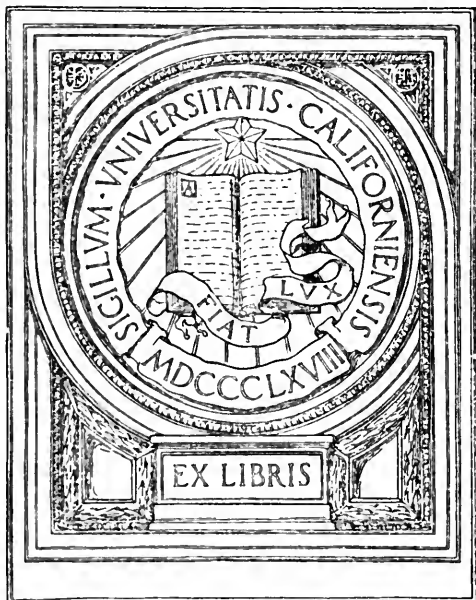




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C. KNIGHT'S
LIBRARY EDITION
OF
SHAKSPERE.

VOL. VII.—HISTORIES—TRAGEDIES.

THE
COMEDIES, HISTORIES, TRAGEDIES,
AND POEMS
OF
WILLIAM SHAKSPERE.

EDITED BY
CHARLES KNIGHT.

“ It is a thing scarcely believable how much, and how boldly, as well the common writers that from time to time have copied out his works, as also certain that have thought themselves liable to control and emend all men’s doings, have taken upon them in this author; who ought with all reverence to have been handled of them, and with all fear to have been preserved from altering, depraving, or corrupting.”

Udall’s Preface to Erasmus’s Apophthegms (applied there to Plutarch).

THE SECOND EDITION.

VOLUME VII.

LONDON:
CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO., LUDGATE STREET.

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A N E S S A Y

ON

THE THREE PARTS OF KING HENRY VI,
AND KING RICHARD III.

WITH REFERENCE TO THE OPINION THAT THE THREE PARTS OF KING
HENRY VI. WERE NOT WRITTEN ORIGINALLY BY SHAKSPERE.



A N E S S A Y,

&c. &c.

§ I.

THE Dramas of Shakspeare are in no particular more remarkable than in the almost complete absence of any allusion to their author—any reference to his merely personal thoughts and circumstances—any intimation, that might naturally enough have been conveyed in Prologue or Epilogue, of the relations in which the Poet stood with regard to his audience. There are only ten of his plays in which any one of the characters, at the conclusion, comes forward as an actor to deprecate censure or solicit applause. There are only two out of these ten plays in which the *Author*, through the actor, directly addresses the spectators. In the Epilogue to ‘The Second Part of Henry IV.’ the Dancer says, in a light manner, “Our humble Author will continue the story.” In the concluding Chorus to ‘Henry V.,’ the Poet, then in the very zenith of his popularity, addresses himself to the audience, of course through the actor, more seriously and emphatically:—

“ Thus far, with rough and all unable pen,
Our bending author hath pursued the story;
In little room confining mighty men,
Mangling by starts the full course of their glory.
Small time, but in that small most greatly liv’d
This star of England: fortune made his sword
By which the world’s best garden he achiev’d,
And of it left his son imperial lord.
Henry the sixth, in infant bands crown’d king
Of France and England, did this king succeed;
Whose state so many had the managing,
That they lost France, and made his England bleed:
Which oft our stage hath shown; and for their sake,
In your fair minds let this acceptance take.”

“The story” which the author “hath pursued thus far” is the story which began with the deposition of Richard II. The story of the triumphant progress of the house of Lancaster, up to the

period when the son of Bolingbroke had "achieved the world's best garden," had been told by the poet in four dramas, of which 'Henry V.' was the concluding one. These dramas had been linked together with the most scrupulous care, so that, although for the purposes of representation there were necessarily distinct pauses in the action, they were essentially one great drama. They were written, it is highly probable, almost consecutively; for not only does the external evidence show that they were given to the world during the three last years of the sixteenth century, but their whole dramatic construction, as well as their peculiarities of style, determine them to belong to one and the same period of the poet's life, when his genius grasped a subject with the full consciousness of power, and revelled in its own luxuriance, whether of wit or fancy, without timidity. But there was another great division of the story, which had been previously told. As the glories of the house of Lancaster, consummated in the victory of Agincourt, had been traced through these four great dramas, so the ruin of the house of Lancaster, and all the terrible consequences of the struggles between that house and the other branch of the Plantagenets, even up to the final termination of the struggle at the field of Bosworth, had been developed in four other dramas of an earlier date:—

"Henry the sixth, in infant bands crown'd king
Of France and England, did this king succeed;
Whose state so many had the managing,
That they lost France, and made his England bleed:
Which oft our stage hath shown."

Of this other series of dramas thus described—the second in the order of events, the first in the order of their composition and performance—"the bending author" in his Chorus to 'Henry V.' makes no equivocal mention. The events which "lost France" and made "England bleed" had the "stage" of Shakspeare often "shown," in dramas which had long been familiar to his audience, and were unquestionably in the highest degree popular. As early as 1592 Thomas Nashe thus writes:—"How would it have joyed brave Talbot, the terror of the French, to think that after he had lien two hundred year in his tomb he should triumph again on the stage; and have his bones new embalmed with the tears of ten thousand spectators at least (at several times), who, in the tragedian that represents his person, behold him fresh bleeding!"* In 1596, when Ben Jonson produced his 'Every Man in his Humour,' he

* Pierce Penniless his Supplication to the Devil.

accompanied it with a Prologue,* levelled against what appeared to him the absurdities of the romantic drama, in which is this passage:—

“ With three rusty swords,
And help of some few foot and half-foot words, †
Fight over York and Lancaster’s long jars,
And in the tiring-house bring wounds to scars.”

That the play in which the brave Talbot triumphed “again on the stage” was what we call ‘The First Part of Henry VI.,’ there can be no reasonable doubt; that what we call the Second and Third Parts of ‘Henry VI.,’ and perhaps ‘Richard III.,’ were those in which were fought over “York and Lancaster’s long jars,” is equally clear. Shakspeare, as it appears to us, does not hesitate to adopt this series of plays as his own. The author of ‘Henry V.’ asks that the success of these earlier dramas should commend his later play to a favourable reception:—

“ For *their* sake,
In your fair minds let *this* acceptance take.”

Is this language which Shakspeare would have publicly used if three of this series of dramas had in no proper sense of the word been his own? if he had written not a line of ‘The First Part of Henry VI.;’ and of the Second and Third Parts had produced a sort of *olla podrida* from the works of some other dramatist, contributing, out of 6043 lines of which these plays consist, 1899 of his own, adopting 1771 without alteration, and mending 2373? ‡ Yet such is the received opinion of these dramas in England. Malone, who is the founder of this opinion, does not doubt of Shakspeare “supplicating the favour of the audience to his new play of ‘King Henry V.,’ for the sake of these old and popular dramas, *which were so closely connected with it.*”§ It was to bind the ‘Henry V.’ with the ‘Henry VI.’ and the ‘Richard III.’ that he writes this *Epilogue*: that was to be the link between the new play of 1599 and the much earlier plays. The ‘Richard II.’ and the ‘Henry IV.’ were not separated from the ‘Henry V.’ by any long interval in their performance;—they required no *Prologue*, for this reason, to hold them all together. The ‘Henry V.’ was the *triumphal* completion of the story which those plays had begun. But if the *disastrous* continuation of the

* Gifford has clearly demonstrated that the Prologue appeared originally with Jonson’s first comedy, and was not appended long afterwards, as the commentators have supposed, for the sake of sneering at Shakspeare’s later dramas.

† Jonson, in another place, has translated the “*sesquipedalia verba*” by this phrase.

‡ This is Malone’s computation.

§ Dissertation, p. 592.

story had been the work of another man, we doubt whether Shakspeare would have desired thus emphatically to carry forward the connexion. Malone holds that, to a certain extent, they were connected in their authorship, and that this connexion is implied in the address to the favour of the audience,—“for the sake of these old and popular dramas which were so closely connected with it; and *in the composition of which, as they had for many years been exhibited, he had so considerable a share.*” * This is the point which we desire to examine. We hold that Shakspeare associates these old dramas with his own undoubted work, because he was their *sole author*. The words of the Chorus, as we conceive, (agreeing thus far with Malone,) distinctly imply some authorship. If this be doubted altogether, we are content with the expression of a contrary opinion: for the question, not of the meaning of the Chorus (for that is a very unimportant matter), but of the ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP of these plays, *which point the Chorus raises*, is the subject of this Essay.

It is not our intention to give this Essay the form of an answer to Mr. Malone’s ‘Dissertation on the Three Parts of Henry VI., tending to show that these plays were not written originally by Shakspeare.’ We shall endeavour, indeed, not to pass over any important argument in that celebrated treatise, the learned dust of which, even to this hour, hath somewhat obscured the vision of antiquarians as acute as Mr. Collier, and of critics as far-seeing as Mr. Hallam. In England, at least, in our own day, Malone’s verbal subtleties and laborious computations are pretty extensively held for the only true doctrine in this matter, supported as they are by the ready assent of such authorities as we have named. Mr. Collier says, “They” (‘The History of Henry VI.,’ ‘The First Part of the Whole Contention,’ and ‘The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York’) “*were all three in being before Shakspeare began to write for the stage.*” † Mr. Hallam, not quite so strongly, observes, “It seems probable that the *old plays* of ‘The Contention of Lancaster and York,’ and ‘The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York,’ *which Shakspeare remodelled* in the Second and Third Parts of ‘Henry VI.,’ were in great part by Marlowe. . . . In default of a more probable claimant, I have sometimes been inclined to assign ‘The First Part of Henry VI.’ to Greene.” ‡ Such opinions render it impossible that we should dissent from Malone’s theory rashly and lightly. But still we must dissent wholly and uncompromisingly. The opinion which we have not incautiously adopted

* Dissertation, p. 592.

† Annals of the Stage, vol. iii., p. 145.

‡ Literature of Europe, vol. ii., pp. 376, 380.

is, in brief, this—that the three disputed plays are, in the strictest sense of the word, Shakspeare's own plays;—that in connexion with 'Richard III.' they form one complete whole,—the first great Shaksperian series of Chronicle Histories;—that although, in common with all the Histories, they might each have been in some degree formed upon such rude productions of the early stage as 'The Famous Victories,' and 'The True Tragedy of Richard III.,' the theory of the remodelling of the Second and Third Parts upon two other plays of a higher character, of which we possess copies, is altogether fallacious, 'The First Part of the Contention' and the 'Richard Duke of York' (more commonly called 'The Second Part of the Contention') being in fact Shakspeare's own work, in an imperfect state;—and that their supposed inferiority to Shakspeare's other works, and their dissimilarities of style as compared with those works, are referable to other circumstances than that of their being the productions of an author or authors who preceded him.

The question whether the three Parts of 'Henry VI.' were or were not originally written by Shakspeare, or by some other poet, is, it might be thought, sufficiently complicated without the introduction of any new and entirely different question. It is held, however, that the play first printed in the folio edition of Shakspeare's works under the title of 'The First Part of Henry VI.'—(the same play that we find from Henslowe's papers was acted thirteen times in the spring of 1592, by "Lord Strange's men," under the title of 'Henry the VI.')

—was not only not written by Shakspeare, but was written altogether by a different person from the unknown author—the Marlowe, or Peele, or Greene, or all of them together—to whom are ascribed the plays which are printed in the folio edition as the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.,' and which had been previously printed as 'The First Part of the Contention,' and 'The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York.' Malone has *proved* this, after his own minute fashion, to which we shall have occasion subsequently to advert; at present we shall only give his judgment in his own words: "It appears to me clear that neither Shakspeare, nor the author of 'The First Part of the Contention,' &c., or 'The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York,' &c., could have been the author of 'The *First* Part of King Henry VI.'" It is to this second point that we first address ourselves. We proceed to inquire, not whether Shakspeare was the author of 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' but whether that play was written by the author or authors of the Second and Third Parts, in the form in which they were originally produced,

(the form in which we have reprinted them,) before, upon the prevailing theory, they were remodelled by Shakspeare.

“It is plausibly conjectured,” says Mr. Collier, “that Shakspeare never touched ‘The First Part of Henry VI.,’ as it stands in his works, and it is merely the old play on the early events of that reign, which was most likely written about 1589.”* Dr. Drake, in the fulness of his confidence in this plausible conjecture, proposes entirely to exclude the play from any future edition of Shakspeare’s works, as a production which “offers no trace of any finishing strokes from the master-bard.”† We take, then, ‘The First Part of Henry VI.,’ in the only original form in which we find it, bearing, improperly, it is said, the name of Shakspeare, without a trace of Shakspeare’s hand; and we proceed to compare it with the two other Parts of ‘Henry VI.,’ in the form also in which they are held not to contain a single line or word by Shakspeare. “What Shakspeare contributed to the Second and Third Parts of ‘Henry VI.’ may be seen by a comparison of them with the two old quartos, reprinted by Steevens in 1766.”‡ We have again reprinted these early copies, in a manner which may enable the reader fairly to compare the original and the revised dramas.§ The text of ‘The First Part of Henry VI.,’ as it stands in our own edition, and the text of the two Parts of the ‘Contention’ as modernized in their orthography, &c., by us, are thus equally fitted for a comparison addressed to the general reader. But they are still each in that state in which, according to the prevailing opinion, Shakspeare has not written one line of either of them. That, however, we beg to repeat, is not the point to which we first address ourselves; it is simply whether they were written by one and the same man.

The theory that ‘The First Part of Henry VI.’ was not written by the author of the Second and Third Parts, in their unrevised state, must assume one of two things;—either, that it was intended as a whole, as a single and complete play looking to no continuation,—or that the continuation has been lost. Into this mode of viewing the subject Malone does not at all enter. Drake, however, departing from his usual safe course of submission to the authority of others, says, “It would be but doing justice to the original design of Shakspeare to insert for the future in his works only the two

* *Annals of the Stage*, vol. iii., p. 145.

† *Shakspeare and his Times*, vol. ii., p. 297.

‡ *Collier, Annals of the Stage*, vol. iii., p. 145.

§ See vol. vi., pp. 119 and 281.

pieces which he remodelled. . . . This may the more readily be done, as there appears no necessary connexion between the elder drama and those of Shakspeare (those remodelled by him) on the same reign." Upon this theory, then, that the Second and Third Parts have no connexion with 'The First Part of Henry VI.' we turn to 'The First Part of the Contention,' and we find that the scene opens with the following lines:—

Suf. As by your high imperial majesty's command,
I had in charge at my depart for France,
As procurator for your excellence,
To marry princess Margaret for your grace;
So in the ancient famous city Tours,
In presence of the kings of France and Sicil,
The dukes of Orleans, Calaber, Bretagne, and Alençon,
Seven earls, twelve barons, and twenty reverend bishops,
I did perform my task, and was espous'd:
And now, most humbly on my bended knees,
In sight of England and her royal peers,
Deliver up my title in the queen
Unto your gracious excellence, that are the substance
Of that great shadow I did represent:
The happiest gift that ever marquess gave,
The fairest queen that ever king possess'd."

This is a singular commencement of a drama which has "no necessary connexion" with a previous drama. There is an abruptness in it which can scarcely be accounted for upon any other principle than that of "necessary connexion." The same abruptness prevails in the other two plays, of which the "necessary connexion" is admitted by all men. 'The Second Part of the Contention' opens with

"I wonder how the king escap'd our hands."

It is the first exclamation of Warwick after the results of the battle of St. Alban's are detailed to him; and the scene continues the detail. The link is manifest; for 'The First Part of the Contention' concluded with the battle of St. Alban's. In the same way, the address of Suffolk to the King, which we have quoted, is the connecting link between 'The First Part of the Contention' and 'The First Part of Henry VI.' "The command," to which Suffolk refers, is thus given in Henry's speech in the concluding scene of that play:—

"Take, therefore, shipping; post, my lord, to France;
Agree to any covenants; and procure
That lady Margaret do vouchsafe to come
To cross the seas to England, and be crown'd
King Henry's faithful and anointed queen."

This appears to us to offer quite sufficient ground to justify a more prolonged inquiry, whether that *unity of action* which would render the one drama an integral portion of its successors prevails in 'The First Part of Henry VI.' and the two Parts of the 'Contention';—whether, in fact, with reference to this unity of action, they are not essentially one and the same drama, divided into parts only for the convenience of representation. This inquiry may be more conveniently conducted by inquiring, at the same time, whether there is a similar *unity of characterization*. If the action in these plays were the same, but with a different development of character, there would be reasonable grounds for believing that the author of the Second and Third Parts had, with little difficulty, continued the action of the First Part, without attempting, or attempting in vain, to identify the characters of each. Involved in these two inquiries, though of less importance, is the further question of *identity of manner*. We shall pursue each of these questions, separately or in connexion, as, in our judgment, may best illustrate the entire subject.

The action of 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' which is spread over the period from the accession of the infant king to his marriage, is twofold. Its chief action is the war in France; its secondary action is the progress of party-discord in England. The scenes in which Talbot and Salisbury and Bedford are "raised from the grave of oblivion, and brought to plead their aged honours in open presence,"* possessed, as we know, a wondrous charm for the audiences of the early drama. The brave Talbot had "his bones new embalmed with the tears of ten thousand spectators." This we can readily understand; for the scene between John Talbot and his father, and the death scene of Talbot, in this play possess a power unto which, we may venture to say, the audiences in 1592 had never before yielded up their tears. But it was not by poetical fervour alone that they were subdued. The exhibition of their "forefathers' valiant acts," in the rudest fashion, was to them, according to Nashe, a new source of the highest pleasure. In another passage Nashe says, "What a glorious thing it is to have King Henry V. represented on the stage, leading the French king prisoner, and forcing both him and the dolphin to swear fealty!" This is the concluding scene of the coarse and unpoetical 'Famous Victories.'† The stage had thus early possession of the subject of 'Henry V.' The continuation of that story, with reference only to the wars of France under the regent Bedford, had enough in it to furnish materials for a spirit-stirring drama of equal popularity.

* Thomas Nashe, 1592.

† See Introduction to 'Henry IV.'

But the author of 'Henry VI.' carried his views beyond this point; and it is for this cause that he gives us a two-fold action. The principle upon which he worked rendered it essentially a drama to be continued. Taken in itself it is a drama without a catastrophe. So, it may be said, is Shakspeare's 'Henry V.;' and we add that it is intentionally so. The catastrophe is to be found in the plays which preceded it in the order of composition, but followed it in the order of their events.

The main action of 'The First Part of Henry VI.' terminates with the inglorious condemnation of Joan of Arc. The peace that immediately follows that event is essentially linked with the continuation of this play. To York this peace is a cause of unmingled apprehension:—

"Oh, Warwick, Warwick! I foresee with grief
The utter loss of all the realm of France."

To the followers of the French king it is but a hollow paction:—

"And therefore take this compact of a truce,
Although you break it when your pleasure serves."

Preceding the conclusion of that ominous peace, we have the scenes between Suffolk and Margaret; and the play concludes with the ratification of the promises which Suffolk has made to Reignier:—

"Thus Suffolk hath prevail'd."

That these scenes had most distinct regard to a continuation there can, we think, be no doubt. Suffolk has no sooner, in the subsequent play, communicated the result of his mission, than the forebodings of York are realized by the denunciations of Humphrey of Gloster:—

"Hum. Brave peers of England, pillars of the state,
To you duke Humphrey must unfold his grief;
What, did my brother Henry toil himself,
And waste his subjects for to conquer France?
And did my brother Bedford spend his time,
To keep in awe that stout unruly realm?
And have not I and mine uncle Beaufort here
Done all we could to keep that land in peace?
And are all our labours then spent quite in vain?"

But in truth the entire conduct of the play of 'Henry VI.,' with reference to the issue of the war in France, is of a gloomy and foreboding tendency. The author gave the tone to the whole progress of the action in the opening scene. He goes out of his way, in this scene, to anticipate the disasters which, after a long interval, followed the death of Henry V. Would he have done this had he intended the play to have stood by itself? There were enough

materials in the career of Bedford for a song of triumph; but he has chosen to exhibit to us the most desperate valour fruitlessly exerted,—success and misfortune going hand in hand,—treachery and supineness losing what honour and courage had won,—and murderous victories terminating in a base revenge and an inglorious peace. This is certainly not the course that would have been pursued by the author of ‘The First Part of Henry VI.,’ had he regarded that part as a whole. It is not the course, even, that would have been pursued by an author careless altogether of dramatic effect, beyond the rude art of embodying in successive scenes the events of the chroniclers; for the events so dramatized are not, in the material parts of their relations to each other, the events told by the chroniclers. But it is the course that would have been pursued by a poet who had also conceived the plan of the subsequent dramas, in which the consequences of the reverses in France, and the abandonment of the conquests of Henry V., are never lost sight of as long as they influence in the remotest degree the conduct of the story. We will trace a few of the allusions to this portion of the action of ‘The First Part of Henry VI.’ which occur in the old copies of the succeeding plays.

In the first scene of ‘The First Part of the Contention’ York thus exclaims:—

“*York.* Anjou and Maine both given unto the French!
Cold news for me, for I had hope of France,
Even as I have of fertile England.”

In the third act of ‘The First Part of the Contention’ * York repeats the same sentiment in the same words:—

“*King.* Welcome, lord Somerset; what news from France?
Som. Cold news, my lord, and this it is,—
That all your holds and towns within those territories
Is overcome, my lord; all is lost.
King. Cold news, indeed, lord Somerset;
But God’s will be done.
York. Cold news for me, for I had hope of France,
Even as I have of fertile England.”

In the first act of ‘The Second Part of the Contention’ Henry denies that the loss of France is to be imputed to himself:—

“I am the son of Henry the fifth, who tam’d the French,
And made the dauphin stoop, and seiz’d upon
Their towns and provinces.

* There are no divisions into acts and scenes in the original copies; but for the convenience of reference and comparison we have made these divisions in our editions.

War. Talk not of France, since thou hast lost it all.

King. The lord protector lost it, and not I;

When I was crown'd I was but nine months old."

In the third act of the same Part Warwick twits the followers of Henry with his abandonment of the conquests of his father:—

"*Oxf.* Then Warwick disannuls great John of Gaunt,
That did subdue the greatest part of Spain;
And after John of Gaunt, wise Henry the fourth,
Whose wisdom was a mirror to the world;
And after this wise prince Henry the fifth,
Who with his prowess conquered all France:—
From these our Henry's lineally descent.

War. Oxford, how haps that in this smooth discourse
You told not how Henry the sixth had lost
All that Henry the fifth had gotten?
Methinks these peers of France should smile at that!"

The audience is constantly kept in mind of the connexion of the events by which Henry VI. both

"lost France, and made his England bleed."

The unhappy marriage with Margaret of Anjou is as constantly exhibited as the main cause of these misfortunes. In the scene of the second act of 'The First Part of the Contention' where the Protector detects the impostor at Saint Alban's, the calamitous treaty between Suffolk and Reignier is thus sarcastically alluded to:—

"*Suf.* My lord protector hath done wonders to-day;
He hath made the blind to see, and halt to go.

Hum. Ay, but you did greater wonders when you made
whole dukedoms fly in a day.

Witness France.

King. Have done, I say, and let me hear no more of that."

In the great scene (Act I., Scene 4) of 'The Second Part of the Contention,' York thus upbraids the Queen with the poverty of her father:—

"She-wolf of France, but worse than wolves of France,
Whose tongue's more poison'd than the adder's tooth!
How ill beseeeming is it in thy sex
To triumph like an Amazonian trull
Upon his woes whom fortune captivates!
But that thy face is visard-like, unchanging,
Made impudent by use of evil deeds,
I would assay, proud queen, to make thee blush:
To tell thee of whence thou art, from whom deriv'd,
'T were shame enough to shame thee, wert thou not shameless.
Thy father bears the type of king of Naples,
Of both the Sicils, and Jerusalem,
Yet not so wealthy as an English yeoman."

More emphatically than all, in the next act, the sons of York connect the marriage of Margaret not only with the loss of France, but with the whole course of the civil wars of England:—

“*Rich.* Iron of Naples, hid with English gilt,
Thy father bears the title of a king,
As if a channel should be call'd the sea :
Sham'st thou not, knowing from whence thou art deriv'd,
To parley thus with England's lawful heirs ?
Edw. A wisp of straw were worth a thousand crowns,
To make that shameless callet know herself.
Thy husband's father revell'd in the heart of France,
And tam'd the French, and made the dauphin stoop :
And had he match'd according to his state,
He might have kept that glory till this day.
But when he took a beggar to his bed,
And grac'd thy poor sire with his bridal day,
Then that sunshine bred a shower for him,
Which wash'd his father's fortunes out of France,
And heap'd seditions on his crown at home.
For what hath mov'd these tumults, but thy pride ?
Hadst thou been meek, our title yet had slept :
And we, in pity of the gentle king,
Had slipp'd our claim until another age.”

We have no hesitation in expressing our belief that, except for the purposes of continuation, the wooing of Margaret by Suffolk, and the intrigue by which he induces Henry to consent to the marriage, would have formed no portion of ‘The First Part of Henry VI.’ These scenes come at the end of that drama, if it is to be regarded as a whole, as an episode entirely out of place. But the devotion of Suffolk to Margaret, as exhibited in ‘The First Part of Henry VI.’ is essentially connected with their unholy love, as shown in ‘The First Part of the Contention.’ We will give a portion of each of these scenes, in apposition, not only as furnishing an example of the unity of action, but of the identity of characterisation and of manner:—

FIRST PART OF HENRY VI., Act V., Scene 3.

“*Suf.* Be what thou wilt, thou art my
prisoner. [*Gazes on her.*
O fairest beauty, do not fear, nor fly ;
For I will touch thee but with reverent hands.
I kiss these fingers [*kissing her hand*] for eternal
peace,
And lay them gently on thy tender side.
Who art thou ? say, that I may honour thee.
Mar. Margaret my name, and daughter to
a king,
The king of Naples ; whosoe'er thou art.
Suf. An earl I am, and Suffolk am I call'd.
Be not offended, nature's miracle,

FIRST PART OF THE CONTENTION, Act III.,
Scene 2.

“*Queen.* Sweet Suffolk, hie thee hence to
France,
For if the king do come, thou sure must die.
Suf. And if I go I cannot live : but here
to die,
What were it else,
But like a pleasant slumber in thy lap ?
Here could I breathe my soul into the air,
As mild and gentle as the new-born babe,
That dies with mother's dug between his lips.
Where from my (thy) sight I should be
raging mad,
And call for thee to close mine eyes,

Thou art allotted to be ta'en by me :
So doth the swan her downy cygnets save,
Keeping them prisoner underneath her
wings.

Yet if this servile usage once offend,
Go, and be free again, as Suffolk's friend.

[*She turns away as going.*]

O, stay !—I have no power to let her pass ;
My hand would free her, but my heart says—
no.

As plays the sun upon the glassy streams,
Twinkling another counterfeited beam,
So seems this gorgeous beauty to mine eyes."

Or with thy lips to stop my dying soul,
That I might breathe it so into thy body,
And then it liv'd in sweet Elysium.
By thee to die, were but to die in jest ;
From thee to die, were torment more than
death :

Oh, let me stay, befall what may befall.

Queen. Oh, mightst thou stay with safety
of thy life,

Then shouldst thou stay ; but Heavens deny
it,

And therefore go, but hope ere long to be
repeal'd.

Suf. I go.

Queen. And take my heart with thee.

[*She kisses him.*]

Suf. A jewel lock'd into the woeful'st cask
That ever yet contain'd a thing of worth.

Thus, like a splitted bark, so sunder we ;

This way fall I to death. [*Exit SUFFOLK.*]

Queen. This way for me. [*Exit QUEEN.*"]

We now proceed to the secondary action of 'The First Part of Henry VI.,'—the growth of civil discord in England. And here, as it appears to us, the unity of action and of characterisation in this play and the two Parts of the 'Contention' are so manifest, that we incur the risk of attempting to prove what is self-evident. It is still, however, necessary that we should conduct this inquiry, even with the danger of being tedious, by regular advances.

The quarrels of Gloster and Beaufort commence even over the bier of Henry V. Bedford here restrains the rivals:—"Cease, cease these jars." In the third scene their hatred breaks out into open violence. The forced reconciliation of these angry peers, in the third act, terminates the quarrel, as far as it proceeds in 'The First Part of Henry VI.' Can we imagine that, if this play had been written without regard to a continuation, this part of the action would have thus terminated? Exeter, in this scene, anticipates the consequences of these dissensions. But it is in 'The First Part of the Contention' that they are carried forward to a catastrophe. Let us compare portions of the scene in the parliament-house, in 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' and the scene at St. Alban's in 'The First Part of the Contention:—

FIRST PART OF HENRY VI., Act III., Scene 1.

"*Win.* Com'st thou with deep premeditated lines,

With written pamphlets studiously devis'd,
Humphrey of Gloster? if thou canst accuse,
Or aught intend'st to lay unto my charge,
Do it without invention suddenly ;
As I with sudden and extemporal speech
Purpose to answer what thou canst object.

Glo. Presumptuous priest ! this place commands my patience,

FIRST PART OF THE CONTENTION, Act II., Scene 1.

"*Suf.* My lord protector's hawks do tower
so well ;

They know their master soars a falcon's pitch.

Hum. Faith, my lord, it's but a base mind
That soars no higher than a bird can soar.

Card. I thought your grace would be above
the clouds.

Hum. Ay, my lord cardinal, were it not
good

Your grace could fly to heaven ?

Or thou shouldst find thou hast dishonour'd
me.

Think not, although in writing I prefer'd
The manner of thy vile outrageous crimes,
That therefore I have forg'd, or am not able
Verbatim to rehearse the method of my pen:
No, prelate; such is thy audacious wicked-
ness,

Thy lewd, pestiferous, and dissentious pranks,
As very infants prattle of thy pride.

Thou art a most pernicious usurer;
Froward by nature, enemy to peace;
Lascivious, wanton, more than well beseems
A man of thy profession and degree;
And for thy treachery, what's more manifest?
In that thou laid'st a trap to take my life,
As well at London bridge, as at the Tower?
Beside, I fear me, if thy thoughts were sifted,
The king, thy sovereign, is not quite exempt
From envious malice of thy swelling heart.

Win. Gloster, I do defy thee. Lords,
vouchsafe

To give me hearing what I shall reply.
If I were covetous, ambitious, or perverse,
As he will have me, how am I so poor?
Or how haps it I seek not to advance
Or raise myself, but keep my wonted calling?
And for dissention, who preferreth peace
More than I do,—except I be provok'd?
No, my good lords, it is not that offends;
It is not that that hath incens'd the duke:
It is, because no one should sway but he;
No one but he should be about the king;
And that engenders thunder in his breast,
And makes him roar these accusations forth.
But he shall know, I sm as good—

Glo. As good?

Thou bastard of my grandfather!—

Win. Ay, lordly sir: For what are you, I
pray,

But one imperious in another's throne?

Glo. Am I not protector, saucy priest?

Win. And am I not a prelate of the church?

Glo. Yes, as an outlaw in a castle keeps,
And useth it to patronage his theft.

Win. Unreverent Gloster!

Glo. Thou art reverent,
Touching thy spiritual function, not thy life."

Card. Thy heaven is on earth, thy words
and thoughts

Beat on a crown, proud protector, dangerous
peer,

To smooth it thus with king and common-
wealth.

Hum. How now, my lord? why, this is more
than needs!

Churchmen so hot? Good uncle, can you
do 't?

Suf. Why not, having so good a quarrel,
And so bad a cause?

Hum. As how, my lord?

Suf. As you, my lord, an 't like your
lordly lord's protectorship.

Hum. Why, Suffolk, England knows thy
insolence.

Queen. And thy ambition, Gloster.

King. Cease, gentle queen,
And whet not on these furious lords to wrath,
For blessed are the peacemakers on earth.

Card. Let me be blessed for the peace I
make

Against this proud protector with my sword.

Hum. Faith, holy uncle, I would it were
come to that.

Card. Even when thou dar'st.

Hum. Dare? I tell thee, priest,
Plantagenets could never brook the dare.

Card. I am Plantagenet as well as thou,
And son to John of Gaunt.

Hum. In bastardy.

Card. I scorn thy words.

Hum. Make up no factious numbers,
But even in thine own person meet me at the
east end of the grove.

Card. Here 's my hand, I will.

King. Why, how now, lords?

Card. Faith, cousin Gloster,
Had not your man cast off so soon, we had had
More sport to-day. Come with thy sword
and buckler.

Hum. God's mother, priest, I 'll shave your
crown.

Card. Protector, protect thyself well."

Is there, or is there not, unity of action in these scenes of two different plays? Is there not unity of characterisation? Is there not identity of manner? The angry passions which, in 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' are unrestrained even by the immediate presence of funereal solemnity, are only terminated in 'The First Part of the Contention' by the murder of Gloster and the terrible deathbed of Beaufort.

In the mean while, nourished by these dissensions, a fiercer contest is about to begin, whose catastrophe is far distant. The scene in the Temple-garden of 'The First Part of Henry VI.' is the

cloud before the storm. Connected with the future conduct of the story, it is thrown thus early into the series of plays with wonderful dramatic skill. Standing by itself it has no issue but in the quarrel of Vernon and Bassett in the fourth act. With the same dramatic skill, with reference to a continuation, is the early scene between Plantagenet and Mortimer. The object of the poet in the introduction of these scenes is most emphatically marked in several presaging passages of this play. At the close of the Temple-garden scene Warwick thus exclaims:—

“ And here I prophesy,—This brawl to-day,
Grown to this faction, in the Temple garden,
Shall send, between the red rose and the white,
A thousand souls to death and deadly night.”

After Henry has taken his pacific course in the quarrel between Vernon and Bassett, Exeter leads us onward to some undeveloped result of the fearful tragedy to which these quarrels are but the prologue:—

“ Well didst thou, Richard, to suppress thy voice :
For had the passions of thy heart burst out,
I fear we should have seen decipher'd there
More rancorous spite, more furious raging broils,
Than yet can be imagin'd or suppos'd.
But howsoe'er, no simple man that sees
This jarring discord of nobility,
This should'ring of each other in the court,
This factious bandying of their favourites,
But that it doth presage some ill event.
'T is much, when sceptres are in children's hands ;
But more, when envy breeds unkind division ;
There comes the ruin, there begins confusion.”

The speech of York in the first scene of ‘The First Part of the Contention’ knits all these circumstances together, linking that play and the preceding one as closely as if the action had been continued without any division of the entire drama into separate portions:—

“ Aujou and Maine both given unto the French!
Cold news for me, for I had hope of France,
Even as I have of fertile England.
A day will come when York shall claim his own,
And therefore I will take the Nevils' parts,
And make a show of love to proud duke Humphrey :
And, when I spy advantage, claim the crown,
For that 's the golden mark I seek to hit ;
Nor shall proud Lancaster usurp my right,
Nor hold the sceptre in his childish fist,
Nor wear the diadem upon his head,

Whose church-like humours fit not for a crown.
 Then, York, be still awhile till time do serve :
 Watch thou, and wake, when others be asleep,
 To pry into the secrets of the state ;
 Till Henry, surfeiting in joys of love,
 With his new bride and England's dear-bought queen,
 And Humphrey with the peers be fall'n at jars.
 Then will I raise aloft the milk-white rose,
 With whose sweet smell the air shall be perfum'd,
 And in my standard bear the arms of York,
 To grapple with the house of Lancaster :
 And, force perforce, I'll make him yield the crown,
 Whose bookish rule hath pull'd fair England down."

The connexion which we have thus endeavoured to establish between 'The First Part of Henry VI.' and 'The First Part of the Contention' had been already briefly noticed by Dr. Johnson:—"It is apparent that this play ('Henry VI., Part II.')

begins where the former ends, and continues the series of transactions of which it presupposes the first part already known. This is a sufficient proof that the Second and Third Parts were not written without dependence on the First, though they were printed as containing a complete period of history." To this, Malone thus replies:—"Dr. Johnson observes very justly that these two Parts were not written without a *dependence* on the First. Undoubtedly not: the old play of 'King Henry VI.' (or, as it is now called, the First Part) certainly had been exhibited before these were written in *any form*. But it does not follow from this concession, either that the 'Contention of the Two Houses,' &c., in two Parts, was written by the author of the former play, or that Shakspeare was the author of these two pieces as they *originally appeared*." This, to our minds, is an evasion, and not an answer. If the author of the two Parts of the 'Contention' had merely taken up the thread of the story where it is dropped in 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' we should have had no proof that the three plays were written by one and the same author. But not only does the author of the 'Contention' continue the story, with perfect unity of action, of character, and of manner, but the author of 'The First Part of Henry VI.' has written entire scenes for the express purpose of continuation,—scenes incomplete in themselves, and excrescences upon his drama if it is to be regarded as a whole. We have shown these points, we trust, with sufficient distinctness. Upon the identity of manner we have the less dwelt, because, in the versification especially, each of the plays is admitted by Malone to be constructed upon the same model.*

* Dissertation, p. 564, Boswell's edition.

And what then has Malone to urge against the dependence, the unity of action, the identity of characterization, the similarity of manner, which all prove, as far as such a subject is capable of internal proof, that 'The First Part of Henry VI.' and the two Parts of the 'Contention' were written by one and the same man, whoever he be? We will endeavour to state his argument with becoming gravity:—1st. The author of 'The First Part of Henry VI.' does not seem to have *known* how old Henry VI. was at the time of his father's death. In the third act he makes the King say, speaking of Talbot—

“ When *I was young* (as yet I am not *old*),
I do remember how my father said,
 A stouter champion never handled sword.”

Shakspeare, it appears from a passage introduced by him in the revised copy of 'The Second Part of Henry VI.,' did *know* that Henry VI. could not have remembered what his father said; and therefore *he* could not have been the author of 'The *First* Part of Henry VI.' But in 'The Second Part of the Contention' there is an evidence of similar knowledge by the author of that play:—

“ When I was crown'd I was but nine months old;”

and this is a “decisive proof” that the two plays could not have been written by the same person. 2nd. 'The First Part of Henry VI.' exhibits Mortimer dying in the Tower a state prisoner. 'The First Part of the Contention' makes Salisbury say that Owen Glendower

“ Kept him in captivity till he died.”

Furthermore, 'The First Part of Henry VI.' correctly states the issue of Edward III., and the title of Mortimer to the crown; whereas 'The First Part of the Contention' incorrectly states these circumstances. This is literally the whole of Malone's evidence in proof of his assertion; and he thus triumphantly concludes: “Those two plays, *therefore*, could not have been the work of one hand.” It is scarcely necessary to attempt a reply. All readers of Shakspeare are perfectly aware of the occurrence of such slight inaccuracies, even in the same play. In 'The First Part of Henry VI.' Malone himself points out that Winchester is called “cardinal” in the first act; while in the fifth act surprise is expressed that he is “call'd unto a cardinal's degree.” According to this reasoning, therefore, the fifth act could not have been the work of the same hand as that which produced the first act. 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' we see, states correctly the title of Mortimer to the

crown; the next play of the series states it incorrectly. But the argument may be carried a step further. 'The First Part of Henry IV.' mistakes even the person of this Mortimer, confounding the Earl of March, a child, with Hotspur's brother-in-law. Shakspeare wrote 'The First Part of Henry IV.,' but according to Malone he did not write either of the older plays in which we find correct and incorrect genealogy. But if the argument is to be pursued to its conclusion, he *did* write 'The First Part of the Contention,' which is inaccurate in this particular, because he *did* write 'The First Part of Henry IV.,' which is also inaccurate. One more example of the fallacy of such reasoning. In the 'Richard II.,' after the King has been deposed—after Bolingbroke has said,

"In God's name, I'll ascend the regal throne,"—

Richard thus addresses Northumberland:—

"Northumberland, thou ladder wherewithal
The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne."

There was no one present but Richard, the Queen, and Northumberland. Shakspeare, of course, wrote the 'Richard II.' But, in 'The Second Part of Henry IV.,' Bolingbroke, then king, uses these words, speaking to Warwick:—

"But which of you was by,
(*You, cousin Nevil, as I may remember,*)
When Richard,—with his eye brimful of tears,
Then check'd and rated by Northumberland,—
Did speak these words, now prov'd a prophecy?—
Northumberland, thou ladder by the which
My cousin Bolingbroke ascends my throne;—
Though, then, Heaven knows, I had no such intent."

Here are two important differences. When the words were spoken "cousin Nevil" was not by; and before the words were spoken Henry had actually ascended the throne, instead of having "no such intent." Upon Malone's argument, then, these extraordinary contradictions furnish "a decisive proof" that the 'Richard II.' and 'The Second Part of Henry IV.' "could not have been the work of one hand." Which shall we give up?

§ II.

THE line of inquiry which we have pursued up to this point, with reference to the question whether 'The First Part of Henry VI.' and the two Parts of the 'Contention' were written by one and the same person, we shall now follow up by a parallel course of inquiry whether these three plays were written by the author of 'Richard

III.' And here we may pause for a moment to observe that the argument upon which Shakspeare has been held, in England, during the last fifty years, to be one of the most unblushing plagiarists that ever put pen to paper, has been conducted throughout in a spirit of disingenuousness almost unequalled in literary history. Malone, indeed, cannot be accused, as Lauder was, of having falsified quotations, or invented passages that had no existence; but he is certainly open to the charge of having suppressed minute facts with which he must have been perfectly acquainted, because they made against his theory. Of these hereafter. We impute not to his dishonesty, but to the weakness of his intellectual grasp, that it never occurred to him to institute a comparison between the two Parts of the 'Contention'—we mean the original plays, and not the remodelled ones—and the 'Richard III.' of Shakspeare. He chose to isolate the two Parts of the 'Contention' from the play which preceded them and the play which followed them. By this process he was disencumbered from the troublesome necessity—fatal, as we think, to his theory—of looking at the four plays as one great whole—one drama of four parts. The 'Richard III.' stands at the end of the series as the avowed completion of that long tragic history. The scenes of that drama are as intimately blended with the previous scenes of the other dramas, as the scenes that belong to the separate dramas are blended amongst themselves. Its story not only naturally grows out of the previous story,—its characters are not only, wherever possible, the same characters as in the preceding dramas,—but it is even more palpably linked with them by constant retrospection to the events which they had exhibited. If Malone could have shown by his array of figures,—his enumeration of original lines, of lines altered, and lines added,—that the resemblances between the 'Richard III.' and the two previous plays had been confined to the passages which are not found in the original copies of those plays, or even if he could have established that there was a more marked similarity in the passages added,—he would probably have rendered the present Essay perfectly unnecessary. But he has not even made the attempt to compare together, in the slightest manner, the work which he alleges to be spurious and the work which all men hold to be genuine. Let us endeavour to supply the omission.

The dramas which we now propose to compare are the First and Second Parts of the 'Contention,' as printed by us in this edition, and the 'Richard III.' as given in our own text.* In any inci-

* There are passages in the folio edition which are not found in the quartos;

dental notice of 'The First Part of Henry VI.' we shall now assume that it is written by the author of the two Parts of the 'Contention.'

There is a remarkable link between the first of this series of plays and the last, in the continuance of Margaret of Anjou upon the scene, almost to the conclusion of 'Richard III.' She is the only one character that runs through all the four plays. In 'The First Part of Henry VI.' she is painted in slight but brilliant colours,—beautiful, haughty, ambitious, and somewhat free. In 'The First Part of the Contention' we find her eager for power, revengeful, tyrannous, unfaithful, and bloody. Energy and decision essentially belong to her character, with indomitable courage. In 'The Second Part of the Contention' her evil qualities put on a more heroic attitude; but she is still the "she-wolf of France." In the 'Richard III.,' where the poet has kept her on the stage against the fact of history, but with the very highest truth of art, her retrospects of the past and her prophecies of the future are as sublime as anything in the compass of poetry. There she stands, widowed, childless, outcast, surrounded by her enemies;—but the miseries which she has felt are they also doomed to feel, and she rings in their ears the bitter memory of what they are and what they were, as if she were herself the minister of offended justice. We will select a passage from 'The Second Part of the Contention,' and another from the 'Richard III.,' and we will ask, without hesitation, if they are not both written by Shakspeare?—

SECOND PART OF THE CONTENTION.

"*Queen.* Brave warriors, Clifford and Northumberland,
Come, make him stand upon this mole-hill here,
That aim'd at mountains with outstretched arm,
And parted but the shadow with his hand.
Was it you that revell'd in our parliament,
And made a preachment of your high descent?
Where are your mess of sons to back you now?
The wanton Edward, and the lusty George?
Or where is that valiant crook-back'd prodigy,
Dicky, your boy, that, with his grumbling voice,
Was wont to cheer his dad in mutinies?
Or, amongst the rest, where is your darling Rutland?
Look, York, I dipp'd this napkin in the blood
That valiant Clifford, with his rapier's point,
Made issue from the bosom of thy boy:
And, if thine eyes can water for his death,

RICHARD III.

"*Q. Mar.* If ancient sorrow be most reverent,
Give mine the benefit of seniory,
And let my griefs frown on the upper hand.
If sorrow can admit society,
[*Sitting down with them.*]
Tell o'er your woes again by viewing mine:—
I had an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;
I had a husband, till a Richard kill'd him:
Thou hadst an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;
Thou hadst a Richard, till a Richard kill'd him.
Duch. I had a Richard too, and thou didst kill him;
I had a Rutland too, thou holp'st to kill him.
Q. Mar. Thou hadst a Clarence too, and Richard kill'd him.
From forth the kennel of thy womb hath crept
A hell-hound, that doth hunt us all to death:
That dog, that had his teeth before his eyes

and many lines of the quartos have been remodelled. But these minute differences are not important in the present inquiry.

I give thee this to dry thy cheeks withal.
 Alas! poor York: but that I hate thee much,
 I should lament thy miserable state.
 I prithee grieve to make me merry, York;
 Stamp, rave, and fret, that I may sing and
 dance.

What, hath thy fiery heart so parch'd thine
 entrails

That not a tear can fall for Rutland's death?
 Thou wouldst be fee'd, I see, to make me
 sport;

York cannot speak unless he wear a crown.—
 A crown for York! and, lords, bow low to him.
 So, hold you his hands whilst I do set it on.
 Ay, now looks he like a king!

This is he that took king Henry's chair,
 And this is he was his adopted heir.
 But how is it that great Plantagenet
 Is crown'd so soon, and broke his holy oath?
 As I bethink me, you should not be king
 Till our Henry had shook hands with death.
 And will you impale your head with Henry's
 glory,

And rob his temples of the diadem,
 Now in his life, against your holy oath?
 Oh, 't is a fault too, too unpardonable.
 Off with the crown; and with the crown his
 head;
 And whilst we breathe take time to do him
 dead."

To worry lambs, and lap their gentle blood;
 That foul defacer of God's handiwork,
 That reigns in galled eyes of weeping souls;
 That excellent grand tyrant of the earth,
 Thy womb let loose, to chase us to our graves.
 O upright, just, and true-disposing God,
 How do I thank thee, that this carnal cur
 Preys on the issue of his mother's body,
 And makes her pew-fellow with others' moan!

Duch. O, Harry's wife, triumph not in my
 woes;

God witness with me, I have wept for thine.
Q. Mar. Bear with me; I am hungry for
 revenge,

And now I cloy me with beholding it.
 Thy Edward he is dead that kill'd my Ed-
 ward;

The other Edward dead, to quit my Edward;
 Young York he is but boot, because both they
 Match not the high perfection of my loss.
 Thy Clarence he is dead that stabb'd my
 Edward;

And the beholders of this frantic play,
 The adulterate Hastings, Rivers, Vaughan,
 Grey,

Untimely smother'd in their dusky graves.
 Richard yet lives, hell's black intelligencer;
 Only reserv'd their factor, to buy souls,
 And send them thither: But at hand, at hand,
 Ensues his piteous and unpitied end:
 Earth gapes, hell burns, fiends roar, saints
 pray,

To have him suddenly convey'd from hence:
 Cancel his bond of life, dear God, I pray,
 That I may live to say, the dog is dead!"

Can any one here doubt of the absolute identity of character,—of the similarity of manner, even to the nicest structure of the verse? If the reader will compare the speech of Margaret to York, as printed above from the 'Contention,' with the text of the same speech in 'The Third Part of Henry VI.,' he will find that three lines are omitted. They are these:—

"What! was it you that would be England's king?"

"Why art thou patient, man? thou shouldst be mad;

And I, to make thee mad, do mock thee thus."

Malone, by his arithmetic, has shown that these are the only three lines of the speech of Margaret that were written by Shakspeare!

Of the characters which fill 'The First Part of the Contention,' only three, Margaret, Edward (afterwards Edward IV.), and Richard (afterwards Duke of Gloster), are found in the play of 'Richard III.' They have all been swept away, for the most part by the course of those fearful events which these dramas record. Nor are there any allusions in the play of 'Richard III.' to circumstances which had occurred in 'The First Part of the Contention.' But as the unity of action and character is completely carried on

from 'The First Part of the Contention' to the Second, and as no doubt has ever existed of these two Parts being by the same hand, when we trace the action and the characterization onward to the 'Richard III.' we equally establish the unity between the two Parts and the 'Richard III.' Of the principal characters, then, in the 'Richard III.,' which are found in 'The Second Part of the Contention,' beside Margaret, already mentioned, there are Edward IV., Elizabeth his queen, the Duke of Clarence, and the Duke of Gloster. It is not with the real succession of events that we have here to deal. The poet, in the first scenes of 'Richard III.,' gives us the committal of Clarence to the Tower, the funeral of Henry VI., and the fatal sickness of Edward IV. But this play, in its dramatic action, is as closely allied to the preceding play, 'The Second Part of the Contention,' as if it were one and the same play. 'The Second Part of the Contention' thus concludes:—

“And now what rests, but that we spend the time
With stately triumphs and mirthful comic shows,
Such as befit the pleasures of the court?”

The 'Richard III.' thus opens:—

“Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths;
Our bruised arms hung up for monuments;
Our stern alarums chang'd to merry meetings;
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.”

The last scene but one in 'The Second Part of the Contention' is the murder of Henry VI.; the second scene of the 'Richard III.' is the funeral of Henry VI. But the poet is not satisfied with this marked connexion of the dramatic action of the two plays. He,—Shakspeare,—scatters over his 'Richard III.' allusions to very minute circumstances in the former play, which he is alleged not to have written. We will select some of these. In the first act of 'Richard III.' the Duke of Gloster thus addresses Anne:—

“These eyes, which never shed remorseful tear,
No, when my father York and Edward wept
To hear the piteous moan that Rutland made,
When black-fac'd Clifford shook his sword at him:
Nor when thy warlike father, like a child,
Told the sad story of my father's death,
And twenty times made pause, to sob and weep,
That all the standers-by had wet their cheeks,
Like trees bedash'd with rain: in that sad time
My manly eyes did scorn an humble tear.”

Compare this with York's speech in 'The Second Part of the Contention'—(Act I., Scene 4):—

“Wouldst have me weep? why so, thou hast thy wish.
 For raging winds blow up a storm of tears,
 And when the rage allays the rain begins.
 These tears are my sweet Rutland’s obsequies;
 And every drop begs vengeance as it falls,
 On thee, fell Clifford, and thee, false Frenchwoman.”

And with Richard’s exclamation in the second act:—

“I cannot weep, for all my breast’s moisture
 Scarce serves to quench my furnace-burning hate.”

Richard thus addresses Margaret, in the third scene of ‘Richard III.’:—

“*Glo.* The curse my noble father laid on thee,
 When thou didst crown his warlike brows with paper,
 And with thy scorns drew’st rivers from his eyes,
 And then, to dry them, gav’st the duke a clout,
 Steep’d in the faultless blood of pretty Rutland;—
 His curses, then from bitterness of soul
 Denounc’d against thee, are all fallen upon thee;
 And God, not we, hath plagued thy bloody deed.”

The curse is found in the first act of the ‘Contention’:—

“Here, take the crown, and with the crown my curse;
 And, in thy need, such comfort come to thee,
 As now I reap at thy too cruel hands.”

Reproaching Margaret with the death of Rutland, Buckingham, in ‘Richard III.’ says—

“Northumberland then present wept to see it.”

Margaret in the ‘Contention’ exclaims at Northumberland’s tears—

“What, weeping ripe, my lord Northumberland?”

The very minuteness of these allusions is a proof to us that the author was perpetually mindful of his own preceding work. If the passages to which they refer had not been found in the ‘Contention,’ but only in the remodelled play, Malone’s arithmetic might have gone for something.

But we now approach the character of Richard himself. And to us it seems the most extraordinary marvel that the world, for half a century, should have consented to believe that the man who absolutely created that most wonderful character, in all its essential lineaments, in ‘The Second Part of the Contention,’ was not the man who continued it in the ‘Richard III.’ In the fourth act of ‘Richard’ his mother thus describes him:—

“A grievous burthen was thy birth to me;
 Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy;
 Thy school-days frightful, desperate, wild, and furious;
 Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous;

Thy age confirm'd proud, subtle, sly, and bloody,
More mild, but yet more harmful, kind in hatred."

The author of the 'Contention' anticipates the "manhood" of Richard, and shows him a "daring, bold, and venturous" soldier. A single line tells his character when he originally comes upon the scene in 'The First Part of the Contention.' When York asks his sons whether they will be "bail" for their father, Edward replies,

"Yes, noble father, if our words will serve."

But Richard answers,

"And if our words will not, our swords shall."

In the fight of St. Alban's Richard kills Somerset; and although Clifford denounces him as a "crook'd-back villain," his thoughts are those of a most gallant knight when he describes the bearing of old Salisbury:—

"*Rich.* My lord, I saw him in the thickest throng,
Charging his lance with his old weary arms;
And thrice I saw him beaten from his horse,
And thrice this hand did set him up again,
And still he fought with courage 'gainst his foes,
The boldest spirited man that e'er mine eyes beheld."

We have no doubt that the poet brought Richard thus early upon the scene, in 'The First Part of the Contention,' with distinct regard to the important character he was to sustain in the succeeding plays. In 'The Second Part of the Contention' his "daring, bold, and venturous" spirit is most prominent in the parliament scene:—

"Arm'd as we be, let's stay within this house."
"Father, tear the crown from the usurper's head."
"Sound drums and trumpets, and the king will fly."

His mother's description still holds on:—

"Thy age confirm'd, proud, subtle, sly."

Witness his counsel to his father to break his oath:—

"An oath is of no moment,
Being not sworn before a lawful magistrate.
Henry is none, but doth usurp your right,
And yet your grace stands bound to him by oath."

The second act of 'The Second Part of the Contention' continues to represent the young Richard as the daring soldier, with courage excelled only by his acuteness; but gradually becoming "bloody," and exhibiting that sarcastic humour in his revenge which is identified with his after character. When Clifford is found dead, who but Richard could have uttered these words?—

“*Rich.* What, not an oath? Nay, then I know he’s dead :
 ’T is hard when Clifford cannot ’ford his friend an oath :
 By this I know he’s dead : And by my soul,
 Would this right hand buy but an hour’s life,
 (That I in all contempt might rail at him,)
 I’d cut it off, and with the issuing blood
 Stifle the villain.”

But in the third act the complete Richard—

“subtle, sly, and bloody,
 More mild, but yet more harmful”—

is developed. We request the reader carefully to compare the following passages of ‘The Second Part of the Contention’ and of the ‘Richard III. ;’ and resolve us whether it is more easy to believe that the man who wrote the first passage was not also the author of the second passage (in all essentials an amplification of the first); or that the man who wrote the second passage—and that man Shakspeare—was an impudent plagiarist of the characterization and the style of some unknown contemporary, who has left nothing like it in any other work, and whose very name Shakspeare, by adoption and imitation, has thus swamped with posterity?—

SECOND PART OF THE CONTENTION, Act III.,
 Scene 2.

“ I will go clad my body in gay ornaments,
 And lull myself within a lady’s lap,
 And witch sweet ladies with my words and
 looks.
 Oh monstrous man, to harbour such a
 thought !
 Why, love did scorn me in my mother’s
 womb ;
 And, for I should not deal in her affairs,
 She did corrupt frail nature in the flesh,
 And plac’d an envious mountain on my back,
 Where sits deformity to mock my body ;
 To dry mine arm up like a wither’d shrimp ;
 To make my legs of an unequal size.
 And am I then a man to be belov’d ?
 Easier for me to compass twenty crowns.
 Tut ! I can smile, and murder when I smile ;
 I cry content to that which grieves me most ;
 I can add colours to the chameleon ;
 And for a need change shapes with Proteus,
 And set the aspiring Catiline to school.
 Can I do this, and cannot get the crown ?
 Tush ! were it ten times higher, I’ll pull it
 down.”

RICHARD III., Act I., Scene 1.

“ But I, that am not shap’d for sportive
 tricks,
 Nor made to court an amorous looking-
 glass ;—
 I, that am rudely stamp’d, and want love’s
 majesty
 To strut before a wanton ambling nymph ;—
 I, that am curtail’d of this fair proportion,
 Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
 Deform’d, unfinish’d, sent before my time
 Into this breathing world, scarce half made
 up,
 And that so lamely and unfashionable
 That dogs bark at me as I halt by them ;—
 Why I, in this weak piping time of peace,
 Have no delight to pass away the time,
 Unless to see my shadow in the sun,
 And descant on mine own deformity.
 And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
 To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
 I am determin’d to prove a villain,
 And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
 Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,
 By drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams,
 To set my brother Clarence and the king
 In deadly hate the one against the other :
 And, if king Edward be as true and just
 As I am subtle, false, and treacherous,
 This day should Clarence closely be mew’d
 up.”

When Cibber concocted the medley which he called 'Richard III.,' he, not having the fear before his eyes of the critics who succeeded him, adopted the scene in which Richard murders Henry VI., as the work of Shakspeare. We request our readers to turn to that scene. ('Henry VI., Part III. ;' Act V., Scene 6.) It will amply repay their perusal, being in its whole conception distinguished by that truth of characterization and that energy of language which we have agreed to call Shaksperian. But, according to Malone, and to those who adopt the theory that what Shakspeare contributed to the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' includes nothing which is found in 'The Second Part of the Contention,' Shakspeare only wrote five lines of this scene. They are as follow :—

“And both preposterous ; therefore, not good lord.

Glo. Sirrah, leave us to ourselves : we must confer.

K. Hen. So flies the reckless shepherd from the wolf :

So first the harmless sheep doth yield his fleece,

And next his throat unto the butcher's knife.”

If the reader will turn to 'The Second Part of the Contention' he will see that these five lines are wanting at the beginning of the scene. All the rest of the scene is essentially the same (with the exception of a few verbal alterations) in 'The Second Part of the Contention' and 'The Third Part of Henry VI.' We leave the decision in the reader's hands, perfectly satisfied that he will arrive at the conviction that, if Shakspeare did not write this scene as it originally stood, neither did he write 'Richard III.'

§ III.

THE argument whose course we have followed up to this point has sought to establish the unity of action and of characterization—incidentally noticing also the similarity of manner—between 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' the First and Second Parts of the 'Contention,' and the 'Richard III.' In the exhibition of these unities between 'The First Part of Henry VI.' and the two Parts of the 'Contention,' we have endeavoured to prove that these three dramas, of which it is maintained that Shakspeare wrote not a single line, were the work of one mind. Having thus linked these together, we carried on the link to the 'Richard III.,' and thus attempted to demonstrate that the four dramas, as well as the three, were the work of one mind, and that mind Shakspeare's. Upon the great dramatic characteristics of this series of plays we have only slightly touched. It will remain for us to show that, in all the higher attributes of

genius which they display, and especially the force of passion and the truth of character, no mind but that of Shakspeare could have produced them. We have at present chiefly aimed at fixing the attention of our readers upon the unity of these dramas. If we have established this unity, we have gone far to shake the ground of the existing belief, that the author of 'Richard III.' was not, in any just sense of the word, the author of the three Parts of 'Henry VI.'

It has been held good service to the reputation of Shakspeare to assume that he did not write a line of the first part of this series. Malone says, with great triumph, that he has "vindicated Shakspeare" from the imputation. But he has at the same time conferred upon him an honour which appears to us, in truth, a disgrace, and from which we are equally anxious to vindicate him. Shakspeare's share in the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' is thus stated by the critic who thought it a derogation from the poet's fame to have written the scene in the Temple garden and the death scene of Talbot:—

"Several years after the death of Boiardo, Francesco Berni undertook to new-versify Boiardo's poem entitled 'Orlando Innamorato.' 'Berni,' as Baretti observes, 'was not satisfied with merely making the versification of that poem better, he interspersed it with many stanzas of his own, and changed almost all the beginnings of the cantos, introducing each of them with some moral reflection arising from the canto foregoing.' What Berni did to Boiardo's poem after the death of its author, and more, I suppose Shakspeare to have done to 'The First Part of the Contention of the two Houses of York and Lancaster,' &c., and 'The True Tragedie of Richarde Duke of Yorke,' &c., *in the lifetime of Greene and Peele*, their literary parents; and this *rifacimento*, as the Italians call it, of these two plays, I suppose to have been executed by Shakspeare, and exhibited at the Globe or Blackfriars theatre in the year 1591.

"I have said Shakspeare did what Berni did, and more. He did not content himself with writing new beginnings to the acts; he new-versified, he new-modelled, he transposed many of the parts, and greatly amplified and improved the whole. Several lines, however, and even whole speeches which he thought sufficiently polished, he accepted, and introduced into his own work, without any, or with very slight, alterations."*

If Shakspeare had done all which Malone here represents him to have done—new-versify, new-model, transpose, amplify, improve,

* Dissertation, p. 572.

and polish,—he would still have been essentially a dishonest plagiarist. We have no hesitation in stating our belief that the two Parts of the ‘Contention’ are immeasurably superior, in the dramatic conduct of the story, the force and consistency of character, the energy of language, yea, and even in the harmony of versification, to any dramatic production whatever which existed in the year 1591. This we shall have to show in detail. But in the mean time we hold that whoever obtained possession, legally or otherwise, of the property of these remarkable productions (meaning by property the purchased right of exhibiting them on the stage), and applied himself to their amplification and improvement to the extent, and with the success, which Malone has represented, was, to say the best of him, a presumptuous and self-sufficient meddler. We hold that it was utterly impossible that Shakspeare should have set about such a work at all, having any consciousness of his own original power. We further hold, that the only consistent theory that can be maintained with regard to the amplifications and improvements upon the original work must be founded upon the belief that the work in its first form was Shakspeare’s own. But in the mean time we desire to show what is the real character and extent of these changes,—how far, in fact, Shakspeare, in producing the Second and Third Parts of ‘Henry VI.,’ new-versified, new-modelled, amplified, and improved ‘The First Part of the Contention of the two Houses of York and Lancaster,’ and ‘The true Tragedy of Richard Duke of York.’

“He did not content himself,” says Malone, “with writing new beginnings to the acts.” In our republication of the two Parts of the ‘Contention,’ we divided these dramas into acts and scenes. There was not the slightest difficulty in making this division, for we had only to follow the corresponding division in the Second and Third Parts of ‘Henry VI.’ If our readers will take the trouble to compare the beginnings of the acts of the two Parts of ‘Henry VI.’ and of the two Parts of the ‘Contention,’ they will find that in only one act out of ten (‘Henry VI., Part II.,’ Act IV.) did Shakspeare write any new beginning at all. “He transposed many of the parts,” says Malone. In the whole of the two plays, with the exception of some slight changes in the last scene of ‘Henry VI., Part II.,’ Act I., and in four short scenes of the fourth act of ‘Henry VI., Part III.,’ (which changes we have pointed out in our foot-notes and in the corresponding scenes of the ‘Contention,’) there is not a single transposition in the order of the scenes. Very slight, indeed, are the changes in the order of the speeches, from

the first line of these plays to the last. "He new-modelled," says Malone. This is a phrase of large acceptance. We can understand how Shakspeare new-modelled the old 'King John,' and perhaps the old 'Taming of a Shrew,' by completely re-writing all the parts, adding some characters, rejecting others, rendering the action at his pleasure more simple or more complex, expanding a short exclamation into a long and brilliant dialogue, or condensing a whole scene into some expressive speech or two. This, to our minds, is a sort of remodelling which Shakspeare did not disdain to try his hand upon. But the remodelling which consists in the addition of lines here and there—in the expansion of a sentiment already expressed—in the substitution of a forcible line for a weak one, or a rhythmical line for one less harmonious—in the change of an epithet or the inversion of two epithets,—and this without the slightest change in the dramatic conception of the original, whether as to the action as a whole or the progress of the action,—or the characterization as a whole, or the small details of character;—remodelling such as this, to be called the work of Shakspeare, and the only work upon which he exercised his hand in these dramas, appears to us to assume that he stood in the same relation to the original author of these pieces as the mechanic who chisels a statue does to the artist who conceives and perfects its design.

That Malone greatly overstated the character and the extent of the alterations of the two Parts of the 'Contention' arose, most probably, from the circumstance that he was not in the habit of looking at Shakspeare generally, except through the microscopic glasses of verbal criticism. It was completely in the spirit of his age that he applied himself to reduce to an arithmetical quantity what he held Shakspeare had contributed to the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' A great deal of labour, no doubt, was bestowed in arriving at these arithmetical results; but the labour was not bestowed in vain for the purposes of advocacy. Malone was of the same opinion as the statesman who said he could prove anything by figures. He undertook to prove by figures that Shakspeare did not write his own book; and the world for fifty years has implicitly confided in the figures:—"The total number of lines in our author's Second and Third Part of 'King Henry VI.' is 6043: of these, as I conceive, 1771 lines were written by some author who preceded Shakspeare; 2373 were formed by him on the foundation laid by his predecessors; and 1899 lines were entirely his own composition."* How, then, stands the account according to this? Of the 6000

* Dissertation, p. 572.

lines, something less than a third was written, as they appear in the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.,' by the author of the original play; something more than a third was formed by Shakspeare on the foundation laid by his predecessors; and about a third was entirely his own composition. Malone distinguishes these several classes in his editions by particular marks:—"All those lines which he adopted without any alteration are printed in the usual manner; those speeches which he altered or expanded are distinguished by inverted commas; and to all the lines entirely composed by himself asterisks are prefixed." Nothing, as it would seem, can be fairer than this; and the reader, who sees the inverted commas and the asterisks spread over every page, must come to the conclusion that what Shakspeare did to the original work constituted at least two-thirds of the labour; and that therefore, if the original author were Peele, or Greene, or Marlowe, or some one whose name has perished, the greater part of the work was still Shakspeare's, and he might, without any injury to his character, have been held justified in doing what he pleased with the rude materials that fell into his hands. We are of opinion, however, that if Malone had printed the 'Contention' in his edition, his arithmetic would have all been blown into thin air; but he chose to print, in support of his inverted commas and his asterisks, those passages, as notes, in which the greatest amount of alteration had taken place. We will endeavour to put the matter on a fairer foundation by analysing a larger portion of the original and the corrected work. It would be tedious for us to pursue this branch of the inquiry beyond a limited extent; and we therefore shall institute a comparison chiefly between a few of the scenes which, to a reader who is familiar with Shakspeare without having learnt that he is held not to have written 'Henry VI.,' are amongst the most treasured recollections. The plan which we shall pursue will be to print, in one column, the text of 'Henry VI.,' with the marks affixed by Malone; and in a parallel column the lines of the 'Contention' opposite the passages to which they bear a similarity; and upon each passage, thus exhibited, we shall offer some brief remarks. We begin with the scene of the Duchess of Gloster's penance:—

HENRY VI., PART II., Act II., Scene 4.

Enter GLOSTER and Servants, in mourning cloaks.

- * *Glo.* Thus, sometimes, hath the brightest day a cloud;
- *And after summer evermore succeeds
- *Barreu winter, with his wrathful nipping cold:

CONTENTION, PART I., Act II., Scene 4.

Enter DUKE HUMPHREY and his men, in mourning cloaks.

*So cares and joys abound as seasons fleet.
Sirs, what 's o'clock ?
Serv. Ten, my lord.
* *Glo.* Ten is the hour that was appointed me,
' To watch the coming of my punish'd duchess ;
' Uneath may she endure the flinty streets,
' To tread them with her tender-feeling feet.
Sweet Nell, ill can thy noble mind abrook
The abject people, gazing on thy face,
With envious looks still laughing at thy shame,
' That erst did follow thy proud chariot wheels,
When thou didst ride in triumph through the streets.
*But, soft ! I think she comes ; and I'll prepare
*My tear-stain'd eyes to see her miseries.

Enter the DUCHESS OF GLOSTER, in a white sheet, with papers pinned upon her back, her feet bare, and a taper burning in her hand ; Sir JOHN STANLEY, a Sheriff, and Officers.

Serv. So please your grace, we'll take her from the sheriff.
' *Glo.* No, stir not, for your lives ; let her pass by.
Duch. Come you, my lord, to see my open shame ?
Now thou dost penance too. Look how they gaze !
' See how the giddy multitude do point,
' And nod their heads, and throw their eyes on thee !
' Ah, Gloster, hide thee from their hateful looks ;
' And in thy closet pent up rue my shame,
And ban thine enemies, both mine and thine.
Glo. Be patient, gentle Nell ; forget this grief.
Duch. Ah, Gloster, teach me to forget myself :
For, whilst I think I am thy married wife, ' And thou a prince, protector of this land, *
' Methinks I should not thus be led along,
Mail'd up in shame, with papers on my back ;
*And follow'd with a rabble, that rejoice
*To see my tears, and hear my deep-fet groans.
The ruthless flint doth cut my tender feet ; ' And when I start the envious people laugh, ' And bid me be advised how I tread.
Ah, Humphrey, can I bear this shameful yoke ? *
*Trowest thou that e'er I'll look upon the world ;
*Or count them happy that enjoy the sun ?
*No ; dark shall be my light, and night my day ;
*To think upon my pomp shall be my hell.

Hum. Sirrah, what 's o'clock ?
Serv. Almost ten, my lord.
Hum. Then is that woeful hour hard at hand,
That my poor lady should come by this way,
In shameful penance wandering in the streets.
Sweet Nell, ill can thy noble mind abrook
The abject people gazing on thy face,
With envious looks laughing at thy shame,
That erst did follow thy proud chariot wheels
When thou didst ride in triumph through the streets.

Enter Dame ELEANOR COBHAM, barefoot, and a white sheet about her, with a wax candle in her hand, and verses written on her back, and pinned on, and accompanied with the Sheriffs of London, and Sir JOHN STANLEY, and Officers, with bills and halberds.

Serv. My gracious lord, see where my lady comes.
Please it your grace, we'll take her from the sheriffs.
Hum. I charge you for your lives stir not a foot,
Nor offer once to draw a weapon here,
But let them do their office as they should.
Eleanor. Come you, my lord, to see my open shame ?
Ah, Gloster, now thou dost penance too.
See how the giddy people look at thee,
Shaking their heads, and pointing at thee here.
Go, get thee gone, and hide thee from their sights,
And in thy pent-up study rue my shame,
And ban thine enemies,—ah ! mine and thine.
Hum. Ah, Nell, sweet Nell, forget this extreme grief,
And bear it patiently to ease thy heart.
Eleanor. Ah, Gloster, teach me to forget myself ;
For whilst I think I am thy wedded wife,
The thought of this doth kill my woeful heart.
The ruthless flints do cut my tender feet,
And when I start the cruel people laugh,
And bid me be advised how I tread ;
And thus, with burning taper in my hand,
Mail'd up in shame, with papers on my back,
Ah, Gloster, can I endure this and live ?

Sometime I'll say, I am duke Humphrey's wife;
 And he a prince, and ruler of the land :
 Yet so he rul'd, and such a prince he was,
 As he stood by, whilst I, his forlorn duchess,
 Was made a wonder, and a pointing-stock,
 To every idle rascal follower.
 But be thou mild, and blush not at my shame;
 Nor stir at nothing, till the axe of death
 Hang over thee, as, sure, it shortly will.
 For Suffolk,—he that can do all in all
 With her, that hateth thee, and hates us all,—
 And York, and impious Beaufort, that false priest,
 Have all lim'd bushes to betray thy wings,
 And, fly thou how thou canst, they'll tangle thee :

*But fear not thou until thy foot be snar'd,
 *Nor never seek prevention of thy foes.
 * *Glo.* Ah, Nell, forbear; thou almost all awry;
 *I must offend before I be attained :
 *And had I twenty times so many foes,
 *And each of them had twenty times their power,
 *All these could not procure me any scath,
 *So long as I am loyal, true, and crimeless.
 ' Wouldst have me rescue thee from this reproach?
 ' Why, yet thy scandal were not wip'd away,
 ' But I in danger for the breach of law.
 ' Thy greatest help is quiet, gentle Nell :
 ' I pray thee, sort thy heart to patience;
 ' These few days' wonder will be quickly worn.

Sometime I'll say, I am duke Humphrey's wife,
 And he a prince, protector of the land;
 But so he rul'd, and such a prince he was,
 As he stood by, whilst I, his forlorn duchess,
 Was led with shame, and made a laughing-stock
 To every idle rascal follower.

Hum. My lovely Nell, what wouldst thou have me do?
 Should I attempt to rescue thee from hence,
 I should incur the danger of the law,
 And thy disgrace would not be shadow'd so.
Eleanor. Be thou mild, and stir not at my disgrace,
 Until the axe of death hang o'er thy head,
 As shortly sure it will. For Suffolk, he,
 The new-made duke, that may do all in all
 With her that loves him so, and hates us all,
 And impious York, and Beaufort that false priest,
 Have all lim'd bushes to betray thy wings,
 And, fly thou how thou canst, they will entangle thee.

We have here 69 lines of 'Henry VI.,' and the marks of Malone show that, of these, 31 are unaltered from the 'Contention.' Malone, however, has not carried out his own principle of distinguishing by inverted commas the lines in which any change has taken place. When we open 'The Second Part of Henry VI.' we find, in the first speech, the following three lines marked with inverted commas:—

“ ‘ Seven earls, twelve barons, twenty reverend bishops,—
 ‘ I have perform'd my task, and was espous'd :
 ‘ And humbly now upon my bended knee.”

The differences of the corresponding three lines in the 'Contention' are as slight as we find in many passages of the quarto and folio copies of Shakspeare's undoubted works. They stand thus in the 'Contention':—

“ ‘ Seven earls, twelve barons, and twenty reverend bishops,—
 I did perform my task, and was espous'd :
 And now, most humbly on my bended knees.”

We may state with confidence that, of the 2373 lines which Malone has computed were formed by Shakspeare "on the foundation laid by his predecessors," one-half, at least, so stated to be formed, exhibit nothing more than such minute deviations as we here point out. But, if Malone had carried this principle throughout, of the 1771 lines which he conceives were written by "some author who preceded Shakspeare," at least one-half would have been transferred to Shakspeare by the inverted commas. For example: in the scene with Gloster and his duchess there are many lines of the 69 in which no deviation whatever is marked by Malone, but which still deviate as much from the original as the three lines beginning "Seven earls," &c. We have marked these at the *end* of each with inverted commas. We mark also, with asterisks at the end, two new lines which Malone has omitted to mark. The result is that, if Malone had carried out his own principle, only 12 of these 69 lines would be held to belong to the original play. Our readers may judge from this what reliance is to be placed upon the commentator's capricious arithmetic. We hold it to be a test altogether fallacious in principle, and carried by him into practice to the extent in which it suited his own purpose, and no farther. Had he shown, for example, that there remained only 12 lines of the original play in the scene before us, some painstaking inquirer might have referred to 'The First Part of the Contention,' in surprise at the result, and have discovered that, in all essentials, the scene of 'Henry VI.' and the scene of the 'Contention' are evidently the production of one and the same mind. For what are the additions to this scene which Malone and his followers hold to be the amount of Shakspeare's contribution towards it? With the exception of the first four lines, these additions do not contain a single idea which is not found in the original; and in the original *all* that marks the poet—in a word, all that is Shaksperian—is exclusively to be found. The new lines are comparatively weak, though not injudicious, amplifications of the original. The entire conception of character is in the original; the additions do not contribute a single feature to its development. We have ventured to mark in italics those passages of the scene in the 'Contention' which appear to us essentially Shaksperian; and we may add that, if passages such as these are to be found in "some author who preceded Shakspeare," we regret that our stock of enjoyment has not yet been enlarged through any acquaintance with his works.

We have now to present a scene,—the celebrated one of the death of Cardinal Beaufort,—in which the elaboration has been so

far carried that Malone leaves only one line as the property of the original author. Yet we venture to think that the original author had something more to do with its production than that one line; and that the whole dramatic conception of the scene, as well as some of the most remarkable expressions, are the property, not of the amplifier, however skilful be his amplification, but of the mind which first pictured to itself that terrible deathbed. Most skilful, indeed, are the elaborations; and they belong evidently to a more practised hand than that which reduced the original conception into language. But the hand, as we think, is still the same; the improved hand applying itself to its work with more technical precision. It is our belief that the man who conceived the original scene could alone have finished it. When did any great artist ever produce a perfect picture from another's sketch? The genius which informed the original idea could alone preserve it through the process of its refinement.

SECOND PART OF HENRY VI., ACT III.,
SCENE 3.

- * *K. Hen.* How fares my lord? speak,
Beaufort, to thy sovereign.
- ‘ *Car.* If thou be’st death, I’ll give thee
England’s treasure,
‘ Enough to purchase such another island,
‘ So thou wilt let me live, and feel no pain.
- * *K. Hen.* Ah, what a sign it is of evil life,
* When death’s approach is seen so terrible!
- * *War.* Beaufort, it is thy sovereign speaks
to thee.
- * *Car.* Bring me unto my trial when you
will.
- ‘ Died he not in his bed? where should he
die?
Can I make men live, wher they will or
no?—
- * O! torture me no more, I will confess.—
‘ Alive again? then show me where he is;
‘ I’ll give a thousand pound to look upon
him.—
- * He hath no eyes, the dust hath blinded
them.—
- ‘ Comb down his hair; look! look! it stands
upright,
‘ Like lime-twigs set to catch my winged
soul!—
- ‘ Give me some drink; and bid the apothecary
‘ Bring the strong poison that I bought of him.
- * *K. Hen.* O, thou eternal Mover of the
heavens,
* Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch!
* O, beat away the busy meddling fiend,
* That lays strong siege unto this wretch’s soul,
* And from his bosom purge this black de-
spair!

FIRST PART OF THE CONTENTION, ACT III.,
SCENE 3.

- Car.* O, death! if thou wilt let me live
But one whole year, I’ll give thee as much
gold
As will purchase such another island.
- King.* Oh, see, my lord of Salisbury, how
he is troubled!
- Lord cardinal, remember, Christ must save
thy soul.
- Car.* Why, died he not in his bed?
What would you have me to do then?
Can I make men live, whether they will or no?
Sirrah, go fetch me the poison which the
‘pothecary sent me.
Oh, see where duke Humphrey’s ghost doth
stand,
And stares me in the face. *Look, look, comb
down his hair!*
So, now he’s gone again: Oh, oh, oh!

‘ *War.* See, how the pangs of death do make him grin.
 * *Sal.* Disturb him not, let him pass peaceably.
 * *K. Hen.* Peace to his soul, if God’s good pleasure be!
 ‘ Lord cardinal, if thou think’st on heaven’s bliss,
 ‘ Hold up thy hand, make signal of thy hope.—
 ‘ He dies, and makes no sign; O, God, forgive him!
 ‘ *War.* So bad a death argues a monstrous life.
 ‘ *K. Hen.* Forbear to judge, for we are sinners all.—
 ‘ Close up his eyes, and draw the curtain close;
 ‘ And let us all to meditation.

Sal. See how the pangs of death do gripe his heart.
King. Lord cardinal, if thou diest assur’d of heavenly bliss,
 Hold up thy hand, and make some sign to us,
 [CARDINAL dies.
Oh, see he dies, and makes no sign at all.
 Oh, God, forgive his soul!
Sal. So bad an end did never none behold;
 But as his death, so was his life in all.
King. Forbear to judge, good Salisbury, forbear,
 For God will judge us all.
 Go, take him hence, and see his funerals perform’d.

We shall conclude our parallel extracts from ‘The Second Part of Henry VI.’ and the ‘Contention’ with the following portions of the scenes with Jack Cade:—

SECOND PART OF HENRY VI., ACT IV.,
 SCENE 2.

Drum. Enter CADE, DICK the butcher, SMITH the weaver, and others in great number.
 ‘ *Cade.* We John Cade, so termed of our supposed father,—
 ‘ *Dick.* Or rather, of stealing a cade of herrings.
 ‘ *Cade.* —for our enemies shall fall before us, inspired with the spirit of putting down kings and princes,—Command silence.
Dick. Silence!
Cade. My father was a Mortimer,—
Dick. He was an honest man, and a good bricklayer.
 ‘ *Cade.* My mother a Plantagenet,—
 ‘ *Dick.* I knew her well, she was a midwife.
 ‘ *Cade.* My wife descended of the Lacies,—
Dick. She was, indeed, a pedlar’s daughter, and sold many laces.
 ‘ *Smith.* But, now of late, not able to travel with her furred pack, she washes bucks here at home.
 ‘ *Cade.* Therefore am I of an honourable house.
Dick. Ay, by my faith, the field is honourable; and there was he born, under a hedge; for his father had never a house, but the cage.
Cade. Valiant I am.
 * *Smith.* ‘A must needs; for beggary is *valiant.
Cade. I am able to endure much.
Dick. No question of that; for I have seen him whipped three market-days together.
Cade. I fear neither sword nor fire.
Smith. He need not fear the sword, for his coat is of proof.

FIRST PART OF THE CONTENTION, ACT IV.,
 SCENE 2.

Enter JACK CADE, DICK BUTCHER, ROBIN, WILL, TOM, HARRY, and the rest, with long staves.
Cade. Proclaim silence.
All. Silence!
Cade. I, John Cade, so named for my valiancy.
Dick. Or rather for stealing of a cade of sprats.
Cade. My father was a Mortimer.
Dick. He was an honest man and a good bricklayer.
Cade. My mother was come of the Lacies.
Nick. She was a pedlar’s daughter indeed, and sold many laces.
Robin. And now, being not able to occupy her furred pack, she washeth bucks up and down the country.
Cade. Therefore I am honourably born.
Harry. Ay, the field is honourable, for he was born under a hedge, because his father had no other house but the cage.
Cade. I am able to endure much.
Geo. That’s true; I know he can endure anything, for I have seen him whipped two market-days together.
Cade. I fear neither sword nor fire.
Will. He need not fear the sword, for his coat is of proof.

Dick. But, methinks, he should stand in fear of fire, being burnt i' the hand for stealing of sheep.

Cade. Be brave then; for your captain is brave, and vows reformation. There shall be, in England, seven halfpenny loaves sold for a penny: the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops; and I will make it felony to drink small beer: all the realm shall be in common, and in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass. And, when I am king, (as king I will be)—

All. God save your majesty!

Cade. I thank you, good people;—there shall be no money; all shall eat and drink on my hoops; and I will apparel them all in one livery, that they may agree like brothers, and worship me their lord.

Dick. The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers.

Cade. Nay, that I mean to do. Is not this a lamentable thing, that of the skin of an innocent lamb should be made parchment? that parchment, being scribbled o'er, should undo a man? Some say the bee stings: but I say, 't is the bee's wax, for I did but seal once to a thing, and I was never mine own man since. How now? who's there?

Enter some, bringing in the Clerk of Chatham.

Smith. The clerk of Chatham: he can write and read, and cast accompt.

Cade. O, monstrous!

Smith. We took him setting of boys' coples.

Cade. Here 's a villain!

Smith. H'as a book in his pocket, with red letters in't.

Cade. Nay, then he is a conjurer.

Dick. Nay, he can make obligations, and write court-hand.

Cade. I am sorry for't: the man is a proper man, on mine honour; unless I find him guilty, he shall not die.—Come hither, sirrah, I must examine thee: What is thy name?

Clerk. Emmanuel.

Dick. They use to write it on the top of letters;—'T will go hard with you.

Cade. Let me alone:—Dost thou use to write thy name? or hast thou a mark to thyself, like an honest plain-dealing man?

Clerk. Sir, I thank God, I have been so well brought up, that I can write my name.

All. He hath confess'd: away with him; he 's a villain and a traitor.

Cade. Away with him, I say: hang him with his pen and inkhorn about his neck.

SECOND PART OF HENRY VI., ACT IV.,
SCENE 7.

Mess. My lord, a prize, a prize! here 's the lord Say, which sold the towns in France;

Dick. But methinks he should fear the fire, being so often burnt in the hand for stealing of sheep.

Cade. Therefore be brave, for your captain is brave, and vows reformation: you shall have seven halfpenny loaves for a penny, and the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops, and it shall be felony to drink small beer, if I be king, as king I will be.

All. God save your majesty!

Cade. I thank you, good people: you shall all eat and drink of my score, and go all in my livery; and we 'll have no writing, but the score and the tally, and there shall be no laws but such as come from my mouth.

Dick. We shall have sore laws then, for he was thrust into the mouth the other day.

Geo. Ay, and stinking law too, for his breath stinks so that one cannot abide it.

[Why, is't not a miserable thing, that of the skin of an innocent lamb parchment should be made, and then with a little blotting over with ink a man should undo himself? Some say 't is the bees that sting, but I say 't is their wax, for I am sure I never sealed to anything but once, and I was never mine own man since.]*

Enter WILL with the Clerk of Chatham.

Will. Oh, captain, a prize!

Cade. Who's that, Will?

Will. The clerk of Chatham: he can write and read and cast account. I took him setting of boys' copies; and he has a book in his pocket with red letters.

Cade. Zounds, he 's a conjurer! bring him hither. Now, sir, what 's your name?

Clerk. Emanuel, sir, an it shall please you.

Dick. It will go hard with you, I tell you, for they use to write that o'er the top of letters.

Cade. What, do you use to write your name? Or do you, as ancient forefathers have done, use the score and the tally?

Clerk. Nay, truly, sir, I praise God I have been so well brought up that I can write mine own name.

Cade. Oh, he has confessed; go hang him with his pen and inkhorn about his neck.

FIRST PART OF THE CONTENTION, ACT IV.,
SCENE 7.

Geo. My lord, a prize, a prize! here 's the lord Say, which sold the towns in France.

* This passage in brackets is found in Scene 7 of the fourth act.

*he that made us pay one and twenty fif-
*teens, and one shilling to the pound, the
*last subsidy.

Cade. Well, he shall be beheaded for it
'ten times.—Ah, thou say, thou serge, nay,
'thou buckram lord! now art thou within
'point blank of our jurisdiction regal. What
'canst thou answer to my majesty, for giving
'up of Normandy unto monsieur Basimecu,
'the dauphin of France? Be it known unto
'thee, by these presence, even the presence
'of lord Mortimer, that I am the besom that
'must sweep the court clean of such filth as
'thou art. Thou hast most traitorously cor-
'rupted the youth of the realm, in erecting a
'grammar-school: and whereas, before, our
'forefathers had no other books but the score
'and the tally, thou hast caused printing to
'be used; and, contrary to the king, his
'crown and dignity, thou hast built a paper-
'mill. It will be proved to thy face, that
'thou hast men about thee, that usually talk
'of a noun, and a verb; and such abominable
'words, as no christian ear can endure to
'hear. Thou hast appointed justices of
'peace, to call poor men before them about
'matters they were not able to answer.
'Moreover, thou hast put them in prison;
'and because they could not read, thou hast
'hanged them; when, indeed, only for that
'cause they have been most worthy to live.
'Thou dost ride on a foot-cloth, dost thou
'not?

Say. What of that?

Cade. Marry, thou oughtest not to let
thy horse wear a cloak, when honest men
than thou go in their hose and doublets.

Cade. Come hither, thou say, thou George
(serge), thou buckram lord! what answer
canst thou make unto my mightiness for
delivering up the towns in France to mon-
sieur Bus-mine-cue, the dolphin of France?
And more than so, thou hast most traitor-
ously erected a grammar-school to infect the
youth of the realm; and against the king's
crown and dignity thou hast built up a
paper-mill; nay, it will be said to thy face,
that thou keep'st men in thy house that daily
read of books with red letters, and talk of a
noun and verb, and such abominable words
as no christian ear is able to endure it. And
besides all this, thou hast appointed certain
justices of the peace, in every shire, to hang
honest men that steal for their living; and
because they could not read, thou hast hung
them up; only for which cause they were
most worthy to live.

Say. Yes, what of that?

Cade. Marry, I say, thou oughtest not to
let thy horse wear a cloak, when an honest
man than thyself goes in his hose and
doublet.

Though Malone, it will be observed, has been here somewhat liberal with his commas, he has given us very few asterisks. Shakspeare thus only contributed some half-dozen original lines to these scenes; and if we trace the lines marked with commas to the corresponding lines in the 'Contention,' we shall find that he has not contributed a single new point. According to Malone's theory, then, there was "some author who preceded Shakspeare" who may justly claim the merit of having given birth in England to the very highest comedy—not the mere comedy of manners, not the comedy of imitation, but that comedy which, having its roots imbedded in the most profound philosophy, is still as fresh as at the hour when it was first written, and will endure through every change in the outward forms of social life. For what is the comedy which is here before us, written, as it would seem, by "some author who preceded Shakspeare?" Is it the comedy of Marlowe? or of Greene? or of Peele? or of the latter two, to whom Malone ascribes these plays?—or of Lodge, who wrote in conjunction with

Greene?—or of Lyly?—or Kyd?—or Nashe?—or is it to be traced to some anonymous author, such as he who produced ‘The Famous Victories?’ We are utterly at a loss where to assign the authorship of this comedy upon Malone’s theory. We turn to the works of the authors who preceded Shakspeare, and we find abundance indeed of low buffoonery, but scarcely a spark of that universal wit and humour which, all things considered, is the very rarest amongst the gifts of genius. Those who are familiar with the works of the earliest English dramatists will know that our assertion is not made at random. Without entering at present more minutely into this question we may support our opinion of the character of the comedy which “preceded Shakspeare” by that of a valued friend, extracted from a few pages of critique on the genius of our poet, as comprehensive as it is beautiful. “He first informed our drama with true wit and humour. Of boisterous, uproarious, blackguard merriment and buffoonery there is no want in our earlier dramatists, nor of mere gibing and jeering and vulgar personal satire; but of true airy wit there is little or none. In the comedies of Shakspeare the wit plays and dazzles like dancing light. This seems to have been the excellence, indeed, for which he was most admired by his contemporaries; for quickness and felicity of repartee they placed him above all other play-writers. But his humour was still more his own than his wit. In that rich but delicate and subtle spirit of drollery, moistening and softening whatever it touches like a gentle oil, and penetrating through all enfoldings and rigorous encrustments into the kernel of the ludicrous that is in everything, which mainly created Malvolio, and Shallow, and Slender, and Dogberry, and Verges, and Bottom, and Lancelot, and Launce, and Costard, and Touchstone, and a score of other clowns, fools, and simpletons, and which, gloriously overflowing in Falstaff, makes his wit exhilarate like wine, Shakspeare has had almost as few successors as he had predecessors.”* We believe then that the man “who first informed our drama with true wit and humour” was the only man of whose existence we have any record who could have written the Jack Cade scenes of the ‘Contention.’

