

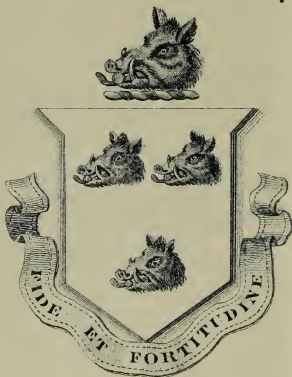
Accessions

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J. June, Inve. Sculp. May 6 1st 1771.

T H E

Millican

H I S T O R Y
O F
K I N G L E A R,
A
T R A G E D Y.

As it is now acted at the THEATRES ROYAL in
DRURY-LANE and COVENT-GARDEN.

Revived, with Alterations,
By N. T A T E, Esq.



L O N D O N :

Printed for F. and J. NOBLE, T. LOWNDES,
T. LONGMAN, T. CASLON, C. CORBETT,
and W. NICOLL.

M DCC LXXI,

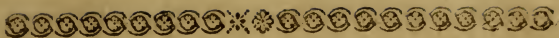
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43

15,1551

May, 1873



To my Esteemed FRIEND

THOMAS BOTELEER, *Esq;*

S I R,

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ O U have a natural right to this piece, since
 ❖ Y ❖ by your advice I attempted the revival of it
 ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ with alterations. Nothing but the power of
 ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ your persuasions, and my zeal for all the
 remains of *Shakespear*, could have wrought
 me to so bold an undertaking. I found that the new-
 modelling of this story would force me sometimes on the
 difficult task of making the chiefest persons speak some-
 thing like their characters, on matter whereof I had no
 ground in my author *Lear's* real and *Edgar's* pre-
 tended madness have so much of *ext avagant nature*,
 (I know not how else to express it) as could never have
 started but from our *Shakespear's* creating fancy. The
 images and language are so odd and surprizing, and yet
 so agreeable and proper, that whilst we grant that none
 but *Shakespear* could have formed such conceptions, we
 are satisfied that they were the only things in the world
 that ought to be said on those occasions. I found the whole
 to answer your account of it, a heap of jewels unstrung,
 and unpolish'd; yet so dazzling in their disorder, that
 I soon perceived I had seized a treasure. It was my good
 fortune to light on one expedient to rectify what was
 wanting in the regularity and probability of the tale,
 which was to run through the whole: *A love* betwixt
Edgar and *Cordelia*, that never changed word with each
 other in the original. This renders *Cordelia's* indifference,
 and her father's passion in the first scene, probable: It
 likewise gives countenance to *Edgar's* disguise, making
 that a generous design that was before a poor shift to save
 his life. The distress of the story is evidently heightened
 by it; and it particularly gave occasion of a new scene

or two, of more success (perhaps) than merit. This method necessarily threw me on making the tale conclude in a success to the innocent distressed persons: Otherwise I must have incumbered the stage with dead bodies, which conduct makes many Tragedies conclude with unseasonable jests. Yet was I wrack'd with no small fears for so bold a change, 'till I found it well received by my Audience; and if this will not satisfy the reader, I can produce an authority that questionless will.

Mr. Dryden. Neither is it of so trivial an undertaking in his Preface to make a Tragedy end happily, for 'tis to the Spanish more difficult to save than 'tis to kill. The dagger and cup of prison are always in readiness; but to bring the action to the last extremity, and then by probable means to recover all, will require the art and judgment of a writer, and cost him many a pang in the performance.

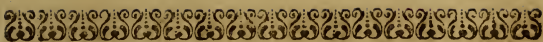
I have one thing more to apologize for, which is, that I have not used less quaintness of expression even in the newest parts of this play. I confess it was design in me, partly to comply with my author's style, to make the scenes of a piece, and partly to give it some resemblance of the time and persons here represented. This, Sir, I submit wholly to you, who are both a judge and master of style. Nature had exempted you before you went abroad from the morose saturnine humour of our country, and you brought home the refinedness of travel without the affectation. Many faults I see in the following pages, and question not but you will discover more; yet I will presume so far on your friendship, as to make the whole a present to you, and subscribe myself,

