*” Chapman's *Widow's Tears*, 1612. “Admitted? I, into her heart, *Ile able it*; never was man so prais'd with a dispraise; nor so spoken for in being rail'd on,” *ibid.*

Constable, *I'le able him*: if he do come to be a justice afterwards, let him thank the keeper.—*The Changeling*, 1653.

³⁷ *We wawl and cry.*

Evidently taken from Pliny as translated by Philemon Holland. “Man alone, poor wretch [nature] hath laid all naked upon the bare earth, even on his birth day *to cry and wrangle* presently from the very first houre that he is borne into this world.”—*Proeme* to book 7.—*Douce.*

Where serpent tongs the pen men are to write,
Where cats do *waule* by day, dogges by night.

The Returne from Pernassus, 1606.

³⁸ *This' a good block.*

That is, this is a good block. See Mr. Dyce's edition, note 72.

Upon the king's saying, *I will preach to thee*, the poet seems to have meant him to pull off his *hat*, and keep turning it and feeling it, in the attitude of one of the preachers of those times, (whom I have seen so represented in ancient prints,) till the idea of *felt*, which the good *hat* or *block* was made of, raises the stratagem in his brain of shoeing a troop of horse with a substance soft as that which he held and moulded between his hands. This makes him start from his preachment.—*Block* anciently signified the *head part* of the hat, or *the thing on which a hat is formed*, and sometimes the hat itself.—See *Much Ado About Nothing*: “He wears his faith but as the fashion of his *hat*; it changes with the next *block.*” Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Wit at Several Weapons*:—

I am so haunted with this broad-brim'd *hat*
Of the last progress *block*, with the young hatband.

Again, in the *Two Merry Milkmaids*, 1620: “—my haberdasher has a new *block*, and will find me and all my generation in *beaters,*” &c. Again, in Decker's *Gul's*

Hornbook, 1609: “— that cannot observe the time of his hatband, nor know what fashioned *block* is most kin to his head: for in my opinion, the braine that cannot chuse his *felt* well,” &c. Again, in the Seven Deadly Sinnes of London, by Decker, 1606: “— The *blocke* for his head alters faster than the *felt-maker* can fitte him.” Again, in Run and a Great Cast, an ancient collection of Epigrams, 4to. without date, Epigram 46. In Sextinum:—

A pretty *blocke* Sextinus names his *hat* ;
So much the fitter for his head by that.—*Steevens*.

³⁹ *To shoe a troop of horse with felt.*

That is, with flocks kneaded to a mass, a practice I believe sometimes used in former ages, for it is mentioned in Ariosto:

— — fece nel cadar strepito quanto
Avesse avuto sotto i piedi il *feltro*.—*Johnson*.

Shakspeare however might have adopted the stratagem of shoeing a troop of horse with *felt*, from the following passage in Fenton's Tragicall Discourses, 4to. bl. l. 1567: “— he attyreth himselfe for the purpose in a night-gowne girt to hym, with a paire of *shoes* of *felte*, leaste the noyse of his feete shoulde discover his goinge.” Again, in Hay any Worke for a Cooper, an ancient pamphlet, no date: “Their adversaries are very eager: the saints in heaven have *felt* o' their tongues.”—*Steevens*.

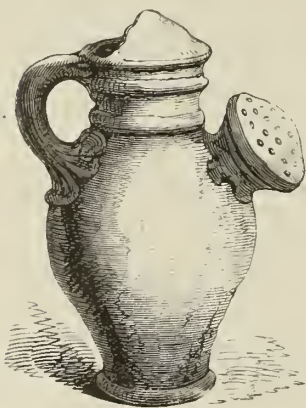
This “delicate stratagem” had actually been put in practice about fifty years before Shakspeare was born, as we learn from Lord Herbert's Life of Henry the Eighth, p. 41. “And now,” says that historian, “having feasted the ladies royally for divers dayes, he [Henry] departed from Tournay to Lisle, [Oct. 13, 1513,] whither he was invited by the Lady Margaret, who caused there a juste to be held in an extraordinary manner; the plaec being a fore-room raised high from the ground by many steps, and paved with black square stones like marble; while *the horses*, to prevent sliding, *were shod with felt* or flocks (the Latin words are *feltro sive tomento*): after which the ladies danced all night.”—*Malone*.

⁴⁰ *A man of salt.*

“A man of salt” is ‘a man of tears.’ In All's Well that Ends Well, we meet with—“your salt *tears*' head;” and in Troilus and Cressida, “the *salt* of broken *tears*.” Again, in Coriolanus:—

He has betray'd your business, and given up
For certain drops of *salt*, your city Rome.—*Malone*.

⁴¹ *To use his eyes for garden water-pots.*



Shakspeare, in these matters, alludes to articles of his own era. The watering-pot of his time was a roughly constructed vessel of coarse clay. The annexed example was taken by Mr. Fairholt from one exhumed in Goodmans Fields, Whitechapel.

⁴² *Che vore ye.*

I believe that this, in the old West country dialect, was equivalent to,—I warrant ye.

⁴³ *O undistinguish'd space of woman's will.*

Thus the folio. The quartos read—of woman's *wit*! The meaning (says

Dr. Warburton in Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition,) is, "The variations in a woman's will are so sudden, and their liking and loathing follow so quick upon each other, that there is no distinguishable space between them."—*Malone*.

⁴⁴ *Thee I'll rake up.*

To rake, to cover anything in the fire with ashes. This explanation is given by Palsgrave, 1530. To rake is still in use, meaning to cover up a fire to keep it alive.