The additions which, in ‘The *Second* Part of Henry VI.,’ we find made to the original play, are pretty equally spread through all the scenes. The passages between Henry and Margaret in the third act, and the scene of Suffolk’s murder in the fourth act, have upon the whole received the greatest elaboration. But in ‘The

* Pictorial History of England, vol. iii., p. 589.

Third Part of Henry VI. we have whole scenes taken from the 'Contention' with scarcely an additional line; and the lines which are added come, for the most part, in large masses. The alterations are sometimes, too, of the very slightest character. Compare, for example, the Parliament scene in the first act, the scene of the death of Rutland, that in which York is taken prisoner and murdered, the stabbing of young Edward in the field at Tewksbury, and the scene between Gloster and Henry in the Tower. These, be it observed, are the great scenes of the play. It is unnecessary for us to give parallel examples of these; for the critical reader may now readily compare the 'Henry VI.' with the 'Contention.' The additions, we have said, come in large masses in the Third Part. We instance the celebrated soliloquy of Henry in the second act, which is expanded from thirteen lines to fifty-four, and of which the additions are evidently not of Shakspeare's earliest period. The scene between Henry and the Gamekeepers is also greatly expanded; so the soliloquy of Gloster at the end of the third act; and so the scene with Lewis of France. These elaborated scenes are, as compared with those which remain unaltered, the minor scenes. Upon the whole it is clear to us that when Shakspeare revised the play he found less necessity for a general change in the Second Part than in the First. The original work had been performed with greater technical skill.

§ IV.

THE additions which Shakspeare undoubtedly made to 'The First Part of the Contention,' and 'The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York,' as they appear in the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.,' ought, upon any just theory that the original plays were the composition of a different author, to be recognised by a distinctive character. Malone was aware that, without such a distinctive character could be shown, his arithmetical exhibition of the amended lines and the additional lines would go for little. He therefore makes a bold statement, which he does not take the slightest trouble to verify:—

"I have said that certain passages in the Second and Third Parts of 'King Henry VI.' are ascertained to be Shakspeare's by a peculiar phraseology. This peculiar phraseology, without a single exception, distinguishes such parts of these plays as are found in the folio, and not in the *elder* quarto dramas, of which the phraseology, as well as the versification, is of a different colour. This observa-

tion applies not only to the new original matter produced by Shakspeare, but to his alteration of the old."

If this peculiarity of phraseology could be shown to exist only in the amended portions of the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' as compared with those portions which are untouched, we are ready to admit that the received theory would remain unshaken in a very material point. But the assertion is utterly without foundation. Malone himself does not attempt to support his assertion by any examples. He flies off from the general question, and goes to the "inaccuracies," which he holds form a distinguishing "peculiarity" of Shakspeare, and "other minute marks of his hand," such as using adjectives adverbially—a characteristic not of Shakspeare alone, but of every writer of his time. In the same way he maintains that "in our author's genuine plays he frequently borrows from himself, the same thoughts being found in nearly the same expressions in different pieces;" but he asserts that, in the Second and Third Parts, such resemblances, with the exception of three passages, are only found between the *additional* passages and the genuine plays of Shakspeare. 'The First Part of Henry VI.' is assumed to stand upon the same ground, for he gives *one* example of "coincidency" between that play and 'Henry V.' as against his hypothesis. Malone's citation of passages in the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' in which these resemblances may be traced, includes only *new* passages, of course. We hold that, if this want of accurate resemblance of manner could be established, the argument would still be worth little whilst there was unity of action, and of character, in the plays themselves, and general identity with the manner of Shakspeare. But it is utterly worthless if we show that there are many passages in 'The *First Part* of Henry VI.' and the two Parts of the '*Contention*' in which the same thought and expression may be traced to Shakspeare's other works. The author of the 'Dissertation' has been extremely careful to point out the resemblances, in his own notes, between the *new* lines of the '*Contention*' and passages in various plays of Shakspeare; and has even traced the associations which would naturally present themselves to the poet's mind, as a proof that *he* wrote the new lines only. We will divert our readers with an example:—

"And as the butcher takes away the calf,
And binds the wretch, and beats it when it strays,
Bearing it to the bloody slaughterhouse."

"In perusing these lines," says the solemn commentator, "one cannot help recollecting the trade which his father has by some been

supposed to have followed." We proceed to exhibit, not the *one* passage of 'The First Part of Henry VI.' in which there is "coincidence" of thought and expression with Shakspeare's other plays, nor the *three* other passages of the two Parts of the 'Contention;' but we put some thirty or forty passages of this character before our readers; and we leave to others to assign its true name to the assertion of Malone, that these resemblances can be found only in what he held Shakspeare to have written of these dramas,—that is, in one passage of 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' and in three of the unmarked lines of the Second and Third Parts.

FROM HENRY VI., Part I.

"Scarlet hypocrite"—(addressed to a cardinal).
 "Good God! that nobles should such *stomachs* bear."
 "Rather than I would be so *vile-esteem'd*."
 "No, no, I am but *shadow* of myself."
 "I love no *colours*."
 "Were growing *time* once ripen'd to my will."
 "My *book of memory*."
 "My *blood-drinking* hate."
 "Like *lamps* whose *wasting oil* is spent."
 "Thou dost then wrong me; as the slaughterer doth,
 Which giveth many wounds, when one will kill."
 "Our *sacks* shall be a mean to *sack* a city."
 "Lean *famine*, quartering *steel*, and climbing *fire*."
 "Who now is *girdled* with a *waist* of iron."
 "Now thou art come unto a *feast of death*."
 "'Tis but the *short'ning of my life one day*."
 "Thou *antic death*, which *laughs us here to scorn*."
 "Marriage is a matter of more worth
 Than to be dealt with by *attorneyship*."

FROM THE FIRST PART OF THE
 CONTENTION.

"She bears a *duke's whole revenues on her back*."
 (Malone has marked this as a new line with an asterisk, the only difference being that *whole* is omitted.)
 "Mail'd up in shame, with *papers* on my back."

"Scarlet sin"—(*Henry VIII.*, addressed to a cardinal).

—"He was a man
 Of an unbounded *stomach*." *Henry VIII.*
 "'T is better to be vile than *vile-esteem'd*."
Sonnets.
 "I am the *shadow* of poor Buckingham."
Henry VIII.

"I do fear colourable *colours*."

Love's Labour's Lost.
 — "Stay the very *ripping* of the *time*."
Merchant of Venice.
 — "The *table of my memory*." *Hamlet.*

"Dry sorrow *drinks our blood*."
Romeo and Juliet.
 "My *oil-dried lamp*, and *time-bewasted* light."
Richard II.

"Like to a murdering-piece, in many places
 Gives me superfluous death." *Hamlet.*

"Here's that will *sack* a city." *Henry IV.*
 (Falstaff showing his bottle of *sack*.)

"Leash'd in like hounds, should *famine*,
sword, and *fire*." *Henry V.*

"That as a *waist* do *girdle* you about."
King John.

"This *feast of battle*."
Richard II.

"Heaven *shorten* Harry's happy *life one day*."
Henry V.

"Keeps *death* his court, and there the *antic*
sits,
Scoffing his state." *Richard II.*

"Be the *attorney* of my love to her."
Richard III.

"Have broke their *backs* with *laying manors*
on them." *Henry VIII.*

"*Bearing* their *birthrights* proudly on their
backs." *King John.*

"Like a perjure, wearing *papers*."
Love's Labour's Lost.

" Oft have I seen a timely-parted *ghost*."
(Johnson observes that what is true of
a *corpse* is here applied to the *soul*.)

" Sometimes he calls upon duke Humphrey's ghost,
And *whispers to his pillow*, as to him."

" Can I make men live, whether they will or no?"

" Then shall I *charm* thee—hold thy lavish tongue."

FROM THE SECOND PART OF THE
CONTENTION.

" The sight of any of the house of York
Is as a fury to torment my soul."

" With purple *faulchion painted* to the hilts
In *blood* of those whom he had slaughtered."

" Wouldst have me weep? why, so, thou
hast thy wish,
For raging winds blow up a storm of tears,
And when the rage allays the rain begins."

" And if thou tell the story well,
Upon my soul, the hearers will shed tears."

" Bring forth that fatal *screech-owl* to our
house,

That nothing *sung* to us but blood and *death*."

" *You have no children*, devils."

" What valiant foemen, like to autumn's *corn*,
Have we *mow'd* down?"

" And now what rests, but that we spend the
time

With stately triumphs and mirthful comic
shows?"

" The *ghosts* they have depos'd," *Richard II.*

— " *Damn'd spirits* all

That in cross ways and floods have *burial*."

Hamlet.

— " *Infected minds*

To their deaf *pillows* will discharge their secrets."

Macbeth.

" Think you, I bear the shears of destiny?
Have I commandment on the pulse of life?"

King John.

" Go to; *charm your tongue*." *Othello.*

" A dog of the house of Montague moves me."
Romeo and Juliet.

" With pennons *painted* in the *blood* of Har-
fleur." *Henry V.*

" This windy tempest, till it blow up rain,
Held back his sorrow's tide, to make it more;
At last it rains, and busy winds give o'er."

Lucrece.

" This shower, blown up by tempest of the
soul." *King John.*

" Tell thou the lamentable tale of me,
And send the hearers weeping to their beds."

Richard II.

" Out on you, *owls!* nothing but *songs* of
death!" *Richard III.*

" He has no children." *Macbeth.*

— " *Mowing*, like *grass*,

Your fresh-fair virgins, and your flowering
infants." *Henry V.*

" Come, let us go; we will include all jars
With triumphs, mirth, and rare solemnity."

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

If Malone, then, as we have seen, suppresses the resemblances between passages which he holds were not written by Shakspeare and passages in his undoubted works, it is not unreasonable to expect that in the same disingenuous spirit he should have concealed the resemblances which also exist between the new and the old portions of the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' and the new portions as compared with the entire First Part. It is important to note these particulars.

There is no opinion more commonly received, and justly, than that of Shakspeare's dramas being remarkably free from classical and mythological allusions as compared with the works of his contemporaries; and it has long been the fashion to ascribe this absence of the peculiarity which distinguished all other productions of his day to his want of the necessary learning. Mr. Collier says, "His (Greene's) usual fault, more discoverable in his plays than in his

poems, is an absence of simplicity; but his pedantic classical references, frequently without either taste or discretion, he had in common with the other scribbling scholars of the time. It was Shakespeare's good fortune to be in a great degree without the knowledge, and therefore, if on no other account, without the defect."* Malone proves that 'The First Part of Henry VI.' could not have been written by Shakspeare, because it abounds with such references:—

"It is very observable that in 'The First Part of King Henry VI.' there are more allusions to mythology, to classical authors, and to ancient and modern history, than, I believe, can be found in any one piece of our author's written on an English story; and that these allusions are introduced very much in the same manner as they are introduced in the plays of Greene, Peele, Lodge, and other dramatists who preceded Shakspeare; that is, they do not naturally arise out of the subject, but seem to be inserted merely to show the writer's learning."

Malone then proceeds to select twenty-two of the "most remarkable" of such passages from 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' taking Dr. Johnson's conjectural "Berenice" as one of them. It is our intention to print these twenty-two passages as Malone gives them, placing, however, by their side nearly as many passages from other plays, in which there are not only classical allusions, but Latin quotations. This will at least show the fashion of the times. The first column contains the passages from 'Henry VI., Part I. :'

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Mars his true moving, even as in the heavens,
So in the earth, to this day is not known.</p> <p>2. A far more glorious star thy soul will make
Than Julius Cæsar, or bright [Berenice].</p> <p>3. Was Mahomet inspired with a dove?</p> <p>4. Helen, the mother of great Constantine,
Nor yet saint Philip's daughters, were like thee.</p> <p>5. Froisard, a countryman of ours, records,
&c.</p> <p>6. ——— And, like thee, [Nero],
Play on the lute, beholding the towna
burning.</p> <p>7. The spirit of deep prophecy she hath,
Exceeding the nine Sibyls of old Rome.</p> <p>8. A witch, by fear, not force, like Hannibal,
Drives back our troops.</p> <p>9. Divinest creature, Astræa's daughter.</p> <p>10. ——— Adonis' gardens,</p> | <p>1. Methinks the realms of England, France,
and Ireland,
Bear that proportion to my flesh and
blood,
As did the fatal brand Althea burn'd,
Unto the prince's heart of Calydon.</p> <p>2. Aio te, Æacida, Romanos vincere posse.</p> <p>3. Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?</p> <p>4. Medice teipsum.</p> <p>5. To sit and witch me, as Ascanius did,
When he to madding Dido would unfold
His father's acts, commenc'd in burning
Troy?</p> <p>6. And, like ambitious Sylla, overgorg'd
With gobbets of thy mother's bleeding
heart.</p> <p>7. Penè gelidus timor occupat artus.</p> <p>8. Into as many gobbets will I cut it,
As wild Medea young Absyrtus did.</p> <p>9. Dii faciant, laudis summa sit ista tuæ.</p> <p>10. Helen of Greece was fairer far than thou</p> |
|--|--|

* Annals of the Stage, vol. iii., p. 151.

- That one day bloom'd, and fruitful were the next.
- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>11. A statelier pyramis to her I'll rear,
Than Rhodope's or Memphis' ever was.</p> <p>12. ——— An urn more precious
Than the rich-jewell'd coffer of Darius.</p> <p>13. I shall as famous be by this exploit,
As Scythian Thomyris by Cyrus' death.</p> <p>14. I thought I should have seen some Hercules,
A second Hector, for his grim aspect.</p> <p>15. Nestor-like aged, in an age of care.</p> <p>16. Then follow thou thy desperate sire of Crete,
Thou Icarus.</p> <p>17. Where is the great Alcides of the field?</p> <p>18. Now am I like that proud insulting ship,
That Cæsar and his fortune bare at once.</p> <p>19. Is Talbot slain; the Frenchman's only scourge,
Your kingdom's terror, and black Nemesis?</p> <p>20. Thou mayst not wander in that labyrinth;
There Minotaurs and ugly treasons lurk.</p> <p>21. See how the ugly witch doth bend her brows,
As if, with Circe, she would change shape.</p> <p>22. ——— Thus he goes,
As did the youthful Paris once to Greece;
With hope to find the like event in love.</p> | <p>Although thy husband may be Menelaus;
And ne'er was Agamemnon's brother wrong'd
By that false woman, as this king by thee.</p> <p>11. And, if we thrive, promise them such rewards
As victors wear at the Olympian games.</p> <p>12. And so obsequious will thy father be,
Sad for the loss of thee, having no more,
As Priam was for all his valiant sons.</p> <p>13. The tiger will be mild, while she doth mourn;
And Nero will be tainted with remorse,
To hear, and see, her complaints, her brinish tears.</p> <p>14. I'll play the orator as well as Nestor,
Deceive more slyly than Ulysses could,
And, like a Sinon, take another Troy.</p> <p>15. That as Ulysses, and stout Diomedes,
With sleight and manhood stole to Rhesus' tents,
And brought from thence the Thracian fatal steeds.</p> <p>16. Like to his island, girt in with the ocean,
Or modest Dian circled with her nymphs.</p> <p>17. To keep that oath were more impiety
Than Jephtha's, when he sacrificed his daughter.</p> <p>18. And now like Ajax Telamonius.</p> |
|--|---|

It will be obvious to the careful reader that we have taken these eighteen passages, in which there are such "allusions to mythology, to classical authors," &c., as are rarely found in Shakspeare, from the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' But it may not be equally apparent that *we have selected such passages only as are additions to the 'Contention'*—*passages all marked with Malone's asterisk*—all, without an exception, held to be contributed by Shakspeare. It is scarcely necessary to point out that the exhibition of such passages at once destroys Malone's argument, that 'The First Part of Henry VI.' could not have been written by Shakspeare because it abounds with similar allusions; and further shows that there are peculiarities in Shakspeare's undoubted portion of these dramas which are totally different from the ordinary characteristics of his manner. We dwell little upon the fact that these eighteen passages which we have given are conclusive against the theory of Shakspeare's want of knowledge. They prove, incontestably, that as a young writer he had the knowledge, and was not unwilling to display it; but that, with that wonderful judgment which was as remarkable as the prodigious range of his imaginative powers, he

soon learnt to avoid the pedantry to which inferior men so pertinaciously clung in the pride of their scholarship.

Malone, we have seen, states distinctly that the *versification* of the new portions of 'Henry VI.' is of a different colour from the old portions of the 'Contention.' He holds, farther, that the versification of 'The First Part of Henry VI.' is precisely of the same character as the two Parts of the 'Contention;' and upon this ground, combined with that of the display of learning which we have already noticed, he rejects 'The First Part of Henry VI.' altogether from being Shakspeare's, and adopts as Shakspeare's only the new passages in the Second and Third Parts:—

"The versification of this play ('Henry VI. Part I.')

appears to me clearly of a different colour from that of all our author's genuine dramas, while, at the same time, it resembles that of many of the plays produced before the time of Shakspeare.

"In all the tragedies written before his time, or just when he commenced author, a certain stately march of versification is very observable. The sense concludes or pauses almost uniformly at the end of every line; and the verse has scarcely a redundant syllable. As the reader may not have any of these pieces at hand (by the possession of which, however, his library would not be much enriched), I shall add a few instances,—the first that occur."*

The quotations which Malone has subjoined are very numerous, occupying four closely printed pages. They all go to show, what we shall subsequently endeavour to establish, that the blank-verse which, in the hands of the matured Shakspeare, became the most exquisitely modulated instrument of harmonious utterance, was, before he fully tried its power and its compass, a rude, and at the best a monotonous, instrument,—a vehicle of verse that was little better than measured prose. Mr. Collier exhibits the character of our early blank-verse with a knowledge and exactness very superior to Malone:—"It will be evident that the long use of rhyme, in which the ear waited for the recurrence of the corresponding sound, led at first to the formation and employment of what may be termed couplets in blank-verse; in which the pauses occurred at the end of the lines, and the sense was only completed with the completion of the couplet."†

The four pages of quotations which Malone exhibits show most decisively that, about the time when 'The First Part of Henry VI.' and the 'Contention' may be held to have been written, our dra-

* Dissertation, p. 560.

† Annals of the Stage, vol. iii., p. 129.

matic poetry, without a single exception, was formed upon one model of versification. The prevailing theory therefore is, that Shakspeare could not have written those plays, because, in his undoubted works, a different character of versification prevails. Our belief, on the contrary, being that Shakspeare did write these dramas at a very early age, we have no difficulty in believing also that his first efforts were formed upon existing models of versification. The discovery of the powers of his instrument could only come from its habitual use. Versification is as much perfected by practice in the poet as colouring in the painter; but when did a poet or a painter, in his first attempts, produce a new system of versification, or a new system of colouring, till he had learnt by practice the imperfection of existing models? Holding the two Parts of the 'Contention' to be Shakspeare's originally, but written by him before 1590, we are prepared, without any abatement of our admiration of his early genius, to find him employing, though not exclusively, the versification of his time, in which "the sense concludes or pauses almost uniformly at the end of every line, and the verse has scarcely ever a redundant syllable." But in these plays we also occasionally find a freedom and rapidity which we in vain seek for in other historical plays of the period. Upon this point we shall not at present dwell. We are about to make a selection from some of the passages quoted by Malone from the early plays, exhibiting them with some parallel passages from the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.:'—

1. "My lord of Gloucester, and lord Mortimer,
To do you honour in your sovereign's eyes,
That, as we hear, is newly come a land
From Palestine, with all his men of war,
(The poor remainder of the royal fleet,
Preserv'd by miracle in Sicill road,)
Go mount your coursers, meet him on the way:
Pray him to spur his steed, minutes and hours,
Until his mother see her princely son,
Shining in glory of his safe return."

Edward I., by GEORGE PEELE.

2. "The work that Ninus rear'd at Babylon,
The brzen walls fram'd by Semiramis,
Carv'd out like to the portal of the sun,
Shall not be such as rings the English strand
From Dover to the market-place of Rye.

England's rich monarch, brave Plantagenet,
The Pyren mountains swelling above the clouds,

That ward this wealthy Castile in with walls,
Could not detain the beauteous Eleanor;
But, hearing of the fame of Edward's youth,

1. "*Glo.* Now, lords, my choler being over-blown,
With walking once about the quadrangle,
I come to talk of commonwealth affairs.
As for your spiteful false objections,
Prove them, and I lie open to the law:
But God in mercy so deal with my soul,
As I in duty love my king and country!
But, to the matter that we have in hand:—
I say, my sovereign, York is meetest man
To be your regent in the realm of France."

Henry VI., Part II.

2. "*K. Hen.* Ay, Margaret; my heart is drown'd with grief,
Whose flood begins to flow within mine eyes;
My body round engirt with misery;
For what's more miserable than discontent?
Ah, uncle Humphrey! in thy face I see
The map of honour, truth, and loyalty;
And yet, good Humphrey, is the hour to come,
That e'er I prov'd thee false, or fear'd thy faith.
What low'ring star now envies thy estate,

She dared to brave Neptunus' haughty pride,
And brave the brunt of froward Eolus."

Friar Bacon, by ROBERT GREENE.

3. "King. Thus far, ye English peers,
have we display'd

Our waving ensigns with a happy war;
Thus nearly hath our furious rage reveng'd
My daughter's death upon the traitorous Scot;
And now before Dunbar our camp is pitch'd,
Which, if it yield not to our compromise,
The plough shall furrow where the palace
stood,

And fury shall envy so high a power,
That mercy shall be banish'd from our sword.

Doug. What seeks the English king?

King. Scot, ope those gates, and let me
enter in.

Submit thyself and thine unto my grace,
Or I will put each mother's son to death,
And lay this city level with the ground."

James IV., by ROBERT GREENE.

4. "Barons of England, and my noble
lords,

Though God and fortune have bereft from us
Victorious Richard, scourge of infidels,
And clad this land in stole of dismal hue,
Yet give me leave to joy, and joy you all,
That from this womb hath sprung a second
hope,

A king that may in rule and virtue both
Succeed his brother in his empery."

The Troublesome Reign of King John.

As the examples of Shaksperian learning which we have recently given are all taken from the *additions* to 'The Contention,' so are the examples of early Shaksperian versification also taken from the *new passages*. No one attempts to doubt that these new passages are by Shakspeare. If, then, the same structure of versification prevails in some of the additional passages as prevails in the old portions,—and of this we could have furnished many similar examples,—it follows, almost conclusively, that the argument against Shakspeare being the original author of the three plays, on account of their versification, is as untenable as that he was not the author of the First Part on account of its learning.

Some pages of Malone's 'Dissertation' are devoted to the proof that "the supposition of imperfect or spurious copies cannot account for the variations" between the two Parts of 'The Contention' and the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' We quite agree with him here. The argument sustains itself without any proof; for no theory of unskilful copyists, or of auditors obtaining a copy from repeated hearings, would account for such changes as we have exhibited between the elder and later plays. "We are compelled to maintain," adds Malone, "either that Shakspeare wrote *two* plays

That these great lords, and Margaret our
queen,

Do seek subversion of thy harmless life?"

Henry VI., Part II.

3. "Q. Mar. Who can be patient in such
extremes?

Ah, wretched man! 'would I had died a maid,
And never seen thee, never borne thee son,
Seeing thou hast prov'd so unnatural a father!
Hath he deserv'd to lose his birthright thus?
Hast thou but lov'd him half so well as I;
Or felt that pain which I did for him once;
Or nourish'd him, as I did with my blood;
Thou wouldst have left thy dearest heart-
blood there,

Rather than made that savage duke thine
heir,

And disinherited thine only son."

Henry VI., Part III.

4. "York. The army of the queen hath
got the field:

My uncles both are slain in rescuing me;
And all my followers to the eager foe
Turn back, and fly, like ships before the wind,
Or lambs pursued by hungry starved wolves.
My sons—God knows what hath bechanced
them."

Henry VI., Part III.

on the story which forms his 'Second Part of King Henry VI.'—a hasty sketch, and an entirely distinct and more finished performance—or else we must acknowledge that he formed that piece on a foundation laid by another writer; that is, upon the quarto copy of 'The First Part of the Contention,' &c.; and the same argument applies to 'The Third Part of King Henry VI.,' which is founded on 'The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York.'"* This is the question, certainly, to which we confine ourselves, with a slight difference in terms. We hold that the quarto copy of each Part of the 'Contention' is a sketch, if we may so describe an artist's first picture, as compared with a later and more finished copy of the same general design. But it is not necessarily "a hasty sketch." This is, however, immaterial. But is the case of the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' without a parallel? Has not Shakspeare, in some of his undoubted plays, made a sketch of each, which was afterwards worked up into a "more finished performance"? Are there not existing sketches of 'Romeo and Juliet,' of 'Henry V.,' of 'The Merry Wives of Windsor,' and of 'Hamlet'?† The latter is the most important parallel example. The Duke of Devonshire's copy of the edition of 1603 was unknown to Malone; had it been familiar to him, as it now is to all Shaksperian students by its republication, would Malone have proved that Shakspeare's 'Hamlet' was formed "on a foundation laid by another writer"? We have no hesitation in saying most distinctly that there is not a single principle of "internal evidence" by which Malone's hypothesis is supported, that the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' "were not originally written by Shakspeare," which could not be applied to prove that the 'Hamlet' of 1603 did not also own some other "literary parent;" and that Shakspeare only "new versified, new modelled, transposed many of the parts, and greatly amplified and improved the whole." We will endeavour very briefly to propound an hypothesis to this effect, *after Malone's fashion*. We take the words which he applies to the 'Henry VI. ;' the difference is only in a name. "That the reader may have *the whole of the subject before him*, we shall here transcribe" a speech from the second scene of the first act of 'Hamlet,' "together with the corresponding scene in the original play; and also a speech" in the third act, "with the original speech on which it is formed. The first specimen will serve to show the method taken by Shakspeare, where he only new polished the language of the old play, rejecting some part of the dialogue, and making

* Dissertation, p. 582.

† See Introductory Notices to those plays.

some slight additions to the part which he retained : the second is a striking proof of his facility and vigour of composition, which has happily expanded a thought, comprised originally in a short speech, into " fifty-nine " lines, none of which appear feeble or superfluous."*

FROM THE OLD HAMLET, SIG. B 3, EDIT. 1603.

Cor. † Farewell ! how now, Ophelia ? what's the news with you ?

Oph. O, my dear father, such a change in nature,

So great an alteration in a prince,
So pitiful to him, fearful to me,
A maiden's eye ne'er looked on.

Cor. Why, what's the matter, my Ophelia ?

Oph. O young prince Hamlet, the only flower of Denmark,

He is bereft of all the wealth he had ;
That jewel that adorn'd his feature most
Is filch'd and stol'n away, his wit's bereft him.

He found me walking in the gallery all alone :
There comes he to me, with a distracted look,
His garters lagging down, his shoes untied,
And fix'd his eyes so steadfast on my face,
As if they had vow'd, this is their latest object.
Small while he stood, but gripes me by the wrist,

And there he holds my pulse till with a sigh
He doth unclasp his hold, and parts away
Silent, as is the mid time of the night :
And as he went, his eye was still on me,
For thus his head over his shoulder look'd.
He seem'd to find the way without his eyes,
For out of doors he went without their help,
And so did leave me.

Cor. Mad for thy love.

What, have you given him any cross words of late ?

Oph. I did repel his letters, deny his gifts,
As you did charge me.

Cor. Why, that hath made him mad :

By Heav'n, 't is as proper for our age to cast
Beyond ourselves, as 't is for the younger sort
To leave their wantonness. Well, I am sorry
That I was so rash : but what remedy ?
Let's to the king : this madness may prove,
Though wild a while, yet more true to thy
love.

FROM HAMLET, ACT I., SCENE 2.

' *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 Heaven ?

* *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 ankle ;

* 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.* Go with me ; I will go seek the king.

* This is the very ecstasy of love ;

* Whose violent property foredoes 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

* Dissertation, p. 572.

† Corambis, in the old ' Hamlet,' is the Polonius of the later play.

FROM THE OLD HAMLET, SIG. G, EDIT. 1603.

Ham. Why, what a dunghill idiot slave
am I!

Why, these players here draw water from
eyes:

For Hecuba! why, what is Hecuba to him,
or he to Hecuba?

What would he do, and if he had my loss?
His father murder'd, and a crown bereft him?
He would turn all his tears to drops of blood,
Amaze the standers-by with his laments,
Strike more than wonder in the judicial ears,
Confound the ignorant, and make mute the
wise:

Indeed his passion would be general.

Yet I, like to an ass and John-a-dreams,
Having my father murder'd by a villain,
Stand still, and let it pass. Why, sure I am
a coward;

Who plucks me by the beard, or twits my
nose?

Gives me the lie i' th' throat down to the
lungs?

Sure I should take it, or else I have no gall,
Or by this I should a fatted all the region
kites

With this slave's offal, this damned villain,
Traucherous, bawdy, murderous villain!

Why, this is brave; that I, the son of my
dear father,

Should like a scallion, like a very drab,
Thus rail in words. About, my brain!

I have heard that guilty creatures, sitting at a
play,

Hath, by the very cunning of the scene,
Confess'd a murder committed long before.

This spirit that I have seen may be the devil,
And out of my weakness and my melan-
choly,

As he is very potent with such men,
Doth seek to damn me. I will have sounder
proofs:

The play 's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

*I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but
trifle,

*And meant to wrack thee; but, beshrew my
jealousy!

'It seems it is as proper to our age

'To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,

'As it is common for the younger sort

'To lack 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.

FROM HAMLET, ACT III., SCENE 3.

'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 whole conceit,

*That, from her working, all his visage
warm'd;

*Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,

*A broken voice, and his whole function
suing

*Which forms to his conceit? And all for
nothing!

For Hecuba?

What 's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

'That he should weep for her? What would
he do,

*Had he the motive and the cue for passion

*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, 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!

'Why, I should take it: for it cannot be,

'But I am pigeon liver'd, and lack gall

*To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,

I should have fatted all the region kites

'With this slave's offal: Bloody, bawdy vil-
lain!

'Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kind-
less villain!

*O vengeance.

'What an ass am I! say, surc, this is most
brave;

'That I, the son of the dear murder'd,

*Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,

' Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with
 words,
 ' And fall a cursing like a very drab,
 ' A scullion!
 ' Fie upon 't! foh! About, my brains! I
 have heard
 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 but blench,
 ' I know my course. The spirit that I have
 seen
 ' May be the devil: and the devil hath power
 * To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and per-
 haps,
 Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
 (As he is very potent with such spirits,)
 ' Abuses me to damn me: I'll have^e grounds
 ' More relative than this: The play 'a' the
 thing
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the
 king.

The reader then having "the *whole* subject before him" in these extracts (those who will take the trouble to read Malone's 'Dissertation' will know that we are not over-stating his proofs), we ask, as Malone has asked with reference to the 'Henry VI.,' if there is any similarity between the "*versification*" of the old play and "the undoubted performances of Shakspeare;" whether there is any similarity in the "*diction*;" whether it is not clear, from this isolated view of the matter, that the old 'Hamlet' was the work of "some author who preceded Shakspeare;" and whether any further proof of this limited nature is required to show "with what expression, animation, and splendour of colouring, he filled up the outline that had been sketched by a preceding writer"?* In giving these extracts, "all those lines which he adopted without any alteration are printed in the usual manner; those which he altered or expanded are distinguished by inverted commas; and to all the lines entirely composed by himself asterisks are prefixed. The total number of lines in" these extracts from "our author's" 'Hamlet' is 106: "of these, as I conceive," 14 "lines were written by some author or authors who preceded Shakspeare;" 36 "were formed by him on the foundations laid by his predecessors; and" 56 "lines were entirely his own composition."†

* Dissertation, p. 376.

† Dissertation, p. 572.

And what does this calculation, and what do these internal proofs that Shakspeare did not write the original 'Hamlet,' *omit*? They entirely neglect to show that the first, informing, poetical idea was in the original; that entire scenes are the same in the original and the amended play, with very slight verbal alterations; that the whole of the action is in the original; that the characterization generally, and especially the character of 'Hamlet,' has undergone no change; that the alterations, all of them, exhibit a wonderful advance in technical skill; and that all the differences in versification and diction, as compared with Shakspeare's maturer works, only show that the 'Hamlet' was a very early play,* possessing the peculiarities of the transition state of the drama, but distinguished by more characteristic peculiarities of individual genius, such as belonged to no other writer of that period. This is the theory which we maintain with regard to the two Parts of the 'Contention.' These dramas, and the previous drama of the series, are not to be judged of, any more than the old 'Hamlet,' by a comparison of their diction and versification, in the parts which exhibit least skill, with the finished parts of Shakspeare's later works. They belong to a period which more or less impressed its own character upon them, as upon every contemporary dramatic production.

§ V.

At the period when, as we learn from Nashe's pamphlet, published in 1592, 'The First Part of Henry VI.' was amongst the most popular of theatrical exhibitions, the public stages derived their chief attraction from that class of plays which we call Histories. In the same pamphlet Nashe describes the plays to the performance of which "in the afternoon" resorted "men that are their own masters, as gentlemen of the court, the inns of court, and the number of captains and soldiers about London." To this audience, then,—not the rudest or least refined, however idle and dissipated,—the representation of some series of events connected with the history of their country had a charm which, according to Nashe, was to divert them from grosser excitements. He says,—“Nay, what if I prove plays to be no extreme, but a rare exercise of virtue! First, for the *subject* of them; for the most part it is bor-

* See the Introductory Notice to 'Hamlet,' and especially the quotations from Lodge and Nashe, in reference to an *old* 'Hamlet.'

rowed out of our English Chronicles, wherein our forefathers' valiant acts, that have been long buried in rusty brass and worm-eaten books, are revived, and they themselves raised from the grave of oblivion, and brought to plead their aged honours in open presence; than which, what can be a sharper reproof to these degenerate days of ours? In plays all cosenages, all cunning drifts, over-gilded with outward holiness, all stratagems of war, all the canker-worms that breed in the rust of peace, are most lively anatomised. They show the ill success of treason, the fall of hasty climbers, the wretched end of usurpers, the misery of civil dissention, and how just God is evermore in punishing murder. And to prove every one of these allegations could I propound the circumstances of *this play and that*, if I meant to handle this theme otherwise than *obiter*." Nashe, as we have seen, has referred to two plays as examples of this attractive class of composition. If 'The First Part of Henry VI.' and 'The Famous Victories' be the plays to which he refers, we have sufficient evidence that the poetical treatment of an historical subject was not absolutely necessary to its success. Nothing can be ruder or more inartificial than the dramatic conduct of 'The Famous Victories;' nothing grosser than the taste of many of its dialogues. The old Coventry play of 'Hock Tuesday,' exhibited before Queen Elizabeth in Kenilworth Castle in 1575, did not more essentially differ in the conduct of its action from the structure of a regular historical drama, than such a play as 'The Famous Victories' differed, in all that constitutes dramatic beauty and propriety, from the almost contemporary histories of Shakspeare and Marlowe. Of the plays which had been acted previous to 1592, whose subject was "for the most part borrowed out of our English Chronicles," there are two specimens of the earlier and ruder sort preserved to us—'The Famous Victories,' and 'The True Tragedy of Richard III.' 'The Famous Victories' was certainly acted previous to 1588; for Tarleton, who played the clown in it, died in that year. Mr. Collier thinks it was written in 1580. It continued to hold possession of the stage as late as 1595. We have already noticed that play in our account of the sources of 'The History of Henry IV.:' but it may be desirable, in reference to our present purpose, to furnish a specimen of this extraordinary composition. We select the parallel scene to the well-known passage of Shakspeare's 'Henry IV., Part II.,' Act IV., Scene 4, beginning

"I never thought to hear you speak again."

Mr. Collier has observed that in the printed copy of this play

(which was entered at Stationers' Hall in 1594) much of the original prose has been chopped up into lines of various lengths, in order to look like some kind of measure :—

Hen. IV. Why, how now, my son ?

I had thought the last time I had you in schooling
I had given you a lesson for all,
And do you now begin again ?
Why, tell me, my son,
Dost thou think the time so long,
That thou wouldst have it before the
Breath be out of my mouth ?

Hen. V. Most sovereign lord, and well-beloved father,
I came into your chamber to comfort the melancholy
Soul of your body, and, finding you at that time
Past all recovery, and dead to my thinking,
God is my witness, and what should I do,
But with weeping tears lament the death of you my father ;
And after that, seeing the crown, I took it.
And tell me, my father, who might better take it than I,
After your death ? but, seeing you live,
I most humbly render it into your majesty's hands,
And the happiest man alive that my father lives ;
And live my lord and father for ever !

Hen. IV. Stand up, my son ;

Thine answer hath sounded well in mine ears,
For I must needs confess that I was in a very sound sleep,
And altogether unmindful of thy coming :
But come near, my son,
And let me put thee in possession whilst I live,
That none deprive thee of it after my death.

Hen. V. Well may I take it at your majesty's hands,
But it shall never touch my head so long as my father lives.

[*He taketh the crown.*]

Hen. IV. God give thee joy, my son ;
God bless thee and make thee his servant,
And send thee a prosperous reign ;
For God knows, my son, how hardly I came by it,
And how hardly I have maintained it.

Hen. V. Howsoever you came by it I know not ;
And now I have it from you, and from you I will keep it :
And he that seeks to take the crown from my head,
Let him look that his armour be thicker than mine,
Or I will pierce him to the heart,
Were it harder than brass or bullion.

Hen. IV. Nobly spoken, and like a king.

Now trust me, my lords, I fear not but my son
Will be as warlike and victorious a prince
As ever reigned in England."

'The True Tragedy of Richard III.' was republished by Boswell

in 1821, from a copy which had been previously undiscovered.* On the 19th of June, 1594, we find the following entry on the Stationers' registers:—"Tho. Creede. An Enterlude intituled the Tragedie of Richard the Third, wherein is shoven the Death of Edward the Fourthe, with the Smotheringe of the Twoo Princes in the Tower, with the lamentable End of Shore's Wife, and the Conjunction of the Twoo Houses of Lancaster and York." It is evident that this entry could not relate to Shakspeare's 'Richard III.,' for in that we have no display of the "lamentable end of Shore's wife;" whereas in 'The True Tragedy' there are several scenes in which she appears. This old play is a performance of higher pretension than 'The Famous Victories.' Like that play, it contains many prose speeches which are printed to have some resemblance to measured lines; but, on the other hand, there are many passages of legitimate verse which are run together as prose. The most ambitious part of the whole performance is a speech of Richard before the battle; and this we transcribe:—

King. The hell of life that hangs upon the crown,
 The daily cares, the nightly dreams,
 The wretched crews, the treason of the foe,
 And horror of my bloody practice past,
 Strikes such a terror to my wounded conscience,
 That, sleep I, wake I, or whatsoever I do,
 Methinks their ghosts come gaping for revenge,
 Whom I have slain in reaching for a crown.
 Clarence complains and crieth for revenge;
 My nephews' bloods, Revenge! revenge! doth cry;
 The headless peers come pressing for revenge;
 And every one cries, Let the tyrant die.
 The sun by day shines hotly for revenge;
 The moon by night eclipseth for revenge;
 The stars are turn'd to comets for revenge;
 The planets change their courses for revenge;
 The birds sing not, but sorrow for revenge;
 The silly lambs sit bleating for revenge;
 The screeching raven sits croaking for revenge;
 Whole herds of beasts come bellowing for revenge;
 And all, yea, all the world, I think,
 Cries for revenge, and nothing but revenge:
 But to conclude, I have deserv'd revenge.

* Another copy exists—a perfect one; and it has been kindly pointed out to us that it would be desirable to reprint this. We cannot venture, however, so to occupy our space. We reprinted the 'Conteution' to render this Dissertation complete: 'The True Tragedy of Richard III.' has little bearing upon our general argument.

In company I dare not trust my friend ;
 Being alone, I dread the secret foe ;
 I doubt my food, lest poison lurk therein ;
 My bed is uncoth, rest refrains my head.
 Then such a life I count far worse to be
 Than thousand deaths unto a damned death !
 How ! was 't death, I said ? who dare attempt my death ?
 Nay, who dare so much as once to think my death ?
 Though enemies there be that would my body kill,
 Yet shall they leave a never-dying mind.
 But you, villains, rebels, traitors as you are,
 How came the foe in, pressing so near ?
 Where, where slept the garrison that should a beat them back ?
 Where was our friends to intercept the foe ?
 All gone, quite fled, his loyalty quite laid a-bed.
 Then vengeance, mischief, horror with mischance,
 Wild-fire, with whirlwinds, light upon your heads,
 That thus betray'd your prince by your untruth !"

There is not a trace in the elder play of the *character* of Shakspeare's Richard:—in that play he is a coarse ruffian only—an unintellectual villain. The author has not even had the skill to copy the dramatic narrative of Sir Thomas More in the scene of the arrest of Hastings. It is sufficient for him to make Richard display the brute force of the tyrant. The affected complacency, the mock passion, the bitter sarcasm of the Richard of the historian, were left for Shakspeare to imitate and improve. Rude as is the dramatic construction, and coarse the execution, of these two relics of the period which preceded the transition state of the stage, there can be no doubt that these had their ruder predecessors,—dumb-shows, with here and there explanatory rhymes adapted to the same gross popular taste that had so long delighted in the Mysteries and Moralities which even still held a divided empire. The growing love of the people for "the storial shows," as Laneham calls the Coventry play of 'Hock Tuesday,' was the natural result of the active and inquiring spirit of the age. There were many who went to the theatre to be instructed. In the prologue to 'Henry VIII.' we find that this great source of the popularity of the early Histories was still active:—

"Such as give
 Their money out of hope they may believe,
 May here find truth too."

Heywood, in his 'Apology for Actors,' thus writes in 1612:—
 "Plays have made the ignorant more apprehensive, taught the unlearned the knowledge of many famous histories, instructed such

as cannot read in the discovery of our English Chronicles: and what man have you now of that weak capacity that cannot discourse of any notable thing recorded even from William the Conqueror, nay, from the landing of Brute, until this day, being possessed of their true use?" There is a tradition reported by Gildon, (which Percy believes, though Malone pronounces it to be a fiction,) that Shakspeare, in a conversation with Ben Jonson upon the subject of his historical plays, said that, "finding the nation generally very ignorant of history, he wrote them in order to instruct the people in that particular." It is not necessary that we should credit or discredit this anecdote, to come to the conclusion that, when Shakspeare first became personally interested in providing entertainment and instruction for the people, there was a great demand already existing for that species of drama, which subsequently became important enough to constitute a class apart from Tragedy or Comedy. Our belief is that he was *the first* who saw the possibility of conducting this species of entertainment with dramatic skill—with integrity, if not unity, of action—with action interrupted indeed by the succession of events, but not dissevered—with force and consistency of character—with spirited dialogue and harmonious versification. If he were not the author of 'The First Part of Henry VI.' and of the two Parts of 'The Contention,' this praise of giving the first great model of this species of drama is not due to him. If he were the author of those three dramas, it belongs to him, and to him alone.

The question which we propose to examine is, not who first wrote historical plays, but who first wrote historical plays in the spirit of an artist. We will commence our inquiry with reference to 'The First Part of Henry VI.' We hold this play to be Shakspeare's first historical performance. The form in which we have received it may be a considerable improvement on its first form; and indeed we have no doubt that it was re-cast, as well as the Second and Third Parts. There appears to be little difference of opinion as to the date of its original production. Malone says, in his 'Chronological Order,' "'The First Part of King Henry VI.," which, I imagine, was formerly known by the name of 'The Historical Play of King Henry VI.," had, I suspect, been a very popular piece for *some years* before 1592, and perhaps was first exhibited in 1588 or 1589." Mr. Collier states the general belief "that it is merely the *old* play on the early events of that reign, which was most likely written in 1589." There can be no doubt that the composition of this play preceded that of the two Parts of 'The Con-

tion;’ and that these had been acted before September, 1592, we know from the fact so often quoted, that Robert Greene, who died in that month and year, had, in his deathbed recantation of his errors, parodied a line which occurs in ‘The Second Part of the Contention.’ Putting aside for a moment, then, who was the author of ‘The First Part of Henry VI.’ or of ‘The Contention,’ there can be no doubt of the existence of the three plays at the time of Greene’s death; and Malone’s conjecture, therefore, as to the date of the first of these plays may be received without hesitation. That is all we ask at present to be conceded. Malone’s general theory as to the period of Shakspeare’s commencement as a writer is, that he had not produced any original piece before 1591. Mr. Collier holds that he “had not written any of his original plays prior to 1593, (when Marlowe was killed,) although anterior to that year he might have employed himself in altering and improving for representation some of the works of older dramatists.”* ‘The First Part of Henry VI.’ is distinctly held not to fall within the condition of one of the plays so improved. It is come down to us, according to the critical authorities, in its primitive rudeness. In its present state, then, according to their opinions, it existed in or before 1589.

We will now ask, what other historical plays of any poetical pretension were in existence in 1589? it being remembered that Shakspeare was then twenty-five years of age, and a shareholder in the Blackfriars theatre. The old play of ‘The Troublesome Reign of King John of England’ was *possibly* then in existence. It was printed in 1591. Rude as this play may be deemed when compared with the finished ‘King John’ of Shakspeare, it is unquestionably a very much higher performance than ‘The Famous Victories,’ or ‘The True Tragedy of Richard III.’ The German critics consider it to be an early production of Shakspeare himself. Schlegel and Tieck maintain this opinion without any qualification. Ulrici holds that the comic parts are not his, as they display only rudeness and vulgarity instead of the “facetious grace” of Shakspeare; and he thinks that he can trace an older play in this old play. We cannot subscribe either to the unconditional or the qualified opinion; and we take leave to repeat what we have previously said, that “whoever really wishes thoroughly to understand the resources which Shakspeare possessed, in the creation of characters, in the conduct of a story, and the employment of lan-

* *Annals of the Stage*, vol. iii., p. 128.

guage, will do well again and again to compare the old play of 'The Troublesome Reign' and the 'King John' of our dramatist." * Had Shakspeare, however, commenced his poetical career a few years later, the old 'King John' would have offered a very remarkable point in the progress of the historical drama. Its coarseness is, in some degree, associated with a power and freedom from which it seems to result, and is as distinct a thing as possible from the 'imbecile vulgarity of 'The Famous Victories.' Malone, without any authority, assigns this play to Greene or Peele. We now and then unquestionably meet with a passage which may be called poetical, and which may not unworthily be compared with undoubted passages of those writers. There is much of Peele's tinsel too—his straining after poetical images without regard to propriety of situation or character. The Faulconbridge of the old play, for example, talks after this fashion :—

“Methinks I hear an hollow echo sound
That Philip is the son unto a king :
The whistling leaves upon the trembling trees
Whistle in concert I am Richard's son :
The bubbling murmur of the water's fall
Records *Philippus Regius filius* :
Birds in their flight make music with their wings,
Filling the air with glory of my birth :
Birds, bubbles, leaves, and mountains, echo, all
Ring in mine ears that I am Richard's son.”

The versification throughout is constructed upon the old monotonous model ; yet we should say the blank-verse is not so monotonous as that of Peele.

There is no other historical play aspiring to the character of a work of art, whose production may be placed in or before 1589, but the 'Edward I.' of Peele. The 'Edward II.' of Marlowe was undoubtedly later. The anonymous 'Edward III.' belongs also, we think, to a later period.

The 'Edward I.' of Peele bears this title :—'The famous Chronicle of King Edward the First, surnamed Edward Longshankes, with his Returne from the Holy Land. Also the Life of Llewellen Rebell in Wales. Lastly, the sinking of Queene Elinor, who sunck at Charing-crosse, and rose againe at Potters-hith, now named Queenehith.' It is evident that a play which deals with the "sinking of Queene Elinor" as a veritable portion of 'The Famous Chronicle of Edward I.' must be one of those productions from which

* Introductory Notice to 'King John,' vol. iv. p. 238.

Fitzdottrel, the Norfolk simpleton of Ben Jonson's 'The Devil is an Ass,' obtained his facts:—

"Meer. By my faith, you are cunning in the chronicle, sir.

Fitz. No, I confess I have it from the play-books,
And think they are more authentic."

Eleanor, the queen of Edward I., is a name which to this hour is familiar to us all, through the exquisite monumental remains of the affection of her husband which still dot the great road from Tottenham to Northampton. That she "sunk at Charing-cross" before Charing-cross was erected to her memory is a sufficiently remarkable circumstance in Peele's play; but it is more remarkable that, assuming to be a 'Famous Chronicle,' and in one or two of the events following the Chronicles, he has represented the queen altogether to be a fiend in female shape,—proud, adulterous, cruel, treacherous, and bloody. "She was a godly and modest princess," says Holinshed, "full of pity, and one that showed much favour to the English nation, ready to relieve every man's grief that sustained wrong, and to make them friends that were at discord, so far as in her lay." The character of the Eleanor of Peele is held to be taken from a ballad, entitled 'A Warning Piece to England against Pride and Wickedness,' &c., and thought to be written in the time of Queen Mary. We doubt exceedingly whether the ballad preceded the play; but, at any rate, the incidents of each are the same. The "mayor of London's wife" of the ballad had given offence to Queen Eleanor by appearing in "London streets in stately sort," and the queen's revenge, according to this authority, was after the following remarkable fashion:—

"She sent her into Wales with speed,
And kept her secret there;
And used her still more cruelly
Than ever man did hear.
She made her wash, she made her starch,
She made her drudge alway;
She made her nurse up children small,
And labour night and day.
But this contented not the queen,
But show'd her most despite;
She bound this lady to a post,
At twelve a clock at night.
And as, poor lady, she stood bound,
The queen (in angry mood)
Did set two snakes unto her breast,
That suck'd away her blood."*

* Mr. Dyce's edition of Peele, vol. i., p. 73.

We transcribe the corresponding scene of Peele's 'Edward I.:'—

" *Q. Elin.* Now fits the time to purge our melancholy,
And be reveng'd upon this London dame.
Katherina!

Enter KATHERINA.

Kath. At hand, madam.

Q. Elin. Bring forth our London mayoress here.

Kath. I will, madam.

[*Exit.*

Q. Elin. Now, Nell,

Bethink thee of some tortures for the dame,
And purge thy choler to the uttermost.

Enter MAYORESS and KATHERINA.

Now, mistress mayoress, you have attendance urg'd,
And therefore, to requite your courtesy,
Our mind is to bestow an office on you straight.

May. Myself, my life and service, mighty queen,
Are humbly at your majesty's command.

Q. Elin. Then, mistress mayoress, say whether will you be our nurse or laundress?

May. Then, may it please your majesty
To entertain your handmaid for your nurse,
She will attend the cradle carefully.

Q. Elin. O, no, nurse; the babe needs no great rocking; it can lull itself. Katherina, bind her in the chair, and let me see how she'll become a nurse. So: now, Katherina, draw forth her breast, and let the serpent suck his fill. Why so; now she is a nurse. Suck on, sweet babe.

May. Ah, queen, sweet queen, seek not my blood to spill,
For I shall die before this adder have his fill.

Q. Elin. Die or die not, my mind is fully pleas'd.
Come, Katherina: to London now will we,
And leave our mayoress with her nursery.

Kath. Farewell, sweet mayoress: look unto the babe. [*Exeunt QUEEN and KATH.*

May. Farewell, proud queen, the author of my death,
The scourge of England and to English dames!
Ah, husband, sweet John Bearmber, mayor of London,
Ah, didst thou know how Mary is perplex'd,
Soon wouldst thou come to Wales, and rid me of this pain.
But O! I die; my wish is all in vain.

[*Here she dies.*

Mr. Hallam has characterised the gross violation of historical truth in this play as "a hideous misrepresentation of the virtuous Eleanor of Castile, probably from the base motive of rendering the Spanish nation odious to the vulgar." The whole play is in truth addressed to the lowest taste of the vulgar, as much a fault of the age as of the inherent false taste of the writer. Where the language is intended to be stately and poetical, it becomes tumid and extravagant. For example, King Edward, "in his *suit of glass*," meets the

“ nine lords of Scotland :” and Eleanor, on this occasion, thus addresses her husband, to his great contentment :—

“ The welkin, spangled through with golden spots,
 Reflects no finer in a frosty night
 Than lovely Longshanks in his Elinor’s eye :
 So, Ned, thy Nell in every part of thee,—
 Thy person’s guarded with a troop of queens,
 And every queen as brave as Elinor.
 Give glory to these glorious crystal quarries,
 Where every robe an object entertains
 Of rich device and princely majesty.
 Thus, like Narcissus, diving in the deep,
 I die in honour and in England’s arms ;
 And if I drown, it is in my delight,
 Whose company is chiefest life in death ;
 From forth whose coral lips I suck the sweet
 Wherewith are dainty Cupid’s caudles made.
 Then live or die, brave Ned, or sink or swim,
 An earthly bliss it is to look on him.
 On thee, sweet Ned, it shall become thy Nell
 Bounteous to be unto the beauteous :
 O’er-pry the palms, sweet fountains of my bliss,
 And I will stand on tiptoe for a kiss.”

The historical action of this play—if there be any portion of it that can be properly called so—is, in the highest degree, confused and eccentric. It relates, as far as we can understand, to the invasions of Wales and of Scotland : but the whole conduct of the historical action is so perplexed with the queen’s multifarious intrigues, with the masquerading of some of the principal characters, as Robin Hoods and Maid Marians, and with the ribaldry of a Welsh friar, who is the chief vehicle for the grossness of the comedy, that the only historical impression left upon the mind of the reader is, that it has something to do with the real story of Edward I., and that he was called Longshanks. To the truth of characterization this drama has not the slightest pretension ; nor, as the characters are drawn, have they any consistency. The dying queen is made to confess her sins to her husband, disguised as a friar, with the most hideous minuteness ; and when she dies, the king, as far as we may gather from the extravagant language in which he expresses his grief, has also a proper indignation upon the subject of his own wrongs :—

“ Blushing I shut these thine enticing lamps,
 The wanton baits that make me suck my bane.
 Pyropus’ harden’d flames did never reflect
 More hideous flames than from my breast arise :

What fault more vild unto thy dearest lord?
 Our daughter base-begotten of a priest,
 And Ned, my brother, partner of my love!
 O, that those eyes that lighten'd Cæsar's brain,
 O, that those looks that master'd Phœbus' brand,
 Or else those looks that stain Medusa's far,
 Should shrine deceit, desire, and lawless lust!
 Unhappy king, dishonour'd in thy stock!
 Hence, feigned weeds, unfeigned is my grief."

But before the scene concludes he gives direction for his lady's funeral, without the slightest conflicting feeling; and takes leave of the audience in the character of a mournful widower whose loss could never be repaired:—

"Inter my lovely Elinor, late deceas'd;
 And, in remembrance of her royalty,
 Erect a rich and stately carved cross,
 Whereon her stature shall with glory shine,
 And henceforth see you call it Charing-cross;
 For why, the chariest and the choicest queen,
 That ever did delight my royal eyes,
 There dwells in darkness whilst I die in grief."

We thoroughly agree with Mr. Hallam that the 'Edward I.' of Peele "is a gross tissue of absurdity, with some facility of language, but nothing truly good." There is nothing either in the action or the characterization that can be called *real*. He has not the slightest conception of the possible union of simplicity with poetical power; in all, therefore, that constitutes dramatic truth he is utterly deficient. His characters pass over the scene like dim shadows, which are the vehicles of fantastic and extravagant language, corresponding with their absurd and incongruous actions; but they exhibit not a single spark of vitality; there is no flesh and blood in their composition; men and women never thought as they think, nor spoke as they speak. Peele's play was first printed in 1593: it was acted fourteen times by Henslowe's company in 1595. Mr. Dyce considers that it was "acted, perhaps, long before it passed the press;" and he calls it "one of the earliest of our chronicle histories." With reference to the question of the originality of the author of 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' it is perfectly immaterial when Peele wrote the 'Edward I.' It no more interferes with the claim of that author to originality in the conception and dramatic conduct of a chronicle history than does 'The Famous Victories.'

In addition to the historical plays which we have thus described as probably existing in 1589, there is an old rude play, 'The Life and Death of Jack Straw,' printed in 1593; and there is little

doubt that there was a much older play than Shakspeare's on the subject of Richard II. It is, indeed, highly probable that, when 'The First Part of Henry VI.' was originally produced, the stage had possession of a complete series of chronicle histories, rudely put together, aspiring to little poetical elevation, and managed pretty generally after the fashion described by Gosson, in a pamphlet against the stage, printed about 1581:—"If a true history be taken in hand, it is made like our shadows, longest at the rising and falling of the sun, shortest of all at high noon; for the poets drive it most commonly into such points as may best show the majesty of their pen in tragical speeches, or set the hearers agog with discourses of love, or paint a few antics to fit their own humours with scoffs and taunts, or bring in a show to furnish the stage when it is bare: when the matter of itself comes short of this, they follow the practice of a cobbler, and set their teeth to the leather to pull it out." What "the poets" were who produced these performances, and what "the majesty of their pen," have been shown in the specimens we have given from 'The Famous Victories' and the old 'Richard III.' The truth is, that up to the period when Shakspeare reached the age of manhood there were no artists in existence competent to produce an historical play superior to these rude performances. The state of the drama generally is thus succinctly, but most correctly, noticed by a recent anonymous writer:—"From the commencement of Shakspeare's boyhood, till about the earliest date at which his removal to London can be possibly fixed, the drama lingered in the last stage of a semi-barbarism. Perhaps we do not possess any monument of the time except Whetstone's 'Promos and Cassandra;' but neither that play, nor any details that can be gathered respecting others, indicate the slightest advance beyond a point of development which had been reached many years before by such writers as Edwards and Gascoyne. About 1585, or Shakspeare's twenty-first year, there opened a new era, which, before the same decad was closed, had given birth to a large number of dramas, many of them wonderful for the circumstances in which they arose, and several possessing real and absolute excellence."* Of the poets which belong to this remarkable decad, we possess undoubted specimens of the works of Lyly, Peele, Marlowe, Lodge, Greene, Kyd, and Nashe. There are one or two other inferior names, such as Chettle and Munday, connected with the latter part of this decad. We ourselves hold that Shakspeare belongs to the first as well as to the second half of this short but most influential

* Edin. Review, July 1840, p. 469.

period of our literature. Of those artists to whom can be possibly imputed the composition of 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' there are only five in whom can be traced any supposed resemblance of style. They are—Peele, Marlowe, Greene, Lodge, and Kyd. 'The First Part of Henry VI.' was therefore either written by one of these five poets, or by some unknown author whose name has perished, or by Shakspeare.

A very lively writer, who had the merit of heartily avowing his admiration for Shakspeare, when the poet's expositors, while they bowed before the shrine, were not sparing of their abuse of the idol, has disposed of the authorship of 'Henry VI.' after a very summary fashion: "That drum-and-trumpet thing called 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' written, doubtless, or rather exhibited, long before Shakespeare was born, though afterwards repaired, I think, and furnished up by him, with here and there a little sentiment and diction."* The recovery of a copy of the original play, produced long before Shakspeare was born, would be a treasure of much higher value than a legion of 'Gammer Gurtons' and

Ralph Roister Doisters.' Mr. Morgann does not, in truth, pretend to speak out of any knowledge of the state of our early drama. Every one now sees the absurdity of imagining that *a play which existed many years before Shakspeare was born* could have been "repaired and furnished, with here and there a little sentiment and diction," into 'The First Part of Henry VI.' But is it not almost as absurd, and quite as opposed to any real knowledge of the early history of our drama, to maintain that some unknown man—and that man not the author of the two subsequent plays—wrote 'The First Part of Henry VI. *in or before the year 1588 or 1589*, and that Shakspeare either did nothing at all in the way of repairing, or that at most he threw in a little sentiment and diction here and there? Mr. Morgann's random "long before Shakespeare was born" is, as it appears to us, just as tenable as Malone's "had, I suspect, been a very popular piece for some years before 1592." The looseness of expression in each, with reference to the date of 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' can only be appreciated by recollecting that two or three years in the history of the drama, at the period when Shakspeare first became associated with it, constitute an era of far higher importance than any previous half-century. If Mr. Morgann had said that 'The First Part of Henry VI.' was written or exhibited five years before Shakspeare came to London, his assertion would have been equally incredible. But is the assertion more

* Morgann's 'Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff.'

credible that some unknown man produced it, as it stands, in 1589? We believe that it was, in some shape, produced by Shakspeare earlier than 1589; but we do not believe that Shakspeare himself left it in its present state in 1589. The versification of some passages is, to our minds, quite conclusive on this point. We find, indeed, the stately march, the sense concluding or pausing at the end of every line, the verse without a redundant syllable, which Malone describes as the characteristics of *all* the dramas that preceded Shakspeare's undoubted productions. We have already adverted to this; but we only met Malone's statement that such versification was the absolute and distinguishing character of 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' by showing that, in Shakspeare's unquestionable additions to the Second and Third Parts, he still occasionally clung to the early models. But we could put our finger upon fifty passages in the First Part where the stately march becomes *rapid*, the sense is *not* terminated at the end of each line, the verse *has* a redundant syllable,—where the rhythm, in fact, is essentially Shakspearean. What shall we say of Joan of Arc's speech, when she first appears?—

“ Dauphin, I am by birth a shepherd's daughter,
My wit untrain'd in any kind of art.
Heaven, and our Lady gracious, hath it pleas'd
To shine on my contemptible estate.”

Or of the graceful playfulness of Warwick in the Temple-garden scene?—

“ Between two hawks, which flies the higher pitch,
Between two dogs, which hath the deeper mouth,
Between two blades, which bears the better temper,
Between two horses, which doth bear him best,
Between two girls, which hath the merriest eye,
I have, perhaps, some shallow spirit of judgment.”

Or what to the pause in

“ Com'st thou with deep premeditated lines,
With written pamphlets studiously devis'd,
Humphrey of Gloster?”

We ask the critical reader to compare the entire scene in the Temple-garden, the address of La Pucelle to Burgundy in the third act, and the speech of Henry when he puts on the red rose in the fourth act, merely with reference to the rhythm, with any passages in Peele, or Greene, or indeed in any of the dramatists of this decad, and say whether in freedom and variety of versification the author of these passages does not leave all his contemporaries at an immeasurable distance? They are so skilfully interwoven with the

original fabric, if they be additions, that no eye can detect a piecing of the web. But we cannot, without conducting this inquiry in a spirit of mere advocacy, assume that they are not additions; and therefore we reserve the question of versification, in proof that Shakspeare was the entire author of 'Henry VI.,' till we come to examine the poetical structure of the two Parts of 'The Contention,' in which, without the additional passages, the freedom of versification stands out in most decided contrast to every production that existed before 1592.

We hold, then, that 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' in all the essentials of its dramatic construction, is, with reference to the object which its author had in view of depicting a series of historical events with poetical truth, immeasurably superior to any other chronicle history which existed between 1585 and 1590. It has been called, as we see, a "drum-and-trumpet thing." The age in which it was produced was one in which the most accomplished of its courtiers said, "I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet: and yet it is sung but by some blind crowder, with no rougher voice than rude style; which, being so evil apparelled in the dust and cobweb of that uncivil age, what would it work trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindar!"* He who made the "drum-and-trumpet thing" desired to move men's hearts as Sidney's was moved. He saw around him thousands who crowded to the theatres to witness the heroic deeds of their forefathers, although "evil apparelled in the dust and cobweb of that uncivil age;" and it was he who first seized upon the great theme for his own, and "trimmed" it in his own "gorgeous eloquence." And what, if the music which he first uttered had a savour of the rough voice and the rude style which had preceded him? What, if his unpractised hand sometimes struck the notes of timidity and unskilfulness? What, if he now and then hurried away even from the principles of his own art, and appeared to start at "the sounds himself had made?" He did what no other man up to that day had done, or did for a long time afterwards—he banished the "senseless and soulless shows" of the old historical drama, and at once raised up a stage, "ample and true with life." To understand the value of 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' we must have a competent knowledge of the chronicle histories which had preceded it.

* Sir Philip Sidney's 'Defence of Poesy.'

§ VI.

“ No more than five dramas, the undoubted works of Greene, have come down to posterity. Writing for bread, and with a pen whose readiness was notorious, he undoubtedly produced, during the series of years when he was a professed author, a much greater number of plays: in all probability many of them were never published, and perhaps, of some of them which were really printed, not a single copy has escaped destruction.”* Of these five dramatic pieces none were printed till after Greene’s death in 1592. ‘Orlando Furioso’ bears no name on its title; ‘Alphonsus King of Aragon’ is made by R. G.; ‘The Looking Glass for London’ bears the joint names of Lodge and Greene; whilst ‘Friar Bacon,’ and ‘The Scottish History of James the Fourth,’ purport to be written by Robert Greene. It is from these plays, then, that we must form our estimate of Greene’s peculiarities as a dramatist; and thence inquire with what justice he can be accounted the author of one or both of the two Parts of ‘The Contention of the Houses of York and Lancaster.’

The subjects of Greene’s five plays would appear from their titles to be sufficiently varied. In ‘Orlando’ the groundwork is, of course, to be traced to Ariosto; but the superstructure presents the most extravagant deviations from the plan of the great romance-writer of Italy. The pomposity of the diction is not amiss in the mouths of such stately personages as the Emperor of Africa, the Soldan of Egypt, the Prince of Mexico, the King of the Isles, and the mad Orlando. We give an average specimen of the versification:—

“ Discourteous women, nature’s fairest ill,
 The woe of man, that first-created curse,
 Base female sex, sprung from black Ate’s loins,
 Proud, disdainful, cruel, and unjust,
 Whose words are shaded with enchanting wiles,
 Worse than Medusa mateth all our minds;
 And in their hearts sits shameless treachery,
 Turning a truthless vile circumference!
 O, could my fury paint their furies forth!
 For hell’s no hell, compared to their hearts,
 Too simple devils to conceal their arts;
 Born to be plagues unto the thoughts of men,
 Brought for eternal pestilence to the world.”

But the ‘Orlando’ has its comic scenes as well as its heroic; and we may form some judgment from them of the nature of the wit

* The Rev. A. Dyce. Greene’s Dramatic Works, vol. i., p. xli.

which a scholar, such as Robert Greene was, had to offer to audiences who, in a few years after, had become familiar with Launce, and Bottom, and Falstaff. One sample will suffice :—

Tom. Sirrah Ralph, and thou 'lt go with me, I 'll let thee see the bravest madman that ever thou sawest.

Ralph. Sirrah Tom, I believe it was he that was at our town a' Sunday : I 'll tell thee what he did, sirrah. He came to our house when all our folks were gone to church, and there was nobody at home but I, and I was turning of the spit ; and he comes in, and bade me fetch him some drink. Now, I went and fetched him some ; and ere I came again, by my troth, he ran away with the roast meat, spit and all, and so we had nothing but porridge to dinner.

Tom. By my troth, that was brave : but, sirrah, he did so course the boys last Sunday ; and if ye call him madman, he 'll run after you, and tickle your ribs so with his flap of leather that he hath, as it passeth."

'The Looking Glass for London' may appear to promise a comedy of manners, such as Jonson came a few years afterwards to present with accurate discrimination and poetical force. Greene's portion of it, which we think may be easily distinguished from Lodge's satirical prose, offers the most extraordinary canvas for such a delineation. The whole play is the most surprising combination of Kings of Nineveh, Crete, Cilicia, and Paphlagonia ; of usurers, judges, lawyers, clowns, and ruffians ; of angels, magi, sailors, lords, and "one clad in devil's attire." Last of all, we have the prophets Jonas and Oseas. The opening of this extraordinary drama sufficiently marks the general character of the versified parts :—

“Enters RASNI King of Nineveh, with three Kings of Cilicia, Crete, and Paphlagonia, from the overthrow of Jeroboam King of Jerusalem.

“Rasni. So pace ye on, triumphant warriors ;
 Make Venus' leman, arm'd in all his pomp,
 Bash at the brightness of your hardy looks,
 For you the viceroys are, the cavaliers,
 That wait on Rasni's royal mightiness.
 Boast, petty kings, and glory in your fates,
 That stars have made your fortunes climb so high,
 To give attend on Rasni's excellence.
 Am I not he that rules great Nineveh,
 Bounded with Lycas' silver-flowing streams ?
 Whose city large diametri contains,
 Even three days' journey's length from wall to wall ;
 Two hundred gates carv'd out of burnish'd brass,
 As glorious as the portal of the sun ;
 And for to deck heaven's battlements with pride,
 Six hundred towers that topless touch the clouds."

'Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay' is the old story of 'The Brazen Head.' There is here, unquestionably, more facility in the versi-

fiction, much less of what we may best distinguish by the name of fustian, and some approach to simplicity and even playfulness. But whenever Greene gets hold of a king he invariably makes him talk in the right royal style which we have already seen; and our Henry III. does not condescend to discourse in a bit more simple English than the Soldan of Egypt or the King of Nineveh. A line or two will exhibit this peculiarity:—

“ *Hen.* Great men of Europe, monarchs of the west,
Ring'd with the walls of old Oceanus,
Whose lofty surge is like the battlements
That compass'd high-built Babel in with towers,
Welcome, my lords, welcome, brave western kings.”

‘Alphonsus King of Aragon’ is surrounded by companions that render it impossible *he should* descend to the language men use, and which the real dramatic poet never casts aside, even in his most imaginative moods. Alphonsus is not only accompanied by the great Turk, the King of the Moors, the King of Barbary, the King of Arabia, and the King of Babylon, but the scene is varied by the presence of Medea, Venus, and the nine Muses. Yet in this play, extravagant as the whole conception is, we occasionally meet with passages not so laboured, the result, probably, of the author’s carelessness as much as of his art. The following is an example:—

“ Fabius, come hither; what is that thou sayest?
What did God Mahomed prophesy to us?
Why do our viceroys weend unto the wars
Before their king had notice of the same?
What, do they think to play bob-fool with me?
Or are they wax’d so frolic now of late,
Since that they had the leading of our bands,
As that they think that mighty Amurack
Dares do no other than to soothe them up?
Why speak’st thou not? What fond or frantic fit
Did make those careless kings to venture it?”

‘The Scottish History of James IV., slain at Flodden,’ would, from its title, lead us to imagine that Greene, abandoning his phantasies for realities, had applied himself at last to a genuine historical drama. But the words “slain at Flodden” indicate only what Scottish James was meant. The story is altogether a romance, in which James, putting away his queen, and falling in love with a maiden called Ida, is forsaken by his peers; whilst his wife, who undergoes a mysterious assassination with a still more mysterious recovery, is at last restored to her repentant husband. Mr. Dyce says, “From what source our author derived the materials of this strange fiction I have not been able to discover; nor could Mr.

David Laing, of Edinburgh, who is so profoundly versed in the ancient literature of his country, point out to me any Scottish chronicle or tract which might have afforded hints to the poet for its composition." As if purposely to divest this piece of any pretension to the character of an historical drama, we have a sort of chorus of 'Oberon' and 'Antics,' and a 'Stoic,' who talks Scotch. Yet the play is not without indications that, however Greene might be incapable of producing a regular historical drama, he could occasionally adapt his style so as to express plain thoughts in intelligible words. The following speech is one of the most favourable specimens: it does not exhibit much power, but it strikingly contrasts with the ambitious rhodomontade which is his distinguishing characteristic:—

“O king, canst thou endure to see thy court
 Of finest wits and judgments dispossest'd,
 Whilst cloaking craft with soothing climbs so high,
 As each bewails ambition is so bad?
 Thy father left thee, with estate and crown,
 A learned council to direct thy court:
 These carelessly, O king, thou castest off,
 To entertain a train of sycophants.
 Thou well mayst see, although thou wilt not see,
 That every eye and ear both sees and hears
 The certain signs of thine incontinence.
 Thou art allied unto the English king
 By marriage; a happy friend indeed
 If used well, if not, a mighty foe.”

The dramatic works of Greene, which were amongst the rarest treasures of the bibliographer, have been rendered accessible to the general reader by the valuable labours of Mr. Dyce. To those who are familiar with these works we will appeal, without hesitation, in saying that the character of Greene's mind, and his habits of composition, rendered him utterly incapable of producing, not the two Parts of 'The Contention,' or one Part, but a single sustained scene of either Part. And yet a belief has been long entertained in England, to which even the wise and judicious still cling, that Greene and Peele either wrote the two Parts of 'The Contention' in conjunction; or that Greene wrote one Part, and Peele the other Part; or that, at any rate, Greene had some share in these dramas. This was a theory propagated by Malone in his 'Dissertation;' and it rests, not upon the slightest examination of the works of these writers, but solely on the far-famed passage in Greene's posthumous pamphlet, the 'Groat's Worth of Wit,' in which he points out Shakspeare as "a crow beautified with our feathers." The hypothesis

appears to us to be little less than absurd; and yet it is partially sanctioned by such high authority that we cannot pass it over in silence. Mr. Hallam says—"His angry allusion to Shakspeare's plagiarism is *best* explained by supposing that he (Greene) was himself concerned in the two old plays which have been converted into the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.' "* In a note upon this passage Mr. Hallam speaks more distinctly:—"Mr. Collier says, Greene may possibly have had a hand in 'The True History of Richard Duke of York.' But why possibly? when he claims it, if not in express words, yet so as to leave no doubt of his meaning." We venture to think that the words of Greene convey no such meaning, and that, if the passage in the 'Groat's Worth of Wit' could be presented to an intelligent judgment thoroughly unacquainted with the inferences that have been drawn from it, it would be found to bear very slightly indeed on the question of the authorship of the plays which we are examining; nor, further, to affect the character of Shakspeare at all, in any essential point of his moral or literary reputation.

The entire pamphlet of Greene is, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary fragments of autobiography that the vanity or the repentance of a sinful man ever produced. The recital which he makes of his abandoned course of life involves not only a confession of crimes and follies which were common to a very licentious age, but of particular and especial depravities, which even to mention argues as much shamelessness as repentance. The portion, however, which relates to the subject before us stands alone, in conclusion, as a friendly warning out of his own terrible example:—"To those gentlemen, his quondam acquaintance, that spend their wits in making plays, R. G. wisheth a better exercise, and wisdom to prevent his extremities." To three of his quondam acquaintance the dying man addresses himself. To the first, supposed to be Marlowe—"thou famous gracer of tragedians"—he speaks in words as terrible as came from

" that warning voice, which he who saw
Th' Apocalypse heard cry in heav'n aloud."

In exhorting his friend to turn from atheism, he ran the risk of consigning him to the stake, for Francis Kett was burnt for his opinions only three years before Greene's death. That Marlowe resented this address to him we have the testimony of Chettle. With his second friend, supposed to be Lodge, his plain speaking is much more tender: "Be advised, and get not many enemies by

* History of Literature, vol. ii. p. 379.

bitter words." He addresses the third, supposed to be Peele, as one "driven as myself to extreme shifts;" and he adds, "thou art unworthy better hap sith thou dependest on so mean a stay." What is the stay? "Making plays." The exhortation then proceeds to include the three "gentlemen his quondam acquaintance that spend their wits in making plays."—"Base-minded men all three of you, if by my misery ye be not warned: for unto none of you, like me, sought those burs to cleave; those puppets, I mean, that speak from our mouths; those antics garnished in our colours." Up to this point the meaning is perfectly clear. The puppets, the antics,—by which names of course are meant the players, whom he held, and justly, to derive their chief importance from the labours of the poet, in the words which they uttered and the colours with which they were garnished,—had once cleaved to him like burs. But a change had taken place: "Is it not strange that I, to whom they all have been beholding—is it not like that you, to whom they all have been beholding, shall, were ye in that case that I am now, be, both, of them at once forsaken?" This is a lamentable picture of one whose powers, wasted by dissipation and enfeebled by sickness, were no longer required by those to whom they had once been serviceable. As he was forsaken, so he holds that his friends will be forsaken. And chiefly for what reason? "Yes, trust them not: for there is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with *his tiger's heart wrapped in a player's hide*, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank-verse as the best of you: and, being an absolute Johannes factotum, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country." There can be no doubt that Shakspeare was here pointed at; that the starving man spoke with exceeding bitterness of the successful author; that he affected to despise him as a player; that, if "beautified with our feathers" had a stronger meaning than "garnished with our colours," it conveyed a vague charge of borrowing from other poets; and that he parodied a line from 'The True Tragedy of Richard the Second.' This is literally every word that can be supposed to apply to Shakspeare. Greene proceeds to exhort his friends "to be employed in more profitable courses."—"Let these apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired inventions."—"Seek you better masters." It is perfectly clear that these words refer only to the players generally; and, possibly, to the particular company of which Shakspeare was a member. As such, and such only, must he take his share in the names which Greene applies to them, of "apes,"—"rude grooms,"—"buckram gentlemen,"—"peasants,"

—and “painted monsters.” It will be well to give the construction that has been put upon these words, in the form in which the “hypothesis” was first propounded by Malone:—

“Shakspeare having therefore, probably not long before the year 1592, when Greene wrote his dying exhortation to his friend, new-modelled and amplified these two pieces (the two Parts of ‘The Contention’), and produced on the stage what in the folio edition of his works are called the Second and Third Parts of ‘King Henry VI.’ and having acquired considerable reputation by them, Greene could not conceal the mortification that he felt at his own fame, and that of his associate, both of them old and admired playwrights, being eclipsed by a new *upstart* writer (for so he calls our great poet), who had then first perhaps attracted the notice of the public by exhibiting two plays, formed upon old dramas written by them, considerably enlarged and improved. He therefore in direct terms charges him with having acted like the crow in the fable, *beautified himself with their feathers*; in other words, with having acquired fame *furtivis coloribus*, by new-modelling a work originally produced by them: and, wishing to depreciate our author, he very naturally quotes a line from one of the pieces which Shakspeare had thus *re-written*,—a proceeding which the authors of the original plays considered as an invasion both of their literary property and character. This line, with many others, Shakspeare adopted without any alteration. The very term that Greene uses,—‘to *bombast* out a blank-verse,’—exactly corresponds with what has been now suggested. This new poet, says he, knows as well as any man how to *amplify* and swell out a blank-verse. *Bumbast* was a soft stuff of a loose texture, by which garments were rendered more swelling and protuberant.”*

Thus, then, the starving and forsaken man—rejected by those who had been beholding to him; wanting the very bread of which he had been robbed, in the appropriation of his property by one of those who had rejected him; a man, too, prone to revenge, full of irascibility and self-love—contents himself with calling his plunderer “an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers”—“A Johannes factotum”—“The only Shake-scene in a country.” “He could not conceal his mortification!” It would have been mira-

* Malone gives here a special application to the term *bombast*, as if it were meant to express the amplification of the old plays charged against Shakspeare. The term had been used by Nashe five years before:—“Idiot art-masters, that intrude themselves to our ears as the alchymists of eloquence, who (mounted on the stage of arrogance) think to outbrave better pens with the *swelling bombast of bragging blank-verse*.” (Epistle prefixed to Greene’s ‘Menaphon,’ 1587.)

culous if he could. And how does he exhibit it? He parodies a line from one of the productions of which he had been so plundered, to carry the point home—to leave no doubt as to the sting of his allusion. But, as has been most justly observed, the epigram would have wanted its sting if the line parodied had not been that of the very writer attacked.* If it were Greene's line, and not Shakspeare's, there would have been no point in the quotation. Be this as it may, the dying man, for some cause or other, chose to veil his deep wrongs in a sarcastic allusion. He left the manuscript containing this allusion to be published by a friend; and it was so published. It was "a perilous shot out of an elder gun." But the matter did not stop here. The editor of the posthumous work actually apologised to the "upstart crow:"—"I am as sorry as if the original fault had been my fault, because myself hath seen his demeanour no less civil than he excellent in the quality he professes; besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art." † This apology was not written by Chettle at some distant period; it came out in the same year with the pamphlet which contained the insult. The terms which he uses—"uprightness of dealing," and "facetious grace in writing"—seem as if meant distinctly to refute the vague accusation of "beautified with our feathers." It is perfectly clear that Chettle could not have used these terms if Shakspeare had been the wholesale plunderer either of Greene or of any other writer that it is assumed he was by those who deprive him of the authorship of the two Parts of 'The Contention.' If he had been this plunderer, and if Chettle had basely apologised for a truth uttered by his dying friend, would the matter have rested there? Were there no Peeles, and Marlowes, and Nashes in the world, to proclaim the dishonour of the thief and the apologist? ‡

* Edin. Review, July, 1840.

† Preface to 'Kind-Heart's Dream.'

‡ There was an indistinct echo of Greene's complaint, by some "R. B." in 1594:—

"Greene gave the ground to all who wrote upon him.
Nay, more; the men that so eclips'd his fame
Purloin'd his plumes,—can they deny the same?"

We believe that never yet any great author appeared in the world who was not reputed, in the onset of his career, to be a plagiarist; or any great literary performance produced by one whose reputation had to be made that was not held to be written by some one else than the man who did write it:—there was some one behind the curtain—some mysterious assistant—whose possible existence was a

The only intelligible theory that can be possibly propounded of the motive for Shakspeare's piracy of the two Parts of 'The Contention' must assume that the plays in their original state had become the property of the shareholders of the Blackfriars Theatre—the rude grooms, apes, buckram gentlemen, peasants, painted monsters, of Greene; and that Shakspeare thrust himself into the capacity of the improver of these plays—the managerial editor. We know that authors were paid, in somewhat later times, to make improvements in old plays. Ben Jonson is held to have written much of the Second Part of Kyd's 'Jeronymo;' and in Henslowe's papers we find him paid, in 1602, a sum on account of these "additions." The same papers exhibit payments to Dekker and Rowley for "new additions" to 'Oldcastle,' and 'Phaeton,' and 'Tasso.'* We have ourselves expressed a belief that Shakspeare's 'Timon' was an alteration of an old play, made by him late in life. But the assumption of Shakspeare's plagiary from 'The Contention,' which is sought to be proved by Greene's "his tiger's heart wrapped in a player's hide," must go on to establish a case of piracy against Shakspeare which would be wholly inconsistent with "uprightness of dealing." Greene was accused of having sold the same play to two theatres: "Master R. G., would it not make you blush if you sold 'Orlando Furioso' to the Queen's players for twenty nobles, and when they were in the country sold the same play to Lord Admiral's men for as much more? Was not this plain coney-catching, M. G.?" † Malone, who accuses Shakspeare with having built his reputation upon the appropriation of the two plays of 'The Contention,' *furtivis coloribus*, tells us that a *decisive proof* that they were not Shakspeare's is furnished by the circumstance that they are said, in their title-pages, to have been "sundry times acted by the Earl of Pembroke his servants." Putting the two arguments together, then, we find that Shakspeare not only appropriated the reputation of another, but *stole* the plays bodily from the Earl of Pembroke's players, and transferred them to the company to which he belonged. How is this answered? Simply by showing

consolation to the envious and the malignant. Examples in our own day are common enough. "R. B." was probably one of these small critics. If he is held for any authority, we may set against him the indignant denial of Nashe that he had anything to do with Greene's 'Groat's Worth of Wit,' which he denounces as a "scald, trivial, lying pamphlet." Nashe, be it remembered, was the friend and companion of the unfortunate Greene.

* Malone, by Boswell, vol. iii., p. 372.

† Defence of Coney-Catching, 1592; quoted by Mr. Dyce in his 'Life of Greene,' p. xli.

that the statement in the title-page is not in the slightest degree inconsistent with the belief that, as very early productions, they might have been Shakspeare's, and might have been acted originally at his own theatre by "the Lord Chamberlain's men," as well as by "the Earl of Pembroke his servants." Mr. Collier, without reference to this particular question, has settled the point with his accustomed industry and knowledge of the early stage:—

"It is probable that prior to the year 1592 or 1593 the copyright of plays was little understood and less recognised; and that various companies were performing the same dramas at the same time, although perhaps they had been bought by one company for its sole use. The only security against invasions of the kind seems to have been the non-publication of plays, which will account for the few that have reached us, compared with the vast number known to have been written: it will account also for the imperfect state of many of them, especially of those of the earliest dates. A popular play, written for one company, and perhaps acted by that company as it was written, might be surreptitiously obtained by another, having been at best taken down from the mouths of the original performers: from the second company it might be procured by a third, and after a succession of changes, corruptions, and omissions, it might find its way at last to the press. I take it for granted, therefore, that such favourite authors as Robert Greene, Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Lodge, George Peele, Thomas Kyd, and some few others, furnished dramatic entertainments not for one company only, but for most of the associations of actors in the metropolis prior to 1593; and when we find early in Henslowe's 'Diary' an entry of 'Tamburlaine,' played by Lord Strange's actors, we may conclude that it was exhibited also by the Queen's, Lord Nottingham's, Lord Oxford's, or any other company that could contrive to get up something like the original performance. The extremely popular play by Christopher Marlowe just named is an instance exactly in point. On the title-page of the printed copy in 1590 we are told that it was played by the servants of the Lord Admiral, yet Henslowe five times mentions its performance by the servants of Lord Strange prior to April, 1592.

"At a subsequent date the case seems to have been different; and after December, 1597, when Henslowe began to insert the names of authors as well as the titles of plays, we find few notices of pieces which appear distinctly to have been employed by other companies than that acting under the name of the Lord Admiral." *

* History of the Stage, vol. iii., p. 86.

Here is an end then of the theory that the statement of the acting of the two Parts of 'The Contention' by Lord Pembroke's company is a decisive proof that they were not written by Shakspeare. The title-page of 'The Contention' proves only that the play was in existence before the value of dramatic copyright was very highly estimated, and when consequently the original property in such copyright was not very strictly guarded. It fell into the hands of players who were not Shakspeare's "fellows;" and it was published by men who were not Shakspeare's booksellers, and who certainly pirated some of his later works.*

§ VII.

It appears to us that Greene, in his attack on the reputation of our great poet, has rendered to his memory the most essential service. He has fixed the date of 'The Second Part of the Contention.' However plausible may be the conjectures as to the early production of two or three of Shakspeare's comedies, the 'Romeo and Juliet,' and even the first 'Hamlet,' there is no *positive* landmark on them for our direction. But in the case of 'The First Part of Henry VI.,' and the two Parts of 'The Contention,' we have the most unquestionable proof, in Greene's parody of a line from the Second Part (the third of the series), that they were popularly known in 1592. They either belonged, therefore, to the first half of the decad between 1585 and 1595, or they touched very closely upon it. Important considerations with reference to Shakspeare's share in the original building up of that mighty structure, the drama of Elizabeth, depend upon the establishment of this point, in connexion with the proof that these dramas were originally written by one poet—that the three Parts of 'Henry VI.' and the 'Richard III.' emanated from the same mind.

But there is another claimant to the authorship of the two Parts of 'The Contention,' of much higher pretensions than any one we have noticed. We pass over Kyd; for, although in facility and vigour he is a very remarkable writer, a slight "taste of his quality" would show that he is not the man to deal with a Jack Cade or a Richard. The monotony of Lodge's verse, more wearisome than that of Peele or Greene, would afford no parallel to that of 'The Contention.' No one has ever attempted to fix these dramas upon either Kyd or Lodge; and we may, therefore, be spared any minute

* See 'Henry V.,' p. 313.

examination of their characteristics. But there is one man who, in the force of his genius, and its later direction, was qualified to write at least portions of these plays. We mean Christopher Marlowe. It is to his "mighty line" that we must now address a careful consideration.