Your obliged friend,

and humble servant,

N. T A T E.

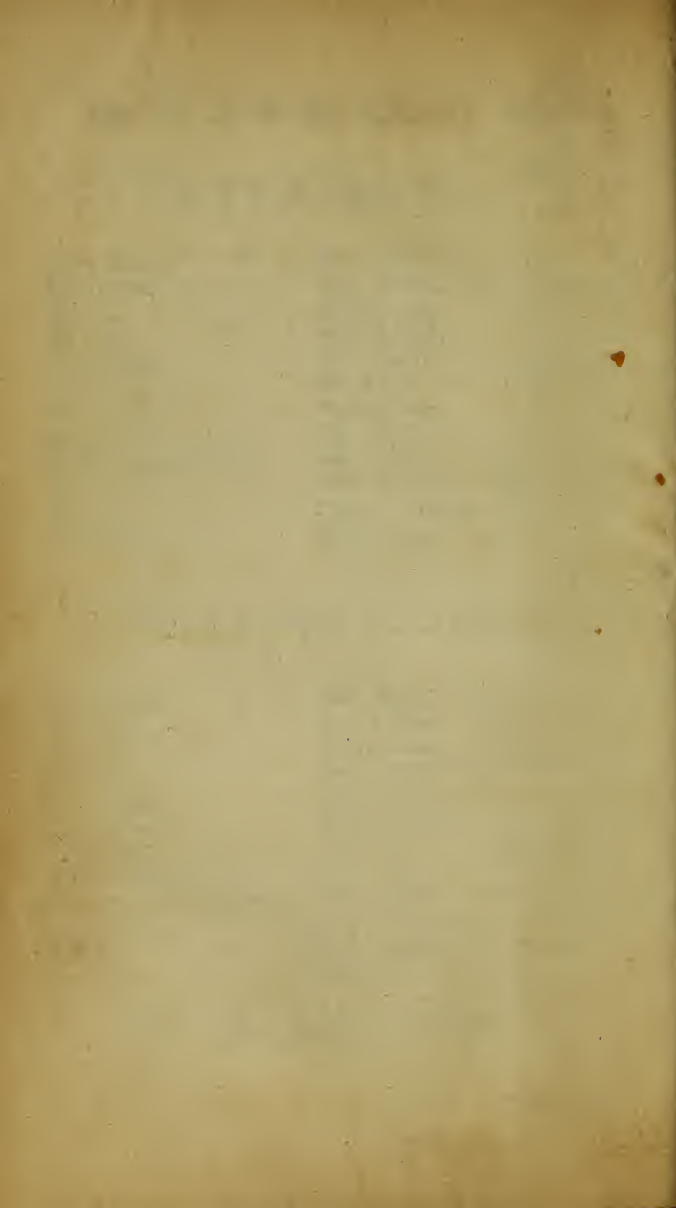
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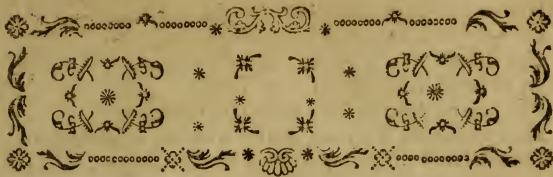


PROLOGUE.

SINCE by mistakes your best delights are made,
(For e'en your wives can please in masquerade)
'Twere worth our while t'have drawn you in this day
By a new name to our old honest play:
But he that did this evening's treat prepare,
Bluntly resolv'd before-hand to declare,
Your entertainment should be most old fare;
Yet hopes, since in rich Shakespear's soil it grew,
'Twill relish yet with those whose Tastes are true,
And his Ambition is to please a Few.

If then his heap of flow'rs shall chance to wear
Fresh beauty in the order they now bear,
E'v'n this is Shakespear's praise: each rustick knows
'Mongst plenteous flow'rs a garland to compose,
Which strung by his coarse hand may fairer show,
But 'twas a power divine first made 'em grow.
Why shou'd these scenes lie hid, in which we find
What may at once divert and teach the mind?
Morals were a'ways proper for the stage,
But are e'v'n necessary in this age.
Poets must take the church's teaching trade,
Since priests their province of intrigue invade;
But we the worst in this exchange have g.t,
In vain our poets preach, whilst churchmen plet.





T H E

H I S T O R Y

O F

K I N G L E A R.

A C T I.

Enter Bastard solus.