⁴⁵ *Of this child-changed father.*

A father changed by the conduct of his children. Cordelia offers the kindness of another child to make *restoration* to what he was, before he was altered by her sisters.

⁴⁶ *Is he array'd?*

The folio entry after these words, viz.—*Enter Lear in a chair carried by servants*, which has been adhered to by all the moderns, was a meer stage convenience, for which those folios and their followers sunk the line,—*Please you, draw near,—Louder the music, &c.* and in that a fine thought of the poet's in this editor's judgment: What he gathers from the concluding words is this; that soft *music* should be heard at the scene's opening and behind the bed which is at a distance; that this music had been the composer of Lear's distracted fancy, and, by that means, the instrument of his recovery; that it is now required by the doctor for the purpose of waking him by such strains as were properly adapted for this end, and rising gradually; which is not only a noble idea, but just, and has a good effect on the scene: It is found in no modern.—*Capell*.

⁴⁷ *To watch,—poor perdu!*

Perdu, a soldier sent on a forlorn hope, a person in a desperate state. Amongst other desperate services in which the forlorn hope or *enfants perdus*, were engaged, the night-watches seem to have been a common one. So, Beaumont and Fletcher:—

I am set here like a *perdu*,
To *watch* a fellow that has wrong'd my mistress.

Little French Lawyer, Act II. Sc. II.—*Whalley*.

"With this thin helm?" With this thin covering of hair.—*Malone*.

⁴⁸ *To make him even o'er the time he has lost.*

That is, to reconcile it to his apprehension.—*Warburton*.

The uncommon verb—to *even*, occurs again in *Cymbeline*. The meaning there seems to be, we will fully employ all the time we have. So here the Physician says, that it is dangerous to draw from Lear a full relation of all that he felt or suffered while his reason was disturbed; to make him employ as much time in the recital of what has befallen him as passed during his state of insanity.—*Malone*.

I believe, Dr. Warburton's explanation is just. The poor old king had nothing to tell, though he had much to hear. The speaker's meaning therefore I conceive to be—it is dangerous to render all that passed during the interval of his insanity, *even* (i. e. plain or level,) to his understanding, while it continues in its present state of uncertainty.—*Stevens*.

Act the Fifth.

SCENE I.—*The Camp of the British Forces, near Dover.*

Enter, with Drums and Colours, EDMUND, REGAN, Officers, Soldiers, and Others.

Edm. Know of the duke, if his last purpose hold ;
Or whether since he is advis'd by aught
To change the course. He's full of alteration,
And self-reproving :—bring his constant pleasure.

[*To an Officer, who goes out.*

Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

Edm. 'Tis to be doubted, madam.

Reg. Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you :
Tell me, but truly, but then speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister ?

Edm. In honour'd love.

Reg. But have you never found my brother's way
To the forefended place ?¹

Edm. That thought abuses you.

Reg. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct,
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.

Edm. No, by mine honour, madam.

Reg. I never shall endure her. Dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

Edm. Fear me not.—
She, and the duke her husband.²

Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, *and* Soldiers.

Gon. I had rather lose the battle, than that sister
Should loosen him and me.

[*Aside.*]

Alb. Our very loving sister, well be-met.—
Sir, this I hear,³—the king is come to his daughter,
With others, whom the rigour of our state
Fore'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant: for this business,
It toucheth us, as France invades our land,
Not bolds the king,⁴ with others, whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.

Edm. Sir, you speak nobly.

Reg. Why is this reason'd?

Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils
Are not the question here.

Alb. Let us, then, determine
With the ancient of war on our proceedings.

Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.

Reg. Sister, you'll go with us?

Gon. No.

Reg. 'Tis most convenient; pray you, go with us.

Gon. O, ho! I know the riddle. [*Aside.*] I will go.

Enter EDGAR, *disguised.*

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.

Alb. I'll overtake you.—Speak.

[*Exeunt* EDMUND, REGAN, GONERIL, Officers, Soldiers,
and Attendants.]

Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion, that will prove
What is avouched there. If you miscarry,

Your business of the world hath so an end,
And maehination ceases. Fortune love you!

Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.

Edg. I was forbid it.

When time shall serve, let but the herald ery,
And I'll appear again.

[*Exit.*

Alb. Why, fare thee well: I will o'erlook thy paper.

Re-enter EDMUND.

Edm. The enemy's in view; draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
By diligent discovery; but your haste
Is now urg'd on you.

Alb. We will greet the time.

[*Exit.*

Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both? one? or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive: to take the widow,
Exasperates, makes mad, her sister Goneril;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,⁵
Her husband being alive. Now then, we'll use
His countenance for the battle; which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the merey
Which he intends to Lear, and to Cordelia,
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon; for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Field between the two Camps.*

Alarum within. Enter, with Drum and Colours, LEAR, CORDELIA,
and their Forces; and exeunt.

Enter EDGAR and GLOSTER.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host; pray that the right may thrive.

If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.

Glo. Grace go with you, sir! [*Exit* EDGAR.]

Alarum; afterwards a Retreat. Re-enter EDGAR.

Edg. Away, old man! give me thy hand: away!
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en.
Give me thy hand; come on.

Glo. No farther, sir: a man may rot even here.

Edg. What! in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither:
Ripeness is all. Come on.

Glo. And that's true too. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The British Camp near Dover.*

*Enter, in Conquest, with Drum and Colours, EDMUND; LEAR and
CORDELIA, as Prisoners; Captain, Officers, Soldiers, &c.*

Edm. Some officers take them away: good guard,
Until their greater pleasures first be known,
That are to eensure them.