The earliest example of the application of blank-verse to the drama is exhibited in 'Ferrex and Porrex,' (usually called 'Gorboduc,') written by Sackville and Norton, and acted in the Inner Temple, and before the queen, in 1561. A surreptitious copy of this play was published in 1565; and a genuine edition appeared in 1571. Gascoyne's 'Jocasta,' played at Gray's Inn in 1566, was also in blank-verse. Whetstone's 'Promos and Cassandra,' printed in 1578, but not previously acted, was partially in blank-verse. Hughes's 'Misfortunes of Arthur,' in blank-verse, was acted before the queen in 1587 at Greenwich. The plays *publicly* acted subsequent to most of these performances, and up to 1587,—when Nashe, in a passage we have quoted, talks of the "swelling bombast of bragging blank-verse,"—are held by Mr. Collier either to have been written in prose or in rhyming verse. Mr. Collier therefore maintains that the establishment of blank-verse upon the *public* stage was a great and original effort; and he gives the praise of effecting this revolution to Christopher Marlowe. 'Tamburlaine,' which he holds to be Marlowe's work, was, he affirms, the first example of a play in blank-verse so acted. Mr. Collier says, "To adduce 'Tamburlaine' as our earliest popular dramatic composition in blank-verse is to present it in an entirely new light, most important in considering the question of its merits and its defects." Again: "Marlowe did not 'set the end of scholarism in an English blank-verse;'"* but he thought that the substitution of blank-verse for rhyme would be a most valuable improvement in our drama." Now, we honestly confess, admitting that "Marlowe was our first poet who used blank-verse in compositions performed in public theatres," (and the question is not one which we are called upon here to examine,) we cannot appreciate the amount of the merit which Mr. Collier thus claims for Marlowe. 'Ferrex and Porrex' had been acted, more than once, before numerous spectators; and it was in existence, in the printed form in which it was accessible to all men, sixteen years before Marlowe is supposed to have effected this improvement. It was not an obscure or a contemptible performance. Sidney describes it as "full of stately speeches and well-sounding phrases, climbing to the height of Seneca his style." At any rate, here was

* Greene, in 1588.

dramatic blank-verse; monotonous indeed, not informed with any bold or creative spirit of poetry, coldly correct, and tediously didactic; but still blank-verse, constructed upon a principle that was imitated by all the early dramatists, till some master arose who broke up its uniformity, and refined the "drumming decasyllabon"* with variety of measure and of pause. Where was the remarkable merit of introducing the blank-verse of Sackville to the *public* stage? If 'Ferrex and Porrex' had not been printed,—if 'Promos and Cassandra' had not been printed,—if, being known to a few, their memory had perished,—the man who first introduced blank-verse into a popular play might have been held in some sense to have been an inventor. But the public stage had not received the dramatic blank-verse with which every scholar must have been familiar, from one very obvious circumstance,—the rudeness of its exhibitions did not require the aid of the poet, or at least required only the aid which he could afford with extreme facility. The stage had its extemporal actors, its ready constructors of dull and pointless prose, and its manufacturers of doggerel, which exhibited nothing of poetry but its fetters. Greene himself, who is not to be confounded with the tribe of low writers for the theatre in its earliest transition-state, says, in 1588, that he still maintains his "*old* course to palter up something in prose." He is as indignant as his friend Nashe against "verses jet on the stage in tragical buskins, every word filling the mouth like the faburden of Bow-bell." This, Mr. Collier says, is pointed at Marlowe. Greene is no doubt sarcastic upon some one who had made mouthing verses, whilst he continued to write prose. Marlowe, very probably, had first made a species of verse popular which Greene had not practised, and which, he says, he was twitted with being unable to produce. It was commendable in any man to adopt an essentially higher style than that with which the stage had been familiar; but it certainly required no great effort in a poet to transfer the style which had been popular in the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn to Blackfriars and the Curtain. The cases appear to us parallel with many cases of publication in another form. The style which was first made popular by 'Beppo,' for example, was previously presented to the English taste in Whistlecraft; but because Whistlecraft was known to a few, whilst 'Beppo' was read by thousands, shall we say that Byron first thought the introduction of the style of Berni would be a most valuable improvement in our poetry? With great respect for Mr. Collier's opinions, it appears to us that the reputation of Marlowe must rest, not upon

* Nashe, 1587.

his popular revival of dramatic blank-verse, if he did so revive it, but upon the extent to which he improved the model which was ready to his hand. And here we cannot help thinking that the invective both of Nashe and Greene is not directed so much against the popular introduction of blank-verse, as against a particular species of blank-verse whose very defects had perhaps contributed to its popularity. Nashe bestows his satire upon "vain-glorious tragedians, who contend not so seriously to excel in action as to embowel the clouds in a speech of comparison;"—art-masters, who "think to outbrave better pens with a swelling bombast," &c.;—"being not extemporal in the invention of any other means to vent their manhood." Greene, on the other hand, is one "whose extemporal vein in any humour will excel our greatest art-masters' deliberate thoughts." Greene himself, although he derides those "who set the end of scholarism in an English blank-verse," points especially at verse where he finds "every word filling the mouth like the faburden of Bow-Bell;" and, he adds, "daring God out of heaven with that atheist Tamburlaine." Mr. Collier has proved, very conclusively we think, that Marlowe was the author of 'Tamburlaine;' and there can be no doubt that much of the invective of Nashe and Greene may justly apply to this performance. Its very defects Mr. Collier ascribes to the circumstances under which it was written:—"We may assert that, when writing 'Tamburlaine,' Marlowe contemplated a most important change and improvement in English dramatic poetry. Until it appeared, *plays upon the public stage* were written, sometimes in prose, but most commonly in rhyme; and the object of Marlowe was to substitute blank-verse. His genius was daring and original: he felt that prose was heavy and unattractive, and rhyme unnatural and wearisome; and he determined to make a bold effort, to the success of which we know not how much to attribute of the after-excellence of even Shakespeare himself. . . . Marlowe had a purpose to accomplish; he had undertaken to wean the multitude from the 'jigging veins of rhyming mother-wits,' which, according to Gosson, were so attractive; and in order to accomplish this object it was necessary to give something in exchange for what he took away. Hence the 'swelling bombast' of the style in which much of the two Parts of 'Tamburlaine the Great' is written." Be this as it may, we greatly doubt whether, if Shakspeare had followed in the steps of 'Tamburlaine,' his "after-excellence" would have been so rapidly matured. It was when he rejected this model, if he ever followed it, that he moved onward with freedom to his own surpassing glory.

The first part of 'Tamburlaine' was printed in 1590. We have not received it entire in the form in which it was acted. The publisher says, in a prefatory address, "I have purposely omitted some fond and frivolous gestures, digressing, and, in my poor opinion, far unmeet for the matter; which I thought might seem more tedious unto the wise than any way else to be regarded, though haply they have been of some vain conceited fondlings greatly gaped at, what time they were showed upon the stage in their graced deformities." It is impossible to open 'Tamburlaine,' at any page, without feeling that we have lighted upon a work of power. We encounter perpetual instances of the most extravagant taste; the inflated style invades, without intermission, the debateable ground between the sublime and the ridiculous; the characters are destitute of interest, with the exception of the gorgeous savage who perpetually fills the scene; we look in vain for the slightest approach to simplicity. . But still we are not wearied with the feeble platitudes that belong to the herd of imitators. Shakspeare has one or two good-natured hits at the bombast of 'Tamburlaine;' and Pistol's allusion to the "pamper'd jades of Asia" is doubly pointed, when we know that the jades are two kings, who are thus described in the stage-direction:—"Enter Tamburlaine, drawn in his chariot by Trebizond and Syria, with bits in their mouths, reins in his left hand, in his right hand a whip, with which he scourgeth them." It is unnecessary for us to enter upon any separate examination of this extraordinary performance with reference to Marlowe's *versification*; for whatever differences it may exhibit to the blank-verse of 'Ferrex and Porrex,' they are not defined enough to constitute a style; his verse as yet was confessedly unformed. With regard to the other points of Marlowe's poetical character that bear upon the authorship of 'The Contention of the Houses of York and Lancaster,' they may be better examined after a rapid notice of all his works that have come down to us.

The plays that can be unhesitatingly assigned to Marlowe are,—the two Parts of 'Tamburlaine,' 'The Massacre of Paris,' 'Faustus,' 'The Jew of Malta,' and 'Edward II.' There can be no doubt, whatever be the defects of these performances, that they are the work of a very remarkable man,—one that stood apart from the mass of his contemporaries to impress the peculiarities of his genius upon everything he touched. The wild magnificence, the unbridled passion, the fierceness of love or hatred, the revelling in blood and cruelty without fear or remorse, the pride in being accounted a scourge of God—these attributes of the character of Tamburlaine

were precisely suited to the power which Marlowe possessed for their development. In the furnace of his imagination not only the images and figurative allusions, but the whole material of his poetry,—the action, the characterization, and the style,—became all of the same white heat. Everything in ‘Tamburlaine’ burns. The characters walk about like the damned in ‘Vathek,’ with hearts of real fire in their bosoms. They speak in language such as no human beings actually employ,—not because they are Orientals, but because they are not men and women. They look to us as things apart from this earth,—not because they are clothed in “barbaric pearl and gold,” but because their feelings are not our feelings, and their thoughts not our thoughts. The queen of the hero is dying in his presence: though he tied kings to his chariot-wheels, and scourged them with whips, he is represented as accessible to the softer emotions; and the lover thus pours forth his lament:—

“Proud fury, and intolerable fit,
 That dares torment the body of my love,
 And scourge the scourge of the immortal God:
 Now are those spheres, where Cupid us’d to sit,
 Wounding the world with wonder and with love,
 Sadly supplied with pale and ghastly death,
 Whose darts do pierce the centre of my soul.
 Her sacred beauty hath enchanted Heaven;
 And had she liv’d before the siege of Troy,
 Helen (whose beauty summon’d Greece to arms,
 And drew a thousand ships to Tenedos)
 Had not been nam’d in Homer’s Iliads;
 Her name had been in ev’ry line he wrote.
 Or had those wanton poets, for whose birth
 Old Rome was proud, but gaz’d awhile on her,
 Nor Lesbia nor Corinna had been nam’d;
 Zenocrate had been the argument
 Of ev’ry epigram or elegy. [*The music sounds.*—ZENOCRATE dies.
 What! is she dead? Techelles, draw thy sword
 And wound the earth, that it may cleave in twain,
 And we descend into th’ infernal vaults,
 To hale the fatal sisters by the hair,
 And throw them in the triple moat of hell,
 For taking hence my fair Zenocrate.
 Casane and Theridamas, to arms!
 Raise cavaleros higher than the clouds,
 And with the cannon break the frame of heav’n;
 Batter the shining palace of the sun,
 And shiver all the starry firmament,
 For am’rous Jove hath snatch’d my love from hence,
 Meaning to make her stately queen of heaven.
 What God soever hold thee in his arms,

Giving thee nectar and ambrosia,
Behold me here, divine Zenocrate,
Raving, impatient, desperate, and mad,
Breaking my steeled lance, with which I burst
The rusty beams of Janus' temple-doors,
Letting out death and tyrannizing war,
To march with me under this bloody flag!
And if thou pitiest Tamburlaine the Great,
Come down from heav'n, and live with me again."

'The Massacre of Paris,' which Mr. Collier thinks "was produced soon after 1588," is essentially without dramatic interest. It was a subject in which Marlowe would naturally revel; for in the progress of the action blood could be made to flow as freely as water. Charles Lamb wittily says, "*Blood* is made as light of in some of these old dramas as *money* in a modern sentimental comedy; and as *this* is given away till it reminds us that it is nothing but counters, so *that* is spilt till it affects us no more than its representative, the paint of the property-man in the theatre." Unquestionably this was a characteristic of the transition-state of the drama; and 'Titus Andronicus' is a memorable example of it. But Marlowe, especially, revels in these exhibitions; and in 'The Jew of Malta' the passion is carried to the verge of the ludicrous. The effect intended to be produced is, of course, utterly defeated by these wholesale displays of brutality. As we pity the "one solitary captive," so we weep over the one victim of another's passions; but the revenge of Barabas, the poisoning not only of his own daughter but of the entire nunnery in which she had taken refuge, the massacres, the treacheries, the burning caldron that he had intended for a whole garrison, and into which he is himself plunged,—tragedy such as this is simply revolting. The characters of Barabas and of his servant, and the motives by which they are stimulated, are the mere coinage of extravagance; and the effect is as essentially undramatic as the personification is unreal. We subjoin a specimen of the conversation of this remarkable pair:—

"Bar. As for myself, I walk abroad a nights,
And kill sick people groaning under walls:
Sometimes I go about and poison wells;
And now and then, to cherish christian thieves,
I am content to lose some of my crowns;
That I may, walking in my gallery,
See 'em go pinion'd by my door.
Being young, I studied physic, and began
To practise first upon the Italian;
There I enrich'd the priests with burials,
And always kept the sexton's arms in use

With digging graves and ringing dead men's knells :
 And after that was I an engineer,
 And in the wars 'twixt France and Germany,
 Under pretence of helping Charles the fifth,
 Slew friend and enemy with my stratagems.
 Then after that was I an usurer,
 And with extorting, cozening, forfeiting,
 And tricks belonging unto brokery,
 I fill'd the jails with bankrupts in a year,
 And with young orphans planted hospitals,
 And every moon made some or other mad,
 And now and then one hung himself for grief,
 Pinning upon his breast a long great scroll
 How I with interest tormented him.
 But mark how I am bless'd for plaguing them ;
 I have as much coin as will buy the town.
 But tell me now, how hast thou spent thy time ?

Itha. 'Faith, master, in setting christian villages on fire,
 Chaining of eunuchs, binding galley-slaves.
 One time I was an ostler in an inn,
 And in the night-time secretly would I steal
 To travellers' chambers, and there cut their throats :
 Once at Jerusalem, where the pilgrims kneel'd,
 I strewed powder on the marble stones,
 And therewithal their knees would rankle so
 That I have laugh'd agood to see the cripples
 Go limping home to Christendom on stilts.'

'Faustus' is of a higher cast than 'The Jew of Malta,' although it was probably written before it. Mr. Collier conceives that 'Faustus' was intended to follow up 'Tamburlaine;' while he assigns 'The Jew' to 1589 or 1590. Its great merit lies in the conception of the principal character. It is undramatic in the general progress of the action; full of dark subtleties, that rather reveal the condition of Marlowe's own mind than lead to the popular appreciation of the character which he painted; and the comedy with which it is blended is perfectly out of keeping, neither harmonising with the principal action, nor relieving it by contrast. But still there is wonderful power. It is, however, essentially the power of Marlowe, to whom it was not given, as to the "myriad-minded man," to go out of himself to realise the truth of every form of human thought and passion, and even to make the supernatural a reality. It was for Marlowe to put his own habits of mind into his dramatic creations; to grapple with terrors that would be revolting to a well-disciplined understanding; "to wander in fields where curiosity is forbidden to go; to approach the dark gulf near enough to look in; to be busied in speculations which are the rottenest part of the core of the fruit that fell from the tree of

knowledge."* It is in this spirit, Lamb holds, that he dealt with the characters of Barabas and Faustus. May we not add that, when he worked upon a new model,—when he produced his 'Edward II.,' in all probability his latest play,—he could not even then avoid exposing "a mind which at least delighted to dabble with interdicted subjects"? The character of Gaveston is certainly not drawn as Shakspeare would have drawn it: if there had been a necessity for so treating the subject, *he* would have abandoned it altogether.

Within a year or two of his death the genius of Marlowe was thus revelling in the exercise of its own peculiar qualities; displaying alike its strength and its weakness, its refinement and its grossness. In his latest period he produced the 'Edward II.' Mr. Collier mentions this as "if not the last, certainly one of the most perfect, of Marlowe's productions. . . . Here the author's versification is exhibited in its greatest excellence." It was entered at Stationers' Hall in July 1593, the unhappy poet having been killed in the previous month. We presume, therefore, that those who hold that Marlowe wrote the two Parts of 'The Contention between the Houses of York and Lancaster'—the two *old* plays upon which Shakspeare founded the Second and Third Parts of 'Henry VI.'—also hold that they were written before Marlowe's 'Edward II.' Chalmers was the first to broach the theory of Marlowe's authorship of these plays. Malone, as we have seen, propounded, with minute circumstantiality, in his 'Dissertation,' how Greene "could not conceal his mortification" that he and Peele had been robbed of their property by a "new upstart writer." But Malone, in his 'Chronological Order,' arraigns the thief under an entirely new indictment. Some circumstances, he says, which have lately struck him, confirm an opinion that Marlowe was the author. And he then goes on to produce "confirmations strong as proofs of holy writ." "A passage in his (Marlowe's) historical drama of 'King Edward II.,' which Dr. Farmer has pointed out to me since the 'Dissertation' was printed, also inclines me to believe, with him, that Marlowe was the author of one, if not both, of the old dramas on which Shakspeare formed the two plays which in the first folio edition of his works are distinguished by the titles of the Second and Third Parts of 'King Henry VI.'" The passage which produced this recantation of Malone's former opinion is that of the two celebrated lines in 'The Second Part of the Contention':—

"What, will the aspiring blood of Lancaster
Sink into the ground? I thought it would have mounted."

* Lamb's 'Specimens,' vol. i., p. 44.

Mark the proof. "Marlowe, as Dr. Farmer observes to me, has the very same phraseology in 'King Edward II.:'—

‘Scorning that the lowly earth
Should drink his blood, mounts up to the air.’

“And in the same play I have lately noticed another line in which we find the very epithet here applied to the pious Lancastrian king:—

‘Frown’st thou thereat, *aspiring Lancaster?*’”

We should be content to leave such childish nonsense to its own fate, had the opinion of Marlowe’s authorship not been adopted by men of a very different calibre.

The theory that Marlowe wrote one or both Parts of ‘The Contention’ must begin by assuming that his mind was so thoroughly disciplined at the period when he produced ‘Tamburlaine,’ and ‘Faustus,’ and ‘The Jew of Malta,’ that he was able to lay aside every element, whether of thought or expression, by which those plays are characterised; adopt essentially different principles for the dramatic conduct of a story; copy his characters from living and breathing models of actual man; come down from his pomp and extravagance of language, not to reject poetry, but to ally poetry with familiar and natural thoughts; and delineate crime, not with the glaring and fantastic pencil that makes demons spout forth fire and blood in the midst of thick darkness, but with a severe portraiture of men who walk in broad daylight upon the common earth, rendering the ordinary passions of their fellows—pride, and envy, and ambition, and revenge—most fearful, from their alliance with stupendous intellect and unconquerable energy. This was what Marlowe must have done before he could have conducted a single sustained scene of either Part of ‘The Contention;’—before he could have depicted the fierce hatreds of Beaufort and Gloster, the never-subdued ambition of Margaret and York, the patient suffering amidst taunting friends and reviling enemies of Henry, and, above all, the courage, the activity, the tenacity, the self-possession, the intellectual supremacy, and the passionless ferocity, of Richard. In the ‘Tamburlaine,’ and ‘Jew,’ and ‘Faustus,’ events move on with no natural progression. In every scene there must be something to excite. We have no repose; for, if striking situations are not presented, we have the same exaggerations of thought, and the same extravagance of language. What is intended to be familiar at once plunges into the opposite extravagance of ribaldry; and even the messengers and servants are made out of something different from life. We

have looked through Marlowe's plays (we except 'Edward II.' for reasons which will presently appear) for a plain piece of narrative, such as might contrast with the easy method with which Shakspeare in general tells a story, and of which 'The Contention' furnishes abundant examples; but we have looked in vain. We select a passage, however, from the Second Part of 'Tamburlaine,' in which Callapine and his allies take a survey of their military position and resources; and we compare it with the scene in 'The Second Part of the Contention' in which Warwick meets Edward and Richard after the battle of Wakefield. There can be no doubt that these passages were written within two or three years of each other:—

FROM THE SECOND PART OF TAMBURLAINE.

"Enter CALLAPINE, ORCANES, ALMEDA, and the Kings of Jerusalem, Trebizond, and Syria, with their Trains.—To them enter a Messenger.

Mess. Renowned emperor, mighty Callapine,

God's great lieutenant over half the world!
Here at Aleppo, with a host of men,
Lies Tamburlaine, this king of Persia,
(In numbers more than are the quiv'ring
leaves

Of Ida's forest, where your highness' hounds,
With open cry, pursue the wounded stag.)
Who means to girt Natolia's walls with siege,
Fire the town, and overrun the land.

Call. My royal army is as great as his,
That, from the bounds of Phrygia to the sea
Which washeth Cyprus with his brinish
waves,

Covers the hills, the valleys, and the plains.
Viceroy and peers of Turkey, play the men!
Whet all your swords, to mangle Tamburlaine,

His sons, his captains, and his followers;
By Mahomet! not one of them shall live:
The field wherein this battle shall be fought
For ever term the Persians' sepulchre,
In memory of this our victory!

Orc. Now, he that calls himself the scourge
of Jove,

The emp'ror of the world, and earthly god,
Shall end the warlike progress he intends,
And travel headlong to the lake of hell,
Where legions of devils, (knowing he must
die

Here, in Natolia, by your highness' hands,)
All brandishing their brands of quenchless
fire,
Stretching their monstrous paws, grin with
their teeth,

And guard the gates to entertain his soul.

Call. Tell us, viceroys, the number of your
men,
And what our army royal is esteem'd.

FROM THE SECOND PART OF THE CONTENTION.

"Enter the EARL OF WARWICK, MONTAQUE,
with drum, Ancient, and Soldiers.

War. How now, fair lords? what fare?
What news abroad?

Rich. Ah, Warwick, should we report
The baleful news, and, at each word's deli-
verance,
Stab poniards in our flesh till all were told,
The words would add more anguish than the
wounds.

Ah, valiant lord, the duke of York is slain.

Edw. Ah, Warwick! Warwick! that Plan-
tagenet

Which held thee dear, ay, even as his soul's
redemption,

Is by the stern lord Clifford done to death.

War. Ten days ago I drown'd those news
in tears:

And now, to add more measure to your woes,
I come to tell you news since then befallen.
After the bloody fray at Wakefield fought,
Where your brave father breath'd his latest
gasp,
Tidings, as swiftly as the post could run,
Were brought me of your loss, and his de-
parture.

I then in London, keeper of the king,
Muster'd my soldiers, gather'd flocks of
friends,

And very well appointed, as I thought,
March'd to St. Alban's to intercept the queen,
Bearing the king in my behalf along:
For by my scouts I was advertised
That she was coming, with a full intent
To dash your late decree in parliament,
Touching king Henry's heirs, and your suc-
cession.

Short tale to make—we at St. Alban's met,
Our battles join'd, and both sides fiercely
fought:

But, whether 't was the coldness of the king
(He look'd full gently on his warlike queen)
That robb'd my soldiers of their heated
spleen;

Jer. From Palestina and Jerusalem,
Of Hebrews threescore thousand fighting men
Are come since last we showed to your ma-
jesty.

Orc. So from Arabia desert, and the bounds
Of that sweet land, whose brave metropolis
Re-edified the fair Semiramis,
Came forty thousand warlike foot and horse,
Since last we number'd to your majesty.

Treb. From Trebizond, in Asia the Less,
Naturaliz'd Turks and stout Bithynians
Came to my band, full fifty thousand more
(That fighting know not what retreat doth
mean,

Nor e'er return but with the victory)
Since last we number'd to your majesty.

Syr. Of Syrians from Halia is repair'd,
And neighbour cities of your highness' land,
Ten thousand horse, and thirty thousand
foot,

Since last we number'd to your majesty ;
So that the royal army is esteem'd
Six hundred thousand valiant fighting men.

Call. Then welcome, Tamburlaine, unto
thy death.

Come, puissant viceroys, let us to the field,
(The Persians' sepulchre,) and sacrifice
Mountains of breathless men to Mahomet,
Who now, with Jove, opens the firmament
To see the slaughter of our enemies."

Or whether 't was report of his success,
Or more than common fear of Clifford's rigour,
Who thunders to his captains—blood and
death,

I cannot tell: but, to conclude with truth,
Their weapons like to lightnings went and
came :

Our soldiers', like the night-owl's lazy flight,
Or like an idle thresher with a flail,
Fell gently down, as if they smote their
friends.

I cheer'd them up with justice of the cause,
With promise of high pay, and great rewards :
But all in vain, they had no hearts to fight,
Nor we in them no hope to win the day ;
So that we fled ; the king unto the queen,
Lord George your brother, Norfolk, and my-
self,

In haste, post haste, are come to join with you ;
For in the marches here we heard you were
Making another head to fight again.

Edw. Thanks, gentle Warwick.
How far hence is the duke with his power ?
And when came George from Burgundy to
England ?

War. Some five miles off the duke is with
his power.

But as for your brother, he was lately sent
From your kind aunt, duchess of Burgundy,
With aid of soldiers'gainst this needful war."

Our readers have now the two Parts of 'The Contention' before them; and we would ask if a single passage can be therein found conceived in Marlowe's "Ercles' vein"? On the other hand, innumerable other passages may be found in Marlowe's 'Edward II.' in which his peculiar characteristics continue to prevail, associated indeed with many evidences of a really higher style of dramatic poetry. This is decisive, we think, against Marlowe being the author of 'The Contention.' But it proves something more;—it is evidence that he had become acquainted with another model, and that model we hold to be 'The Contention' itself. Here it stands, with a fixed date; in itself a model, we believe, if no other works of Shakspeare can be proved to have existed in, or close upon, the first half of the decad commencing in 1585. To show the contrary it would be necessary to maintain that Marlowe's 'Edward II.' preceded 'The Contention;' but upon this point no one has ever raised a doubt. All the English authorities have left 'The Contention' amidst the dust and rubbish of that drama, which Marlowe *first*, and Shakspeare afterwards, according to their theory, came to inform with life and poetry. They have always proclaimed these dramas as *old* plays—rude plays—things which Shakspeare remodelled. We hold that they were the things upon which Marlowe built his later style, whether as regards the dramatic conduct

of an action, the development of character, or the structure of the verse;—and we hold that they were Shakspere's.

But it is necessary that we should show that in Marlowe's 'Edward II.' the author, possessing that power of adaptation, to a certain extent, which always belongs to genius, was still pursued by his original faults of exaggeration of thought and inflation of language. We think this may be effected by selecting a few passages scattered up and down the drama:—

" *Queen.* O miserable and distressed queen!
 Would, when I left sweet France, and was embark'd,
 That charming Circe, walking on the waves,
 Had chang'd my shape; or at the marriage-day
 The cup of Hymen had been full of poison;
 Or with those arms, that twin'd about my neck,
 I had been stifled, and not liv'd to see
 The king my lord thus to abandon me!
 Like frantic Juno will I fill the earth
 With ghastly murmur of my sighs and cries."

" *Edw.* My heart is as an anvil unto sorrow,
 Which beats upon it like the Cyclops' hammers,
 And with the noise turns up my giddy brain,
 And makes me frantic for my Gaveston.
 Ah! had some bloodless fury rose from hell,
 And with my kingly sceptre struck me dead,
 When I was forc'd to leave my Gaveston!"

" *Edw.* By earth, the common mother of us all!
 By heaven, and all the moving orbs thereof!
 By this right hand! and by my father's sword!
 And all the honours 'longing to my crown!
 I will have heads and lives for him, as many
 As I have manors, castles, towns, and towers.
 Treacherous Warwick! traitorous Mortimer!
 If I be England's king, in lakes of gore
 Your headless trunks, your bodies will I trail,
 That you may drink your fill, and quaff in blood,
 And stain my royal standard with the same,
 That so my bloody colours may suggest
 Remembrance of revenge immortally
 On your accursed traitorous progeny,
 You villains that have slain my Gaveston.
 And in this place of honour and of trust,
 Spencer, sweet Spencer, I adopt thee here;
 And merely of our love we do create thee
 Earl of Gloster, and lord chamberlain,
 Despite of times, despite of enemies."

" *Edw.* A litter hast thou? lay me in a hearse,

And to the gates of hell convey me hence ;
 Let Pluto's bells ring out my fatal knell,
 And hags howl for my death at Charon's shore.
 For friends hath Edward none but these ; and these
 Must die under a tyrant's sword."

" *Spencer, junior.* O, is he gone ? is noble Edward gone ?
 Parted from hence, never to see us more ?
 Rend, sphere of heav'n ! and, fire, forsake thy orb !
 Earth, melt to air ! Gone is my sovereign !
 Gone, gone, alas ! never to make return."

The slight specimens which we have thus taken, almost at random, from the 'Edward II.' will suggest to our readers a general idea of the structure of Marlowe's verse in that play, which is held to be, "if not the last, the most perfect, of his dramatic productions;" and of which Mr. Collier further says, "Here the author's versification is exhibited in its greatest excellence, and successful experiments are made in nearly all those improvements for which Shakespeare has generally had exclusive credit." Mr. Collier, in his 'History of Dramatic Poetry,' from which this passage is extracted, has given a criticism upon each of Marlowe's productions, "with a view to trace the gradual improvement of his style and versification, and to show that he often introduced into his mighty line (as Ben Jonson calls it) not less vigour and majesty than Shakespeare, with such varieties of pause, inflection, and modulation, as left our greatest dramatist little more to do than to follow his example." He adds, "This position supposes, as I have already endeavoured to establish, that Shakespeare had not written any of his original plays prior to 1593 (when Marlowe was killed), although, anterior to that year, he might have employed himself in altering and improving for representation some of the works of older dramatists." We have invariably been opposed to this position; and not only opposed to Mr. Collier's theory that Shakspeare did not commence as an original author till 1593, (so utterly at variance with the same gentleman's invaluable discovery that Shakspeare held a distinguished *status* in his profession in 1589,) but also to the more common belief that the date of his first original efforts must be assigned to 1591. We have not disguised that we ourselves have a theory connected with our own opinion:—"We have somewhat pertinaciously clung to the belief that Shakspeare, by commencing his career as a dramatic writer some four or five years earlier than is generally maintained, may claim, in common with his less illustrious early contemporaries, the praise of being one of the founders of our dramatic literature, instead of being the mere follower and

improver of Marlowe, and Greene, and Peele, and Kyd." * The two Parts of 'The Contention' were produced as early, if not earlier, than 1591, by universal admission. Mr. Collier thinks (a little, we apprehend, with the partiality of an advocate) that even Shakspeare's 'Richard II.' "presents no variety of rhythm that may not be found" in Marlowe's 'Edward II.' If we can show that in the 'Edward II.' there is no variety of rhythm that may not be found in the two Parts of 'The Contention,'—if we have shown that Marlowe could not have been the author of those two dramas,—and if we establish that Shakspeare must have been their author,—there is an end of Mr. Collier's theory, with regard to the versification of Shakspeare, that "the varieties of pause, inflection, and modulation" in Marlowe "left our greatest dramatist little more to do than to follow his example."

Mr. Collier admits that the monotony of the elder blank-verse,—the monosyllabic endings of the lines, the construction of blank-verse couplets as it were,—is a defect to "be found in Marlowe's first experiment;" and "when he produced his 'Faustus' he had not yet learnt to avoid it." In 'The Jew of Malta' he finds an improvement in the versification; but in the 'Edward II.' it "is exhibited in its greatest excellence." He then proceeds to analyse this excellence, which consists in the judicious employment of Alexandrines, the use of a redundant syllable, whether at the close of a line or before the close, and the varied pause. Mr. Collier gives examples of passages that combine these merits. We propose to offer some similar examples from the two Parts of 'The Contention;' and, believing these dramas to have preceded 'Edward II.,' we shall, in placing Mr. Collier's selections from Marlowe in apposition with those from 'The Contention,' give Shakspeare the first column, and Marlowe the second:—

FROM THE CONTENTION.

1. "As by your high imperial majesty's command."
- "Unto your gracious excellence, that are the substance."
- "Pardon, my lord, a sudden qualm came o'er my heart."
- "And bashful Henry be depos'd, whose cowardice."
- "Broke in, and were by th' hands of common soldiers slain."
2. "Methought I was in the cathedral church
At Westminster, and seated in the chair
Where kings and queens are crown'd, and at my feet

FROM MARLOWE'S EDWARD II.

1. "But, for we know thou art a noble gentleman."
- "Thou com'st from Mortimer and his accomplices."
- "To make me miserable! here receive my crown."
- "Further, ere this letter was seal'd lord Berkley came."
- "Oh, level all your looks upon these daring men."
2. "Away! poor Gaveston, that has no friend but me;
Do what they can, we'll live in Tynmouth here;
And so I walk with him about the walls,

* Introductory Notice to 'The Merchant of Venice.'

Henry and Margaret with a crown of gold
Stood ready to set it on my princely head."

"And you, my gracious lady and sovereign
mistress,

Causeless have laid complaints upon my
head.

I shall not want false witnesses enough,
That so amongst you you may have my life."

3. "*War.* Trust me, my lords, all hitherto
goes well;

The common people by numbers swarm to us.
But see where Somerset and Clarence come;
Speak suddenly, my lords, are we all friends?

Cl. Fear not that, my lord.

War. Then, gentle Clarence, welcome unto
Warwick,

And welcome, Somerset: I hold it cowardice
To rest mistrustful, where a noble heart

Hath pawn'd an open hand in sign of love:
Else might I think that Clarence, Edward's
brother,

Were but a feigned friend to our proceedings:
But welcome, sweet Clarence, my daughter
shall be thine.

And now what rests, but, in night's coverture,
Thy brother being carelessly encamp'd,
His soldiers lurking in the town about,
And but attended by a simple guard,
We may surprise and take him at our pleasure?

Our scouts have found the adventure very
easy.

Then cry king Henry, with resolved minds,
And break we presently into his tent.

Cl. Why, then let's on our way in silent
sort:

For Warwick and his friends, God, and St.
George!

War. This is his tent, and see where his
guard doth stand:

Courage, my soldiers, now or never;
But follow me now, and Edward shall be ours.

All. A Warwick, a Warwick."

4. "*War.* Ah, who is nigh? Come to me,
friend or foe,

And tell me who is victor, York or Warwick?
Why ask I that? my mangled body shows
That I must yield my body to the earth,
And by my fall the conquest to my foes.

Thus yields the cedar to the axe's edge,
Whose arms gave shelter to the princely
eagle,

Under whose shade the rampant lion slept,
Whose top-branch overpeer'd Jove's spread-
ing tree.

The wrinkles in my brows, now fill'd with
blood,

Were liken'd oft to kingly sepulchres;

What care I, though the earls begirt us
round?"

"Now, get thee to thy lords,
And tell them I will come to chastise them
For murdering Gaveston. Hie thee, get thee
gone!

Edward, with fire and sword, follows at thy
heels."

"These hands were never stain'd with inno-
cent blood,

Nor shall they now be tainted with a king's."

3. "*Gaveston.* Oh, treacherous Warwick,
thus to wrong thy friend!

James. I see it is your life these arms pur-
sue.

Gav. Weaponless must I fall, and die in
hands?

Oh, must this day be period of my life,
Centre of all my bliss? And ye be men,
Speed to the king.

Warwick. My lord of Pembroke's men,
Strive you no more—I will have that Gave-
ston.

James. Your lordship doth dishonour to
yourself,
And wrong our lord, your honourable friend.

War. No, James; it is my country's cause
I follow.

Go, take the villain. Soldiers, come, away.
We'll make quick work. Commend me to
your master,

My friend, and tell him that I watch'd it well.
Come, let thy shadow parley with king Ed-
ward.

Gav. Treacherous earl, shall not I see the
king?

War. The King of heaven, perhaps; no
other king."

4. "*Leicester.* Be patient, good my lord:
cease to lament.

Imagine Killingworth-castle were your court,
And that you lay for pleasure here a space,
Not of compulsion or necessity.

Edw. Leicester, if gentle words might
comfort me,

Thy speeches long ago had eas'd my sorrows,
For kind and loving hast thou always been.
The griefs of private men are soon allay'd,
But not of kings. The forest deer, being
struck,

Runs to an herb that closeth up the wounds;
But when the imperial lion's flesh is gor'd,
He rends and tear it with his wrathful paw,

For who liv'd king, but I could dig his grave?
And who durst smile, when Warwick bent his
brow?

Lo, now my glory smear'd in dust and blood,
My parks, and walks, my manors that I had,
Even now forsake me, and of all my lands
Is nothing left me but my body's length."

[And], highly scorning that the lowly earth
Should drink his blood, mounts up to the
air."

It would be tedious were we to carry this comparison much beyond the limits of Mr. Collier's extracts from the 'Edward II. '; but we cannot resist the temptation of putting the celebrated scene of the murder of Henry VI. side by side with the no less celebrated scene of the murder of Edward II. :—

FROM THE CONTENTION.

" *Glo.* Good day, my lord! What, at your book so hard?

King. Ay, my good lord. Lord, I should say rather;

'Tis sin to flatter, good was little better;
Good Gloster, and good devil, were all alike.
What scene of death hath Roscius now to act?

Glo. Suspicion always haunts a guilty mind.

King. The bird once lim'd doth fear the fatal bush;

And I, the hapless male to one poor bird,
Have now the fatal object in mine eye,
Where my poor young was lim'd, was caught, and kill'd.

Glo. Why, what a fool was that of Crete,
That taught his son the office of a bird!
And yet, for all that, the poor fowl was drown'd.

King. I, Dædalus; my poor son, Icarus;
Thy father, Minos, that denied our course;
Thy brother Edward the sun that sear'd his wings;

And thou the enviest gulf that swallow'd him.

Oh, better can my breast abide thy dagger's point,
Than can mine ears that tragic history.

Glo. Why, dost thou think I am an executioner?

King. A persecutor, I am sure thou art;
And if murdering innocents be executions,
Then I know thou art an executioner.

Glo. Thy son I kill'd for his presumption.

King. Hadst thou been kill'd when first thou didst presume,
Thou hadst not liv'd to kill a son of mine.
And thus I prophesy of thee:
That many a widow for her husband's death,
And many an infant's water-standing eye,
Widows for their husbands, children for their fathers,
Shall curse the time that ever thou wert born.
The owl shriek'd at thy birth, an evil sign;
The night-crow cried, a boding luckless tune;
Dogs howl'd, and hideous tempests shook down trees;

FROM EDWARD II.

" *Edward.* Who's there? what light is that? wherefore com'st thou?

Lightborn. To comfort you, and bring you joyful news.

Edw. Small comfort finds poor Edward in thy looks.

Villain, I know thou com'st to murder me.

Light. To murder you, my gracious lord! Far is it from my heart to do you harm.

The queen sent me to see how you were used,
For she relents at this your misery:

And what eyes can refrain from shedding tears,

To see a king in this most piteous state?

Edw. Weep'st thou already? list awhile to me,

And then thy heart, were it as Gurney's is,
Or as Matrevis, hewn from the Caucasus,
Yet will it melt, ere I have done my tale.

The dungeons where they keep me is the sink

Wherein the filth of all the castle falls.

Light. O villains!

Edw. And there, in mire and puddle, have I stood

This ten days' space; and lest that I should sleep,

One plays continually upon a drum.

They give me bread and water, being a king;
So that, for want of sleep and sustenance,
My mind 's distemper'd, and my body 's numb'd,

And whether I have limbs or no, I know not.
O, would my blood drop out from every vein,

As doth this water from my tatter'd robes!

Tell Isabel, the queen, I look'd not thus,
When for her sake I ran at tilt in France,
And there unhors'd the duke of Cleremont.

Light. O, speak no more, my lord! this breaks my heart.

Lie on this bed, and rest yourself a while.

Edw. These looks of thine can harbour nought but death:

I see my tragedy written in thy brows.

Yet stay a while, forbear thy bloody hand,
And let me see the stroke before it comes,

The raven rook'd her on the chimney's top,
And chattering pies in dismal discord sung;
Thy mother felt more than a mother's pain,
And yet brought forth less than a mother's
hope;

To wit, an undigest created lump,
Not like the fruit of such a goodly tree.
Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou
wast born,

To signify thou cam'st to bite the world:
And if the rest be true that I have heard,
Thou cam'st into the world—

Glo. Die, prophet, in thy speech, I'll hear
no more: [Stabs him.

For this amongst the rest was I ordain'd.

King. Ay, and for much more slaughter
after this.

O, God! forgive my sins, and pardon thee.
[He dies.

Glo. What! will the aspiring blood of Lan-
caster

Sink into the ground? I had thought it
would have mounted.

See how my sword weeps for the poor king's
death.

Now may such purple tears always be shed,
For such as seek the downfall of our house.
If any spark of life remain in thee,

[Stabs him again.

Down, down to hell, and say I sent thee
thither;

I, that have neither pity, love, nor fear.
Indeed, 't was true that Henry told me of,
For I have often heard my mother say,
I came into the world with my legs forward:
And had I not reason, think you, to make
haste,

And seek their ruins that usnrp'd our rights?
The women weeping, and the midwife crying,
'O, Jesus bless us, he is born with teeth.'
And so I was, indeed; which plainly signi-
fied

That I should snarl, and bite, and play the
dog.

Then, since Heaven hath made my body so,
Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it.
I had no father, I am like no father;
I have no brothers, I am like no brothers;
And this word *love*, which greybeards term
divine,

Be resident in men like one another,
And not in me; I am myself alone."

And even then, when I shall lose my life,
My mind may be more steadfast on my God.
Light. What means your highness to mis-
trust me thus?

Edw. What mean'st thou to dissemble with
me thus?

Light. These hands were never stain'd
with innocent blood,

Nor shall they now be tainted with a king's.

Edw. Forgive my thought, for having
such a thought.

One jewel have I left, receive thou this.
Still fear I, and I know not what's the cause,
But every joint shakes as I give it thee.

O, if thou harbour'st murder in thy heart,
Let this gift change thy mind, and save thy
soul!

Know, that I am a king: Oh, at that name
I feel a hell of grief; where is my crown?
Gone, gone; and do I remain?

Light. You're overwatch'd, my lord; lie
down and rest.

Edw. But that grief keeps me waking, I
should sleep;

For not these ten days have these eyelids
clos'd.

Now as I speak they fall, and yet with fear
Open again. O wherefore sitt'st thou here?

Light. If you mistrust me, I'll be gone,
my lord.

Edw. No, no; for if thou mean'st to mur-
ther me,

Thou wilt return again; and therefore stay.

Light. He sleeps.

Edw. O let me not die; yet stay, O stay a
while.

Light. How now, my lord?

Edw. Something still buzzeth in mine ears,
And tells me, if I sleep, I never wake;
This fear is that which makes me tremble
thus,

And therefore tell me, wherefore art thou
here?

Light. To rid thee of thy life; Matrevis,
come.

Edw. I am too weak and feeble to resist:
Assist me, sweet God, and receive my soul."

These are two specimens of power unequalled [by any poet
except the author of one of the passages. The power of both pas-
sages is in their reality. But where did Marlowe attain that power
so essentially different from his wonted characteristics? We for-
bear to press this point. We only ask an impartial examination of
the rhythm of the passage from the "old play" to determine in
what school Marlowe learnt his later and most perfect versification.

Before we conclude these observations on the versification of the *old* plays which it is held Shakspeare did not write, we may properly notice a very remarkable peculiarity in the first of the series, which we think bears the evidence of being composed as early as any portion of the play. 'The First Part of Henry VI.' contains about a hundred and fifty consecutive lines which are essentially different in their poetical construction from the other portions of the play, or the series of plays; and, taken as a mass, entirely of another character from any connected passage of his dramas generally. We refer to the couplets of the fifth, sixth, and seventh scenes of the fourth act. Dr. Johnson says of the sixth scene, "For what reason this scene is written in rhyme, I cannot guess. If Shakspeare had not in other plays mingled his rhymes and blank-verse in the same manner, I should have suspected that this dialogue had been a part of some other poem which was never finished, and that, being loth to throw his labour away, he inserted it here." Johnson's theory is highly plausible. At any rate we may believe that Shakspeare adopted rhyme—the "heroic verse" of Dryden—in this isolated and extensive manner, to render the concluding scenes of Talbot more emphatic. *He* was the hero of the play; *he* carried with him the highest sympathy of the audience. The principle upon which Dryden defended "heroic verse" in tragedy must have been the governing principle of its use in the passage in question:—"If you once admit of a latitude, that thoughts may be exalted, and that images and actions may be raised above the life, and described in measure without rhyme, that leads you insensibly from your own principles to mine: you are already so far onward of your way that you have forsaken the imitation of ordinary converse."* That Shakspeare thoroughly understood the far higher dramatic powers of the other instrument, "measure without rhyme," requires no proof. But in the introduction of the scene before us—the longest-sustained scene in heroic verse which his plays exhibit, or, as far as we know, which any contemporary drama exhibits—it is manifest to us that he made an experiment such as a very young poet would alone venture to make. But in this experiment we believe that he carried the powers of the inferior instrument farther, *for dramatic purposes*, than any poet who preceded or came after him. The extraordinary freedom of the versification, which, however, does not possess the slightest ruggedness, has not been approached even by Dryden himself; and of all Shakspeare's contemporaries in the use of the couplet, there is not one who has attempted

* Essay prefixed to 'The Conquest of Grenada.'

that variety of pause which we perpetually encounter in these hundred and fifty lines. We cannot, of course, attempt to prove this by any detailed comparison; but to illustrate our meaning we will occupy a little space with three passages from Peele's 'Arraignment of Paris,' Shakspeare's 'First Part of Henry VI.,' and Dryden's 'Aurengzebe:':—

PEELE.

"*Apol.* Thrice reverend gods, and thou, immortal Jove,
If Phoebus may, as him doth much behove,
Be licensed, according to our laws,
To speak uprightly in this doubted cause,
(Sith women's wits work men's unceasing woes,
To make them friends, that now bin friendless foes,
And peace to keep with them, with us, and all
That make their title to this golden ball;
(Nor think, ye gods, my speech doth derogate
From sacred power of this immortal sonate;)
Refer this sentence where it doth belong:
In this, say I, fair Phœbe hath the wrong:
Not that I mean her beauty bears the prize,
But that the holy law of heaven denies
One god to meddle in another's power;
And this befell so near Diana's bower,
As for th' appeasing this unpleasant grudge,
In my conceit she hight the fittest judge."

SHAKSPEARE.

"*Tal.* When from the dauphin's crest thy sword struck fire,
It warm'd thy father's heart with proud desire
Of bold-fac'd victory. Then leaden age,
Quicken'd with youthful spleen and warlike rage,
Beat down Alençon, Orleans, Burgundy,
And from the pride of Gallia rescued thee.
The ireful bastard Orleans — that drew blood
From thee, my boy; and had the maidenhood
Of thy first fight — I soon encountered;
And, interchanging blows, I quickly shed
Some of his bastard blood; and, in disgrace,
Bespoke him thus: 'Contaminated, base,
And misbegotten blood I spill of thine,
Mean and right poor; for that pure blood of mine
Which thou didst force from Talbot, my brave boy:'
Here, purposing the bastard to destroy,
Came in strong rescue. Speak, thy father's care;
Art thou not, weary, John? How didst thou fare?
Wilt thou yet leave the battle, boy, and fly,
Now thou art seal'd the son of chivalry!"

DRYDEN.

"*Arm.* Heav'n seems the empire of the east to lay
On the success of this important day.
Their arms ure to the last decision bent,
And fortune labours with the vast event:
She now has in her hand the greatest stako
Which for contending monarchs she can make.
Whate'er can urge ambitious youth to fight
She pompously displays before their sight;
Laws, empire, all permitted to the sword,
And fate could ne'er an ampler scene afford.
Asaph. Four several armies to the field are led,
Which, high in equal hopes, four princes head;
Indus and Ganges, our wide empire's bounds,
Swell their dy'd currents with their natives' wounds:
Each purple river winding, as he runs,
His bloody arms about his slaughter'd sons.
Fayel. I well remember you foretold the storm,
When first the brothers did their factions form:
When each, by curs'd cabals of women, strove
To draw th' indulgent king to partial love."

We ask, then, where we shall find an example amongst the dramatic poets who are held to have preceded Shakspeare of couplets written for the stage with the freedom and variety of these scenes? Such qualities, we are ready to acknowledge, are to be found in Marlowe's unfinished 'Hero and Leander;' but the few couplets that we meet in Marlowe's plays, if they admit at all of a comparison with the sustained scenes before us, will show that this poet had, with reference to the drama, a different theory of heroic verse from the theory of the author of 'The First Part of Henry VI.' He had a different theory, as we have held, of *dramatic* verse altogether till he reached the period of his latest productions. And why so? Because he had a different theory of the qualities in which the strength

of dramatic poetry consisted; and he kept to his own theory until an opposite model was presented to him.

§ VIII.

WHEN William Shakspeare was about five years of age a grant of arms was made by the College of Heralds to his father. The father was unquestionably engaged in business of some sort in Stratford-upon-Avon; he was an agriculturist, in all likelihood; but he lived in an age when the pride of ancestry was not lightly regarded, and when a distinction such as this was of real and permanent importance. The grant was confirmed in 1599; and the reason for the confirmation of arms is stated with minute particularity in the "exemplification" then granted by Sir William Dethick and the great Camden:—"Know ye that in all nations and kingdoms the record and remembrance of the valiant facts and virtuous dispositions of worthy men have been known and divulged by certain shields of arms and tokens of chivalry; the grant and testimony whereof appertaineth unto us, by virtue of our offices from the queen's most excellent majesty and her highness' most noble and victorious progenitors: wherefore, being solicited, and by credible report informed that John Shakspeare, now of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warwick, gent., whose parent and great-grandfather, late antecessor, for his faithful and approved service to the late most prudent prince King Henry VII. of famous memory was advanced and rewarded with lands and tenements, given to him in these parts of Warwickshire, where they have continued by some descents in good reputation and credit," &c. &c. It is not difficult to imagine the youthful Shakspeare sitting at his mother's feet, to listen to the tale of his "antecessor's" prowess; or to picture the boy led by his father over the field of Bosworth,—to be shown the great morass which lay between both armies,—and Radmoor Plain, where the battle began,—and Dickon's Nook, where the tyrant harangued his army,—and the village of Dadlington, where the graves of the slain still indented the ground. Here was the scene of his antecessor's "faithful and approved service." In the humble house of Shakspeare's boyhood there was, in all probability, to be found a thick squat folio volume, then some thirty years printed, in which might be read, "what misery, what murder, and what execrable plagues this famous region hath suffered by the division and dissention of the renowned houses of Lancaster and York." This, to the generation of Shakspeare's boyhood, was not a tale buried in the dust of

ages; it was one whose traditions were familiar to the humblest of the land, whilst the memory of its bitter hatreds still ruffled the spirits of the highest. "For what nobleman liveth at this day, or what gentleman of any ancient stock or progeny is clear, whose lineage hath not been infested and plagued with this unnatural division?" In that old volume from which we quote, "the names of the histories contained" are thus set forth:—"I. 'The *Unquiet Time* of King Henry the Fourth.' II. 'The *Victorious Acts* of King Henry the Fifth.' III. 'The *Troublous Season* of King Henry the Sixth.' IV. 'The *Prosperous Reign* of King Edward the Fourth.' V. 'The *Pitiful Life* of King Edward the Fifth.' VI. 'The *Tragical Doings* of King Richard the Third.' VII. 'The *Politic Governace* of King Henry the Seventh.' VIII. 'The *Triumphant Reign* of King Henry the Eighth.'" This book was Hall's 'Chronicle.' How diligently the young man Shakspeare had studied the book, and how carefully he has followed it in four of his chronicle histories, we have given abundant example in the Historical Illustrations of these plays. With the local and family associations, then, that must have belonged to his early years, the subject of these four dramas, or rather the subject of this one great drama in four parts, must have irresistibly presented itself to the mind of Shakspeare, as one which he was especially qualified to throw into the form of a chronicle history. It was a task peculiarly fitted for the young poet during the first five years of his connexion with the theatre. Historical dramas, in the rudest form, presented unequalled attractions to the audiences who flocked to the rising stage. Without any undue reliance on his own powers, he might believe that he could produce something more worthily attractive than the rude dialogue which ushered in the "four swords and a buckler" of the old stage. He had not here to invent a plot; or to aim at the unity of action, of time, and of place, which the more refined critics of his day held to be essential to tragedy. The form of a chronicle history might appear to require little beyond a poetical exposition of the most attractive facts of the real Chronicles. It is in this spirit, we think, that Shakspeare approached the execution of 'The First Part of Henry VI.' It appears to us, also, that in that very early performance he in some degree held his genius in subordination to the necessity of executing his task, rather with reference to the character of his audience and the general nature of his subject than for the fulfilment of his own aspirations as a poet. There was before him one of two courses. He might have chosen, as the greater number of his contemporaries chose, to consider the

dominions of poetry and of common sense to be far sundered; and, unconscious or doubtful of the force of simplicity, he might have resolved, with them, to substitute what would more unquestionably gratify a rude popular taste,—the force of extravagance. On the other hand, it was open to him to transfer to the dramatic shape the spirit-stirring recitals of the old chronicle-writers; in whose narratives, and especially in that portion of them in which they make their characters speak, there is a manly and straightforward earnestness which in itself not seldom becomes poetical. Shakspeare chose this latter course. When we begin to study the ‘Henry VI.’ we find in the First Part that the action does not appear to progress to a catastrophe; that the author lingers about the details, as one who was called upon to exhibit an entire series of events rather than the most dramatic portions of them;—there are the alternations of success and loss, and loss and success, till we somewhat doubt to which side to assign the victory. The characters are firmly drawn, but without any very subtle distinctions,—and their sentiments and actions appear occasionally inconsistent, or at any rate not guided by a determined purpose in the writer. It is easy to perceive that this mode of dealing with a complicated subject was the most natural and obvious to be adopted by an unpractised poet, who was working without models. But although the effect may be, to a certain extent, undramatic, there is impressed upon the whole performance a wonderful air of truth. Much of this must have resulted from the extraordinary quality of the poet’s mind, which could tear off all the flimsy conventional disguises of individual character, and penetrate the real moving principle of events with a rare acuteness, and a rarer impartiality. In our view, that whole portion of ‘The First Part of Henry VI.’ which deals with the character and actions of Joan of Arc is a remarkable example of this power in Shakspeare. We find her described in the Chronicles under every form of vituperation,—a monstrous woman, a monster, a ramp, a devilish witch and satanical enchantress, an organ of the devil. She was the main instrument through which England had lost France; and thus the people still hated her memory. She claimed to be invested with supernatural powers; and thus her name was not only execrated but feared. Neither the patriotism nor the superstition of Shakspeare’s age would have endured that the Pucelle should have been dismissed from the scene without vengeance taken upon her imagined crimes; or that confession should not be made by her which would exculpate the authors of her death. Shakspeare has conducted her history up to the point when she is handed over to the stake.

Other writers would have burnt her upon the scene, and the audience would have shouted with the same delight that they felt when the Barabas of Marlowe was thrown into the caldron. Shakspeare, following the historian, has made her utter a contradictory confession of one of the charges against her honour; but he has taken care to show that the brutality of her English persecutors forced from her an inconsistent avowal, if it did not suggest a false one, for the purpose of averting a cruel and instant death. In the treatment which she receives from York and Warwick, the poet has not exhibited one single circumstance that might excite sympathy for *them*. They are cold, and cruel, and insolent, because a defenceless creature whom they had dreaded is in their power. Her parting malediction has, as it appears to us, especial reference to the calamities which await the authors of her death:—

“ May never glorious sun reflex his beams
 Upon the country where you make abode!
 But darkness and the gloomy shade of death
 Environ you.”

But in all the previous scenes Shakspeare has drawn the character of the Maid with an undisguised sympathy for her courage, her patriotism, her high intellect, and her enthusiasm. If she had been the defender of England, and not of France, the poet could not have invested her with higher attributes. It is in her mouth that he puts his choicest thoughts and his most musical verse. It is she who says

“ Glory is like a circle in the water,
 Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself,
 Till, by broad spreading, it disperse to nought.”

It is she who solicits the alliance of Burgundy in a strain of impassioned eloquence which belongs to one fighting in a high cause with unconquerable trust, and winning over enemies by the firm resolves of a vigorous understanding and an unshaken will. The lines beginning

“ Look on thy country, look on fertile France,”

might have given the tone to everything that has been subsequently written in honour of the Maid. It was his accurate knowledge of the springs of character, which in so young a man appears almost intuitive, that made Shakspeare adopt this delineation of Joan of Arc. He knew that, with all the influence of her supernatural pretension, this extraordinary woman could not have swayed the destinies of kingdoms, and moulded princes and warriors to her will, unless she had been a person of very rare natural endowments. She was

represented by the Chroniclers as a mere virago, a bold and shameless trull, a monster, a witch;—because they adopted the vulgar view of her character,—the view, in truth, of those to whom she was opposed. *They* were rough soldiers, with all the virtues and all the vices of their age; the creatures of brute force; the champions, indeed, of chivalry, but with the brand upon them of all the selfish passions with which the highest deeds of chivalry were too invariably associated. The wonderful thing about ‘The First Part of Henry VI.’ is, that these men, who stood in the same relation of time to Shakspeare’s age as the men of Anne do to ours, should have been painted with a pencil at once so vigorous and so true. The English Chroniclers, in all that regards the delineation of characters and manners, give us abundant *materials* upon which we may form an estimate of actions, and motives, and instruments; but they do not show us the instruments moving in their own forms of vitality; they do not lay bare their motives; and hence we have no real key to their actions. Froissart is, perhaps, the only contemporary writer who gives us real portraits of the men of mail. But Shakspeare marshalled them upon his stage, in all their rude might, their coarse ambition, their low jealousies, their factious hatreds,—mixed up with their thirst for glory, their indomitable courage, their warm friendships, their tender natural affections, their love of country. They move over his scene, displaying alike their grandeur and their littleness. He arrays them, equally indifferent whether their faults or their excellences be most prominent. The “terrible Talbot” denounces his rival Fastolf with a bitterness unworthy a companion in arms; enters into a fierce war of words with the Pucelle, in which her power of understanding leaves him almost contemptible; and fights onward from scene to scene as if there was nothing high in man except the power of warring against his fellows: but he weeps like a lover over the fruitless gallantry of his devoted son; and he folds his dead boy in his rough arms, even as the mother, perishing with her child, takes the cold clay of the dear one to her bosom. This is the *truth* which Shakspeare substituted for the vague delineations of the old stage. These are the pictures of manners which he gave to the people, when other poets adopted the easier expedient of separating the imaginative from the vulgar view of human actions and passions, only by rejecting whatever was real. He gave to his audiences new characters and new manners, simply because he presented to them the characters and manners of the ages which he undertook to delineate. Other men were satisfied to find the new in what never had an existence.

But with all this truth of characterization and of costume, the scattered events, the multifarious details, the alternations from factions at home to wars abroad, would have never hung together as a dramatic whole, had the poet not supplied a principle of cohesion, by which what is distant either in time or space, or separated in the natural progression of events, is bound together. We feel in the First Part of the 'Henry VI.' that some unseen principle is in operation by which the action still moves onward to a fixed point. One by one the great soldiers of Henry V. fade from the scene—the Salisburys, and Bedfords, and Talbots, who held France as their hunting-ground. Other actors come upon the busy stage more distinctly associated with the scenes of factious strife which are to follow. The beginnings of those strifes are heard even amidst the din of the battle-fields of France; and, surrounded by terrible slaughter and fruitless victories, we have an unstable peace and a marriage without hope—an imbecile king and a discontented nobility. Amidst all this involvement the poet disdains, as it were, to illuminate the thick darkness beyond with a single ray. We see only the progression of events without their consequences; and the belief produced upon the mind is, that a fate presides over their direction. The effect is achieved by the masterly skill with which the future is linked to the present—felt, but not seen.

It appears to us that one of the most decisive proofs that Shakspeare was the original author of the three Parts of 'Henry VI.' is to be derived from the evidence which these plays present of the gradual increase of power in the writer. We say this without reference to the passages which have been added to 'The Contention;' for all the real dramatic power is most thoroughly developed in the original plays that have grown into the Second and Third Parts of the 'Henry VI.' The succeeding process to which they were subjected was simply one of technical elaboration and refinement. We have no doubt at all that 'The First Part of Henry VI.' originally existed in a rougher form. Whoever compares it critically with the two Parts of 'The Contention' will perceive that much of the ruggedness which belongs to those dramas has no place in this first drama of the series. For instance, it has very few Alexandrines; the use of old words, such as "belike," is very rare, that word being frequently found in 'The Contention;' and the versification altogether, though certainly more monotonous, is what we may call more correct, than that of 'The Contention.' How it could ever have been held that this play has undergone *no* repair, is to us one of the many marvellous things that belong to the ordi-

nary critical estimation of it. Be the changes it has passed through few or many, it is evident to us that all the material parts of the original structure are still to be found. But whatever rapidity of action, truth of characterization, and correctness of style it may possess, in a pre-eminent degree, as compared with other plays of the period, it is not, in all the higher essentials of dramatic excellence, to be placed in the same scale as the two Parts of 'The Contention.' It wants, speaking generally, the high poetry of those plays—not the mere poetry of description, but the teeming thought, the figurative expression, the single word that conveys a complex idea with more distinctness and much more force than the periphrasis of ordinary writers. It results from this very defect that 'The First Part of Henry VI.' has far less obscurity than the succeeding parts. We may venture to say that there is no play of the whole number received as Shakspeare's which exhibits so few passages of doubtful meaning; and this we hold to be a consequence of its being one of his very earliest performances. All the very early plays possess this attribute, more or less. We can understand how a poet of Shakspeare's extraordinary judgment—the quality which we hold to be as remarkable in him as his invention—should, surrounded as he was with dramatic productions teeming with extravagance and unreality of every description, first endeavour to be correct and to be intelligible. We have already noticed that 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona' possesses this distinctive character. "This comedy has, to our minds, a very modern air. The thoughts are natural and obvious, the images familiar and general. The most celebrated passages have a character of grace rather than of beauty; the elegance of a youthful poet aiming to be correct, instead of the splendour of the perfect artist, subjecting every crude and apparently unmanageable thought to the wonderful alchemy of his all-penetrating genius."* But of what other author, who belonged to the transition-state of the drama, can it be said that intelligibility was a characteristic? Who else has attempted to give us the familiar without the vapid or the gross, and the dignified without the inflated? Who, in a word, of our dramatic writers between 1585 and 1590, trusted to the power of the real?

The value of any work of art is to be tested rather by its effect as a whole than by the effect of particular parts. And this especially applies to a work of dramatic art; for parts even fine in themselves may, with reference to the entire effect of a drama, be

* Introductory Notice to 'Two Gentlemen of Verona.'

blemishes instead of beauties. No writer that ever lived has approached Shakspeare in the skill by which the whole is made to produce its entire and undisturbed effect. He is, thus, of all poets, the least to be appreciated from the study alone of "specimens." For although these may be sufficient to place him in the highest rank, in comparison with the "specimens" of other writers, yet, separated from the parts by which they are naturally surrounded, they furnish no idea of the extraordinary harmony with which they are blended with all that has preceded and all that follows them. Shakspeare, beyond every other dramatic writer, possesses the power of sustaining a continuous idea, which imparts its own organization and vitality to the most complete and apparently incongruous action, —to the most diversified and seemingly isolated characters.

Without understanding the paramount idea, the manufacturers of acting plays have proceeded to the abridgment and transposition of Shakspeare's scenes, and have produced such monsters as Davenant's 'Tempest' and Tate's 'Lear.' It is in the same spirit that the critics upon the 'Henry VI.' hold that these dramas are greatly inferior to Shakspeare's other performances; and hence the theory of their spuriousness. But, as we have partially shown, the informing idea in all its dramatic power and unity runs through the entire series of these plays; and, as we think, is most especially manifest in the two Parts of 'The Contention.' For what is the effect which the poet intended in these two dramas to produce on the minds of his audience? There was to be shown a dark chaotic mass of civil tumult, of factious strifes, of fierce and bloody hatreds, of desperate ambition, of political profligacy, of popular ignorance, of weak government. The struggle was to be continued, while each faction had its alternations of success; each was to exhibit the same demoralising effects of the same frenzied ambition which drove them onward; the course of events was sometimes to be determined by energy and sometimes by accident; weakness was to throw away what power and good fortune had won; alliances were to be broken by causeless quarrels, and cemented by motiveless treachery; and, lastly, when the ever-present fate which seemed to dominate over this wild and fearful confusion gave the final battle to the feeble, and hurled down the mighty from the car of victory, there was to be superfluous guilt in the hour of success, and the conquerors were to march to thrones with their hands red with murder. But what principle was to hold together all these apparently incongruous elements? How were the separate scenes, each so carelessly, as it were, linked with the other, to produce one overwhelming interest,

stimulate one prevailing curiosity, satisfy one irresistible craving in the spectators? The stern majesty of justice was made to preside over the course of these wild and mysterious events—sometimes dimly seen, sometimes wholly hidden, but rising up ever and anon out of thick clouds and darkness, to assert the overruling power of some government of events, more equal, more enduring, more mighty, and more fearful, than the direction which they received from human energy, and passion, and intellect, and guilt. Shakspeare has *never* chosen to exhibit this tremendous agency after that unnatural manner which we are accustomed to call *poetical* justice—*he* develops the progress of that *real* justice which *sometimes*, for inscrutable purposes, permits the good to be forsaken, to be humiliated, to be crushed, to perish; but which invariably follows the guilty with some dismal retribution, more striking if it be seen,—more terrible if it be hidden from all eyes, and revealed only in the innermost heart of the peace-abandoned. *He* never distorts and vulgarises the manifest workings of a providential arbitrement of human actions, by heaping every calamity upon the good man,—searing his heart with tortures which leave the wheel and the stake but little to inflict,—and then—hey presto—turning the dirge into a dance—the prison into a palace,—whilst the tyrant and the villain has his profitable account settled with a stab or an execution. *Poetical* justice is “your only jig-maker.” But Shakspeare never forgets that in the general course of *actual* events there is a slow but unerring retribution that follows the violation of justice, evolved, not by the shifting of a scene, but out of the natural consequences of the events themselves. Let us endeavour to trace how this paramount idea is brought out in the dramas before us.

Sir Walter Scott somewhere speaks, through one of his characters, of the “Lancastrian prejudices” of Shakspeare. The great novelist had probably in his mind the delineation of Richard. But it would be difficult, we think, to have conducted the entire chronicle history of ‘The Contention between the two famous Houses of York and Lancaster’ with more rigid impartiality. This just and tolerant view of human events and characters constitutes one of the most remarkable peculiarities of the mind of Shakspeare; and its manifestation in the dramas before us furnishes one of the many proofs, and to us not the least convincing, that they could alone have emanated from that mind. For, let us turn to the very first scenes of these dramas, and we shall find the character of the Lancastrian Margaret gradually displaying itself in an aptitude for bold and dangerous intrigue, founded upon her pride and impatience of

a rival in authority. The Duchess of Gloster is tempted by her own weak ambition to meddle with the "lime-twigs" that have been set for her. But it is the passionate hatred of Margaret, lending itself to schemes of treachery and bloodshed, that drives on the murder of the "good Duke Humphrey." With the accomplices of Margaret the retribution is instant and terrible. The banished Suffolk falls, not by the hand of the law, but by some mysterious agency which appears to have armed against him a power mightier than the law, which seizes upon its victim with an obdurate ferocity, and hurries him to death in the name of a wild and irregular justice. To the second great conspirator against the Protector the retribution is even more fearful—the death, not of violence but of mental torture, far more terrible than any bodily pain. The "Look, look, comb down his hair!" of Beaufort, speaks of sufferings far higher than those of the proud Suffolk, when the pirate had denounced him as "Pole, puddle, kennel, sink, and dirt!" and he saw the prophecy of the "cunning wizard" about to be accomplished. The justice which followed the other conspirator against Humphrey had not yet unsheathed its sword. His punishment was postponed till the battle-day of Wakefield.

The scenes of the first four acts of 'The First Part of the Contention' may appear to a superficial observation to be very slightly linked with the after-scenes of the great contest of the Roses. But it was the object of the poet to show the beginnings of faction, continued onward in the same form from the previous drama. The Protectorship was essentially a government of weakness, through the jealousies which it engendered and the intrigues by which it was surrounded. But the removal of the Protector left the government more weak; subjected as it then was to the capricious guidance of the imbecility of Henry and the violence of Margaret. Of such a rule popular commotions are the natural fruit. The author of 'The Contention,' with a depth of political wisdom which Shakspere invariably displays, has exhibited the insurrection of Cade, not as a revolt for specific objects, such as the removal of public oppressors or the redress of popular wrongs, but as a movement of the most brutal ignorance, instigated by a coarse ruffian, upon promises which could be realised in no condition of society, and for ends which proposed only such peace and security as would result from the overthrow of all rule and order. "You shall have seven halfpenny loaves for a penny, and the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops, and it shall be felony to drink small beer," is the proper prologue to "Henceforward all things

shall be in common, and in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass." The same political sagacity has given us the inconstancy, as well as the violence, of the multitude. Nor are these remarkable scenes an episode only in this great dramatic history. Cade perishes, but York is in arms. The civil war is founded upon the popular tumult.

The civil war is begun. The Yorkists are in the field. The poet has delineated the character of their leader with a nice discrimination, and certainly without any of the coarseness of partisanship. He conveys to us that York is ambitious and courageous, but somewhat weak, and, to a great extent, a puppet in the hands of others. In the early scene in the Temple-garden his ambition is rashly discovered, in a war of words, commenced in accident and terminated in fruitless passion. That ambition first contents itself "to be restored to my blood." And when Henry grants this wish the submission of the half-rebel is almost grovelling:—

"Thy humble servant vows obedience,
And humble service, till the point of death."

The full development of his ambition is the result of his estimation of the character of Henry, and his sense of the advantage which he derives from the factions which grow out of an imbecile government. But he is still only a dissembler, exciting his fancies with some shadowy visions of a crown, lending himself to the dark intrigues of his natural and avowed enemies, and calling up the terrible agency of popular violence, reckless of any consequences so that confusion be produced:—

"From Ireland then comes York again
To reap the harvest which that coystrill sow'd."

The schemes of York are successful, and he is at length in arms; but he still dissembles. When Buckingham demands "the reason of these arms," and addresses him as a "subject, as I am," his wounded pride has vent in the original play in a few words. But Shakspeare, in his additions to the sketch, has marked the inflated weakness of York's character by putting in his mouth words of "sound and fury" which he is afraid to speak aloud:—

"O, I could hew up rocks, and fight with them,
I am so angry at these abject terms;
And now, like Ajax Telamonius,
On sheep or oxen could I spend my fury!
I am far better born than is the king;
More like a king, more kingly in my thoughts:
But I must make fair weather yet a while,
Till Henry be more weak, and I more strong."

Passion, however, precipitates that decided movement which prudence would have avoided; and the battle of St. Alban's is the result.

The poet has now fairly opened

“ The purple testament of bleeding war.”

Smothered dislikes are now to become scorching hatreds; and the domestic affections, bruised and wounded, are to be the stimulants of the most savage revenge. Shakspeare has, with wonderful knowledge of human nature, made the atrocities of Clifford spring from the very depths of his filial love. The original conception is found in ‘ The Contention ;’ but its elaboration in ‘ The Second Part of Henry VI.’ is perhaps unsurpassed in beauty of expression by any passage of our matchless poet :—

“ Wast thou ordain'd, dear father,
To lose thy youth in peace, and to achieve
The silver livery of advised age,
And in thy reverence, and thy chair-days, thus
To die in ruffian battle? Even at this sight
My heart is turn'd to stone: and while 't is mine
It shall be stony.”

With this preparation the savage ferocity of Clifford, in the murder of Rutland, is rendered less revolting :—

“ Thy father slew my father, therefore die.”

This is the key to his cold-blooded participation in the butchery of York :—

“ There 's for my oath, there 's for my father's death.”

And what a real exhibition is this of the foulest crimes perpetrated under gentle impulses, where ill-regulated love and hate keep together 'as twin-sisters! But this is chivalry. Here, even the kindly affections have an aspect of intense selfishness; and “ fierce wars and faithful loves” spring from the same want of the principle of self-control, and the same ignorance of the duties of a large and comprehensive charity. The partisanship of chivalry, displaying itself in bold adventure and desperate courage, looks to be something high and glorious. But it is the same blind emanation of self-love as the factious partisanship of modern politics, in which the leader and the serf are equally indifferent to the justice of the quarrel, and equally regardless of the ends by which victory is to be achieved. Shakspeare has given us every light and shadow of the partisanship of chivalry in his delineation of the various characters in these two wonderful dramas. Apart and isolated from

all active agency in the quarrel stands out the remarkable creation of Henry. The poet, with his instinctive judgment, has given the king a much higher character than the chroniclers assign to him. Their relations leave little doubt upon our minds that his imbecility was very nearly allied to utter incapacity; and that the thin partition between weakness and idiocy was sometimes wholly removed. But Shakspeare has never painted Henry under this aspect: he has shown us a king with virtues unsuited to the age in which he lived; with talents unfitted for the station in which he moved; contemplative amidst friends and foes hurried along by a distempered energy; peaceful under circumstances that could have no issue but in appeals to arms; just in thought, but powerless to assert even his own sense of right amidst the contests of injustice which hemmed him in. The entire conception of the character of Henry, in connexion with the circumstances to which it was subjected, is to be found in the Parliament-scene of 'The Third Part of Henry VI.' This scene is copied from 'The Contention,' with scarcely the addition or alteration of a word. We may boldly affirm that none but Shakspeare could have depicted with such marvellous truth the weakness, based upon a hatred of strife—the vacillation, not of imbecile cunning, but of clear-sighted candour—the assertion of power through the influence of habit, but of a power trembling even at its own authority—the glimmerings of courage utterly extinguished by the threats of "armed men," and proposing compromise even worse than war. We request our readers to peruse this scene in 'The Second Part of the Contention,' and endeavour to recollect if any poet besides Shakspeare ever presented such a reality in the exhibition of a mind whose principles have no coherency and no self-reliance; one moment threatening and exhorting his followers to revenge, the next imploring them to be patient; now urging his rival to peace, and now threatening war; turning from the assertion of his title to acknowledge its weakness; and terminating his display of "words, frowns and threats" with

"Let me but reign in quiet while I live."

It was weakness such as this which inevitably raised up the fiery partisans that the poet has so wonderfully depicted; the bloody Clifford—the "she-wolf of France"—the dissembling York—the haughty Warwick—the voluptuous Edward—and, last and most terrible of all, *he* that best explains his own character, "I am myself alone."

One by one the partisans that are thus marshalled by the poet in the Parliament-scene of London are swept away by the steady progress of that justice which rides over their violence and their subtlety. The hollow truce is broken. Margaret is ready to assail York in his castle; York is prepared for the field, having learned from the precocious sophist Richard how "an oath is of no moment." Now are let loose all the "dogs of war." The savage Clifford strikes down the innocent Rutland; the more savage Margaret dips her napkin in his blood. York perishes under the prolonged retribution that awaited the ambition that dallied with murder and rebellion. Clifford, to whom nothing is so odious as "harmful pity," falls in the field of Towton, where the son was arrayed against the father, and the father against the son; and the king, more "woe-begone" than the unwilling victims of ambition, moralises upon the "happy life" of the "homely swain." The great actors of the tragedy are changed. Edward and Richard have become the leaders of the Yorkists, with Warwick, "the king-maker," to rest upon. Henry has fled to Scotland; Margaret to France. Then is unfolded another leaf of that Sibylline book. Edward is on the throne, careless of everything but self-gratification; despising his supporters, offending even his brothers. Warwick takes arms against him; Clarence deserts to Warwick; Richard alone remains faithful, sneering at his brother, and laughing in the concealment of his own motives for fidelity. Edward is a fugitive, and finally a captive; but Richard redeems him, and Clarence again cleaves to him. The second revolution is accomplished. The "king-maker" yields his "body to the earth" in the field of Barnet; Margaret and her son become captives in the plains near Tewksbury. Then comes the terrible hour to the unhappy queen—that hour which she foresaw not when she gave the "bloody napkin" to the wretched York—that hour whose intensity of suffering reached its climax of expression in "You have no children." But Richard is fled

"To make a bloody supper in the Tower."

The three that stab the defenceless Edward equally desire another murder; but *one* is to do the work. It is accomplished.

And here then, according to the authorities that we have so long followed in England, rested the history of 'The Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster,' as far as the original author carried that history. It was to conclude with deeds of violence, as fearful and as atrocious as any we have yet witnessed,

The slaughter of Rutland by the Lancastrian Clifford was to find its parallel in the stabbing of Edward by the three brothers of York; the butchery of York, amidst the taunts and execrations of Margaret and her followers, was to be equalled by the sudden murder of the desolate Henry in his prison-house. There was to be no retribution for these later crimes. The justice which had so long presided over this eventful story was now to sleep. If there was vengeance in reserve, it was to be distant and shadowy. The scene was to close with "stately triumphs;" "drums and trumpets" were to sound; Hope was to display to the conqueror her visions of "lasting joy." If the poet had here closed his chronicle, he would have been an imperfect interpreter of his own idea. We open another leaf of the same volume, and all becomes clear and consistent.

To understand the character of the Richard III. of Shakspeare, we must have traced its development by the author of 'The Contention.' We have already pointed out in Section II. how thoroughly the character was a creation of the early author; and how entire the unity was preserved between the last of these four dramas, which everybody admits to be the work of the "greatest name in all literature," in an unbroken link with the previous drama, which everybody has been in the habit of assigning to some obscure and very inferior writer. We are taught to open 'The Life and Death of King Richard III.,' and to look upon the extraordinary being who utters the opening lines as some new creation, set before us in the perfect completeness of self-formed villainy. We have not learnt to trace the growth of the mind of this bold bad man; to see how his bravery became gradually darkened with ferocity; how his prodigious talents insensibly allied themselves with cunning and hypocrisy; how, in struggling for his house, he ultimately proposed to struggle for himself; how, in fact, the bad ambition would be naturally kindled in his mind, to seize upon the power which was sliding from the hands of the voluptuous Edward, and the "simple, plain Clarence." He that wrote—

"I have no brothers, I am like no brother;
And this word *love*, which greybeards term divine,
Be resident in men like one another,
And not in me; I am myself alone"—

prepared the way for the Richard that was to tell us—

"If I fail not in my deep intent,
Clarence hath not another day to live:
Which done, God take king Edward to his mercy,
And leave the world for me to bustle in!"

The poet of the 'Richard III.' goes straightforward to his object; for he has made all the preparation in the previous dramas. No gradual development is wanting of the character which is now to sway the action. The struggle of the houses up to this point has been one only of violence; and it was therefore anarchical. "The big-boned" Warwick, and the fiery Clifford, alternately presided over the confusion. The power which changed the

"Dreadful marches to delightful measures"

seemed little more than accident. But Richard proposed to himself to subject events to his domination, not by courage alone, or activity, or even by the legitimate exercise of a commanding intellect, but by the clearest and coolest perception of the strength which he must inevitably possess who unites the deepest sagacity to the most thorough unscrupulousness in its exercise, and is an equal master of the weapons of force and of craft. The character of Richard is essentially different from any other character which Shakspeare has drawn. His bloody violence is not that of Macbeth; nor his subtle treachery that of Iago. It is difficult to say whether he derives a greater satisfaction from the success of his crimes, or from the consciousness of power which attends the working of them. This is a feature which he holds in common with Iago. But then he does not labour with a "motiveless malignity," as Iago does. He has no vague suspicions, no petty jealousies, no remembrance of slight affronts, to stimulate him to a disproportioned and unnatural vengeance. He does not *hate* his victims; but they stand in his way, and, as he does not *love* them, they perish. He chuckles in the fortitude which this alienation from humanity confers upon him:—

"Simple, plain Clarence! I do love thee so,
That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven,
If Heaven will take the present at our hand."

Other men, the most obdurate, have been wrought upon by a mother's tears and a mother's prayers: they are to him a jest:—

"Madam, my mother, I do cry you mercy,
I did not see your grace:—Humbly on my knee
I crave your blessing.
Duch. God bless thee, and put meekness in thy breast,
Love, charity, obedience, and true duty.
Glo. Amen; and make me die a good old man!
That is the butt-end of a mother's blessing;
I marvel that her grace did leave it out."

Villains of the blackest die disguise their crimes even from them-

selves. Richard shrinks not from their avowal to others, for a purpose. The wooing of Lady Anne is, perhaps, the boldest thing in the Shakspearean drama. It is perpetually on the verge of the impossible; yet the marvellous consistency of character with which it is conducted renders the whole of this conduct probable, if we once get over the difficulty which startles Richard himself:—

“ Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?
Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?”

His exultation at having accomplished his purpose by the sole agency of “the plain devil and dissembling looks” is founded on his unbounded reliance upon his mental powers; and that reliance is even strong enough to afford that he should abate so much of his self-love as to be joyous in the contemplation of his own bodily deformity.

It is the result of the peculiar organization of Richard's mind, formed as it had been by circumstances as well as by nature, that he invariably puts himself in the attitude of one who is playing a part. It is this circumstance which makes the character (clumsy even as it has been made by the joinery of Cibber) such a favourite on the stage. It cannot be over-acted. It was not without a purpose that the author of ‘The Contention’ put in the mouth of Henry

“ What scene of death hath Roscius now to act?”

Burbage, the original player of Richard, according to Bishop Corbet's description of his host at Bosworth,* was identified with him. This aptitude for subjecting all his real thoughts and all his natural impulses to the exigences of the scene of life in which he was to

* “ Mine host was full of ale and history,
And in the morning when he brought us nigh
Where the two Roses join'd, you would suppose
Chaucer ne'er made the romaunt of the Rose.
Hear him. See you yon wood? There Richard lay
With his whole army. Look the other way,
And lo! while Richmond in a bed of gorse
Encamp'd himself all night, and all his force,
Upon this hill they met. Why, he could tell
The inch where Richmond stood, where Richard fell.
Besides what of his knowledge he could say,
He had authentic notice from the play;
Which I might guess by marking up the ghosts,
And policies not incident to hosts;
But chiefly by that one perspicuous thing
Where he mistook a player for a king.
For when he would have said, King Richard died,
And call'd, A horse! a horse! he Burbage cried.”

play the chief part, equally govern his conduct whether he is wooing Lady Anne—or denouncing the relations of the queen—or protesting before the king,

“’T is death to me to be at eumity”—

or mentioning the death of Clarence as a thing of course—or begging the strawberries from the Bishop of Ely when he is meditating the execution of Hastings—or appearing on the Tower walls in rusty armour—or rejecting the crown which the citizens present to him—or dismissing Buckingham with

“Thou troublest me, I am not in the vein”—

or soliciting the mother of his murdered nephews to win for him her daughter,

“As I intend to prosper and repent.”

It is only in the actual presence of a powerful enemy that Richard displays any portion of his *natural* character. His bravery required no dissimulation to uphold it. In his last battle-field he puts forth all the resources of his intellect in a worthy direction: but the retribution is fast approaching. It was not enough for offended justice that he should die as a hero: the terrible tortures of conscience were to precede the catastrophe. The drama has exhibited all it could exhibit—the palpable images of terror haunting a mind already anticipating the end. “Radcliff, I fear, I fear,” is the first revelation of the true inward man to a fellow-being. But the terror is but momentary:—

“Let not our babbling dreams affright our souls.”

To the last the poet exhibits the supremacy of Richard’s intellect, his ready talent, and his unwearied energy. The tame address of Richmond to his soldiers, and the spirited exhortation of Richard, could not have been the result of accident.

It appears to us, then, that the complete development of the character of Richard was absolutely essential to the completion of the great idea upon which the poet constructed these four dramas. There was a man to be raised up out of the wild turbulence of the long contest—not cruel, after the mere fashion of a Clifford’s cruelty—not revengeful, according to the passionate impulses of the revenge of a Margaret and of an Edward—not false and perjured, in imitation of the irresolute weakness of a Clarence—but one who was cruel, and revengeful, and treacherous, upon the deepest premeditation and with the most profound hypocrisy. That man was also to be so confident in his intellectual power, that no

resolve was too daring to be acted upon, no risk too great to be encountered. Fraud and force were to go hand in hand, and the one was to exterminate what the other could not win. This man was to be an instrument of that justice which was to preside to the end of this "sad eventful history." By his agency was the house of York to fall, as the house of Lancaster had fallen. The innocent by him were to be swept away with the guilty. Last of all, the Fate was to be appeased—the one great criminal was to perish out of the consequences of his own enormities.

It is an observation of Horace Walpole that Shakspeare, in his 'Richard III.,' "seems to deduce the woes of the house of York from the curses which Queen Margaret had vented against them." It was the faith of Margaret that curses were all-powerful:—

"I'll not believe but they ascend the sky,
And there awake God's gentle-sleeping peace."*

This was the poetical faith of the author of these dramas—the power of the curse was associated with the great idea of a presiding Fate. But Margaret's were not the only curses. Richard himself, in one passage, where he appears to make words exhibit thoughts and not conceal them, refers to the same power of a curse—that of his father, insulted in his death-hour by the scorns of Margaret, and moved to tears by her atrocious cruelty. This is the assertion of the equal justice which is displayed in the dramatic issue of these fearful events; not justice upon the house of York alone, which Horace Walpole thinks Shakspeare strove to exhibit in deference to Tudor prejudices, but justice upon the house of Lancaster as well as the house of York, for those individual crimes of the leaders of each house that had made a charnel-ground of England. When that justice had asserted its supremacy tranquillity was to come. The poet has not chosen to exhibit the establishment of law and order in the astute government of Henry VII.; but in his drama of 'Henry VIII.' he has carried us onward to a new state of things, when the power of the sword was at an end. He came as near to his own times as was either safe or fitting; but he contrasts his own times with the days of civil fury, in a prophetic view of the reign of Elizabeth:—

"In her days, every man shall eat in safety,
Under his own vine, what he plants; and sing
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours."†

* Richard III., Act I., Scene 3.

† Henry VIII., Act V., Scene 4.

There has existed, then, a dramatic teacher of historical events from the deposition of Richard II. to the birth of Elizabeth. We have *nine* historical dramas written upon a plan of connexion bearing the name of this teacher. Did *Shakspeare* write the nine? or did *he* accomplish the more difficult task of appropriating *three* out of the nine—the work, it is said, of several other men—and make all their disjointed parts cohere in themselves, and form a whole with the dramas of his own which introduced and continued their story? Did he create the *one idea*, by piecing out a *half-idea*? Did he, especially, make the four dramas of which we have been treating *one* great drama in four parts, by informing the work of others, as well as his own work, with that unity which we have endeavoured to render manifest?

KING HENRY VIII.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

KING HENRY VIII.

CARDINAL WOLSEY. CARDINAL CAMPEIUS.

CAPUCIUS, *Ambassador from the Emperor, Charles V.*

CRANMER, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*

DUKE OF NORFOLK.

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

DUKE OF SUFFOLK.

EARL OF SURREY.

Lord Chamberlain. Lord Chancellor.

GARDINER, *Bishop of Winchester.*

BISHOP OF LINCOLN.

LORD ABERGAVENNY.

LORD SANDS.

SIR HENRY GUILDFORD. SIR THOMAS LOVELL.

SIR ANTHONY DENNY. SIR NICHOLAS VAUX.

Secretaries to Wolsey.

CROMWELL, *servant to Wolsey.*

GRIFFITH, *Gentleman-Usher to Queen Katharine.*

Three other Gentlemen.

DOCTOR BUTTS, *physician to the King.*

Garter King at Arms.

Surveyor to the Duke of Buckingham.

BRANDON, *and a Sergeant at Arms.*

Door-keeper of the Council-Chamber.

Porter, and his man. Page to Gardiner. A Crier.

QUEEN KATHARINE, *wife to King Henry, afterwards divorced.*

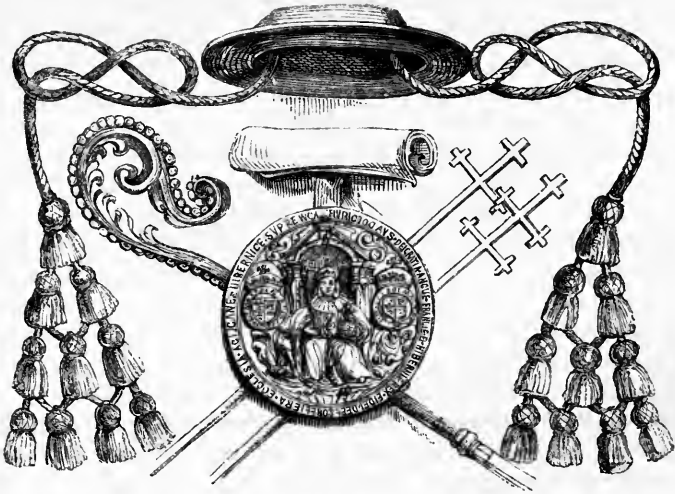
ANNE BULLEN, *her Maid of Honour, afterwards Queen.*

An Old Lady, friend to Anne Bullen.

PATIENCE, *woman to Queen Katharine.*

Several Lords and Ladies in the Dumb Shows; Women attending upon the Queen; Spirits which appear to her; Scribes, Officers, Guards, and other Attendants.

SCENE,—*chiefly in LONDON and WESTMINSTER; once at KIMBOLTON.*



[Cardinal's Hat, &c.]

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

STATE OF THE TEXT, AND CHRONOLOGY, OF KING HENRY VIII.

‘THE famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth’ was first published in the folio collection of Shakspeare’s works in 1623. The text, taken as a whole, is singularly correct: it contains, no doubt, some few typographical errors, but certainly not so many as those which deform the ordinary reprints. The commentators have, speaking comparatively, meddled very little with this text; but for the want of a careful collation several verbal errors have been constantly transferred from one modern edition to another without correction. For example: in the exquisite song in the beginning of the third act, the passage—

“To his music, plants and flowers
Ever sprung; as sun and showers
There had *made* a lasting spring”—

is invariably printed

“There had *been* a lasting spring.”

The date of the original production of this drama has been a subject of much discussion. The opinions in favour of its having been

produced in the reign of Elizabeth are far more numerous than those which hold it to be a later production. As the question is one of more than usual interest, we shall examine it somewhat in detail.

And first, of the external evidence. The Globe, Shakspeare's theatre, was burnt down in June, 1613. The cause of this accident, and the circumstances attending it, are minutely related by several witnesses. In Winwood's 'Memorials' there is a letter from John Chamberlain to Sir Ralph Winwood, dated from London the 12th of July, 1613, which describes the burning,—“ which fell out by a peal of chambers.” This conflagration took place on the previous 29th of June. The play acted on this occasion was one on the story of 'Henry VIII.' Were the “chambers” (small cannon) which produced the misfortune those fired according to the original stage-direction in the fourth scene of the first act of Shakspeare's 'King Henry VIII.,' “*Drum and trumpet, chambers discharged*”? In the Harleian Manuscripts there is a letter from Thomas Lorkin to Sir Thomas Puckering, dated “this last of June, 1613,” in which the writer says, “No longer since than yesterday, while Bourbage his company were acting at the Globe *the play of 'Henry VIII.,'* and there shooting of certain chambers in way of triumph, the fire catch'd.” But this does not establish that it was Shakspeare's play. The accomplished Sir Henry Wotton, writing to his nephew on the 6th of July, 1613, gives a minute and graphic account of the accident at the Globe:—“Now to let matters of state sleep, I will entertain you at the present with what happened this week at the Bankside. The king's players had *a new play*, called '*All is True*,' representing *some principal pieces of the reign of Henry the Eighth*, which was set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of pomp and majesty, even to the matting of the stage; the knights of the order, with their Georges and Garter, the guards with their embroidered coats, and the like; sufficient, in truth, within a while to make greatness very familiar, if not ridiculous. Now King Henry, making a mask at the Cardinal Wolsey's house, and certain cannons being shot off at his entry, some of the paper, or other stuff, wherewith one of them was stopped, did light on the thatch, where, being thought at first but an idle smoke, and their eyes being more attentive to the show, it kindled inwardly, and ran round like a train, consuming, within less than an hour, the whole house to the very ground. This was the fatal period of that virtuous fabric, wherein yet nothing did perish but wood and straw, and a few forsaken cloaks: only one man had his breeches set on fire, that would perhaps have broiled him, if he had not, by the benefit

of a provident wit, put it out with bottle ale."* Here, then, is a *new play* described "representing some principal pieces of the reign of Henry VIII.;" and further, the passage of Shakspeare's play in which the "chambers" are discharged, being the "entry" of the king to the "mask at the cardinal's house," is the same to the letter. But the title which Sir Henry Wotton gives the *new play* is '*All is True*.' Gifford thinks this sufficient to show that the play represented at the Globe in June, 1613, was not Shakspeare's. But other persons call the play so represented 'Henry VIII.' Howes, in his continuation of Stow's 'Chronicle,' so calls it. He writes some time after the destruction of the Globe, for he adds to his account of the fire, "And the next spring it was new builded in far fairer manner than before." He speaks of the title of the play as a familiar thing:—"the house being filled with people to behold the play, viz. of 'Henry the Eighth.'" When Howes wrote, was the title '*All is True*' merged in the more obvious title derived from the subject of the play, and following the character of the titles of Shakspeare's other historical plays? There can be no difficulty in showing that the Prologue to 'Henry VIII.' especially keeps in view such a title as Sir Henry Wotton has mentioned:—

"Such as give
Their money out of hope they may believe,
May here find *truth* too."