Bast. ❀❀❀❀❀ H O U, Nature, art my Goddess; to
 ❀ thy law
 ❀ T ❀ My services are bound: why am I
 ❀ then
 ❀❀❀❀❀ Depriv'd of a son's right, because I
 came not

In the dull road that custom has prescrib'd?
 Why bastard? Wherefore base? when I can boast
 A mind as gen'rous, and a shape as true
 As honest Madam's Issue? Why are we
 Held base, who in the lusty steath of Nature
 Take fiercer qualities than what compound
 The scant'd births of the stale marriage-bed?

Well

Well then, legitimate *Edgar*, to thy right
 Of law I will oppose a bastard's cunning.
 Our father's love is to the bastard *Edmund*.
 As to legitimate *Edgar*; with success
 I've practis'd yet on both their easy natures:
 Here comes the o'd man, chaf'd with the information
 Which last I forg'd against my brother *Edgar*;
 A tale so plausible, so boldly utter'd,
 And heighten'd by such lucky accidents,
 That now the slightest circumstance confirms him,
 And base-born *Edmund*, spight of law, inherits.

Enter Kent and Gloster

Gloster. Nay, good my Lord, your charity
 O'ershoots itself, to plead in his behalf;
 You are yourself a father, and may feel
 The sting of disobedience from a son
 First-born and best-belov'd: O villain *Edgar*!

Kent. Be not too rash; all may be forger;
 And time yet clear the duty of your son.

Gloster. Plead with the seas, and reason down the winds,
 Yet shalt thou ne'er convince me: I have seen
 His soul designs through all a father's fondness:
 But be this light and thou my witnesses,
 That I discard him here from my possessions,
 Divorce him from my heart, my blood, and name.

Bast. It works as I cou'd wish; I'll shew myself. [*Aside*.]

Gloster. Ha *Edmund*, welcome, boy. O *Kent*! see here
 Inverted nature, *Gloster's* shame and glory:
 This bye-born, the wild sal'y of my youth,
 Pursues me with all filial offices;
 Whilst *Edgar*, begg'd of Heaven, and born in honour,
 Draws plagues on my white head, that urge me still
 To curse in age the pleasure of my youth.
 Nay, weep not, *Edmund*, for thy brother's crimes.
 O gen'rous boy! thou shar'st but half his blood,
 Yet lov'st beyond the kindness of a brother:
 But I'll reward thy virtue. Follow me.
 My Lord, you wait the King, who comes resolv'd
 To quit the toys of empire, and divide
 His realms amongst his daughters. Heaven succeed it;
 But much I fear the change.

Kent

Ken. I grieve to see him
With such wild starts of passion hourly seiz'd,
As renders majesty beneath itself.

Gloss. Alas! 'tis the infirmity of his age:
Yet has his temper ever been unfixt,
Chol'rick, and sudden. Hark, they approach.

[*Exeunt Gloss. and Bass.*]

Flourish. Enter Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Burgundy,
Edgar, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia. Edgar *speaking to*
Cordelia at entrance.

Edgar. Cordelia, Royal fair, turn yet once more,
And ere successful *Burgundy* receive
The treasure of thy beauties from the King;
Ere happy *Burgundy* for ever fold thee,
Cast back one pitying look on wretched *Edgar*.

Cord. Alas! what wou'd the wretched *Edgar* with
The more unfortunate *Cordelia*;
Who, in obedience to a father's will,
Flies from her *Edgar's* arms to *Burgundy's*.

Lear. Attend, my Lords of *Albany* and *Cornwall*,
With princely *Burgundy*.

Alb. We do, my liege.

Lear. Give me the map.—Know, Lords, we have
In three our kingdom, having now resolv'd. [divided]
To disengage from our long toil of state;
Conferring all upon your younger years.
You, *Burgundy*, *Cornwall*, and *Albany*,
Long in our court have made your amorous sojourn,
And now are to be answer'd.—Tell me, my daughters,
Which of you loves us most, that we may place
Our largest bounty with the largest merit.
Goneril, our eldest born, speak first.

Gon. Sir, I do love you more than words can utter,
Beyond what can be valu'd rich or rare;
Nor liberty, nor sight, health, fame, or beauty,
Are half so dear; my life for you were vile;
As much as child can love the best of fathers.

Lear. Of all these bounds, e'en from this line to this,
With shady forests, and wide skirted meads,
We make thee lady; to thine and *Albany's* Issue
Be this perpetual.—What says our second daughter,
Regan, wife to *Cornwall*?