Cor. We are not the first,
Who, with best meaning, have incur'd the worst.
For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down;
Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.
Shall we not see these daughters, and these sisters?

Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' the eage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses, and who wins; who's in, who's out;
And take upon's the mystery of things,⁶
As if we were God's spies: and we'll wear out,

In a wall'd prison, packs and sects⁷ of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon.

Edm. Take them away.

Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven,
And fire us hence, like foxes.⁸ Wipe thine eyes;
The goujeers shall devour them,⁹ flesh and fell,¹⁰
Ere they shall make us weep: we'll see them starve first.

Come. [*Exeunt LEAR and CORDELIA, guarded.*]

Edm. Come hither, captain; hark.

Take thou this note; [*Giving a Paper.*] go, follow them to
prison.

One step I have advanc'd thee; if thou dost
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
To noble fortunes. Know thou this, that men
Are as the time is: to be tender-minded
Does not become a sword. Thy great employment
Will not bear question;¹¹ either say, thou'lt do't,
Or thrive by other means.

Capt. I'll do't, my lord.

Edm. About it; and write happy, when thou hast done.

Mark,—I say, instantly; and carry it so,
As I have set it down.

Capt. I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If it be man's work, I will do it. [*Exit Captain.*]

Flourish. Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, Officers, and
Attendants.

Alb. Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well. You have the captives
Who were the opposites of this day's strife:
We do require them of you, so to use them,
As we shall find their merits, and our safety,
May equally determine.

Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention, and appointed guard;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes,

Which do command them. With him I sent the queen :
 My reason all the same ; and they are ready
 To-morrow, or at farther space, t' appear
 Where you shall hold your session. At this time,
 We sweat, and bleed : the friend hath lost his friend ;
 And the best quarrels, in the heat, are eurs'd
 By those that feel their sharpness.—
 The question of Cordelia, and her father,
 Requires a fitter place.

Alb. Sir, by your patience,
 I hold you but a subject of this war,
 Not as a brother.

Reg. That's as we list to grace him :
 Methinks, our pleasure might have been demanded,
 Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers,
 Bore the commission of my place and person ;
 The which immediacy may well stand up,¹²
 And call itself your brother.

Gon. Not so hot :
 In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
 More than in your addition.

Reg. In my rights,
 By me invested, he compeers the best.

Gon. That were the most, if he should husband you.

Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.

Gon. Holla, holla !
 That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.¹³

Reg. Lady, I am not well ; else I should answer
 From a full-flowing stomach.—General,
 Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony :
 Dispose of them, of me ; the walls are thine.¹⁴
 Witness the world, that I create thee here
 My lord and master.

Gon. Mean you to enjoy him ?

Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.¹⁵

Edm. Nor in thine, lord.

Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes.

Reg. Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine.

[To EDMUND.]

Alb. Stay yet ; hear reason.—Edmund, I arrest thee
 On capital treason ; and, in thy arrest,

This gilded serpent. [*Pointing to GON.*]—For your claim, fair sister,

I bar it in the interest of my wife ;
'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
If you will marry, make your love to me,
My lady is bespoke.

Gon. An interlude !

Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloster.—Let the trumpet sound :
If none appear to prove upon thy person,
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge. [*Throwing down a Glove.*] I'll prove it on
thy heart,
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

Reg. Sick ! O, sick !

Gon. [*Aside.*] If not, I'll ne'er trust poison.

Edm. There's my exchange : [*Throwing down a Glove.*] what
in the world he is

That names me traitor, villain-like he lies.
Call by thy trumpet : he that dares approach,
On him, on you, who not ? I will maintain
My truth and honour firmly.

Alb. A herald, ho !

Edm. A herald, ho ! a herald !

Alb. Trust to thy single virtue ; for thy soldiers,
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.

Reg. My sickness grows upon me.

Alb. She is not well ; convey her to my tent.

[*Exit REGAN, led.*]

Enter a Herald.

Come hither, herald.—Let the trumpet sound,
And read out this.

Capt. Sound, trumpet. [*A trumpet sounds.*]

Herald reads.

“ If any man of quality, or degree, within the lists of the
army, will maintain upon Edmund, supposed earl of Gloster,

that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear at the third sound of the trumpet. He is bold in his defence."

Edm. Sound!

[1 *Trumpet.*

Her. Again.

[2 *Trumpet.*

Her. Again.

[3 *Trumpet.*

[*Trumpet answers within.*

Enter EDGAR, armed, preceded by a Trumpet.

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this eall o' the trumpet.

Her. What are you?
Your name? your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?

Edg. Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn, and eanker-bit:
Yet am I noble, as the adversary
I come to cope withal.

Alb. Which is that adversary?

Edg. What's he, that speaks for Edmund earl of Gloster?

Edm. Himself: what say'st thou to him?

Edg. Draw thy sword,
That if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice; here is mine:
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,¹⁶
My oath, and my profession. I protest,
Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword, and fire-new fortune,
Thy valour, and thy heart, thou art a traitor:
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;
Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince;
And, from th' extremest upward of thy head,
To the deseent and dust below thy foot,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou, "No,"
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.

Edm. In wisdom, I should ask thy name;
But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes,¹⁷
What safe and nicely I might well delay¹⁸

By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn.
 Baek do I toss these treasons to thy head ;
 With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart ;
 Which, for they yet glance by, and scarcely bruise,
 This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
 Where they shall rest for ever.—Trumpets speak.