"Gentle hearers, know,
To rank our chosen *truth* with such a show
As foot and fight is," &c.

"To make that only *true* we now intend."

Boswell has a very ingenious theory that this Prologue had especial reference to another play on the same historical subject, 'When You See Me You Know Me, or the Famous Chronicle History of King Henry the Eighth, &c., by Samuel Rowley,' in which "the incidents in Henry's reign are thrown together in the most confused manner." But, upon the whole, the probability is that the 'Henry VIII.' of Shakspeare, and the '*All is True*' described by Wotton, are one and the same play. The next question is, then, whether Wotton was correct in describing the 'Henry VIII.' as a *new play*. Chalmers, who almost stands alone in his opinion, maintains that the *fact* of a play on the subject of Henry VIII. being termed *new* in 1613 is decisive as to the date of its original production at that time. Malone, on the contrary, conjectures that the 'Henry VIII.' was written in 1601, and *revived* in 1613, with a

* Reliquiæ Wottonianæ.

new title and prologue, "having lain by some years unacted." This conjecture rests upon no external evidence. We proceed, therefore, to the other division of the subject—the evidence of its date which is furnished by the play itself.

In the prophecy of Cranmer in the last scene, the glories of the reign of Elizabeth are carried on to that of her successor, in the following lines:—

"Nor shall this peace sleep with her: But as when
The bird of wonder dies, the maiden phoenix,
Her ashes new create another heir,
As great in admiration as herself;
So shall she leave her blessedness to one,
(When Heaven shall call her from this cloud of darkness,)
Who, from the sacred ashes of her honour,
Shall star-like rise, as great in fame as she was,
And so stand fix'd: Peace, plenty, love, truth, terror,
That were the servants to this chosen infant,
Shall then be his, and like a vine grow to him;
Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,
His honour, and the greatness of his name,
Shall be, and make new nations: He shall flourish,
And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches
To all the plains about him:—Our children's children
Shall see this, and bless Heaven."

This passage would appear to be decisive as to the date of the play, by the introduction of these lines:—

"Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,
His honour, and the greatness of his name,
Shall be, and make new nations."

That the colonization of *Virginia* is here distinctly alluded to is without doubt. The first charter was granted in 1606; the colony was planted in 1607, in which year *James Town* was built; another charter was given to the colonists in 1612, and a lottery was also then granted for the encouragement of the colony, which was struggling with great difficulties. That James took an especial interest in this important settlement, and naturally enough was recognised as the founder of "new nations," may be readily imagined. In the inscription upon a portrait of the king, which belonged to Lord Bacon, he is styled "*Imperii Atlantici conditor.*" This part of Cranmer's prophecy, therefore, would fix the date of the play after the settlement of *Virginia*. But a new difficulty arises: All that part of the prophecy relating to James, which we have quoted, is held to be an addition upon a revival of the play in 1613.

"These lines," says Dr. Johnson, "to the interruption by the

king, seem to have been inserted at some revisal of the play, after the accession of King James. If the passage be left out, the speech of Cranmer proceeds in a regular tenor of prediction and continuity of sentiments; but, by the interpolation of the new lines, he first celebrates Elizabeth's successor, and then wishes he did not know she was to die; first rejoices at the consequence, and then laments the cause." Is it so? The presumed interpolation immediately follows these lines:—

"In her days, every man shall eat in safety,
Under his own vine, what he plants; and sing
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours," &c

The poet then adds—

"Nor shall this peace sleep with her: But as when
The bird of wonder *dies* * * * * *
So shall she leave her blessedness to one,
(*When Heaven shall call her from this cloud of darkness,*)
Who, from the *sacred ashes* of her honour,
Shall star-like rise."

Is it true, then, that he "first celebrates Elizabeth's successor, and then wishes he did not know she was to die"? Of the seventeen lines which relate to James, the first eleven never lose sight of Elizabeth. Her "blessedness," her "honour," her "fame," were to descend to her "heir." The *extension* of the dominion of England, under James,—the only passage in which "the greatness of his name" is separated from that of Elizabeth,—occupies the remaining part of the prophecy; and that the thread which connects the whole with Elizabeth may not be dropped even while those six lines are uttered, Cranmer *returns* to the close of her life, which in two-thirds of the previous seventeen lines he had constantly inferred:—

"She shall be, to the happiness of England,
An aged princess," &c.

It might as well be assumed, we venture to think, that the "*Tu Marcellus eris*" of Virgil is an interpolation. That famous passage is most skilfully connected with all that accompanies it; but it might nevertheless be as easily severed as the lines which are here maintained to be an unskilful addition.

But it is held, further, that Shakspeare did not write these lines; that Ben Jonson wrote them; that Shakspeare might properly compliment Elizabeth in her lifetime, but that he would not descend to flatter James, who was "a contemptible king." Shakspeare, it is well known, had reason to be grateful to James for personal kind-

nesses; but there is not a word here of James's *personal* qualities. The lines apply to the character of his government—its “peace, plenty, love, truth, terror”—the extension of its growth to “make new nations.” Would Jonson, had he written this passage, have forgotten that James was somewhat prouder of his reputation as a scholar than as a king; and that one who knew him well had not hesitated to say to him, and perhaps, indeed, in sincerity, “There has not been since Christ's time any king or temporal monarch which has been so learned in all literature and erudition, divine and human”?* We have no hesitation in accepting the passage as one that Shakspeare might not have blushed to have written, and which derogates nothing from the manly independence of his character.

The later editors consider that the interpolation rested at the interruption of the king. Theobald would carry it further,—through the remainder of Cranmer's speech: “If this play was wrote, as in my opinion it was, in the reign of Elizabeth, we may easily determine where Cranmer's eulogium of that princess concluded. I make no question but the poet rested here:—

“And by these claim their greatness, not by blood”

Theobald omits to state the most obvious reason for his opinion. We hold that Shakspeare, in the age of Elizabeth, would never have written—

“She shall be, to the happiness of England,
An aged princess.”

That passage is, also, to our minds, clearly an interpolation, *assuming that the play was produced during Elizabeth's reign*. She, of all sovereigns, would least have endured to be called *aged*; she, of whom, in her seventieth year, the French ambassador writes, “Her eye is still lively, she has good spirits, and is fond of life, for which reason she takes great care of herself; to which may be added an inclination for the Earl of Clancarty, a brave, handsome Irish nobleman. This makes her cheerful, *full of hope and confidence respecting her age*.” About a year before this time it is held that the ‘Henry VIII.’ was written, and that it originally included the close of Cranmer's prophecy. “An aged princess!” “But she must die!” Shakspeare must indeed have been a bold man to have ventured upon such truths.

But let us yield the whole question of interpolation to those who assert that the ‘Henry VIII.’ was written in the time of Elizabeth; and give up even the passage of the “aged princess.” It is held

* Bacon: ‘Advancement of Learning.’

that the play was written to please Elizabeth. The memory of Henry VIII., perhaps, was not cherished by her with any deep affection; but would she, who in her dying hour is reported to have said, "My seat has been the seat of kings," allow the frailties, and even the peculiarities, of her father to be made a public spectacle? Would she have borne that his passion for her mother should have been put forward in the strongest way by the poet—that is, in the sequence of the dramatic action—as the impelling motive for his divorce from Katharine? Would she have tolerated the masque-scene immediately succeeding that in which Katharine is told by her husband, "You have half our power"? Would she have endured that her father, upon his next appearance after the meeting with Anne Bullen, when he exclaims,

"The fairest band I ever touch'd! O beauty,
Till now I never knew thee!"—

and—

"By Heaven she is a dainty one! Sweetheart,
I were unmannerly to take you out,
And not to kiss you"—

that he should be represented in the depth of his hypocrisy gloating over his projected divorce, with—

"But conscience, conscience,
O! 'tis a tender place, and I must leave her"?

Would she have been pleased with the jests of the old lady to Anne upon her approaching elevation—her title—her "thousand pound a-year"—and all to be instantly followed by the trial-scene,—that magnificent exhibition of the purity, the constancy, the fortitude, the grandeur of soul, the self-possession, of the "most poor woman and a stranger" that her mother had supplanted; contrasted with the heartless coldness, salved over with a more heartless commendation of his injured wife, from the hypocritical tyrant, who ends the defence of his conduct, expressed in

"the sharp thorny points
Of my alleged reasons drive this forward,"

with the real truth, spoken aside,

I may perceive
These cardinals trifle with me * * *
Cranmer,
Prithee return! with thy approach I know
My comfort comes?"

Finally, would she have licensed the stage exhibition of her father's traditional peculiarities, in addition to the portraiture, which can-

not be mistaken, of his sensual, arrogant, impatient, and crafty character? Would she have laughed at his perpetual "ha!"; or taken away Burbage's licence? Would she have wept over the most touching sorrow of the dying Katharine; or sent Shakspeare to join the company of his friend Southampton in the Tower? Those who have written on the subject say she would have borne all this; and that the pageant of her mother's coronation, with the succeeding representation of her own christening, capped with the prophecy of her future greatness, were to ensure the harmlessness of all these somewhat explosive materials, and to carry forward the five acts to a most felicitous conclusion—

" This little one shall make it holiday."

Malone, as it appears to us, says all that can be said, in the literal way, to prove that such a drama as this would be acceptable to Elizabeth: "It is more likely that Shakspeare should have written a play the chief subject of which is the *disgraces* of Queen Katharine, the *aggrandizement* of Anne Boleyn, and the birth of her daughter, in the lifetime of Elizabeth, than after her death; at a time when the subject must have been highly pleasing at court, rather than at a period when it must have been less interesting. Queen Katharine, it is true, is represented as an amiable character, but still she is *eclipsed*; and the greater her merit, the higher was the compliment to the mother of Elizabeth, *to whose superior beauty she was obliged to give way.*"* This is the prosaic, we may say the essentially grovelling, mode of viewing the object of Shakspeare,—an object pre-supposing equal vulgarity of mind in the dramatist and his court audience. Our readers will be sure that we appreciate far more highly Mr. Campbell's poetical creed in this matter:—

"Shakspeare contrives, though at the sacrifice of some historical truth, to raise the matron Katharine to our highest admiration, whilst at the same time he keeps us in love with Anne Boleyn, and on tolerable terms with Henry VIII. But who does not see, under all this wise management, the drift of his design, namely, to compliment Elizabeth as a virgin queen; to interest us in the memory of her mother Anne Boleyn; and to impress us with a belief of her innocence, though she suffered as an alleged traitress to the bed of Henry? The private death of Katharine of Arragon might have been still remembered by many living persons, but the death of Anne Boleyn was still more fresh in public recollection; and a

* Chronological Order, p. 390.

wiser expedient could not have been devised for asserting the innocence of Elizabeth's mother than by portraying Henry's injustice towards Queen Katharine. For we are obliged to infer that, if the tyrant could thus misuse the noble Katharine, the purest innocence in her lovely successor could be no shield against his cruelty."*

There is one slight objection to this theory. Shakspeare wrote for an audience; and an audience is a thing of impulses; it sympathizes with the oppressed, and hates the oppressor. An audience does not "*infer*." The poet who trusts to an audience perceiving "the drift of his design," through the veil of a dramatic action which moves their feelings entirely in an opposite direction to that in which he intends them to be moved, has, to our minds at least, a different theory of his art from that of Shakspeare.

We had intended to have said something on "The Prologue," which the commentators hold was written by Ben Jonson, to allow him an occasion of sneering at Shakspeare's fools and battle-scenes. But as we hold that the Prologue is a complete exposition of the *idea* of this drama, we shall return to it in our Supplementary Notice. The Prologue is fastened upon Jonson, upon the theory that he wrote it after Shakspeare's retirement from the stage, when the old play was *revived* in his absence. We believe in the *one* piece of external evidence,—that a 'Henry VIII.' was produced in 1613, when the Globe was burned; that it was a *new play*; that it was then called 'All is True;' and that this title agrees with the idea upon which Shakspeare wrote the 'Henry VIII.' Those who believe that it was written in the time of Elizabeth have to reject this one piece of *external* evidence. We further believe, from the *internal* evidence, that the play, as it stands, was written in the time of James I., and that we have received it in its original form. Those who assert the contrary have to resort to the hypothesis of interpolation; and, further, have to explain how many things which are, to a plain understanding, inconsistent with their theory, may be interpreted, by great ingenuity, to be consistent. We believe that Shakspeare, amongst his latest dramas, constructed an historical drama to complete his great series,—one that was agreeable to the one of his mind after his fiftieth year:—

"Sad, high, and working, full of state and woe."

Those who take the opposite view hold that the chief object of the poet was to produce something which might be acceptable to Queen Elizabeth. Our belief is the obvious one; the contrary belief may be the more ingenious.

* Life. Moxon's edition of Shakspeare.



[Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk.]

COSTUME.

THE male costume of the reign of Henry VIII. has been rendered familiar to our very children by the innumerable portraits of "Bluff King Hal," principally copied from the paintings by Holbein, and the female costume scarcely less so by those of his six wives. Henry VIII. was born in 1491, and was therefore just thirty years of age at the period at which the play opens (the arrest and impeachment of Buckingham having taken place in 1521), and forty-two at the time it is supposed to close, as above mentioned. The best authorities, therefore, for the dress of the monarch and his nobles at the commencement of this play would be the curious old painting of the meeting of Henry and Francis, preserved at Windsor Castle, and the bas-reliefs representing the same occurrence, at Rouen. The profusion of feathers in the latter—a fashion of the previous reign, and still raging in 1520—adds greatly to the picturesque effect of the general costume. For the later period, the full-length by Holbein engraved in Lodge's 'Portraits,' or the

print by Vertue, in which Henry is seen granting a charter to the barber-surgeons, would be preferable. Of Cardinal Wolsey there is a fine painting by Holbein at Christ Church, Oxford, engraved in Lodge's work. Cavendish, in his 'Life of Wolsey,' describes him as issuing out in his cardinal's habit of fine scarlet or crimson satin, his cap being of black velvet: and in a MS. copy of that interesting work, formerly in the possession of the late Francis Douce, Esq., F.S.A., are three very curious drawings, representing—1st, The cardinal's progress on his way to France, with his archers, spearmen, cross, pillar, and purse bearers, &c.; 2ndly, The cardinal surrendering the great seal to the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk; and, 3rdly, Dr. Butts sent by the king and Anne Bullen to the sick cardinal with tokens of favour. The gentlemen in the cardinal's train wore, we are told, black velvet livery-coats, the most part with great chains of gold about their necks; and all his yeomen following were clad in French tawny livery-coats, having embroidered upon the backs and breasts of the said coats the letters T and C under the cardinal's hat.

In the same beautiful work by Lodge, before mentioned, the portraits will be found of the Dukes of Suffolk and Norfolk, Cromwell, Sir Thomas More, and Sir Anthony Denny, by Holbein; and Cranmer by Flick, the original painting being in the British Museum. Also a most interesting one of the gallant and accomplished Henry Earl of Surrey, by Titian, who has represented him in a magnificent suit of armour, and thereby given us a splendid specimen of the military costume of the period. In addition to the information conveyed to the eye by this collection of authentic portraits, it will be sufficient to quote, from the sumptuary law passed in the 24th year of Henry's reign, such passages as will describe the materials of which the dresses were made, and which were, indeed, at this time of the most costly kind. The royal family alone were permitted to use the fur of the black jennet; and sables could only be worn by noblemen above the rank of a viscount. Crimson or blue velvet, embroidered apparel, or garments bordered "with gold sunken work," were forbidden to any person beneath the quality of a baron or knight's son or heir; and velvet dresses of any colour, furs of martens, chains, bracelets, and collars of gold, were prohibited to all persons possessing less than two hundred marks per annum. The sons and heirs of such persons were, however, permitted the use of black velvet or damask, and tawny-coloured russet or camlet. Satin and damask gowns were confined to the use of persons possessing at least one hundred marks

per annum ; and the wearing of plaited shirts, garnished with gold, silver, or silk, was permitted to none below the rank of knighthood. The hair was cut remarkably close, a peremptory order having been issued by Henry to all his attendants and courtiers to "poll their heads." Beards and moustaches were worn at pleasure.

The portraits of Anne Bullen and Queen Katharine will convey a sufficient idea of the costume of ladies of rank at this period. The jewelled cap and feather with which Holbein has represented Anne in the portraits engraved in Cavendish's 'Life of Wolsey' are exceedingly picturesque and becoming. The other head-dress, which was probably the often-talked-of "French hood," is better known, nearly all Henry's wives being represented in it. The gown was cut square at the bosom, as in the preceding reign ; but instead of the neck being bare, it was covered almost to the throat by the *partlet*, a sort of habit-shirt, much like the modern one, embroidered with gold and silk. The sleeves of the gowns were frequently of a different material from that which composed the rest of the dress, and generally of a richer stuff. The gown was open in front to the waist, showing the kirtle or petticoat, and with or without a train, according to the prevailing fashion of France or Holland. Anne of Cleves is described as wearing a gown made round without any train, after the Dutch fashion ; while the train of Catherine Parr is stated to have been more than two yards long. Anne Bullen, while Countess of Pembroke, danced at Calais with Francis I. in a masque consisting of seven ladies besides herself, who were attired in masking apparel of strange fashion, made of cloth of gold compassed with crimson tinsel satin, formed with cloth of silver lying loose and knit with laces of gold. They were brought into the chamber with four damsels in crimson satin, with tabards of fine cypress. Cavendish, in his 'Life of Wolsey,' says—"I have seen the king suddenly come thither (*i. e.* to the cardinal's) in a mask, with a dozen other maskers in garments like shepherds, made of fine cloth of gold and crimson satin ; their hairs and beards of fine gold wire, or silver, or some of black silk, with sixteen torch-bearers and drums all in satin." A minute account is given by Hall of the coronation of Queen Anne Bullen ; and also by Cavendish, who has described the procession and the ceremony. We must be careful, however, not to confound the procession from the Tower to Westminster, on the day previous to the coronation, with that introduced in the play, which is the procession from the palace to the Abbey. On the first occasion she wore a surcoat of white cloth of tissue, and a mantle of the same, furred with ermine, her



[Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey.]

hair hanging down from under a coif, with a circlet about it full of rich stones. On the second (that in the play) she wore a surcoat and robe of purple velvet, furred with ermine, the coif and circlet as before. The barons of the Cinque Ports, who carried the canopy over her, were "all in crimson, with points of blue and red hanging on their sleeves." The ladies, "being lords' wives," that followed her, "had surcoats of scarlet with narrow sleeves, the breast all lettuce (fur), with bars of borders (*i. e.* rows of ermine) according to their degrees, and over that they had mantles of scarlet furred, and every mantle had lettuce about the neck, like a neckercher, likewise powdered (with ermine), so that by the powderings their degree was known. Then followed ladies, being knights' wives, in gowns of scarlet with narrow sleeves, without trains, only edged with lettuce." The queen's gentlewomen were similarly attired with the last. The lord chancellor wore a robe of scarlet, open before, and

bordered with lettuce. The dukes were in crimson velvet, furred with ermine, and powdered according to their degrees. The Duke of Suffolk's doublet and jacket were set with orient pearl; his gown of crimson velvet, richly embroidered; and he carried a white rod in his hand, being that day high steward of England. The knights of the Bath wore "violet gowns, with hoods purfled with miniver, like doctors."



[Chancellor's Costume.]

PROLOGUE.¹

I come no more to make you laugh; things now,
That bear a weighty and a serious brow,
Sad, high, and working, full of state and woe,
Such noble scenes as draw the eye to flow,
We now present. Those that can pity, here
May, if they think it well, let fall a tear;
The subject will deserve it. Such as give
Their money out of hope they may believe,
May here find truth too. Those that come to see
Only a show or two, and so agree
The play may pass, if they be still and willing,
I'll undertake may see away their shilling
Richly in two short hours. Only they
That come to hear a merry, bawdy play,
A noise of targets; or to see a fellow
In a long motley coat, guarded with yellow,
Will be deceiv'd: for, gentle hearers, know,
To rank our chosen truth with such a show
As fool and fight is, beside forfeiting
Our own brains, and the opinion that we bring,
(To make that only true we now intend,)
Will leave us never an understanding friend.
Therefore, for goodness' sake, and, as you are known
The first and happiest hearers of the town,
Be sad, as we would make you: Think, ye see
The very persons of our noble story,
As they were living; think, you see them great,
And follow'd with the general throng and sweat
Of thousand friends; then, in a moment, see
How soon this mightiness meets misery!
And if you can be merry then, I'll say
A man may weep upon his wedding-day.



[Henry VIII.]

ACT I.

SCENE I.—London. *An Antechamber in the Palace.*

*Enter the DUKE OF NORFOLK, at one door; at the other, the DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM and the LORD ABERGAVENNY.*²

Buck. Good morrow, and well met. How have you done Since last we saw in France ?

Nor. I thank your grace :
Healthful ; and ever since a fresh admirer
Of what I saw there.

Buck. An untimely ague
Stay'd me a prisoner in my chamber, when

Those suns of glory, those two lights of men,
Met in the vale of Andren.^a

Nor. 'Twixt Guynes and Arde :
I was then present, saw them salute on horseback ;
Beheld them, when they lighted, how they clung
In their embracement as they grew together ;
Which had they, what four thron'd ones could have weigh'd
Such a compounded one ?

Buck. All the whole time
I was my chamber's prisoner.

Nor. Then you lost
The view of earthly glory : Men might say,
Till this time pomp was single, but now married
To one above itself. Each following day
Became the next day's master, till the last
Made former wonders its : To-day, the French,
All clinquant,^b all in gold, like heathen gods,
Shone down the English ; and, to-morrow, they
Made Britain, India : every man that stood
Show'd like a mine. Their dwarfish pages were
As cherubins, all gilt : the madams too,
Not us'd to toil, did almost sweat to bear
The pride upon them, that their very labour
Was to them as a painting : Now this mask
Was cried incomparable ; and the ensuing night
Made it a fool, and beggar. The two kings,
Equal in lustre, were now best, now worst,
As presence did present them ; him in eye
Still him in praise : and, being present both,
'T was said they saw but one ; and no discerner
Durst wag his tongue in censure.^c When these suns
(For so they phrase them) by their heralds challeng'd
The noble spirits to arms, they did perform
Beyond thought's compass ; that former fabulous story,

^a *Andren.* So the original ; so the Chroniclers. But the modern editors write "the vale of Arde." *Arde*, or *Ardres*, is the town, which in the next line is spelt *Arde* in the original. *Andren*, or *Ardren*, is the village near the place of meeting.

^b *Clinquant*—bright with gling ornaments.

^c *Censure*—comparison.

Being now seen possible enough, got credit,
That Bevis was believ'd.

Buck. O, you go far.

Nor. As I belong to worship, and affect
In honour honesty, the tract of everything
Would by a good discourser lose some life,
Which action's self was tongue to.

Buck. All was royal;
To the disposing of it nought rebell'd,
Order gave each thing view; the office did
Distinctly his full function.^a Who did guide?
I mean, who set the body and the limbs
Of this great sport together?

Nor. As you guess:
One, certes, that promises no element^b
In such a business.

Buck. I pray you, who, my lord?

Nor. All this was order'd by the good discretion
Of the right reverend cardinal of York.

Buck. The devil speed him! no man's pie is freed
From his ambitious finger. What had he
To do in these fierce vanities? I wonder
That such a keech^c can with his very bulk
Take up the rays o' the beneficial sun,
And keep it from the earth.

^a It is usual, contrary to the original, to give to Norfolk the sentence beginning "All was royal," and then make Buckingham ask the question, "Who did guide?" &c. Theobald made the change, and Warburton says it was improperly given to Buckingham, "for he wanted information, having kept his chamber during the solemnity." But what *information* does he communicate? After the eloquent description by Norfolk of the various shows of the pageant, he makes a *general observation* that "order" must have presided over these complicated arrangements—"gave each thing view." He then asks, "Who did guide?"—who made the body and the limbs work together? Norfolk then answers, "As you guess;"—(which words have been transferred to Buckingham by the revisers of the text)—according to your guess, *one* did guide:—"one, certes," &c.

^b *Element*—constituent quality of mind. Thus in 'Twelfth Night' (Act III., Scene 4) Malvolio says, "Go, hang yourselves all! you are idle shallow things; I am not of your *element*."

^c *Keech*. Steevens thinks this term has a peculiar application to Wolsey, as the son of a butcher;—as a butcher's wife is called in 'Henry IV., Part II.,' "Goody Keech." But Falstaff, in the First Part, is called by Prince Henry "a greasy tallow keech." A "keech" is a lump of fat; and it appears to us that Bucking-

Nor. Surely, sir,
 There's in him stuff that puts him to these ends :
 For, being not propp'd by ancestry, whose grace
 Chalks successors their way ; nor call'd upon
 For high feats done to the crown ; neither allied
 To eminent assistants ; but, spider-like,
 Out of his self-drawing web,—O ! give us note !—
 The force of his own merit makes his way
 A gift that Heaven gives for him, which buys
 A place next to the king.^a

Aber. I cannot tell
 What Heaven hath given him, let some graver eye
 Pierce into that ; but I can see his pride
 Peep through each part of him : Whence has he that ?
 If not from hell, the devil is a niggard,
 Or has given all before, and he begins
 A new hell in himself.

Buck. Why the devil,
 Upon this French going-out, took he upon him,
 Without the privity o' the king, to appoint

ham here denounces Wolsey, not as a butcher's son, but as an overgrown bloated favourite, that

“ can with his very *bulk*

Take up the rays o' the beneficial sun.”

^a This passage has been corrupted by the modern editors, and, as we think, misunderstood. It is ordinarily printed thus :—

“ spider-like,

Out of his self-drawing web, *he gives* us note,

The force of his own merit makes his way ;

A gift that Heaven gives for him,” &c.

“ O ! give us note,” the original reading, is one of Shakspeare's happy parentheses to break a long sentence, and meaning only, *mark what I say*. The whole speech is intended to render the ironical close emphatic. Wolsey is without ancestry, without the credit of great service, without eminent assistants ; but, spider-like, deriving everything from himself, the force of his own self-sustained merit *makes* his way—his course—his good fortune—a gift from Heaven, which buys, &c. If we were to receive the passage in the sense of the revisers of the text, we ought to read “ his own merit makes *its* way.” To “ make way,” in Shakspeare, is to go away, as in ‘ The Taming of the Shrew :’—

“ While I *make way* from hence to save my life.”

To *make way*, in the colloquial sense of *to get on in the world*, is, we think, a forced and unauthorised meaning of the words before us. That Wolsey should *give note* that he made his way only by his own merit would have been utterly at variance with the stately pomp and haughtiness of his ambition.

Who should attend on him? He makes up the file
Of all the gentry; for the most part such
To whom as great a charge as little honour
He meant to lay upon:^a and his own letter
(The honourable board of council out)
Must fetch him in he papers.^b

Aber. I do know
Kinsmen of mine, three at the least, that have
By this so sicken'd their estates, that never
They shall abound as formerly.

Buck. O, many
Have broke their backs with laying manors on them
For this great journey. What did this vanity,
But minister communication of
A most poor issue?

Nor. Grievingly I think,
The peace between the French and us not values
The cost that did conclude it.

Buck. Every man,
After the hideous storm that follow'd, was
A thing inspir'd; and, not consulting, broke
Into a general prophecy,—That this tempest,

^a This is ordinarily read,

“for the most part such,
Too, whom,” &c.

To the preposition of the original, appeared to the editors a redundancy, because we have “lay upon.” But if *lay upon* has not here the force of a compound verb, examples of redundant prepositions are most common in Shakspeare; for example, in ‘*Coriolanus*’:—

“*In* what commodity is Marcius poor *in*?”

The feeble expletive *too*, with its unmetrical pause, appears to us a corruption, though unnoticed altogether by the editors.

^b The construction of this passage is difficult; the meaning is in Holiushed:—“The peers of the realm, receiving letters to prepare themselves to attend the king in this journey, and no apparent necessary cause expressed, why or wherefore, seemed to grudge that such a costly journey should be taken in hand, without consent of the whole board of the council.” In Wolsey’s letter the “board of council” was “out”—omitted; the letter alone “must fetch *him* in [whom] *he papers*”—whom he sets down in the paper. Ben Jonson, in his ‘*English Grammar*,’ gives examples of a similar “want of the relative,” adding, “in Greek and Latin this want were barbarous.” Amongst other instances he has the passage of the 118th Psalm—“the stone the builders refused”—a parallel case with the sentence before us.

Dashing the garment of this peace, aboded
The sudden breach on 't.

Nor. Which is budded out ;
For France hath flaw'd the league, and hath attach'd
Our merchants' goods at Bourdeaux.

Aber. Is it therefore
The ambassador is silenc'd?

Nor. Marry, is 't.

Aber. A proper title of a peace ; and purchas'd
At a superfluous rate !

Buck. Why, all this business
Our reverend cardinal carried.

Nor. 'Like it your grace,
The state takes notice of the private difference
Betwixt you and the cardinal. I advise you,
(And take it from a heart that wishes towards you
Honour and plenteous safety,) that you read
The cardinal's malice and his potency
Together : to consider further, that
What his high hatred would effect wants not
A minister in his power : You know his nature,
That he 's revengeful ; and I know his sword
Hath a sharp edge : it 's long, and 't may be said,
It reaches far ; and where 't will not extend,
Thither he darts it. Bosom up my counsel,
You 'll find it wholesome. Lo, where comes that rock
That I advise your shunning.

Enter CARDINAL WOLSEY, (the purse borne before him,) certain of the Guard, and Two Secretaries with papers. The CARDINAL in his passage fixeth his eye on BUCKINGHAM, and BUCKINGHAM on him, both full of disdain.

Wol. The duke of Buckingham's surveyor? ha?
Where 's his examination?

1 Secr. Here, so please you.

Wol. Is he in person ready?

1 Secr. Ay, please your grace.

Wol. Well, we shall then know more ; and Buckingham
Shall lessen this big look. [*Exeunt* WOLSEY and Train.]

Buck. This butcher's cur is venom-mouth'd, and I
Have not the power to muzzle him; therefore, best
Not wake him in his slumber. A beggar's book
Out-worths a noble's blood.

Nor. What, are you chaf'd?
Ask God for temperance; that's the appliance only
Which your disease requires.

Buck. I read in his looks
Matter against me; and his eye revil'd
Me, as his abject object: at this instant
He bores^a me with some trick: He's gone to the king;
I'll follow, and out-stare him.

Nor. Stay, my lord,
And let your reason with your choler question
What 't is you go about: To climb steep hills
Requires slow pace at first: Anger is like
A full-hot horse; who being allow'd his way,
Self-mettle tires him. Not a man in England
Can advise me like you: be to yourself
As you would to your friend.

Buck. I'll to the king:
And from a mouth of honour quite cry down
This Ipswich fellow's insolence; or proclaim
There's difference in no persons.

Nor. Be advis'd.
Heat not a furnace for your foe so hot
That it do singe yourself: We may outrun,
By violent swiftness, that which we run at,
And lose by over-running. Know you not
The fire that mounts the liquor till it run o'er,
In seeming to augment it, wastes it? Be advis'd:
I say again, there is no English soul
More stronger to direct you than yourself;
If with the sap of reason you would quench,
Or but allay, the fire of passion.

Buck. Sir,
I am thankful to you: and I'll go along

^a *Bores*—wounds—thrusts. So in the 'Winter's Tale': "Now the ship boring the moon with her mainmast."

By your prescription:—but this top-proud fellow,
 (Whom from the flow of gall I name not, but
 From sincere motions,^a) by intelligence,
 And proofs as clear as founts in July, when
 We see each grain of gravel, I do know
 To be corrupt and treasonous.

Nor. Say not treasonous.

Buck. To the king I'll say 't; and make my vouch as
 strong

As shore of rock. Attend. This holy fox,
 Or wolf, or both (for he is equal ravenous
 As he is subtle; and as prone to mischief,
 As able to perform it: his mind and place
 Infecting one another, yea, reciprocally),
 Only to show his pomp as well in France
 As here at home, suggests^b the king our master
 To this last costly treaty, the interview,
 That swallow'd so much treasure, and like a glass
 Did break i' the rinsing.^c

Nor. 'Faith, and so it did.

Buck. Pray, give me favour, sir. This cunning cardinal
 The articles o' the combination drew
 As himself pleas'd; and they were ratified,
 As he cried, Thus let be: to as much end,
 As give a crutch to the dead: But our count-cardinal
 Has done this, and 't is well; for worthy Wolsey,
 Who cannot err, he did it. Now this follows,
 (Which, as I take it, is a kind of puppy
 To the old dam, treason,)—Charles the emperor,
 Under pretence to see the queen his aunt,
 (For 't was, indeed, his colour; but he came
 To whisper Wolsey,) here makes visitation:
 His fears were, that the interview betwixt
 England and France might, through their amity,
 Breed him some prejudice; for from this league
 Peep'd harms that menac'd him: He privily

^a *Motions*—impulses.

^b *Suggests*—excites.

^c *Rinsing*—in the original *wrenching*.

Deals with our cardinal; and, as I trow,—
 Which I do well; for I am sure the emperor
 Paid ere he promis'd; whereby his suit was granted
 Ere it was ask'd;—but when the way was made,
 And pav'd with gold, the emperor thus desir'd,
 That he would please to alter the king's course,
 And break the foresaid peace. Let the king know,
 (As soon he shall by me,) that thus the cardinal
 Docs buy and sell his honour as he pleases,
 And for his own advantage.

Nor. I am sorry
 To hear this of him; and could wish he were
 Something mistaken^a in 't.

Buck. No, not a syllable;
 I do pronounce him in that very shape
 He shall appear in proof.

Enter BRANDON; a Sergeant-at-Arms before him, and two or three of the Guard.

Bran. Your office, sergeant; execute it.

Serg. Sir,

My lord the duke of Buckingham, and earl
 Of Hereford, Stafford, and Northampton, I
 Arrest thee of high treason, in the name
 Of our most sovereign king.

Buck. Lo you, my lord,
 The net has fallen upon me; I shall perish
 Under device and practice.^b

Bran. I am sorry
 To see you ta'en from liberty, to look on
 The business present: 'T is his highness' pleasure,
 You shall to the Tower.

Buck. It will help me nothing
 To plead mine innocence; for that die is on me,
 Which makes my whitest part black. The will of Heaven

^a *Mistaken*—misapprehended.

^b *Practice*—artifice. So in 'Othello':—

“ Fallen in the *practice* of a cursed slave.”

Be done in this and all things!—I obey.—

O my lord Aberga'ny, fare you well.

Bran. Nay, he must bear you company:—The king
[*To* ABERGAVENNY.]

Is pleas'd you shall to the Tower, till you know
How he determines further.

Aber. As the duke said,
The will of Heaven be done, and the king's pleasure
By me obey'd.

Bran. Here is a warrant from
The king, to attach lord Montacute; and the bodies
Of the duke's confessor, John de la Car,^a
One Gilbert Peck, his chancellor,—

Buck. So, so;
These are the limbs of the plot: no more, I hope.

Bran. A monk o' the Chartreux.

Buck. O, Michael Hopkins?^b

Bran. He.

Buck. My surveyor is false; the o'er-great cardinal
Hath show'd him gold: my life is spann'd already:
I am the shadow of poor Buckingham;
Whose figure even this instant cloud puts on,
By dark'ning my clear sun.^c—My lords, farewell. [*Exeunt.*]

^a *John de la Car*—the name of the original and of the 'Chronicles;' but ordinarily printed John de la Court.

^b *Michael Hopkins.* So the original. The same person—the "Chartreux friar"—is in the next scene called by "the Surveyor" *Nicholas Henton*: in both these passages the name is changed by the modern editors to *Nicholas Hopkins*. Some confusion is probably saved by this; but we also think that the poet might intend Buckingham to give the *Nicholas Hopkins* of the 'Chronicles' a wrong Christian-name in his precipitation; and that the Surveyor might call him by his more formal surname, *Nicholas Henton*—*Nicholas of Henton*—to which convent he belonged. With this explanation we retain the original text, in both cases.

^c This passage is not easy to be understood. Is the comparison a single or a double one? Douce says it is *double*: "Buckingham is first made to say that he is but a shadow; in other terms a dead man. He then adverts to the *sudden* cloud of misfortune that overwhelms him, and, like a shadow, obscures his prosperity." Johnson treats the comparison as *single*: "I am the shadow of poor Buckingham, whose post and dignity is assumed by the cardinal that overclouds and oppresses me, and who gains my place by darkening my clear sun." Offering another explanation, Johnson would read *puts out*; and Steevens inclines to *pouts on*. We think the comparison is *continuous*, though not exactly single: I am the shadow of poor Buckingham—Buckingham is no longer a reality—but *even* this figure of

SCENE II.—*The Council-Chamber.*

Cornets. Enter KING HENRY, CARDINAL WOLSEY, the Lords of the Council, SIR THOMAS LOVELL, Officers, and Attendants. The KING enters, leaning on the CARDINAL's shoulder.

K. Hen. My life itself, and the best heart of it,
Thanks you for this great care: I stood i' the level
Of a full-charg'd confederacy, and give thanks
To you that chok'd it.—Let be call'd before us
That gentleman of Buckingham's: in person
I'll hear him his confessions justify;
And point by point the treasons of his master
He shall again relate.

The KING takes his State. The Lords of the Council take their several places. The CARDINAL places himself under the KING's feet, on his right side.

A noise within, crying, Room for the Queen! Enter the QUEEN, ushered by the DUKES OF NORFOLK and SUFFOLK: she kneels. The KING riseth from his State, takes her up, kisses, and placeth her by him.

Q. Kath. Nay, we must longer kneel; I am a suitor.

K. Hen. Arise, and take place by us:—Half your suit
Never name to us; you have half our power;
The other moiety, ere you ask, is given;
Repeat your will, and take it.

Q. Kath. Thank your majesty.
That you would love yourself, and, in that love,
Not unconsider'd leave your honour, nor
The dignity of your office, is the point
Of my petition.

K. Hen. Lady mine, proceed.

Q. Kath. I am solicited, not by a few,

himself is absorbed, annihilated, by the instant cloud. The metaphor, however, forgets that

“the shadow proves the substance true.”

And those of true condition, that your subjects
 Are in great grievance: there have been commissions
 Sent down among them, which have flaw'd the heart
 Of all their loyalties:—wherein, although,
 My good lord cardinal, they vent reproaches
 Most bitterly on you, as putter-on
 Of these exactions, yet the king our master,
 (Whose honour Heaven shield from soil!) even he escapes
 not

Language unmannerly, yea, such which breaks
 The sides of loyalty, and almost appears
 In loud rebellion.

Nor. Not almost appears,
 It doth appear: for, upon these taxations,
 The clothiers all, not able to maintain
 The many to them 'longing, have put off
 The spinsters, carders, fullers, weavers, who,
 Unfit for other life, compell'd by hunger,
 And lack of other means, in desperate manner
 Daring the event to the teeth, are all in uproar,
 And Danger serves among them.^a

K. Hen. Taxation!
 Wherein? and what taxation?—My lord cardinal,
 You that are blam'd for it alike with us,
 Know you of this taxation?

Wol. Please you, sir,
 I know but of a single part, in aught
 Pertains to the state; and front but in that file^b
 Where others tell steps with me.

Q. Kath. No, my lord,
 You know no more than others: but you frame
 Things, that are known alike, which are not wholesome
 To those which would not know them, and yet must
 Perforce be their acquaintance. These exactions
 Whereof my sovereign would have note, they are
 Most pestilent to the hearing; and to bear them

^a Danger is often personified by our old poets.

^b Johnson explains this—"I am but first in the row of counsellors." But Wolsey disclaims any priority. He uses *front* as a verb;—he *faces* in that file, &c.

The back is sacrifice to the load. They say
They are devis'd by you ; or else you suffer
Too hard an exclamation.

K. Hen. Still exaction !
The nature of it ? In what kind, let's know,
Is this exaction ?

Q. Kath. I am much too venturous
In tempting of your patience ; but am bolden'd
Under your promis'd pardon. The subject's grief
Comes through commissions, which compel from each
The sixth part of his substance, to be levied
Without delay ; and the pretence for this
Is nam'd, your wars in France : This makes bold mouths ;
Tongues spit their duties out ; and cold hearts freeze
Allegiance in them ; their curses now
Live where their prayers did ; and it's come to pass,
This tractable obedience is a slave
To each incensed will. I would your highness
Would give it quick consideration, for
There is no primer baseness.^a

K. Hen. By my life,
This is against our pleasure.

Wol. And for me,
I have no further gone in this, than by
A single voice ; and that not pass'd me, but
By learned approbation of the judges. If I am ^b
Traduc'd by ignorant tongues, which neither know
My faculties, nor person, yet will be
The chronicles of my doing,—let me say
'T is but the fate of place, and the rough brake
That virtue must go through. We must not stint
Our necessary actions, in the fear
To cope malicious censurers ; which ever,
As ravenous fishes, do a vessel follow
That is new trimm'd ; but benefit no further

^a *Baseness*. So the original ; Warburton changed it to *business*, which is the ordinary reading,—and a much feebler one.

^b To avoid the Alexandrine in this line Steevens leaves out "ignorant" in the next ; and so we get a text.

Than vainly longing. What we oft do best,
 By sick interpreters, once^a weak ones, is
 Not ours, or not allow'd ; what worst, as oft,
 Hitting a grosser quality, is cried up
 For our best act. If we shall stand still,
 In fear our motion will be mock'd or carp'd at,
 We should take root here where we sit, or sit
 State statues only.

K. Hen. Things done well,
 And with a care, exempt themselves from fear ;
 Things done without example, in their issue
 Are to be fear'd. Have you a precedent
 Of this commission? I believe not any.
 We must not rend our subjects from our laws,
 And stick them in our will. Sixth part of each?
 A trembling contribution! Why, we take
 From every tree, lop, bark, and part o' the timber ;
 And, though we leave it with a root, thus hack'd
 The air will drink the sap. To every county,
 Where this is question'd, send our letters, with
 Free pardon to each man that has denied
 The force of this commission : Pray, look to 't ;
 I put it to your care.

Wol. A word with you.

[*To the Secretary.*

Let there be letters writ to every shire,
 Of the king's grace and pardon. The griev'd commons
 Hardly conceive of me ; let it be nois'd,
 That through our intercession this revokement
 And pardon comes : I shall anon advise you
 Further in the proceeding. [*Exit Secretary.*

Enter Surveyor.

Q. Kath. I am sorry that the duke of Buckingham
 Is run in your displeasure.

K. Hen. It grieves many :
 The gentleman is learn'd, and a most rare speaker,
 To nature none more bound ; his training such

^a *Once* is here used in the sense of *sometimes*.

That he may furnish and instruct great teachers,
 And never seek for aid out of himself. Yet see
 When these so noble benefits shall prove
 Not well dispos'd, the mind growing once corrupt,
 They turn to vicious forms, ten times more ugly
 Than ever they were fair. This man so complete,
 Who was enroll'd 'mongst wonders, and when we,
 Almost with ravish'd list'ning, could not find
 His hour of speech a minute; he, my lady,
 Hath into monstrous habits put the graces
 That once were his, and is become as black
 As if besmear'd in hell. Sit by us; you shall hear
 (This was his gentleman in trust) of him
 Things to strike honour sad.—Bid him recount
 The fore-recited practices; whereof
 We cannot feel too little, hear too much.

Wol. Stand forth; and with bold spirit relate what
 you,
 Most like a careful subject, have collected
 Out of the duke of Buckingham.

K. Hen. Speak freely.

Surv. First, it was usual with him, every day
 It would infect his speech, That if the king
 Should without issue die, he'd carry it so
 To make the sceptre his: These very words
 I have heard him utter to his son-in-law,
 Lord Aberga'ny; to whom by oath he 'menac'd
 Revenge upon the cardinal.

Wol. Please your highness, note
 This dangerous conception in this point.
 Not friended by his wish, to your high person
 His will is most malignant; and it stretches
 Beyond you, to your friends.

Q. Kath. My learn'd lord cardinal,
 Deliver all with charity.

K. Hen. Speak on:
 How grounded he his title to the crown,
 Upon our fail? to this point hast thou heard him
 At any time speak aught?

Surv. He was brought to this
By a vain prophecy of Nicholas Henton.^a

K. Hen. What was that Henton?

Surv. Sir, a Chartreux friar,
His confessor; who fed him every minute
With words of sovereignty.

K. Hen. How know'st thou this?

Surv. Not long before your highness sped to France,
The duke, being at the Rose, within the parish
Saint Lawrence Poultney, did of me demand
What was the speech among the Londoners
Concerning the French journey: I replied,
Men fear'd the French would prove perfidious,
To the king's danger. Presently the duke
Said, 'T was the fear, indeed; and that he doubted,
'T would prove the verity of certain words
Spoke by a holy monk: "that oft," says he,
"Hath sent to me, wishing me to permit
John de la Car, my chaplain, a choice hour
To hear from him a matter of some moment:
Whom after under the confession's seal^b
He solemnly had sworn, that, what he spoke,
My chaplain to no creature living, but
To me, should utter, with demure confidence
This pausingly ensued—Neither the king, nor his heirs,
(Tell you the duke,) shall prosper: bid him strive
To gain^c the love of the commonalty; the duke
Shall govern England."

Q. Kath. If I know you well,
You were the duke's surveyor, and lost your office
On the complaint o' the tenants: Take good heed
You charge not in your spleen a noble person,
And spoil your nobler soul! I say, take heed;
Yes, heartily beseech you.

^a See Note *b*, p. 147.

^b *The confession's seal.* In the original "the commission's seal"—evidently a mistake. The monk, according to Holinshed, bound the chaplain "under the seal of confession."

^c *Gain* is not in the original. It was first inserted in the fourth folio.

K. Hen. Let him on :—
Go forward.

Surv. On my soul, I 'll speak but truth.
I told my lord the duke, by the devil's illusions
The monk might be deceiv'd ; and that 't was dangerous for
him ^a

To ruminate on this so far, until
It forg'd him some design, which, being believ'd,
It was much like to do : He answer'd, " Tush !
It can do me no damage : " adding further,
That had the king in his last sickness fail'd,
The cardinal's and sir Thomas Lovell's heads
Should have gone off.

K. Hen. Ha ! what, so rank ? Ah, ha !
There 's mischief in this man : Canst thou say further ?

Surv. I can, my liege.

K. Hen. Proceed.

Surv. Being at Greenwich,
After your highness had reprov'd the duke
About sir William Blomer,—

K. Hen. I remember of such a time—Being my sworn
servant,

The duke retain'd him his.—But on ; What hence ?

Surv. " If," quoth he, " I for this had been committed,
As, to the Tower, I thought,—I would have play'd
The part my father meant to act upon
The usurper Richard ; who, being at Salisbury,
Made suit to come in his presence ; which if granted,
As he made semblance of his duty, would
Have put his knife into him."

K. Hen. A giant traitor !

Wol. Now, madam, may his highness live in freedom,
And this man out of prison ?

Q. Kath. God mend all !

K. Hen. There 's something more would out of thee ?
what say'st ?

Surv. After—" the duke his father,"—with " the knife,"—
He stretch'd him, and, with one hand on his dagger,

^a For him. In the original for this.

Another spread on his breast, mounting his eyes,
He did discharge a horrible oath; whose tenor
Was,—were he evil us'd, he would outgo
His father, by as much as a performance
Does an irresolute purpose.

K. Hen. There 's his period,
To sheathe his knife in us. He is attach'd;
Call him to present trial: if he may
Find mercy in the law, 't is his; if none,
Let him not seek 't of us: by day and night,
He 's traitor to the height.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Palace.*

Enter the Lord Chamberlain and LORD SANDS.

Cham. Is 't possible the spells of France should juggle
Men into such strange mysteries? ^a

Sands. New customs,
Though they be never so ridiculous,
Nay, let them be unmanly, yet are follow'd.

Cham. As far as I see, all the good our English
Have got by the late voyage is but merely
A fit or two o' the face; but they are shrewd ones;
For when they hold them, you would swear directly
Their very noses had been counsellors
To Pepin, or Clotharius, they keep state so.

Sands. They have all new legs, and lame ones; one would
take it,
That never saw them pace before, the spavin,
A springhalt reign'd among them.

Cham. Death! my lord,
Their clothes are after such a pagan cut too,
That, sure, they have worn out Christendom. How now?
What news, sir Thomas Lovell?

Enter SIR THOMAS LOVELL.

Lov. 'Faith, my lord,
I hear of none, but the new proclamation
That 's clapp'd upon the court-gate.

^a *Mysteries*—artificial fashions.

Cham. What is 't for?

Lov. The reformation of our travell'd gallants,
That fill the court with quarrels, talk, and tailors.

Cham. I am glad 't is there; now I would pray our mon-
sieurs
To think an English courtier may be wise,
And never see the Louvre.

Lov. They must either
(For so run the conditions) leave those remnants
Of fool, and feather,^s that they got in France,
With all their honourable points of ignorance
Pertaining thereunto, (as fights, and fireworks;
Abusing better men than they can be,
Out of a foreign wisdom,) renouncing clean
The faith they have in tennis and tall stockings,
Short blister'd breeches, and those types of travel,
And understand again like honest men;
Or pack to their old playfellows: there, I take it,
They may, *cum privilegio*, wear away
The lag end of their lewdness, and be laugh'd at.

Sands. 'T is time to give them physic, their diseases
Are grown so catching.

Cham. What a loss our ladies
Will have of these trim vanities!

Lov. Ay, marry,
There will be woe, indeed, lords; the sly whoresons
Have got a speeding trick to lay down ladies;
A French song, and a fiddle, has no fellow.

Sands. The devil fiddle them! I am glad they are
going;
(For, sure, there 's no converting of them;) now,
An honest country lord, as I am, beaten
A long time out of play, may bring his plain-song,
And have an hour of hearing; and, by 'r lady,
Held current music too.

Cham. Well said, lord Sands;
Your colt's tooth is not cast yet.

Sands. No, my lord;
Nor shall not, while I have a stump.

Cham. Sir Thomas,
Whither were you a going?

Lov. To the cardinal's ;
Your lordship is a guest too.

Cham. O, 't is true :
This night he makes a supper, and a great one,
To many lords and ladies ; there will be
The beauty of this kingdom, I 'll assure you.

Lov. That churchman bears a bounteous mind indeed,
A hand as fruitful as the land that feeds us ;
His dews fall everywhere.

Cham. No doubt he 's noble ;
He had a black mouth that said other of him.

Sands. He may, my lord ; he has wherewithal ; in him,
Sparing would show a worse sin than ill doctrine :
Men of his way should be most liberal,
They are set here for examples.

Cham. True, they are so ;
But few now give so great ones. My barge stays ;
Your lordship shall along :—Come, good sir Thomas,
We shall be late else ; which I would not be,
For I was spoke to, with sir Henry Guildford,
This night to be comptrollers.

Sands. I am your lordship's. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Presence-Chamber in York-Place.*

Hautboys. A small table under a state for the CARDINAL, a longer table for the guests. Enter at one door ANNE BULLEN, and divers Lords, Ladies, and Gentlewomen, as guests ; at another door, enter SIR HENRY GUILDFORD.

Guild. Ladies, a general welcome from his grace
Salutes ye all : This night he dedicates
To fair content, and you : none here, he hopes,
In all this noble bevy,^a has brought with her
One care abroad : he would have all as merry

^a So Spenser ('Shepherd's Calendar') :—

“ A lovely bevy of fair ladies sat.”

As first-good company, good wine, good welcome,
Can make good people. O, my lord, you are tardy ;

Enter Lord Chamberlain, LORD SANDS, and SIR THOMAS
LOVELL.

The very thought of this fair company
Clapp'd wings to me.

Cham. You are young, sir Harry Guildford.

Sands. Sir Thomas Lovell, had the cardinal
But half my lay-thoughts in him, some of these
Should find a running banquet ere they rested,
I think would better please them : By my life,
They are a sweet society of fair ones.

Lov. O, that your lordship were but now confessor
To one or two of these !

Sands. I would I were ;
They should find easy penance.

Lov. 'Faith, how easy ?

Sands. As easy as a down-bed would afford it.

Cham. Sweet ladies, will it please you sit ? Sir Harry,
Place you that side, I 'll take the charge of this :
His grace is ent'ring.—Nay, you must not freeze ;
Two women plac'd together makes cold weather :—
My lord Sands, you are one will keep them waking ;
Pray, sit between these ladies.

Sands. By my faith,
And thank your lordship.—By your leave, sweet ladies :

[*Seats himself between ANNE BULLEN and another lady.*
If I chance to talk a little wild, forgive me ;
I had it from my father.

Anne. Was he mad, sir ?

Sands. O, very mad, exceeding mad, in love too :
But he would bite none ; just as I do now,
He would kiss you twenty with a breath. [*Kisses her.*

Cham. Well said, my lord.—
So, now you are fairly seated :—Gentlemen,
The penance lies on you, if these fair ladies
Pass away frowning.

Sands. For my little cure,
Let me alone.

Hautboys. Enter CARDINAL WOLSEY, attended; and takes
his state.

Wol. You are welcome, my fair guests; that noble lady,
Or gentleman, that is not freely merry,
Is not my friend: This, to confirm my welcome;
And to you all good health. [*Drinks.*

Sands. Your grace is noble:—
Let me have such a bowl may hold my thanks,
And save me so much talking.

Wol. My lord Sands,
I am beholden to you: cheer your neighbours.
Ladies, you are not merry;—Gentlemen,
Whose fault is this?

Sands. The red wine first must rise
In their fair cheeks, my lord; then we shall have them
Talk us to silence.

Anne. You are a merry gamester,
My lord Sands.

Sands. Yes, if I make my play.
Here's to your ladyship: and pledge it, madam,
For 't is to such a thing,—

Anne. You cannot show me.

Sands. I told your grace they would talk anon.

[*Drum and trumpets within: Chambers discharged.*^a

Wol. What's that?

Cham. Look out there, some of ye. [*Exit a Servant.*

Wol. What warlike voice?

And to what end is this?—Nay, ladies, fear not;
By all the laws of war ye are privileg'd.

Re-enter Servant.

Cham. How now? what is 't?

Serv. A noble troop of strangers;
For so they seem; they have left their barge, and landed;

^a See Introductory Notice.

And hither make, as great ambassadors
From foreign princes.

Wol. Good lord chamberlain,
Go, give them welcome, you can speak the French tongue ;
And, pray, receive them nobly, and conduct them
Into our presence, where this heaven of beauty
Shall shine at full upon them :—Some attend him.—

[*Exit Chamb., attended. All arise, and tables removed.*]

You have now a broken banquet ; but we 'll mend it.
A good digestion to you all : and, once more,
I shower a welcome on you ;—Welcome all.

Hautboys. Enter the KING, and twelve others, as maskers,
habited like shepherds, with sixteen torchbearers ; ushered
by the Lord Chamberlain. They pass directly before the
CARDINAL, and gracefully salute him.

A noble company ! what are their pleasures ?

Cham. Because they speak no English, thus they pray'd
To tell your grace ;—That, having heard by fame
Of this so noble and so fair assembly
This night to meet here, they could do no less,
Out of the great respect they bear to beauty,
But leave their flocks ; and, under your fair conduct,
Crave leave to view these ladies, and entreat
An hour of revels with them.

Wol. Say, lord chamberlain,
They have done my poor house grace ; for which I pay them
A thousand thanks, and pray them take their pleasures.

[*Ladies chosen for the dance. The KING chooses ANNE
BULLEN.*]

K. Hen. The fairest hand I ever touch'd ! O, beauty,
Till now I never knew thee. [Music. Dance.]

Wol. My lord.

Cham. Your grace ?

Wol. Pray, tell them thus much from me :
There should be one amongst them, by his person,
More worthy this place than myself ; to whom,
If I but knew him, with my love and duty
I would surrender it.

Cham. I will, my lord.

[*Cham. goes to the company, and returns.*]

Wol. What say they?

Cham. Such a one, they all confess,

There is, indeed; which they would have your grace
Find out, and he will take it.

Wol. Let me see then.—[*Comes from his state.*]

By all your good leaves, gentlemen;—Here I'll make
My royal choice.

K. Hen. You have found him, cardinal: [*Unmasking.*]
You hold a fair assembly; you do well, lord:
You are a churchman, or I'll tell you, cardinal,
I should judge now unhappily.

Wol. I am glad

Your grace is grown so pleasant.

K. Hen. My lord chamberlain,

Prithee, come hither: What fair lady's that?

Cham. An't please your grace, sir Thomas Bullen's
daughter,

The viscount Rochford, one of her highness' women.

K. Hen. By Heaven, she is a dainty one.—Sweetheart,

I were unmannerly to take you out,
And not to kiss you.—A health, gentlemen,
Let it go round.

Wol. Sir Thomas Lovell, is the banquet ready

I' the privy chamber?

Lov. Yes, my lord.

Wol. Your grace,

I fear, with dancing is a little heated.

K. Hen. I fear, too much.

Wol. There's fresher air, my lord,

In the next chamber.

K. Hen. Lead in your ladies, every one.—Sweet partner,

I must not yet forsake you:—Let's be merry;—
Good my lord cardinal, I have half a dozen healths
To drink to these fair ladies, and a measure
To lead them once again; and then let's dream
Who's best in favour.—Let the music knock it.

[*Exeunt with trumpets*]

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ACT I.

¹ *The Prologue.*

THERE are several points here which require remark—"a noise of targets"—"a fellow in a long motley coat," &c. But we have found it desirable to touch upon these allusions in our Introductory Notice, to which we refer the reader.

² SCENE I.—"*Enter the Duke of Norfolk,*" &c.

Many of the stage-directions in this play are very remarkable, and are evidently written with great care. The modern editors have for the most part retained their substance, and in some cases their words. We shall more closely follow the original, with such slight changes as are absolutely necessary to make the scene intelligible.

³ SCENE III.—"*Of fool, and feather.*"

It appears, from Nashe's '*Life of Jacke Wilton,*' that, amongst other French fashions in the court of Henry VIII., the hero of the biography says, "I had my feather in my cap as big as a flag in the foretop."

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION.

THE drama of '*Henry VIII.*' is essentially one of pageantry. Coleridge calls it "a sort of historical masque, or show-play." With this view nothing can be finer than the opening. Hall, who was a contemporary of Henry VIII., and was present at the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," has filled his '*Chronicle*' of this reign with the most elaborate accounts of tournaments, and processions, and marriages, and christenings. A judicial murder is despatched by him in a few lines. Malone here repeats his stupid assertion that "Holinshed and not Hall was Shakspeare's author." (See Historical Illustration of '*Henry VI., Part I.,*' Act I.) It is easy to trace Shakspeare to Hall in the "show" parts of '*Henry VIII.,*' and to Holinshed for the more serious passages. Cavendish, however, has described the masque at York Place, and Holinshed has evidently had the advantage of consulting that admirable piece of biography, '*The Life of Wolsey.*' We prefer, however, in those places where the chronicler follows the authority of Wolsey's '*Gentleman Usher,*' to transcribe from the truly graphic original. It has been asserted by Bishop Nicholson that an edition of Cavendish's '*Life*' was published in 1590; but Mr. Hunter* inclines to the more general opinion that it was first printed in 1641. Shakspeare has unquestionably followed Cavendish in some of the most important scenes, either from an acquaintance with his book, or through Holinshed. Assuming that he was not the idle and incurious person that it has been the fashion to represent him, we cannot hold it to be impossible that, if the book were not printed, he was acquainted with one of the several manuscript copies of '*The Life*'

* '*Who wrote Cavendish's Life of Wolsey?*'

of Master Thomas Wolsey,' the collation of which by Mr. Singer has given us the admirable edition of 1827.

Hall's description of the meeting between Henry and Francis is a singular specimen of the minute mind of the young chronicler, who was some twenty years old at the time of this memorable interview. He revels in all the luxuriance of the details of man-millinery and horse-millinery; he describes the dress of the two princes even to the smallest button; chambers of blue velvet and cloth-of-gold dazzle our eyes in every page; and of "the great and goodly plate," and "the noble feasting and cheer," the accounts would furnish out a dozen degenerate modern court-historians. We have space only for his description of the first meeting of the two kings:—

"Then the King of England showed himself sofnedeal forward in beauty and personage, the most goodliest prince that ever reigned over the realm of England: his grace was apparelled in a garment of cloth-of-silver, of damask, ribbed with cloth-of-gold so thick as might be; the garment was large, and plaited very thick, and canteled of very good intail, of such shape and making that it was marvellous to behold. * * * *

"Then up blew the trumpets, sagbuttes, clarions, and all other minstrels on both sides, and the kings descended down toward the bottom of the valley of Andren, in sight of both the nations, and on horseback met and embraced the two kings each other: then the two kings alighted, and after embraced with benign and courteous manner each to other, with sweet and goodly words of greeting. * * *

"After the two kings had ended the banquet, and spice and wine given to the Frenchmen, ipocras was chief drink of plenty to all that would drink. In open sight then came the two kings; that is to wete, the French king and the King of England, out of their tent, by which I then well perceived the habiliment royal of the French king. * * * And verily of his person the same Francis the French king, a goodly prince, stately of countenance, merry of cheer, brown coloured, great eyes, high nosed, big lipped, fair breasted and shoulders, small legs, and long feet."

From his processions and his maskings Hall turns without an effort to more serious matter—the arrest of Buckingham. In the account of this event Shakspeare has followed Holinshed:—

"The cardinal, boiling in hatred against the Duke of Buckingham, and thirsting for his blood, devised to make Charles Knevet, that had been the duke's surveyor, and put from him (as ye have heard), an instrument to bring the duke to destruction. This Knevet, being had in examination before the cardinal, disclosed all the duke's life. And first he uttered that the duke was accustomed, by way of talk, to say how he meant so to use the matter that he would attain to the crown if King Henry chanced to die without issue; and that he had talk and conference of that matter on a time with George Nevill, Lord of Abergavenny, unto whom he had given his daughter in marriage; and also that he threatened to punish the cardinal for his manifold misdoings, being without cause his mortal enemy.

"The cardinal, having gotten that which he sought for, encouraged, comforted, and procured Knevet, with many comfortable words and great promises, that he should with a bold spirit and countenance object and lay these things to the duke's charge, with more if he knew it when time required. Then Knevet, partly provoked with desire to be revenged, and partly moved with hope of reward, openly confessed that the duke had once fully determined to devise means how to make the king away, being brought into a full hope that he should be king, by a vain prophecy which one Nicholas Hopkins, a monk of an house of the Chartreux order beside Bristow, called Henton, sometime his confessor, had opened unto him. * *



[Duke of Buckingham.]

* * * * The king, hearing the accusation, enforced the uttermost by the cardinal, made this answer : If the duke have deserved to be punished, let him have according to his deserts."

The scene where the king lays upon Wolsey the blame of having taxed the commons is also from Holinshed. But Cavendish supplies the details of the masque at York House :—

" And when it pleased the king's majesty, for his recreation, to repair unto the cardinal's house, as he did divers times in the year, at which time there wanted no preparations, or goodly furniture, with viands of the finest sort that might be provided for money or friendship; such pleasures were then devised for the king's comfort and consolation as might be invented, or by man's wit imagined. The banquets were set forth, with masks and mummeries, in so gorgeous a sort and costly manner, that it was a heaven to behold. There wanted no dames or damsels meet or apt to dance with the maskers, or to garnish the place for the time, with other goodly disports. Then was there all kind of music and harmony set forth, with excellent voices both of men and children. I have seen the king suddenly come in thither in a mask, with a dozen of other maskers, all in garments like shepherds, made of fine cloth-of-gold and fine crimson satin paned, and caps of the same, with visors of good proportion of visnomy; their hairs and beards either of fine gold wire, or else of silver, and some being of black silk; having sixteen torch-bearers, besides their drums, and other persons attending upon them, with visors, and clothed all in satin of the same colours. And at his coming, and before he came into the hall, ye shall understand that he came by water to the water-gate, without any noise; where, against his coming, were laid charged many chambers, and at his landing they were all shot off, which made such a rumble in the air that it was like thunder. It made all the noblemen, ladies, and gentlemen, to muse what it should mean coming so suddenly, they sitting quietly at a solemn banquet; under this sort: First, ye shall perceive that the tables were set in the chamber of presence, banquet-wise covered, my lord cardinal sitting under the cloth of estate,

and there having his service all alone; and then was there set a lady and a nobleman, or a gentleman and gentlewoman, throughout all the tables in the chamber on the one side, which were made and joined as it were but one table. All which order and device was done and devised by the Lord Sands, lord chamberlain to the king; and also by Sir Henry Guilford, comptroller to the king. Then immediately after this great shot of guns the cardinal desired the lord chamberlain and comptroller to look what this sudden shot should mean, as though he knew nothing of the matter. They, thereupon looking out of the windows into Thames, returned again, and showed him that it seemed to them there should be some noblemen and strangers arrived at his bridge, as ambassadors from some foreign prince. With that quoth the cardinal, 'I shall desire you, because ye can speak French, to take the pains to go down into the hall to encounter and to receive them according to their estates, and to conduct them into this chamber, where they shall see us and all these noble personages, sitting merrily at our banquet, desiring them to sit down with us, and to take part of our fare and pastime.' Then they went incontinent down into the hall, where they received them with twenty new torches, and conveyed them up into the chamber, with such a number of drums and fifes as I have seldom seen together at one time in any masque. At their arrival into the chamber, two and two together, they went directly before the cardinal where he sat, saluting him very reverently; to whom the lord chamberlain for them said, 'Sir, forasmuch as they be strangers, and can speak no English, they have desired me to declare unto your grace thus: They, having understanding of this your triumphant banquet, where was assembled such a number of excellent fair dames, could do no less, under the supportation of your good grace, but to repair hither to view as well their incomparable beauty, as for to accompany them at mummance, and then after to dance with them, and so to have of them acquaintance. And, sir, they furthermore require of your grace licence to accomplish the cause of their repair.' To whom the cardinal answered that he was very well contented they should do so. Then the maskers went first and saluted all the dames as they sat, and then returned to the most worthiest, and there opened a cup full of gold, with crowns and other pieces of coin, to whom they set divers pieces to cast at. Thus in this manner perusing all the ladies and gentlewomen, and to some they lost, and of some they won. And thus done, they returned unto the cardinal, with great reverence, pouring down all the crowns in the cup, which was about two hundred crowns. 'At all,' quoth the cardinal, and so cast the dice, and won them all at a cast; whereat was great joy made. Then quoth the cardinal to my lord chamberlain, 'I pray you,' quoth he, 'show them that it seemeth me that there should be among them some noble man, whom I suppose to be much more worthy of honour to sit and occupy this room and place than I; to whom I would most gladly, if I knew him, surrender my place according to my duty.' Then spake my lord chamberlain unto them in French, declaring my lord cardinal's mind; and they rounding him again in the ear, my lord chamberlain said to my lord cardinal, 'Sir, they confess,' quoth he, 'that among them there is such a noble personage, whom if your grace can appoint him from the other, he is contented to disclose himself, and to accept your place most worthily.' With that the cardinal, taking a good advisement among them, at the last quoth he, 'Me seemeth the gentleman with the black beard should be even he.' And with that he arose out of his chair, and offered the same to the gentleman in the black beard, with his cap in his hand. The person to whom he offered then his chair was Sir Edward Neville, a comely knight, of a goodly personage, that much more resembled the king's person in that mask than any other. The king, hearing and perceiving the cardinal so deceived in his estimation and choice, could not forbear laughing; but plucked

down his visor, and Master Neville's also, and dashed out with such a pleasant countenance and cheer, that all noble estates there assembled, seeing the king to be there amongst them, rejoiced very much. The cardinal eftsoons desired his highness to take the place of estate; to whom the king answered that he would go first and shift his apparel; and so departed, and went straight into my lord's bed-chamber, where was a great fire made and prepared for him, and there new apparelled him with rich and princely garments. And in the time of the king's absence the dishes of the banquet were clean taken up, and the tables spread again with new and sweet perfumed cloths; every man sitting still until the king and his maskers came in among them again, every man being newly apparelled. Then the king took his seat under the cloth of estate, commanding no man to remove, but sit still, as they did before. Then in came a new banquet before the king's majesty, and to all the rest through the tables, wherein, I suppose, were served two hundred dishes, or above, of wondrous costly meats and devices subtilly devised. Thus passed they forth the whole night with banqueting, dancing, and other triumphant devices, to the great comfort of the king, and pleasant regard of the nobility there assembled."

Shakspeare, with great dramatic skill, has here first introduced Anne Bullen upon the scene.



[Anne Bullen.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter Two Gentlemen, meeting.

1 *Gent.* Whither away so fast?

2 *Gent.* O,—God save you!

Even to the hall, to hear what shall become
Of the great duke of Buckingham.

1 *Gent.* I'll save you
That labour, sir. All's now done, but the ceremony
Of bringing back the prisoner.

2 *Gent.* Were you there?

1 *Gent.* Yes, indeed, was I.

2 *Gent.* Pray speak what has happen'd.^a

1 *Gent.* You may guess quickly what.

2 *Gent.* Is he found guilty?

1 *Gent.* Yes, truly is he, and condemn'd upon it.

2 *Gent.* I am sorry for 't.

1 *Gent.* So are a number more.

2 *Gent.* But, pray, how pass'd it?

1 *Gent.* I'll tell you in a little. The great duke
Came to the bar; where to his accusations
He pleaded still, not guilty, and alleg'd
Many sharp reasons to defeat the law.
The king's attorney, on the contrary,
Urg'd on the examinations, proofs, confessions
Of divers witnesses; which the duke desir'd
To have^b brought *vivâ voce*, to his face:
At which appear'd against him, his surveyor;
Sir Gilbert Peck his chancellor; and John Car,
Confessor to him; with that devil-monk,
Hopkins, that made this mischief.

^a This is usually pointed thus:—"Pray, speak, what has happened?"

^b In the original, "to *him* brought."

2 *Gent.* That was he
That fed him with his prophecies?

1 *Gent.* The same.
All these accus'd him strongly; which he fain
Would have flung from him, but, indeed, he could not:
And so his peers, upon this evidence,
Have found him guilty of high treason. Much
He spoke, and learnedly, for life; but all
Was either pitied in him, or forgotten.

2 *Gent.* After all this, how did he bear himself?

1 *Gent.* When he was brought again to the bar, to hear
His knell rung out, his judgment, he was stirr'd
With such an agony, he sweat extremely,
And something spoke in choler, ill, and hasty:
But he fell to himself again, and sweetly
In all the rest show'd a most noble patience.

2 *Gent.* I do not think he fears death.

1 *Gent.* Sure, he does not.
He never was so womanish; the cause
He may a little grieve at.

2 *Gent.* Certainly
The cardinal is the end of this.

1 *Gent.* 'Tis likely,
By all conjectures: First, Kildare's attainder,
Then deputy of Ireland; who remov'd,
Earl Surrey was sent thither, and in haste too,
Lest he should help his father.

2 *Gent.* That trick of state
Was a deep envious one.

1 *Gent.* At his return,
No doubt he will requite it. This is noted,
And generally, whoever the king favours,
The cardinal instantly will find employment,^a
And far enough from court too.

2 *Gent.* All the commons
Hate him perniciously, and, o' my conscience,

^a There are many similar instances in Shakspeare of this construction;—*for* being here understood;—as in 'The Merchant of Venice':—

"How good a gentleman you sent relief" (*to*).

Wish him ten fathom deep : this duke as much
They love and dote on ; call him bounteous Buckingham,
The mirror of all courtesy.

Enter BUCKINGHAM from his arraignment ; Tipstaves before him ; the axe with the edge towards him ; halberds on each side ; accompanied with SIR THOMAS LOVELL, SIR NICHOLAS VAUX, SIR WILLIAM SANDS, and common people.

1 *Gent.* Stay there, sir,
And see the noble ruin'd man you speak of.

2 *Gent.* Let 's stand close, and behold him.

Buck. All good people,
You that thus far have come to pity me,
Hear what I say, and then go home and lose me.
I have this day receiv'd a traitor's judgment,
And by that name must die : Yet, Heaven bear witness,
And if I have a conscience let it sink me,
Even as the axe falls, if I be not faithful !
The law I bear no malice for my death,
It has done, upon the premises, but justice :
But those that sought it I could wish more christians :
Be what they will, I heartily forgive them :
Yet let them look they glory not in mischief,
Nor build their evils on the graves of great men ;
For then my guiltless blood must cry against them.
For further life in this world I ne'er hope,
Nor will I sue, although the king have mercies
More than I dare make faults. You few that lov'd me,
And dare be bold to weep for Buckingham,
His noble friends, and fellows, whom to leave
Is only bitter to him, only dying,
Go with me, like good angels, to my end ;
And, as the long divorce of steel falls on me,
Make of your prayers one sweet sacrifice,
And lift my soul to heaven.—Lead on, o' God's name.

Lov. I do beseech your grace, for charity,
If ever any malice in your heart
Were hid against me, now to forgive me frankly.

Buck. Sir Thomas Lovell, I as free forgive you

As I would be forgiven : I forgive all :
 There cannot be those numberless offences
 'Gainst me that I cannot take peace with :
 No black envy shall make my grave.
 Commend me to his grace ;^a
 And if he speak of Buckingham, pray tell him,
 You met him half in heaven : my vows and prayers
 Yet are the king's ; and, till my soul forsake,^b
 Shall cry for blessings on him : May he live
 Longer than I have time to tell his years !
 Ever belov'd, and loving, may his rule be !
 And, when old Time shall lead him to his end,
 Goodness and he fill up one monument !

Lov. To the water side I must conduct your grace ;
 Then give my charge up to sir Nicholas Vaux,
 Who undertakes you to your end.

Vaux. Prepare there,
 The duke is coming ; see the barge be ready ;
 And fit it with such furniture as suits
 The greatness of his person.

Buck. Nay, sir Nicholas,
 Let it alone ; my state now will but mock me.
 When I came hither I was lord high constable,
 And duke of Buckingham ; now, poor Edward Bohun :
 Yet I am richer than my base accusers,
 That never knew what truth meant : I now seal it ;
 And with that blood will make them one day groan for 't.
 My noble father, Henry of Buckingham,
 Who first rais'd head against usurping Richard,
 Flying for succour to his servant Banister,
 Being distress'd, was by that wretch betray'd,

^a These short lines are not introduced without a meaning. With those pauses in the delivery that properly belong to one speaking under such circumstances they add to the pathos. They are ordinarily printed after the uniform metrical fashion of the modern editors.

“'Gainst me I can't take peace with : no black envy
 Shall make my grave. Commend me to his grace.”

^b Rowe here stuck in *me*—“ till my soul forsake *me*.” It is not difficult to see that Shakspeare had a different metaphysical notion from that of his editors : the *me* places the individuality in the body alone.

And without trial fell ; God's peace be with him !
 Henry the seventh succeeding, truly pitying
 My father's loss, like a most royal prince,
 Restor'd me to my honours, and, out of ruins,
 Made my name once more noble. Now his son,
 Henry the eighth, life, honour, name, and all
 That made me happy, at one stroke has taken
 For ever from the world. I had my trial,
 And, must needs say, a noble one ; which makes me
 A little happier than my wretched father :
 Yet thus far we are one in fortunes,—Both
 Fell by our servants, by those men we lov'd most ;
 A most unnatural and faithless service !
 Heaven has an end in all : Yet, you that hear me,
 This from a dying man receive as certain :
 Where you are liberal of your loves and counsels,
 Be sure you be not loose ; for those you make friends,
 And give your hearts to, when they once perceive
 The least rub in your fortunes, fall away
 Like water from ye, never found again
 But where they mean to sink ye. All good people,
 Pray for me ! I must now forsake ye ; the last hour
 Of my long weary life is come upon me.
 Farewell :

And when you would say something that is sad,
 Speak how I fell.—I have done ; and God forgive me !

[*Exeunt* BUCKINGHAM and Train.]

1 *Gent.* O, this is full of pity !—Sir, it calls,
 I fear, too many curses on their heads
 That were the authors.

2 *Gent.* If the duke be guiltless,
 'Tis full of woe : yet I can give you inkling
 Of an ensuing evil, if it fall,
 Greater than this.

1 *Gent.* Good angels keep it from us !
 What may it be ?^a You do not doubt my faith, sir ?

^a *What may it be ?* All the modern editors, without any authority, read,
 “ *where may it be ?* ”

2 *Gent.* This secret is so weighty, 't will require
A strong faith to conceal it.

1 *Gent.* Let me have it ;
I do not talk much.

2 *Gent.* I am confident ;
You shall, sir : Did you not of late days hear
A buzzing, of a separation
Between the king and Katharine ?

1 *Gent.* Yes, but it held not :
For when the king once heard it, out of anger
He sent command to the lord mayor, straight
To stop the rumour, and allay those tongues
That durst disperse it.

2 *Gent.* But that slander, sir,
Is found a truth now : for it grows again
Fresher than e'er it was ; and held for certain
The king will venture at it. Either the cardinal,
Or some about him near, have, out of malice
To the good queen, possess'd him with a scruple
That will undo her : To confirm this too,
Cardinal Campeius is arriv'd, and lately ;
As all think, for this business.

1 *Gent.* 'T is the cardinal ;
And merely to revenge him on the emperor,
For not bestowing on him, at his asking,
The archbishopric of Toledo, this is purpos'd.

2 *Gent.* I think you have hit the mark : But is 't not
cruel
That she should feel the smart of this ? The cardinal
Will have his will, and she must fall.

1 *Gent.* 'Tis woful.
We are too open here to argue this ;
Let's think in private more. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Antechamber in the Palace.*

Enter the Lord Chamberlain, reading a letter.

Cham.

“ My lord,—The horses your lordship sent for, with all the care I had I saw well
chosen, ridden, and furnished. They were young and handsome ; and of the best

breed in the north. When they were ready to set out for London, a man of my lord cardinal's, by commission, and main power, took 'em from me; with this reason,—His master would be served before a subject, if not before the king; which stopped our mouths, sir."

I fear, he will, indeed: Well, let him have them:
He will have all, I think.

Enter the DUKES OF NORFOLK and SUFFOLK.

Nor. Well met, my lord chamberlain.^a

Cham. Good day to both your graces.

Suf. How is the king employ'd?

Cham. I left him private,

Full of sad thoughts and troubles.

Nor. What 's the cause?

Cham. It seems the marriage with his brother's wife
Has crept too near his conscience.

Suf. No, his conscience

Has crept too near another lady.

Nor. 'T is so:

This is the cardinal's doing, the king-cardinal:

That blind priest, like the eldest son of fortune,

Turns what he list. The king will know him one day.

Suf. Pray God he do! he 'll never know himself else.

Nor. How holily he works in all his business!

And with what zeal! For now he has crack'd the league

Between us and the emperor, the queen's great nephew:

He dives into the king's soul; and there scatters

Dangers, doubts, wringing of the conscience,

Fears, and despairs, and all these for his marriage:

And out of all these to restore the king,

He counsels a divorce: a loss of her

That, like a jewel, has hung twenty years

About his neck, yet never lost her lustre:

Of her that loves him with that excellence

That angels love good men with; even of her

That when the greatest stroke of fortune falls

Will bless the king: And is not this course pious?

Cham. Heaven keep me from such counsel! 'T is most
true

^a *Good*—"my good lord chamberlain"—has been here thrust into the text.

These news are everywhere ; every tongue speaks them,
 And every true heart weeps for 't : All that dare
 Look into these affairs see this main end,—
 The French king's sister. Heaven will one day open
 The king's eyes, that so long have slept upon
 This bold bad man.

Suf. And free us from his slavery.

Nor. We had need pray,
 And heartily, for our deliverance ;
 Or this imperious man will work us all
 From princes into pages : all men's honours
 Lie like ^a one lump before him, to be fashion'd
 Into what pitch he please.

Suf. For me, my lords,
 I love him not, nor fear him ; there 's my creed :
 As I am made without him, so I 'll stand,
 If the king please ; his curses and his blessings
 Touch me alike, they are breath I not believe in.
 I knew him, and I know him ; so I leave him
 To him that made him proud, the pope.

Nor. Let 's in ;
 And, with some other business, put the king
 From these sad thoughts, that work too much upon him :
 My lord, you 'll bear us company ?

Cham. Excuse me ;
 The king hath sent me other-where : besides,
 You 'll find a most unfit time to disturb him :
 Health to your lordships.

Nor. Thanks, my good lord chamberlain.

[*Exit* Lord Chamberlain.]

NORFOLK *opens a folding-door.* The KING *is discovered sitting, and reading pensively.*^b

Suf. How sad he looks ! sure, he is much afflicted.

K. Hen. Who is there ? ha ?

^a In the same way *like* has been changed into *in*—"in one lump."

^b The old stage-direction is, "The king *draws the curtain*, and sits reading pensively."—See Note on the construction of the ancient stage, 'Othello,' Act V., Illustration.

Nor. 'Pray God he be not angry.

K. Hen. Who's there, I say? How dare you thrust yourselves

Into my private meditations?

Who am I? ha?

Nor. A gracious king, that pardons all offences
Malice ne'er meant: our breach of duty, this way,
Is business of estate; in which, we come
To know your royal pleasure.

K. Hen. Ye are too bold;
Go to; I'll make ye know your times of business:
Is this an hour for temporal affairs? ha?

Enter WOLSEY and CAMPEIUS.

Who's there? my good lord cardinal?—O my Wolsey,
The quiet of my wounded conscience,
Thou art a cure fit for a king.—You're welcome, [*To CAMP.*
Most learned reverend sir, into our kingdom;
Use us, and it:—My good lord, have great care
I be not found a talker. [*To WOLSEY.*

Wol. Sir, you cannot.
I would your grace would give us but an hour
Of private conference.

K. Hen. We are busy; go. [*To NORFOLK and SUFFOLK.*

Nor. This priest has no pride in him?

Suf. Not to speak of; }
I would not be so sick though, for his place: }
But this cannot continue. } *Aside.*

Nor. If it do,
I'll venture one;—have at him.^a

Suf. I another.

[*Exeunt NORFOLK and SUFFOLK.*

Wol. Your grace has given a precedent of wisdom
Above all princes, in committing freely

^a This is ordinarily printed, "I'll venture one have at him." *Have at you*, as Douce properly says, is a common phrase; and it is used in two other passages of this play. But in following the old punctuation it is not less a common phrase. It appears to us that Norfolk means by "I'll venture one"—"I'll risk myself; and that Suffolk is ready to encounter the same danger—"I another." Steevens reads, "I'll venture one *heave* at him"—a metaphor of the wharfs.

Your scruple to the voice of Christendom :
 Who can be angry now ? what envy reach you ?
 The Spaniard, tied by blood and favour to her,
 Must now confess, if they have any goodness,
 The trial just and noble. All the clerks,
 I mean the learned ones, in christian kingdoms,
 Have their free voices ^a—Rome, the nurse of judgment,
 Invited by your noble self, hath sent
 One general tongue unto us, this good man,
 This just and learned priest, cardinal Campeius ;
 Whom, once more, I present unto your highness.

K. Hen. And, once more, in mine arms I bid him welcome,

And thank the holy conclave for their loves ;
 They have sent me such a man I would have wish'd for.

Cam. Your grace must needs deserve all strangers' loves,
 You are so noble : To your highness' hand
 I tender my commission ; by whose virtue,
 (The court of Rome commanding,) you, my lord
 Cardinal of York, are join'd with me their servant,
 In the impartial judging of this business.

K. Hen. Two equal men. The queen shall be acquainted,
 Forthwith, for what you come :—Where's Gardiner ?

Wol. I know your majesty has always lov'd her
 So dear in heart, not to deny her that
 A woman of less place might ask by law,
 Scholars allow'd freely to argue for her.

K. Hen. Ay, and the best she shall have ; and my favour
 To him that does best : God forbid else. Cardinal,
 Prithee call Gardiner to me, my new secretary ;
 I find him a fit fellow. [Exit WOLSEY.]

Re-enter WOLSEY, with GARDINER.

Wol. Give me your hand : much joy and favour to you ;
 You are the king's now.

Gard. But to be commanded
 For ever by your grace, whose hand has rais'd me. [Aside.]

^a By a great freedom of construction the verb *sent* applies to this first member of the sentence, as well as to the second.

K. Hen. Come hither, Gardiner. [*They converse apart.*]

Cam. My lord of York, was not one doctor Pace
In this man's place before him?

Wol. Yes, he was.

Cam. Was he not held a learned man?

Wol. Yes, surely.

Cam. Believe me, there's an ill opinion spread then
Even of yourself, lord cardinal.

Wol. How! of me?

Cam. They will not stick to say you envied him;
And fearing he would rise, he was so virtuous,
Kept him a foreign man still; which so griev'd him,
That he ran mad, and died.

Wol. Heaven's peace be with him
That's christian care enough: for living murmurers
There's places of rebuke. He was a fool;
For he would needs be virtuous: That good fellow,
If I command him, follows my appointment;
I will have none so near else. Learn this, brother,
We live not to be grip'd by meaner persons.

K. Hen. Deliver this with modesty to the queen.

[*Exit GARDINER.*]

The most convenient place that I can think of,
For such receipt of learning, is Blackfriars;
There ye shall meet about this weighty business:
My Wolsey, see it furnish'd. O my lord,
Would it not grieve an able man, to leave
So sweet a bedfellow? But, conscience, conscience,—
O, 't is a tender place, and I must leave her. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*An Antechamber in the Queen's Apartments.*

Enter ANNE BULLEN and an old Lady.

Anne. Not for that neither:—Here's the pang that
pinches:

His highness having liv'd so long with her: and she
So good a lady, that no tongue could ever
Pronounce dishonour of her,—by my life,

She never knew harm-doing ;—O now, after
 So many courses of the sun enthron'd,
 Still growing in a majesty and pomp,—the which
 To leave^a a thousand-fold more bitter than
 'T is sweet at first to acquire,—after this process,
 To give her the avaunt ! it is a pity
 Would move a monster.

Old L. Hearts of most hard temper
 Melt and lament for her.

Anne. O, God's will ! much better
 She ne'er had known pomp : though it be temporal,
 Yet, if that quarrel,^b fortune, do divorce
 It from the bearer, 't is a sufferance, panging
 As soul and body's severing.

Old L. Alas, poor lady !
 She 's a stranger now again.^c

Anne. So much the more
 Must pity drop upon her. Verily,
 I swear, 't is better to be lowly born,
 And range with humble livers in content,
 Than to be perk'd up in a glistering grief,
 And wear a golden sorrow.

Old L. Our content
 Is our best having.

Anne. By my troth, and maidenhead,
 I would not be a queen.

Old L. Beshrew me, I would,
 And venture maidenhead for 't ; and so would you,
 For all this spice of your hypocrisy :
 You, that have so fair parts of woman on you,
 Have too a woman's heart : which ever yet
 Affected eminence, wealth, sovereignty ;
 Which, to say sooth, are blessings : and which gifts
 (Saving your mincing) the capacity

^a The ordinary reading is "to leave *is* a thousand-fold," &c. The verb is understood.

^b *Quarrel*. Some would read *quarreller*. The expression is metaphorical : *Quarrel* is an arrow.

^c She is a *foreigner* again.

Of your soft cheveril ^a conscience would receive,
If you might please to stretch it.

Anne. Nay, good troth,—

Old L. Yes, troth, and troth,—You would not be a queen?

Anne. No, not for all the riches under heaven.

Old L. 'T is strange : a three-pence bow'd would hire me,
Old as I am, to queen it : But, I pray you,
What think you of a duchess? have you limbs
To bear that load of title?

Anne. No, in truth.

Old L. Then you are weakly made : Pluck off a little ; ^b
I would not be a young count in your way,
For more than blushing comes to : if your back
Cannot vouchsafe this burthen, 't is too weak
Ever to get a boy.

Anne. How you do talk!

I swear again, I would not be a queen
For all the world.

Old L. In faith, for little England
You 'd venture an emballing : I myself
Would for Carnarvonshire, although there 'long'd
No more to the crown but that. Lo, who comes here?

Enter the Lord Chamberlain.

Cham. Good morrow, ladies. What wer 't worth to know
The secret of your conference?

Anne. My good lord,
Not your demand ; it values not your asking :
Our mistress' sorrows we were pitying.

Cham. It was a gentle business, and becoming
The action of good women : there is hope
All will be well.

Anne. Now I pray God, amen!

^a *Cheveril*—kid-skin. So in 'Romeo and Juliet,' "O, here 's a wit of cheveril, that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad."

^b *Pluck off a little*—descend a little : You refuse to be a queen, a duchess, try a count.

^c *Anne* would not be a queen "for all the world ;"—but you would, says the old lady, "for little England ;"—I "would for Carnarvonshire"—for one Welsh county.

Cham. You bear a gentle mind, and heavenly blessings
Follow such creatures. That you may, fair lady,
Perceive I speak sincerely, and high note's ^a
Ta'en of your many virtues, the king's majesty
Commends his good opinion of you to you, and ^b
Does purpose honour to you no less flowing
Than marchioness of Pembroke; to which title
A thousand pound a-year, annual support,
Out of his grace he adds.

Anne. I do not know
What kind of my obedience I should tender,
More than my all is nothing; nor my prayers
Are not words duly hallow'd, nor my wishes
More worth than empty vanities; yet prayers, and wishes,
Are all I can return. 'Beseech your lordship,
Vouchsafe to speak my thanks, and my obedience,
As from a blushing handmaid to his highness;
Whose health and royalty I pray for.

Cham. Lady,
I shall not fail to improve the fair conceit
The king hath of you.—I have perus'd her well; [*Aside.*
Beauty and honour in her are so mingled,
That they have caught the king: and who knows yet,
But from this lady may proceed a gem
To lighten all this isle!—I'll to the king,
And say, I spoke with you.

Anne. My honour'd lord.

[*Exit* Lord Chamberlain.]

Old L. Why, this it is; see, see!
I have been begging sixteen years in court,
(Am yet a courtier beggarly,) nor could
Come pat betwixt too early and too late,
For any suit of pounds: and you, (O fate!)

^a *High note's.* In the original, *high notes*;—we understand it “that high note is taken,” &c.

^b We print this line as in the original. The modern editors have silently dropped “of you.” They hate the twelve-syllable verse,—one of the most marked peculiarities of our dramatic poetry when it threw off the shackles of the blank-verse which preceded Shakspere.

A very fresh-fish here, (fie, fie, fie^a upon
This compell'd fortune!) have your mouth fill'd up,
Before you open it.

Anne. This is strange to me.

Old L. How tastes it? is it bitter? forty pence, no.^b
There was a lady once, ('t is an old story,)
That would not be a queen, that would she not,
For all the mud in Egypt: Have you heard it?

Anne. Come, you are pleasant.

Old L. With your theme, I could
O'er mount the lark. The marchioness of Pembroke!
A thousand pounds a-year! for pure respect;
No other obligation: By my life,
That promises more thousands: Honour's train
Is longer than his foreskirt. By this time,
I know, your back will bear a duchess;—Say,
Are you not stronger than you were?

Anne. Good lady,
Make yourself mirth with your particular fancy,
And leave me out on 't. 'Would I had no being
If this salute my blood a jot; it faints me
To think what follows.

The queen is comfortless, and we forgetful
In our long absence: Pray, do not deliver
What here you have heard, to her.

Old L. What do you think me? [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in Blackfriars.*

Trumpets, sennet, and cornets. Enter Two Vergers, with short silver wands; next them, Two Scribes, in the habits of doctors; after them, the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY alone; after him, the BISHOPS OF LINCOLN, ELY, ROCHESTER, and SAINT ASAPH; next them, with some small distance, follows a Gentleman bearing the purse, with the great seal, and a cardinal's hat; then Two Priests, bearing each a silver cross; then a Gentleman-Usher bareheaded,

^a The third *fie* has been rejected from the same love of monotony.

^b The old lady, whose gossip is most characteristic, would lay a wager of forty pence.

accompanied with a Sergeant-at-Arms, bearing a silver mace; then Two Gentlemen, bearing two great silver pillars; after them, side by side, the Two CARDINALS, WOLSEY and CAMPEIUS; Two Noblemen with the sword and mace. [Then enter the KING and QUEEN, and their Trains.] The KING takes place under the cloth of state; the Two CARDINALS sit under him as judges. The QUEEN takes place at some distance from the KING. The BISHOPS place themselves on each side the court, in manner of a consistory; below them, the Scribes. The Lords sit next the BISHOPS. The Crier and the rest of the Attendants stand in convenient order about the stage.

Wol. Whilst our commission from Rome is read,
Let silence be commanded.

K. Hen. What's the need?
It hath already publicly been read,
And on all sides the authority allow'd;
You may then spare that time.

Wol. Be't so:—Proceed.

Scribe. Say, Henry king of England, come into the court.

Crier. Henry king of England, &c.

K. Hen. Here.

Scribe. Say, Katharine queen of England, come into the court.

Crier. Katharine queen of England, &c.

[The QUEEN makes no answer, rises out of her chair, goes about the court, comes to the KING, and kneels at his feet; then speaks.]

Q. Kath. Sir, I desire you, do me right and justice;
And to bestow your pity on me: for
I am a most poor woman, and a stranger,
Born out of your dominions; having here
No judge indifferent, nor no more assurance
Of equal friendship and proceeding. Alas, sir,
In what have I offended you? what cause
Hath my behaviour given to your displeasure,
That thus you should proceed to put me off,
And take your good grace from me? Heaven witness,

I have been to you a true and humble wife,
At all times to your will conformable :
Ever in fear to kindle your dislike,
Yea, subject to your countenance ; glad, or sorry,
As I saw it inclin'd. When was the hour,
I ever contradicted your desire,
Or made it not mine too? Or which of your friends
Have I not strove to love, although I knew
He were mine enemy? What friend of mine
That had to him deriv'd your anger, did I
Continue in my liking? nay, gave notice
He was from thence discharg'd? Sir, call to mind
That I have been your wife, in this obedience,
Upward of twenty years, and have been blest
With many children by you : If, in the course
And process of this time, you can report,
And prove it too, against mine honour aught,
My bond to wedlock, or my love and duty,
Against your sacred person,^a in God's name,
Turn me away ; and let the foul'st contempt
Shut door upon me, and so give me up
To the sharpest kind of justice. Please you, sir,
The king, your father, was reputed for
A prince most prudent, of an excellent
And unmatched wit and judgment: Ferdinand,
My father, king of Spain, was reckon'd one
The wisest prince, that there had reign'd by many
A year before : It is not to be question'd
That they had gather'd a wise council to them
Of every realm, that did debate this business,
Who deem'd our marriage lawful : Wherefore I humbly
Beseech you, sir, to spare me, till I may
Be by my friends in Spain advis'd ; whose counsel
I will implore ; if not, i' the name of God,
Your pleasure be fulfill'd !

Wol.

You have here, lady,

^a There is a licence of construction here—one of the many elliptical expressions with which the play abounds. *Aught* is required to be repeated—*Aught* “against your sacred person.”

(And of your choice,) these reverend fathers; men
Of singular integrity and learning,
Yea, the elect of the land, who are assembled
To plead your cause: It shall be therefore bootless,
That longer you desire the court; as well
For your own quiet, as to rectify
What is unsettled in the king.

Cam. His grace
Hath spoken well, and justly: Therefore, madam,
It's fit this royal session do proceed;
And that, without delay, their arguments
Be now produc'd, and heard.

Q. Kath. Lord cardinal,
To you I speak.

Wol. Your pleasure, madam?

Q. Kath. Sir,
I am about to weep; but, thinking that
We are a queen, (or long have dream'd so,) certain
The daughter of a king, my drops of tears
I'll turn to sparks of fire.

Wol. Be patient yet.

Q. Kath. I will, when you are humble; nay, before,
Or God will punish me. I do believe,
Induc'd by potent circumstances, that
You are mine enemy; and make my challenge
You shall not be my judge: for it is you
Have blown this coal betwixt my lord and me,
Which God's dew quench!—Therefore, I say again,
I utterly abhor, yea, from my soul
Refuse you^a for my judge: whom, yet once more,
I hold my most malicious foe, and think not
At all a friend to truth.

Wol. I do profess
You speak not like yourself; who ever yet
Have stood to charity, and display'd the effects

^a Sir W. Blackstone, who contributed a few notes to Shakspeare, says that *abhor* and *refuse* are, in such a case, technical terms of the canon-law—*Detestor* and *Recuso*. The very words occur in Holinshed. *Challenge* has been previously used by the queen technically.

Of disposition gentle, and of wisdom
 O'ertopping woman's power. Madam, you do me wrong:
 I have no spleen against you; nor injustice
 For you, or any: how far I have proceeded,
 Or how far further shall, is warranted
 By a commission from the consistory,
 Yea, the whole consistory of Rome. You charge me
 That I have blown this coal: I do deny it:
 The king is present: if it be known to him
 That I gainsay my deed, how may he wound,
 And worthily, my falsehood! yea, as much
 As you have done my truth. If he know
 That I am free of your report, he knows
 I am not of your wrong. Therefore in him
 It lies to cure me: and the cure is, to
 Remove these thoughts from you: The which before
 His highness shall speak in, I do beseech
 You, gracious madam, to unthink your speaking,
 And to say so no more.

Q. Kath. My lord, my lord,
 I am a simple woman, much too weak
 To oppose your cunning. You are meek, and humble-
 mouth'd;
 You sign your place and calling, in full seeming
 With meekness and humility: but your heart
 Is cramm'd with arrogancy, spleen, and pride.
 You have, by fortune, and his highness' favours,
 Gone slightly o'er low steps; and now are mounted
 Where powers are your retainers: and your words,^a
 Domestics to you, serve your will, as 't please
 Yourself pronounce their office. I must tell you,
 You tender more your person's honour than
 Your high profession spiritual: That again
 I do refuse you for my judge; and here,

^a Tyrwhitt would read, as we think most unpoetically, "your *wards*,"—persons subject to him as to the care of their fortunes, and treated as "servants." This is to convert high poetry into matter of fact. What an image is presented of an unscrupulous but most able man, to say that his *powers* are used as the mere agents of his pleasure, and his *words*, without regard to the general obligation of truth, are "domestics" who serve but his will!

Before you all, appeal unto the pope,
To bring my whole cause 'fore his holiness,
And to be judg'd by him.

[*She curtsies to the KING, and offers to depart.*

Cam. The queen is obstinate,
Stubborn to justice, apt to accuse it, and
Disdainful to be tried by it; 't is not well.
She's going away.

K. Hen. Call her again.

Crier. Katharine queen of England, come into the court.

Grif. Madam, you are call'd back.

Q. Kath. What need you note it? pray you, keep your
way:

When you are call'd, return.—Now the Lord help,
They vex me past my patience!—pray you, pass on:
I will not tarry: no, nor ever more,
Upon this business, my appearance make
In any of their courts.

[*Exeunt QUEEN, GRIFFITH, and her other Attendants.*

K. Hen. Go thy ways, Kate:
That man i' the world who shall report he has
A better wife, let him in nought be trusted,
For speaking false in that: Thou art, alone,
(If thy rare qualities, sweet gentleness,
Thy meekness saint-like, wife-like government,—
Obeying in commanding,—and thy parts
Sovereign and pious else, could speak thee out,)
The queen of earthly queens:—She is noble born;
And, like her true nobility, she has
Carried herself towards me.

Wol. Most gracious sir,
In humblest manner I require your highness,
That it shall please you to declare, in hearing
Of all these ears, (for where I am robb'd and bound,
There must I be unloos'd; although not there
At once and fully satisfied,) whether ever I
Did broach this business to your highness; or
Laid any scruple in your way, which might
Induce you to the question on 't? or ever

Have to you,—but with thanks to God for such
A royal lady,—spake one the least word that might
Be to the prejudice of her present state,
Or touch of her good person?

K. Hen. My lord cardinal,
I do excuse you ; yea, upon mine honour,
I free you from 't. You are not to be taught
That you have many enemies, that know not
Why they are so, but, like to village curs,
Bark when their fellows do : by some of these
The queen is put in anger. You are excus'd :
But will you be more justified ? you ever
Have wish'd the sleeping of this business ; never
Desir'd it to be stirr'd ; but oft have hinder'd, oft,
The passages made toward it :—on my honour,
I speak my good lord cardinal to this point,
And thus far clear him. Now, what mov'd me to 't,
I will be bold with time, and your attention :—
Then mark the inducement. Thus it came ;—give heed to 't :
My conscience first receiv'd a tenderness,
Scruple, and prick, on certain speeches utter'd
By the bishop of Bayonne, then French ambassador ;
Who had been hither sent on the debating
A marriage, 'twixt the duke of Orleans and
Our daughter Mary : I' the progress of this business,
Ere a determinate resolution, he
(I mean the bishop) did require a respite ;
Wherein he might the king his lord advertise
Whether our daughter were legitimate,
Respecting this our marriage with the dowager,
Sometimes our brother's wife. This respite shook
The bosom of my conscience, enter'd me,
Yea, with a splitting power, and made to tremble
The region of my breast ; which forc'd such way,
That many maz'd considerings did throng,
And press'd in with this caution. First, methought,
I stood not in the smile of Heaven ; who had
Commanded Nature, that my lady's womb,
If it conceiv'd a male child by me, should

Do no more offices of life to 't, than
 The grave does to the dead: for her male issue
 Or died where they were made, or shortly after
 This world had air'd them: Hence I took a thought
 This was a judgment on me; that my kingdom,
 Well worthy the best heir o' the world, should not
 Be gladdened in 't by me: Then follows, that
 I weigh'd the danger which my realms stood in
 By this my issue's fail: and that gave to me
 Many a groaning throe. Thus hulling in
 The wild sea of my conscience, I did steer
 Toward this remedy, whereupon we are
 Now present here together; that's to say,
 I meant to rectify my conscience,—which
 I then did feel full sick, and yet not well,—
 By all the reverend fathers of the land,
 And doctors learn'd. First, I began in private
 With you, my lord of Lincoln; you remember
 How under my oppression I did reek,
 When I first mov'd you.

Lin. Very well, my liege.

K. Hen. I have spoke long; be pleas'd yourself to say
 How far you satisfied me.

Lin. So please your highness,
 The question did at first so stagger me,—
 Bearing a state of mighty moment in 't,
 And consequence of dread,—that I committed
 The daring'st counsel which I had, to doubt;
 And did entreat your highness to this course,
 Which you are running here.

K. Hen. I then mov'd you,
 My lord of Canterbury; and got your leave
 To make this present summons:—Unsolicited
 I left no reverend person in this court;
 But by particular consent proceeded,
 Under your hands and seals. Therefore, go on;
 For no dislike i' the world against the person
 Of the good queen, but the sharp thorny points
 Of my alleged reasons, drive this forward:

Prove but our marriage lawful, by my life,
And kingly dignity, we are contented
To wear our mortal state to come with her,
Katharine our queen, before the primest creature
That's paragon'd o' the world.

Cam. So please your highness,
The queen being absent, 't is a needful fitness,
That we adjourn this court till further day :
Meanwhile must be an earnest motion
Made to the queen, to call back her appeal
She intends unto his holiness. [*They rise to depart.*

K. Hen. I may perceive, [*Aside.*
These cardinals trifle with me : I abhor
This dilatory sloth, and tricks of Rome.
My learn'd and well-beloved servant, Cranmer,
Prithee, return ! with thy approach, I know,
My comfort comes along. Break up the court :
I say, set on. [*Exeunt in manner as they entered.*



[Cardinal Wolsey.]

ILLUSTRATION OF ACT II.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION.

THE condemnation and subsequent demeanour of Buckingham are thus given by Hall. The outline has been beautifully filled up in the poet's picture:—

“The duke was brought to the bar sore chafing, and sweat marvellously; after he had made his reverence he paused awhile.” * * * * *

After his sentence “the Duke of Buckingham said,—‘My lord of Norfolk, you have said as a traitor should be said unto, but I was never none; but, my lords, I nothing malign for that you have done to me, but the eternal God forgive you my death, as I do: I shall never sue to the king for life, howbeit he is a gracious prince, and more grace may come from him than I desire. I desire you, my lords, and all my fellows to pray for me.’

“Then was the edge of the axe turned towards him, and so led into a barge. Sir Thomas Lovell desired him to sit on the cushions and carpet ordained for him; he said, ‘Nay, for when I went to Westminster I was Duke of Buckingham; now I am but Edward Bohun, the most caitiff of the world.’ Thus they landed at the Temple, where received him Sir Nicolas Vawse and Sir William Sandes, Baronets, and led him through the city, who desired ever the people to pray for him, of whom some wept and lamented, and said, This is the end of evil life. God forgive him! he was a proud prince; it is a pity that he behaved him so against his king and

liege lord, whom God preserve. Thus about iiii of the clock he was brought as a cast man to the Tower."

Holinshed thus narrates the circumstance which suggests the dialogue between Campeius and Wolsey in the second scene:—"About this time the king received into favour Doctor Stephen Gardiner, whose service he used in matters of great secrecy and weight; admitting him in the room of Doctor Pace, the which being continually abroad in ambassades, and the same oftentimes not much necessary, by the cardinal's appointment, at length he took such grief therewith that he fell out of his right wits."

The great trial-scene is fully described by Cavendish, in one of the most interesting pieces of memoir-writing which our language furnishes. We track Shakspeare at every step:—

"Ye shall understand, as I said before, that there was a court erected in the Blackfriars in London, where these two cardinals sat for judges. Now will I set you out the manner and order of the court there. First, there was a court placed with tables, benches, and bars, like a consistory, a place judicial (for the judges to sit on). There was also a cloth of estate, under the which sat the king; and the queen sat some distance beneath the king: under the judges' feet sat the officers of the court. The chief scribe there was Dr. Stephens (who was after Bishop of Winchester); the apparitor was one Cooke, most commonly called Cooke of Winchester. Then sat there within the said court, directly before the king and the judges, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Doctor Warham, and all the other bishops. Then at both the ends, with a bar made for them, the councillors on both sides. The doctors for the king were Doctor Sampson, that was after Bishop of Chichester, and Doctor Bell, who after was Bishop of Worcester, with divers other. The proctors on the king's part were Doctor Peter, who was after made the king's chief secretary, and Doctor Tregonell, and divers other.

"Now on the other side stood the counsel for the queen,—Doctor Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and Doctor Standish, some time a grey friar, and then Bishop of St. Asaph in Wales; two notable clerks in divinity, and in especial the Bishop of Rochester, a very godly man and a devout person, who after suffered death at Tower Hill; the which was greatly lamented through all the foreign universities of Christendom. There was also another ancient doctor, called, as I remember, Doctor Ridley, a very small person in stature, but surely a great and excellent clerk in divinity.

"The court being thus furnished and ordered, the judges commanded the crier to proclaim silence; then was the judges' commission, which they had of the pope, published and read openly before all the audience there assembled: that done, the crier called the king, by the name of 'King Henry of England, come into the court,' &c. With that the king answered and said, 'Here, my lords.' Then he called also the queen, by the name of 'Katharine queen of England, come into the court,' &c.; who made no answer to the same, but rose up incontinent out of her chair, where as she sat; and because she could not come directly to the king for the distance which severed them, she took pain to go about unto the king, kneeling down at his feet in the sight of all the court and assembly, to whom she said in effect, in broken English, as followeth:—

"'Sir,' quoth she, 'I beseech you for all the loves that hath been between us, and for the love of God, let me have justice and right; take of me some pity and compassion, for I am a poor woman and a stranger born out of your dominion; I have here no assured friend, and much less indifferent counsel; I flee to you as to the head of justice within this realm. Alas! sir, wherein have I offended you, or what occasion of displeasure? Have I designed against your will and pleasure;

intending, as I perceive, to put me from you? I take God and all the world to witness that I have been to you a true, humble, and obedient wife, ever conformable to your will and pleasure, that never said or did anything to the contrary thereof, being always well pleased and contented with all things wherein you had any delight or dalliance, whether it were in little or much; I never grudged in word or countenance, or showed a visage or spark of discontentation. I loved all those whom ye loved only for your sake, whether I had cause or no, and whether they were my friends or my enemies. This twenty years I have been your true wife, or more, and by me ye have had divers children, although it hath pleased God to call them out of this world, which hath been no default in me.

“ And when ye had me at the first, I take God to be my judge, I was a true maid without touch of man; and whether it be true or no, I put it to your conscience. If there be any just cause by the law that ye can allege against me, either of dishonesty or any other impediment, to banish and put me from you, I am well content to depart, to my great shame and dishonour; and if there be none, then here I most lowly beseech you let me remain in my former estate, and receive justice at your hands. The king your father was in the time of his reign of such estimation through the world for his excellent wisdom, that he was accounted and called of all men the second Solomon; and my father Ferdinand King of Spain, who was esteemed to be one of the wittiest princes that reigned in Spain many years before, were both wise and excellent kings in wisdom and princely behaviour. It is not therefore to be doubted but that they elected and gathered as wise councillors about them as to their high discretions was thought meet. Also, as me seemeth, there was in those days as wise, as well-learned men, and men of as good judgment, as be at this present in both realms, who thought then the marriage between you and me good and lawful; therefore it is a wonder to hear what new inventions are now invented against me, that never intended but honesty, and cause me to stand to the order and judgment of this new court, wherein ye may do me much wrong, if ye intend any cruelty; for ye may condemn me for lack of sufficient answer, having no indifferent counsel, but such as be assigned me, with whose wisdom and learning I am not acquainted. Ye must consider that they cannot be indifferent counsellors for my part which be your subjects, and taken out of your own council before, wherein they be made privy, and dare not, for your displeasure, disobey your will and intent, being once made privy thereto. Therefore, I most humbly require you, in the way of charity, and for the love of God, who is the best judge, to spare me the extremity of this new court, until I may be advertised what way and order my friends in Spain will advise me to take; and if ye will not extend to me so much indifferent favour, your pleasure then be fulfilled, and to God I commit my cause!”

“ And with that she rose up, making a low curtsy to the king, and so departed from thence. Many supposed that she would have resorted again to her former place; but she took her way straight out of the house, leaning, as she was wont always to do, upon the arm of her general receiver, called Master Griffith. And the king, being advertised of her departure, commanded the crier to call her again, who called her by the name of ‘Katharine queen of England, come into the court,’ &c. With that quoth Master Griffith, ‘*Madam, ye be called again.*’ ‘On, on,’ quoth she, ‘it maketh no matter, for it is no indifferent court for me, therefore I will not tarry. Go on your ways.’ And thus she departed out of that court, without any farther answer at that time, or at any other, nor would never appear at any other court after.

“ The king, perceiving that she was departed in such sort, calling to his grace’s memory all her lament words that she had pronounced before him and all the

audience, said thus in effect:—‘Forasmuch,’ quoth he, ‘as the queen is gone, I will, in her absence, declare unto you all, my lords here present assembled, she hath been to me as true, as obedient, and as conformable a wife as I could in my fantasy wish or desire. She hath all the virtuous qualities that ought to be in a woman of her dignity, or in any other of baser estate. Surely she is also a noblewoman born: if nothing were in her but only her conditions, will well declare the same.’ With that quoth my lord cardinal,—‘Sir, I most humbly beseech your highness to declare me before all this audience, whether I have been the chief inventor or first mover of this matter unto your majesty; for I am greatly suspected of all men herein.’ ‘My lord cardinal,’ quoth the king, ‘I can well excuse you herein. Marry,’ quoth he, ‘ye have been rather against me in attempting or setting forth thereof. And to put you all out of doubt, I will declare unto you the special cause that moved me hereunto; it was a certain scrupulosity that pricked my conscience upon divers words that were spoken at a certain time by the Bishop of Bayonne, the French king’s ambassador, who had been here long upon the debating for the conclusion of a marriage to be concluded between the princess our daughter Mary and the Duke of Orleans, the French king’s second son.

“‘And upon the resolution and determination thereof, he desired respite to advertise the king his master thereof, whether our daughter Mary should be legitimate in respect of the marriage which was sometime between the queen here and my brother the late prince Arthur. These words were so conceived within my scrupulous conscience, that it bred a doubt within my breast, which doubt pricked, vexed, and troubled so my mind, and so disquieted me, that I was in great doubt of God’s indignation; which, as seemed me, appeared right well; much the rather for that he hath not sent me any issue male; for all such issue male as I have received of the queen died incontinent after they were born; so that I doubt the punishment of God in that behalf. Thus being troubled in waves of a scrupulous conscience, and partly in despair of any issue male by her, it drove me at last to consider the estate of this realm, and the danger it stood in for lack of issue male to succeed me in this imperial dignity. I thought it good, therefore, in relief of the weighty burden of scrupulous conscience, and the quiet estate of this noble realm, to attempt the law therein, and whether I might take another wife in case that my first copulation with this gentlewoman were not lawful; which I intend not for any carnal concupiscence, nor for any displeasure or dislike of the queen’s person or age, with whom I could be as well content to continue during my life, if our marriage may stand with God’s laws, as with any woman alive; in which point consisteth all this doubt that we go now about to try by the learned wisdom and judgment of you our prelates and pastors of this realm here assembled for that purpose; to whose conscience and judgment I have committed the charge, according to the which, God willing, we will be right well contented to submit ourself, to obey the same for our part. Wherein after I once perceived my conscience wounded with the doubtful case herein, I moved first this matter in confession to you, my lord of Lincoln, my ghostly father. And forasmuch as then yourself were in some doubt to give me counsel, moved me to ask further counsel of all you, my lords; wherein I moved you first, my lord of Canterbury, axing your licence (forasmuch as you were our metropolitan) to put this matter in question; and so I did of all you, my lords; to the which ye have all granted by writing under all your seals, the which I have here to be showed.’ ‘That is truth, if it please your highness,’ quoth the Bishop of Canterbury; ‘I doubt not but all my brethren here present will affirm the same.’ ‘No, sir, not I,’ quoth the Bishop of Rochester, ‘ye have not my consent thereto.’ ‘No ha’ thee?’ quoth the king; ‘look here upon this: is not this your hand and seal?’ and showed him the instrument with seals. ‘No, forsooth, sire,’ quoth the

Bishop of Rochester, 'it is not my hand nor seal!' To that quoth the king to my lord of Canterbury, 'Sir, how say ye? is it not his hand and seal?' 'Yes, sir,' quoth my lord of Canterbury. 'That is not so,' quoth the Bishop of Rochester, 'for indeed you were in hand with me to have both my hand and seal, as other of my lords had already done; but then I said to you that I would never consent to no such act, for it were much against my conscience; nor my hand and seal should never be seen at any such instrument, God willing; with much more matter touching the same communication between us.' 'You say truth,' quoth the Bishop of Canterbury; 'such words ye said unto me; but at the last ye were fully persuaded that I should for you subscribe your name, and put to a seal myself, and ye would allow the same.' 'All which words and matter,' quoth the Bishop of Rochester, 'under your correction, my lord, and supportation of this noble audience, there is nothing more untrue.' 'Well, well,' quoth the king, 'it shall make no matter; we will not stand with you in argument herein, for you are but one man.' And with that the court was adjourned until the next day of this session.'



[Queen Katharine.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Palace at Bridewell. A Room in the Queen's Apartment.*

The QUEEN, and some of her Women, at work.

Q. Kath. Take thy lute, wench : my soul grows sad with troubles :

Sing, and disperse them if thou canst : leave working.

SONG.

Orpheus with his lute made trees,
And the mountain-tops that freeze,
Bow themselves, when he did sing :
To his music, plants and flowers
Ever sprung ; as sun and showers
There had made ^a a lasting spring.

Everything that heard him play,
Even the billows of the sea,
Hung their heads, and then lay by.
In sweet music is such art :
Killing care and grief of heart
Fall asleep, or, hearing, die.

Enter a Gentleman.

Q. Kath. How now ?

Gent. An 't please your grace, the two great cardinals
Wait in the presence.

Q. Kath. Would they speak with me ?

Gent. They will'd me say so, madam.

Q. Kath. Pray their graces
To come near. [*Exit Gent.*] What can be their business
With me, a poor weak woman, fallen from favour ?
I do not like their coming. Now I think on 't,
They should be good men ;^b their affairs as righteous :
But all hoods make not monks.^c

^a The modern editors, without the slightest authority, read—

“ There had *been* a lasting spring.”

^b We follow the punctuation of the original. The ordinary reading is—

“ I do not like their coming, now I think on 't.”

^c The old Latin proverb—“ Cucullus non facit monachum.”

Enter WOLSEY and CAMPEIUS.

Wol. Peace to your highness!

Q. Kath. Your graces find me here part of a housewife;
I would be all, against the worst may happen.
What are your pleasures with me, reverend lords?

Wol. May it please you, noble madam, to withdraw
Into your private chamber, we shall give you
The full cause of our coming.

Q. Kath. Speak it here;
There's nothing I have done yet, o' my conscience,
Deserves a corner: 'Would all other women
Could speak this with as free a soul as I do!
My lords, I care not, (so much I am happy
Above a number,) if my actions
Were tried by every tongue, every eye saw them,
Envy and base opinion set against them,
I know my life so even: If your business
Seek me out, and that way I am wife in,
Out with it boldly: Truth loves open dealing.

Wol. *Tanta est ergà te mentis integritas, regina serenissima,*—

Q. Kath. O good my lord, no Latin;
I am not such a truant since my coming,
As not to know the language I have liv'd in:
A strange tongue makes my cause more strange, suspicious;
Pray speak in English: here are some will thank you,
If you speak truth, for their poor mistress' sake;
Believe me she has had much wrong: Lord cardinal,
The willing'st sin I ever yet committed
May be absolv'd in English.

Wol. Noble lady,
I am sorry my integrity should breed,
And service to his majesty and you,
So deep suspicion where all faith was meant.
We come not by the way of accusation,
To taint that honour every good tongue blesses;
Nor to betray you any way to sorrow;
You have too much, good lady: but to know

How you stand minded in the weighty difference
 Between the king and you ; and to deliver,
 Like free and honest men, our just opinions,
 And comforts to your cause.

Cam. Most honour'd madam,
 My lord of York,—out of his noble nature,
 Zeal and obedience he still bore your grace ;
 Forgetting, like a good man, your late censure
 Both of his truth and him, (which was too far,)—
 Offers, as I do, in a sign of peace,
 His service and his counsel.

Q. Kath. To betray me. [*Aside.*]
 My lords, I thank you both for your good wills ;
 Ye speak like honest men ; pray God, ye prove so !
 But how to make ye suddenly an answer,
 In such a point of weight, so near mine honour,
 (More near my life, I fear,) with my weak wit,
 And to such men of gravity and learning,
 In truth, I know not. I was set at work
 Among my maids ; full little, God knows, looking
 Either for such men, or such business.
 For her sake that I have been, (for I feel
 The last fit of my greatness,) good your graces,
 Let me have time, and counsel, for my cause ;
 Alas ! I am a woman, friendless, hopeless.

Wol. Madam, you wrong the king's love with these
 fears ;
 Your hopes and friends are infinite.

Q. Kath. In England
 But little for my profit : Can you think, lords,
 That any Englishman dare give me counsel ?
 Or be a known friend, 'gainst his highness' pleasure,
 (Though he be grown so desperate to be honest,)
 And live a subject ? Nay, forsooth, my friends,
 They that must weigh out^a my afflictions,
 They that my trust must grow to, live not here :
 They are, as all my other comforts, far hence,
 In mine own country, lords.

^a *Weigh out*—outweigh.

Cam. I would your grace
Would leave your griefs, and take my counsel.

Q. Kath. How, sir?

Cam. Put your main cause into the king's protection ;
He's loving, and most gracious ; 't will be much
Both for your honour better, and your cause ;
For, if the trial of the law o'ertake you,
You 'll part away disgrac'd.

Wol. He tells you rightly.

Q. Kath. Ye tell me what ye wish for both, my ruin :
Is this your christian counsel ? out upon ye !
Heaven is above all yet ; there sits a Judge
That no king can corrupt.

Cam. Your rage mistakes us.

Q. Kath. The more shame for ye ; holy men I thought ye,
Upon my soul, two reverend cardinal virtues ;
But cardinal sins, and hollow hearts, I fear ye :
Mend them, for shame, my lords. Is this your comfort ?
The cordial that ye bring a wretched lady ?
A woman lost among ye, laugh'd at, scorn'd ?
I will not wish ye half my miseries,
I have more charity : But say, I warn'd ye ;
Take heed ; for Heaven's sake, take heed, lest at once
The burthen of my sorrows fall upon ye.

Wol. Madam, this is a mere distraction ;
You turn the good we offer into envy.

Q. Kath. Ye turn me into nothing : Woe upon ye,
And all such false professors ! Would ye have me
(If you have any justice, any pity ;
If ye be anything but churchmen's habits)
Put my sick cause into his hands that hates me ?
Alas ! he has banish'd me his bed already ;
His love, too long ago : I am old, my lords,
And all the fellowship I hold now with him
Is only my obedience. What can happen
To me above this wretchedness ? all your studies
Make me a curse like this.

Cam. Your fears are worse.

Q. Kath. Have I liv'd thus long—(let me speak myself,

Since virtue finds no friends)—a wife, a true one?
 A woman (I dare say, without vainglory)
 Never yet branded with suspicion?
 Have I with all my full affections
 Still met the king? lov'd him next Heaven? obey'd him?
 Been, out of fondness, superstitious to him?
 Almost forgot my prayers to content him?
 And am I thus rewarded? 't is not well, lords.
 Bring me a constant woman to her husband,
 One that ne'er dream'd a joy beyond his pleasure;
 And to that woman, when she has done most,
 Yet will I add an honour,—a great patience.

Wol. Madam, you wander from the good we aim at.

Q. Kath. My lord, I dare not make myself so guilty,
 To give up willingly that noble title
 Your master wed me to: nothing but death
 Shall e'er divorce my dignities.

Wol. Pray, hear me.

Q. Kath. Would I had never trod this English earth,
 Or felt the flatteries that grow upon it!
 Ye have angels' faces, but Heaven knows your hearts.
 What will become of me now, wretched lady?
 I am the most unhappy woman living.
 Alas! poor wenches, where are now your fortunes?

[*To her Women.*]

Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom, where no pity,
 No friends, no hope; no kindred weep for me;
 Almost no grave allow'd me:—Like the lily,
 That once was mistress of the field and flourish'd,
 I'll hang my head and perish.

Wol. If your grace

Could but be brought to know our ends are honest,
 You'd feel more comfort: why should we, good lady,
 Upon what cause, wrong you? alas! our places,
 The way of our profession is against it;
 We are to cure such sorrows, not to sow them.
 For goodness' sake, consider what you do;
 How you may hurt yourself, ay, utterly
 Grow from the king's acquaintance, by this carriage.

The hearts of princes kiss obedience,
 So much they love it; but to stubborn spirits
 They swell, and grow as terrible as storms.
 I know you have a gentle, noble temper,
 A soul as even as a calm: Pray, think us
 Those we profess, peacemakers, friends, and servants.

Cam. Madam, you'll find it so. You wrong your virtues
 With these weak women's fears. A noble spirit,
 As yours was put into you, ever casts
 Such doubts, as false coin, from it. The king loves you;
 Beware you lose it not: For us, if you please
 To trust us in your business, we are ready
 To use our utmost studies in your service.

Q. Kath. Do what ye will, my lords: And, pray, forgive
 me,
 If I have us'd myself^a unmannerly;
 You know, I am a woman, lacking wit
 To make a seemly answer to such persons.
 Pray, do my service to his majesty:
 He has my heart yet; and shall have my prayers,
 While I shall have my life. Come, reverend fathers,
 Bestow your counsels on me: she now begs,
 That little thought, when she set footing here,
 She should have bought her dignities so dear. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Antechamber to the King's Apartment.*

*Enter the DUKE OF NORFOLK, the DUKE OF SUFFOLK, the
 EARL OF SURREY, and the Lord Chamberlain.*

Nor. If you will now unite in your complaints
 And force^b them with a constancy, the cardinal
 Cannot stand under them: If you omit
 The offer of this time, I cannot promise
 But that you shall sustain more new disgraces,
 With these you bear already.

^a *Us'd myself*—deported myself.

^b *Force*—enforce. So in 'Measure for Measure':—

“Has he affections in him,
 That thus can make him bite the law by the nose,
 When he would *force* it?”

Sur.

I am joyful

To meet the least occasion that may give me
Remembrance of my father-in-law, the duke,
To be reveng'd on him.

Suf.

Which of the peers

Have uncontemn'd gone by him, or at least
Strangely neglected? when did he regard
The stamp of nobleness in any person,
Out of himself?

Cham.

My lords, you speak your pleasures:

What he deserves of you and me I know;
What we can do to him, (though now the time
Gives way to us,) I much fear. If you cannot
Bar his access to the king, never attempt
Anything on him; for he hath a witchcraft
Over the king in his tongue.

Nor.

O, fear him not;

His spell in that is out; the king hath found
Matter against him, that for ever mars
The honey of his language. No, he's settled,
Not to come off, in his displeasure.

Sur.

Sir,

I should be glad to hear such news as this
Once every hour.

Nor.

Believe it, this is true:

In the divorce, his contrary proceedings
Are all unfolded; wherein he appears,
As I would wish mine enemy.

Sur.

How came

His practices to light?

Suf.

Most strangely.

Sur.

O, how, how?

Suf. The cardinal's letter to the pope miscarried,
And came to the eye o' the king: wherein was read,
How that the cardinal did entreat his holiness
To stay the judgment o' the divorce: For if
It did take place, "I do," quoth he, "perceive,
My king is tangled in affection to
A creature of the queen's, lady Anne Bullen."

Sur. Has the king this?

Suf. Believe it.

Sur. Will this work?

Cham. The king in this perceives him, how he coasts,
And hedges, his own way. But in this point
All his tricks founder, and he brings his physic
After his patient's death; the king already
Hath married the fair lady.

Sur. 'Would he had!

Suf. May you be happy in your wish, my lord!
For, I profess, you have it.

Sur. Now all my joy
Trace the conjunction!

Suf. My amen to 't!

Nor. All men's!

Suf. There's order given for her coronation:
Marry, this is yet but young, and may be left
To some ears unrecounted.—But, my lords,
She is a gallant creature, and complete
In mind and feature: I persuade me, from her
Will fall some blessing to this land, which shall
In it be memoriz'd.

Sur. But, will the king
Digest this letter of the cardinal's?
The Lord forbid!

Nor. Marry, amen!

Suf. No, no;
There be more wasps that buzz about his nose,
Will make this sting the sooner. Cardinal Campeius
Is stolen away to Rome; hath ta'en no leave;
Has left the cause o' the king unhandled; and
Is posted, as the agent of our cardinal,
To second all his plot. I do assure you,
The king cried Ha! at this.

Cham. Now, God incense him,
And let him cry Ha! louder!

Nor. But, my lord,
When returns Cranmer?

Suf. He is return'd, in his opinions; which

Have satisfied the king for his divorce,
 Together with all famous colleges
 Almost in Christendom :^a shortly, I believe,
 His second marriage shall be publish'd, and
 Her coronation. Katharine no more
 Shall be call'd queen ; but princess dowager,
 And widow to prince Arthur.

Nor. This same Cranmer 's
 A worthy fellow, and hath ta'en much pain
 In the king's business.

Suf. He has ; and we shall see him,
 For it, an archbishop.

Nor. So I hear.

Suf. 'T is so.
 The cardinal—

Enter WOLSEY and CROMWELL.

Nor. Observe, observe, he 's moody.

Wol. The packet, Cromwell, gave it you the king ?

Crom. To his own hand, in his bedchamber.

Wol. Look'd he o' the inside of the paper ?

Crom. Presently

He did unseal them : and the first he view'd,
 He did it with a serious mind ; a heed
 Was in his countenance : You, he bade
 Attend him here this morning.

Wol. Is he ready

To come abroad ?

Crom. I think, by this he is.

Wol. Leave me a while.— [*Exit CROMWELL.*]

It shall be to the duchess of Alençon,
 The French king's sister : he shall marry her.—
 Anne Bullen ! No ; I 'll no Anne Bullens for him :
 There is more in it than fair visage.—Bullen !
 No, we 'll no Bullens.—Speedily I wish
 To hear from Rome.—The marchioness of Pembroke !

^a The construction is here difficult, and the meaning equivocal. The passage means probably that Cranmer is actually return'd in his opinions—in the same opinions which he formerly maintained, supported by the opinions of " all famous colleges."

Nor. He's discontented.

Suf. May be, he hears the king
Does whet his anger to him.

Sur. Sharp enough,
Lord, for thy justice!

Vol. The late queen's gentlewoman; a knight's daughter,
To be her mistress' mistress! the queen's queen!—
This candle burns not clear; 't is I must snuff it;
Then, out it goes.—What though I know her virtuous,
And well deserving? yet I know her for
A spleeny Lutheran; and not wholesome to
Our cause, that she should lie i' the bosom of
Our hard-rul'd king. Again, there is sprung up
An heretic, an arch one, Cranmer; one
Hath crawl'd into the favour of the king,
And is his oracle.

Nor. He is vex'd at something.

Suf. I would 't were something that would fret the
string,
The master-cord of his heart!

Enter the KING, reading a schedule; and LOVELL.

Suf. The king, the king.

K. Hen. What piles of wealth hath he accumulated
To his own portion! and what expense by the hour
Seems to flow from him! How, i' the name of thrift,
Does he rake this together?—Now, my lords,
Saw you the cardinal?

Nor. My lord, we have
Stood here observing him: Some strange commotion
Is in his brain: he bites his lip, and starts;
Stops on a sudden, looks upon the ground;
Then, lays his finger on his temple; straight,
Springs out into fast gait; then, stops again,
Strikes his breast hard; and anon, he casts
His eye against the moon: in most strange postures
We have seen him set himself.

K. Hen. It may well be;
There is a mutiny in his mind. This morning

Papers of state he sent me to peruse,
 As I requir'd: And wot you what I found
 There; on my conscience, put unwittingly?
 Forsooth, an inventory, thus importing,—
 The several parcels of his plate, his treasure,
 Rich stuffs, and ornaments of household; which
 I find at such proud rate, that it out-speaks
 Possession of a subject.

Nor. It's Heaven's will;
 Some spirit put this paper in the packet
 To bless your eye withal.

K. Hen. If we did think
 His contemplation were above the earth,
 And fix'd on spiritual object, he should still
 Dwell in his musings: but, I am afraid,
 His thinkings are below the moon, not worth
 His serious considering.

[*He takes his seat, and whispers* LOVELL, *who goes to*
 WOLSEY.

Wol. Heaven forgive me!
 Ever God bless your highness!

K. Hen. Good my lord,
 You are full of heavenly stuff, and bear the inventory
 Of your best graces in your mind; the which
 You were now running o'er; you have scarce time
 To steal from spiritual leisure a brief span
 To keep your earthly audit: Sure, in that
 I deem you an ill husband: and am glad
 To have you therein my companion.

Wol. Sir,
 For holy offices I have a time; a time
 To think upon the part of business, which
 I bear i' the state; and Nature does require
 Her times of preservation, which, perforce,
 I her frail son, amongst my brethren mortal,
 Must give my tendance to.

K. Hen. You have said well.

Wol. And ever may your highness yoke together,

As I will lend you cause, my doing well
With my well-saying !

K. Hen. 'T is well said again ;
And 't is a kind of good deed to say well :
And yet words are no deeds. My father lov'd you :
He said he did ; and with his deed did crown
His word upon you. Since I had my office,
I have kept you next my heart ; have not alone
Employ'd you where high profits might come home,
But par'd my present havings, to bestow
My bounties upon you.

Wol. What should this mean ?

Sur. The Lord increase this business ! [*Aside.*

K. Hen. Have I not made you
The prime man of the state ? I pray you, tell me,
If what I now pronounce you have found true :
And, if you may confess it, say withal,
If you are bound to us, or no. What say you ?

Wol. My sovereign, I confess, your royal graces,
Shower'd on me daily, have been more than could
My studied purposes requite ; which went
Beyond all man's endeavours :—my endeavours
Have ever come too short of my desires,
Yet, fil'd with my abilities : Mine own ends
Have been mine so, that evermore they pointed
To the good of your most sacred person, and
The profit of the state. For your great graces
Heap'd upon me, poor undeserver, I
Can nothing render but allegiant thanks ;
My prayers to Heaven for you ; my loyalty,
Which ever has, and ever shall be growing,
Till death, that winter, kill it.

K. Hen. Fairly answer'd ;
A loyal and obedient subject is
Therein illustrated : The honour of it
Does pay the act of it ; as, i' the contrary,
The foulness is the punishment. I presume
That, as my hand has open'd bounty to you,

My heart dropp'd love, my power rain'd honour, more
 On you, than any; so your hand, and heart,
 Your brain, and every function of your power,
 Should, notwithstanding that your bond of duty,
 As 't were in love's particular, be more
 To me, your friend, than any.

Wol. I do profess
 That for your highness' good I ever labour'd
 More than mine own; that am, have, and will be.^a
 Though all the world should crack their duty to you,
 And throw it from their soul; though perils did
 Abound, as thick as thought could make them, and
 Appear in forms more horrid; yet my duty,
 As doth a rock against the chiding flood,
 Should the approach of this wild river break,
 And stand unshaken yours.

K. Hen. 'T is nobly spoken:
 Take notice, lords, he has a loyal breast,
 For you have seen him open 't.—Read o'er this;
[Giving him papers.]
 And, after, this: and then to breakfast, with
 What appetite you have.

*[Exit KING, frowning upon CARDINAL WOLSEY: the
 Nobles throng after him, smiling, and whispering.]*

Wol. What should this mean?
 What sudden anger's this? how have I reap'd it?
 He parted frowning from me, as if ruin
 Leap'd from his eyes: So looks the chafed lion
 Upon the daring huntsman that has gall'd him;
 Then makes him nothing. I must read this paper:
 I fear, the story of his anger.—'T is so:
 This paper has undone me: 'T is the account
 Of all that world of wealth I have drawn together
 For mine own ends; indeed, to gain the popedom,
 And fee my friends in Rome. O negligence,

^a *That am, have, and will be.* There is certainly some corruption in this passage; for no ellipsis can have taken this very obscure form. Z. Jackson suggests "that *am* has and will be." This is very harsh. We might read "That aim I have, and will"—*will* being a noun.

Fit for a fool to fall by! What cross devil
 Made me put this main secret in the packet
 I sent the king? Is there no way to cure this?
 No new device to beat this from his brains?
 I know 't will stir him strongly; Yet I know
 A way, if it take right, in spite of fortune
 Will bring me off again. What's this—"To the Pope"?
 The letter, as I live, with all the business
 I writ to his holiness. Nay then, farewell!
 I have touch'd the highest point of all my greatness:
 And, from that full meridian of my glory,
 I haste now to my setting. I shall fall
 Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
 And no man see me more.

*Re-enter the DUKES OF NORFOLK and SUFFOLK, the EARL
 OF SURREY, and the Lord Chamberlain.*

Nor. Hear the king's pleasure, cardinal: who commands
 you

To render up the great seal presently
 Into our hands; and to confine yourself
 To Asher-house, my lord of Winchester's,
 Till you hear further from his highness.

Wol.

Stay,

Where's your commission, lords? words cannot carry
 Authority so weighty.

Suf.

Who dare cross them,
 Bearing the king's will from his mouth expressly?

Wol. Till I find more than will, or words, to do it,
 (I mean, your malice,) know, officious lords,
 I dare, and must deny it. Now I feel
 Of what coarse metal ye are moulded,—envy.
 How eagerly ye follow my disgraces,
 As if it fed ye! and how sleek and wanton
 Ye appear in everything may bring my ruin!
 Follow your envious courses, men of malice;
 You have christian warrant for them, and, no doubt,
 In time will find their fit rewards. That seal
 You ask with such a violence, the king,

(Mine, and your master,) with his own hand gave me :
 Bade me enjoy it, with the place and honours,
 During my life, and, to confirm his goodness,
 Tied it by letters patent : Now, who 'll take it ?

Sur. The king, that gave it.

Wol. It must be himself then.

Sur. Thou art a proud traitor, priest.

Wol. Proud lord, thou liest ;

Within these forty hours Surrey durst better
 Have burnt that tongue than said so.

Sur. Thy ambition,

Thou scarlet sin, robb'd this bewailing land
 Of noble Buckingham, my father-in-law :
 The heads of all thy brother cardinals
 (With thee, and all thy best parts bound together)
 Weigh'd not a hair of his. Plague of your policy !
 You sent me deputy for Ireland :
 Far from his succour, from the king, from all
 That might have mercy on the fault thou gav'st him ;
 Whilst your great goodness, out of holy pity,
 Absolv'd him with an axe.

Wol. This, and all else

This talking lord can lay upon my credit,
 I answer is most false. The duke by law
 Found his deserts : how innocent I was
 From any private malice in his end,
 His noble jury and foul cause can witness.
 If I lov'd many words, lord, I should tell you,
 You have as little honesty as honour,
 That in the way of loyalty and truth
 Toward the king, my ever royal master,
 Dare mate a sounder man than Surrey can be,
 And all that love his follies.

Sur. By my soul,

Your long coat, priest, protects you ; thou shouldst feel
 My sword i' the life-blood of thee else.—My lords,
 Can ye endure to hear this arrogance ?
 And from this fellow ? If we live thus tamely
 To be thus jaded by a piece of scarlet,

Farewell nobility ; let his grace go forward,
And dare us with his cap, like larks.

Wol. All goodness
Is poison to thy stomach.

Sur. Yes, that goodness
Of gleaning all the land's wealth into one,
Into your own hands, cardinal, by extortion ;
The goodness of your intercepted packets,
You writ to the pope, against the king : your goodness,
Since you provoke me, shall be most notorious.
My lord of Norfolk, as you are truly noble,
As you respect the common good, the state
Of our despis'd nobility, our issues,
Who, if he live, will scarce be gentlemen,—
Produce the grand sum of his sins, the articles
Collected from his life :—I'll startle you
Worse than the sacring bell, when the brown wench
Lay kissing in your arms, lord cardinal.

Wol. How much, methinks, I could despise this man,
But that I am bound in charity against it !

Nor. Those articles, my lord, are in the king's hand :
But, thus much, they are foul ones.

Wol. So much fairer,
And spotless, shall mine innocence arise,
When the king knows my truth.

Sur. This cannot save you :
I thank my memory, I yet remember
Some of these articles ; and out they shall.
Now, if you can blush, and cry guilty, cardinal,
You'll show a little honesty.

Wol. Speak on, sir ;
I dare your worst objections : if I blush,
It is, to see a nobleman want manners.

Suf. I'd rather want those than my head. Have at you.
First, that, without the king's assent or knowledge,
You wrought to be a legate ; by which power
You maim'd the jurisdiction of all bishops.

Nor. Then, that, in all you writ to Rome, or else
To foreign princes, *Ego et Rex meus*

Was still inscrib'd ; in which you brought the king
To be your servant.

Suf. Then, that, without the knowledge
Either of king or council, when you went
Ambassador to the emperor, you made bold
To carry into Flanders the great seal.

Sur. Item, you sent a large commission
To Gregory de Cassalis, to conclude,
Without the king's will, or the state's allowance,
A league between his highness and Ferrara.

Suf. That, out of mere ambition, you have caus'd
Your holy hat to be stamp'd on the king's coin.

Sur. Then, that you have sent innumerable substance,
(By what means got, I leave to your own conscience,)
To furnish Rome, and to prepare the ways
You have for dignities ; to the mere^a undoing
Of all the kingdom. Many more there are ;
Which, since they are of you, and odious,
I will not taint my mouth with.

Cham. O my lord,
Press not a falling man too far ; 't is virtue :
His faults lie open to the laws ; let them,
Not you, correct him. My heart weeps to see him
So little of his great self.

Sur. I forgive him.

Suf. Lord cardinal, the king's further pleasure is,—
Because all those things, you have done of late
By your power legatine within this kingdom,
Fall into the compass of a *præmunire*,—
That therefore such a writ be sued against you ;
To forfeit all your goods, lands, tenements,
Chattels, and whatsoever, and to be
Out of the king's protection :—This is my charge.

Nor. And so we'll leave you to your meditations
How to live better. For your stubborn answer,
About the giving back the great seal to us,

^a *Mere*—absolute.

The king shall know it, and, no doubt, shall thank you.
So fare you well, my little good lord cardinal.

[*Exeunt all but WOLSEY.*]

Wol. So farewell to the little good you bear me.
Farewell, a long farewell, to all my greatness!
This is the state of man: To-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hopes; to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him:
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost;
And,—when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening,—nips his root,
And then he falls, as I do. I have ventur'd,
Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
This many summers in a sea of glory;
But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride
At length broke under me; and now has left me,
Weary, and old with service, to the mercy
Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.
Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye;
I feel my heart new open'd: O, how wretched
Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours!
There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to,
That sweet aspect of princes, and their ruin,^a
More pangs and fears than wars or women have;
And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,^b
Never to hope again.—

Enter CROMWELL, amazedly.

Why, how now, Cromwell?

Crom. I have no power to speak, sir.

Wol. What, amaz'd

At my misfortunes? can thy spirit wonder
A great man should decline? Nay, an you weep,
I am fallen indeed.

Crom. How does your grace?

^a *Their ruin*—the ruin which princes inflict.

^b This passage was probably suggested by the noble apostrophe in Isaiah:—
“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!”

Wol.

Why, well;

Never so truly happy, my good Cromwell.
 I know myself now; and I feel within me
 A peace above all earthly dignities,
 A still and quiet conscience. The king has cur'd me,
 I humbly thank his grace; and from these shoulders,
 These ruin'd pillars, out of pity, taken
 A load would sink a navy, too much honour:
 O, 't is a burthen, Cromwell, 't is a burthen,
 Too heavy for a man that hopes for heaven.

Crom. I am glad your grace has made that right use of it.

Wol. I hope I have: I am able now, methinks,
 (Out of a fortitude of soul I feel,)
 To endure more miseries, and greater far,
 Than my weak-hearted enemies dare offer.
 What news abroad?

Crom. The heaviest, and the worst,
 Is your displeasure with the king.

Wol. God bless him!

Crom. The next is, that sir Thomas More is chosen
 Lord chancellor in your place.

Wol. That's somewhat sudden:
 But he's a learned man. May he continue
 Long in his highness' favour, and do justice
 For truth's sake, and his conscience; that his bones,
 When he has run his course, and sleeps in blessings,
 May have a tomb of orphans' tears wept on 'em!
 What more?

Crom. That Cranmer is return'd with welcome,
 Install'd lord archbishop of Canterbury.

Wol. That's news indeed.

Crom. Last, that the lady Anne,
 Whom the king hath in secrecy long married,
 This day was view'd in open, as his queen,
 Going to chapel; and the voice is now
 Only about her coronation.

Wol. There was the weight that pull'd me down. O
 Cromwell,
 The king has gone beyond me; all my glories

In that one woman I have lost for ever :
 No sun shall ever usher forth mine honours,
 Or gild again the noble troops that waited
 Upon my smiles. Go, get thee from me, Cromwell ;
 I am a poor fallen man, unworthy now
 To be thy lord and master : Seek the king ;
 That sun, I pray, may never set ! I have told him
 What, and how true, thou art : he will advance thee ;
 Some little memory of me will stir him,
 (I know his noble nature,) not to let
 Thy hopeful service perish too : Good Cromwell,
 Neglect him not ; make use now, and provide
 For thine own future safety.

Crom. O, my lord,
 Must I then leave you ? must I needs forego
 So good, so noble, and so true a master ?
 Bear witness, all that have not hearts of iron,
 With what a sorrow Cromwell leaves his lord.—
 The king shall have my service ; but my prayers
 For ever, and for ever, shall be yours.

Wol. Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear
 In all my miseries ; but thou hast forc'd me
 Out of thy honest truth to play the woman.
 Let's dry our eyes : and thus far hear me, Cromwell ;
 And,—when I am forgotten, as I shall be ;
 And sleep in dull cold marble, where no mention
 Of me more must be heard of,—say, I taught thee ;
 Say, Wolsey,—that once trod the ways of glory,
 And sounded all the depths and shoals of honour,—
 Found thee a way, out of his wrack, to rise in ;
 A sure and safe one, though thy master miss'd it.
 Mark but my fall, and that that ruin'd me.
 Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition ;
 By that sin fell the angels ; how can man then,
 The image of his Maker, hope to win by it ?
 Love thyself last : cherish those hearts that hate thee ;
 Corruption wins not more than honesty.
 Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,
 To silence envious tongues. Be just, and fear not :

Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's; then if thou fall'st, O Cromwell,
Thou fall'st a blessed martyr. Serve the king;
And,—Prithee, lead me in:
There take an inventory of all I have,
To the last penny; 't is the king's: my robe,
And my integrity to Heaven, is all
I dare now call mine own. O Cromwell, Cromwell,
Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal
I serv'd my king, he would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

Crom. Good sir, have patience.

Wol. So I have. Farewell

The hopes of court! my hopes in heaven do dwell. [*Exeunt.*]



[Cardinal Campeius.]

ILLUSTRATION OF ACT III.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION.

THE scene of the visit of the Cardinals Wolsey and Campeius to Queen Katharine has its origin in the narrative of Cavendish:—

“ And then my lord rose up and made him ready, taking his barge, and went straight to Bath Place to the other cardinal, and so went together unto Bridewell, directly to the queen’s lodging; and they, being in her chamber of presence, showed to the gentleman-usher that they came to speak with the queen’s grace. The gentleman-usher advertised the queen thereof incontinent. With that she came out of her privy chamber with a skein of white thread about her neck, into the chamber of presence, where the cardinals were giving of attendance upon her coming. At whose coming quoth she, ‘ Alack, my lords, I am very sorry to cause you to attend upon me; what is your pleasure with me?’ ‘ If it please you,’ quoth my lord cardinal, ‘ to go into your privy chamber, we will show you the cause of our coming.’ ‘ My lord,’ quoth she, ‘ if you have anything to say, speak it openly before all these folks, for I fear nothing that ye can say or allege against me, but that I would all the world should both hear and see it; therefore I pray you speak your minds openly.’ Then began my lord to speak to her in Latin. ‘ Nay, good my lord,’ quoth she, ‘ speak to me in English I beseech you; although I understand Latin.’ ‘ Forsooth, then,’ quoth my lord, ‘ Madam, if it please your grace, we come both to know your mind, how ye be disposed to do in this matter between the king and you, and also to declare secretly our opinions and our counsel unto you, which we have intended of very zeal and obedience that we bear to your grace.’ ‘ My lords, I thank you then,’ quoth she, ‘ of your good wills; but to make answer to your request I cannot so suddenly, for I was set among my maidens at

work, thinking full little of any such matter, wherein there needeth a longer deliberation, and a better head than mine, to make answer to so noble wise men as ye be. I had need of good counsel in this case, which toucheth me so near; and for any counsel or friendship that I can find in England, they are nothing to my purpose or profit. Think you, I pray you, my lords, will any Englishman counsel or be friendly unto me against the king's pleasure, they being his subjects? Nay, forsooth, my lords! and for my counsel in whom I do intend to put my trust be not here; they be in Spain, in my native country. Alas, my lords! I am a poor woman, lacking both wit and understanding sufficiently to answer such approved wise men as ye be both, in so weighty a matter. I pray you to extend your good and indifferent minds in your authority unto me, for I am a simple woman, destitute and barren of friendship and counsel here in a foreign region: and as for your counsel, I will not refuse, but be glad to hear.'

"And with that she took my lord by the hand, and led him into her privy chamber, with the other cardinal, where they were in long communication: we, in the other chamber, might sometime hear the queen speak very loud, but what it was we could not understand. The communication ended, the cardinals departed and went directly to the king, making to him relation of their talk with the queen, and after resorted home to their houses to supper."

The circumstance of Wolsey incurring the king's displeasure through the accidental discovery of a "schedule" of his wealth is not supported by historical authority. The story is told somewhat differently of Thomas Ruthall, Bishop of Durham; who sent to the king, through Wolsey, a book upon his private affairs, instead of a 'Treatise on the Estate of the Kingdom,' each having been bound in white vellum.

The dramatic condensation of the action has produced some historical confusion. The Duke of Norfolk whom we meet in the first scene, before Buckingham's arrest in 1521, died in 1525. The Duke of Norfolk who succeeded him is the same person as the Earl of Surrey of the present scene, for Buckingham was his "father-in-law." Between the arrest of Wolsey and the christening scene, Shakspeare meant, probably, to change the persons, for we have in the procession "the old Duchess of Norfolk." The Earl of Surrey is then Henry Howard.

The demand of the great seal from Wolsey was made by the Dukes of Suffolk and Norfolk; and the proceeding is thus detailed by Cavendish:—

"After Cardinal Campeggio was thus departed and gone, Michaelmas Term drew near, against the which my lord returned unto his house at Westminster; and when the term began he went to the hall in such-like sort and gesture as he was wont most commonly to do, and sat in the chancery, being chancellor. After which day he never sat there more. The next day he tarried at home, expecting the coming of the Dukes of Suffolk and Norfolk, who came not that day, but the next day came thither unto him; to whom they declared how the king's pleasure was that he should surrender and deliver up the great seal into their hands, and to depart simply unto Asher, a house situate nigh Hampton Court, belonging to the bishopric of Winchester. My lord, understanding their message, demanded of them what commission they had to give him any such commandment? Who answered him again, that they were sufficient commissioners in that behalf, having the king's commandment by his mouth so to do. 'Yet,' quoth he, 'that is not sufficient for me, without farther commandment of the king's pleasure; for the great seal of England was delivered me by the king's own person, to enjoy during my life, with the ministration of the office and high room of chancellorship of England: for my surety whereof, I have the king's letters patent to show.' Which matter was greatly debated between the dukes and him with many stout words between them; whose words and

checks he took in patience for the time; in so much that the dukes were fain to depart again without their purpose at that present, and returned again unto Windsor to the king; and what report they made I cannot tell: howbeit, the next day they came again from the king, bringing with them the king's letters. After the receipt and reading of the same by my lord, which was done with much reverence, he delivered unto them the great seal, contented to obey the king's high commandment; and seeing that the king's pleasure was to take his house, with the contents, was well pleased simply to depart to Asher, taking nothing but only some provision for his house.

“And after long talk between the dukes and him, they departed, with the great seal of England, to Windsor, unto the king. Then went my lord cardinal and called all officers in every office in his house before him, to take account of all such stuff as they had in charge.”

The articles of accusation against Wolsey are given at length in the old historians; but they were first correctly printed by Lord Coke in his ‘*Institutes*.’ The more important of them are found in the charges heaped upon the fallen man by Surrey, Suffolk, and Norfolk.

The touching exclamation of Wolsey—

“Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal
I serv'd my king, he would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies”—

is found in Cavendish:—

“‘Well, well, Master Kingston,’ quoth he, ‘I see the matter against me how it is framed; but if I had served God as diligently as I have done the king, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs.’”



[Duke of Suffolk.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Westminster.**Enter two Gentlemen, meeting.*1 *Gent.* You are well met once again.2 *Gent.* So are you.1 *Gent.* You come to take your stand here, and behold
The lady Anne pass from her coronation?2 *Gent.* 'Tis all my business. At our last encounter,
The duke of Buckingham came from his trial.1 *Gent.* 'Tis very true: but that time offer'd sorrow;
This general joy.2 *Gent.* 'Tis well: 'The citizens,
I am sure, have shown at full their royal minds,
(As, let them have their rights, they are ever forward,)
In celebration of this day with shows,^a
Pageants, and sights of honour.1 *Gent.* Never greater,
Nor, I'll assure you, better taken, sir.2 *Gent.* May I be bold to ask what that contains,
That paper in your hand?1 *Gent.* Yes; 't is the list
Of those that claim their offices this day,
By custom of the coronation.
The duke of Suffolk is the first, and claims
To be high steward; next, the duke of Norfolk,
He to be earl marshal: you may read the rest.2 *Gent.* I thank you, sir; had I not known those customs,
I should have been beholding^b to your paper.
But, I beseech you, what's become of Katharine,
The princess dowager? how goes her business?^a We have punctuated this according to a suggestion by Boswell.^b *Beholding.* This is not a corrupt word, but one constantly used by the writers of Shakspeare's day. We have an example of it in Greene's 'Groat's Worth of Wit.'

1 *Gent.* That I can tell you too. The archbishop
Of Canterbury, accompanied with other
Learned and reverend fathers of his order,
Held a late court at Dunstable, six miles off
From Ampthill, where the princess lay; to which
She was often cited by them, but appear'd not:
And, to be short, for not appearance, and
The king's late scruple, by the main assent
Of all these learned men she was divorc'd,
And the late marriage made of none effect:
Since which, she was remov'd to Kimbolton,
Where she remains now, sick.

2 *Gent.* Alas, good lady!— [*Trumpets.*
The trumpets sound: stand close, the queen is coming.

THE ORDER OF THE PROCESSION.

A lively flourish of trumpets: then, enter

1. *Two Judges.*
2. *Lord Chancellor, with the purse and mace before him.*
3. *Choristers singing.* [*Music.*]
4. *Mayor of London bearing the mace. Then Garter, in his coat of arms, and, on his head, a gilt copper crown.*
5. *Marquis Dorset, bearing a sceptre of gold, on his head a demi-coronal of gold. With him, the Earl of Surrey, bearing the rod of silver with the dove, crowned with an earl's coronet. Collars of SS.*
6. *Duke of Suffolk, in his robe of estate, his coronet on his head, bearing a long white wand, as high-steward. With him, the Duke of Norfolk, with the rod of marshalship, a coronet on his head. Collars of SS.*
7. *A canopy borne by four of the Cinque-ports; under it, the Queen in her robe; in her hair richly adorned with pearl, crowned. On each side of her, the Bishops of London and Winchester.*
8. *The old Duchess of Norfolk, in a coronal of gold, wrought with flowers, bearing the Queen's train.*
9. *Certain Ladies or Countesses, with plain-circlets of gold without flowers.*

2 *Gent.* A royal train, believe me.—These I know ;—
Who 's that that bears the sceptre ?

1 *Gent.* Marquis Dorset :
And that the earl of Surrey, with the rod.

2 *Gent.* A bold brave gentleman. That should be
The duke of Suffolk.

1 *Gent.* 'T is the same ; high-steward.

2 *Gent.* And that my lord of Norfolk ?

1 *Gent.* Yes.

2 *Gent.* Heaven bless thee !

[*Looking on the QUEEN.*

Thou hast the sweetest face I ever look'd on.—

Sir, as I have a soul, she is an angel ;

Our king has all the Indies in his arms,

And more, and richer, when he strains that lady ;

I cannot blame his conscience.

1 *Gent.* They that bear
The cloth of honour over her, are four barons
Of the Cinque-ports.

2 *Gent.* Those men are happy ; and so are all, are near
her.

I take it, she that carries up the train

Is that old noble lady, duchess of Norfolk.

1 *Gent.* It is ; and all the rest are countesses.

2 *Gent.* Their coronets say so. These are stars, indeed ;
And, sometimes, falling ones.

1 *Gent.* No more of that.

[*Exit Procession, with a great flourish of trumpets.*

Enter a Third Gentleman.

God save you, sir ! Where have you been broiling ?

3 *Gent.* Among the crowd i' the abbey ; where a finger
Could not be wedg'd in more ; I am stifled
With the mere rankness of their joy.

2 *Gent.* You saw the ceremony ?

3 *Gent.* That I did.

1 *Gent.* How was it ?

3 *Gent.* Well worth the seeing.

2 *Gent.* Good sir, speak it to us.

3 *Gent.* As well as I am able. The rich stream
 Of lords, and ladies, having brought the queen
 To a prepar'd place in the choir, fell off
 A distance from her: while her grace sat down
 To rest a while, some half an hour, or so,
 In a rich chair of state, opposing freely
 The beauty of her person to the people.
 Believe me, sir, she is the goodliest woman
 That ever lay by man: which when the people
 Had the full view of, such a noise arose
 As the shrouds make at sea in a stiff tempest,
 As loud, and to as many tunes: hats, cloaks,
 Doublets, I think, flew up: and had their faces
 Been loose, this day they had been lost. Such joy
 I never saw before. Great-bellied women,
 That had not half a week to go, like rams^a
 In the old time of war, would shake the press,
 And make them reel before them. No man living
 Could say, "This is my wife," there; all were woven
 So strangely in one piece.

2 *Gent.* But, what follow'd?

3 *Gent.* At length her grace rose, and with modest paces
 Came to the altar: where she kneel'd, and, saint-like,
 Cast her fair eyes to heaven, and pray'd devoutly.
 Then rose again, and bow'd her to the people:
 When by the archbishop of Canterbury
 She had all the royal makings of a queen;
 As holy oil, Edward Confessor's crown,
 The rod, and bird of peace, and all such emblems,
 Laid nobly on her; which perform'd, the choir,
 With all the choicest music of the kingdom,
 Together sung *Te Deum*. So she parted,
 And with the same full state pac'd back again
 To York-place, where the feast is held.

1 *Gent.* Sir,
 You must no more call it York-place, that is past:
 For, since the cardinal fell, that title's lost;
 'Tis now the king's, and call'd Whitehall.

^a *Rams*—battering-rams.

3 *Gent.* I know it ;
But 't is so lately alter'd, that the old name
Is fresh about me.

2 *Gent.* What two reverend bishops
Were those that went on each side of the queen ?

3 *Gent.* Stokesly and Gardiner ; the one, of Winchester,
(Newly preferr'd from the king's secretary,)
The other, London.

2 *Gent.* He of Winchester
Is held no great good lover of the archbishop's,
The virtuous Cranmer.

3 *Gent.* All the land knows that :
However, yet there's no great breach ; when it comes,
Cranmer will find a friend will not shrink from him.

2 *Gent.* Who may that be, I pray you ?

3 *Gent.* Thomas Cromwell ;
A man in much esteem with the king, and truly
A worthy friend.—The king
Has made him master o' the jewel-house,
And one, already, of the privy-council.

2 *Gent.* He will deserve more.

3 *Gent.* Yes, without all doubt.
Come, gentlemen, ye shall go my way, which
Is to the court, and there ye shall be my guests ;
Something I can command. As I walk thither,
I'll tell ye more.

Both. You may command us, sir. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Kimbolton.

Enter KATHARINE, *Dowager, sick ; led between* GRIFFITH
and PATIENCE.

Grif. How does your grace ?

Kath. O, Griffith, sick to death :
My legs, like loaden branches, bow to the earth,
Willing to leave their burthen : reach a chair ;—
So,—now, methinks, I feel a little ease.
Didst thou not tell me, Griffith, as thou ledd'st me,

That the great child of honour, cardinal Wolsey,
Was dead?

Grif. Yes, madam; but I think your grace,
Out of the pain you suffer'd, gave no ear to 't.

Kath. Prithee, good Griffith, tell me how he died:
If well, he stepp'd before me, happily,
For my example.

Grif. Well, the voice goes, madam:
For after the stout earl Northumberland
Arrested him at York, and brought him forward
(As a man sorely tainted) to his answer,
He fell sick suddenly, and grew so ill,
He could not sit his mule.

Kath. Alas, poor man!

Grif. At last, with easy roads, he came to Leicester,
Lodg'd in the abbey; where the reverend abbot,
With all his convent, honourably received him;
To whom he gave these words,—“O father abbot,
An old man, broken with the storms of state,
Is come to lay his weary bones among ye;
Give him a little earth for charity!”
So went to bed: where eagerly his sickness
Pursued him still; and, three nights after this,
About the hour of eight, (which he himself
Foretold should be his last,) full of repentance,
Continual meditations, tears, and sorrows,
He gave his honours to the world again,
His blessed part to Heaven, and slept in peace.

Kath. So may he rest; his faults lie gently on him!
Yet thus far, Griffith, give me leave to speak him,
And yet with charity:—He was a man
Of an unbounded stomach, ever ranking
Himself with princes; one, that by suggestion
Tied^a all the kingdom: simony was fair play;
His own opinion was his law: I' the presence
He would say untruths; and be ever double,

^a *Tied.* There is a great controversy amongst the commentators whether this word means *limited*—infringed the liberties—or *tithed*. We have no doubt that the allusion is to the acquisition of wealth by the Cardinal.

Both in his words and meaning: He was never,
 But where he meant to ruin, pitiful:
 His promises were, as he then was, mighty;
 But his performance, as he is now, nothing.
 Of his own body he was ill, and gave
 The clergy ill example.

Grif. Noble madam,
 Men's evil manners live in brass; their virtues
 We write in water. May it please your highness
 To hear me speak his good now?

Kath. Yes, good Griffith;
 I were malicious else.

Grif. This cardinal,
 Though from an humble stock, undoubtedly
 Was fashion'd to much honour from his cradle.^a
 He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one;
 Exceeding wise, fair spoken, and persuading:
 Lofty, and sour, to them that lov'd him not;
 But, to those men that sought him, sweet as summer.
 And though he were unsatisfied in getting,
 (Which was a sin,) yet in bestowing, madam,
 He was most princely: Ever witness for him
 Those twins of learning, that he rais'd in you,
 Ipswich, and Oxford! one of which fell with him,
 Unwilling to outlive the good that did it;
 The other, though unfinish'd, yet so famous,
 So excellent in art, and still so rising,
 That Christendom shall ever speak his virtue.
 His overthrow heap'd happiness upon him;
 For then, and not till then, he felt himself,
 And found the blessedness of being little:
 And, to add greater honours to his age
 Than man could give him, he died fearing God.

Kath. After my death I wish no other herald,
 No other speaker of my living actions,

^a We have not followed the punctuation of the old copy; for that a man should not only be a scholar from his cradle, but a ripe and good one, is more than remarkable. We have no doubt that the passage was formed upon a sentence in Holinshed:—"This cardinal was a man undoubtedly *born to honour*."

To keep mine honour from corruption,
 But such an honest chronicler as Griffith.
 Whom I most hated living, thou hast made me,
 With thy religious truth, and modesty,
 Now in his ashes honour : Peace be with him !
 Patience, be near me still ; and set me lower :
 I have not long to trouble thee.—Good Griffith,
 Cause the musicians play me that sad note
 I nam'd my knell, whilst I sit meditating
 On that celestial harmony I go to.

Sad and solemn music.

Grif. She is asleep : Good wench, let's sit down quiet,
 For fear we wake her ;—Softly, gentle Patience.

The Vision. *Enter, solemnly tripping one after another, six Personages, clad in white robes, wearing on their heads garlands of bays, and golden vizards on their faces ; branches of bays, or palm, in their hands. They first congee unto her, then dance ; and at certain changes, the first two hold a spare garland over her head ; at which, the other four make reverend curtsies ; then the two that held the garland deliver the same to the other next two, who observe the same order in their changes, and holding the garland over her head : which done, they deliver the same garland to the last two, who likewise observe the same order : at which, (as it were by inspiration,) she makes in her sleep signs of rejoicing, and holdeth up her hands to heaven : and so in their dancing vanish, carrying the garland with them. The music continues.*

Kath. Spirits of peace, where are ye ? Are ye all gone ?
 And leave me here in wretchedness behind ye ?

Grif. Madam, we are here.

Kath. It is not you I call for :
 Saw ye none enter, since I slept ?

Grif. None, madam.

Kath. No ? Saw you not, even now, a blessed troop
 Invite me to a banquet ; whose bright faces
 Cast thousand beams upon me, like the sun ?

They promis'd me eternal happiness ;
 And brought me garlands, Griffith, which I feel
 I am not worthy yet to wear : I shall,
 Assuredly.

Grif. I am most joyful, madam, such good dreams
 Possess your fancy.

Kath. Bid the music leave,
 They are harsh and heavy to me. [Music ceases.

Pat. Do you note,
 How much her grace is alter'd on the sudden ?
 How long her face is drawn ? How pale she looks,
 And of an earthy cold ? Mark her eyes !

Grif. She is going, wench ; pray, pray.

Pat. Heaven comfort her !

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. An 't like your grace,—

Kath. You are a saucy fellow :
 Deserve we no more reverence ?

Grif. You are to blame,
 Knowing she will not lose her wonted greatness,
 To use so rude behaviour ! go to, kneel.

Mess. I humbly do entreat your highness' pardon ;
 My haste made me unmannerly : There is staying
 A gentleman, sent from the king, to see you.

Kath. Admit him entrance, Griffith : But this fellow
 Let me ne'er see again. [*Exeunt GRIFFITH and Messenger.*

Re-enter GRIFFITH with CAPUCIUS.

If my sight fail not,
 You should be lord ambassador from the emperor,
 My royal nephew, and your name Capucius.

Cap. Madam, the same, your servant.

Kath. O my lord,
 The times, and titles, now are alter'd strangely
 With me, since first you knew me. But, I pray you,
 What is your pleasure with me ?

Cap. Noble lady,
 First, mine own service to your grace ; the next,

The king's request that I would visit you ;
 Who grieves much for your weakness, and by me
 Sends you his princely commendations,
 And heartily entreats you take good comfort.

Kath. O my good lord, that comfort comes too late ;
 'T is like a pardon after execution :
 That gentle physic, given in time, had cur'd me ;
 But now I am past all comforts here, but prayers.
 How does his highness ?

Cap. Madam, in good health.

Kath. So may he ever do ! and ever flourish,
 When I shall dwell with worms, and my poor name
 Banish'd the kingdom !—Patience, is that letter
 I caus'd you write, yet sent away ?

Pat. No, madam. [*Giving it to KATH.*]

Kath. Sir, I most humbly pray you to deliver
 This to my lord the king.

Cap. Most willing, madam.

Kath. In which I have commended to his goodness
 The model of our chaste loves, his young daughter :
 The dews of heaven fall thick in blessings on her !—
 Beseeching him to give her virtuous breeding ;
 (She is young, and of a noble modest nature ;
 I hope she will deserve well ;) and a little
 To love her for her mother's sake, that lov'd him,
 Heaven knows how dearly. My next poor petition
 Is, that his noble grace would have some pity
 Upon my wretched women, that so long
 Have follow'd both my fortunes faithfully :
 Of which there is not one, I dare avow,
 (And now I should not lie,) but will deserve,
 For virtue, and true beauty of the soul,
 For honesty, and decent carriage,
 A right good husband, let him be a noble ;
 And, sure, those men are happy that shall have them.
 The last is, for my men ;—they are the poorest,
 But poverty could never draw them from me ;—
 That they may have their wages duly paid them,
 And something over to remember me by ;

If Heaven had pleas'd to have given me longer life,
And able means, we had not parted thus.
These are the whole contents:—And, good my lord,
By that you love the dearest in this world,
As you wish christian peace to souls departed,
Stand these poor people's friend, and urge the king
To do me this last right.

Cap. By Heaven, I will;
Or let me lose the fashion of a man!

Kath. I thank you, honest lord. Remember me
In all humility unto his highness:
Say, his long trouble now is passing
Out of this world: tell him, in death I bless'd him,
For so I will.—Mine eyes grow dim.—Farewell,
My lord.—Griffith, farewell.—Nay, Patience,
You must not leave me yet. I must to bed;
Call in more women.—When I am dead, good wench,
Let me be us'd with honour; strew me over
With maiden flowers, that all the world may know
I was a chaste wife to my grave: embalm me,
Then lay me forth: although unqueen'd, yet like
A queen, and daughter to a king, inter me.
I can no more. [*Exeunt, leading* KATHARINE.



[Sir T. More.]

ILLUSTRATION OF ACT IV.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION.

THE ceremonies attending the coronation of Anne Bullen are most minutely described by Hall. From that source Shakspeare derived not only the narration in the first scene of this act, but "the Order of the Procession." Sir Thomas More was the chancellor on this occasion; and he is introduced again in the fifth act.

We have only space for a fragment of Hall's description; nor, indeed, would it afford any illustration of the text to transcribe his somewhat tedious exposition of the magnificent homage of the court and the city to one upon whom the axe fell within three years:—

"When she was thus brought to the high place made in the middes of the church between the choir and the high altar, she was set in a rich chair. And after that she had rested awhile she descended down to the high altar and there prostrate herself, while the Archbishop of Canterbury said certain collects; then she rose, and the bishop anointed her on the head and on the breast; and then she was led up again, where, after divers orisons said, the archbishop set the crown of St. Edward on her head, and then delivered her the sceptre of gold in her right hand, and the rod of ivory with the dove in the left hand, and then all the choir sang *Te Deum*," &c.

The circumstances which preceded the death of Wolsey are described by Cavendish:—

“And the next day he took his journey with Master Kingston and the guard. And as soon as they espied their old master in such a lamentable estate, they lamented him with weeping eyes, whom my lord took by the hands, and divers times by the way, as he rode, he would talk with them, sometime with one and sometime with another. At night he was lodged at a house of the Earl of Shrewsbury’s, called Hardwick Hall, very ill at ease. The next day he rode to Nottingham, and there lodged that night, more sicker, and the next day we rode to Leicester Abbey; and by the way he waxed so sick that he was divers times likely to have fallen from his mule; and being night before we came to the Abbey of Leicester, where, at his coming in at the gates, the abbot of the place, with all his convent, met him with the light of many torches; whom they right honourably received with great reverence. To whom my lord said, ‘Father Abbot, I am come hither to leave my bones among you;’ whom they brought on his mule to the stairs’ foot of his chamber, and there alighted; and Master Kingston then took him by the arm and led him up the stairs, who told me afterwards that he never carried so heavy a burden in all his life. And as soon as he was in his chamber he went incontinent to his bed, very sick. This was upon Saturday at night; and there he continued sicker and sicker.

“Upon Monday in the morning, as I stood by his bedside, about eight of the clock, the windows being close shut, having wax-lights burning upon the cupboard, I beheld him, as me seemed, drawing fast to his end. He, perceiving my shadow upon the wall by his bedside, asked who was there? ‘Sir, I am here,’ quoth I. ‘How do you?’ quoth he to me. ‘Very well, sir,’ quoth I, ‘if I might see your grace well.’ ‘What is it of the clock?’ said he to me. ‘Forsooth, sir,’ said I, ‘it is past eight of the clock in the morning.’ ‘Eight of the clock?’ quoth he; ‘that cannot be:’ rehearsing divers times ‘eight of the clock—eight of the clock. Nay, nay,’ quoth he at the last, ‘it cannot be eight of the clock, for by eight of the clock ye shall lose your master, for my time draweth near that I must depart out of this world.’”

The letter of Katharine to the king, of which the substance is in Holinshed, was first published by Polydore Virgil, and was translated by Lord Herbert:—

“My most dear lord, king, and husband,—

“The hour of my death now approaching, I cannot choose but, out of the love I bear you, advise you of your soul’s health, which you ought to prefer before all considerations of the world or flesh whatsoever: for which yet you have cast me into many calamities, and yourself into many troubles. But I forgive you all, and pray God to do so likewise. For the rest, I commend unto you Mary our daughter, beseeching you to be a good father to her, as I have heretofore desired. I must entreat you also to respect my maids, and give them in marriage (which is not much, they being but three), and to all my other servants a year’s pay besides their due, lest otherwise they should be unprovided for. Lastly, I make this vow, that mine eyes desire you above all things. Farewell.”

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Gallery in the Palace.*

Enter GARDINER, Bishop of Winchester, a Page with a torch before him, met by SIR THOMAS LOVELL.

Gar. It's one o'clock, boy, is 't not?

Boy. It hath struck.

Gar. These should be hours for necessities,
Not for delights; times to repair our nature
With comforting repose, and not for us
To waste these times.—Good hour of night, sir Thomas!
Whither so late?

Lov. Came you from the king, my lord?

Gar. I did, sir Thomas; and left him at primero
With the duke of Suffolk.

Lov. I must to him too,
Before he go to bed. I'll take my leave.

Gar. Not yet, sir Thomas Lovell. What's the matter?
It seems you are in haste; an if there be
No great offence belongs to 't, give your friend
Some touch of your late business: Affairs that walk
(As, they say, spirits do) at midnight, have
In them a wilder nature, than the business
That seeks despatch by day.

Lov. My lord, I love you;
And durst commend a secret to your ear
Much weightier than this work. The queen's in labour,
They say, in great extremity; and fear'd,
She'll with the labour end.

Gar. The fruit she goes with,
I pray for heartily; that it may find
Good time, and live: but for the stock, sir Thomas,
I wish it grubb'd up now.

Lov. Methinks, I could
Cry the amen ; and yet my conscience says
She 's a good creature, and, sweet lady, does
Deserve our better wishes.

Gar. But, sir, sir,—
Hear me, sir Thomas : You are a gentleman
Of mine own way ; I know you wise, religious ;
And, let me tell you, it will ne'er be well,—
'T will not, sir Thomas Lovell, take 't of me,—
Till Cranmer, Cromwell, her two hands, and she,
Sleep in their graves.

Lov. Now, sir, you speak of two
The most remark'd i' the kingdom. As for Cromwell,—
Beside that of the jewel-house, he 's made master
O' the rolls, and the king's secretary ; further, sir,
Stands in the gap and trade^a of more preferments,
With which the time will load him : The archbishop
Is the king's hand and tongue : And who dare speak
One syllable against him ?

Gar. Yes, yes, sir Thomas,
There are that dare ; and I myself have ventur'd
To speak my mind of him : and, indeed, this day,
Sir, (I may tell it you,) I think I have
Insens'd the lords o' the council, that he is
(For so I know he is, they know he is)
A most arch heretic, a pestilence
That does infect the land : with which they mov'd,
Have broken with^b the king ; who hath so far
Given ear to our complaint, (of his great grace
And princely care, foreseeing those fell mischiefs
Our reasons laid before him,) he hath commanded,
To-morrow morning to the council-board
He be convented.^c He 's a rank weed, sir Thomas,
And we must root him out. From your affairs
I hinder you too long : good night, sir Thomas.

^a *Trade*—habitual course, path trodden. See 'Richard II.,' Act III., Scene 4.

^b *Broken with*—communicated with. So in 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona :—

“ I am to *break* with thee of some affairs.”

^c *Convented*—summoned.

Lov. Many good nights, my lord ; I rest your servant.
 [*Exeunt* GARDINER and Page.

As LOVELL *is going out, enter the* KING, *and the* DUKE OF
 SUFFOLK.

K. Hen. Charles, I will play no more to-night ;
 My mind 's not on 't, you are too hard for me.

Suf. Sir, I did never win of you before.

K. Hen. But little, Charles ;
 Nor shall not, when my fancy 's on my play.—
 Now, Lovell, from the queen what is the news ?

Lov. I could not personally deliver to her
 What you commanded me, but by her woman
 I sent your message ; who return'd her thanks
 In the greatest humbleness, and desir'd your highness
 Most heartily to pray for her.

K. Hen. What say'st thou ? ha !
 To pray for her ? what, is she crying out ?

Lov. So said her woman ; and that her sufferance made
 Almost each pang a death.

K. Hen. Alas, good lady !

Suf. God safely quit her of her burthen, and
 With gentle travail, to the gladding of
 Your highness with an heir !

K. Hen. 'T is midnight, Charles,
 Prithee to bed ; and in thy prayers remember
 The estate of my poor queen. Leave me alone ;
 For I must think of that which company
 Will not be friendly to.

Suf. I wish your highness
 A quiet night, and my good mistress will
 Remember in my prayers.

K. Hen. Charles, good night. [*Exit* SUFF.

Enter SIR ANTHONY DENNY.

Well, sir, what follows ?

Den. Sir, I have brought my lord the archbishop.
 As you commanded me.

K. Hen. Ha! Canterbury?

Den. Ay, my good lord.

K. Hen. 'T is true: Where is he, Denny?

Den. He attends your highness' pleasure.

K. Hen. Bring him to us. [*Exit DEN.*]

Lov. This is about that which the bishop spake;
I am happily come hither. [*Aside.*]

Re-enter DENNY, with CRANMER.

K. Hen. Avoid the gallery.

[*LOVELL seems to stay.*]

Ha!—I have said.—Be gone.

What!— [*Exeunt LOVELL and DENNY.*]

Cran. I am fearful:—Wherefore frowns he thus?

'T is his aspect of terror. All 's not well.

K. Hen. How now, my lord? You do desire to know
Wherefore I sent for you.

Cran. It is my duty

To attend your highness' pleasure.

K. Hen. 'Pray you, arise,

My good and gracious lord of Canterbury.

Come, you and I must walk a turn together;

I have news to tell you: Come, come, give me your hand.

Ah, my good lord, I grieve at what I speak,

And am right sorry to repeat what follows:

I have, and most unwillingly, of late

Heard many grievous, I do say, my lord,

Grievous complaints of you; which, being considered,

Have mov'd us and our council, that you shall

This morning come before us; where, I know,

You cannot with such freedom purge yourself,

But that, till further trial in those charges

Which will require your answer, you must take

Your patience to you, and be well contented

To make your house our Tower: You a brother of us,

It fits we thus proceed, or else no witness

Would come against you.

Cran. I humbly thank your highness;

And am right glad to catch this good occasion
 Most throughly to be winnow'd, where my chaff
 And corn shall fly asunder : for, I know
 There 's none stands under more calumnious tongues
 Than I myself, poor man.

K. Hen. Stand up, good Canterbury ;
 Thy truth, and thy integrity, is rooted
 In us, thy friend : Give me thy hand, stand up ;
 Prithee, let 's walk. Now, by my holy-dame,
 What manner of man are you ? My lord, I look'd
 You would have given me your petition, that
 I should have ta'en some pains to bring together
 Yourself and your accusers ; and to have heard you
 Without indurance further.

Cran. Most dread liege,
 The good I stand on is my truth and honesty ;
 If they shall fail, I, with mine enemies,
 Will triumph o'er my person ; which I weigh not,
 Being of those virtues vacant. I fear nothing
 What can be said against me.

K. Hen. Know you not
 How your state stands i' the world, with the whole world ?
 Your enemies are many, and not small ; their practices
 Must bear the same proportion ; and not ever
 The justice and the truth o' the question carries
 The due o' the verdict with it : At what ease
 Might corrupt minds procure knaves as corrupt
 To swear against you ? such things have been done.
 You are potently oppos'd ; and with a malice
 Of as great size. Ween you of better luck,
 I mean, in perjur'd witness, than your master,
 Whose minister you are, whiles here he liv'd
 Upon this naughty earth ? Go to, go to ;
 You take a precipice for no leap of danger,
 And woo your own destruction.

Cran. God, and your majesty,
 Protect mine innocence, or I fall into
 The trap is laid for me !

K. Hen. Be of good cheer ;

They shall no more prevail, than we give way to.
Keep comfort to you ; and this morning see
You do appear before them ; if they shall chance,
In charging you with matters, to commit you,
The best persuasions to the contrary
Fail not to use, and with what vehemency
The occasion shall instruct you : if entreaties
Will render you no remedy, this ring
Deliver them, and your appeal to us
There make before them.—Look, the good man weeps!
He's honest, on mine honour. God's bless'd mother!
I swear he is true-hearted ; and a soul
None better in my kingdom.—Get you gone,
And do as I have bid you.—[*Exit CRANMER.*]—He has
strangled
His language in his tears.

Enter an old Lady.

Gent. [*Within.*] Come back. What mean you ?

Lady. I'll not come back ; the tidings that I bring
Will make my boldness manners.—Now, good angels
Fly o'er thy royal head, and shade thy person
Under their blessed wings!

K. Hen. Now, by thy looks
I guess thy message. Is the queen deliver'd ?
Say, ay ; and of a boy.

Lady. Ay, ay, my liege ;
And of a lovely boy : The God of heaven
Both now and ever bless her—'t is a girl,
Promises boys hereafter. Sir, your queen
Desires your visitation, and to be
Acquainted with this stranger ; 't is as like you
As cherry is to cherry.

K. Hen. Lovell,—

Enter LOVELL.

Lov. Sir.