[*Alarums. They fight. EDMUND falls.*]

Alb. O, save him ! save him !¹⁹

Gon. This is mere praetice, Gloster.
 By the law of arms, thou wast not bound to answer
 An unknown opposite ; thou art not vanquish'd,
 But eozen'd and beguil'd.

Alb. Shut your mouth, dame ;
 Or with this paper shall I stop it ?—Hold, sir !—²⁰
 Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil :
 No tearing, lady ; I pereceive, you know it.

[*Gives the Letter to EDMUND.*]

Gon. Say, if I do, the laws are mine, not thine :
 Who can arraign me for't ?

Alb. Most monstrous !
 Know'st thou this paper ?

Gon. Ask me not what I know.

[*Exit GONERIL.*]

Alb. Go after her : she's desperate ; govern her.

[*Exit an Officer.*]

Edm. What you have charg'd me with, that have I done,
 And more, much more ; the time will bring it out :
 'Tis past, and so am I. But what art thou,
 That hast this fortune on me ? If thou'rt noble,
 I do forgive thee.

Edg. Let's exehange charity.
 I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund ;
 If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.
 My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
 The gods are just, and of our pleasant viees
 Make instruments to plague us :
 The dark and vieious place where thee he got,
 Cost him his eyes.

Edm. Thou hast spoken right, 'tis true ;
 The wheel is eome full eirele : I am here.

Alb. Methought, thy very gait did prophesy
 A royal nobleness. I must embrace thee :

Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I
Did hate thee, or thy father.

Edg. Worthy prince, I know't.

Alb. Where have you hid yourself?

How have you known the miseries of your father?

Edg. By nursing them, my lord.—List a brief tale ;
And, when 'tis told, O, that my heart would burst !—
The bloody proclamation to escape,
That follow'd me so near—O, our lives' sweetness !
That we the pain of death would hourly die,²¹
Rather than die at once !—taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags, t' assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd ; and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost ; became his guide,
Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair ;
Never—O fault !—reveal'd myself unto him,
Until some half hour past, when I was arm'd,
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
To him my pilgrimage : but his flaw'd heart,—
Alack ! too weak the conflict to support—
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.

Edm. This speech of yours hath mov'd me,
And shall, perchance, do good ; but speak you on :
You look as you had something more to say.

Alb. If there be more more woful, hold it in,
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.

Edg. This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow ; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamour, came there a man,
Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhor'd society ; but then, finding
Who 'twas that so endur'd, with his strong arms
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he'd burst heaven ; threw him on my father ;²²
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him,
That ever ear receiv'd ; which in recounting,

His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack : twice, then, the trumpets sounded,
And there I left him tranc'd.

Alb. But who was this ?

Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent ; who in disguise
Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service
Improper for a slave.

Enter a Gentleman hastily, with a bloody Knife.

Gent. Help, help ! O help !

Edg. What kind of help ?

Alb. Speak, man.

Edg. What means that bloody knife ?

Gent. 'Tis hot, it smokes ;

It came even from the heart of—O ! she's dead :

Alb. Who dead ? speak, man.

Gent. Your lady, sir, your lady : and her sister
By her is poisoned ; she hath confess'd it.²³

Edm. I was contracted to them both : all three
Now marry in an instant.

Alb. Produce the bodies, be they alive or dead !—
This judgment of the heavens, that makes us tremble,
Touches us not with pity. [*Exit Gentleman.*]

Enter KENT.

Edg. Here comes Kent.

Alb. O ! it is he.

The time will not allow the compliment,
Which very manners urges.

Kent. I am come

To bid my king and master aye good night :
Is he not here ?

Alb. Great thing of us forgot !—

Speak, Edmund, where's the king ? and where's Cordelia ?—
Seest thou this object, Kent ?

[*The Bodies of GONERIL and REGAN are brought in.*]

Kent. Alack ? why thus ?

Edm. Yet Edmund was belov'd :

The one the other poison'd for my sake,
And after slew herself.

Alb. Even so.—Cover their faces.

Edm. I pant for life :—some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,—
Be brief in it,—to the castle ; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear, and on Cordelia.—
Nay, send in time.

Alb. Run, run ! O, run !

Edg. To who, my lord ?—Who has the office ? send
Thy token of reprieve.

Edm. Well thought on : take my sword,
Give it the captain.

Alb. Haste thee, for thy life. [*Exit* EDGAR.]

Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.

Alb. The gods defend her ! Bear him hence awhile.
[EDMUND is borne off.]

Enter LEAR, *with* CORDELIA *dead in his Arms* ;²⁴ EDGAR,
Officer, *and* Others.

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl !—O ! you are men of stones ;
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack.—She's gone for ever.—
I know when one is dead, and when one lives ;
She's dead as earth.—Lend me a looking-glass ;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

Kent. Is this the promis'd end ?

Edg. Or image of that horror ?²⁵

Alb. Fall, and cease !²⁶

Lear. This feather stirs ;²⁷ she lives ! if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.

Kent. O, my good master ! [*Kneeling.*]

Lear. Pr'ythee, away.

Edg. 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all !
I might have sav'd her ; now, she's gone for ever !—
Cordelia, Cordelia ! stay a little. Ha !
What is't thou say'st ?—Her voice was ever soft,

Gentle, and low—an excellent thing in woman.—
I kill'd the slave that was a hanging thee.

Off. 'Tis true, my lords, he did.

Lear. Did I not, fellow?

I have seen the day, with my good biting faulchion
I would have made them skip: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me.—Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' the best:—I'll tell you straight.

Kent. If Fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,²⁸
One of them we behold.