K. Hen. Give her an hundred marks. I'll to the queen.
[*Exit KING.*]

Lady. An hundred marks! By this light, I 'll have more.
 An ordinary groom is for such payment.
 I will have more, or scold it out of him.
 Said I for this the girl is like to him?
 I will have more, or else unsay 't; and now,
 While it is hot, I 'll put it to the issue. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Lobby before the Council-Chamber.*

Enter CRANMER; Servants, Door-Keeper, &c., *attending.*

Cran. I hope I am not too late; and yet the gentleman,
 That was sent to me from the council, pray'd me
 To make great haste. All fast? what means this?—Hoa!
 Who waits there?—Sure, you know me?

D. Keep. Yes, my lord;
 But yet I cannot help you.

Cran. Why?

D. Keep. Your grace must wait till you be call'd for.

Enter Doctor BUTTS.

Cran. So.

Butts. This is a piece of malice. I am glad
 I came this way so happily: The king
 Shall understand it presently. [*Exit* BUTTS.]

Cran. [*Aside.*] 'T is Butts,
 The king's physician; as he pass'd along,
 How earnestly he cast his eyes upon me!
 Pray Heaven, he sound not my disgrace! For certain,
 This is of purpose laid by some that hate me,
 (God turn their hearts! I never sought their malice,)
 To quench mine honour: they would shame to make me
 Wait else at door; a fellow-counsellor,
 Among boys, grooms, and lackeys. But their pleasures
 Must be fulfill'd, and I attend with patience.

*Enter, at a window above, the KING and BUTTS.*¹

Butts. I 'll show your grace the strangest sight,—

K. Hen.

What 's that, Butts?

Butts. I think your highness saw this many a day.

K. Hen. Body o' me, where is it?

Butts. There, my lord :
The high promotion of his grace of Canterbury ;
Who holds his state at door, 'mongst pursuivants,
Pages, and footboys.

K. Hen. Ha ! 'T is he, indeed :
Is this the honour they do one another ?
'T is well there 's one above them yet. I had thought
They had parted^a so much honesty among them,
(At least, good manners,) as not thus to suffer
A man of his place, and so near our favour,
To dance attendance on their lordships' pleasures,
And at the door too, like a post with packets.
By holy Mary, *Butts*, there 's knavery :
Let them alone, and draw the curtain close ;
We shall hear more anon.

[*Exeunt.*]

The Council-Chamber.

Enter the Lord Chancellor, the DUKE OF SUFFOLK, EARL OF SURREY, Lord Chamberlain, GARDINER, and CROMWELL. The Chancellor places himself at the upper end of the table on the left hand ; a seat being left void above him, as for the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY. The rest seat themselves in order on each side. CROMWELL at the lower end, as secretary.

Chan. Speak to the business, master secretary :
Why are we met in council?

Crom. Please your honours,
The chief cause concerns his grace of Canterbury.

Gar. Has he had knowledge of it?

Crom. Yes.

Nor. Who waits there?

D. Keep. Without, my noble lords?

Gar. Yes.

D. Keep. My lord archbishop ;
And has done half an hour, to know your pleasures.

Chan. Let him come in.

^a *Parted*—shared.

D. Keep.

Your grace may enter now.

[CRANMER approaches the council-table.]

Chan. My good lord archbishop, I am very sorry
To sit here at this present, and behold
That chair stand empty : But we all are men,
In our own natures frail, and capable
Of our flesh ; few are angels :^a out of which frailty,
And want of wisdom, you, that best should teach us,
Have misdemean'd yourself, and not a little,
Toward the king first, then his laws, in filling
The whole realm, by your teaching and your chaplains,
(For so we are inform'd,) with new opinions,
Divers and dangerous ; which are heresies,
And, not reform'd, may prove pernicious.

Gar. Which reformation must be sudden too,
My noble lords : for those that tame wild horses
Pace them not in their hands to make them gentle ;
But stop their mouths with stubborn bits, and spur them,
Till they obey the manage. If we suffer
(Out of our easiness, and childish pity
To one man's honour) this contagious sickness,
Farewell, all physic ; and what follows then ?
Commotions, uproars, with a general taint
Of the whole state : as, of late days, our neighbours,
The upper Germany, can dearly witness,
Yet freshly pitied in our memories.

Cran. My good lords, hitherto, in all the progress,
Both of my life and office, I have labour'd,
And with no little study, that my teaching,
And the strong course of my authority,
Might go one way, and safely ; and the end
Was ever to do well : nor is there living
(I speak it with a single heart, my lords)

^a We follow the original. Malone reads—

“ But we are all men,
In our own natures frail, incapable ;
Of our flesh, few are angels.”

The text of the original is not clear, but it is not mended by this dilution. We believe that the poet attached a definite meaning to the expression “capable of our flesh.”

A man that more detests, more stirs against,
 Both in his private conscience and his place,
 Defacers of a public peace, than I do.
 'Pray Heaven the king may never find a heart
 With less allegiance in it! Men, that make
 Envy, and crooked malice, nourishment,
 Dare bite the best. I do beseech your lordships,
 That, in this case of justice, my accusers,
 Be what they will, may stand forth face to face,
 And freely urge against me.

Suf. Nay, my lord,
 That cannot be; you are a counsellor,
 And, by that virtue, no man dare accuse you.

Gar. My lord, because we have business of more moment,
 We will be short with you. 'T is his highness' pleasure,
 And our consent, for better trial of you,
 From hence you be committed to the Tower,
 Where, being but a private man again,
 You shall know many dare accuse you boldly,
 More than, I fear, you are provided for.

Cran. Ah, my good lord of Winchester, I thank you,
 You are always my good friend; if your will pass,
 I shall both find your lordship judge and juror,
 You are so merciful: I see your end,
 'T is my undoing: Love and meekness, lord,
 Become a churchman better than ambition;
 Win straying souls with modesty again,
 Cast none away. That I shall clear myself,
 Lay all the weight ye can upon my patience,
 I make as little doubt, as you do conscience,
 In doing daily wrongs. I could say more,
 But reverence to your calling makes me modest.

Gar. My lord, my lord, you are a sectary,
 That's the plain truth; your painted gloss discovers,
 To men that understand you, words and weakness.

Crom. My lord of Winchester, you are a little,
 By your good favour, too sharp; men so noble,
 However faulty, yet should find respect

For what they have been: 't is a cruelty,
To load a falling man.

Gar. Good master secretary,
I cry your honour mercy; you may, worst
Of all this table, say so.

Crom. Why, my lord?

Gar. Do not I know you for a favourer
Of this new sect? ye are not sound.

Crom. Not sound?

Gar. Not sound, I say.

Crom. 'Would you were half so honest!
Men's prayers then would seek you, not their fears.

Gar. I shall remember this bold language.

Crom. Do.

Remember your bold life too.

Chan. This is too much;
Forbear, for shame, my lords.

Gar. I have done.

Crom. And I.

Chan. Then thus for you, my lord,—It stands agreed,
I take it, by all voices, that forthwith
You be conveyed to the Tower a prisoner;
There to remain, till the king's further pleasure
Be known unto us: Are you all agreed, lords?

All. We are.

Cran. Is there no other way of mercy,
But I must needs to the Tower, my lords?

Gar. What other
Would you expect? You are strangely troublesome:
Let some o' the guard be ready there.

Enter Guard.

Cran. For me?
Must I go like a traitor thither?

Gar. Receive him,
And see him safe i' the Tower.

Cran. Stay, good my lords;
I have a little yet to say. Look there, my lords;
By virtue of that ring, I take my cause

Out of the gripes of cruel men, and give it
To a most noble judge, the king my master.

Cham. This is the king's ring.

Sur. 'T is no counterfeit.

Suf. 'T is the right ring, by Heaven: I told ye all,
When we first put this dangerous stone a rolling,
'T would fall upon ourselves.

Nor. Do you think, my lords,
The king will suffer but the little finger
Of this man to be vex'd?

Cham. 'T is now too certain:
How much more is his life in value with him?
'Would I were fairly out on 't.

Crom. My mind gave me,
In seeking tales and informations
Against this man, (whose honesty the devil
And his disciples only envy at,)
Ye blew the fire that burns ye: Now have at ye.

Enter KING, frowning on them; takes his seat.

Gar. Dread sovereign, how much are we bound to Heaven

In daily thanks, that gave us such a prince;
Not only good and wise, but most religious:
One that, in all obedience, makes the church
The chief aim of his honour; and, to strengthen
That holy duty, out of dear respect,
His royal self in judgment comes to hear
The cause betwixt her and this great offender.

K. Hen. You were ever good at sudden commendations,
Bishop of Winchester. But know, I come not
To hear such flattery now; and in my presence,
They are too thin and base to hide offences.
To me you cannot reach; you play the spaniel,
And think with wagging of your tongue to win me;
But, whatsoever thou tak'st me for, I am sure,
Thou hast a cruel nature, and a bloody.
Good man, [*to CRANMER*] sit down. Now let me see the
proudest

He, that dares most, but wag his finger at thee :
 By all that 's holy, he had better starve,
 Than but once think his place becomes thee not.

Sur. May it please your grace,—

K. Hen.

No, sir, it does not please me.

I had thought I had had men of some understanding
 And wisdom, of my council ; but I find none.
 Was it discretion, lords, to let this man,
 This good man, (few of you deserve that title,)
 This honest man, wait like a lousy footboy
 At chamber-door ? and one as great as you are ?
 Why, what a shame was this ! Did my commission
 Bid ye so far forget yourselves ? I gave ye
 Power as he was a counsellor to try him,
 Not as a groom ; There 's some of ye, I see,
 More out of malice than integrity,
 Would try him to the utmost, had ye mean ;
 Which ye shall never have, while I live.

Chan.

Thus far,

My most dread sovereign, may it like your grace
 To let my tongue excuse all. What was purpos'd,
 Concerning his imprisonment, was rather
 (If there be faith in men) meant for his trial,
 And fair purgation to the world, than malice ;
 I am sure, in me.

K. Hen. Well, well, my lords, respect him ;
 Take him, and use him well, he 's worthy of it.
 I will say thus much for him, if a prince
 May be beholden to a subject, I
 Am, for his love and service, so to him.
 Make me no more ado, but all embrace him ;
 Be friends, for shame, my lords.—My lord of Canter-
 bury,

I have a suit which you must not deny me ;
 That is, a fair young maid that yet wants baptism,
 You must be godfather, and answer for her.

Cran. The greatest monarch now alive may glory
 In such an honour : How may I deserve it,
 That am a poor and humble subject to you ?

K. Hen. Come, come, my lord, you 'd spare your spoons;²
you shall have

Two noble partners with you; the old duchess of Norfolk,
And lady marquis Dorset: Will these please you?
Once more, my lord of Winchester, I charge you,
Embrace, and love this man.

Gar. With a true heart,

And brother-love, I do it.

Cran. And let Heaven

Witness, how dear I hold this confirmation.

K. Hen. Good man, those joyful tears show thy true heart.

The common voice, I see, is verified

Of thee, which says thus, "Do my lord of Canterbury

A shrewd turn, and he is your friend for ever."—

Come, lords, we trifle time away; I long

To have this young one made a christian.

As I have made ye one, lords, one remain;

So I grow stronger, you more honour gain.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Palace Yard.*

Noise and tumult within. Enter Porter and his Man.

Port. You'll leave your noise anon, ye rascals: Do you
take the court for Paris-garden?³ ye rude slaves, leave your
gaping.^a

[*Within.*] Good master porter, I belong to the larder.

Port. Belong to the gallows, and be hanged, you rogue: Is
this a place to roar in?—Fetch me a dozen crab-tree staves,
and strong ones; these are but switches to them.—I'll scratch
your heads: You must be seeing christenings? Do you look
for ale and cakes here, you rude rascals?

Man. Pray, sir, be patient; 't is as much impossible
(Unless we sweep them from the door with cannons)

To scatter them, as 't is to make them sleep

On May-day morning; which will never be:

We may as well push against Paul's, as stir them.

Port. How got they in, and be hang'd?

^a *Gaping*—shouting. The "gaping pig" of Shylock meant probably the roaring pig.

Man. Alas, I know not: How gets the tide in?
As much as one sound cudgel of four foot
(You see the poor remainder) could distribute,
I made no spare, sir.

Port. You did nothing, sir.

Man. I am not Samson, nor sir Guy, nor Colbrand, to mow them down before me: but if I spared any that had a head to hit, either young or old, he or she, cuckold or cuckold-maker, let me never hope to see a chine again; and that I would not for a cow, God save her.

[*Within.*] Do you hear, master porter?

Port. I shall be with you presently, good master puppy. Keep the door close, sirrah.

Man. What would you have me do?

Port. What should you do, but knock them down by the dozens? Is this Moorfields to muster in? or have we some strange Indian with the great tool come to court, the women so besiege us? Bless me, what a fry of fornication is at door! On my christian conscience, this one christening will beget a thousand; here will be father, godfather, and all together.

Man. The spoons will be the bigger, sir. There is a fellow somewhat near the door, he should be a brazier by his face, for, o' my conscience, twenty of the dog-days now reign in's nose; all that stand about him are under the line, they need no other penance: That fire-drake^a did I hit three times on the head, and three times was his nose discharged against me; he stands there, like a mortar-piece, to blow us. There was a haberdasher's wife of small wit near him, that railed upon me till her pink'd porringer fell off her head, for kindling such a combustion in the state. I missed the meteor once, and hit that woman, who cried out, *Clubs!*⁴ when I might see from far some forty truncheoners draw to her succour, which were the hope of the Strand, where she was quartered. They fell on; I made good my place; at length they came to the broomstaff to me; I defied them still; when suddenly a file of boys behind them, loose shot, deli-

^a *Fire-drake.* An *ignis-fatuus* was so called; and the name was also given to any artificial firework.

vered such a shower of pebbles, that I was fain to draw mine honour in, and let them win the work: The devil was amongst them, I think, surely.

Port. These are the youths that thunder at a playhouse, and fight for bitten apples; that no audience, but the Tribulation of Tower-hill, or the limbs of Limehouse,⁵ their dear brothers, are able to endure. I have some of them in *Limbo Patrum*, and there they are like to dance these three days; besides the running banquet of two beadles, that is to come.

Enter the Lord Chamberlain.

Cham. Mercy o' me, what a multitude are here! They grow still too, from all parts they are coming, As if we kept a fair here! Where are these porters, These lazy knaves?—Ye have made a fine hand, fellows. There's a trim rabble let in: Are all these Your faithful friends o' the suburbs? We shall have Great store of room, no doubt, left for the ladies, When they pass back from the christening.

Port. An't please your honour, We are but men; and what so many may do, Not being torn a pieces, we have done: An army cannot rule them.

Cham. As I live, If the king blame me for 't, I'll lay ye all By the heels, and suddenly; and on your heads Clap round fines, for neglect: You are lazy knaves; And here ye lie baiting of bumbards,^a when Ye should do service. Hark, the trumpets sound; They are come already from the christening: Go, break among the press, and find a way out To let the troop pass fairly; or I'll find A Marshalsea, shall hold you play these two months.

Port. Make way there for the princess.

Man. You great fellow, stand close up, or I'll make your head ache.

Port. You i' the camblet, get up o' the rail; I'll pick you o'er the pales else. [*Exeunt.*

^a *Bumbards*—ale-barrels.

SCENE IV.—*The Palace.*

Enter trumpets, sounding; then Two Aldermen, Lord Mayor, Garter, CRANMER, DUKE OF NORFOLK, with his marshal's staff, DUKE OF SUFFOLK, Two Noblemen bearing great standing bowls for the christening gifts; then Four Noblemen bearing a canopy, under which the DUCHESS OF NORFOLK, godmother, bearing the child richly habited in a mantle, &c. Train borne by a Lady: then follows the MARCHIONESS OF DORSET, the other godmother, and Ladies. The troop pass once about the stage, and Garter speaks.

Gart. Heaven, from thy endless goodness, send prosperous life, long, and ever happy, to the high and mighty princess of England, Elizabeth!

Flourish. Enter KING and Train.

Cran. [*Kneeling.*] And to your royal grace, and the good queen,

My noble partners, and myself, thus pray;—
All comfort, joy, in this most gracious lady,
Heaven ever laid up to make parents happy,
May hourly fall upon ye!

K. Hen. Thank you, good lord archbishop:
What is her name?

Cran. Elizabeth.

K. Hen. Stand up, lord.—
[*The KING kisses the child.*]

With this kiss take my blessing: God protect thee!
Into whose hands I give thy life.

Cran. Amen.

K. Hen. My noble gossips, ye have been too prodigal:
I thank ye heartily; so shall this lady,
When she has so much English.

Cran. Let me speak, sir,
For Heaven now bids me; and the words I utter
Let none think flattery, for they'll find them truth.
This royal infant, (Heaven still move about her!)
Though in her cradle, yet now promises
Upon this land a thousand thousand blessings,

Which time shall bring to ripeness : She shall be
 (But few now living can behold that goodness)
 A pattern to all princes living with her,
 And all that shall succeed : Saba was never
 More covetous of wisdom, and fair virtue,
 Than this pure soul shall be : all princely graces,
 That mould up such a mighty piece as this is,
 With all the virtues that attend the good,
 Shall still be doubled on her : truth shall nurse her,
 Holy and heavenly thoughts still counsel her :
 She shall be lov'd, and fear'd : Her own shall bless her :
 Her foes shake like a field of beaten corn,
 And hang their heads with sorrow : Good grows with her :
 In her days, every man shall eat in safety,
 Under his own vine, what he plants ; and sing
 The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours :
 God shall be truly known ; and those about her
 From her shall read the perfect ways of honour,
 And by those claim their greatness, not by blood.
 Nor shall this peace sleep with her : But as when
 The bird of wonder dies, the maiden phoenix,
 Her ashes new create another heir,
 As great in admiration as herself ;
 So shall she leave her blessedness to one,
 (When Heaven shall call her from this cloud of darkness,)
 Who, from the sacred ashes of her honour,
 Shall star-like rise, as great in fame as she was,
 And so stand fix'd : Peace, plenty, love, truth, terror,
 That were the servants to this chosen infant,
 Shall then be his, and like a vine grow to him ;
 Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,
 His honour, and the greatness of his name,
 Shall be, and make new nations : He shall flourish,
 And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches
 To all the plains about him :—Our children's children
 Shall see this, and bless Heaven.

K. Hen.

Thou speakest wonders.^a

^a The passage ending here, and beginning

“ Nor shall this peace sleep with her,”

Cran. She shall be, to the happiness of England,
An aged princess ; many days shall see her,
And yet no day without a deed to crown it.
Would I had known no more ! but she must die,
She must, the saints must have her ; yet a virgin,
A most unspotted lily, shall she pass
To the ground, and all the world shall mourn her.

K. Hen. O lord archbishop,
Thou hast made me now a man ; never, before
This happy child, did I get anything :
This oracle of comfort has so pleas'd me,
That, when I am in heaven, I shall desire
To see what this child does, and praise my Maker.
I thank ye all,—to you, my good lord mayor,
And you, good brethren, I am much beholding ;
I have receiv'd much honour by your presence,
And ye shall find me thankful. Lead the way, lords ;
Ye must all see the queen, and she must thank ye,
She will be sick else. This day, no man think
He has business at his house ; for all shall stay ;
This little one shall make it holiday.

[*Exeunt.*]

is held to be an interpolation, and is ordinarily printed in brackets. Differing from the usual opinion, for reasons stated in our Introductory Notice, we have removed the marks by which the supposed interpolation is commonly distinguished.



[Group of Christening Gifts.]

EPILOGUE.

'T is ten to one, this play can never please
All that are here : Some come to take their ease,
And sleep an act or two ; but those, we fear,
We have frighted with our trumpets ; so, 't is clear,
They'll say 't is naught : others, to hear the city
Abus'd extremely, and to cry,—“ That's witty ! ”
Which we have not done neither : that, I fear,
All the expected good we are like to hear,
For this play at this time, is only in
The merciful construction of good women ;
For such a one we show'd them : If they smile,
And say, 't will do, I know, within a while
All the best men are ours ; for 't is ill hap,
If they hold, when their ladies bid them clap.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ACT V.

¹ SCENE II.—“*At a window above.*”

THE old mode of building castles or mansions, by which a principal room could be commanded from a window opening into it, is illustrated by a letter from Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1573 :—“ And if it please her Majesty, she may come in through my gallery, and see the disposition of the hall in dinner-time, at a window opening thereunto.”

² SCENE II.—“*You'd spare your spoons.*”

The allusion is to the practice of sponsors at a christening presenting the child with spoons, called apostle spoons. The old plays contain many allusions to this custom ; as in a comedy of Middleton's :—

“² *Gos.* What has he given her?—what is it, gossip?

³ *Gos.* A fair high standing cup, and two great 'postle spoons, one of them gilt.”

³ SCENE III.—“*Paris-garden.*”

The bear-garden on the Bankside, remarkable enough to be distinguished in the maps of London in the time of Elizabeth.

⁴ SCENE III.—“*Who cried out, Clubs!*”

The cry of *clubs* was sure to draw together the London “truncheoneers ;” and the appearance of “the hope of the Strand” cannot fail to remind us of the heroic apprentices of the watchmaker of Fleet Street, in that inimitable picture of ancient manners, ‘The Fortunes of Nigel.’ See Illustrations of ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ Act I., Scene 1.

⁵ SCENE III.—“*The Tribulation of Tower-hill, or the limbs of Limehouse.*”

These allusions are perhaps now inexplicable. Johnson supposed the *Tribulation* to have been a puritanical meeting-house. But why should the “youths that thunder at a playhouse” be endurable by the frequenters of the *Tribulation*? Because, says Steevens, such an audience was familiarized to excess of noise by the bellowings of their preachers. Is it not, that the puritans, hating playhouses, approved of the uproar of those who “fight for bitten apples,” because it disturbed those that came to hear?



[Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester.]

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION.

SHAKSPERE, who, according to Malone, read no history but Holinshed's, may now be traced to another source—to one of the most popular books in our language, Fox's 'Acts and Monuments of the Christian Martyrs,' printed in 1563. Our poet saw the dramatic power of this scene, though the occurrence took place long after the birth of Elizabeth :—

“When night came, the king sent sir Anthony Denny about midnight to Lambeth to the archbishop, willing him forthwith to resort unto him at the court. The message done, the archbishop speedily addressed himself to the court, and, coming into the gallery where the king walked and tarried for him, his highness said, ‘Ah, my lord of Canterbury, I can tell you news. For divers weighty considerations it is determined by me and the council that you to-morrow at nine of the clock shall be committed to the Tower, for that you and your chaplains (as information is given us) have taught and preached, and thereby sown within the realm, such a number of execrable heresies, that it is feared, the whole realm being infected with them, no small contention and commotions will rise thereby amongst my subjects, as of late days the like was in divers parts of Germany; and therefore the council have requested me, for the trial of the matter, to suffer them to commit you to the Tower, or else no man dare come forth as witness in those matters, you being a counsellor.’

“When the king had said his mind, the archbishop kneeled down, and said, ‘I am content, if it please your grace, with all my heart, to go thither at your highness’ commandment; and I must humbly thank your majesty that I may come to my trial, for there be that have many ways slandered me, and now this way I hope to try myself not worthy of such report.’

“The king, perceiving the man’s uprightness, joined with such simplicity, said, ‘Oh Lord, what manner o’ man be you? What simplicity is in you! I had

thought that you would rather have sued to us to have taken the pains to have heard you and your accusers together for your trial, without any such indurance. Do you not know what state you be in with the whole world, and how many great enemies you have? Do you not consider what an easy thing it is to procure three or four false knaves to witness against you? Think you to have better luck that way than your master Christ had? I see by it you will run headlong to your undoing, if I would suffer you. Your enemies shall not so prevail against you; for I have otherwise devised with myself to keep you out of their hands. Yet, notwithstanding, to-morrow when the council shall sit, and send for you, resort unto them, and if, in charging you with this matter, they do commit you to the Tower, require of them, because you are one of them, a counsellor, that you may have your accusers brought before them without any further indurance, and use for yourself as good persuasions that way as you may devise; and if no entreaty or reasonable request will serve, then deliver unto them this my ring' (which then the king delivered unto the archbishop), 'and say unto them, If there be no remedy, my lords, but that I must needs go to the Tower, then I revoke my cause from you, and appeal to the king's own person by this token unto you all; for' (said the king then unto the archbishop) 'so soon as they shall see this my ring, they know it so well that they shall understand that I have reserved the whole cause into mine own hands and determination, and that I have discharged them thereof.'

"The archbishop, perceiving the king's benignity so much to him wards, had much ado to forbear tears. 'Well,' said the king, 'go your ways, my lord, and do as I have bidden you.' My lord, humbling himself with thanks, took his leave of the king's highness for that night.

"On the morrow, about nine of the clock before noon, the council sent a gentleman-usher for the archbishop, who, when he came to the council-chamber door, could not be let in, but of purpose (as it seemed) was compelled there to wait among the pages, lackeys, and servingmen all alone. D. Butts, the king's physician, resorting that way, and espying how my lord of Canterbury was handled, went to the king's highness, and said, 'My lord of Canterbury, if it please your grace, is well promoted; for now he is become a lackey or a servingman, for yonder he standeth this half-hour at the council-chamber door amongst them.' 'It is not so' (quoth the king), 'I trow, nor the council hath not so little discretion as to use the metropolitan of the realm in that sort, specially being one of their own number. But let them alone' (said the king) 'and we shall hear more soon.'

"Anon the archbishop was called into the council-chamber, to whom was alleged as before is rehearsed. The archbishop answered in like sort as the king had advised him; and in the end, when he perceived that no manner of persuasion or entreaty could serve, he delivered them the king's ring, revoking his cause into the king's hands. The whole council being thereat somewhat amazed, the Earl of Bedford, with a loud voice, confirming his words with a solemn oath, said, 'When you first began the matter, my lords, I told you what would become of it. Do you think that the king would suffer this man's finger to ache? Much more (I warrant you) will he defend his life against brabbling varlets. You do but cumber yourselves to hear tales and fables against him.' And incontinently upon the receipt of the king's token they all rose, and carried to the king his ring, surrendering that matter, as the order and use was, into his own hands.

"When they were all come to the king's presence, his highness, with a severe countenance, said unto them, 'Ah, my lords, I thought I had had wiser men of my council than now I find you. What discretion was this in you thus to make the primate of the realm, and one of you in office, to wait at the council-chamber door amongst servingmen? You might have considered that he was a counsellor



[Cromwell, Earl of Essex.]

as well as you, and you had no such commission of me so to handle him. I was content that you should try him as a counsellor, and not as a mean subject. But now I well perceive that things be done against him maliciously, and, if some of you might have had your minds, you would have tried him to the uttermost. But I do you all to wit, and protest, that if a prince may be beholding unto his subject' (and so solemnly laying his hand upon his breast, said), 'by the faith I owe to God, I take this man here, my lord of Canterbury, to be of all other a most faithful subject unto us, and one to whom we are much beholding, giving him great commendations otherwise.' And, with that, one or two of the chiefest of the council, making their excuse, declared that, in requesting his indurance, it was rather meant for his trial and his purgation against the common fame and slander of the world, than for any malice conceived against him. 'Well, well, my lords' (quoth the king), 'take him, and well use him, as he is worthy to be, and make no more ado.' And with that, every man caught him by the hand, and made fair weather of altogether, which might easily be done with that man."

The christening of the Princess Elizabeth at Greenwich is the last "show" of this "historical masque." In the description of this ceremony Hall is again superb. The most important part of the day's proceeding is briefly despatched by the chronicler:—

"The godfather was the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; the godmothers were the old Duchess of Norfolk and the old Marchioness of Dorset, widows; and the child was named Elizabeth: and after that all thing was done, at the church-door the child was brought to the fount, and christened; and this done, Garter chief king of arms cried aloud, 'God, of his infinite goodness, send prosperous life and long to the high and mighty Princess of England Elizabeth:' and then the trumpets blew, then the child was brought up to the altar, and the Gospel said over

it : and after that immediately the Archbishop of Canterbury confirmed it, the Marchioness of Exeter being godmother : then the Archbishop of Canterbury gave to the princess a standing cup of gold ; the Duchess of Norfolk gave to her a standing cup of gold, fretted with pearl ; the Marchioness of Dorset gave three gilt bowls, pounced, with a cover ; and the Marchioness of Exeter gave three standing bowls, graven, all gilt, with a cover."



[Cranmer.]

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTICE.

“I come no more to make you laugh ; things now,
 That bear a weighty and a serious brow,
 Sad, high, and working, full of state and woe,
 Such noble scenes as draw the eye to flow,
 We now present.”

THIS is the commencement of the most remarkable prologue of the few which are attached to Shakspeare's plays. It is, to our minds, a perfect exposition of the principle upon which the poet worked in the construction of this drama. Believing, whatever weight of authority there may be for the contrary opinion, that the ‘Henry VIII.’ was a new play in 1613, there had been a considerable interval between its production and that of the ‘Henry V.’—the last in the order of representation of his previous Histories. During that interval several of the poet's most admirable comedies had been unquestionably produced ; and the audience of 1613 was perhaps still revelling in the recollections of the wit of Touchstone, or the more recent whimsies of Autolycus. But the poet, who was equally master of the tears and the smiles of his audience, prepares them for a serious view of the aspects of real life:—“I come no more to make you laugh.” He thought, too, that the popular desire for noisy combats, and the unavoidable deficiencies of the stage in the representation of battle-scenes—he had before described it as an “unworthy scaffold” for “vasty fields”—might be passingly adverted to ; and that the Clowns of the same stage, whom he had indeed reformed, but who still delighted the “ears of the groundlings” with their extemporal rudeness, might be slightly renounced. He disclaimed, then, “both fool and fight:” these were not amongst the attractions of this work of his maturer age. He had to offer weighty and serious things, sad and high things, noble scenes that commanded tears ; state and woe were to be exhibited together : there was to be pageantry, but it was to be full of pity ; and the woe was to be the more intense from its truth. And how did this master of his art profess to be able to produce such deep

emotion from the exhibition of scenes that almost came down to his own times; that the fathers and grandfathers of his audience had witnessed in their unpoetical reality; that belonged not to the period when the sword was the sole arbiter of the destinies of princes and favourites, but when men fell by intrigue and not by battle, and even the axe of the capricious despot struck in the name of the law? There was another great poet of this age of high poetry, who had indicated the general theme which Shakspeare proposed to illustrate in this drama:—

“What man that sees the ever-whirling wheel
Of change, the which all mortal things doth sway,
But that thereby doth find, and plainly feel,
How Mutability in them doth play
The cruel sports to many men’s decay?”*

From the first scene to the last, the dramatic action seems to point to the abiding presence of that power which works

“Her cruel sports to many men’s decay.”

We see the “ever-whirling wheel,” in a succession of contrasts of grandeur and debasement; and even when the action is closed, we are carried forward into the depths of the future, to have the same triumph of “Mutability” suggested to our contemplation. This is the theme which the poet emphatically presents to us under its aspect of sadness:—

“Be sad, as we would make ye: Think ye see
The very persons of our noble story,
As they were living; think you see them great,
And follow’d with the general throug and sweat
Of thousand friends; then in a moment see
How soon this mightiness meets misery.”

Bearing in mind the great principle of the play, it appears to us to open with singular art. The Field of the Cloth of Gold is presented to our view, not as a mere piece of ordinary description, but as having a dramatic connexion with the principal action. By this description we are at once, and most naturally, introduced to the characters of the proud nobles whose hatred Wolsey has provoked. The sarcastic Norfolk may probably abide the frown of the great cardinal; but in the temperament of the impetuous Buckingham there is inevitable danger. What a portrait of self-willed pride has the poet drawn of Buckingham in all that scene! How the haughty peer first displays his rough contempt of “such a keech” as Wolsey; then throws out his random allegations against his

* The Faerie Queene. Two cantos of Mutabilitie.

honesty; next encounters him with an eye "full of disdain," and is scarcely kept from following him to the king to "outstare him;" and, finally, lashes himself to the utterance of a torrent of words, while his friends evidently tremble more for him in the consequences of his blind hatred than they look with hope to its power to injure the man whom they equally hate. And how does all this close? In—

" my life is spann'd already :
I am the shadow of poor Buckingham."

We see the coming end of the rash and haughty man;—his "noble blood" will be reckoned as nothing in the "beggar's book;" the "butcher's cur" will tear him.

If the arrest of Buckingham had been followed by his "coming from his arraignment," we should have seen indeed the "misery" following upon the "mightiness;" but we should not have seen the moving cause of this rapid transition of fortune. There sits the absolute king, prejudging his victim before examination:—

" I stood i' the level
Of a full-charg'd confederacy."

But an interruption takes place. The queen comes, in the spirit of honesty and justice, to represent to the king that his subjects "are in great grievance." Upon his minister does the king lay the blame, and desires the grievance to be redressed. This looks like equity and moderation:—

" We must not rend our subjects from our laws,
And stick them in our will."

The queen, who has obtained the redress of the subjects' wrong, is to "sit by," and hear the charges against Buckingham. To her upright and sagacious mind it is evident that the charges are the exaggerations of revenge, stimulated by corruption. The king will see only the one side of the evidence. When Katharine exhorts Wolsey to "deliver all with charity," Henry desires the witness to "speak on;" when Katharine lays bare the "spleen" of the Surveyor, with Henry it is still "Let him on." The allegation rests only upon the testimony of a discarded servant as to words spoken; but upon these is the duke condemned; for, after the decision of the king, a trial is but a form:—

" He is attach'd ;
Call him to present trial : if he may
Find mercy in the law, 't is his ; if none,
Let him not seek 't of us."

It is evident that the hatred of Wolsey produces the fall of Buckingham; but the ambitious minister wields a power which may turn and rend him. All with him, however, is apparent security: his greatness is at its height. The king visits his mighty subject as a familiar friend;—there is masquing and banqueting; and the gay monarch chooses the “fairest hand,” and hovers round the one “sweet partner.” This is the “state” which is the prelude to the “woe.” Between the prejudgment of Buckingham by the king, and his formal condemnation, the cardinal’s masque is interposed. It is the wonderful art of Shakspeare in this play to command our entire sympathies for the unfortunate. He has taken no care to render Buckingham an object of our love, or even respect, till he perishes. We think him a wilful man; we see that there is a struggle for power between him and Wolsey: it is his “misery” alone that makes us “let fall a tear.” Amongst the “noble scenes” of this drama, that in which Buckingham addresses “all good people” is very noble. The deepest pathos is in—

“When I came hither I was lord high constable,
And duke of Buckingham; now, poor Edward Bohun.”

But there is a deeper pathos that will “draw the eye to flow.” It is foreshadowed to us even while the eye is still wet for Buckingham:—

“Did you not of late days hear
A buzzing of a separation
Between the king and Katharine?”

The courtiers speak of this freely:—

“*Cham.* It seems the marriage with his brother’s wife
Has crept too near his conscience.
Suf. No, his conscience
Has crept too near another lady.”

And shall we “let fall a tear” because a just and spotless wife is about to be parted from a self-willed, capricious, tyrannical husband? If we read her character aright, we shall understand where lies the depth of her “misery.” It is not in Anne Bullen’s description alone that we can estimate “the pang that pinches.” It is not alone that she has “lived long” with “his highness”—

“Still growing in a majesty and pomp, the which
To leave is a thousand-fold more bitter than
’Tis sweet at first to acquire.”

This is the interpretation of a young woman, to whom “majesty and pomp” look dazzling. In her notion the “divorce” from “temporal” glory is

“ a sufferance, paining
As soul and body's severing.”

It is held that this pity of Anne for her mistress is a stroke of dramatic art to render her amiable under her equivocal situation. Is it not rather the poet's profound display of the weakness of Anne's own character? The sufferings of Katharine lie deeper than this. She is one who feels that she is about to be surrounded with the snares of injustice. She is defenceless—“ a most poor woman and a stranger.” She has been “ a true and humble wife.” But she is proud—nobly proud :—

“ Sir,
I am about to weep; but, thinking that
We are a queen (or long have dream'd so) certain
The daughter of a king, my drops of tears
I'll turn to sparks of fire.”

The eloquence of that “ simple woman”—her lofty bearing, her bold resolve—is not born of the clinging to temporal pomp: it issues out of the bruised spirit, whose affections are outraged, whose honour is insulted, whose dignity is trodden upon. She is all in all in this great scene. Before the grandeur of her earnest and impassioned pleading the intellect of Wolsey quails, and the self-will of Henry resorts to a justification of his motives. What a picture next is opened of the “ poor weak woman, fallen from favour ”! The poetry of the situation is unequalled: the queen, sitting amongst her women at work—and listening to that delicious song of “ Orpheus with his lute made trees.” Then is revealed the innermost grief of that wounded heart :—

“ Would ye have me
Put my sick cause into his hands that hates me ?
Alas! he has banish'd me his bed already ;
His love, too long ago : I am old, my lords,
And all the fellowship I hold now with him
Is only my obedience. What can happen
To me above this wretchedness ?”

But the pride still remains—the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella speaks in the fallen woman's

“ nothing but death
Shall e'er divorce my dignities.”

She has lost even the power of making her dependants happy :—

“ Alas! poor wenches, where are now your fortunes ?”

and then comes, out of this tenderness, the revulsion from that lofty passion to the humility of an absorbing despair :—

“Do what ye will, my lords : And, pray, forgive me,
If I have used myself unmannerly.”

There is nothing in the compass of poetry more touching than this exhibition of the gradual subjection of a high spirit to the force of circumstances.

Another turn of “the ever-whirling wheel!” Wolsey next falls. He had none of our sympathies. We gaze upon his commanding intellect; we marvel at “his unbounded stomach;”—but we fear the crafty and daring politician. Up to the moment when the treacherous Henry gathers up his power to hurl the bolt at him—

“and then to breakfast, with
What appetite you may”—

we rejoice at the “instant cloud.” But by the exercise of his marvellous art the poet throws the *fallen* man upon our pity. He restores him to his fellowship with humanity by his temporal abasement. The trappings of his ambition are stripped off, and we see him in his natural dignity. He puts on the armour of fortitude, and we reverence him.

The scene is changed. The stage is crowded with processional displays. There has been a coronation. We see it not; but its description is worth more than the sight:—

“The rich stream
Of lords and ladies, having brought the queen
To a prepar'd place in the choir, fell off
A distance from her : while her grace sat down
To rest a while, some half an hour, or so,
In a rich chair of state, opposing freely
The beauty of her person to the people.”

Anne passes from the stage;—Katharine is led in sick. Her great enemy is dead. She cannot but number up his faults; but she listens to “his good.” They have a fellowship in misfortune; and she honours his ashes. She is passing from the world. The grave hides that pure, and gentle, and noble sufferer. Anne is crowned. Her example of

“How soon this mightiness meets misery”

was not to be shown. But who can forget it? Then comes the shadowing out of new intrigues and new hatreds; and the despot puts on an attitude of justice. Elizabeth is born. The link is completed between the generation which is past and the generation which looks upon

“The very persons of our noble story,
As they were living.”

Shakspeare has closed his great series of 'Chronicle Histories.' This last of them was to be "sad, high, and working." It has laid bare the hollowness of worldly glory; it has shown the heavy "load" of "too much honour." It has given us a picture of the times which succeeded the feudal strifes of the other 'Histories.' Were they better times? To the mind of the poet the age of corruption was as "sad" as the age of force. The one tyrant rides over the obligations of justice, wielding a power more terrible than that of the sword. The poet's consolation is to be found in the prophetic views of the future. The prophecy of Cranmer upon the reigns of Elizabeth and James is the eulogy of just government—partially realized in the age of Shakspeare, but not the less a high conception, however beyond the reality, of

"What makes a nation happy and keeps it so."

We have a few words to add on the style of this drama. It is remarkable for the elliptical construction of many of the sentences and for an occasional peculiarity in the versification, which is not found in any other of Shakspeare's works. The Roman plays, decidedly amongst the latest of his productions, possess a colloquial freedom of versification which in some cases approaches almost to ruggedness. But in the 'Henry VIII.' this freedom is carried much farther. We have repeated instances in which the lines are so constructed that it is impossible to read them with the slightest pause at the end of each line:—the sentence must be run together, so as to produce more the effect of measured prose than of blank-verse. As an example of what we mean we will write a sentence of fourteen lines as if it had been printed as prose:—

"Hence I took a thought this was a judgment on me; that my kingdom, well worthy the best heir of the world, should not be gladdened in 't by me: Then follows, that I weigh'd the danger which my realms stood in by this my issue's fail: and that gave to me many a groaning throe. Thus hulling in the wild sea of my conscience, I did steer towards this remedy, whereupon we are now present here together; that's to say, I meant to rectify my conscience,—which I then did feel full sick, and yet not well,—by all the reverend fathers of the laud, and doctors learn'd."

If the reader will turn to the passage (Act II., Scene 4) he will see that many of the lines end with particles, and that scarcely one of the lines is marked by a pause at the termination. Many other passages could be pointed out with this peculiarity. A theory has been set up that Jonson "tampered" with the versification. We hold this notion to be utterly untenable; for there is no play of Shakspeare's which has a more decided character of unity—no one

from which any passage could be less easily struck out. We believe that Shakspeare worked in this particular upon a principle of art which he had proposed to himself to adhere to wherever the nature of the scene would allow. The elliptical construction, and the licence of versification, brought the dialogue, whenever the speaker was not necessarily rhetorical, closer to the language of common life. Of all his historical plays, the 'Henry VIII.' is the nearest in its story to his own times. It professed to be a "truth." It belongs to his own country. It has no poetical indistinctness about it, either of time or place: all is defined. If the diction and the versification had been more artificial it would have been less a reality.

TRAGEDIES.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ESCALUS, *Prince of Verona.*

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

MONTAGUE, }
CAPULET, } *heads of two houses at variance with each other.*

An old Man, uncle to Capulet.

ROMEO, *son to Montague.*

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

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

TYBALT, *nephew to Lady Capulet.*

FRIAR LAURENCE, *a Franciscan.*

FRIAR JOHN, *of the same order.*

BALTHASAR, *servant to Romeo.*

SAMPSO N }
GREGORY, } *servants to Capulet.*

ABRAM, *servant to Montague.*

An Apothecary.

Three Musicians.

Chorus.

Boy.

Page to Paris.

PETER.

An Officer.

LADY MONTAGUE, *wife to Montague.*

LADY CAPULET, *wife to Capulet.*

JULIET, *daughter to Capulet.*

Nurse to Juliet.

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

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

STATE OF THE TEXT, AND CHRONOLOGY, OF ROMEO AND JULIET.

'ROMEO AND JULIET' was first printed in the year 1597, under the following title:—'An excellent conceited Tragedie of Romeo and Juliet. As it hath been often (with great applause) plaid publicly, by the right honourable the L. of Hunsdon his Seruants.' This edition, a copy of which is of great rarity and value, was reprinted by Steevens, in his collection of twenty of the plays of Shakspeare.

The second edition of 'Romeo and Juliet' was printed in 1599, under the following title:—'The most excellent and lamentable Tragedie, of Romeo and Juliet. Newly corrected, augmented, and amended: As it hath bene sundry times publicly acted, by the right Honourable the Lord Chamberlaine his Seruants.' This edition is also rare; but we have had the advantage of using a copy in the British Museum.

The subsequent original editions are,—an undated quarto; a quarto in 1607; a quarto in 1609, which has also been reprinted by Steevens; and the folio of 1623. All these editions are founded upon the quarto of 1599, from which they differ very slightly.

We have taken the folio of 1623 as the basis of our text, indicating the differences between that text and the quartos subsequent to that of 1597, whenever any occur. But we have not attempted to make up a text, as was done by Pope, and subsequently by Steevens, out of the amended quarto of 1599 and the original of 1597. In some instances, indeed, the quarto of 1597 is of importance in the formation of a text, for the correction of typographical errors, which have run through the subsequent editions. Wherever our text differs from that commonly received, we state the difference, and the reasons for that difference. Our general reasons for founding the text upon the folio of 1623, which is, in truth, to found it upon the quarto of 1599, are as follows:—

The quarto of 1599 was declared to be "newly corrected, augmented, and amended." There can be no doubt whatever that the corrections, augmentations, and emendations were those of the

author. There are typographical errors in this edition, and in all the editions, and occasional confusions of the metrical arrangement, which render it more than probable that Shakspeare did not see the proofs of his printed works. But that the *copy*, both of the first edition and of the second, was derived from him, is, to our minds, perfectly certain. We know of nothing in literary history more curious or more instructive than the example of minute attention, as well as consummate skill, exhibited by Shakspeare in correcting, augmenting, and amending the first copy of this play. We would ask, then, upon what canon of criticism can an editor be justified in foisting into a copy, so corrected, passages of the original copy, which the matured judgment of the author had rejected? Essentially the question ought not to be determined by any arbitrement whatever other than the judgment of the author. Even if his corrections did not appear, in every case, to be improvements, we should be still bound to receive them with respect and deference. We would not, indeed, attempt to establish it as a rule implicitly to be followed, that an author's last corrections are to be invariably adopted; for, as in the case of Cowper's 'Homer,' and Tasso's 'Jerusalem,' the corrections which these poets made in their first productions, when their faculties were in a great degree clouded and worn out, are properly considered as not entitled to supersede what they produced in brighter and happier hours. Mr. Southey has admirably stated the reason for this in the advertisement to his edition of Cowper's 'Homer.' But in the case of Shakspeare's 'Romeo and Juliet,' the corrections and augmentations were made by him at that epoch of his life when he exhibited "all the graces and facilities of a genius in full possession and habitual exercise of power."* The *augmentations*, with one or two very trifling exceptions, are amongst the most masterly passages in the whole play, and include many of the lines that are invariably turned to, as some of the highest examples of poetical beauty. These augmentations, further, are so large in their amount, that, in Steevens's reprint, the first edition occupies only *seventy-three* pages; while the edition of 1609, in the same volume, printed in the same type as the first edition, occupies *ninety-nine* pages. The *corrections* are made with such exceeding judgment, such marvellous tact, that of themselves they completely overthrow the theory, so long submitted to, that Shakspeare was a careless writer. We have furnished abundant evidence of this in our foot-notes, in which we have exhibited some of the more re-

* Coleridge's 'Literary Remains.'

markable of the amended passages, and have indicated the most important augmentations. Such being the case, we consider ourselves justified in treating the labour of Steevens and other editors, in making a patchwork text out of the author's first and second copies, as utterly worthless; and we have, therefore, in nearly every instance, rejected the passages from the first copy which these editors, to use their own word, have *recovered* to swell out the second copy, as mere surplusage which the author had himself rejected. We have, of course, indicated these changes from the commonly received text; but we will just present one example here, and we purposely select a familiar one.

In the scene where the Nurse and Peter encounter Romeo and his friends in the street, their first words are thus given in the editions of Johnson and Steevens, of Reed, and of Malone, and are copied, of course, in all the popular editions:—

“ *Nurse.* Peter!

Peter. Anon!

Nurse. My fan, Peter.

Mercutio. *Prithee, do,* good Peter, to hide her face.”

In Shakspeare's own *corrected* edition of 1599 there is no “*prithee, do.*” How comes it, then, into Johnson and Steevens? Through an adulteration of two texts. In the original copy of 1597, the Nurse, instead of “Peter, my fan,” says, “Peter, prithee give me my fan,” and Mercutio, in raillery, adds, “Prithee do, good Peter.” Each of Shakspeare's own readings is obviously good; but the mixing up of the two readings by the modern editors is obviously nonsense. But this is not all that Steevens has “recovered” in the matter of this fan. In the first copy the scene concludes with,

“ *Nurse.* Peter, take my fan and go before.”

In the second copy, Shakspeare wisely thought that it was enough to make the people laugh *once* at Peter and the fan, and he, therefore, substitutes for the above line,

“ *Nurse.* Before and apace.”

The modern editors do not agree with Shakspeare, and they “recover” out of the first quarto the line which Shakspeare rejected. But enough of this. We have no wish to depreciate the labours of our predecessors. We thoroughly agree with Southey, that, “though in their cumbrous annotations the last labourer always added more rubbish to the heaps which his predecessors had accumulated, they did good service by directing attention to our earlier

literature.”* We most readily acknowledge our own particular obligations to them; for, unless they had collected a great mass of materials, the present edition could not have been undertaken. But we, nevertheless, cannot conceal our opinion, that as editors they were rash, and as critics they were cold and unimaginative; and we hold it to be the highest duty to attempt to undo what they have done, when they approach their author, as in their manufacture of a text for ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ “without reverence.” We believe, as they did not, “that his own judgment is entitled to more respect than that of any or all his critics;” † and we shall attempt to vindicate that judgment on every occasion, upon the great principle laid down by Bentley:—“The point is not what he *might* have done, but what he *has* done.”

In attempting to settle the CHRONOLOGY of Shakspeare’s plays, there are, as in every other case of literary history, two species of evidence to be regarded—the extrinsic and the intrinsic. Of the former species of evidence we have the one important fact that a ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ by Shakspeare, however wanting in the completeness of the ‘Romeo and Juliet’ which we now possess, was published in 1597. The enumeration of this play, therefore, in the list by Francis Meres, in 1598, adds nothing to our previous information. In the same manner, the mention of this play by Marston, in his tenth satire, first published in 1599, only shows us how popular it was:—

“Luscus, what’s play’d to-day? i’ faith, now I know;
I see thy lips abroach, from whence doth flow
Nought but pure Juliet and Romeo.”

The “corrected, amended, and augmented” copy of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ was printed in 1599; and as Marston’s tenth satire did not appear in his ‘Three Books of Satires,’ first printed in 1598, it is by no means improbable that his mention of the play referred to the improved copy which was in that year being acted by “The Lord Chamberlain his servants.” We might here dismiss the extrinsic evidence; but Malone thinks, contrary to his original opinion of the date of the play, that the statement in the title-page of the original quarto, “that it had been often (with great applause) plaid publicly by the right honourable Lord Hunsdon his servants,” decides that it was first played in 1596. His reasons are these:—Henry Lord Hunsdon, and George Lord Hunsdon his son, each filled the office of Lord Chamberlain under Elizabeth.

* Life of Cowper, vol. ii. p. 178.

† Southey (speaking of Cowper).

Henry, the father, died on the 22nd of July, 1596. Shakspeare's company, during the life of this lord, were called "the Lord Chamberlain's men;" but, according to Malone, they bore this designation, not as being attached to the Lord Chamberlain officially, but as the servants of Lord Hunsdon, whose title, as a nobleman, was merged in that of his office. George Lord Hunsdon was not appointed Lord Chamberlain till April, 1597; and in the interval after the death of his father his company of comedians were not the Lord Chamberlain's servants, but Lord Hunsdon's servants. This, no doubt, is decisive as to the play being performed before George Lord Hunsdon; but it is not in any degree decisive as to the play not having been performed without the advantage of this nobleman's patronage. The first date of the printing of any play of Shakspeare goes a very short way to determine the date of its theatrical production. We are very much in the dark as to the mode in which a play passed from one form of publication, that of the theatre, into another form of publication, that of the press. It is no evidence to our minds, that, because the 'Romeo and Juliet' first printed in 1597 is stated to have been publicly acted by the Lord Hunsdon his servants, it was not publicly acted long before, under circumstances that would appear less attractive in the bookseller's title-page.

Of the *positive intrinsic* evidence of the date of 'Romeo and Juliet,' the play, as it appears to us, only furnishes one passage, to which we shall presently more particularly advert. Chalmers has, indeed, given three passages from Daniel's 'Complaint of Rosamond,' first printed in 1592, which appear a little like imitations either of Daniel by Shakspeare, or of Shakspeare by Daniel. Malone has also given another passage from the old comedy of 'Doctor Dodipoll,' which has some similarity to the speech of Juliet, "Take him and cut him out in little stars." If the 'Romeo and Juliet' were produced before these pieces, which we believe, the resemblances would not be close enough to justify us in saying that their authors borrowed from Shakspeare; and they consequently have as little weight with us to fix the date of the play after their production.

The one piece of intrinsic evidence to which we have referred is this. The Nurse, describing the time when Juliet was weaned, says,

"On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;
That shall she, marry; I remember it well.
'T is since the earthquake now eleven years;

* * * * *

Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall,

* * * * *

Shake, quoth the dove-house; 't was no need, I trow,
To bid me trudge.
And since that time it is eleven years.'

All this particularity with reference to the earthquake—

“ I never shall forget it,—
Of all the days of the year”—

was for the audience. The poet had to exhibit the minuteness with which unlettered people, and old people in particular, establish a date, by reference to some circumstance which has made a particular impression upon their imagination; but in this case he chose a circumstance which would be familiar to his audience, and would have produced a corresponding impression upon themselves. Tyrwhitt was the first to point out that this passage had, in all probability, a reference to the great earthquake which happened in England in 1580. Stow has described this earthquake minutely in his Chronicle, and so has Holinshed. “ On the 6th of April, 1580, being Wednesday in Easter week, about six o'clock toward evening, a sudden earthquake happening in London, and almost generally throughout all England, caused such an amazedness among the people as was wonderful for the time, and caused them to make their earnest prayers to Almighty God!” The circumstances attendant upon this earthquake show that the remembrance of it would not have easily passed away from the minds of the people. The great clock in the palace at Westminster, and divers other clocks and bells, struck of themselves against the hammers with the shaking of the earth. The lawyers supping in the Temple “ ran from the tables, and out of their halls, with their knives in their hands.” The people assembled at the theatres rushed forth into the fields, lest the galleries should fall. The roof of Christ Church, near to Newgate-market, was so shaken, that a large stone dropped out of it, killing one person, and mortally wounding another, it being sermon-time. Chimneys toppled down, houses were shattered. Shakspeare, therefore, could not have mentioned an earthquake with the minuteness of the passage in the Nurse's speech without immediately calling up some associations in the minds of his audience. He knew the double world in which an excited audience lives,—the half belief in the world of poetry amongst which they are placed during a theatrical representation, and the half consciousness of the external world of their ordinary life.

The ready disposition of every audience to make a transition from the scene before them to the scene in which they ordinarily move,—to assimilate what is shadowy and distant with what is distinct and at hand,—is perfectly well known to all who are acquainted with the machinery of the drama. Actors seize upon the principle to perpetrate the grossest violations of good taste; and authors who write for present applause invariably do the same when they offer us, in their dialogue, a passing allusion, which is technically called a clap-trap. In the case before us, even if Shakspeare had not this principle in view, the association of the English earthquake must have been strongly in his mind when he made the Nurse date from an earthquake. Without reference to the circumstance of Juliet's age,—

“Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas-eve at night, shall she be fourteen,”—

he would naturally, dating from the earthquake, have made the date refer to the period of his writing the passage instead of the period of Juliet's being weaned:—“Then she could stand alone.” But, according to the Nurse's chronology, Juliet had not arrived at that epoch in the lives of children till she was three years old. The very contradiction shows that Shakspeare had another object in view than that of making the Nurse's chronology tally with the age of her nursling. Had he written,

“'T is since the earthquake now *just thirteen* years,”

we should not have been so ready to believe that ‘Romeo and Juliet’ was written in 1593; but as he has written,

“'T is since the earthquake now *eleven* years,”

in defiance of a very obvious calculation on the part of the Nurse, we have no doubt that he wrote the passage eleven years after the earthquake of 1580, and that, the passage being also meant to fix the attention of an audience, the play was produced, as well as written, in 1591.

Reasoning such as this would, we acknowledge, be very weak if it were unsupported by evidence deduced from the general character of the performance, with reference to the maturity of the author's powers. But, taken in connexion with that evidence, it becomes important. Now, we have no hesitation in believing, although it would be exceedingly difficult to communicate the grounds of our belief fully to our readers, that the alterations made by Shakspeare upon his first copy of ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ as printed in 1597 (which alterations are shown in his second copy as printed in 1599), exhibit

differences as to the quality of his mind—differences in judgment—differences in the cast of thought—differences in poetical power—which cannot be accounted for by the growth of his mind during two years only. If the first ‘Romeo and Juliet’ were produced in 1591, and the second in 1599, we have an interval of eight years, in which some of his most finished works had been given to the world. During this period his richness, as well as his sweetness, had been developed; and it is this development which is so remarkable in the superadded passages in ‘Romeo and Juliet.’ We almost fancy that the “Queen Mab” speech will of itself furnish an example of what we mean.

“Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out of mind the fairies’ coach-makers.”

These lines are not in the first copy; but how beautifully they fit in after the description of the spokes—the cover—the traces—the collars—the whip—and the waggoner; while, in their peculiarly rich and picturesque effect, they stand out before all the rest of the passage! Then, the “I have seen the day—* * * ’t is gone, ’t is gone, ’t is gone,” of old Capulet, seems to speak more of the middle-aged than of the youthful poet, of whom all the passages by which it is surrounded are characteristic. Again, the lines in the friar’s soliloquy, beginning

“The earth, that’s Nature’s mother, is her tomb,”

look like the work of one who had been reading and thinking more deeply of nature’s mysteries than in his first delineation of the benevolent philosophy of this good old man. But, as we advance in the play, the development of the writer’s powers is more and more displayed in his additions. The examples are far too numerous for us to particularize many of them. The critical reader may trace what has been added by our foot-notes. We would especially direct attention to the soliloquy of Juliet in the fifth scene of Act II.;—to her soliloquy, also, in the second scene of Act III.;—and to her great soliloquy, before taking the draught, in the fourth act. We have given this last passage as it stood in the original copy; and we confidently believe that whoever peruses it with attention will entertain little doubt that the original sketch was the work of a much younger man than the perfect composition which we now possess. The whole of the magnificent speech of Romeo in the tomb may be said to be re-written; and it produces in us precisely the same impression—that it was the work of a genius much more mature than that which is exhibited in the original copy.

Tieck, who, as a translator of Shakspeare, and as a profound and beautiful critic, has done very much for cultivating the knowledge, built upon love, which the Germans possess of our poet, has not been trammelled by Malone and Chalmers, but has placed 'Romeo and Juliet' amongst Shakspeare's early plays. We have no exact statements on this subject by Tieck; but, in a very delightful imaginary scene between Marlowe and Greene, he has made Marlowe describe to his brother dramatist the first performance of 'Romeo and Juliet' to which he had been witness.* Tieck has made this imaginary conversation a vehicle for the most enthusiastic praise of this play. Marlowe describes the performance as taking place at the palace of the Lord Hunsdon. He had expected, he says, that one of his own plays would have been performed; but he found that it was "that old poem, which we have all long known, worked up into a tragedy." After Marlowe has run through the general characteristics of the play, with an eloquent admiration, mingled with deep regret that he himself had been able to approach so distantly the excellence of that "out-sounding mouth, which a godlike muse has herself inspired with the sweetest of her kisses," he thus replies to Greene's inquiry as to who was the poet:—"Wilt thou believe?—one of Henslowe's common comedians, who has already served him many years on very low wages." "And now, if thy fever has passed," said Greene, "let us look on this thing in the broad light. This is merely such a passing apparition as we have seen many of before—admired, gaped at, praised without limit—but full of faults and imperfections, and soon to be altogether forgotten." "The same thing," said Marlowe, "the same words were whispered to me by my base envy, when I observed the universal delight, the deep emotion, of every spectator. I endeavoured to comfort myself therewith, and again to recover my lost honours in this miserable manner. I fled from the company; and the house-steward, who had acted as an assistant, gave me the manuscript of the play. In my lonely chamber I sat and read the whole night, and read again,—and each time admired the more; for much that had appeared to me episodical or superfluous, acquired, on more exact examination, a significancy and needful fulness. The good house-steward gave me also another poem, which the author has not yet quite completed, 'Venus and Adonis,' that I might read it in my nightly leisure. My friend, even here, even in this sweet narrative,—even in this soft speech and voluptuous imagery,—in this intoxicating realm, where I, till now, only looked upon likenesses of myself,—I am

* *Dichterleben*, von Tieck: Berlin, 1828, p. 123, &c.

completely, completely beaten. O this man, this more than mortal! to him (I feel as if my life depends on it) I must become the most intimate friend or the most bitter enemy. Either I will yet find my way to him, or I will succumb to this Apollo, and he may then speak over my outstretched corpse the last words of praise or blame." Tieck has thus decidedly placed the date of the performance of 'Romeo and Juliet' before 1592,—for Greene died in that year, and Marlowe in the year following. The 'Venus and Adonis,' which is here mentioned as not quite completed, was published in 1593. Tieck built his opinion, no doubt, upon internal evidence; and upon this evidence we must be content to let the question rest.

SUPPOSED SOURCE OF THE PLOT.

WHEN Dante reproaches the Emperor Albert for neglect of Italy,—

"Thy sire and thou have suffer'd thus,
Through greediness of yonder realms detain'd,
The garden of the empire to run waste,"—

he adds,—

"Come, see the Capulets and Montagues,
The Filippeschi and Monaldi, man
Who car'st for nought! those sunk in grief, and these
With dire suspicion rack'd."*

The Capulets and Montagues were amongst the fierce spirits who, according to the poet, had rendered Italy "savage and unmanageable." The Emperor Albert was murdered in 1308; and the Veronese, who believe the story of 'Romeo and Juliet' to be historically true, fix the date of this tragedy as 1303. At that period the Scalas, or Scaligers, ruled over Verona.

If the records of history tell us little of the fair Capulet and her loved Montague, whom Shakspeare has made immortal, the novelists have seized upon the subject, as might be expected from its interest and its obscurity. Massuccio, a Neapolitan, who lived about 1470, was, it is supposed, the writer who first gave a somewhat similar story the clothing of a connected fiction. He places the scene at Sienna, and, of course, there is no mention of the Montagues and Capulets. The story, too, of Massuccio varies in its catastrophe; the bride recovering from her lethargy, produced by the same means as in the case of Juliet, and the husband being executed for a murder which had caused him to flee from his country. Mr. Douce has endeavoured to trace back the groundwork of the

* Purgatory, Canto 6: Cary's Translation.

tale to a Greek romance by Xenophon Ephesius. Luigi da Porto, of Vicenza, gave a connected form to the legend of Romeo and Juliet, in a novel, under the title of 'La Giuletta,' which was published after his death in 1535. Luigi, in an epistle which is prefixed to this work, states that the story was told him by "an archer of mine, whose name was Peregrino, a man about fifty years old, well practised in the military art, a pleasant companion, and, like almost all his countrymen of Verona, a great talker." Bandello, in 1554, published a novel on the same subject, the ninth of his second collection. It begins, "When the Scaligers were lords of Verona," and goes on to say that these events happened "under Bartholomew Scaliger" (Bartolomeo della Scala). The various materials to be found in these sources were embodied in a French novel by Pierre Boistreau, a translation of which was published by Painter in his 'Palace of Pleasure,' in 1567; and upon this French story was founded the English poem by Arthur Brooke, published in 1562, under the title of 'The tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet, written first in Italian by Bandell, and nowe in Englishe by Ar. Br.' It appears highly probable that an English play upon the same subject had appeared previous to Brooke's poem; for a copy of that poem, which was in the possession of the Rev. H. White, of Lichfield, contains the following passage, in an address to the reader:—"Though I saw the same argument lately set forth on the stage with more commendation than I can look for, being there much better set foorth than I have or can dooe, yet the same matter, penned as it is, may serve to lyke good effect, if the readers do brynge with them lyke good myndes to consider it, which hath the more encouraged me to publish it, suche as it is." We thus see that Shakspeare had materials enough to work upon. But, in addition to these sources, there is a play by Lope de Vega in which the incidents are very similar; and an Italian tragedy also by Luigi Grotto, which Mr. Walker, in his historical memoir of Italian tragedy, thinks that the English bard read with profit. Mr. Walker gives us passages in support of his assertion, such as a description of a nightingale when the lovers are parting, which appear to confirm this opinion.

To attempt to show, as many have attempted, what Shakspeare took from the poem of 'Romeus and Juliet,' and what from Painter's 'Palace of Pleasure'—how he was "wretchedly misled in his catastrophe," as Mr. Dunlop has it, because he had not read Luigi da Porto—and how he invented only one incident throughout the play, that of the death of Paris, and created only one character,

that of *Mercutio*, according to the sagacious Mrs. Lenox—appears to us somewhat idle work. At any rate, we have not space to attempt such illustrations, beyond giving one or two examples of the old poem in our notes.

PERIOD OF THE ACTION, AND MANNERS.

THE slight foundation of historical truth which can be established in the legend of '*Romeo and Juliet*'—that of the "civil broils" of the two rival houses of Verona—would place the period of the action about the time of Dante. But this one circumstance ought not, as it appears to us, very strictly to limit this period. The legend is so obscure, that we may be justified in carrying its date forward or backward, to the extent even of a century, if anything may be gained by such a freedom. In this case, we may venture to associate the story with the period which followed the times of Petrarch and Boccaccio—verging towards the close of the fourteenth century—a period full of rich associations. Then, the literary treasures of the ancient world had been rescued out of the dust and darkness of ages,—the language of Italy had been formed, in great part, by the marvellous '*Visions*' of her greatest poet; painting had been revived by Giotto and Cimabue; architecture had put on a character of beauty and majesty, and the first necessities of shelter and defence had been associated with the higher demands of comfort and taste; sculpture had displayed itself in many beautiful productions, both in marble and bronze; and music had been cultivated as a science. All these were the growth of the freedom which prevailed in the Italian republics, and of the wealth which had been acquired by commercial enterprise, under the impulses of freedom. To date the period of the action of '*Romeo and Juliet*' before this revival of learning and the arts, would be to make its accessories out of harmony with the exceeding beauty of Shakspeare's drama. Even if a slight portion of historical accuracy be sacrificed, his poetry must be surrounded with an appropriate atmosphere of grace and richness.

Of the *Manners* of this play we have occasionally spoken in our Illustrations. With the exception of a few English allusions, which are introduced for a particular object, they are thoroughly Italian. Mrs. Jameson has noticed the "sunny brilliance of effect" with which the whole of this drama is lighted up; and she adds, with equal truth and elegance, "the blue sky of Italy bends over all."



COSTUME.

ASSUMING, as we have done, that the incidents of this tragedy took place (at least traditionally) at the commencement of the fourteenth century, the costume of the personages represented would be that exhibited to us in the paintings of Giotto and his pupils or contemporaries.

From a drawing of the former, now in the British Museum (Payne Knight's Collect.), and presumed to have been executed by him at Avignon in 1315, we give the accompanying engraving, and our readers will perceive that it interferes sadly with all popular notions of the dress of this play.

The long robes of the male personages, so magisterial or senatorial in their appearance, would, perhaps, when composed of rich materials, be not unsuitable to the gravity and station of the elder Montague and Capulet, and of the Prince, or Podesta, of Verona himself: but, for the younger and lighter characters, the love-lorn Romeo, the fiery Tybalt, the gallant gay Mercutio, &c., some very different habit would be expected by the million, and, indeed, desired by the artist. Cæsar Vecellio, in his 'Habiti Antichi e Moderni,' presents us with a dress of this time, which he distinctly describes as that of a young nobleman in a love-making expedition.

"Habito Antico di Giovani nobile ornato per far l'amore."

He assigns no particular date to it, but the pointed cowl, or hood, depending from the shoulders, the closely-set buttons down the front of the super-tunic, and up the arms of the under-garment, from the wrist to the elbow, with the peculiar lappet to the sleeve of the super-tunic, are all distinctive marks of the European costume of the early part of the fourteenth century, and to be found in any illuminated French or English MS. of the time of our Edward II., 1307-27, and still earlier, of course, in Italy, from whence the fashions travelled northward, through Paris to London.



The coverings for the head were, at this time, besides the capuchon, or cowl, here seen, caps and hats of various fantastic shapes, and the chaperon, or turban-shaped hood, began to make its appearance (*vide* second male figure in the engraving after Giotto). No plumes, however, adorned them till near the close of the century, when a single feather, generally ostrich, appears placed upright in front of the cap, or chaperon. The hose were richly fretted and embroidered with gold, and the toes of the shoes long and pointed.

The female costume of the same period consisted of a robe, or super-tunic, flowing in graceful folds to the feet, coming high up in the neck, where it was sometimes met by the wimple, or gorget, of white linen, giving a nun-like appearance to the wearer; the sleeves terminating at the elbow, in short lappets, like those of the men, and showing the sleeve of the under-garment (the kirtle,

which fitted the body tightly), buttoned from the wrist to the elbow also, as in the male costume.

The hair was gathered up into a sort of club behind, braided in front, and covered, wholly or partially, with a caul of golden network. Garlands of flowers, natural, or imitated in goldsmith's work, and plain filets of gold, or even ribbon, were worn by very young females. We shall say no more respecting the costume of this play, as the introduction of such a masquerade as is indispensable to the plot would be inconsistent with the dressing of the other characters correctly. Artists of every description are, in our opinion, perfectly justified in clothing the *dramatis personæ* of this tragedy in the habits of the time in which it was written, by which means all serious anachronisms would be avoided.

7.

PROLOGUE.

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



[Verona.]

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A public Place.*

Enter SAMPSON *and* GREGORY, *armed with swords and bucklers.*

Sam. Gregory, o' my word, we'll not carry coals.¹

Gre. No, for then we should be colliers.

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

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

Sam. I strike quickly, being moved.

Gre. But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

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

Gre. To move is to stir; and to be valiant is to stand; ^a therefore, if thou art moved, thou runn'st away.

^a The first quarto of 1597, which we mark as (*A*), "Stand to it."

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

Gre. That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall.

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

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

Sam. 'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be civil^a with the maids, and cut off their heads.

Gre. The heads of the maids?

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

Gre. They must take it sense,^b that feel it.

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

Gre. 'Tis well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been poor John.^c Draw thy tool; here comes^d of the house of the Montagues.²

Enter ABRAM and BALTHASAR.

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

Gre. How? turn thy back, and run?

Sam. Fear me not.

Gre. No, marry: I fear thee!

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

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

Sam. Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them;³ which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

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

Sam. I do bite my thumb, sir.

^a The undated quarto, which we mark as (*D*), *cruel*.

^b (*A*), *in sense*.

^c *Poor John*—hake, dried and salted.

^d (*A*), *two* of the house.

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

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

Gre. No.

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

Gre. Do you quarrel, sir?

Abr. Quarrel, sir? no, sir.

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

Abr. No better.

Sam. Well, sir.

Enter BENVOLIO, *at a distance.*

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

Sam. Yes, better.

Abr. You lie.

Sam. Draw, if you be men.—Gregory, remember thy swashing blow.⁴ [*They fight.*

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

Enter TYBALT.

Tyb. What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds? Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

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

Tyb. What, draw,^a and talk of peace? I hate the word, As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee: Have at thee, coward. [*They fight.*

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

1 Cit. Clubs, bills, and partisans!⁵ strike! beat them down! Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

Enter CAPULET, *in his gown; and* LADY CAPULET.

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

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

^a The quarto of 1609, which we mark as (C), *drawn.*

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

Enter MONTAGUE *and* LADY MONTAGUE.

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

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

Enter PRINCE, *with* Attendants.

Prin. Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel,—
Will they not hear?—what ho! you men, you beasts,—
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage
With purple fountains issuing from your veins!
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
Throw your mistemper'd weapons to the ground,
And hear the sentence of your moved prince.
Three civil broils,^b bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets;
And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave beseeming ornaments,
To wield old partisans, in hands as old,
Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd hate:
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
For this time, all the rest depart away:
You, Capulet, shall go along with me;
And, Montague, come you this afternoon,
To know our farther^c pleasure in this case,
To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

[*Exeunt* PRINCE *and* Attendants; CAPULET, LADY
CAPULET, TYBALT, Citizens, *and* Servants.]

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

Ben. Here were the servants of your adversary,
And yours, close fighting ere I did approach:

^a (C), one foot.

^b (C), *brawls*.

^c So (A). The folio and (C), *father's*.

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

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

Ben. Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
 Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,
 A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad;
 Where, underneath the grove of sycamore,^a
 That westward rooteth from this city's side,
 So early walking did I see your son:
 Towards him I made; but he was 'ware of me,
 And stole into the covert of the wood:
 I, measuring his affections by my own,—
 That most are busied when they are most alone,^b—
 Pursued my humour, not pursuing his,
 And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.

Mon. Many a morning hath he there been seen,
 With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
 Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs:
 But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
 Should in the farthest east begin to draw
 The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
 Away from light steals home my heavy son,
 And private in his chamber pens himself;
 Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,
 And makes himself an artificial night:^c

^a (*A*), *I am*.

^b So (*A*). The folio and (*C*) have

“ By my own,
 Which then most sought, where most might not be found,
 Being one too many by my weary self,
 Pursued my humour.”

The restoration of the first reading is clearly an improvement.

^c The first ten beautiful lines of Montague's speech are not in the original quarto;

Black and portentous must this humour prove,
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

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

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

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

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

Enter ROMEO, at a distance.

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

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

[*Exeunt MONTAGUE and Lady.*

Ben. Good morrow, cousin.

Rom. Is the day so young?

Ben. But new struck nine.

Rom. Ah me ! sad hours seem long.
Was that my father that went hence so fast ?

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

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

Ben. In love ?

Rom. Out—

Ben. Of love ?

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

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

neither is Benvolio's question, "Have you importun'd him?" nor the answer. We find them in (B), the quarto of 1599.

^a The folio and (C) read *same*. Theobald gave us *sun* ; and we could scarcely wish to restore the old reading, even if the probability of a typographical error, *same* for *sunne*, were not so obvious.

Rom. Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!
Where shall we dine?—O me!—What fray was here?
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.
Here 's much to do with hate, but more with love:—
Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate! 7
O anything, of nothing first created!^a
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is! -
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
Dost thou not laugh?

Ben. No, coz, I rather weep.

Rom. Good heart, at what?

Ben. At thy good heart's oppression.

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

Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast;
Which thou wilt propagate, to have it press'd
With more of thine: this love, that thou hast shown,
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.
Love is a smoke made^b with the fume of sighs;
Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with loving^c tears:
What is it else? a madness most discreet,
A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.
Farewell, my coz. [*Going.*

Ben. Soft, I will go along;
An if you leave me so, you do me wrong.

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

Ben. Tell me in sadness, who is that^d you love.

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

Ben. Groan? why, no;
But sadly tell me, who.

^a (A), *create*. The modern editors have adopted this: but it introduces, improperly, a couplet amidst the blank-verse.

^b (A), *rais'd*.

^c (A), *raging with a lover's tears*.

^d (A), *whom she is*.

Rom. Bid a sick man in sadness make his will :—^a
 Ah, word ill urg'd to one that is so ill!—
 In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

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

Rom. A right good marksman!—And she 's fair I love.

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

Rom. Well, in that hit, you miss: she 'll not be hit
 With Cupid's arrow, she hath Dian's wit ;
 And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd,
 From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.^b
 She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
 Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,
 Nor open her lap to saint-seducing gold :
 O, she is rich in beauty ; only poor
 That, when she dies, with beauty dies her store.^c

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

Rom. She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste ;
 For beauty, starv'd with her severity,
 Cuts beauty off from all posterity.
 She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,
 To merit bliss by making me despair :
 She hath forsworn to love ; and, in that vow,
 Do I live dead, that live to tell it now.

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

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

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

Rom. 'T is the way
 To call hers, exquisite, in question more :
 These happy masks, that kiss fair ladies' brows,
 Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair ;^d
 He that is strucken blind, cannot forget
 The precious treasure of his eyesight lost :
 Show me a mistress that is passing fair,

^a So (*A*). The folio and (*C*), *A sick man in sadness makes.*

^b So (*A*). The folio and (*C*), *uncharm'd.*

^c The scene ends here in (*A*) ; and the three first lines in the next scene are also wanting. (*B*) has them.

What doth her beauty serve, but as a note
Where I may read, who pass'd that passing fair?
Farewell: thou canst not teach me to forget.

Ben. I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter CAPULET, PARIS, *and* Servant.

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

Par. Of honourable reckoning are you both;
And pity 't is, you liv'd at odds so long.
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?

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

Par. Younger than she are happy mothers made.

Cap. And too soon marr'd are those so early made.
Earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,
She is the hopeful lady of my earth:^b
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
My will to her consent^c is but a part;
An she agree, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,⁹
Whereto I have invited many a guest,
Such as I love; and you, among the store,
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.

^a So (*D*). The folio omits *And*.

^b *Lady of my earth.* Fille de terre being the French phrase for an heiress, Steevens thinks that Capulet speaks of Juliet in this sense; but Shakspeare uses earth for the mortal part, as in the 146th Sonnet,—

“Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth;”

and in this play,—

“Turn back, dull earth.”

^c *My will to her consent.* In proportion to, or with reference to, her consent.

At my poor house, look to behold this night
 Earth-treading stars,^a that make dark heaven light :
 Such comfort, as do lusty young men feel
 When well-apparell'd April on the heel
 Of limping winter treads,¹⁰ even such delight
 Among fresh female buds shall you this night
 Inherit at my house ; hear all, all see,
 And like her most, whose merit most shall be :
 Which on more^b view of many, mine, being one,
 May stand in number, though in reckoning none.
 Come, go with me ;—Go, sirrah, trudge about
 Through fair Verona ; find those persons out,
 Whose names are written there, [*gives a paper*] and to them
 say,
 My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

[*Exeunt CAPULET and PARIS.*]

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

Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO.

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

^a *Earth-treading stars*, &c. Warburton calls this line nonsense, and would read,—

“ Earth-treading stars that make dark *even* light.”

Monck Mason would read,—

“ Earth-treading stars that make dark, heaven's light ;”

that is, stars that make the light of heaven appear dark in comparison with them. It appears to us unnecessary to alter the original reading, and especially as passages in the masquerade scene would seem to indicate that the banquetting-room opened into a garden—as,

“ Her beauty hangs upon *the cheek of night.*”

^b So the folio and (C), with the exception of *one* for *on*. (A), *Such, amongst view of many.*

Rom. Your plantain-leaf is excellent for that.¹¹

Ben. For what, I pray thee?

Rom. For your broken shin.

Ben. Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

Rom. Not mad, but bound more than a madman is:
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipp'd, and tormented, and—Good e'en, good fellow.

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

Rom. Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

Serv. Perhaps you have learn'd it without book:
But I pray, can you read anything you see?

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

Serv. Ye say honestly; Rest you merry!

Rom. Stay, fellow: I can read. [*Reads.*

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

A fair assembly; [*gives back the note*] Whither should they
come?

Serv. Up.

Rom. Whither to supper?^a

Serv. To our house.

Rom. Whose house?

Serv. My master's.

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

Serv. Now I'll tell you without asking: My master is the
great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Mon-
tagues, I pray, come and crush a cup of wine. Rest you
merry. [*Exit.*

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

^a So all the early editions. Theobald gives “*To supper*” to the Servant.

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

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

Rom. I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,
 But to rejoice in splendour of mine own. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*A Room in Capulet's House.*

Enter LADY CAPULET and Nurse.

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

Nurse. Now by my maidenhead,—at twelve year old,—
 I bade her come.—What, lamb! what, ladybird!—
 God forbid!—where's this girl?—what, Juliet!

Enter JULIET.

Jul. How now, who calls?

Nurse. Your mother.

Jul. Madam, I am here.

What is your will?

La. Cap. This is the matter:—Nurse, give leave awhile,
 We must talk in secret.—Nurse, come back again;
 I have remember'd me, thou shalt hear our counsel.
 Thou know'st, my daughter's of a pretty age.

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

La. Cap. She's not fourteen.

Nurse. I'll lay fourteen of my teeth,

* *Scales*—used as a singular noun.

And yet, to my teen ^a be it spoken, I have but four,—
She is not fourteen.—How long is it now
To Lammas-tide?

La. Cap. A fortnight, and odd days.

Nurse. ^bEven or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas-eve at night, shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she,—God rest all christian souls!—
Were of an age.—Well, Susan is with God;
She was too good for me: But, as I said,
On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;
That shall she, marry; I remember it well.
'T is since the earthquake now eleven years; ¹²
And she was wean'd,—I never shall forget it,—
Of all the days of the year, upon that day:
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall,
My lord and you were then at Mantua:—
Nay, I do bear a brain: ^c—but, as I said,
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
Of my dug, and felt it bitter, pretty fool!
To see it tetchy, and fall out with the dug.
Shake, quoth the dove-house: 't was no need, I trow,
To bid me trudge.

And since that time it is eleven years:
For then she could stand alone; nay, by the rood,
She could have run and waddled all about.
For even the day before, she broke her brow:
And then my husband—God be with his soul!
'A was a merry man!—took up the child:
Yea, quoth he, dost thou fall upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward, when thou hast more wit;
Wilt thou not, Jule? and, by my holy dam,
The pretty wretch left crying, and said—Ay:
To see now, how a jest shall come about!

^a *Teen*—sorrow.

^b The speeches of the Nurse, from hence, are given as prose in all the early editions. Capell had the great merit of first printing them as verse; and not “erroneously,” as Boswell appears to think, for there is not in all Shakspeare a passage in which the rhythm is more happily characteristic.

^c *Bear a brain*—have a memory—a common expression.

I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
I never should forget it; Wilt thou not, Jule? quoth he:
And, pretty fool, it stinted,^a and said—Ay.

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

Nurse. Yes, madam; yet I cannot choose but laugh,
To think it should leave crying, and say—Ay:

And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow
A bump as big as a young cockrel's stone;
A parlous^b knock; and it cried bitterly.

Yea, quoth my husband, fall'st upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward, when thou com'st to age;
Wilt thou not, Jule? it stinted, and said—Ay.

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

Nurse. Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace!
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nurs'd:
An I might live to see thee married once,
I have my wish.

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

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

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

La. Cap. Well, think of marriage now; younger than you,
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,
Are made already mothers: by my count,
I was a mother much upon these years

^a *It stinted*—it stopped. Thus Gascoigne,—

“Then stinted she as if her song were done.”

To *stint* is used in an active signification for to *stop*. Thus in those fine lines in ‘Titus Andronicus,’ which it is difficult to believe any other than Shakspeare wrote,—

“The eagle suffers little birds to sing,
And is not careful what they mean thereby,
Knowing that with the shadow of his wing
He can at pleasure *stint* their melody.”

What a picture of a despot in his intervals of self-satisfying forbearance!

^b *Parlous*. A corruption of the word *perilous*, which word is given in the folio. The *parlous* of the earlier copies is more in the Nurse's manner.

^c So (*A*). The folio and (*C*) have *hour*, both in Juliet's and the Nurse's speeches.

That you are now a maid. Thus, then, in brief;—
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

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

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

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

La. Cap. ^aWhat say you? can you love the gentleman?
This night you shall behold him at our feast:
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,¹³
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
Examine every several^b lineament,
And see how one another lends content;
And what obscur'd in this fair volume lies,
Find written in the margin of his eyes.
This precious book of love, this unbound lover,
To beautify him, only lacks a cover:
The fish lives in the sea; and 't is much pride,
For fair without the fair within to hide:
That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;
So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him, making yourself no less.

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

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

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

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you called, my young lady asked for, the nurse cursed in the pantry, and everything in extremity. I must hence to wait; I beseech you, follow straight.

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

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

[*Exeunt.*

^a The next seventeen lines are wanting in (A).

^b (B), *married*; which reading has been adopted by Steevens and Malone, in preference to *several* in the folio and (C).

SCENE IV.—*A Street.*

Enter ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, *with Five or Six Maskers, Torchbearers, and others.*

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

Ben. The date is out of such prolixity:
We'll have no Cupid hoodwink'd with a scarf,¹⁴
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,
Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper;
Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke
After the prompter, for our entrance:^a
But, let them measure us by what they will,
We'll measure them a measure,¹⁵ and be gone.

Rom. Give me a torch,¹⁶—I am not for this ambling;
Being but heavy I will bear the light.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mer. If love be rough with you, be rough with love;
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.—
Give me a case to put my visage in: [*Putting on a mask.*]
A visor for a visor!—what care I,
What curious eye doth quote^c deformities?
Here are the beetle-brows shall blush for me.

^a These two lines in (*A*) are omitted in the subsequent old editions.

^b To bound, in folio; so bound, in (*C*).

^c Quote—observe.

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

Rom. A torch for me: let wantons, light of heart,
Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels;¹⁷
For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase,—
I'll be a candle-holder, and look on,—
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.

Mer. Tut! dun's the mouse,¹⁸ the constable's own word:
If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire
Of this, sir reverence,¹⁹ love,^a wherein thou stick'st
Up to the ears.—Come, we burn daylight, ho.

Rom. Nay, that's not so.

Mer. I mean, sir, in delay
We waste our lights in vain, lights, lights, by day.^b
Take our good meaning; for our judgment sits
Five times in that, ere once in our five wits.

Rom. And we mean well in going to this mask;
But 't is no wit to go.

Mer. Why, may one ask?

Rom. I dreamt a dream to-night.

Mer. And so did I.

Rom. Well, what was yours?

Mer. That dreamers often lie.

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

Mer. O, then, I see, queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife; and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,^c
Drawn with a team of little atomies^d
Athwart^e men's noses as they lie asleep:
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers;
Her traces of the smallest spider's web;
Her collars of the moonshine's watery beams;
Her whip of cricket's bone; the lash of film:
Her waggoner a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm

^a Thus (A).

^b (A), like lamps, by day.

^c (A), burgomaster.

^d (A), atomy.

^e Thus (A). (C) and folio, over.

Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid :^a
 Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
 Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
 Time out o' mind the fairies' coach-makers.
 And in this state she gallops night by night
 Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love :
 On courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight :
 O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees :
 O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream ;
 Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
 Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.
 Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
 And then dreams he of smelling out a suit :^b
 And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
 Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,
 Then dreams he of another benefice :
 Sometimes she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
 And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
 Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
 Of healths five fathom deep ; and then anon
 Drums in his ears ; at which he starts, and wakes ;
 And, being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two,
 And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
 That plats the manes of horses in the night ;³⁰
 And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,
 Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.
 This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
 That presses them, and learns them first to bear,
 Making them women of good carriage.
 This is she—^c

^a (*A*), *maid* ; folio and (*C*), *man*,—clearly an error in the latter.

^b *A suit*. A court solicitation was called a suit ;—a process, a suit at law :

^c It is desirable to exhibit the first draft of a performance so exquisitely finished as this celebrated description, in which every word is a study. And yet it is curious that in the quarto of 1609, and in the folio (from which we print), and in both of which the corrections of the author are apparent, the whole speech is given as if it were *prose*. The original quarto of 1597 gives the passage as follows :—

“ Ah, then I see queen Mab hath been with you.
 She is the fairies' midwife, and doth come
 In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
 On the forefinger of a burgomaster,

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

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

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

Rom. I fear, too early : for my mind misgives
Some consequence yet hanging in the stars,

W. Dramatic
Summary

Drawn with a team of little atomy,
Athwart men's noses when they lie asleep.
Her waggon-spokes are made of spinners' webs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
The traces are the moonshine watery beams,
The collars cricket bones, the lash of films.
Her waggoner is a small grey-coated fly
Not half so big as is a little worm,
Pick'd from the lazy finger of a maid.
And in this sort she gallops up and down
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love ;
O'er courtiers' knees, who straight on courtesies dream ;
O'er ladies' lips, who dream on kisses straight,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.
Sometimes she gallops o'er a lawyer's lap,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit ;
And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
Tickling a parson's nose that lies asleep,
And then dreams he of another benefice.
Sometimes she gallops o'er a soldier's nose,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, countermines,
Of healths five fathom deep, and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
And swears a prayer or two, and sleeps again :
This is that Mab that makes maids lie on their backs,
And proves them women of good carriage.
This is the very Mab,
That plaits the manes of horses in the night,
And plaits the elf-locks in foul sluttish hair,
Which once untangled much misfortune breeds."

^a Thus (A). (C) and the folio, *side*.

Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
 With this night's revels; and expire the term
 Of a despised life, clos'd in my breast,
 By some vile forfeit of untimely death:
 But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
 Direct my sail!^a—On, lusty gentlemen.

Ben. Strike drum.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A Hall in Capulet's House.*

Musicians waiting. Enter Servants.

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

2 *Serv.* When good manners shall lie all^b in one or two
 men's hands, and they unwashed too, 't is a foul thing.

1 *Serv.* Away with the joint-stools, remove the court cup-
 board,^c look to the plate:—good thou, save me a piece of
 marchpane;^c and, as thou lovest me, let the porter let in
 Susan Grindstone, and Nell.—Antony! and Potpan!

2 *Serv.* Ay, boy; ready.

1 *Serv.* You are looked for, and called for, asked for, and
 sought for, in the great chamber.

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

[*They retire behind.*]

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

Cap. Welcome, gentlemen! ladies, that have their toes
 Unplagued with corns, will have a bout^d with you:—
 Ah ha, my mistresses! which of you all
 Will now deny to dance? she that makes dainty, she,
 I'll swear, hath corns; Am I come near ye now?
 Welcome, gentlemen!^e I have seen the day,
 That I have worn a visor; and could tell

^a Thus (*A*). (*C*) and the folio, *suit*.

^b Thus (*C*). Folio omits *all*.

^c *Marchpane.* A kind of sweet cake or biscuit, sometimes called almond-cake.
 Our maccaroons are diminutive marchpanes.

^d Thus (*A*). (*C*) and folio, *walk about*.

^e This passage, to "More light, ye knaves," is wanting in (*A*).

A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,
Such as would please; 't is gone, 't is gone, 't is gone :
You are welcome, gentlemen!—Come, musicians, play.
A hall! a hall! give room, and foot it, girls.

[*Music plays, and they dance.*]

More light, ye knaves; and turn the tables up,
And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot.—
Ah, sirrah, this unlook'd-for sport comes well.

Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet;^a
For you and I are past our dancing days :
How long is 't now, since last yourself and I
Were in a mask?

2 *Cap.* By 'r lady, thirty years.

1 *Cap.* What, man! 't is not so much, 't is not so much :
'T is since the nuptial of Lucentio,
Come Pentecost as quickly as it will,
Some five-and-twenty years; and then we mask'd.

2 *Cap.* 'T is more, 't is more : his son is elder, sir ;
His son is thirty.

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

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

Serv. I know not, sir.

Rom. O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
Her beauty hangs^b upon the cheek of night

^a *Good cousin Capulet.* The word cousin, in Shakspeare, was applied to any collateral relation of whatever degree : thus we have in this play "Tybalt, my cousin, Oh my brother's child." Richard III. calls his nephew York, cousin, while the boy calls Richard, uncle. In the same play York's grandmother calls him cousin, while he replies grandam.

^b *Her beauty hangs.* All the ancient editions which can be considered authorities—the four quartos and the first folio—read *It seems she hangs*. The reading of *her beauty* is from the second folio. Why then, it may be asked, do we depart from our usual principle, and reject an undoubted ancient reading? Because the reading which we give has become familiar,—has passed into common use wherever our language is spoken,—is quoted in books as frequently as any of the other passages of Shakspeare which constantly present themselves as examples of his exquisite power of description. Here, it appears to us, is a higher law to be observed than that of adherence to the ancient copies. It is the same with the celebrated passage,

"Or dedicate his beauty to the sun."

All the ancient copies read *the same*. We believe this to be a misprint; but, even

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

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

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

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

1 Cap. Young Romeo is 't ?

Tyb. 'T is he, that villain Romeo.

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

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

1 Cap. He shall be endur'd.

What, goodman boy !—I say, he shall ;—Go to ;—
 Am I the master here, or you? go to.

if that could not be alleged, we should feel ourselves justified in retaining *the sun*.
 Such instances, of course, present but very rare exceptions to a general rule.

^a (A), *Like*.

^b So (C) and folio. (A), *happy*.

You 'll not endure him!—God shall mend my soul—
 You 'll make a mutiny among my guests!
 You will set cock-a-hoop!^a you 'll be the man!

Tyb. Why, uncle, 't is a shame.

I Cap.

Go to, go to,

You are a saucy boy:—Is 't so indeed?
 This trick may chance to scath^b you;—I know what.
 You must contrary^c me!—marry, 't is time—
 Well said, my hearts!—You are a princox;^d go:—
 Be quiet, or—More light, more light.—For shame!—
 I 'll make you quiet; What!—Cheerly, my hearts.

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

I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall,

Now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall.

[*Exit.*

Rom. If I profane with my unworhiest hand [To JULIET.

This holy shrine, the gentle sin^e is this,—

My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand

To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

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

Which mannerly devotion shows in this;

For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,

And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thus from my lips, by thine^f my sin is purg'd. [*Kissing her.*

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

^a *Set cock-a-hoop.* The origin of this phrase, which appears always to be used in the sense of hasty and violent excess, is very doubtful. The received opinion is, that on some festive occasions the *cock*, or spigot, was taken out of the barrel and laid on the *hoop*, and that the uninterrupted flow of the ale naturally led to intemperance.

^b *To scath*—to injure.

^c *Contrary.* Sir Philip Sidney, and many other old writers, use this as a verb.

^d *Princox*—coxcomb.

^e So all the old copies. Warburton changed *sin* to *fine*.

^f (*A*), *yours*.

Rom. Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urg'd!
Give me my sin again.

Jul. You kiss by the book.

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

Rom. What is her mother?

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

Rom. Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.

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

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

I Cap. Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone;
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.^a
Is it e'en so? Why, then I thank you all;
I thank you, honest gentlemen; good night:—
More torches here!—Come on, then let's to bed.
Ah, sirrah, [*To 2 Cap.*] by my fay, it waxes late;
I'll to my rest. [*Exeunt all but JULIET and Nurse.*]

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

Nurse. The son and heir of old Tiberio.

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

Nurse. Marry, that, I think, be young Petruccio.

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

Nurse. I know not.

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

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

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

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

^a *Towards*—ready; at hand.

Jul. A rhyme I learn'd even now
Of one I danc'd withal. [*One calls within, "Juliet."*]
Nurse. Anon, anon :—
Come, let's away ; the strangers all are gone. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter CHORUS.

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

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ACT I.

VERONA, the city of Italy where, next to Rome, the antiquary most luxuriates;—where, blended with the remains of theatres, and amphitheatres, and triumphal arches, are the palaces of the factious nobles, and the tombs of the despotic princes, of the Gothic ages;—Verona, so rich in the associations of real *history*, has even a greater charm for those who would live in the *poetry* of the past:—

“ Are these the distant turrets of Verona ?
And shall I sup where Juliet at the masque
Saw her lov'd Montague, and now sleeps by him ? ”

So felt our tender and graceful poet, Rogers. He adds, in a note, “ The old palace of the Cappelletti, with its uncouth balcony and irregular windows, is still standing in a lane near the market-place; and what Englishman can behold it with indifference? When we enter Verona, we forget ourselves, and are almost inclined to say with Dante,

‘ Vieni à veder Montecchi, e Cappelletti.’ ”

¹ SCENE I.—“ *Gregory, o' my word, we'll not carry coals.* ”

To carry coals was to submit to servile offices. Gifford has a note upon a passage in Ben Jonson's ‘ Every Man out of his Humour,’ where Puntarvolo, wanting his dog held, exclaims, “ Here comes one that will carry coals,” in which note he clearly enough shows the origin of the reproach of carrying coals:—“ In all great houses, but particularly in the royal residences, there were a number of mean and dirty dependants, whose office it was to attend the wood-yards, sculleries, &c. Of these (for in the lowest deep there was a lower still) the most forlorn wretches seem to have been selected to carry coals to the kitchens, halls, &c. To this smutty regiment, who attended the progresses, and rode in the carts with the pots and kettles, which, with every other article of furniture, were then moved from palace to palace, the people, in derision, gave the name of black guards, a term since become sufficiently familiar, and never properly explained.” In the passage here quoted from Ben Jonson, we find the primary meaning of the expression—that of being fit for servile offices; but in a subsequent passage of the same play we also have the secondary meaning—that of tamely submitting to an affront. Puntarvolo, having lost his dog, insults Shift, who he supposes has taken it; upon which another character exclaims,—“ Take heed, sir Puntarvolo, what you do; he'll bear no coals, I can tell you.” Gifford has given a quotation in illustration of this meaning (which is the sense in which Shakspeare here uses it), worth all the long

list of similar passages in the Shakspearean commentators:—"It remaineth now that I take notice of Jaspars arryvall, and of those letters with which the queen was exceedingly well satisfied: saying that you were too like somebody in the world, to whom she is afrayde you are a little kin, to be content to carry coales at any Frenchman's haud."—Secretary Cecyll to Sir Henry Neville, March 2, 1559.

² SCENE I.—"*Here comes of the house of the Montagues.*"

How are the Montagues known from the Capulets? naturally occurs to us. They wore badges, which, in all countries, have been the outward manifestations of party spirit. Gascoigne, in "a device of a masque," written in 1575, has,

"And for a further proof he shewed in hys hat
Thys token which the Mountacutes did beare alwaies, for that
They covet to be knowne from Cap:ls."

³ SCENE I.—"*I will bite my thumb at them.*"

There can be little doubt, we apprehend, that this mode of insult was originally peculiar to Italy, and was perhaps a mitigated form of the greater insult of making the fig, or fico, that is, thrusting out the thumb in a peculiar manner between the fingers. Douce has bestowed much laborious investigation upon this difficult and somewhat worthless subject. The commentators have not distinctly alluded to what appears to us the identity of biting the thumb and the fico; but a passage in Lodge's 'Wit's Miserie' clearly shows that the customs were one and the same:—"Behold, I see contempt marching forth, giving mee the fico with his thumbe in his mouth." The practice of biting the thumb was naturalised amongst us in Shakspeare's time; and the lazy and licentious groups that frequented "Paul's" are thus described by Dekker, in 1608:—"What swearing is there, what shouldering, what justling, what jeering, what biting of thumbs to beget quarrels!"

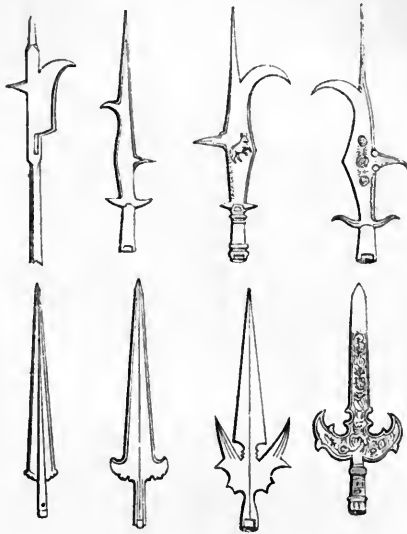
⁴ SCENE I.—"*Gregory, remember thy swashing blow.*"

Sampson and Gregory are described as armed with swords and bucklers. The swashing blow is a blow upon the buckler—the blow accompanied with a noise; and thus a swasher-came to be synonymous with a quarrelsome fellow, a braggart. In 'Henry V.,' Bardolph, Pistol, and Nym are called by the boy three "swashers." Holinshed has—"A man may see how many bloody quarrels a brawling swash-buckler may pick out of a bottle of hay;" and Fuller, in his 'Worthies,' after describing a swaggerer as one that endeavours to make that side to swagger, or weigh down, whereon he engages, tells us that a swash-buckler is so called from swashing or making a noise on bucklers.

⁵ SCENE I.—"*Clubs, bills, and partisans.*"

The cry of "Clubs" is as thoroughly of English origin as the "bite my thumb" is of Italian. "The great long club," as described by Stow, on the necks of the London apprentices, was as characteristic as the flat cap of the same quarrelsome body, in the days of Elizabeth and James. The use by Shakspeare of home phrases, in the mouths of foreign characters, was a part of his art. It is the same thing as rendering Sancho's Spanish proverbs into the corresponding English proverbs instead of literally translating them. The cry of "Clubs" by the citizens of Verona expressed an idea of popular movement, which could not have been conveyed half so emphatically in a foreign phrase. We have given a group of ancient bills and partisans, viz. a very early form of bill, from a specimen preserved in the Town-

hall of Canterbury;—bills of the times of Henry VI., VII., and VIII.; and partisans of the times of Edward IV., Henry VII., and James I.



6 SCENE I.—“ *Underneath the grove of sycamore.*”

When Shakspeare has to deal with descriptions of natural scenery, he almost invariably localizes himself with the utmost distinctness. He never mistakes the sycamore-groves of the south for the birch-woods of the north. In such cases he was not required to employ familiar and conventional images, for the sake of presenting an idea more distinctly to his audience than a rigid adherence to the laws of costume (we employ the word in its larger sense of manners) would have allowed. The grove of sycamore,

“ That westward rooteth from this city’s side,”

takes us at once to a scene entirely different from one presented by Shakspeare’s own experience. The sycamore is the oriental plane (little known in England, though sometimes found), spreading its *broad* branches—from which its name, *platanus*—to supply the most delightful of shades under the sun of Syria or of Italy. Shakspeare might have found the sycamore in Chaucer’s exquisite tale of ‘The Flower and the Leaf,’ where the hedge that

“ Closed in allé the green arbere,
With sycamore was set and eglantere.”

7 SCENE I.—“ *O brawling love! O loving hate!*”

This antithetical combination of contraries originated in the Provençal poetry, and was assiduously cultivated by Petrarch. Shakspeare, in this passage, may be distinctly traced to Chaucer’s translation of ‘The Romaunt of the Rose,’ where we have love described as a hateful peace—a truth full of falsehood—a despairing hope—a void reason—a sick heal, &c.

⁸ SCENE I.—“ *These happy masks, that kiss fair ladies' brows,
Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair.*”

Steevens says that the masks here meant were those worn by female spectators of the play ; but it appears scarcely necessary so to limit the use of a lady's mask. In 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona' we have the “sun-expelling mask.” In 'Love's Labour's Lost' the ladies wear masks in the first interview between the king and the princess :—“Now fair befall your mask,” says Biron to Rosaline. We subjoin a representation of an Italian lady in her black mask. The figure (without the mask) is in Vicellio's 'Habiti Antichi e Moderni.'



⁹ SCENE II.—“ *This night I hold an old accustom'd feast.*”

In the poem of 'Romeus and Juliet' the season of Capulet's feast is winter :—

“ The very winter nightes restore the Christmas games,
And now the season doth invite to banquet townish dames.
And fyrst in Cappel's house, the chief of all the kyn
Sparth for no cost, the wonted use of banquets to begin.”

Shakspeare had, perhaps, this in his mind when, at the ball, old Capulet cries out—

“ And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot ;”

but in every other instance the season is unquestionably summer. “The day is hot,” says Benvolio. The Friar is up in his garden,

“ Now ere the sun advance his burning eye.”

Juliet hears the nightingale sing from the pomegranate-tree. During the whole course of the poem the action appears to move under the “ vaulty heaven ” of Italy, with a soft moon

“ That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops,”

and “ day's pathway ” made lustrous by

“ Titan's fiery wheels.”



¹⁰ SCENE II.—“ *Such comfort, as do lusty young men feel,*” &c.

Dr. Johnson would read *yeomen*, and make Capulet compare the delight of Paris “among fresh female buds” to the joy of the farmer on the return of spring. But the spirit of Italian poetry was upon Shakspeare when he wrote these lines; and he thought not of the lusty yeoman in his fields,—

“ While the ploughman near at hand
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,”—

but of such gay groups as Boccaccio has painted, who

“ Sat down in the high grass, and in the shade
Of many a tree sun-proof.”

Shakspeare has, indeed, explained his own idea of “well-apparelled April” in that beautiful sonnet beginning

“ From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing.”

Douce has well observed that, in this passage of 'Romeo and Juliet,' Shakspeare might "have had in view the decorations which accompany the above mouth in some of the manuscript and printed calendars, where the young folks are represented as sitting together on the grass; the men ornamenting the girls with chaplets of flowers." We have adapted one of these representations from a drawing in the beautiful manuscript of the 'Roman de la Rose' in the British Museum.

¹¹ SCENE II.—" *Your plantain-leaf is excellent for that.*"

The leaf of the broad-leafed plantain was used as a blood-stancher. Of course, Shakspeare did not allude to the tropical fruit-bearing plant, but to the common plantain of our English marshy grounds and ditches. The plantain was also considered as a preventive of poison; and to this supposed virtue Romeo first alludes.



¹² SCENE III.—" *'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years.*"

We have shown in our Introductory Notice the importance of this line, as affording a probable date for the composition of 'Romeo and Juliet.' The earthquake that was within the recollection of Shakspeare's audience happened in the year 1580. The principle of dating from an earthquake, or from any other remarkable phenomenon, is a very obvious one. We have an example as old as the days of the prophet Amos:—"The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziab king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake." Tyrwhitt says, "But how comes the Nurse to talk of an earthquake upon this occasion? There is no such circumstance, I believe, mentioned in any of the novels from which Shakspeare may be supposed to have drawn his story." But it appears to us by no means improbable that Shakspeare might have been acquainted with some description of the great earthquake which happened at Verona in 1348, when Petrarch was sojourning in that city; and that, with something like historical propriety, therefore, he made the Nurse date from that event, while at the same time the supposed allusion to the earthquake in England of 1580 would be relished by his audience.

¹³ SCENE III.—“*Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face.*”

This passage furnishes a very remarkable example of the correctness of the principle laid down in Mr. Whiter's very able tract—‘An Attempt to Explain and Illustrate various Passages of Shakspeare, on a new Principle of Criticism, derived from Mr. Locke's Doctrine of the Association of Ideas.’ Mr. Whiter's most ingenious theory would lose much in being presented in any other than his own words. We may just mention that his leading doctrine, as applied to Shakspeare, is, that the exceeding warmth of his imagination often supplied him, by the power of association, with words, and with ideas, suggested to the mind by a principle of union unperceived by himself, and independent of the subject to which they are applied. We readily agree with Mr. Whiter that “this propensity in the mind to associate subjects so remote in their meaning, and so heterogeneous in their nature, must, of necessity, sometimes deceive the ardour of the writer into whimsical or ridiculous combinations. As the reader, however, is not blinded by this fascinating principle, which, while it creates the association, conceals likewise its effects, he is instantly impressed with the quaintness or the absurdity of the imagery, and is inclined to charge the writer with the intention of a foolish quibble, or an impertinent allusion.” It is in this spirit of a cold and literal criticism, here so well described, that Mr. Monck Mason pronounces upon the passage before us—“This ridiculous speech is full of abstruse quibbles.” But the principle of association, as explained by Mr. Whiter, at once reconciles us to the quibbles. The “volume” of young Paris' face suggests the “beauty's pen” which hath “writ” there. Then, the obscurities of the fair “volume” are written in the “margin of his eyes,” as comments of ancient books are always printed in the margin. Lastly, this “book of love” lacks “a cover”—the “golden story” must be locked in with “golden clasps.” The ingenious management of the vein of imagery is at least as remarkable as its “abstruse quibbles.”

¹⁴ SCENE IV.—“*We'll have no Cupid hoodwink'd with a scarf,*” &c.

The mask of ladies, or amazons, in Shakspeare's ‘Timon,’ is preceded by a Cupid, who addresses the company in a speech. This “device” was a practice of courtly life, before and during the time of Shakspeare. But here he says,

“The date is out of such prolixity.”

The “Tartar's painted bow of lath” is the bow of the Asiatic nations, with a double curve; and Shakspeare employed the epithet to distinguish the bow of Cupid from the old English long-bow. The “crow-keeper,” who scares the ladies, had also a bow:—he is the shuffle or mawkin—the scarecrow of rags and straw, with a bow and arrow in his hand. “That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper,” says Lear. The “without-book prologue faintly spoke after the prompter” is supposed by Warton to allude to the boy-actors that we afterwards find so fully noticed in ‘Hamlet.’

¹⁵ SCENE IV.—“*We'll measure them a measure.*”

The “measure” was the courtly dance of the days of Elizabeth; not so solemn as the pavan—the “doleful pavan,” as Davenant calls it, in which princes in their mantles, and lawyers in their long robes, and courtly dames with enormous trains, swept the rushes like the tails of peacocks. From this circumstance came its name, the pavan—the dance of the peacock. The “measure” may be best described in Shakspeare's own words, in the mouth of the lively Beatrice, in ‘Much Ado about Nothing’:—“The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good

time; if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. For hear me, Hero: wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a *measure*, and a cinque-pace: the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure full of state and acentry; and then comes repentance, and, with his bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave."

16 SCENE IV.—"Give me a torch."

Romeo declares that he will not dance—

"I am not for this ambling."

He subsequently says,

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

Anciently, all rooms of state were lighted by waxen torches borne in the hands of attendants. Froissart thus describes the feasting of Gaston de Foix:—"At midnight when he came out of his chamber into the hall to supper, he had ever before him twelve torches brennyng, borne by twelve varlettes standing before his table all supper." To hold the torch was not, however, a degrading office in England; for the gentlemen pensioners of Elizabeth held torches while a play was acted before her in the chapel of King's College, Cambridge.

17 SCENE IV.—"Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels."

Carpets, though known in Italy, were not adapted to the English habits in the time of Elizabeth; and even the presence-chamber of that queen was, according to Hentzner, strewed with hay, by which he meant rushes. The impurities which gathered on the floor were easily removed with the rushes. But the custom of strewing rushes, although very general in England, was not peculiar to it. Mr. Brown, in his work on Shakspeare's autobiographical poems, has this observation: "An objection has been made, imputing an error in Grumio's question, 'Are the rushes strewed?' But the custom of strewing rushes in England belonged also to Italy: this may be seen in old authors, and their very word, *giuncare*, now out of use, is a proof of it."

18 SCENE IV.—"Tut! dun's the mouse."

We have a string of sayings here which have much puzzled the commentators. When Romeo exclaims, "I am done," Mercutio, playing upon the word, cries "Dun's the mouse." This is a proverbial phrase, constantly occurring in the old comedies. It is probably something like the other cant phrase that occurs in 'Lear,' "The cat is grey." The following line,

"If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire,"

was fully as puzzling, till Gifford gave us a solution:—"Dun is in the mire, then, is a Christmas gambol, at which I have often played. A log of wood is brought into the midst of the room: this is dun (the cart-horse), and a cry is raised that he is *stuck in the mire*. Two of the company advance, either with or without ropes, to draw him out. After repeated attempts, they find themselves unable to do it, and call for more assistance.—The game continues till all the company take part in it, when dun is extricated of course; and the merriment arises from the awkward and affected efforts of the rustics to lift the log, and from sundry arch contrivances to let the ends of it fall on one another's toes. This will not be thought a very exquisite amusement; and yet I have seen much honest mirth at it, and have been far more entertained with the ludicrous contortions of pretended struggles than with the real

writhing, the dark scowl of avarice and envy, exhibited by the same description of persons, in the genteeler amusement of cards, the universal substitute for all our ancient sports."—('Ben Jonson's Works,' vol. vii., p. 282.)

19 SCENE IV.—"Sir reverence."

This was the old mode of apology for the introduction of a free expression. Mercurio says he will draw Romeo from the "mire of this love," and uses, parenthetically, the ordinary form of apology for speaking so profanely of love. Gifford has given us a quotation from an old tract on the origin of tobacco, which is exactly in spirit:—"The time hath been when, if we did speak of this loathsome stuff, tobacco, we used to put a 'sir reverence' before, but we forget our good manners." In another note on the same word, Gifford says, "There is much filthy stuff on this simple interjection, of which neither Steevens nor Malone appears to have known the import, in the notes to 'Romeo and Juliet.'"—('Ben Jonson's Works,' vol. vi., p. 149; vol. vii., p. 337).

20 SCENE IV.—

"This is that very Mab
That plats the manes of horses in the night."

We extract the following amusing note from Douce's 'Illustrations':—

"This line alludes to a very singular superstition, not yet forgotten in some parts of the country. It was believed that certain malignant spirits, whose delight was to wander in groves and pleasant places, assumed occasionally the likenesses of women clothed in white; that in this character they sometimes haunted stables in the night-time, carrying in their hands tapers of wax, which they dropped on the horses' manes, thereby plaiting them in inextricable knots, to the great annoyance of the poor animals, and the vexation of their masters. These bags are mentioned in the works of William Auvergne, Bishop of Paris in the thirteenth century. There is a very uncommon old print by Hans Burgmair, relating to this subject. A witch enters the stable with a lighted torch; and, previously to the operation of entangling the horse's mane, practises her enchantments on the groom, who is lying asleep on his back, and apparently influenced by the nightmare. The belemnites, or elf-stones, were regarded as charms against the last-mentioned disease, and against evil spirits of all kinds; but the *cerauniæ*, or *bætuli*, and all perforated flint-stones, were not only used for the same purpose, but more particularly for the protection of horses and other cattle, by suspending them in stables, or tying them round the necks of the animals."

The next line,

"And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,"

seems to be unconnected with the preceding, and to mark a superstition which, as Dr. Warburton has observed, may have originated from the *plica Polonica*, which was supposed to be the operation of the wicked elves, whence the clotted hair was called elf-locks, and elf-knots. Thus Edgar talks of "elfing all his hair in knots."

21 SCENE V.—"Remove the court cupboard."

The court cupboard was the ornamental sideboard, set out with salvers and beakers on days of festivity. We have, in a play of 1599, "accomplished the court cupboard;" and in another by Chapman, in 1606, "Here shall stand my court cupboard with its furniture of plate." In Italy, the art of Benvenuto Cellini was lavished upon the exquisite ornaments of the court cupboard.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An open Place adjoining Capulet's Garden.**Enter* ROMEO.

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

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

Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO.

Ben. Romeo! my cousin Romeo!

Mer. He is wise;

And, on my life, hath stolen him home to bed.

Ben. He ran this way, and leapt this orchard wall:
Call, good Mercutio.

Mer. Nay, I'll conjure too.

Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!

Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh,

Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied.

Cry but—Ah me! pronounce^a but love and dove;

Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,

One nick-name for her purblind son and heir,

Young Abraham^b Cupid, he that shot so trim,

^a (*A*) has *pronounce*; the subsequent quartos and the first folio, *provaunt*; the second folio *couply*, which has become the received reading of *couple*. Steevens desired to retain *provant*, to provide, from the noun *provant*, provision.

^b All the old copies have "*Abraham*." Upton changed it to "*Adam*," which all the modern editors have adopted, supposing the allusion, "*he that shot so trim*," was to the Adam Bell of the old ballad, to whom Shakspeare has also alluded in '*Much Ado about Nothing*': "*He that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder and called Adam*." But the word "*trim*," which is the reading of the first quarto (the subsequent editions giving us "*true*"), is distinctly derived from '*The Ballad of King Cophetua and the Beggar-maid*':—

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

With all submission to the opinion of Percy, who adopts the reading of Upton, we think that the change of Abraham into Adam was uncalled for. *Abraham* conveys

When king Cophetua lov'd the beggar-maid.¹—
 He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not ;
 The ape^a is dead, and I must conjure him.—
 I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
 By her high forehead, and her scarlet lip,
 By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,
 And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
 That in thy likeness thou appear to us.

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

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

Ben. Come, he hath hid himself among these trees,
 To be consorted with the humorous^b night :
 Blind is his love, and best befits the dark.

Mer. If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
 Now will he sit under a medlar-tree,
 And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit,
 As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone.^c—

another idea than that of Cupid's archery, which is strongly enough conveyed. The "Abraham" Cupid is the cheat—the "Abraham man"—of our old statutes.

^a *The ape*—an expression of kindly familiarity, applied to a young man.

^b *Humorous*—dewy, vaporous.

^c There are two lines here omitted in the text of Steevens's edition, which Malone has restored to the text. In every popular edition of our poet they are omitted. The lines are gross,—but the grossness is obscure, and, if it were understood, could scarcely be called corrupting. The freedoms of Mercutio arise out of his dramatic character;—his exuberant spirits betray him into levities which are constantly opposed to the intellectual refinement which rises above such baser matter. But Pope rejected these lines—Pope, who, in 'The Rape of the Lock,' has introduced one couplet, at least, that would have disgraced the age of Elizabeth. We do not print the two lines of Shakspeare, for they can only interest the verbal critic. But we distinctly record their omission. As far as we have been able to trace—and we have gone through the old editions with an especial reference to this matter—these two lines constitute the *only* passage in the original editions which has been omitted by modern editors. With this exception, there is not a passage in Shakspeare which is not reprinted in every edition except that of Mr. Bowdler. And yet the writer in 'Lardner's Cyclopædia' (Lives of Literary and Scientific Men) has ventured to make the following assertion: "*Whoever has looked into the original editions of his*

Romeo, good night :—I 'll to my truckle-bed ;²
 This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep :
 Come, shall we go ?

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

SCENE II.—Capulet's Garden.

Enter ROMEO.

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

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

But, soft ! what light through yonder window breaks !

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

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief,

That thou her maid art far more fair than she :

Be not her maid, ^a since she is envious ;

Her vestal livery is but sick and green,

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

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

O, that she knew she were !—

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

Her eye discourses, I will answer it.—

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

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes

To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

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

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,

As daylight doth a lamp ; her eye in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright,

That birds would sing and think it were not night.

dramas will be disgusted with the obscenity of his allusions. They absolutely teem with the grossest improprieties—more gross by far than can be found in any contemporary dramatist." The insinuation that the *original editions* contain improprieties that are not to be found in *modern editions*, is difficult to characterise without using expressions that had better be avoided.

^a Be not a votary to Diana,—the

“ Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,”

of Ben Jonson's beautiful hymn.

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

Jul. Ah me!

Rom. She speaks:—

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

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

Rom. Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this? [*Aside.*]

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

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

^a So (*A*). The folio and (*C*), *puffing*.

^b Juliet places his personal qualities in opposition to what she thought evil of his family.

^c There is a confusion in the folio and (*C*), which Malone here appears to have put right, by making out a line with the aid of (*A*). The folio omits "O, be some other name."

^d So (*A*). The folio and (*C*), *word*.

^e So (*C*) and folio. (*A*), *that*.

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

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

Jul. My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words
Of thy tongue's uttering,^a yet I know the sound;
Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

Rom. Neither, fair maid,^b if either thee dislike.^c

Jul. How cam'st thou hither, tell me? and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb;
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

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

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

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

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

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

Rom. I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes;^e
And, but thou love me,^f let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

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

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

^a The folio and (C), *thy tongue's uttering*; (A), *that tongue's utterance*.

^b In (A), *saint*.

^c *Dislike--displease*.

^d In (A), *let*.

^e In (A), *sight*.

^f *But thou love me--so thou do but love me*.

^g So (A); In folio and (C), *should*.

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

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

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

Rom. What shall I swear by?

Jul. Do not swear at all ;
 Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
 Which is the god of my idolatry,
 And I'll believe thee.

Rom. If my heart's dear love—

Jul. Well, do not swear :^s although I joy in thee,
 I have no joy of this contract to-night :
 It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden ;

^a *Farewell compliment*—farewell respect for forms.

^b So (*A*). In folio and (*C*), *cov'ing*.

^c So (*A*). In folio and (*C*), *vow*.

Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,
 Ere one can say—It lightens. Sweet, good night!
 This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
 May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
 Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
 Come to thy heart, as that within my breast!

Rom. O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Jul. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

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

Jul. I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:

And yet I would it were to give again.

Rom. Wouldst thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

Jul. But to be frank, and give it thee again.

And yet I wish but for the thing I have:

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,

My love as deep; the more I give to thee,

The more I have, for both are infinite. [*Nurse calls within.*]

I hear some noise within; Dear love, adieu!

Anon, good nurse!—Sweet Montague, be true.

Stay but a little, I will come again.

[*Exit.*]

Rom. O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard,

Being in night, all this is but a dream,

Too flattering sweet to be substantial.

Re-enter JULIET, above.

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

If that thy bent of love be honourable,

Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,

By one that I'll procure to come to thee,

Where, and what time, thou wilt perform the rite;

And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,

And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

Nurse. [*Within.*] Madam.

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

I do beseech thee—

Nurse. [*Within.*] Madam.

Jul. By and by, I come:—

To cease thy strife and leave me to my grief:

To-morrow will I send.

Rom. So thrive my soul,—

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

Rom. A thousand times the worse to want thy light—
Love goes toward love, as schoolboys from their books;
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.
[Retiring slowly.]

Re-enter JULIET, above.

Jul. Hist! Romeo, hist!—O, for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!^a
Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine
With repetition of my Romeo.^a

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

Jul. Romeo.

Rom. My—

Nurse. [Within.] Madam.

Jul. What o'clock to-morrow^b
Shall I send to thee?

Rom. By the hour of nine.

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

^a In (*A*), *my Romeo's name*.

^b This passage is ordinarily printed thus:—

Jul. Romeo.

Rom. My sweet.

Jul. At what o'clock to-morrow—

My sweet was substituted by the editor of the second folio for *My neece*, which is the reading of the first folio, and of the second and third quartos. In the first quarto we have *Madam*, which Malone adopts. But in the first quarto there is no interruption at all by the Nurse; whilst, in the second quarto, she has twice before used the word *Madam*;—and, consequently, the poet, in his amended copy, avoided the use by Romeo of a title which had just been used by the Nurse. We believe that the word *niece* is altogether a mistake—that the word *Nurse* was written, as denoting a third interruption by her—and that *Madam*, the use of which was the form of the interruption, was omitted accidentally, or was supposed to be implied by the word *Nurse*. As we have printed the passage the metre is correct; and it is to be observed that, in the second quarto and the subsequent copies, *at* before “what o'clock,” which was in the first quarto, is omitted, showing that a word of two syllables was wanted after *my* when *at* was rejected. Zachary Jackson, instead of *niece*, would read *novice*.

Rom. Let me stand here till thou remember it.

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

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

Jul. 'T is almost morning, I would have thee gone :
And yet no further than a wanton's bird ;
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

Rom. I would I were thy bird.

Jul. Sweet, so would I :
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night, good night ! parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good night, till it be morrow. [Exit.

Rom. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast !—
'Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest !
Hence will I to my ghostly friar's close ^a cell ;
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell. ^b [Exit.

SCENE III.—*Friar Laurence's Cell.*

Enter Friar LAURENCE, with a basket.

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

^a (*A*), "ghostly father's cell."

^b The arrangement of the dialogue stands thus in the quarto (*A*) ; and such is the disposition of the parts on the stage. But in the folio, and the quarto (*C*), Romeo, after Juliet's "Good night," exclaims, "Parting is such sweet sorrow," &c., to which Juliet responds, "Sleep dwell upon thine eyes," &c. Romeo then closes the scene with "Would I were sleep," &c.

^c *Flecked*—dappled.

^d So (*A*). It is remarkable that in the folio and (*C*) these four lines, with a slight alteration, are also introduced before the two last lines of *Romeo's* previous speech. It appears to us that the poet was making experiments upon the margin of the first copy of the change of a word or so, and, leaving the MS. upon the page, without obliterating the original passage, it came to be inserted twice. The lines, as given to Romeo, stand thus in the quarto of 1609, and in the folio :— "The

Now ere the sun advance his burning eye,
 The day to cheer, and night's dank dew to dry,
 I must up-fill this osier cage of ours,
 With baleful weeds, and precious-juiced flowers.
 The earth, that 's nature's mother, is her tomb; ^s
 What is her burying grave, that is her womb:
 And from her womb children of divers kind
 We sucking on her natural bosom find:
 Many for many virtues excellent,
 None but for some, and yet all different. ^a
 O, mickle is the powerful grace, that lies
 In plants, herbs, stoncs, and their true qualities:
 For nought so vile that on the earth doth live,
 But to the earth some special good doth give;
 Nor aught so good, but, strain'd from that fair use,
 Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
 Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;
 And vice sometime 's by action dignified.
 Within the infant rind of this weak ^b flower
 Poison hath residence, and medicine power:
 For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part;
 Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
 Two such opposed kings ^c encamp them still
 In man as well as herbs,—grace, and rude will;
And, where the worser is predominant,
Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. Good morrow, father!

Fri. *Benedicite!*

What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?—
 Young son, it argues a distemper'd head,
 So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed:

“The grey-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night,
 Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light;
 And darkness fleckel'd, like a drunkard reels
 From forth day's pathway, made by Titan's wheels.”

^a Six lines, ending with this line, are not in (A).

^b In (A), *small*.

^c In (A), *foes*. In the other ancient editions, *kings*. Opposed *foes* has not the propriety of opposed *kings*—a thoroughly Shakspearean phrase.

Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,
 And where care lodges, sleep will never lie;
 But where unbruised youth with unstuff'd brain
 Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign:
 Therefore thy earliness doth me assure,
 Thou art up-rous'd by some distemp'ration,
 Or if not so, then here I hit it right—
 Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.

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

Fri. God pardon sin! wast thou with Rosaline?

Rom. With Rosaline, my ghostly father? no;

I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.

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

Rom. I'll tell thee, ere thou ask it me again.

I have been feasting with mine enemy;
 Where, on a sudden, one hath wounded me,
 That's by me wounded; both our remedies
 Within thy help and holy physic lies;
 I bear no hatred, blessed man; for, lo,
 My intercession likewise steads my foe.

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

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

Fri. Holy saint Francis! what a change is here!
 Is Rosaline, that thou didst love so dear,
 So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies
 Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes. ✓
Jesu Maria! what a deal of brine
 Hath wash'd thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!
 How much salt water thrown away in waste,
 To season love, that of it doth not taste!

The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,
 Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears;
 Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
 Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet:
 If e'er thou wast thyself, and these woes thine,
 Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline;
 And art thou chang'd? pronounce this sentence then—
 Women may fall, when there's no strength in men.

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

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

Rom. And bad'st me bury love.

Fri. Not in a grave

To lay one in, another out to have.

Rom. I pray thee, chide not: she, whom I love now,
 Doth grace for grace, and love for love, allow;
 The other did not so.

Fri. O, she knew well,

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

But come, young waverer, come, go with me,

In one respect I'll thy assistant be;

For this alliance may so happy prove,

To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

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

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

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Street.*

Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO.

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

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

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

Torments him so, that he will sure run mad.

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

Mer. A challenge, on my life.

Ben. Romeo will answer it.

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

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

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

Ben. Why, what is Tybalt?

Mer. More than prince of cats,^c I can tell you. O, he is the courageous captain of compliments. He fights as you sing prick-song,^d keeps time, distance, and proportion; rests me his minim rest, one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button, a duellist, a duellist;^e a gentleman of the very first house,—of the first and second cause: Ah, the immortal passado! the puncto reverso! the hay!

Ben. The what?

Mer. The pox of such antic, lispings, affecting fantasticoes; these new tuners of accents!—By Jesu, a very good blade!—a very tall man!—a very good whore!—Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashionmongers, these *pardon-mes*, who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench? O, their *bons*, their *bons*!

Enter ROMEO.

Ben. Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

Mer. Without his roe, like a dried herring:—O, flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified!—Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flowed in: Laura, to his lady, was but a kitchen-wench;—marry, she had a better love to be-rhyme her: Dido, a dowdy; Cleopatra, a gipsy; Helen and Hero, hildings and harlots; Thisbé, a grey eye or so,^e but not to

^a *Run.* This is the reading of the folio and (C). *Shot* in (A).

^b The centre of the target, where the pin fastened the clout.

^c Tybert is the name given to the cat in the story of 'Reynard the Fox.'

^d *Prick-song*—music pricked, or noted, down, so as to read according to rule; in contradistinction to music learnt by the ear, or sung from memory.

^e The grey eye—the blue eye—was the most beautiful. In the 'Venus and Adonis,' Venus says, "Mine eyes are grey."

the purpose.—Signior Romeo, *bon jour!* there's a French salutation to your French slop. You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

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

Mer. The slip, sir, the slip;^a Can you not conceive?

Rom. Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great; and, in such a case as mine, a man may strain courtesy.

Mer. That's as much as to say—such a case as yours constrains a man to bow in the hams.

Rom. Meaning—to court'sy.

Mer. Thou hast most kindly hit it.

Rom. A most courteous exposition.

Mer. Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

Rom. Pink for flower.

Mer. Right.

Rom. Why, then is my pump well flowered.^a

Mer. Sure wit.^b Follow me this jest now, till thou hast worn out thy pump; that, when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing, sole singular.

Rom. O single-soled jest, solely singular for the singleness!

Mer. Come between us, good Benvolio; my wits faint.^c

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

Mer. Nay, if our wits run the wild-goose chase,^d I am done; for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits, than, I am sure, I have in my whole five: Was I with you there for the goose?

Rom. Thou wast never with me for anything, when thou wast not there for the goose.

Mer. I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

Rom. Nay, good goose, bite not.

Mer. Thy wit is a very bitter sweetening;^d it is a most sharp sauce.

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

^a The pump was the shoe. We retain the word. The ribbons in the pump were shaped as flowers.

^b In (A), *Well said.*

^c *Faint* in folio and (C). In (A), *fuit.*

^d The name of an apple.

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

Rom. I stretch it out for that word—broad: which added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

Mer. Why, is not this better now than groaning for love?¹⁰ now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature: for this drivelling love is like a great natural, that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.

Ben. Stop there, stop there.

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

Ben. Thou wouldst else have made thy tale large.

Mer. O, thou art deceived, I would have made it short: for I was come to the whole depth of my tale: and meant, indeed, to occupy the argument no longer.

Rom. Here's goodly gear!

Enter Nurse and PETER.

Mer. A sail, a sail, a sail!

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

Nurse. Peter!

Peter. Anon?

Nurse. My fan, Peter.¹¹

Mer. Good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan's the fairer face.^b

Nurse. God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

Mer. God ye good den, fair gentlewoman.

Nurse. Is it good den?¹²

Mer. 'T is no less, I tell you; for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

Nurse. Out upon you! what a man are you?

Rom. One, gentlewoman, that God hath made himself to mar.

Nurse. By my troth, it is well said;—For himself to mar, quoth'a?—Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

Rom. I can tell you; but young Romeo will be older when

^a Kid leather; from *chevreuil*—a roebuck.

^b See Introductory Notice.

you have found him, than he was when you sought him: I am the youngest of that name, for 'fault of a worse.

Nurse. You say well.

Mer. Yea, is the worst well? very well took, i' faith; wisely, wisely.

Nurse. If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you.

Ben. She will indite him to some supper.

Mer. A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho!

Rom. What hast thou found?

Mer. No hare, sir; unless a hare, sir, in a lenten pie, that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent.

An old hare hoar,
And an old hare hoar,
Is very good meat in Lent:
But a hare that is hoar
Is too much for a score,
When it hoars ere it be spent.—

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

Rom. I will follow you.

Mer. Farewell, ancient lady; farewell, lady, lady, lady.

[*Exeunt* MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO.]

Nurse. Marry, farewell!^a—I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant¹³ was this, that was so full of his ropery?

Rom. A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk; and will speak more in a minute, than he will stand to in a month.

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

Pet. I saw no man use you at his pleasure: if I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you: I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel, and the law on my side.

Nurse. Now, afore God, I am so vexed, that every part

^a In the folio and (C) the Nurse does not return a contemptuous farewell. This is the reading of (A).

about me quivers. Scurvy knave!—Pray you, sir, a word: and as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire you out; what she bade me say, I will keep to myself: but first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, as they say: for the gentlewoman is young; and, therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

Rom. Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee,—

Nurse. Good heart! and, i' faith, I will tell her as much: Lord, Lord, she will be a joyful woman.

Rom. What wilt thou tell her, nurse? thou dost not mark me.

Nurse. I will tell her, sir,—that you do protest; which, as I take it, is a gentlemanlike offer.

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

And there she shall at friar Laurence' cell
Be shriv'd, and married. Here is for thy pains.

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

Rom. Go to; I say, you shall.

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

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

Nurse. Now God in heaven bless thee!—Hark you, sir.

Rom. What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

Nurse. Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say
Two may keep counsel, putting one away?

Rom. I warrant thee; my man's as true as steel.

Nurse. Well, sir; my mistress is the sweetest lady—
Lord, Lord!—when 't was a little prating thing,—O, there is
a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife
aboard; but she, good soul, had as lieve see a toad, a very

toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes, and tell her that Paris is the properer man: but, I'll warrant you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any clout in the varsal world. Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?

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

Nurse. Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name. R is for the dog.^a No; I know it begins with some other letter: and she hath the prettiest sententious of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.^a

Rom. Commend me to thy lady.

[*Exit.*

Nurse. Ay, a thousand times.—Peter!

Pet. Anon?

Nurse. Before, and apace.^b

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—Capulet's Garden.

Enter JULIET.

Jul. The clock struck nine, when I did send the nurse;
In half an hour she promis'd to return.
Perchance, she cannot meet him:—that's not so.—
O, she is lame! love's heralds should be thoughts,^c
Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,
Driving back shadows over low'ring hills:
Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,¹⁵
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.
Now is the sun upon the highest hill
Of this day's journey; and from nine till twelve
Is three long hours,—yet she is not come.
Had she affections, and warm youthful blood,
She'd be as swift in motion as a ball;
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,
And his to me:
But old folks, many feign as they were dead;
Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

^a All this dialogue, from "Commend me to thy mistress," is not in (*A*).

^b See Introductory Notice.

^c In (*A*), Juliet's soliloquy ends here.

Enter Nurse and PETER.

O God, she comes!—O honey nurse, what news?
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

Nurse. Peter, stay at the gate. [*Exit PETER.*]

Jul. Now, good sweet nurse,—O Lord! why look'st thou sad?

Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;
If good, thou sham'st the music of sweet news
By playing it to me with so sour a face.

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

Jul. I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news:
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak;—good, good nurse, speak.

Nurse. Jesu, what haste? can you not stay a while?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

Jul. How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
To say to me—that thou art out of breath?

The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.

Is thy news good, or bad? answer to that;
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:

Let me be satisfied, Is't good or bad?

Nurse. Well, you have made a simple choice; you know
not how to choose a man: Romeo! no, not he; though his
face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's;
and for a hand, and a foot, and a body,—though they be not
to be talked on, yet they are past compare: He is not the
flower of courtesy,—but, I'll warrant him, as gentle as a
lamb.—Go thy ways, wench; serve God.—What, have you
dined at home?

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

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

My back o' t' other side,—O, my back, my back!—
Beshrew your heart, for sending me about,

To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

Jul. I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well:
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

Nurse. Your love says like an honest gentleman,
And a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome,
And, I warrant, a virtuous:—Where is your mother?

Jul. Where is my mother?—why, she is within;
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest:
“Your love says like an honest gentleman,—
Where is your mother?”

Nurse. O, God’s lady dear!
Are you so hot? Marry, come up, I trow;
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

Jul. Here’s such a coil,—Come, what says Romeo?

Nurse. Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

Jul. I have.

Nurse. Then hie you hence to friar Laurence’ cell,
There stays a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They’ll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird’s nest soon, when it is dark:
I am the drudge, and toil in your delight;
But you shall bear the burthen soon at night.
Go, I’ll to dinner; hie you to the cell.

Jul. Hie to high fortune!—honest nurse, farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*Friar Laurence’s Cell.*

*Enter Friar LAURENCE and ROMEO.**

Fri. So smile the Heavens upon this holy act
That after-hours with sorrow chide us not!

Rom. Amen, amen! but come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
That one short minute gives me in her sight:
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love-devouring death do what he dare,
It is enough I may but call her mine.

* This scene was entirely re-written, after the first copy.

Fri. These violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die; like fire and powder,
Which, as they kiss, consume: The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness,
And in the taste confounds the appetite:
Therefore, love moderately; long love doth so;
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

Enter JULIET.

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

Jul. Good even to my ghostly confessor.

Fri. Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

Jul. As much to him, else are his thanks too much.

Rom. Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
Be heap'd like mine, and that thy skill be more
To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbour air, and let rich music's tongue
Unfold the imagin'd happiness that both
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

Jul. Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,
Braggs of his substance, not of ornament:
They are but beggars that can count their worth;
But my true love is grown to such excess,
I cannot sum up half my sum of wealth.

Fri. Come, come, with me, and we will make short work;
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone,
Till holy church incorporate two in one. [*Exeunt.*

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ACT II.

1 SCENE I.—“*When king Cophetua lov'd the beggar-maid.*”

THE ballad of ‘King Cophetua and the Beggar-maid’ was amongst the most popular of old English ballads, allusions to which were familiar to Shakspeare’s audience. Upon the authority of learned Master “Moth” in ‘*Love’s Labour’s Lost*,’ it was an ancient ballad in Shakspeare’s day :—

“*Armado.* Is there not a ballad, boy, of the King and the Beggar ?

Moth. The world was very guilty of such a ballad some three ages since ; but, I think, now ’t is not to be found, or, if it were, it would neither serve for the writing nor the tune.

Arm. I will have that subject newly writ o’er.”

We have two versions of this ballad :—the one published in ‘*A Collection of Old Ballads*,’ quoted by Grey, in 1754 ; the other in Percy’s ‘*Reliques*.’ Both of these compositions appear as if they had been “newly writ o’er” not long before, or perhaps after, Shakspeare’s time : we subjoin a stanza of each :—

FROM PERCY’S ‘RELIQUES.’

“ I read that once in Africa
A princely wight did reign,
Who had to name Cophetua,
As poets they did feign :
From nature’s laws he did decline,
For sure he was not of my mind,
He cared not for womankind,
But did them all disdain.
But mark, what happen’d on a day,
As he out of his window lay,
He saw a beggar all in grey,
The which did cause him pain.
The blinded boy, that shoots so trim,
From heaven down did hie,
He drew a dart, and shot at him
In place where he did lie.”

FROM A COLLECTION OF OLD BALLADS.

“ A king once reign’d beyond the seas,
As we in ancient stories find,
Whom no fair face could ever please,
He cared not for womankind.
He despis’d the sweetest beauty,
And the greatest fortune too ;
At length he married to a beggar ;
See what Cupid’s dart can do.
The blind boy, that shoots so trim,
Did to his closet-window steal,
And made him soon his power feel.
He that never car’d for women,
But did females ever hate,
At length was smitten, wounded, swooned,
For a beggar at his gate.”

² SCENE I.—“*I'll to my truckle-bed.*”

The original quarto has, “*I'll to my trundle-bed.*” It appears somewhat strange that Mercutio should speak of sleeping in a truckle-bed, or a trundle-bed, both which words explain the sort of bed—a running-bed. The furniture of a sleeping-chamber in Shakspeare's time consisted of a standing-bed and a truckle-bed. “*There's his chamber, his house, his castle, his standing-bed, and truckle-bed,*” says mine host of the Garter, in ‘*The Merry Wives of Windsor.*’ The standing-bed was for the master; the truckle-bed, which ran under it, for the servant. It may seem strange, therefore, that Mercutio should talk of sleeping in the bed of his page; but the next words will solve the difficulty:—

“*This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep.*”

The field-bed, in this case, was the ground; but the field-bed, properly so called, was the travelling-bed; the *lit de champ*, called, in old English, the “trussing-bedde.” The bed next beyond the luxury of the trussing-bed was the truckle-bed; and therefore Shakspeare naturally takes that in preference to the standing-bed.

³ SCENE II.—“*Well, do not swear,*” &c.

Coleridge has a beautiful remark on this passage, and on the whole of the scene, which we extract:—“*With love, pure love, there is always an anxiety for the safety of the object, a disinterestedness, by which it is distinguished from the counterfeits of its name. Compare this scene with Act III., Scene I, of ‘The Tempest.’ I do not know a more wonderful instance of Shakspeare's mastery in playing a distinctly rememberable variety on the same remembered air, than in the transporting love confessions of Romeo and Juliet, and Ferdinand and Miranda. There seems more passion in the one, and more dignity in the other; yet you feel that the sweet girlish lingering and busy movement of Juliet, and the calmer and more maidenly fondness of Miranda, might easily pass into each other.*”

⁴ SCENE II.—

“*O, for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!*”

The falconer's voice was the voice which the hawk was constrained by long habit to obey. Gervase Markham, in his ‘*Country Contentments,*’ has picturesquely described the process of training hawks to this obedience, “*by watching and keeping them from sleep, by a continual carrying them upon your fist, and by a most familiar stroking and playing with them, with the wing of a dead fowl, or such like, and by often gazing and looking them in the face, with a loving and gentle countenance.*” A hawk so “manned” was brought to the lure “*by easy degrees, and at last was taught to know the voice and lure so perfectly, that either upon the sound of the one, or sight of the other, she will presently come in, and be most obedient.*” There is a peculiar propriety in Juliet calling Romeo her tassel-gentle; for this species was amongst the most beautiful and elegant of hawks, and was especially appropriated to the use of a prince. Our poet always uses the images which have been derived from his own experience with exquisite propriety. In ‘*The Merry Wives of Windsor,*’ Falstaff's page is the *eyas-musket*, the smallest unfledged hawk. Othello fears that Desdemona is *haggard*—that is, the wild hawk which “*checks at every feather.*” The sport with a tassel-gentle is spiritedly described by Massinger:—

“*Then, for an evening flight,
A tiercel gentle, which I call, my masters,
As he were sent a messenger to the moon,*

In such a place flies, as he seems to say,
 See me, or see me not! the partridge sprung,
 He makes his stoop; but, wanting breath, is forc'd
 To cancelier; then, with such speed as if
 He carried lightning in his wings, he strikes
 The trembling bird, who even in death appears
 Proud to be made his quarry."

⁵ SCENE III.—“*The earth, that 's nature's mother, is her tomb.*”

Milton, in the second book of ‘Paradise Lost,’ has the same idea:—

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

The editors of Milton have given a parallel passage in Lucretius:—

“*Omniparens, eadem rerum commune sepulchrum.*”

We would ask, did Shakspeare and Milton go to the same common source? Farmer has not solved this question in his ‘Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare.’

⁶ SCENE III.—

“*Both our remedies*

Within thy help and holy physic lies.”

“This,” says Monck Mason, “is one of the passages in which the author has sacrificed grammar to rhyme.” Mr. Monck Mason’s observation is made in the same spirit in which he calls Romeo’s impassioned language “quaint jargon.” Before Shakspeare was accused of sacrificing grammar, it ought to have been shown that his idiom was essentially different from that of his predecessors and his contemporaries. Dr. Percy, who brought to the elucidation of our old authors the knowledge of an antiquary and the feeling of a poet, has observed that “in very old English the third person plural of the present tense endeth in *eth* as well as the singular, and often familiarly in *es*,” and it has been further explained by Mr. Tollet, that “the third person plural of the Anglo-Saxon present tense endeth in *eth*, and of the Dano-Saxon in *es*.” Malone, we think, has rightly stated the principle upon which such idioms, which appear false concords to us, should be corrected,—that is, “to substitute the modern idiom in all places except where either the metre or rhyme renders it impossible.” But to those who can feel the value of a slight sprinkling of our antique phraseology it is pleasant to drop upon the instances in which correction is impossible. We would not part with the exquisite bit of false concord, as we must now term it, in the last word of the four following lines, for all that Shakspeare’s grammar correctors have ever written:—

“Hark! hark! the lark at heaven’s gate sings,
 And Phœbus ’gins arise,
 His steeds to water at those springs
 On chalic’d flowers that lies.”

⁷ SCENE IV.—“*A duellist, a duellist.*”

George Wither, in his obsequies upon the death of Prince Henry, thus introduces Britannia lamenting:—

“Alas! who now shall grace my tournaments,
 Or honour me with deeds of chivalrie?”

The tournaments and the chivalrie were then, however, but “an insubstantial pageant faded.” Men had learnt to revenge their private wrongs, without the paraphernalia of heralds and warders. In the old chivalrous times they might suppress any outbreak of hatred or passion, and cherish their malice against each other until it could be legally gratified; so that, according to the phrase of Richard Cœur-de-

Lion in his ordinance for permitting tournaments, "the peace of our land be not broken, nor justice hindered, nor damage done to our forests." The private contest of two knights was a violation of the laws of chivalry. Chaucer has a remarkable exemplification of this in his 'Knight's Tale,' where the duke, coming to the plain, saw Arcite and Palamon fighting like two bulls:—

"This duke his courser with his spurrés smote,
And at a start he was betwixt them two,
And pulled out a sword and criéd,—' Ho !
No more, up pain of losing of your head ;
By mighty Mars, he shall anon be dead
That smiteth any stroke that I may see !
But telleth me what mistere men ye been,
That be so hardy for to fighten here
Withouten any judge or other officer,
As though it were in listés really ' ' (royally).

That duels were frequent in England in the reign of Elizabeth, we might collect, if there were no other evidence, from Shakspeare alone. The matter had been reduced to a science. Tybalt is the "courageous captain of compliments,"—a perfect master of punctilio, one who kills his adversary by rule—"one, two, and the third in your bosom." The gentleman of the "first and second cause" is a gentleman who will quarrel upon the very slightest offences. The degrees in quarrelling were called the causes; and these have been most happily ridiculed by Shakspeare in 'As You Like It:—

"Jaques. But for the seventh cause; how did you find the quarrel on the seventh cause?

Touchstone. Upon a lie seven times removed; as thus, sir. I did dislike the cut of a certain courtier's beard; he sent me word, if I said his beard was not cut well, he was in the mind it was: this is called the *Retort courteous*. If I sent him word again, it was not well cut, he would send me word he cut it to please himself: this is called the *Quip modest*. If, again, it was not well cut, he disabled my judgment: this is called the *Reply churlish*. If, again, it was not well cut, he would answer, I spake not true: this is called the *Reproof valiant*. If, again, it was not well cut, he would say, I lie: this is called the *Countercheck quarrelsome*; and so to the *Lie circumstantial* and the *Lie direct*."

When Touchstone adds, "O sir! we quarrel in print by the book," he alludes to the works of Saviolo and Caranza, who laid down laws for the duello. The wit of Shakspeare is the best commentary upon the philosophy of Montaigne: "Inquire why that man hazards his life and honour upon the fortune of his rapier and dagger; let him acquaint you with the occasion of the quarrel, he cannot do it without blushing, 't is so idle and frivolous."—('Essays,' book iii., ch. 10.) But philosophy and wit were equally unavailing to put down the quarrelsome spirit of the times: Henry IV. of France in vain declared all duellists guilty of lese-majesté, and punishable with death; and James I. of England as vainly denounced them in the Star-Chamber.

The practice of duelling went on with us till the civil wars came to merge private quarrels in public ones. Burton, in his 'Anatomy of Melancholy,' has a bitter satire against the nobility, when he says they are "like our modern Frenchmen, that had rather lose a pound of blood in a single combat, than a drop of sweat in any honest labour."

⁸ SCENE IV.—"What counterfeit did I give you?
The slip, sir, the slip."

A counterfeit piece of money and a slip were synonymous; and in many old dramas we have the same play upon words as here. In Robert Greene's 'Thieves falling out' the word "slip" is defined as in a dictionary: "And therefore he went and

got him certain slips, which are counterfeit pieces of money, being brass, and covered over with silver, which the common people call slips."

⁹ SCENE IV.—" *The wild-goose chase.*"

Horse-racing, and the wild-goose chase, were amongst the "disports of great men" in the time of Elizabeth. It is scarcely necessary to describe a sport, if sport it can be called, which is still used amongst us. When the "wits run the wild-goose chase," we have a type of its folly; as the "switch and spurs, switch and spurs," is descriptive of its brutality.

¹⁰ SCENE IV.—" *Why, is not this better now than groaning for love?*"

Coleridge invites us to compare, in this scene, "Romeo's half-excited and half-real ease of mind, with his first manner when in love with Rosaline! His will had come to the clenching point." Romeo had not only recovered the natural tone of his mind, but he had come back to the conventional gaiety—the fives-play of witty words—which was the tone of the best society in Shakspeare's time. "Now art thou what thou art," says Mercutio, "by art as well as by nature."

¹¹ SCENE IV.—" *My fan, Peter.*"

The fan which Peter had to bear was the fan of the time of Elizabeth; and it does not appear quite so ridiculous, therefore, when we consider the size of the machine, to believe the Nurse should have a servant to bear it. Shakspeare has given the same office to Armado in 'Love's Labour's Lost':—

"Oh! a most dainty man,
To see him walk before a lady, and to bear her fan."

¹² SCENE IV.—" *Is it good den?*"

According to Mercutio's answer, the time was noon when the evening salutation "good den" began. But Shakspeare had here English manners in his eye. The Italian custom of commencing the day half an hour after sunset, and reckoning through the twenty-four hours, is inconsistent with such a division of time as this.

¹³ SCENE IV.—" *Saucy merchant.*"

Steevens pointed out that the term *merchant* was anciently used in contradistinction to *gentleman*; as we still use the word *chap* as an abbreviation of chapman. Douce has quoted a passage from Whetstone's 'Mirour for Magistrates of Cyties' (1584), in which he speaks of the usurious practices of the citizens of London, which is conclusive upon this point:—"The extremity of these men's dealings hath been and is so cruell as there is a natural malice generally impressed in the hearts of the gentlemen of England towards the citizens of London, insomuch as, if they odiously name a man, they forthwith call him a *trinme merchaunt*. In like despight the citizen calleth every rascal a *joly gentleman*."

¹⁴ SCENE IV. " *R is for the dog.*"

R was called the dog's letter. In his 'English Grammar' Ben Jonson says, "R is the dog's letter and hirreth in the sound." In our old writers we have a verb formed from the noise of a dog. Thus, in Nashe (1600),

"They *arre* and bark at night against the moon;"

and in Holland's translation of Plutarch's 'Morals,' "A dog is, by nature, fell and quarrelsome, given to *arre* and war upon a very small occasion." Erasmus has a

meaning for R being the dog's letter, which is not derived from the sound :—" R, litera quæ in Rixando prima est, canina vocatur."

¹⁵ SCENE V.—" *Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love.*"

The "love" thus drawn was the queen of love; for "the wind-swift Cupid" had "wings." Shakspeare had here the same idea which suggested his own beautiful description at the close of the 'Venus and Adonis':—

" Thus weary of the world away she hies,
And yokes her silver doves; by whose swift aid,
Their mistress mounted, through the empty skies
In her light chariot quickly is convey'd,
Holding their course to Paphos, where their queen
Means to immure herself, and not be seen."



ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A public Place.*

Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, Page, and Servants.

Ben. I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire;
The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,
And, if we meet, we shall not 'scape a brawl;
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

Mer. Thou art like one of those fellows, that, when he enters the confines of a tavern, claps me his sword upon the table, and says, "God send me no need of thee!" and, by the operation of the second cup, draws it on the drawer, when, indeed, there is no need.

Ben. Am I like such a fellow?

Mer. Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy; and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved.

Ben. And what to?

Mer. Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! why thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard, than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes. What eye, but such an eye, would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels, as an egg is full of meat; and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg, for quarrelling. Thou hast quarrelled with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? with another, for tying his new shoes with old riband? and yet thou wilt tutor me from quarrelling!

Ben. An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man

should buy the fee-simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

Mer. The fee-simple? O simple!

Enter TYBALT and others.

Ben. By my head, here come the Capulets.

Mer. By my heel, I care not.

Tyb. Follow me close, for I will speak to them.

Gentlemen, good den: a word with one of you.

Mer. And but one word with one of us? Couple it with something; make it a word and a blow.

Tyb. You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, an you will give me occasion.

Mer. Could you not take some occasion without giving?

Tyb. Mercutio, thou consortest with Romeo,—

Mer. Consort! what, dost thou make us minstrels! an thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords: here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall make you dance. 'Zounds, consort!

Ben. We talk here in the public haunt of men:

Either withdraw unto some private place,

Or reason coldly of your grievances,

Or else depart; here all eyes gaze on us.

Mer. Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze; I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

Enter ROMEO.

Tyb. Well, peace be with you, sir! here comes my man.

Mer. But I'll be hang'd, sir, if he wear your livery:

Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower;

Your worship in that sense, may call him—man.

Tyb. Romeo, the love^a I bear thee can afford
No better term than this—Thou art a villain.

Rom. Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee

Doth much excuse the appertaining rage

To such a greeting:—Villain am I none;

Therefore, farewell; I see thou know'st me not.

^a (*A*), *hate*.

Tyb. Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me; therefore turn, and draw.

Rom. I do protest, I never injur'd thee;
But love^a thee better than thou canst devise,
Till thou shalt know the reason of my love:
And so, good Capulet,—which name I tender
As dearly as mine own,—be satisfied.

Mer. O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
Alla stoccata^b carries it away. [Draws.]

Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

Tyb. What wouldst thou have with me?

Mer. Good king of cats, nothing, but one of your nine
lives; that I mean to make bold withal, and, as you shall
use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will you
pluck your sword out of his pilcher^c by the ears? make
haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

Tyb. I am for you. [Drawing.]

Rom. Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

Mer. Come, sir, your passado. [They fight.]

Rom. Draw, Benvolio. Beat down their weapons.

Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage;
Tybalt, Mercutio, the prince expressly hath
Forbidden bandying in Verona streets.
Hold Tybalt—good Mercutio^d—

[Exeunt TYBALT and his Partisans.]

Mer. I am hurt.—

A plague o' both the houses!—I am sped:
Is he gone, and hath nothing?

Ben. What, art thou hurt?

Mer. Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 't is enough.—
Where is my page?—go, villain, fetch a surgeon. [Exit Page.]

Rom. Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

Mer. No, 't is not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a
church door; but 't is enough, 't will serve: ask for me to-
morrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered,

^a *Love.* So (C); the folio, *lov'd*.

^b *Alla stoccata*—the Italian term of art for the thrust with a rapier.

^c Scabbard.

^d We have restored the metrical arrangement of the preceding five lines, from (C) and the folio.

I warrant, for this world.—A plague o' both your houses!—
 What, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death!
 a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of
 arithmetic!—Why the devil came you between us? I was
 hurt under your arm.

Rom. I thought all for the best.

Mer. Help me into some house, Benvolio,
 Or I shall faint.—A plague o' both your houses,
 They have made worm's meat of me :
 I have it, and soundly too :—Your houses.

[*Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO.*]

Rom. This gentleman, the prince's near ally,
 My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt
 In my behalf; my reputation stain'd
 With Tybalt's slander, Tybalt, that an hour
 Hath been my cousin.^a—O sweet Juliet,
 Thy beauty hath made me effeminate,
 And in my temper soften'd valour's steel.

Re-enter BENVOLIO.

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

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

Re-enter TYBALT.

Ben. Herè comes the furious Tybalt back again.

Rom. Alive!^b in triumph! and Mercutio slain!
 Away to heaven, respective lenity,
 And fire-eyed ^c fury be my conduct now!—
 Now, Tybalt, take the "villain" back again,
 That late thou gav'st me; for Mercutio's soul
 Is but a little way above our heads,
 Staying for thine to keep him company ;
 Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.

^a (*A*), kinsman.

^b So (*A*); (*C*) and folio, *he gone*.

^c *Fire-eyed*. So (*A*); the folio and (*C*) have *fire and fury*.

Tyb. Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here,
Shalt with him hence.

Rom. This shall determine that.

[*They fight ; TYBALT falls.*]

Ben. Romeo, away, be gone!
The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain :—
Stand not amaz'd :—the prince will doom thee death,
If thou art taken :—hence !—be gone !—away !

Rom. Oh ! I am fortune's fool !

Ben. Why dost thou stay ?

[*Exit ROMEO.*]

Enter Citizens, &c.

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

Ben. There lies that Tybalt.

1 Cit. Up, sir, go with me ;
I charge thee in the prince's name, obey.

*Enter PRINCE, attended ; MONTAGUE, CAPULET, their Wives,
and others.*

Prin. Where are the vile beginners of this fray ?

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

La. Cap. Tybalt, my cousin ! O my brother's child !
O prince,—O cousin,—husband,^a—the blood is spill'd
Of my dear kinsman !—Prince, as thou art true,
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.—
O cousin, cousin !

Prin. Benvolio, who began this fray ?

Ben. Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay ;
Romeo that spoke him fair, bade him bethink

^a So (C) and folio ; (D), "*unhappy sight, ah me,*" and in that copy, "O cousin, cousin !" in the third line beyond, is omitted. All the modern editors, in this and in other passages, have adopted the arbitrary course of *making up a text* out of the first quarto and the quarto of 1599, without regard to the important circumstance that this later edition was "*newly corrected, augmented, and amended,*"—and that the folio, in nearly every essential particular, follows it.

How nice^a the quarrel was, and urg'd withal
 Your high displeasure :—All this—uttered
 With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bow'd,—
 Could not take truce with the unruly spleen
 Of Tybalt, deaf to peace, but that he tilts
 With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast ;
 Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,
 And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
 Cold death aside, and with the other sends
 It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity
 Retorts it : Romeo he cries aloud,
 Hold, friends ! friends, part ! and swifter than his tongue,
 His agile arm beats down their fatal points,
 And 'twixt them rushes ; underneath whose arm
 An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life
 Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled :
 But by and by comes back to Romeo,
 Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,
 And to't they go like lightning ; for, ere I
 Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain ;
 And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly ;
 This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

La. Cap. He is a kinsman to the Montague,
 Affection makes him false,¹ he speaks not true :
 Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
 And all those twenty could but kill one life :
 I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give ;
 Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

Prin. Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio ;
 Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe ?

Mon. Not Romeo, prince, he was Mercutio's friend ;
 His fault concludes but what the law should end,
 The life of Tybalt.

Prin. And for that offence,
 Immediately we do exile him hence :
 I have an interest in your hate's^b proceeding,
 My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a bleeding ;

^a Slight.

^b (A), hates ; (C), heart's.

But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine,
 That you shall all repent the loss of mine :
 I will be deaf to pleading and excuses ;
 Nor tears, nor prayers, shall purchase out abuses,
 Therefore use none : let Romeo hence in haste,
 Else, when he 's found, that hour is his last.
 Bear hence his body, and attend our will :
 Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*A Room in Capulet's House.*

Enter JULIET.

Jul. Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
 Towards Phœbus' lodging;^a such a waggoner
 As Phaëton would whip you to the west,
 And bring in cloudy night immediately.^b—
 Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night !
 That, unawares,^c eyes may wink; and Romeo
 Leap to these arms, untalk'd of, and unseen !—
 Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
 By their own beauties : or, if love be blind,
 It best agrees with night.—Come, civil night,

^a (A), mansion.

^b Juliet's soliloquy ends here in the first quarto.

^c The common reading, which is that of all the old copies, is
 "That runaways' eyes may weep."

This passage has been a perpetual source of contention to the commentators. Their difficulties are well represented by Warburton's question—"What runaways are these, whose eyes Juliet is wishing to have stopped?" Warburton says *Phœbus* is the runaway. Steevens proves that *Night* is the runaway. Douce thinks that *Juliet* is the runaway. It has been suggested to us that in several early poems Cupid is styled *Runaway*. Monck Mason is confident that the passage ought to be, "That *Renomy's* eyes may wink," *Renomy* being a new personage, created out of the French *Renommée*, and answering, we suppose, to the "Rumour" of Spenser. An unlearned compositor, Zachary Jackson, suggests that *runaways* is a misprint for *unawares*. The word *unawares*, in the old orthography, is *unawayres* (it is so spelt in 'The Third Part of Henry VI. '), and the *r*, having been misplaced, produced this word of puzzle, *runawayes*. We have not the least hesitation in adopting Jackson's reading; and we have the authority of a very clever article in 'Blackwood's Magazine' (July, 1819) for a general testimony to the value of Jackson's book; and the equally valuable authority of a most accomplished friend, who called our attention to this particular reading, as settled by the common sense of the printer.

Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
 And learn me how to lose a winning match,
 Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:
 Hood my unmann'd^a blood bating in my cheeks,
 With thy black mantle; till strange love, grown bold,
 Think true love acted, simple modesty.
 Come, night!—Come, Romeo! come, thou day in night!
 For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
 Whiter than new snow upon a raven's back.—
 Come, gentle night; come, loving, black-brow'd night,
 Give me my Romeo: and, when he shall die,
 Take him and cut him out in little stars,
 And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
 That all the world will be in love with night,
 And pay no worship to the garish sun.
 O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
 But not possess'd it; and, though I am sold,
 Not yet enjoy'd: so tedious is this day,
 As is the night before some festival
 To an impatient child, that hath new robes
 And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,

Enter Nurse, with cords.

And she brings news; and every tongue, that speaks
 But Romeo's name, speaks heavenly eloquence.—
 Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there? the cords
 That Romeo bade thee fetch?

Nurse. Ay, ay, the cords.

[Throws them down.]

Jul. Ah me! what news! why dost thou wring thy hands?

Nurse. Ah well-a-day! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead!

We are undone, lady, we are undone!—

Alack the day!—he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead!—

Jul. Can Heaven be so envious?

Nurse. Romeo can,

Though Heaven cannot:—O Romeo, Romeo!—

Whoever would have thought it?—Romeo!

^a *Unmann'd*—a term of falconry. To man a hawk is to accustom her to the falconer who trains her.

Jul. What devil art thou, that dost torment me thus?
 This torture should be roar'd in dismal hell.
 Hath Romeo slain himself? say thou but *I*,^a
 And that bare vowel *I* shall poison more
 Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice:
 I am not *I*, if there be such an *I*;
 Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer, *I*.
 If he be slain, say—*I*; or if not, no:
 Brief sounds determine of my weal, or woe.

Nurse. I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes,—
 God save the mark!²—here on his manly breast:
 A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse;
 Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaub'd in blood,
 All in gore blood;—I swooned at the sight.

Jul. O break, my heart!—poor bankrout,^b break at once!
 To prison, eyes! ne'er look on liberty!
 Vile earth, to earth resign; end motion here;
 And thou, and Romeo, press one heavy bier!

Nurse. O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had!
 O courteous Tybalt! honest gentleman!
 That ever I should live to see thee dead!

Jul. What storm is this, that blows so contrary?
 Is Romeo slaughter'd; and is Tybalt dead?
 My dearest^c cousin, and my dearer lord?—
 Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom!
 For who is living, if those two are gone?

Nurse. Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished;
 Romeo, that kill'd him, he is banished.

Jul. O God!—did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?

Nurse. It did, it did; alas the day! it did.

Jul. O serpent heart, hid with a flow'ring face!
 Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
 Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!
 Dove-feather'd raven! wolfish-ravens lamb!
 Despised substance of divinest show!

^a It is here necessary to retain the old spelling of the affirmative particle *I* (ay).

^b *Bankrout.* We restore the old poetical *bankrout*, in preference to the modern *bankrupt*.

^c (*A*), *dear-lov'd*.

Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,
 A damned^a saint, an honourable villain!—
 O, nature! what hadst thou to do in hell,
 When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
 In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?—
 Was ever book containing such vile matter
 So fairly bound? O, that deceit should dwell
 In such a gorgeous palace!

Nurse. There's no trust,
 No faith, no honesty in men; all perjur'd,
 All forsworn, all nought, all dissemblers.—
 Ah, where's my man? give me some *aqua vitæ*:—
 These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.
 Shame come to Romeo!

Jul. Blister'd be thy tongue,
 For such a wish! he was not born to shame:
 Upon his brow shame is asham'd to sit;
 For 't is a throne where honour may be crown'd
 Sole monarch of the universal earth.
 O, what a beast was I to chide at him!

Nurse. Will you speak well of him that kill'd your cousin?

Jul. Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
 Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,
 When I, thy three hours' wife, have mangled it?—
 But, wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
 That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:
 Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;
 Your tributary drops belong to woe,
 Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.
 My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
 And Tybalt dead, that would have slain my husband:
 All this is comfort: Wherefore weep I then?
 Some word there was worser than Tybalt's death,
 That murder'd me: I would forget it fain;
 But, O! it presses to my memory,
 Like damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds.
 "Tybalt is dead, and Romeo—banished;"
 That—"banished," that one word—"banished,"

^a Thus (*D*); (*C*), *dimme*.

Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death
 Was woe enough, if it had ended there :
 Or,—if sour woe delights in fellowship,
 And needly will be rank'd with other griefs,—
 Why follow'd not, when she said—Tybalt's dead,
 Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,
 Which modern lamentation might have mov'd?
 But with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,
 "Romeo is banished,"—to speak that word,
 Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
 All slain, all dead :—"Romeo is banished,"—
 There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
 In that word's death; no words can that woe sound.—
 Where is my father, and my mother, nurse?

Nurse. Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse :
 Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.

Jul. Wash they his wounds with tears? mine shall be
 spent,

When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.
 Take up those cords :—Poor ropes, you are beguil'd,
 Both you and I; for Romeo is exil'd :
 He made you for a highway to my bed ;
 But I, a maid, die maiden-widowed.
 Come, cord; come, nurse; I'll to my wedding-bed ;
 And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead!

Nurse. Hie to your chamber: I'll find Romeo
 To comfort you :—I wot well where he is.
 Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night ;
 I'll to him; he is hid at Laurence' cell.

Jul. O find him! give this ring to my true knight,
 And bid him come to take his last farewell. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*Friar Laurence's Cell.*

Enter Friar LAURENCE and ROMEO.

Fri. Romeo, come forth; come forth, thou fearful man ;
 Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,
 And thou art wedded to calamity.

Rom. Father, what news? what is the prince's doom?

What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand,
That I yet know not?

Fri. Too familiar

Is my dear son with such sour company :
I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.

Rom. What less than doomsday is the prince's doom?

Fri. A gentler judgment vanish'd from his lips,
Not body's death, but body's banishment.

Rom. Ha! banishment? be merciful, say—death.
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death: do not say—banishment.

Fri. Here^a from Verona art thou banished :
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

Rom. There is no world without Verona walls,
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
Hence-banished is banish'd from the world,
And world's exile is death :—then banished
Is death mis-term'd. Calling death banishment,
Thou cutt'st my head off with a golden axe,
And smil'st upon the stroke that murders me.

Fri. O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!
Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,
Taking thy part, hath rush'd aside the law,
And turn'd that black word death to banishment.
This is dear mercy, and thou seest it not.

Rom. 'T is torture, and not mercy : Heaven is here,
Where Juliet lives; and every cat, and dog,
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,
Live here in heaven, and may look on her,
But Romeo may not.—More validity,
More honourable state, more courtship lives
In carrion flies, than Romeo: they may seize
On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,
And steal immortal blessing from her lips;
Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin;
This may flies do, when I from this must fly—
(And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death?)—

^a (A), Hence.

But Romeo may not, he is banished.^a
 Hadst thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,
 No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,
 But—banished—to kill me ; banished ?
 O friar, the damned use that word in hell ;
 Howlings attend it : How hast thou the heart,
 Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
 A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,
 To mangle me with that word—banished ?

Fri. Thou fond mad man, hear me a little speak.^b

Rom. O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

Fri. I'll give thee armour to keep off that word ;
 Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,
 To comfort thee, though thou art banished.

Rom. Yet banished ?—Hang up philosophy !
 Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,
 Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom ;
 It helps not, it prevails not, talk no more.

Fri. O, then I see that madmen have no ears.

Rom. How should they, when that wise men have no
 eyes ?

Fri. Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.

Rom. Thou canst not speak of what thou dost not feel :
 Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
 An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,
 Doting like me, and like me banished,
 Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear thy
 hair,

And fall upon the ground, as I do now,
 Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

Fri. Arise ; one knocks ; good Romeo, hide thyself.

[*Knocking within.*

^a We have restored this passage to the reading of the folio. The lines were transposed by Steevens, without regard to any copy. In the first quarto the passage is altogether different. In that of 1609 it runs thus :—

“ This may flies do, when I from this must fly ;—
 (And say'st thou yet that exile is not death ?)—
 But Romeo may not, he is banished.
 Flies may do this, but I from this must fly,
 They are free men, but I am banished.”

^b Thus (*D*).

Rom. Not I ; unless the breath of heart-sick groans,
Mist-like, infold me from the search of eyes. [*Knocking.*

Fri. Hark, how they knock !—Who 's there ?—Romeo,
arise ;

Thou wilt be taken :—Stay a while ;—stand up ; [*Knocking.*
Run to my study :—By and by :—God's will !

What simpleness^a is this !—I come, I come. [*Knocking.*
Who knocks so hard ? whence come you ? what 's your will ?

Nurse. [*Within.*] Let me come in, and you shall know my
errand ;

I come from lady Juliet.

Fri. Welcome then.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. O holy friar, O, tell me, holy friar,
Where is my lady's lord, where 's Romeo ?

Fri. There on the ground, with his own tears made drunk.

Nurse. O, he is even in my mistress' case,
Just in her case !

Fri. O woeful sympathy !

Piteous predicament !

Nurse. Even so lies she,
Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering :—
Stand up, stand up ; stand, an you be a man :
For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand ;
Why should you fall into so deep an O ?

Rom. Nurse !

Nurse. Ah, sir ! ah, sir !—Well, death 's the end of all.

Rom. Speak'st thou of Juliet ? how is it with her ?
Doth not she think me an old murtherer,
Now I have stain'd the childhood of our joy
With blood remov'd but little from her own ?
Where is she ? and how doth she ? and what says
My conceal'd lady to our cancell'd love ?

Nurse. O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps ;
And now falls on her bed ; and then starts up,
And Tybalt calls ; and then on Romeo cries,
And then down falls again.

^a (*A*), wilfulness.

Rom. As if that name,
 Shot from the deadly level of a gun,
 Did murder her; as that name's cursed hand
 Murder'd her kinsman.—O tell me, friar, tell me,
 In what vile part of this anatomy
 Doth my name lodge? tell me, that I may sack
 The hateful mansion. [*Draws his sword.*]

Fri. Hold thy desperate hand:
 Art thou a man? thy form cries out thou art;
 Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote
 The unreasonable fury of a beast:
 Unseemly woman, in a seeming man!
 And ill-beseeming beast, in seeming both!
 Thou hast amaz'd me: by my holy order,
 I thought thy disposition better temper'd.
 Hast thou slain Tybalt? wilt thou slay thyself?
 And slay thy lady that in thy life lives,^a
 By doing damned hate upon thyself?
 Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth?
 Since birth, and heaven, and earth, all three do meet
 In thee at once; which thou at once wouldst lose.
 Fie, fie! thou sham'st thy shape, thy love, thy wit;
 Which, like an usurer, abound'st in all,
 And usest none in that true use indeed
 Which would bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit.
 Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,
 Digressing from the valour of a man:
 Thy dear love sworn, but hollow perjury,
 Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish:
 Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,
 Mis-shapen in the conduct of them both,
 Like powder in a skill-less soldier's flask,³
 Is set on fire by thine own ignorance,
 And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.
 What, rouse thee, man! thy Juliet is alive,
 For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead;
 There art thou happy: Tybalt would kill thee,

^a (*A*) reads—

“And slay thy lady, too, that lives in thee.”

But thou slew'st Tybalt; there art thou happy:^a
 The law, that threaten'd death, became thy friend,
 And turn'd it to exile; there art thou happy:
 A pack of blessing lights upon thy back;
 Happiness courts thee in her best array;
 But, like a misbehav'd^b and sullen wench,
 Thou putttest up^c thy fortune and thy love:
 Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.
 Go get thee to thy love, as was decreed,
 Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her;
 But, look thou stay not till the watch be set,
 For then thou canst not pass to Mantua;
 Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time
 To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,
 Beg pardon of thy prince, and call thee back
 With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
 Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.
 Go before, nurse: commend me to thy lady;
 And bid her hasten all the house to bed,
 Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto:
 Romeo is coming.

Nurse. O Lord, I could have stay'd here all the night,
 To hear good counsel: O, what learning is!—
 My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

Rom. Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.

Nurse. Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir:
 Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late. [*Exit Nurse.*]

Rom. How well my comfort is reviv'd by this!

Fri. Go hence: Good night; and here stands all your state;
 Either be gone before the watch be set,
 Or by the break of day, disguis'd, from hence;
 Sojourn in Mantua: I'll find out your man,
 And he shall signify from time to time
 Every good hap to you, that chances here:
 Give me thy hand; 't is late: farewell; good night.

^a (*A*), which modern editors have followed, gives "happy too."

^b Thus (*A*); the folio, *mis-shaped*.

^c *Putttest up*. So the folio; (*D*) reads *pouts* thy fortune, which modern editors have adopted, with the addition of *upon*. Is to *put up* used as to *put aside*?

Rom. But that a joy past joy calls out on me,
It were a grief so brief to part with thee:
Farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Room in Capulet's House.*

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS.

Cap. Things have fallen out, sir, so unluckily,
That we have had no time to move our daughter:
Look you, she lov'd her kinsman Tybalt dearly,
And so did I;—Well; we were born to die.—
'T is very late, she'll not come down to-night:
I promise you, but for your company,
I would have been a-bed an hour ago.

Par. These times of woe afford no time to woo;
Madam, good night: commend me to your daughter.

La. Cap. I will, and know her mind early to-morrow;
To-night she's mew'd^a up to her heaviness.

Cap. Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender
Of my child's love: I think she will be rul'd
In all respects by me; nay more, I doubt it not.
Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed;
Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love;
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next—
But soft; What day is this?

Par. Monday, my lord.

Cap. Monday? ha! ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon,
O' Thursday let it be;—o' Thursday, tell her,
She shall be married to this noble earl:—
Will you be ready? do you like this haste?
We'll keep no great ado;—a friend, or two:—
For hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,
It may be thought we held him carelessly,
Being our kinsman, if we revel much:
Therefore we'll have some half a dozen friends,
And there an end. But what say you to Thursday?

Par. My lord, I would that Thursday were to-morrow.

Cap. Well, get you gone:—O' Thursday be it then:—

^a Another term of falconry. The *mew* is the hawk's cage.

Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed,
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding-day.—
Farewell, my lord.—Light to my chamber, ho!
Afore me, it is so very late, that we
May call it early by and by :—Good night.

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE V.—*Loggia to Juliet's Chamber.*⁴

Enter ROMEO and JULIET.

Jul. Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day :
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear ;
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate-tree :⁵
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

Rom. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,⁶
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east :
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain's tops ;
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

Jul. Yon light is not daylight, I know it, I :
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torchbearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua :
Therefore stay yet, thou need'st not to be gone.

Rom. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death :
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I'll say, yon grey is not the morning's eye,
'T is but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow ;
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads :
I have more care to stay than will to go ;—
Come, death, and welcome!—Juliet wills it so.—
How is 't, my soul? let's talk, it is not day.

Jul. It is, it is, hie hence, be gone, away ;
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords, and displeasing sharps.

Some say the lark makes sweet division ;^a
 This doth not so, for she divideth us :
 Some say, the lark and loathed toad change eyes ;
 O, now I would they had chang'd voices too !
 Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,
 Hunting thee hence with hunts-up to the day.⁷
 O, now be gone ; more light and light it grows.

Rom. More light and light!—more dark and dark our
 woes.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Madam !

Jul. Nurse ?

Nurse. Your lady mother is coming to your chamber :
 The day is broke ; be wary, look about. [*Exit Nurse.*

Jul. Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

Rom. Farewell, farewell ! one kiss, and I'll descend.

[*ROMEO descends.*

Jul. Art thou gone so ? love ! lord ! ay—husband, friend !^b
 I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
 For in a minute there are many days :
 O ! by this count I shall be much in years,
 Ere I again behold my Romeo.

Rom. Farewell ! I will omit no opportunity
 That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

Jul. O, thinkest thou we shall ever meet again ?

Rom. I doubt it not ; and all these woes shall serve
 For sweet discourses in our time to come.

Jul. O God ! I have an ill-divining soul ;^a
 Methinks, I see thee, now thou art so low,^c
 As one dead in the bottom of a tomb :
 Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

Rom. And trust me, love, in my eye so do you :
 Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu ! adieu ! [*Exit ROM.*

^a *Sweet division.* A division in music is a number of quick notes sung to one syllable ; a kind of warbling. This continued to prevail in vocal music till rather recently. Handel, governed by custom rather than by his own better taste, introduces divisions in many of his airs and choruses. Steevens, in his note on this word, mistakes the meaning entirely.

^b (*A*) reads "my love, my lord, my friend," which has supplied the modern text.

^c (*A*), below.

Jul. O fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle:
If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him
That is renown'd for faith? Be fickle, fortune;
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,
But send him back.

La. Cap. [*Within.*] Ho, daughter! are you up?

Jul. Who is 't that calls? is it my lady mother?
Is she not down so late, or up so early?
What unaccustom'd cause procures her hither?

Enter LADY CAPULET.

La. Cap. Why, how now, Juliet?

Jul. Madam, I am not well.

La. Cap. Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?
What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?
An if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him live:
Therefore, have done: some grief shows much of love;
But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

Jul. Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

La. Cap. So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend
Which you weep for.

Jul. Feeling so the loss,
I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

La. Cap. Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death,
As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.

Jul. What villain, madam?

La. Cap. That same villain, Romeo.

Jul. Villain and he be many miles asunder.
God pardon him! I do, with all my heart;
And yet no man, like he, doth grieve my heart.

La. Cap. That is, because the traitor lives.

Jul. Ay, madam, from the reach of these my hands.
'Would, none but I might venge my cousin's death!

La. Cap. We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not:
Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua,—
Where that same banish'd runagate doth live,—
Shall give him such an unaccustom'd dram,^a

^a We have again a made-up text in modern editions. (*A*) (the other lines being different) has,

“That shall bestow on him so sure a draught.”

That he shall soon keep Tybalt company :
And then I hope thou wilt be satisfied.

Jul. Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
With Romeo, till I behold him. Dead—
Is my poor heart, so for a kinsman vex'd :
Madam, if you could find out but a man
To bear a poison, I would temper it ;
That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
Soon sleep in quiet. O, how my heart abhors
To hear him nam'd—and cannot come to him,—
To wreak the love I bore my cousin
Upon his body that hath slaughter'd him !

La. Cap. Find thou the means, and I 'll find such a man.
But now I 'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

Jul. And joy comes well in such a needy^a time :
What are they, I beseech your ladyship ?

La. Cap. Well, well, thou hast a careful father, child ;
One, who, to put thee from thy heaviness,
Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy,
That thou expect'st not, nor I look'd not for.

Jul. Madam, in happy time, what day is that ?

La. Cap. Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn,
The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,
The county Paris, at St. Peter's church,
Shall happily make thee a joyful bride.

Jul. Now, by St. Peter's church, and Peter too,
He shall not make me there a joyful bride !
I wonder at this haste ; that I must wed
Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.
I pray you tell my lord and father, madam,
I will not marry yet ; and, when I do, I swear,
It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,
Rather than Paris :—These are news indeed !

La. Cap. Here comes your father ; tell him so yourself,
And see how he will take it at your hands.

Enter CAPULET and Nurse.

Cap. When the sun sets, the earth^b doth drizzle dew ;

^a (*A*), *needful*.

^b (*D*) gives us *air*, which the modern editors have followed.

But for the sunset of my brother's son,
 It rains downright.—
 How now? a conduit, girl? what, still in tears?
 Evermore showering? In one little body
 Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind:
 For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,
 Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is,
 Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs;
 Who,—raging with thy tears, and they with them,—
 Without a sudden calm, will overset
 Thy tempest-tossed body.—How now, wife?
 Have you deliver'd to her our decree?

La. Cap. Ay, sir; but she will none, she gives you thanks.
 I would the fool were married to her grave!

Cap. Soft, take me with you, take me with you, wife.
 How! will she none? doth she not give us thanks?
 Is she not proud? doth she not count her bless'd,
 Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
 So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

Jul. Not proud, you have; but thankful, that you have:
 Proud can I never be of what I hate;
 But thankful even for hate, that is meant love.^a

Cap. How now! how now, chop-logic! What is this?
 Proud,—and, I thank you,—and, I thank you not;—^b
 Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds,
 But settle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,
 To go with Paris to St. Peter's church,
 Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.
 Out, you green-sickness carrion! out, you baggage!
 You tallow-face!

La. Cap. Fie, fie! what, are you mad?

Jul. Good father, I beseech you on my knees,
 Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

Cap. Hang thee, young baggage! disobedient wretch!
 I tell thee what,—get thee to church o' Thursday,
 Or never after look me in the face:

^a *Meant love*—meant as love.

^b (C) has this line, which is not in the folio:—

“And yet not proud;—Mistress, minion, you.”

Speak not, reply not, do not answer me ;
 My fingers itch.—Wife, we scarce thought us bless'd,
 That God had lent ^a us but this only child ;
 But now I see this one is one too much,
 And that we have a curse in having her :
 Out on her, hilding !

Nurse. God in heaven bless her !—

You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

Cap. And why, my lady wisdom ? hold your tongue,
 Good prudence ; smatter with your gossips, go.

Nurse. I speak no treason.

Cap. O, God ye good den !

Nurse. May not one speak ?

Cap. Peace, you mumbling fool !

Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl,
 For here we need it not.

La. Cap. You are too hot.

Cap. God's bread ! it makes me mad.
 Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play,
 Alone, in company, ^b still my care hath been
 To have her match'd ; and having now provided
 A gentleman of noble parentage,
 Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly train'd, ^c
 Stuff'd (as they say) with honourable parts,
 Proportion'd as one's heart would wish a man,—
 And then to have a wretched puling fool,
 A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,
 To answer—" I 'll not wed,—I cannot love,
 I am too young, I pray you, pardon me ;"—
 But, an you will not wed, I 'll pardon you :
 Graze where you will, you shall not house with me :
 Look to 't, think on 't, I do not use to jest.
 Thursday is near ; lay hand on heart, advise :

^a (*A*), *sent.*

^b Thus (*C*) and folio. (*A*), which has been partially followed, has—
 " God's blessed mother ! Wife, it mads me.
 Day, night, early, late, at home, abroad,
 Alone, in company, waking or sleeping,
 Still my care hath been to see her match'd."