Lear. This is a dull sight.—Are you not Kent?

Kent.

The same,

Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?

Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;²⁹
He'll strike, and quickly too.—He's dead and rotten.

Kent. No, my good lord; I am the very man—

Lear. I'll see that straight.

Kent. That from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.

Lear. You are welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else.³⁰ All's cheerless, dark, and deadly:
Your eldest daughters have fore-doom'd themselves,³¹
And desperately are dead.

Lear. Ay, so I think.

Alb. He knows not what he says; and vain is it,
That we present us to him.

Edg. Very bootless.

Enter an Officer.

Off. Edmund is dead, my lord.

Alb. That's but a trifle here.—

You lords, and noble friends, know our intent.

What comfort to this great decay may come,³²

Shall be applied: for us, we will resign,

During the life of this old majesty,

To him our absolute power.—You to your rights,

[*To EDGAR and KENT.*

With boot, and such addition, as your honours

Have more than merited.—All friends shall taste

The wages of their virtue, and all foes

The cup of their deservings.—O! see, see!

Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd!³³ No, no, no life :
 Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
 And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
 Never, never, never, never, never!—
 Pray you, undo this button: thank you, sir.—
 Do you see this? Look on her,—look,—her lips,—
 Look there, look there!— [*He dies.*]

Edg. He faints!—My lord, my lord!—

Kent. Break, heart; I pr'ythee, break!

Edg. Look up, my lord.

Kent. Vex not his ghost: O! let him pass: he hates him,
 That would upon the rack of this rough world
 Stretch him out longer.

Edg. He is gone, indeed.

Kent. The wonder is, he hath endur'd so long :
 He but usurp'd his life.

Alb. Bear them from hence. Our present business
 Is general woe.—Friends of my soul, you twain

[*To KENT and EDGAR.*]

Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain.

Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go :
 My Master calls me; I must not say, no.

Alb. The weight of this sad time we must obey;³⁴
 Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
 The oldest hath borne most: we, that are young,
 Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

[*Exeunt, with a dead March.*]

Notes to the Fifth Act.

¹ *To the forefended place.*

Forefended means *prohibited, forbidden*. So, in King Henry VI. Part I:—
“Now, heaven *forefend*! the holy maid with child?”—*Steevens*.

That thought abuses you.—That thought imposes on you: you are deceived. This speech and the next are found in both the quartos, but omitted in the folio.—*Malone*.

Bosom'd with her.—*Bosom'd* is used in this sense by Heywood, in the Fair Maid of the West, 1631:—

We'll crown our hopes and wishes with more pomp
And sumptuous cost, than Priam did his son
That night he *bosom'd* Helen.

Again, in Heywood's Silver Age, 1613:—

With fair Alcmena, she that never *bosom'd*
Mortal, save thee.—*Steevens*.

² *She, and the duke her husband.*

Messrs. Malone and Knight put a comma and break at the end of Edmund's speech, as if it were imperfect. On the contrary, it is complete:—“She, and the duke her husband,” *i.e.*, ‘Here she comes, and the duke her husband.’—*A. Dyce*.

³ *Sir, this I hear, &c.*

The meaning is, “the king and others whom we have opposed are come to Cordelia.” I could never be valiant but in a just quarrel. We must distinguish; it is just in one sense and unjust in another. As France invades our land I am concerned to repel him; but as he *holds*, entertains, and supports the king, and *others whom I fear many just and heavy causes make*, or compel, as it were, to *oppose* us, I esteem it unjust to engage against them. This speech, thus interpreted according to the common reading, is likewise very necessary: for otherwise Albany, who is characterised as a man of honour and observer of justice, gives no

reason for going to war with those, whom he owns had been much injured under the countenance of his power.—*Warburton*.

The quartos read—"For this, I hear," &c. Perhaps Shakespeare wrote—"Fore this, I hear, the king," &c. *Sir* is the reading of the folio. Dr. Warburton has explained this passage, as if the copies read—"Not holds the king," i. e. 'not as he holds the king;' but the quartos, in which alone the latter part of this speech is found, read—*bolds*. However, Dr. Warburton's interpretation may be right, as *bolds* may certainly have been a misprint for *holds*, in copies in which we find *mov'd*, for *noble*, (Act V. Sc. III.) *O father*, for *O fault*, (ibid.) the *mistress* of Hecate, for the *mysterics* of Hecate, (Act I. Sc. I.) *blossoms* for *bosoms*, Act V. Sc. III. a *mistresses coward*, for a *mistresses command*, Act IV. Sc. II. &c.—*Malone*.

⁴ *Not bolds the king.*

Bold, to encourage; to embolden; to get bold. (*A.-S.*) See *Piers Ploughman*, p. 55; *Kyng Alisaunder*, 2468; *Chaucer*, MS. Cantab. Ff. i. 6, f. 98.

When he Clementes speche harde,
Hys harte beganne to *bolde*.—*MS. Cantab.* Ff. ii. 38, f. 89.

"This business" (says Albany) "touches us as France invades our land, not as it bolds the king," &c. i. e. *emboldens* him to assert his former title. Thus in the ancient interlude of *Hycke Scorer*:—"Alas, that I had not one to *bold* me!" Again, in *Arthur Hall's* translation of the 4th *Iliad*, 4to. 1581:—"And *Pallas bolds* the Greeks, and blames whom sear doth there dismay."—*Stevens*.