^c (*A*) gives *train'd*; (*C*) and folio, *allied*.

An you be mine, I 'll give you to my friend ;
 An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die i' the streets,
 For, by my soul, I 'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
 Nor what is mine shall never do thee good :
 Trust to 't, bethink you, I 'll not be forsworn.

[*Exit.*]

Jul. Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
 That sees into the bottom of my grief?
 O, sweet my mother, cast me not away !
 Delay this marriage for a month, a week ;
 Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
 In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

La. Cap. Talk not to me, for I 'll not speak a word ;
 Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee. [*Exit.*]

Jul. O God !—O nurse ! how shall this be prevented ?
 My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven ;
 How shall that faith return again to earth,
 Unless that husband send it me from heaven
 By leaving earth ?—comfort me, counsel me.—
 Alack, alack, that Heaven should practise stratagems
 Upon so soft a subject as myself !
 What say'st thou ? hast thou not a word of joy ?
 Some comfort, nurse.

Nurse. 'Faith, here it is : Romeo
 Is banished ; and all the world to nothing,
 That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you ;
 Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
 Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,
 I think it best you married with the county.
 O, he 's a lovely gentleman !
 Romeo 's a dishclout to him ; an eagle, madam,
 Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye,
 As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
 I think you are happy in this second match,
 For it excels your first : or if it did not,
 Your first is dead ; or 't were as good he were,
 As living here and you no use of him.

Jul. Speakest thou from thy heart ?

Nurse. From my soul too ;
 Or else beshrew them both.

Jul. Amen!

Nurse. What?

Jul. Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous much.
Go in ; and tell my lady I am gone,
Having displeas'd my father, to Laurence' cell,
To make confession, and to be absolv'd.

Nurse. Marry, I will ; and this is wisely done. [Exit.]

Jul. Ancient damnation ! O most wicked fiend !
Is it more sin—to wish me thus forsworn,
Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
Which she hath prais'd him with above compare
So many thousand times ?—Go, counsellor ;
Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.—
I 'll to the friar, to know his remedy ;
If all else fail, myself have power to die. [Exit.]

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ACT III.

¹ SCENE I.—“*Affection makes him false.*”

THERE is a slight particle of untruth in Benvolio's statement, which, to a certain degree, justifies this charge of Lady Capulet. Tybalt was bent upon quarrelling with Romeo, but Mercutio forced on his own quarrel with Tybalt. Dr. Johnson's remark upon this circumstance is worthy his character as a moralist:—“The charge of falsehood on Benvolio, though produced at hazard, is very just. The author, who seems to intend the character of Benvolio as good, meant, perhaps, to show how the best minds, in a state of faction and discord, are detorted to criminal partiality.”

² SCENE II.—“*God save the mark!*”

This expression occurs in ‘The First Part of Henry IV.,’ in Hotspur's celebrated speech defending the denial of his prisoners. In ‘Othello,’ we have *God bless the mark*. In these cases, as in the instance before us, the commentators leave the expression in its original obscurity. May we venture a conjecture? The *mark* which persons who are unable to write make, instead of their signature, was often in the form of a *cross*; but anciently the use of this mark was not confined to illiterate persons, for, amongst the Saxons, the mark of the cross, as an attestation of the good faith of the person signing, was required to be attached to the signature of those who could write, and to stand in the place of the signature of those who could not write. (See Blackstone's ‘Commentaries.’) The word *mark* was, we believe, thus taken to signify the *cross*. *God save the mark* was, therefore, a form of ejaculation approaching to the character of an oath; in the same manner as assertions were made emphatic by the addition of “by the rood,” or, “by the holy rood.”

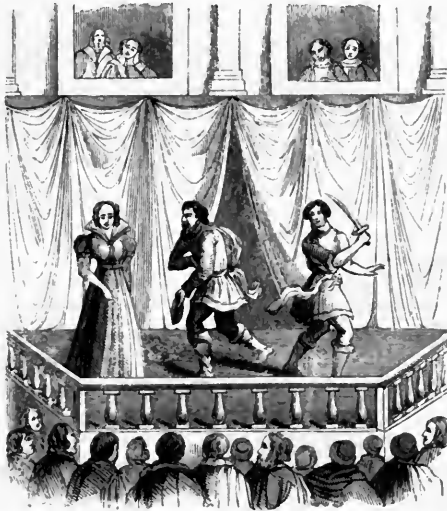
³ SCENE III.—“*Like powder in a skill-less soldier's flask.*”

The force and propriety of this comparison are manifest; but, fully to understand it, we must know how the soldier of Shakspeare's time was accoutred. His heavy gun was fired with a match, his powder was carried in a flask; and the match and the powder, in unskilful hands, were doubtless sometimes productive of accidents; so that the man-at-arms was, like Romeo in his passion, “dismembered with his own defence.”

⁴ SCENE V.—“*Juliet's chamber.*”

The stage-direction in the folio edition of 1623 is, “Enter Romeo and Juliet aloft.” In the first quarto, 1597, the direction is, “Enter Romeo and Juliet at the window.” To understand these directions, we must refer to the construction of the old theatres. “Towards the rear of the stage,” says Malone, “there appears to have been a balcony or upper stage; the platform of which was probably eight or nine feet from the ground. I suppose it to have been supported by pillars. From hence, in many of our old plays, part of the dialogue was spoken; and in the front of it curtains likewise were hung, so as occasionally to conceal the persons in it from

the view of the audience. At each side of this balcony was a box very inconveniently situated, which was sometimes called the *private box*. In these boxes, which were at a lower price, some persons sate, either from economy or singularity." The balcony probably served a variety of purposes. Malone says, "When the citizens of Angiers are to appear on the walls of their town, and young Arthur to leap from the battlements, I suppose our ancestors were contented with seeing them in the balcony already described; or, perhaps, a few boards tacked together, and painted so as to resemble the rude discoloured walls of an old town, behind which a platform might have been placed near the top, on which the citizens stood." It appears to us probable that even in these cases the balcony served for the platform, and that a few painted boards in front supplied the illusion of wall and tower. There was still another use of the balcony. According to Malone, when a play was exhibited within a play, as in 'Hamlet,' the court, or audience, before whom the interlude was performed, sate in the balcony. To Malone's historical account of the English stage, and to Mr. Collier's valuable details regarding theatres ('Annals of the Stage,' vol. iii.), the reader is referred for fuller information upon this and other points which bear upon the economy of our ancient drama. We prefix a representation of the old stage, with its balcony, which is engraved in the title-page to William Alabaster's Latin tragedy of 'Roxana,' 1632.



⁵ SCENE V.—“*Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate-tree.*”

In the description of the garden in Chaucer's translation of 'The Romaunt of the Rose,' the pomegranate is first mentioned amongst the fruit-trees :—

“ There were (and that wot I full well)
Of pomegranates a full great deal.”

The “orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits” was one of the beautiful objects described by Solomon in his 'Canticles.' Amongst the fruit-bearing trees, the pomegranate is in some respects the most beautiful; and, therefore, in the south of Europe and in the East it has become the chief ornament of the garden. But where

did Shakspeare find that the nightingale haunted the pomegranate-tree, pouring forth her song from the same bough, week after week? Doubtless in some of the old travels with which he was familiar. Chaucer puts his nightingale "in a fresh green laurel-tree;" but the preference of the nightingale for the pomegranate is unquestionable. "The nightingale sings from the pomegranate-groves in the daytime," says Russel in his account of Aleppo. A friend, whose observations as a traveller are as acute as his descriptions are graphic and forcible, informs us that throughout his journeys in the East he never heard such a choir of nightingales as in a row of pomegranate-trees that skirt the road from Smyrna to Boudjia. In the truth of details such as these the genius of Shakspeare is as much exhibited as in his wonderful powers of generalization.

⁶ SCENE V.—"*It was the lark, the herald of the morn.*"

Shakspeare's power of describing natural objects is unequalled in this beautiful scene, which, as we think, was amongst his very early productions. The 'Venus and Adonis,' published in 1593, is also full of this power. Compare the following passage with the description of morning in the scene before us:—

"Lo! here the gentle lark, weary of rest,
From his moist cabinet mounts up on high,
And wakes the morning, from whose silver breast,
The sun ariseth in his majesty;
Who doth the world so gloriously behold,
That cedar-tops and hills seem burnish'd gold."

⁷ SCENE V.—"*Hunting thee hence with hunts up to the day.*"

There was one Gray, a maker of "certain merry ballads," who, according to Puttenham in his 'Art of English Poesy' (1589), grew into good estimation with Henry VIII., and the Protector Somerset, for the said merry ballads, "whereof one chiefly was, The hunte is up, the hunte is up." Douce thinks he has recovered the identical song, which he reprints. One stanza will, perhaps, satisfy our readers:—

"Chorus. { The hunt is up, the hunt is up,
Sing merrily wee, the hunt is up;
The birds they sing,
The deer they fling,
Hey, nony nony—no:
The hounds they crye,
The hunters flye,
Hey trolilo, trololilo.
The hunt is up, the hunt is up."

⁸ SCENE V.—"*O God! I have an ill-divining soul.*"

Coleridge has some remarks upon that beautiful passage in 'Richard II.,' where the queen says—

"Some unborn sorrow, ripe in sorrow's womb,
Is coming toward me,"—

which we may properly quote here: "Mark in this scene Shakspeare's gentleness in touching the tender superstitions, the *terræ incognitæ* of presentiments, in the human mind; and how sharp a line of distinction he commonly draws between these obscure forecastings of general experience in each individual, and the vulgar errors of mere tradition. Indeed, it may be taken, once for all, as the truth, that Shakspeare, in the absolute universality of his genius, always reverences whatever arises out of our moral nature; he never profanes his muse with a contemptuous reasoning away of the genuine and general, however unaccountable, feelings of mankind."—('Literary

Remains,' vol. ii., p. 174.)—Shakspeare has himself given us the key to his philosophy of presentiments. Venus, dreading the death of Adonis by the boar, says—

“ The thought of it doth make my faint heart bleed ;
And *fear doth teach it divination* ;
I prophesy thy death.”

Such presentiments, which may or may not be realised, appertain to the imagination when in a highly excited state. Our poet has exhibited the feeling under three different aspects in ‘Romeo and Juliet;’ when Romeo, before going to the masquerade, exclaims—

“ My mind misgives
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night’s revels”—

he is under the influence of his habitual melancholy,—the sentiment of unrequited love, which colours all his imagination with a gloomy foreshadowing of coming events. In the passage before us, when Juliet sees her husband

“ As one dead in the bottom of a tomb,”

we have “the fear” which doth “teach” her heart “divination.” But Romeo, in the fifth act, has a presentiment directly contrary to the approaching catastrophe; and this arises out of his “unaccustomed” animal spirits:—

“ My bosom’s lord sits lightly in his throne.”

All these states of mind are common to the imagination deeply stirred by passionate emotions. Nothing, in all Shakspeare’s philosophy, appears to us finer than the deceiving nature of Romeo’s presages in the last act, as compared with the true-divining fears of Juliet.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Friar Laurence's Cell.**Enter Friar LAURENCE and PARIS.**Fri.* On Thursday, sir? the time is very short.*Par.* My father Capulet will have it so:
And I am nothing slow, to slack his haste.^a*Fri.* You say, you do not know the lady's mind;
Uneven is the course, I like it not.*Par.* Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,
And therefore have I little talk'd of love:
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous,
That she doth give her sorrow so much sway;
And, in his wisdom, hastes our marriage,
To stop the inundation of her tears;
Which, too much minded by herself alone,
May be put from her by society:
Now do you know the reason of this haste.*Fri.* I would I knew not why it should be slow'd. [*Aside.*
Look, sir, here comes the lady towards my cell.*Enter JULIET.**Par.* Happily met, my lady, and my wife!*Jul.* That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.*Par.* That may be, must be, love, on Thursday next.*Jul.* What must be shall be.*Fri.* That's a certain text.*Par.* Come you to make confession to this father?^a In (*A*) the passage is

"And I am nothing slack to slow his haste."

Jackson conjectures that the *to* of all the editions should be *too*. But the meaning is obvious as it stands:—

"I am nothing slow, (so as) to slack his haste."

Jul. To answer that, I should confess to you.

Par. Do not deny to him, that you love me.

Jul. I will confess to you, that I love him.

Par. So will you, I am sure, that you love me.

Jul. If I do so, it will be of more price,
Being spoke behind your back, than to your face.

Par. Poor soul, thy face is much abus'd with tears.

Jul. The tears have got small victory by that ;
For it was bad enough, before their spite.

Par. Thou wrong'st it, more than tears, with that report.

Jul. That is no slander, sir, which is a truth ;
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

Par. Thy face is mine, and thou hast slander'd it.

Jul. It may be so, for it is not mine own.—
Are you at leisure, holy father, now ;
Or shall I come to you at evening mass ?

Fri. My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now :—
My lord, we must entreat the time alone.

Par. God shield I should disturb devotion !—
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse you :
Till then, adieu ! and keep this holy kiss. [Exit PARIS.]

Jul. O, shut the door ! and when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me : Past hope, past care, past help !

Fri. O Juliet, I already know thy grief ;
It strains me past the compass of my wits :
I hear thou must, and nothing may prorogue it,
On Thursday next be married to this county.

Jul. Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st of this,
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it :
If, in thy wisdom, thou canst give no help,
Do thou but call my resolution wise,
And with this knife I'll help it presently.
God join'd my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands ;
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo seal'd,
Shall be the labe to another deed,
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt
Turn to another, this shall slay them both :
Therefore, out of thy long-experienc'd time,^a

^a Nine lines, ending with this, are not in (A).

Give me some present counsel ; or, behold,
'Twi'xt my extremes and me this bloody knife
Shall play the umpire ; arbitrating that
Which the commission of thy years and art
Could to no issue of true honour bring.
Be not so long to speak ; I long to die,
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

Fri. Hold, daughter ; I do spy a kind of hope,
Which craves as desperate an execution
As that is desperate which we would prevent.
If, rather than to marry county Paris,
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,
Then is it likely thou wilt undertake
A thing like death to chide away this shame,
That cop'st with death himself to 'scape from it ;
And, if thou dar'st, I'll give thee remedy.

Jul. O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,
From off the battlements of yonder^a tower ;
Or walk in thievish ways ; or bid me lurk
Where serpents are ; chain me with roaring bears ;
Or hide me nightly in a charnel-house,
O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,
With reeky shanks, and yellow chapless skulls ;
Or bid me go into a new-made grave,
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud ;^b
Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble ;
And I will do it without fear or doubt,
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.

Fri. Hold, then ; go home, be merry, give consent
To marry Paris : Wednesday is to-morrow ;
To-morrow night look that thou lie alone,
Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber :
Take thou this phial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off :
When, presently, through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humour ; for no pulse

^a In (*A*), *yonder* ; in (*C*) and folio, *any*.

^b In (*D*), *shroud* ; in folio, *grave*.

Shall keep his native progress, but surcease.^a
 No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou livest ;
 The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
 To paly^b ashes ; thy eyes' windows fall,
 Like death, when he shuts up the day of life ;
 Each part, depriv'd of supple government,
 Shall stiff, and stark, and cold, appear like death :
 And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death
 Thou shalt continue two-and-forty hours,
 And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.
 Now when the bridegroom in the morning comes
 To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead :
 Then (as the manner of our country is)
 In thy best robes, uncover'd, on the bier,¹
 Be borne to burial in thy kindreds' grave,^c
 Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault,
 Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.
 In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,
 Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift ;
 And hither shall he come ; and he and I
 Will watch thy waking,^d and that very night
 Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.
 And this shall free thee from this present shame ;
 If no inconstant toy, nor womanish fear,
 Abate thy valour in the acting it.

Jul. Give me, give me ! O tell not me of fear.

Fri. Hold ; get you gone, be strong and prosperous

^a (*A*) gives this passage thus :—

“ A dull and heavy slumber, which shall seize
 Each vital spirit ; for no pulse shall keep
 His natural progress, but surcease to beat.”

We give the text of (*C*) and the folio. This speech of the friar, in the author's “ amended ” edition (*B*), is elaborated from thirteen lines to thirty-three ; and yet the modern editors have been bold enough, even here, to give us a text made up of Shakspeare's first thoughts and his last.

^b In (*D*), *paly* ; in (*C*), *many*.

^c This line, which is in all the ancient copies, has been left out in all the modern. The editors have here gone far beyond their office ;—nor can we understand why the more particular working out of the idea in the next two lines should have given them offence. “ Be borne,” means “ to be borne.”

^d *And he and I will watch thy waking*, is omitted in the folio, but is found in (*C*).

In this resolve : I 'll send a friar with speed
To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

Jul. Love, give me strength! and strength shall help afford.
Farewell, dear father! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in Capulet's House.*

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, Nurse, and Servants.

Cap. So many guests invite as here are writ.—[*Exit Serv.*
Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.²

2 Serv. You shall have none ill, sir; for I 'll try if they
can lick their fingers.

Cap. How canst thou try them so?

2 Serv. Marry, sir, 'tis an ill cook that cannot lick his
own fingers: therefore he that cannot lick his fingers goes
not with me.

Cap. Go, begone.—

[*Exit Servant.*

We shall be much unfurnish'd for this time.—

What, is my daughter gone to friar Laurence?

Nurse. Ay, forsooth.

Cap. Well, he may chance to do some good on her:
A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.

Enter JULIET.

Nurse. See, where she comes from shrift with merry look.

Cap. How now, my headstrong? where have you been
gadding?

Jul. Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin
Of disobedient opposition

To you, and your behests; and am enjoin'd

By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,

To beg your pardon:—Pardon, I beseech you!

Henceforward I am ever rul'd by you.

Cap. Send for the county; go tell him of this;
I 'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

Jul. I met the youthful lord at Laurence' cell;
And gave him what becomed^a love I might,
Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

^a *Becomed*—becoming.

Cap. Why, I am glad on 't; this is well,—stand up :
This is as 't should be.—Let me see the county ;
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.—
Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar,
All our whole city is much bound to him.

Jul. Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,
To help me sort such needful ornaments
As you think fit to furnish me to-morrow ?

La. Cap. No, not till Thursday ; there is time enough.

Cap. Go, nurse, go with her :—we 'll to church to-morrow.

[*Exeunt JULIET and Nurse.*]

La. Cap. We shall be short in our provision ;
'T is now near night.

Cap. Tush ! I will stir about,
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife :
Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her ;
I 'll not to bed to-night ;—let me alone ;
I 'll play the housewife for this once.—What, ho !—
They are all forth : Well, I will walk myself
To county Paris, to prepare him up
Against to-morrow : my heart is wondrous light,
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—Juliet's Chamber.

Enter JULIET and Nurse.

Jul. Ay, those attires are best :—But, gentle nurse,
I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night ;
For I have need of many orisons
To move the Heavens to smile upon my state,
Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

Enter LADY CAPULET.

La. Cap. What, are you busy, ho ? Need you ^a my help ?

Jul. No, madam ; we have cull'd such necessaries
As are behoveful for our state to-morrow :
So please you, let me now be left alone,
And let the nurse this night sit up with you ;

^a (A), Do you need my help ?

For, I am sure, you have your hands full all,
In this so sudden business.

La. Cap. Good night.

Get thee to bed, and rest ; for thou hast need.

[*Exeunt* LADY CAPULET and Nurse.]

Jul. Farewell !—God knows when we shall meet again.

I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,

That almost freezes up the heat of life :

I'll call them back again to comfort me ;—

Nurse !—What should she do here ?

My dismal scene I needs must act alone.—

Come, phial.—

What if this mixture do not work at all ?

Shall I be married then to-morrow morning ?^a

No, no ;—this shall forbid it :—lie thou there.—

[*Laying down a dagger.*]

^a This speech of Juliet, like many others of the great passages throughout the play, received the most careful elaboration and the most minute touching. In the first edition it occupies only eighteen lines ; it extends to forty-five in the "amended" edition of 1599. And yet the modern editors will make a patchwork of the two. This line in (*A*) is thus :—

"Must I of force be married to the county?"

The line which follows lower down—

"I will not entertain so bad a thought"—

Steevens says he has *recovered* from the quarto. We print the eighteen lines of the original, that the reader may see with what consummate skill the author's corrections have been made :—

"Farewell, God knows when we shall meet again.

Ah, I do take a fearful thing in hand.

What if this potion should not work at all,

Must I of force be married to the county ?

This shall forbid it. Knife, lie thou there.

What if the friar should give me this drink

To poison me, for fear I should disclose

Our former marriage ? Ah, I wrong him much,

He is a holy and religious man :

I will not entertain so bad a thought.

What if I should be stifled in the tomb ?

Awake an hour before the appointed time :

Ah, then I fear I shall be lunatic :

And playing with my dead forefathers' bones,

Dash out my frantic brains. Methinks I see

My cousin Tybalt weltering in his blood,

Seeking for Romeo : Stay, Tybalt, stay.

Romeo, I come, this do I drink to thee."

What if it be a poison, which the friar
Subtly hath minister'd to have me dead ;
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonour'd,
Because he married me before to Romeo ?
I fear, it is : and yet, methinks, it should not,
For he hath still been tried a holy man :
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me ? there 's a fearful point !
Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes ?
Or, if I live, is it not very like,
The horrible conceit of death and night,
Together with the terror of the place,—
As in a vault,³ an ancient receptacle,
Where, for these many hundred years, the bones
Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd ;
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
Lies fest'ring in his shroud ; where, as they say,
At some hours in the night spirits resort ;—
Alack, alack ! is it not like, that I,
So early waking,—what with loathsome smells ;
And shrieks like mandrakes' torn out of the earth,
That living mortals, hearing them, run mad ;—
O ! if I wake, shall I not be distraught,
Environed with all these hideous fears ?
And madly play with my forefathers' joints ?
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud ?
And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains ?
O, look ! methinks, I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
Upon a rapier's point :—Stay, Tybalt, stay !—
Romeo, Romeo, Romeo,—here 's drink—I drink to thee.

[*She throws herself on the bed.*]

SCENE IV.—Capulet's *Hall*.*Enter* LADY CAPULET *and* Nurse.

La. Cap. Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices,
nurse.

Nurse. They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.

Enter CAPULET.

Cap. Come, stir, stir, stir! the second cock hath crow'd.
The curfew bell hath rung, 't is three o'clock :—
Look to the bak'd meats, good Angelica :
Spare not for cost.

Nurse. Go, you cot-quean, go.
Get you to bed; 'faith, you 'll be sick to-morrow
For this night's watching.

Cap. No, not a whit; What! I have watch'd ere now
All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

La. Cap. Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt in your time ;
But I will watch you from such watching now.

[*Exeunt* LADY CAPULET *and* Nurse.]

Cap. A jealous-hood, a jealous-hood!—Now, fellow,
What 's there?

Enter Servants, *with* spits, logs, *and* baskets.*

1 *Serv.* Things for the cook, sir ; but I know not what.

Cap. Make haste, make haste. [*Exit* 1 *Serv.*]—Sirrah,
fetch drier logs ;

Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.

2 *Serv.* I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,
And never trouble Peter for the matter. [*Exit.*

Cap. 'Mass, and well said ; A merry whoreson! ha,
Thou shalt be loggerhead.—Good father, 't is day :
The county will be here with music straight, [*Music within.*
For so he said he would. I hear him near :—
Nurse!—Wife!—what, ho!—what, nurse, I say!

Enter Nurse.

Go, waken Juliet, go, and trim her up ;
I 'll go and chat with Paris :—Hie, make haste,

Make haste! the bridegroom he is come already:
Make haste, I say.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*Juliet's Chamber; JULIET on the Bed.*

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Mistress!—what, mistress!—Juliet!—fast, I warrant her, she:—

Why, lamb!—Why, lady!—fie, you slug-a-bed!—
Why, love, I say!—madam! sweetheart!—why, bride!—
What, not a word?—you take your pennyworths now;
Sleep for a week; for the next night, I warrant,
The county Paris hath set up his rest,
That you shall rest but little.—God forgive me,
(Marry, and amen!) how sound is she asleep!
I must needs wake her:—Madam, madam, madam!
Ay, let the county take you in your bed;
He'll fright you up, i' faith.—Will it not be?
What, dress'd! and in your clothes! and down again!
I must needs wake you: Lady! lady! lady!
Alas! alas!—Help! help! my lady's dead!—
O, well-a-day, that ever I was born!—
Some *aqua vitæ*, ho!—my lord! my lady!

Enter LADY CAPULET.

La. Cap. What noise is here?

Nurse. O lamentable day!

La. Cap. What is the matter?

Nurse. Look, look! O heavy day!

La. Cap. O me, O me!—my child, my only life,
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee!—
Help, help!—call help.

Enter CAPULET.

Cap. For shame, bring Juliet forth; her lord is come.

Nurse. She's dead, deceas'd, she's dead; alack the day!

La. Cap. Alack the day! she's dead, she's dead, she's
dead.

Cap. Ha! let me see her:—Out, alas! she's cold;

Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff;
 Life and these lips have long been separated:
 Death lies on her, like an untimely frost
 Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.^a

Nurse. O lamentable day!

La. Cap. O woeful time!

Cap. Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,
 Ties up my tongue, and will not let me speak.

Enter Friar LAURENCE and PARIS, with Musicians.

Fri. Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

Cap. Ready to go, but never to return:

O son, the night before thy wedding-day
 Hath Death lain with thy wife:—There she lies,
 Flower as she was, deflowered by him.
 Death is my son-in-law, Death is my heir;
 My daughter he hath wedded! I will die,
 And leave him all; life leaving, all is death's.

Par. Have I thought long to see this morning's face,
 And doth it give me such a sight as this?

La. Cap. Accurs'd, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!
 Most miserable hour, that e'er time saw
 In lasting labour of his pilgrimage!
 But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,
 But one thing to rejoice and solace in,
 And cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight.

Nurse. O woe! O woeful, woeful, woeful day!
 Most lamentable day! most woeful day,
 That ever, ever, I did yet behold!
 O day! O day! O day! O hateful day!
 Never was seen so black a day as this:
 O woeful day, O woeful day!

Par. Beguil'd, divorced, wronged, spited, slain!
 Most detestable Death, by thee beguil'd,

^a In the original we want these four exquisite lines. And yet the modern editors have thrust in the single line which they found in (*A*):—

“ Accursed time, unfortunate old man.”

The scene, from the entrance of Capulet, is elaborated from forty-four lines, in the original, to seventy-four lines.

By cruel, cruel thee quite overthrown!—
O love! O life! not life, but love in death!

Cap. Despis'd, distressed, hated, martyr'd, kill'd!—
Uncomfortable time! why cam'st thou now
To murder, murder, our solemnity?—
O child! O child!—my soul, and not my child!—
Dead art thou!—alack! my child is dead!
And, with my child, my joys are buried!

Fri. Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's cure lives not
In these confusions. Heaven and yourself
Had part in this fair maid; now Heaven hath all,
And all the better is it for the maid:
Your part in her you could not keep from death;
But Heaven keeps his part in eternal life.
The most you sought was her promotion;
For 't was your heaven, she should be advanc'd:
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanc'd,
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
O, in this love, you love your child so ill,
That you run mad, seeing that she is well:
She 's not well married that lives married long;
But she 's best married that dies married young.
Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
On this fair corse; and, as the custom is,
In all her best array bear her to church:
For though some ^a nature bids us all lament,
Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

Cap. All things that we ordained festival,
Turn from their office to black funeral:
Our instruments to melancholy bells;
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast;
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,
And all things change them to the contrary.

Fri. Sir, go you in,—and, madam, go with him;—

^a *Some nature.* *Fond nature* has been introduced into the text from the second folio. The difficulty of *some* is not manifest. *Some nature*—some impulses of nature—some part of our nature. The idea may have suggested the "some natural tears" of Milton.

And go, sir Paris;—every one prepare
 To follow this fair corse unto her grave.
 The Heavens do low'r upon you, for some ill;
 Move them no more, by crossing their high will.

[*Exeunt* CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, PARIS, and Friar.

1 *Mus.* 'Faith, we may put up our pipes, and be gone.

Nurse. Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up,
 For, well you know, this is a pitiful case. [*Exit Nurse.*

1 *Mus.* Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

Enter PETER.

Pet. Musicians, O, musicians,^a "Heart's ease, Heart's ease;"
 O, an you will have me live, play "Heart's ease."

1 *Mus.* Why "Heart's ease?"

Pet. O, musicians, because my heart itself plays—"My
 heart is full?" O, play me some merry dump,^a to comfort me.

2 *Mus.* Not a dump we; 't is no time to play now.

Pet. You will not then?

Mus. No.

Pet. I will then give it you soundly.

1 *Mus.* What will you give us?

Pet. No money, on my faith; but the gleek: I will give
 you the minstrel.

1 *Mus.* Then will I give you the serving-creature.

Pet. Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on your
 pate. I will carry no crotchets: I'll *re* you, I'll *fa* you;^b
 Do you note me?

1 *Mus.* An you *re* us, and *fa* us, you note us.

2 *Mus.* Pray you, put up your dagger, and put out your
 wit.

Pet. Then have at you with my wit; I will dry-beat you
 with an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger:—Answer me
 like men:

^a *Dump.* See 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,' Act III., Scene 2, *note.* The exclamation "O, play me," &c., is not in the folio.

^b *I'll RE you, I'll FA you.* *Re* and *fa* are the syllables, or names, given in solmisation, or sol-fa-ing to the sounds D and F in the musical scale.

When griping griefs the heart doth wound,
 And doleful dumps the mind oppress,
 Then music, with her silver sound ;^a

Why, silver sound? why, music with her silver sound?

What say you, Simon Catling? ^b

1 *Mus.* Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

Pet. Pretty! ^c What say you, Hugh Rebeck? ^d

2 *Mus.* I say—silver sound, because musicians sound for silver.

Pet. Pretty too! What say you, James Soundpost?

3 *Mus.* 'Faith, I know not what to say.

Pet. O, I cry you mercy! you are the singer: I will say for you. It is—music with her silver sound, because musicians have no gold for sounding:^e—

Then music, with her silver sound,
 With speedy help doth lend redress.

[*Exit, singing.*]

1 *Mus.* What a pestilent knave is this same!

2 *Mus.* Hang him, Jack! Come, we 'll in here: tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner. [*Exeunt.*]

^a See Illustrations to this act.

^b *Catling*—a lute-string.

^c (*C*), *pratest*.

^d *Rebeck*—the three-stringed violin.

^e In (*A*) we have "*such fellows as you have seldom gold for sounding;*" and then the servant calls them "fiddlers." It is interesting to mark the change in the corrected copy. Shakspeare would not put offensive words to the skilled in music, even into the mouth of a clownish servant.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ACT IV.

¹ SCENE I.—“*In thy best robes, uncover'd, on the bier.*”

IN the adaptation of Bandello's tale, in Painter's 'Palace of Pleasure,' we have "They will judge you to be dead, and, according to the custom of our city, you shall be carried to the churchyard hard by our church." The Italian mode of interment is given in the poem of 'Romeus and Juliet':—

“ Another use there is, that whosoever dyes,
Borne to their church with open face upon the beere he lyes
In wonted weede attyrde, not wrapt in winding-sheet.”

Painter has no description of this custom; but Shakspeare saw how beautifully it accorded with the conduct of his story, and he therefore emphatically repeats it in the directions of the friar, after Juliet's supposed death:—

“ Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
On this fair corse; and, as the custom is,
In all her best array bear her to church.”

Ancient customs survive when they are built upon the unaltering parts of national character, and have connexion with unalterable local circumstances. Juliet was carried to her tomb as the maids and the matrons of Italy are still carried. Rogers has most accurately described such a scene:—

“ But now by fits
A dull and dismal noise assail'd the ear,
A wail, a chant, louder and louder yet;
And now a strange fantastic troop appear'd!
Thronging, they came—as from the shades below;
All of a ghostly white! ‘ Oh say,’ I cried,
‘ Do not the living here bury the dead?
Do spirits come and fetch them? What are these,
That seem not of this world, and mock the day;
Each with a burning taper in his hand?’
‘ It is an ancient brotherhood thou seest.
Such their apparel. Through the long, long line,
Look where thou wilt, no likeness of a man;
The living mask'd, the dead alone uncover'd.
But mark'—And, lying on her funeral couch,
Like one asleep, her eyelids clos'd, her hands
Folded together on her modest breast,
As 't were her nightly posture, through the crowd
She came at last—and richly, gaily clad,
As for a birthday feast.”

² SCENE II.—“*Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.*”

The “cunning cook,” in the time of Shakspeare, was, as he is at present, a great personage. According to an entry in the books of the Stationers' Company for 1560, the preacher was paid six shillings and two pence for his labour, the minstrel twelve shillings, and the cook fifteen shillings. The relative scale of estimation for theology, poetry, and gastronomy has not been much altered during two centuries, either in the city generally, or in the Company which represents the city's literature. Ben Jonson has described a master-cook in his gorgeous style:—

“ A master-cook ! why, he is the man of men.
 For a professor ; he designs, he draws,
 He paints, he carves, he builds, he fortifies,
 Makes citadels of curious fowl and fish.
 Some he dry-ditches, some moats round with broths,
 Mounts marrow-bones, cuts fifty-angled custards,
 Rears bulwark pies ; and, for his outer works,
 He raiseth ramparts of immortal crust,
 And teacheth all the tactics at one dinner—
 What ranks, what files, to put his dishes in,
 The whole art military ! Then he knows
 The influence of the stars upon his meats,
 And all their seasons, tempers, qualities,
 And so to fit his relishes and sauces.
 He has nature in a pot, 'bove all the chemists,
 Or bare-breech'd brethren of the rosy cross.
 He is an architect, an engineer,
 A soldier, a physician, a philosopher,
 A general mathematician.”

Old Capulet, in his exuberant spirits at his daughter's approaching marriage, calls for “ twenty ” of these artists. The critics think this too large a number. Ritson says, with wonderful simplicity, “ Either Capulet had altered his mind strangely, or our author forgot what he had just made him tell us.” This is, indeed, to understand a poet with admirable exactness. The passage is entirely in keeping with Shakspeare's habit of hitting off a character almost by a word. Capulet is evidently a man of ostentation ; but his ostentation, as is most generally the case, is covered with a thin veil of affected indifference. In the first act he says to his guests,

“ We have a trifling foolish banquet toward.”

In the third act, when he settles the day of Paris' marriage, he just hints,—

“ We'll keep no great ado—a friend or two.”

But Shakspeare knew that these indications of the “ pride which apes humility ” were not inconsistent with the “ twenty cooks,” the regret that

“ We shall be much unfurnish'd for this time,”

and the solicitude expressed in

“ Look to the bak'd meats, good Angelica.”

Steevens turns up his nose aristocratically at Shakspeare, for imputing “ to an Italian nobleman and his lady all the petty solicitudes of a private house, concerning a provincial entertainment ; ” and he adds, very grandly, “ To such a bustle our author might have been witness at home ; but the like anxieties could not well have occurred in the family of Capulet.” Steevens had not well read the history of society, either in Italy or in England, to have fallen into the mistake of believing that the great were exempt from such “ anxieties.” The baron's lady overlooked the baron's kitchen from her private chamber ; and the still-room and the spicery not unfrequently occupied a large portion of her attention.

³ SCENE III.—“ *As in a vault.*”

It has been conjectured that the charnel-house under the church at Stratford, which contains a vast collection of human bones, suggested to Shakspeare this description of “ the ancient receptacle ” of the Capulets.



⁴ SCENE IV.—“*Enter Servants, with spits, logs, and baskets.*”

Vicellio has given us the costume of the menial servants and porters of Italy, which we here copy.

⁵ SCENE V.—“*Musicians, O, musicians.*”

Juliet is held to be dead. Capulet's joys are buried with his child. The musicians that came to accompany her to church remain in the hall. The scene which follows between Peter and the musicians has generally been considered ill-placed. Even Coleridge says, “As the audience know that Juliet is not dead, this scene is, perhaps, excusable.” Rightly understood, it appears to us that the scene requires no apology. It was the custom of our ancient theatre to introduce, in the irregular pauses of a play that stood in the place of a division into acts, some short diversion, such as a song, a dance, or the extempore buffoonery of a clown. At this point of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ there is a natural pause in the action, and at this point such an interlude would, probably, have been presented whether Shakspeare had written one or not. The stage-direction in the second quarto puts this matter, as it appears to us, beyond a doubt. That direction says, “Enter Will Kempe,” and the dialogue immediately begins between Peter and the musicians. Will Kempe was the Liston of his day; and was as great a popular favourite as Tarleton had been before him. It was wise, therefore, in Shakspeare, to find some business for Will Kempe, that should not be entirely out of harmony with the great business of his play. This scene of the musicians is very short, and, regarded as a necessary part of the routine of the ancient stage, is excellently managed. Nothing can be more naturally exhibited than the indifference of hirelings, without attachment, to a family scene of grief. Peter and the musicians bandy jokes; and, although the musicians think Peter a “pestilent knave,” perhaps for his inopportune sallies, they are ready enough to look after their own gratification, even amidst the sorrow which they see around them. A wedding or a burial is the same to them. “Come, we'll in here—tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner.” So Shakspeare read the course of the world—and it is not much changed. The quotation beginning—

“When griping grief the heart doth wound”—

is from a short poem in ‘The Paradise of Daintie Devises,’ by Richard Edwards, master of the children of the chapel to Queen Elizabeth. This was set as a four-part song, by Adrian Batten, organist of St. Paul's in the reign of Charles I., and

is thus printed, but without any name, in Hawkins's 'History of Music,' vol. v. The question of Peter, "Why, silver sound? why, music with her silver sound?" is happily enough explained by Percy: "This ridicule is not so much levelled at the song itself (which, for the time it was written, is not inelegant) as at those forced and unnatural explanations often given by us painful editors and expositors of ancient authors."—('Reliques,' vol. i.) Had Shakspeare a presentiment of what he was to receive at the hands of his own commentators?



ACT V.

SCENE I.—Mantua.¹ *A Street.**Enter* ROMEO.

Rom. If I may trust the flattering truth^a of sleep,
 My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:
 My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne;
 And, all this day, an unaccustom'd spirit
 Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.
 I dreamt, my lady came and found me dead;
 (Strange dream! that gives a dead man leave to think,)
 And breath'd such life with kisses in my lips,
 That I reviv'd, and was an emperor.
 Ah me! how sweet is love itself possess'd,
 When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

Enter BALTHASAR.

News from Verona!—How now, Balthasar?
 Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
 How doth my lady? Is my father well?
 How doth my lady^b Juliet? That I ask again;
 For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

Bal. Then she is well, and nothing can be ill.
 Her body sleeps in Capels' monument,
 And her immortal part with angels lives.
 I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,
 And presently took post to tell it you:
 O pardon me for bringing these ill news,
 Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

^a (*A*) *eye*. This word has been retained by the modern editors. But it is not difficult to see the growth of that philosophical spirit in Shakspeare which suggested the substitution of the word "truth," which opens to the mind a deep volume of metaphysical inquiry.

^b (*A*), *How fares my Juliet?*

Rom. Is it even so? then I defy you, stars!—
Thou know'st my lodging: get me ink and paper,
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.

Bal. I do beseech you, sir, have patience.^a
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure.

Rom. Tush, thou art deceiv'd;
Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do:
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

Bal. No, my good lord.

Rom. No matter: get thee gone
And hire those horses; I'll be with thee straight.

[Exit BALTHASAR.]

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.
Let's see for means:—O, mischief! thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
I do remember an apothecary,—²
And hereabouts he dwells,—which late I noted
In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples; meagre were his looks,
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones:
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuff'd, and other skins
Of ill-shap'd fishes; and about his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,
Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses,
Were thinly scatter'd to make up a show.
Noting this penury, to myself I said—
An if a man did need a poison now,
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,³
Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.

^a The first quarto has

“ Pardon me, sir, I will not leave you thus.”

But then all the remaining dialogue in the early play differs from the amended text of the author, and the changes show his accurate judgment. For example—

“ Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?”—

that most important repetition—is omitted in the original play. Are we not to trust to this judgment? Are his editors to deal with his corrections according to their own caprice?

O, this same thought did but forerun my need ;
 And this same needy man must sell it me.
 As I remember, this should be the house :
 Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.—
 What, ho ! apothecary !^a

Enter Apothecary.

Ap. Who calls so loud ?

Rom. Come hither, man.—I see that thou art poor ;
 Hold, there is forty ducats ; let me have
 A dram of poison ; such soon-speeding gear
 As will disperse itself through all the veins,
 That the life-weary taker may fall dead ;
 And that the trunk may be discharg'd of breath
 As violently as hasty powder fir'd
 Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

Ap. Such mortal drugs I have ; but Mantua's law
 Is death to any he that utters them.

Rom. Art thou so bare, and full of wretchedness,
 And fear'st to die ? famine is in thy cheeks,
 Need and oppression starveth in thy eyes,
 Contempt and beggary hang upon thy back,^b

^a We are tempted once more to trespass upon our limited space by giving the speech descriptive of the Apothecary, from the first edition. The studies in poetical art, which Shakspeare's corrections of himself supply, are amongst the most instructive in the whole compass of literature :—

“ Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.
 Let's see for means. As I do remember,
 Here dwells a pothecary whom oft I noted
 As I pass'd by, whose needy shop is stuff'd
 With beggarly accounts of empty boxes :
 And in the same an alligator hangs,
 Old ends of packthread, and cakes of roses,
 Are thinly strewed to make up a show.
 Him as I noted, thus with myself I thought :
 An if a man should need a poison now
 (Whose present sale is death in Mantua),
 Here he might buy it. This thought of mine
 Did but forerun my need : and hereabout he dwells.
 Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.
 What, ho ! apothecary ! come forth I say.”

^b Steevens again ! who has “ recovered ” from the first quarto the line in our common texts,

“ Upon thy back hangs ragged misery.”

The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law ;
 The world affords no law to make thee rich ;
 Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

Ap. My poverty, but not my will, consents.

Rom. I pray^a thy poverty, and not thy will.

Ap. Put this in any liquid thing you will,
 And drink it off ; and, if you had the strength
 Of twenty men, it would despatch you straight.

Rom. There is thy gold ; worse poison to men's souls,
 Doing more murder in this loathsome world,
 Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell :
 I sell thee poison, thou hast sold me none.
 Farewell : buy food, and get thyself in flesh.—
 Come, cordial, and not poison ; go with me
 To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Friar Laurence's Cell.*

Enter Friar JOHN.

John. Holy Franciscan friar ! brother, ho !

Enter Friar LAURENCE.

Lau. This same should be the voice of friar John.—
 Welcome from Mantua : What says Romeo ?
 Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

John. Going to find a barefoot brother out,⁴
 One of our order, to associate me,
 Here in this city visiting the sick,
 And finding him,—the searchers of the town,
 Suspecting that we both were in a house
 Where the infectious pestilence did reign,
 Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth ;
 So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.

Lau. Who bare my letter then to Romeo ?

John. I could not send it,—here it is again,—
 Nor get a messenger to bring it thee ;
 So fearful were they of infection.

Lau. Unhappy fortune ! by my brotherhood,

^a (*A*), *pay* ; (*C*) and folio, *pray*.

The letter was not nice,^a but full of charge
Of dear import; and the neglecting it
May do much danger: Friar John, go hence;
Get me an iron crow, and bring it straight
Unto my cell.

John. Brother, I'll go and bring it thee. [Exit.

Lau. Now must I to the monument alone;
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake.
She will beshrew me much, that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents;
But I will write again to Mantua,
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come.
Poor living corse, clos'd in a dead man's tomb!

[Exit.

SCENE III.—*A Churchyard; in it, a Monument belonging to the Capulets.*

Enter PARIS, and his Page, bearing flowers and a torch.

Par. Give me thy torch, boy: Hence, and stand aloof;—
Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.
Under yon yew-trees^b lay thee all along,
Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground;
So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread
(Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves),
But thou shalt hear it: whistle then to me,
As signal that thou hear'st something approach.
Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

Page. I am almost afraid to stand alone
Here in the churchyard; yet I will adventure. [Retires.

Par. Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal-bed I strew:
O woe, thy canopy is dust and stones,
Which with sweet water nightly I will dew,
Or wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans;
The obsequies that I for thee will keep,
Nightly shall be, to strew thy grave and weep.^c

[The Boy whistles.

^a Nice—trivial.

^b This passage is different in (A); but an "ew" tree is mentioned. In (C) we have *young-trees*—perhaps a typographical error; but it occurs again.

^c The six lines which Paris here speaks are those of the quarto of 1599, and of the

The boy gives warning, something doth approach.
 What cursed foot wanders this way to-night,
 To cross my obsequies, and true-love's rite?
 What, with a torch!—muffle me, night, a while. [Retires.]

Enter ROMEO and BALTHASAR with a torch, mattock, &c.

Rom. Give me that mattock, and the wrenching iron.
 Hold, take this letter; early in the morning
 See thou deliver it to my lord and father.
 Give me the light; Upon thy life I charge thee,
 Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,
 And do not interrupt me in my course.
 Why I descend into this bed of death,
 Is, partly, to behold my lady's face:
 But, chiefly, to take thence from her dead finger
 A precious ring; a ring, that I must use
 In dear employment: therefore hence, be gone:—
 But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry
 In what I further shall intend to do,
 By Heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint,
 And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs:
 The time and my intents are savage-wild;
 More fierce, and more inexorable far,
 Than empty tigers, or the roaring sea.

Bal. I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

Rom. So shalt thou show me friendship.—Take thou
 that:
 Live and be prosperous; and farewell, good fellow.

Bal. For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout;
 His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt. [Retires.]

Rom. Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,

folio. Pope manufactured a passage from both quarto editions, and Steevens and Malone restored that of the elder quarto. The first copy is thus:—

“Sweet flower, with flowers I strew thy bridal bed:
 Sweet tomb, that in thy circuit dost contain
 The perfect model of eternity;
 Fair Juliet, that with angels dost remain,
 Accept this latest favour at my hands;
 That living honour'd thee, and, being dead,
 With funeral praises do adorn thy tomb.”

Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open.

[*Breaking open the door of the monument.*

And, in despite, I'll cram thee with more food!

Par. This is that banish'd haughty Montague,
That murder'd my love's cousin;—with which grief,
It is supposed the fair creature died,—

And here is come to do some villainous shame
To the dead bodies: I will apprehend him.— [Advances.

Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague.
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?

Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:

Obeys, and go with me; for thou must die.

Rom. I must, indeed; and therefore came I hither.

Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man,
Fly hence and leave me;—think upon these gone;

Let them affright thee.—I beseech thee, youth,

Put^a not another sin upon my head,

By urging me to fury:—O, be gone!

By Heaven, I love thee better than myself;

For I come hither arm'd against myself:

Stay not, be gone;—live, and hereafter say—

A madman's mercy bade thee run away.

Par. I do defy thy commiseration,^b

And apprehend thee for^c a felon here.

Rom. Wilt thou provoke me? then have at thee, boy.

[*They fight.*

Page. O Lord! they fight: I will go call the watch.

[*Exit Page.*

Par. O, I am slain! [*falls*—If thou be merciful,

Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet.

[*Dies.*

Rom. In faith, I will:—Let me peruse this face;—

Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris:—

What said my man, when my betossed soul

Did not attend him as we rode? I think,

He told me Paris should have married Juliet:

Said he not so? or did I dream it so?

^a (*A*), *Heap.*

^b (*A*), *conjurations.*

^c (*A*), *do attach thee as.*

Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
 To think it was so?—O, give me thy hand,
 One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!
 I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave,—
 A grave? O, no; a lantern, slaughter'd youth,
 For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
 This vault a feasting presence full of light.
 Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.

[*Laying PARIS in the monument.*]

How oft when men are at the point of death,
 Have they been merry! which their keepers call
 A lightning before death: O, how may I
 Call this a lightning?—O, my love! my wife!
 Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,
 Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:
 Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet
 Is crimson in thy lips, and in thy cheeks,
 And death's pale flag is not advanced there.—
 Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
 O, what more favour can I do to thee,
 Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain,
 To sunder his that was thine enemy?
 Forgive me, cousin!—Ah, dear Juliet,
 Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe
 That unsubstantial Death is amorous;
 And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
 Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
 For fear of that, I still will stay with thee;
 And never from this palace of dim night
 Depart again; ^a here, here will I remain

^a The following lines are here introduced in (C) and the folio. Malone has very rationally conjectured that they are interpolations of a compositor. The printer had, probably, some imperfectly erased notes of the poet on his copy. We give them as we find them:—

“Come, lie thou in my arms;
 Here 's to thy health, where'er thou tumblest in.
 O true apothecary;
 Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.
 Depart again.”

The speech, as it stands in our text, occupies forty-seven lines. It extended only to twenty-three lines in the original copy.

With worms that are thy chambermaids ; O, here
 Will I set up my everlasting rest ;
 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
 From this world-wearied flesh.—Eyes, look your last !
 Arms, take your last embrace ! and lips, O you
 The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
 A dateless bargain to engrossing death !—
 Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide !
 Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
 The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark !
 Here's to my love !—*[Drinks]* O, true apothecary ;
 Thy drugs are quick.—Thus with a kiss I die. *[Dies.*

*Enter, at the other end of the Churchyard, Friar LAURENCE,
 with a lantern, crow, and spade.*

Fri. Saint Francis be my speed ! how oft to-night
 Have my old feet stumbled at graves !—Who 's there ?^a

Bal. Here 's one, a friend, and one that knows you
 well.

Fri. Bliss be upon you ! Tell me, good my friend,
 What torch is yond', that vainly lends his light
 To grubs and eyeless skulls ; as I discern,
 It burneth in the Capels' monument.

Bal. It doth so, holy sir ; and there 's my master,
 One that you love.

Fri. Who is it ?

Bal. Romeo.

Fri. How long hath he been there ?

Bal. Full half an hour.

Fri. Go with me to the vault.

Bal. I dare not, sir ;

My master knows not but I am gone hence ;
 And fearfully did menace me with death,
 If I did stay to look on his intents.

^a Stevens, in the modern text, has wrested a line out of the first quarto :—

“ Who is it that consorts, so late, the dead ? ”

Fri. Stay then, I'll go alone:—Fear comes upon me;
O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.

Bal. As I did sleep under this yew-tree^a here,
I dreamt my master and another fought,
And that my master slew him.

Fri. Romeo!— [*Advances.*]
Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?—
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?

[*Enters the monument.*]

Romeo! O, pale!—Who else? what, Paris too?
And steep'd in blood?—Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!—
The lady stirs. [*JULIET wakes and stirs.*]

Jul. O, comfortable friar! where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am:—Where is my Romeo? [*Noise within.*]

Fri. I hear some noise.—Lady, come from that nest
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep;
A greater Power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents; come, come away:
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;
And Paris too: come, I'll dispose of thee
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns:
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming;⁵
Come, go, good Juliet,—[*Noise again*] I dare no longer
stay. [*Exit.*]

Jul. Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.—
What's here? a cup, clos'd in my true love's hand?
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end:—
O churl! drink all; and left no friendly drop,
To help me after?—I will kiss thy lips;
Haply, some poison yet doth hang on them,
To make me die with a restorative. [*Kisses him.*]
Thy lips are warm!

^a Again *young-tree* in (C) and folio.

1 *Watch*. [*Within.*] Lead, boy:—Which way?

Jul. Yea, noise?—then I'll be brief.—O happy dagger!

[*Snatching ROMEO's dagger.*

This is thy sheath; [*Stabs herself*] there rust, and let me die.
[*Falls on ROMEO's body, and dies.*

Enter Watch, with the Page of PARIS.

Page. This is the place; there, where the torch doth burn.

1 *Watch.* The ground is bloody; Search about the churchyard:

Go, some of you, whoe'er you find, attach. [*Exeunt some.*

Pitiful sight! here lies the county slain;—

And Juliet bleeding; warm, and newly dead,

Who here hath lain these two days buried.

Go, tell the prince,—run to the Capulets,—

Raise up the Montagues,—some others search;—

[*Exeunt other Watchmen.*

We see the ground whereon these woes do lie;

But the true ground of all these piteous woes,

We cannot without circumstance descry.

Enter some of the Watch, with BALTHASAR.

2 *Watch.* Here 's Romeo's man, we found him in the churchyard.

1 *Watch.* Hold him in safety till the prince come hither.

Enter another Watchman, with Friar LAURENCE.

3 *Watch.* Here is a friar, that trembles, sighs, and weeps:

We took this mattock and this spade from him,

As he was coming from this churchyard side.

1 *Watch.* A great suspicion; Stay the friar too.

Enter the PRINCE and Attendants.

Prince. What misadventure is so early up,
That calls our person from our morning's rest?

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and others.

Cap. What should it be, that they so shriek abroad?

La. Cap. The people in the streets cry—Romco,

Some—Juliet, and some—Paris; and all run,
With open outcry, toward our monument.

Prince. What fear is this, which startles in your ears?

I Watch. Sovereign, here lies the county Paris slain;
And Romeo dead; and Juliet, dead before,
Warm and new kill'd.

Prince. Search, seek, and know how this foul murder
comes.

I Watch. Here is a friar, and slaughter'd Romeo's man;
With instruments upon them, fit to open
These dead men's tombs.

Cap. O, Heaven!—O, wife! look how our daughter bleeds!
This dagger hath mista'en,—for, lo! his house
Is empty on the back of Montague,^a—
And is mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom.

La. Cap. O me! this sight of death is as a bell,
That warns my old age to a sepulchre.

Enter MONTAGUE and others.

Prince. Come, Montague; for thou art early up,
To see thy son and heir now early down.

Mon. Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night;
Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath:
What further woe conspires against my age?

Prince. Look, and thou shalt see.

Mon. O thou untaught! what manners is in this,
To press before thy father to a grave?

Prince. Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,
Till we can clear these ambiguities,
And know their spring, their head, their true descent;
And then will I be general of your woes,
And lead you even to death: Meantime forbear,
And let mischance be slave to patience.—
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

Fri. I am the greatest, able to do least,
Yet most suspected, as the time and place
Doth make against me, of this direful murder;

^a The dagger was worn at the back.

And here I stand, both to impeach and purge
Myself condemned and myself excus'd.

Prince. Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

Fri. I will be brief, for my short date of breath
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.

Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet,
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife :
I married them ; and their stolen marriage-day
Was Tybalt's doomsday, whose untimely death
Banish'd the new-made bridegroom from this city ;
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pin'd.

You, to remove that siege of grief from her,
Betroth'd and would have married her perforce
To county Paris :—Then comes she to me ;
And, with wild looks, bid me devise some means
To rid her from this second marriage,
Or, in my cell there would she kill herself.

Then gave I her, so tutor'd by my art,
A sleeping potion ; which so took effect
As I intended, for it wrought on her
The form of death : meantime I writ to Romeo,
That he should hither come as this dire night,
To help to take her from her borrow'd grave,
Being the time the potion's force should cease.

But he which bore my letter, friar John,
Was stay'd by accident ; and yesternight
Return'd my letter back : Then all alone,
At the prefixed hour of her waking,
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault ;
Meaning to keep her closely at my cell,
Till I conveniently could send to Romeo :
But when I came (some minute ere the time
Of her awaking), here untimely lay
The noble Paris, and true Romeo, dead.

She wakes ; and I entreated her come forth,
And bear this work of Heaven with patience :
But then a noise did scare me from the tomb ;
And she, too desperate, would not go with me,
But (as it seems) did violence on herself.

All this I know ; and to the marriage
Her nurse is privy : And, if aught in this
Miscarried by my fault, let my old life
Be sacrific'd, some hour before the time,
Unto the rigour of severest law.

Prince. We still have known thee for a holy man.—
Where's Romeo's man? what can he say to this?

Bal. I brought my master news of Juliet's death ;
And then in post he came from Mantua,
To this same place, to this same monument.
This letter he early bid me give his father ;
And threaten'd me with death, going in the vault,
If I departed not, and left him there.

Prince. Give me the letter, I will look on it.—
Where is the county's page, that rais'd the watch?—
Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

Page. He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave ;
And bid me stand aloof, and so I did :
Anon comes one with light to ope the tomb ;
And, by and by, my master drew on him ;
And then I ran away to call the watch.

Prince. This letter doth make good the friar's words,
Their course of love, the tidings of her death ;
And here he writes—that he did buy a poison
Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal
Came to this vault to die, and lie with Juliet.
Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!—
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That Heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
And I, for winking at your discords too,
Have lost a brace of kinsmen :—all are punish'd.

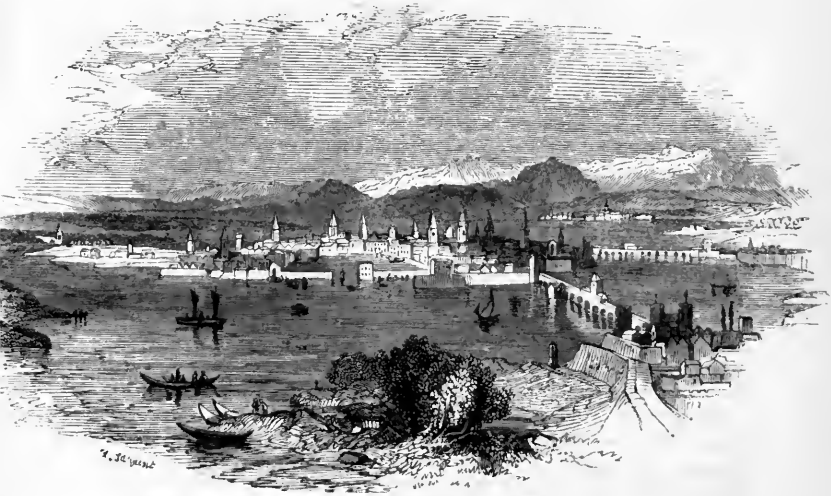
Cap. O, brother Montague, give me thy hand.
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
Can I demand.

Mon. But I can give thee more :
For I will raise her statue in pure gold ;
That whiles Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at that rate be set,
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

Cap. As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie ;
Poor sacrifices of our enmity !

Prince. A glooming peace this morning with it brings ;
The sun for sorrow will not show his head :
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things ;
Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished :
For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

[*Exeunt.*



[Mantua.]

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ACT V.

SCENE I.—“*Mantua.*”

To the poetical traveller it would be difficult to say whether Mantua would excite the greater interest as the birthplace of Virgil or as the scene of Romeo's exile. Surely, an Englishman cannot walk through the streets of that city without thinking of the apothecary in whose

“needy shop a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuff'd, and other skins
Of ill-shap'd fishes; and about his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes.”

Any description of the historical events connected with Mantua, or any account of its architectural monuments, would be here out of place.

SCENE I.—“*I do remember an apothecary.*”

The criticism of the French school has not spared this famous passage. Joseph Warton, an elegant scholar, but who belonged to this school, has the following observations in his ‘*Virgil*’ (1763, vol. i., p. 301):—

“It may not be improper to produce the following glaring instance of the absurdity of introducing long and minute descriptions into tragedy. When Romeo receives the dreadful and unexpected news of Juliet's death, this fond husband, in an agony of grief, immediately resolves to poison himself. But his sorrow is interrupted, while he gives us an exact picture of the apothecary's shop from whom he intended to purchase the poison:—

‘*I do remember an apothecary,*’ &c.

I appeal to those who know anything of the human heart, whether Romeo, in this distressful situation, could have leisure to think of the alligator, empty boxes, and bladders, and other furniture of this beggarly shop, and to point them out so distinctly to the audience. The description is, indeed, very lively and natural, but very improperly put into the mouth of a person agitated with such passion as Romeo is represented to be.”

The criticism of Warton, ingenious as it may appear, and true as applied to many “long and minute descriptions in tragedy,” is here based upon a wrong principle. He says that Romeo, in his distressful situation, had not “leisure” to think of the furniture of the apothecary's shop. What then had he leisure to do? Had he leisure to run off into declamations against fate, and into tedious apostrophes and generalizations, as a less skilful artist than Shakspeare would have made him indulge in? From the moment he had said,

“Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night,—
Let's see for means,”

the apothecary's shop became to him the object of the most intense interest. Great passions, when they have shaped themselves into firm resolves, attach the most distinct importance to the minutest objects connected with the execution of their purpose. He had seen the apothecary's shop in his placid moments as an object of common curiosity. He had hastily looked at the tortoise and the alligator, the empty boxes, and the earthen pots; and he had looked at the tattered weeds and the overwhelming brows of their needy owner. But he had also said, when he first saw these things,

“ An if a man did need a poison now,
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,
Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.”

When he *did* need a poison, all these documents of the misery that was to serve him came with a double intensity upon his vision. The shaping of these things into words was not for the audience. It was not to produce “a long and minute description in tragedy” that had no foundation in the workings of nature. It was the very cunning of nature which produced this description. Mischief was, indeed, swift to enter into the thoughts of the desperate man; but the mind once made up, it took a perverse pleasure in going over every item of the circumstances that had suggested the means of mischief. All other thoughts had passed out of Romeo’s mind. He had nothing left but to die; and everything connected with the means of his death was seized upon by his imagination with an energy that could only find relief in words.

Shakspeare has exhibited the same knowledge of nature in his sad and solemn poem of ‘The Rape of Lucrece,’ where the injured wife, having resolved to wipe out her stain by death,

“ calls to mind where hangs a piece
Of skilful painting, made for Priam’s Troy.”

She sees in that painting some fancied resemblance to her own position, and spends the heavy hours till her husband arrives in its contemplation.

“ So Lucrece set a-work, sad tales doth tell
To pencill’d pensiveness and colour’d sorrow;
She lends them words, and she their looks doth borrow.”

It was the intense interest in his own resolve which made Romeo so minutely describe his apothecary. But, that stage past, came the *abstraction* of his sorrow:—

“ What said my man, when my betossed soul
Did not attend him as we rode? I think
He to’ld me Paris should have married Juliet.”

Juliet was dead; and what mattered it to his “betossed soul” whom she should have married?

“ Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night,”

was the sole thought that made him remember an “apothecary,” and treat what his servant said as a “dream.” Who but Shakspeare could have given us the key to these subtle and delicate workings of the human heart?

³ SCENE I.—“ *Whose sale is present death in Mantua.*”

Sir Walter Raleigh, in his ‘Discourse of Tenures,’ says, “By the laws of Spain and Portugal it is not lawful to sell poison.” A similar law, if we are rightly informed, prevailed in Italy. There is no such law in our own statute-book; and the circumstance is a remarkable exemplification of the difference between English and continental manners.

⁴ SCENE II.—“ *Going to find a barefoot brother out.*”

In the old poem of ‘Romeus and Juliet’ we have the following lines:—

“ Apace our friar John to Mantua hies;
And, for because in Italy it is a wonted guise,
That friars in the town should seldom walk alone,
But of their convent aye should be accompanied with one
Of his profession.”

Friar Laurence and his associates must be supposed to belong to the Franciscan order of friars. The good friar of the play, in his kindness, his learning, and his

inclination to mix with, and perhaps control, the affairs of the world, is no unapt representative of one of this distinguished order in their best days. Warton, in his 'History of English Poetry,' has described the learning, the magnificence, and the prodigious influence of this remarkable body. Friar Laurence was able to give to Romeo

"Adversity's sweet milk—philosophy."

He was to Romeo

"a divine, a ghostly confessor,
A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd;"

but he was yet of the world. He married Romeo and his mistress, partly to gratify their love, and partly to secure his influence in the reconciliation of their families. Warton says the Franciscans "managed the machines of every important operation or event, both in the religious and political world."

⁵ SCENE III.—"The watch is coming."

Malone maintains, here and elsewhere, that there is no such establishment as the watch in Italy. Mr. Charles Armitage Brown, who, to an intimate knowledge of Shakspeare in general, adds a particular knowledge of Italian customs, says, "If Dogberry and Verges should be pronounced nothing else than the constables of the night in London, before the new police was established, I can assert that I have seen those very officers in Italy."

⁶ SCENE III.—"Some shall be pardon'd," &c.

The government of the Scaligers, or Scalas, commenced in 1259, when Mastino de la Scala was elected Podesta of Verona; and it lasted 113 years in the legitimate descendants of the first Podesta. The following is a representation of the tomb of this illustrious family at Verona, from an original sketch.





[Juliet's Tomb.]

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTICE.

“OF the truth of Juliet’s story, they (the Veronese) seem tenacious to a degree,—insisting on the fact, giving a date (1303), and showing a tomb. It is a plain, open, and partly decayed sarcophagus, with withered leaves in it, in a wild and desolate conventual garden, once a cemetery, now ruined to the very graves. The situation struck me as very appropriate to the legend, being blighted as their love.” Byron thus described the tomb of Juliet to his friend Moore, as he saw it at the close of autumn, when withered leaves had dropped into the decayed sarcophagus, and the vines that are trailed above it had been stripped of their fruit. His letter to Moore, in which this passage occurs, is dated the 7th November.* But this wild and desolate garden only struck Byron as appropriate to the *legend*—to that simple tale of fierce hatreds and fatal loves which tradition has still preserved, amongst those who may never have read Luigi da Porto or Bandello, and who, perhaps, never heard the name of Shakspeare. To the legend only is the blighted place appropriate. For who that has ever been thoroughly imbued

* Moore’s ‘Life of Byron,’ Svo. : 1838, p. 327.

with the story of Juliet, as told by Shakspeare,—who that has heard his “glorious song of praise on that inexpressible feeling which ennobles the soul and gives to it its highest sublimity, and which elevates even the senses themselves into soul,”*—who that, in our great poet’s matchless delineation of Juliet’s love, has perceived “whatever is most intoxicating in the odour of a southern spring, languishing in the song of the nightingale, or voluptuous on the first opening of the rose,”†—who, indeed, that looks upon the tomb of the Juliet of Shakspeare, can see only a shapeless ruin amidst wildness and desolation?

“A grave? O, no: a lantern,
For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
This vault a feasting presence full of light.”

Wordsworth has a philosophical remark upon Shakspeare which is applicable to all his tragedies:—“Shakspeare’s writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us as pathetic beyond the bounds of pleasure.” Wordsworth adds, that this effect, “in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular, impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement.”‡ In *Romeo and Juliet* the principle of limiting the pathetic according to the degree in which it is calculated to produce emotions of pleasure, is interwoven with the whole structure and conduct of the play. The tragical part of the story, from the first scene to the last, is held in subjection to the beautiful. It is not only that the beautiful comes to the relief of the tragic, as in ‘*Lear*’ and ‘*Othello*,’ but here the tragic is only a mode of exhibiting the beautiful under its most striking aspects. Shakspeare never intended that the story of ‘*Romeo and Juliet*’ should lacerate the heart. When Mrs. Inchbald, therefore, said, in her preface to the acted play, “‘*Romeo and Juliet*’ is called a pathetic tragedy, but it is not so in reality—it charms the understanding and delights the imagination, without melting, though it touches, the heart,”—she paid the highest compliment to Shakspeare’s skill as an artist, for he had thoroughly worked out his own idea. “*Otway*,” Mrs. Inchbald adds, “would have rendered it more effective.” *Otway* *did* render it “more effective.” It is quite sufficient to refer to his ‘*Caius Marius*,’ to show his success in converting beauty into what is called force. He did exactly what Garrick’s less skilful hand ventured to do—to make Juliet wake before *Romeo* dies. It is marvellous how acute and ingenious men, such as

* A. W. Schlegel’s ‘*Lectures*,’ Black’s translation, vol. ii., p. 187. † *Ibid.*

‡ Observations prefixed to the second edition of ‘*Lyrical Ballads*.’

Thomas Warton, for example, should be betrayed into criticism which deals with such a poem as 'Romeo and Juliet' as if there were no unity of feeling, no homogeneousness, in its entire construction. Warton says, "Shakspeare, misled by the English poem, missed the opportunity of introducing a most affecting scene by the natural and obvious conclusion of the story. In Luigi's novel, Juliet awakes from her trance in the tomb before the death of Romeo." * Shakspeare misled! Shakspeare missing the opportunity! Shakspeare working in the dark! Let us see what has been done by those who were not "misled," and who seized upon "the opportunity." Garrick has written sixty lines of good, orthodox, commonplace dialogue between Romeo and Juliet in the tomb, in which Romeo, before he begins to rave, talks very much in the style of one of Shenstone's shepherds,—as, for example,—

"And all my mind was happiness and thee."

Garrick, moreover, has omitted all such Shakspearean images as would be offensive to superfine ears, such as—

"Here, here will I remain
With worms that are thy chambermaids."

And yet, with all his efforts to destroy the beautiful, and all his managerial skill to thrust forward that species of pathetic which the actor delights in, for the purpose of exhibiting himself and bringing down the galleries, 'Romeo and Juliet,' according to Mrs. Inchbald, "seldom attracts an elegant audience. The company that frequent the side-boxes will not come to a tragedy, unless to weep in torrents; and 'Romeo and Juliet' will not draw even a copious shower of tears." Why, no! The vulgar pathos that Garrick has daubed over Shakspeare's catastrophe, with the same skill with which a picture-dealer would mend a Correggio, only serves to make the beauty, that he has been constrained to leave untouched, more unintelligible to "the company that frequent the side-boxes." The whole thing has become out of keeping. Instead of the sweetness that "ends with a long deep sigh, like the breeze of the evening," † we have a rant about "cruel, cursed fate," which shrieks like the gusty wind in the chinks of a deserted and poverty-stricken hut. Instead of that beautiful close in which "the spring and the winter meet, winter assumes the character of spring, and spring the sadness of winter," ‡ we have here a fierce storm,—“such sheets of

* 'History of English History,' vol. iv. p. 301, (1824).

† Coleridge; 'Drake's Memorials.'

‡ Coleridge, 'Literary Remains.'

fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,"—which produces the effect of mere physical terror. Instead of "the flower that is softly shed on the earth, yet putting forth undying odours,"* we have the rank and loathsome weeds of the charnel-house. It is some praise to our age that any new attempts to "improve" Shakspeare would not be tolerated. It is a higher praise that the endeavour to revive upon the stage what the greatest master of the dramatic art really wrote has, in some few instances, received adequate encouragement. But we have yet a great deal to learn, and a great deal to unlearn, before the principle upon which 'Romeo and Juliet' was written would be thoroughly appreciated by an *audience*. With the millions that *read* Shakspeare throughout the civilized world there is no difficulty.

Coleridge has described the homogeneousness—the totality of interest—which is the great characteristic of this play, by one of those beautiful analogies which could only proceed from the pen of a true poet:—

"Whence arises the harmony that strikes us in the wildest natural landscapes,—in the relative shapes of rocks, the harmony of colours in the heaths, ferns, and lichens, the leaves of the beech and the oak, the stems and rich brown branches of the birch and other mountain-trees, varying from verging autumn to returning spring,—compared with the visual effect from the greater number of artificial plantations?—From this, that the natural landscape is effected, as it were, by a single energy modified *ab intra* in each component part. And as this is the particular excellence of the Shakspearean drama generally, so is it especially characteristic of the 'Romeo and Juliet.'"[†]

Schlegel carried out the proofs of this assertion in an 'Essay on Romeo and Juliet,'[‡] in which, to use his own words, he "went through the whole of the scenes in their order, and demonstrated the inward necessity of each with reference to the whole; showed why such a particular circle of characters and relations was placed around the two lovers; explained the signification of the mirth here and there scattered; and justified the use of the occasional heightening given to the poetical colours."§ Schlegel wisely did this to exhibit what is more remarkable in Shakspeare than in any other poet, "the thorough formation of a work, even in its minutest part, according to a leading idea—the dominion of the animating spirit

* Retrospective Review.

† Literary Remains, vol. ii., p. 150.

‡ Charakteristiken und Kritiken.

§ Lectures, vol. ii., p. 127.

over all the means of execution.”* The general criticism of Schlegel upon ‘Romeo and Juliet’ is based upon a perfect comprehension of this great principle upon which Shakspeare worked. Schlegel, we apprehend, succeeded Coleridge in giving a genial tone to criticism upon Shakspeare—for Coleridge first lectured on the drama in 1802, and Schlegel in 1808; and Schlegel may also have owed something indirectly to Coleridge,—to that master-mind who filled other minds as if they were conduits from his exhaustless fountain. But he in himself is a most acute and profound critic; and what he has done to make Shakspeare properly known, even in this country, where our perception of his greatness had long been obscured amidst the deep gloom of the critical fog that had hung over us for more than a century, ought never to be forgotten. The following is the close of a celebrated passage from Schlegel, upon ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ which has often been quoted;—but it is altogether so true and so beautiful, that we cannot resist the pleasure of circulating it still more widely:—

“Whatever is most intoxicating in the odour of a southern spring, languishing in the song of the nightingale, or voluptuous on the first opening of the rose, is breathed into this poem. But, even more rapidly than the earliest blossoms of youth and beauty decay, it hurries on from the first timidly-bold declaration of love and modest return, to the most unlimited passion, to an irrevocable union; then, amidst alternating storms of rapture and despair, to the death of the two lovers, who still appear enviable, as their love survives them, and as by their death they have obtained a triumph over every separating power. The sweetest and the bitterest, love and hatred, festivity and dark forebodings, tender embraces and sepulchres, the fulness of life and self-annihilation, are all here brought close to each other; and all these contrasts are so blended in the harmonious and wonderful work into a unity of impression, that the echo which the whole leaves behind in the mind resembles a single but endless sigh.” †

In selecting these passages to establish in the minds of our readers the great principle of the unity of feeling which so thoroughly pervades the ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ and which constitutes the “particular excellence of the Shakspearean drama,” we have indirectly furnished the proof of the assertion with which we set out, that the tragical part of the story, from the first scene to the last, is held in subjection to the beautiful. The structure of the play essentially required this.—Coleridge has said that “Shakspeare meant the ‘Ro-

* Lectures, vol. ii., p. 153.

† Ibid., p. 186.

meo and Juliet' to approach to a poem;" but, of course, Coleridge meant a poem entirely modified by the dramatic power. We shall venture to trespass upon the attention of our readers, whilst we examine the conduct of the story and the development of the characters under this aspect. When we have arrived at a due conception of the principle of art on which this drama was constructed—that of sublimating all that is literal and common in human actions and human thoughts, by the force of passion and imagination, throwing their rich colours upon the chief actors, and colouring, upon an indispensable law of harmony, all the groups around them—we shall reject, as utterly unworthy, all that miscalled criticism which takes its stand upon a *material* foundation, and, dealing with high poetry as if it were a thing of demonstrations and syllogisms, tells us that Shakspeare's comic scenes are here "happily wrought, but his pathetic strains are always polluted with some unexpected deprivations. His persons, however distressed, have a conceit left them in their misery, a miserable conceit."*

The first scenes of nearly every play of Shakspeare are remarkable for the skill with which they prepare the mind for all the after scenes. We do not see the succession of scenes; the catastrophe is unrevealed. But we look into a dim and distant prospect, and by what is in the foreground we can form a general notion of the landscape that will be presented to us, as the clouds roll away, and the sun lights up its wild mountains or its fertile valleys. When Sampson and Gregory enter "armed with swords and bucklers"—when we hear, "a dog of the house of Montague moves me"—we know that these are not common servants, and live not in common times: with them the excitement of party-spirit does not rise into strong passion,—it presents its ludicrous side. They quarrel like angry curs, who snarl, yet are afraid to bite. But the "furious Tybalt" in a moment shows us that these hasty quarrels cannot have peaceful endings. The strong arm of authority suspends the affray; but the spirit of enmity is not put down. The movement of this scene is as rapid as the quarrel itself. It produces the effect upon the mind of something which startles—almost terrifies; which passes away into repose, but which leaves an ineffaceable impression upon the senses. The calm immediately succeeds. Benvolio's speech,—

"Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,"—

at once shows us that we are entering into the region of high poetry.

* Johnson's concluding Remarks on 'Romeo and Juliet.'

Coleridge remarks that the succeeding speech of old Montague exhibits the poetical aspect of the play even more strikingly:—

“Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning’s dew.”

It is remarkable that the speech thus commencing, which contains twenty lines as highly wrought as anything in Shakspeare, is not in the first copy of this play. The experience of the artist taught him where to lay on the poetical colouring brighter and brighter. How beautifully these lines prepare us for the appearance of Romeo—the now musing, abstracted Romeo—the Romeo, who, like the lover of Chaucer,

“Solitary was ever alone,
And waking all the night, making moan.”

The love of Romeo was unrequited love. It was a sentiment rather than a passion—a love which displayed itself “in the numbers that Petrarch flowed in”—a love that solaced itself in antithetical conceits upon its own misery, and would draw consolation from melancholy associations. It was the love without the “true Promethean fire.” But it was the fit preparation for what was to follow. The dialogue between Capulet and Paris prepares us for Juliet—the “hopeful lady of his earth,” who

“Hath not seen the change of fourteen years.”

The old man does not think her “ripe to be a bride;” but we are immediately reminded of the precocity of nature under a southern sun, by another magical touch of poetry, which tells us of youth and freshness—of summer in “April”—of “fresh female buds” breathing the fragrance of opening flowers. Juliet at length comes. We see the submissive and gentle girl; but the garrulity of the Nurse carries us back even to the

“Prettiest babe that e’er I nurs’d.”

Neither Juliet nor Romeo had rightly read their own hearts. He was sighing for a shadow—she fancied that she could subject her feelings to the will of others:—

“I’ll look to like, if looking liking move;
But no more deep will I endart mine eye,
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.”

The preparation for their first interview goes forward: Benvolio has persuaded Romeo to go to Capulet’s feast. There is a slight pause in the action, but how gracefully is it filled up! Mercutio comes upon the scene. Coleridge has described him as “that exquisite ebullience and overflow of youthful life, wafted on over the laughing waves of pleasure and prosperity, as a wanton beauty that

distorts the face on which she knows her lover is gazing enraptured, and wrinkles her forehead in the triumph of its smoothness! Wit ever wakeful, fancy busy and procreative as an insect, courage, an easy mind that, without cares of its own, is at once disposed to laugh away those of others, and yet to be interested in them,—these and all other congenial qualities, melting into the common *copula* of them all, the man of rank and the gentleman, with all its excellences and all its weaknesses, constitute the character of Mercutio!"* Is this praise of Mercutio overcharged? We think not, looking at him dramatically. He is placed by the side of Romeo, to contrast with him, but also to harmonize. The poetry of Mercutio is that of fancy:—the poetry of Romeo is that of imagination. The wit of Mercutio is the overflow of animal spirits, occasionally polluted, like a spring pure from the well-head, by the soil over which it passes:—the wit of Romeo is somewhat artificial, and scarcely self-sustained;—it is the unaccustomed play of the intellect when the passions "have come to the clenching point,"—but it is under control—it has no exuberance which, like the wit of Mercutio, admits the colouring of the sensual and the sarcastic. The courage of Mercutio is, in the same way, the courage of high animal spirits, fearless of consequences, and laughing even when it has paid the penalty of its rashness—"Ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man." The courage of Romeo is reflective and forbearing,—

"I do protest, I never injur'd thee."

But when his friend has fallen, his "newly entertained revenge" casts off all control:—

"Away to heaven respective lenity!"

Then, again, how finely the calm, benevolent good sense of Benvolio blends with these opposites!

But the masquerade waits. We have here the realization of youth and freshness which Capulet promised to Paris; but at the moment when we see "the guests and the maskers" we have a touch, in the expression of the old man's natural feelings, which tells us how perishable these things are:—

"I have seen the day,
That I have worn a visor; and could tell
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,
Such as would please;—'t is gone, 't is gone, 't is gone!"

But Juliet appears, and we think not of decay. We forget that "one generation pushes another off the stage." The very first

* Literary Remains, vol. ii.

words of Romeo show the change that has come o'er him. He went into that "hall in Capulet's house," fearing

"Some consequence yet hanging in the stars."

He had "a soul of lead"—he would be "a candle-holder and look on." But he has seen Juliet; and with what gorgeous images has that sight filled his imagination!

"O she doth teach the torches to burn bright;
Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night
As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear."

We have now the poetry of passion bursting upon us with its purple light. Compare this with the pale poetry of sentiment in the first scene, when he talks of Rosaline being

"too fair, too wise, wisely too fair."

Perfectly in accordance with this exaltation of mind is the address of Romeo to Juliet. The dialogue must be considered as that of persons each acting a character. But there is more in it than meets the ear;—it is not entirely the half expression of the thoughts of two maskers:—there is an under-current of reality which blends the language of affection with the language of compliment. When Romeo asks of the Nurse, "What is her mother?" and when Juliet inquires,

"What 's he that now is going out of door?"

we see "the beginning of the end." But we do not forget that the anger of Tybalt at Romeo's presence has thrown a shadow over the brightness of their young love. The maskers are gone—the torches are extinguished—the voice of the revelry has ceased.

Romeo has leapt the wall of Capulet's garden. There are no longer

"Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light."

He has found a sequestered spot far apart from that banqueting-hall from which his Juliet descended, amidst the gay groups that floated about in that garden, to hang

"upon the cheek of night
As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear."

He is alone. The moon

"Tips with silver all those fruit-tree tops."

He hears in the distant street the light-hearted Mercuti calling upon him by the names of

"Humours, passion, madman, lover."

But he heeds him not. Juliet appears. She speaks.

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

From this poetical elevation it would seem almost impossible for the lover to descend to earth,—and yet the earth hath visions of tenderness and purity, which equally belong to the highest region of poetry. The fears of Juliet for his safety;—the “farewell compliment;”—the

“In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond;”—

the “do not swear;”—the

“Stay but a little, I will come again;”—

the

“If that thy bent of love be honourable:”—

all these indications of the union of “purity of heart and the glow of imagination” belong to the highest region of an ideal world, and yet are linked to this our own world of beauty and frailty. This is one of the great scenes of the poem which cannot be comprehended if disjoined from all that is about it; any more than Juliet's soliloquy, in the third act, after her marriage. It is one of the scenes that is consequently obnoxious to a false ridicule, and, what is worse, to a grovelling criticism. In the midst of the intensity of Juliet's “timidly-bold declaration of love,” Steevens inserts one of the atrocious notes that he perpetrated under the fictitious name of Amner. It is a warning to us how far a prosaic spirit may descend into dirt, when it attempts to deal with a great artist without reverence for his art. There are three modes in which criticism, or what is called criticism, may be applied to high art. The first is, where the critic endeavours to look at an entire work,—not at parts of a work only,—in some degree through the same medium as the poet looked at his unformed creations. The second is, where the critic rejects that medium, for the most part through incapacity of using it, and peers through the smoked glass of what he calls common sense, that his eyes, forsooth, may not be dazzled. The third is, where the critic, from a superabundance of the power of detecting what appears the ridiculous side of things (which results from a deficiency of imagination), takes a caricaturist's view of the highest exercises of the intellect, and asserts his own cleverness by presenting a *travestie*. The first system, though it may be the most difficult, is the most safe; the third, though it appears the most insidious, is the least in-

jurious; the second is, at once, easy and debasing; it may begin in Steevens and end in Amner.

The "silver-sweet" sound of "lovers' tongues by night" is hushed. "The grey-eyed morn" sees the friar in his cell, bearing his "osier-cage" of

"Baleful weeds, and precious juiced flowers."

Here is a new link in the conduct of the story. And what a beautiful transition have we made from the elevated poetry of passion to the scarcely less elevated poetry of philosophy! The old man, whose pious thoughts shape themselves into sweet and solemn cadences, stands as the antagonist principle of the passionate conflicts that are going on around him. He is to be a great agent in the workings of the drama. He would close up the dissensions of the rival houses—he would make the new lovers blessed in their union—he would assuage the misery of Romeo's exile—he would save his lady from an unholy marriage—he would join them again in life, although the tomb appears to have separated them. The good old man will rely too much upon his philosophy, and his skilful dealing with human actions; as the lovers have already relied too much upon the integrity of their passion as a shield against calamity. The half-surprise, the half-gladness of the friar, when Romeo tells him where his "heart's dear love is set," are delightful. The reproof that is meant for a commendation—the "come, young waverer"—the "wisely and slow,"—are all true to nature. But Romeo has secured his purpose, and his heart is at ease. Then is he fit to play a part in the comic scenes that succeed,—to bandy words with Mercutio—to be pleasant with the Nurse. But Juliet's soliloquy while she is waiting for the Nurse,—

"O, she is lame! love's heralds should be thoughts,"—

and the scene with Romeo, Juliet, and the friar, again bring us back to the high region of poetry. The latter scene was greatly elaborated after the first draft.

We have almost lost sight of the quarrels of the rival houses of Verona.—We see only the two lovers, who cannot sum up "half their sum of wealth," and have forgotten their names of Montague and Capulet as names of strife. But an evil hour is approaching. The brawl with which the drama opened is to be renewed—

"The day is hot, the Capulets abroad."

The "fiery Tybalt" and the "bold Mercutio" are the first victims of this factious hate—and Romeo is banished. The action does not move laggingly—all is heat and precipitation. Juliet sits alone in her bower, unconscious of all but her impassioned imaginings.

She thinks aloud in the solitude which is around her, with a characteristic vehemence of temperament; but in this soliloquy "there is something so almost infantine in her perfect simplicity, so playful and fantastic in the imagery and language, that the charm of sentiment and innocence is thrown over the whole."* The scene in which the Nurse tells her disjointed story of Tybalt's death is a masterpiece. We have here to encounter the often-repeated objection, that Shakspeare uses conceits when he ought to be expressing the language of vehement passion. The conceits are not in accordance with the general taste of our own age, though they were so with that of Shakspeare's. But they have a much higher justification. They are the results of strong emotion, seeking to relieve itself by a violent effort of the intellect, that the will may recover its balance. Immediately after the lines in which we have that play upon words whose climax is—

"I am not I, if there be such an I,"

we come at once to an exclamation of the deepest pathos and simplicity:—

"O break my heart!—poor bankrout;"—

and then, when Juliet knows that Romeo is not dead, but that Tybalt has fallen by the hand of her husband, what a natural revulsion of feeling succeeds!—

"O, that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!"

The transition from her reproach of Tybalt's murderer, to a glorious trust in the integrity of her lord, is surpassingly beautiful. Not less beautiful is the passion which Romeo exhibits in the friar's cell. Each of the lovers in these scenes shows the intensity of their abandonment to an overmastering will. "They see only themselves in the universe." That is the true moral of their fate. But, even under the direst calamity, they catch at the one joy which is left—the short meeting before the parting. And what a parting that is! Here, again, comes the triumph of the beautiful over the merely tragic. They are once more calm. Their love again breathes of all the sweet sights and sounds in a world of beauty. They are parting—but the almost happy Juliet says—

"It is not yet near day,—
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale."

Romeo, who sees the danger of delay, is not deceived:—

"It was the lark, the herald of the morn."

Then what a burst of poetry follows!—

* Mrs. Jameson's 'Characteristics of Women,' third edition, vol. i. p. 193.

“Night’s candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountains’ tops.”

The scene closes with that exquisite display of womanly tenderness in Juliet, which hurries from the forgetfulness of joy in her husband’s presence to apprehension for his safety. After this scene we are almost content to think, as Romeo fancied he thought,

“come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy.”

The sorrow does come upon poor Juliet with redoubled force. The absolute father, the unyielding mother, the treacherous Nurse,—all hurrying her into a loathed marriage,—might drive one less resolved to the verge of madness. But from this moment her love has become heroism. She sees

“No pity sitting in the clouds”—

she rejects her Nurse—she resolves to deceive her parents. This scene brings out her character in its strongest and most beautiful relief. The Nurse, in the grossness of her nature, has dared to talk to the wife of Romeo—the all-loving and devoted wife—of the green eye of Paris! The Nurse mistook the one passion of Juliet—the sense raised into soul—for a grovelling quality that her lofty imagination would utterly despise. “O most wicked fiend!” Not so Juliet’s other counsellor. The friar estimated her constancy, and he did “spy a kind of hope” that it might be rewarded. He saw that Juliet would, at all hazards, put away “the shame” of marrying Paris. Well had the friar reckoned upon her “strength of will.” The scene in his cell, and the subsequent scene when she swallows the draught, are amongst the most powerful in the play; and yet we never lose sight of the highest poetry, mingling what is grand with what is beautiful. When Juliet is supposed to be dead, nature again asserts her empire over the tetchy and absolute father, and the mother weeps over the

“One, poor one, one poor and loving child.”

Here, again, the gentle poetry of common feelings comes to the relief of the scene; and the friar brings in a higher poetry in the consolations of divine truth.

As we approach the catastrophe, the poetical cast of Romeo’s mind becomes even more clearly defined than in the earlier scenes. It was first fanciful, then imaginative, then impassioned—but when deep sorrow has been added to his love, and he treads upon the threshold of the world of shadows, it puts on even a higher character of beauty. We have elsewhere spoken * of the celebrated speech of the “Apothecary;” refusing to believe that it forms an ex-

* Illustrations of Act V.

ception to the general character of the beauty that throws its rich evening light over the closing scenes. The gentleness of Romeo is apparent, even while he says—

“The time and my intents are savage-wild;”

for he adds, with a strong effort, to his faithful Balthasar,

“Live, and be prosperous, and farewell, good fellow.”

His entreaties to Paris—“O be gone!”—are full of the same tenderness. He is constrained to fight with him—he slays him—but he almost weeps over him, as

“One writ with me in sour misfortune’s book.”

The remainder of Romeo’s speech in the tomb is, as Coleridge has put it, “the master example, how beauty can at once increase and modify passion.”

“O here

Will I set up my everlasting rest,
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh.”

This is the one portion of the “melancholy elegy on the frailty of love, from its own nature and external circumstances,”* which Romeo sings before his last sleep. And how beautifully is the corresponding part sung by the waking and dying Juliet!—

“What’s here? a cup, clos’d in my true love’s hand?
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end:—
O churl! drink all; and left no friendly drop,
To help me after?—I will kiss thy lips;
Haply some poison yet doth hang on them
To make me die with a restorative.”

They have paid the penalty of the fierce hatreds that were engendered around them, and of their own precipitancy. But their misfortunes and their loves have healed the enmities of which they were the victims. “Poor sacrifices!” Capulet may now say,

“O, brother Montague, give me thy hand.”

They have left a peace behind them which they could not taste themselves. But their first “rash and unadvis’d” contract was elevated into all that was pure and beautiful, by their after sorrows and their constancy; and in happier regions their affections may put on that calmness of immortality which the ancients typified in their allegory of ‘Love and the Soul.’

* A. W. Schlegel.

END OF VOLUME VII.

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