⁵ *And hardly shall I carry out my side.*

To carry out a side was an old idiomatic expression for success, probably derived from playing games in which different sides were taken. In one of the *Paston Letters*, Vol. iv. p. 155, quoted by *Stevens*, we read "Heydon's son hath borne out his side stoutly here." In the *Maid's Tragedy*, (*Beaumont and Fletcher*, by *Dyce*, vol. i. p. 343) *Dula* refuses the aid of *Aspatia*, saying, "She will pluck down a side," meaning, that if they were to be partners, *Aspatia* would lose the game. To *pluck down* a side was, therefore, the reverse of *carrying out* a side. *Edmund* observes, in effect, that he should hardly be able to win the game he was playing, while the husband of *Goneril* was living.—*Collier*.

⁶ *And take upon us the mystery of things.*

As if we were angels commissioned to survey and report the lives of men, and were consequently endowed with the power of prying into the original motives of action and the mysteries of conduct.—*Johnson*.

I take the meaning to be; "And take upon us to penetrate and unfold the mystery of public affairs, as if we were commissioned and enabled by God himself to pry into their most hidden secrets."—*Heath*.

Rather, I think, as if we pried into the mysteries of divine providence.

⁷ *Packs and sects of great ones.*

Packs is used for combinations or collections, as is a *pack of cards*. For *sects*, I think *sets* might be more commodiously read. So we say, "affairs are now managed by a new *set*." *Sects*, however, may well stand.—*Johnson*.

⁸ *And fire us hence, like foxes.*

It is known that *foxes* are forced out of their holds by fire; but why a brand from heaven? this implies that *parting* them should be the work of no mortal.—*Capell*.

⁹ *The goujcers shall devour them.*

Goujcers is printed in ed. 1623 *good years*, the latter being a common

corrupted form of the term in Shakespeare's time, but an ignorant perversion such as I do not think was penned by Shakespeare.

¹⁰ *Flesh and fell.*

Flesh and *fell* is *flesh* and *skin*. Thus in the *Speculum Vitæ*, MS.:—

That alle men sal a domcsday rise
Oute of their graves in *fleshe and felle*.

So in the Dyar's Playe, Chester Mysteries, MS. in the Brit. Museum:—'I made thee man of *flesh and fell*.'—*Singer*.

¹¹ *Thy great employment will not bear question.*

Roderick, in the *Canons of Criticism*, p. 271—273, hath, in my judgment, given us the true sense of this passage, to this effect:—The great and important employment in which I now trust thee, will not bear the least hesitation or doubt.—*Heath*.

Image to yourself at these words the Captain startled, and standing in suspense, his eyes turned upon the warrant which he holds, and about which he would willingly have some farther explanation, and you will instantly perceive the force of the terms *employment* and *question*.—*Capell*.

The meaning, I apprehend, is, that the important business he now had in hand, did not admit of *debate*; he must instantly resolve to do it, or not. *Question*, here, as in many other places in these plays, signifies *discourse—conversation*.—*Malone*.

¹² *The which immediacy may well stand up.*

Immediacy, immediate representation; the deriving a character directly from another, so as to stand exactly in his place. It is evident from the context, that supremacy is not the right interpretation.—*Nares*.

¹³ *That eye, that told you so, look'd but a-squint.*

Alluding to the proverb: "Love being jealous makes a good eye look *asquint*." See Ray's *Collection*.—*Steevens*.

So Milton:—"And gladly banish *squint suspicion*."—*Comus*.—*Holt White*.

I looke *asquint* thus privily with the fanne, and I prie about to see to other things also, whether they were sure or no.—*Terence in English*, 1614.

¹⁴ *The walls are thine.*

A metaphorical phrase taken from the camp, and signifying, *to surrender at discretion*.—*Warburton*.

A similar allusion occurs in *Cymbeline*:—"The heavens hold firm *the walls* of thy dear honour."—*Steevens*.

This line is not in the quartos.—*Boswell*.

¹⁵ *The let-alone lies not in your good will.*

Whether he shall not or shall depends not on your choice.—*Johnson*. Albany means to tell his wife, that, however she might want the power, she evidently did not want the inclination to prevent the match.—*Ritson*. To obstruct their union lies not in your good pleasure. Your *veto* will avail nothing.—*Malone*. The sense suggested by *Ritson* would be plausible enough, if the first line stood singly; but the answer of Edmund, and the retort of Albany, completely establish the opinion of *Johnson* and *Malone*.—*Pye*.

¹⁶ *Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours.*

The charge he is going to bring against the Bastard, he calls *the privilege*,

&c. To understand which phraseology, we must consider that the old rights of knighthood are here alluded to; whose oath and profession required him to discover all treasons, and whose privilege it was to have his challenge accepted, or otherwise to have his charge taken *pro confesso*. For if one who was no knight accused another who was, that other was under no obligation to accept the challenge. On this account it was necessary, as Edgar came disguised, to tell the Bastard he was a knight.—*Warburton*.

The *privilege* of this *oath* means the privilege gained by taking the oath administered in the regular initiation of a knight professed.—*Johnson*.

The quartos read—"it is the privilege of *my tongue*.—*Steevens*.

The folio reads:—

Behold, it is *my privilege*,
The privilege of mine *honours*,
My oath and my profession.—*Malone*.

This is spoken upon drawing his sword; which he calls *the privilege of his tongue*, his *oath* and his *profession* (for so the quartos have given it) meaning—that he took authority from it to call a traitor a traitor, and bring him to such account of his treasons as he was bound to by his *oath*, and his *profession* as knight; for such was the obligation of all knights formerly, and is of some at this day, enforced upon them by oath: the least reflection upon the other parts of this speech will shew the reading of the quartos to have been right, and this a right explanation; other copies have—*honours*, the arbitrary word of some player, who was blind to the meaning of the passage, which indeed is not without its obscurity.—*Capell*.

¹⁷ *Some say of breeding breathes.*

Say is *sample*, a *taste*. So, in Sidney:—

So good a *say* invites the eye
A little downward to espy—.

Again, in the Preface to Maurice Kyffin's translation of the *Andria* of Terence, 1588: "Some other like places I could recite, but these shall suffice for a *say*." Again, in *Revenge for Honour*, by Chapman:—

—— But pray do not
Take the first *say* of her yourselves—

Again, in the *Unnatural Combat*, by Massinger:—

—— or to take
A *say* of venison, or stale fowl—.

Again, in Holinshed, p. 847: "He (C. Wolsey) made dukes and erles to serve him of wine, with a *say* taken," &c. To take the *assaie* was the technical term.—*Steevens*.

¹⁸ *What safe and nicely I might well delay.*

The phraseology is here very licentious. I suppose the meaning is, 'That delay which by the law of knighthood I might make, I scorn to make.' *Nicely* is *punctiliously*; *if I stood on minute forms*. This line is not in the quartos; and furnishes one more proof of what readers are so slow to admit, that a whole line is sometimes omitted at the press. The subsequent line without this is nonsense.—*Malone*.

¹⁹ *O save him, save him!*

Thus all the copies; but I have ventured to place the two hemistichs to

Goneril. 'Tis absurd that Albany, who knew Edmund's treasons, and his own wife's passion for him, should be solicitous to have his life saved.—*Theobald*.

Albany desires that Edmund's life might be spared at present, only to obtain his confession, and to convict him openly by his own letter.—*Johnson*.

The words—*Hold, sir*, in Albany's next speech, show that the old copies are right.—*Malone*.

Notwithstanding the last note, it strikes me that the exclamations in the text are too passionate to be spoken by any but Goneril. She cries out when she sees him fall,—O save him, save him!—and then turning to Gloster (Edmund), tells him that he is not to consider this a legal victory, for the reasons that follow. See, however, what Capell says in the next note.

²⁰ *Hold, sir*.

This is addressed to Edgar, whose resentments, he perceives, are prompting him to a present dispatch; which it behoved Albany to prevent, as well for the purpose of punishing Edmund with a death of more infamy, as for that of getting from him, by torture or otherwise, a confession of the whole iniquitous business in which he had been an actor.—*Capell*.

²¹ *That we the pain of death would hourly die*.

“That *with* the paine of death would hourelly die,” quartos. The folio reads unintelligibly, “That *we* the pain,” &c. The original copies have *would*; but this was, I apprehend, a misprint in those copies for *w'ould*, i. e. *we would*, or, as we should now write it, *we'd*. In the *Tempest*, Act II. Sc. I. we have *sh'ould* for *she would*.—*Malone*.

I cannot think the folio reading—“That *we* the pain of death would hourly die,” unintelligible. To die hourly the pains of death, does not seem to me a very harsh ellipsis for, To die suffering the pains of death.—*Boswell*.

An uncritical change here of *die* for *bear*, and *stones* for *gems* a little after, has been made by some modern editors: but they might have known that *die the death* is a hebraism; and what is added to the phrase in this place, adds nothing to its unfitness.—*Capell*.

²² *Threw him on my father*.

“Threw *me*,” quartos. The reading *me* is doubtless intelligible enough; but Kent's tumbling down Edgar on the dead body of his father is an incident more suited to a pantomime than to a serious narrative in a tragedy. The progress of the error here is plain;—*him—'em* (how often these two words are confounded, has been already shewn)—*me*. Other corruptions may be traced in the same way: for instance, we sometimes find *thou*, where the sense positively requires *you*,—the progress of that error having been—*you—you—thou*.—*A. Dyce*.

²³ *She hath confess'd it*.

“She confesses it,” folios. Thus the first and second folio. The quartos—“she *has* (and *hath*) *confess'd* it.” As these readings are equally proper, I have chosen the more metrical of the two.—*Steevens*.

It is surely more proper to say that a person who is already dead *hath* confessed it, than to speak in the present tense. The metre would be set right if we read *poisoned*.—*Boswell*.

²⁴ *With Cordelia dead in his arms*.

This princess, according to the old historians, retired with victory from the battle which she conducted in her father's cause, and thereby replaced him on the throne: but in a subsequent one fought against her (after the death of the old

king) by the sons of Goneril and Regan, she was taken, and died miserably in prison. The poet found this in history, and was therefore willing to precipitate her death, which he knew had happened but a few years after. The dramatick writers of this age suffered as small a number of their heroes and heroines to escape as possible; nor could the filial piety of this lady, any more than the innocence of Ophelia, prevail on Shakspeare to extend her life beyond her misfortune.—*Steevens*.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, the original relater of this story, says, that Cordelia was thrown by her nephews into prison, “where, for grief at the loss of her kingdom, she *killed herself*.”—*Malone*.

²⁵ *Or image of that horror.*

In the first folio this short speech of Edgar (which seems to be only an addition to the preceding one of Kent) has a full stop at the end. *Is this conclusion*, says Kent, *such as the present turn of affairs seemed to promise? Or is it only*, replies Edgar, *a representation of that horror which we suppose to be real?* A similar expression occurs at the beginning of the play.—*I have told you what I have seen and heard, but faintly; nothing like the image and horror of it.*—*Steevens*.

Mason’s note (here omitted) seems unsatisfactory. The reference in the text is to the unexpected catastrophe, so unlooked for just at the moment when everything seemed to promise a happy termination to the innocent and injured parties in the drama.

²⁶ *Fall, and cease!*

Albany is looking with attention on the pains employed by Lear to recover his child, and knows to what miseries he must survive, when he finds them to be ineffectual. Having these images present to his eyes and imagination, he cries out, “Rather fall, and cease to be, at once, than continue in existence only to be wretched.” So, in *All’s Well, &c.* to *cease* is used for to *die*: and in *Hamlet*, the death of majesty is called “the *cease* of majesty.”—*Steevens*.

²⁷ *This feather stirs.*

So, in the *White Devil*, or *Vittoria Corombona*, 1612: “Fetch a looking-glass, see if his breath will not stain it; or pull some *feathers* from my pillow, and lay them to his lips.”—*Steevens*.

A common experiment of applying a light feather to the lips of a person supposed to be dead, to see whether he breathes. There is the same thought in *K. Henry IV. Part II. Act IV. Sc. IV.*:—

————— By his gates of breath
There *lies a downy feather, which stirs not.*

And to express a total stillness in the air, in *Donne’s* poem, called the *Calm*, there is the like sentiment; which *Jonson*, in his conversation with *Drummond of Hawthornden*, highly commended:—

————— in one place lay
Feathers and dust, to-day and yesterday.—*Whalley*.

²⁸ *If Fortune brag of two she lov’d and hated.*

I suppose by the two whom fortune once loved, and then hated, Kent means, Lear and himself; and that each of them, looking on the other, saw a rare instance of her caprice. He may, however, be only thinking of Lear, the object of her hate. This is the reading of the folio. The quartos read—“lov’d or

hated ;” and they may be right, if the interpretation last given be the true one.—*Malone*.

The meaning of this passage appears to me to be this. If Fortune, to display the plenitude of her power, should brag of two persons, one of whom she had highly elevated, and the other she had wofully depressed, we now behold the latter. The quarto reads—“She lov’d or hated,” which seems to confirm this explanation ; but either reading will express the same sense.—*M. Mason*.

²⁹ *He’s a good fellow, I can tell you that.*

Theobald first introduced into the text the following emendation :—

*’Twas a good fellow, I can tell you that ;
He’d strike, and quickly too :—he’s dead, &c.*

The alteration made in this speech has not contributed to its improvement : he knows *Caius* is living, and speaks of his living at first ; his speaking otherwise afterwards, is no other than a way of expressing his own abandonment to all the outrage of fortune ; who, he thinks, could never admit of that person’s living who was either useful or dear to him : hence he pronounces this person *dead*, and long since dead, which much increases the pathos of the speech : instantly upon this, his mind begins to wander, and he falls into a stupid and senseless apathy, evidenced by those expressions—*You are welcome hither*, and again, *Ay, so I think* : Out of this he awakes in his last moments and gives vent to some other piercing exclamations ; is suffocated almost by a rising of new grief, and in the burst of it dies.—*Capell*.

³⁰ *Nor no man else.*

Pope reads *’twas* for *nor* ; followed by Hanmer. This reflection has great tenderness ; the words have been misconceived, and, therefore, altered ; their true force is—“Welcome, alas ! here’s no welcome for me or any one.”—*Capell*.

³¹ *Your eldest daughters have fore-doom’d themselves.*

Thus the quartos. The folio reads,—*foredone*. “Have fore-doom’d themselves” is—have anticipated their own doom. To *fordo* is to *destroy*. So, in Taylor the water-poet’s character of a strumpet :—“So desperately had ne’er *fordone* themselves.”—Again, in *A Warning for Faire Women, &c.* 1599 : “Speak who has done this deed ? thou hast not *fordone* thyself, hast thou ?”—*Steevens*.

³² *What comfort to this great decay may come.*

This *great decay* is Lear, whom Shakspeare poetically calls so, and means the same, as if he had said, “this piece of decay’d royalty,” this “ruin’d majesty.”—*Steevens*.

A preceding passage in which Gloster laments Lear’s frenzy, fully supports Steevens’s interpretation :—

*O ruin’d piece of nature ! This great world
Shall so wear out to nought.*

Again, in Julius Cæsar :—

Thou art the ruins of the noblest man, &c.—Malone.

³³ *And my poor fool is hang’d !*

“Poor fool” was formerly a common phrase of endearment. So Julia, speaking of Proteus, says,—“Alas, poor fool ! why do I pity him ?” The expression *poor fool* occurs as one of endearment, applied to a woman, in Cokain’s *Trappolin Suppos’d a Prince*, 1658,—“Your honour must pardon me ; you saw how I was

employ'd; I could not leave the *poor fool*,—your lordship sees *she* loves me, and protest her labour is not lost.”

The old king is evidently thinking of his daughter, and knows the manner of her death—nay, kills the slave that did it, and *here* he exclaims *immediately* after calling her *poor fool*, unbutton here, look on her, &c. I do not think that it is even necessary to allow for the broken thought and incoherent expression of a madman, and imagine that his ideas of who is the victim, his daughter or his fool, are confused in his crushed intellect.

³⁴ *The weight of this sad time we must obey.*

This speech is rightly assigned in the quartos to Albany, not to Edgar, as in the folio, Albany being the person of greatest authority in the scene. It likewise appears to be intended as a gentle reproof to Kent's despairing speech, telling him that “the weight of this sad time we must obey.” Had Kent died, some sensation would have been created, and his death not passed over as a piece of stage show that is expected; and the speech of Albany would have lost its pertinence.