Reg. My sister, Sir, in part, express my love;
For such as hers, is mine, though more extended:
Sense has no other joy that I can relish;
I have my all in my dear liege's love.

Lear. Therefore, to thee and thine hereditary,
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom.

Cord. Now comes my trial—How am I distressed, [*Aside.*
That must with cold speech tempt the chol'rick King
Rather to leave me dowerless, than condemn me
To loath'd embraces!

Lear. Speak now our last, not least in our dear love;
So ends my task of state.—*Cordelia*, speak.
What canst thou say to win a richer third
Than what thy sisters gain'd?

Cord. Now must my love, in words, fall short of theirs,
As much as it exceeds in truth. — Nothing, my Lord.

Lear. Nothing can come of nothing; speak again.

Cord. Unhappy am I that I can't dissemble:
Sir, as I ought, I love your Majesty,
No more, nor less.

Lear. Take heed, *Cordelia*;
Thy fortunes are at stake; think better on't,
And mend thy speech a little.

Cord. O my liege!
You gave me being, bred me, dearly love me,
And I return my duty as I ought;
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they love you All?
Haply when I shall wed, the Lord whose hand
Shall take my plight, will carry half my love;
For I shall never marry like my Sisters,
To love my father All.

Lear. And goes thy heart with this?
'Tis said that I am chol'rick. Judge me, Gods,
Is there not cause? Now, minion, I perceive
The truth of what has been suggested to us;
Thy fondness for the rebel Son of *Gloster*,
False to his father, as thou art to my hopes;
And, oh! take heed, rash girl, lest we comply
With thy fond wishes, which thou wilt too late
Repent; for know, our nature cannot brook
A child so young, and so ungentle.

Cord.

Cord. So young, my Lord, and true.

Lear. Thy truth then be thy dow'r;
For, by the sacred Sun and solemn Night,
I here disclaim all my paternal care,
And from this minute hold thee as a stranger
Both to my blood and favour.

Kent. This is frenzy.

Consider, good my liege——

Lear. Peace, *Kent*;

Come not between a dragon and his rage.
I lov'd her most, and in her tender trust
Design'd to have bestow'd my age at ease.
So be my grave my peace, as here I give
My heart from her, and with it all my wealth.
My Lords of *Cornwall* and of *Albany*,
I do invest you jointly with full right
In this fair third, *Cordelia's* forfeit dow'r.
Mark me, my Lords, observe our last resolve;
Our self, attended with an hundred Knights,
Will make abode with you in monthly course;
The name alone of King remain with me,
Yours be th' execution and revenues.
This is our final Will; and to confirm it,
This coronet part between you.

Kent. Royal *Lear*,

Whom I have ever honour'd as my King,
Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
And, as my patron, thought on in my pray'rs——

Lear. Away! the bow is bent, make from the shaft.

Kent. No, let it fall, and drench within my heart:
Be *Kent* unmannerly when *Lear* is mad;
Thy youngest daughter——

Lear. On thy life no more.

Kent. What wilt thou do, old man?

Lear. Out of my sight!

Kent. See better first.

Lear. Now, by the Gods——

Kent. Now by the Gods, rash King, thou swear'st in

Lear. Ha, traitor!

[vain.

Kent. Do, kill thy physician, *Lear*;
Strike thro' my throat, yet with my latest breath

I'll thunder in thine ear my just complaint,
And tell thee to thy face that thou dost ill.

Lear. Hear me, rash man; on thy allegiance hear me:
Since thou hast striven to make us break our vow,
And prest between our sentence and our pow'r,
Which nor our nature, nor our place can bear,
We banish thee for ever from our sight
And kingdom: If, when three days are expir'd,
Thy hated trunk be found in our dominions,
That moment is thy death—Away.

Kent. Why fare thee well, King; since thou art resolv'd,
I take thee at thy word, and will not stay
To see thy fall: The Gods protect thee, maid,
That truly thinks, and has most justly said.
Thus to new climates my old truth I bear;
Friendship lives hence, and banishment is here. [*Exit.*]

Lear. Now *Burgundy*, you see her price is fall'n;
Yet if the fondness of your passion still
Affects her as she stands, dow'rless, and lost
In our esteem, she's yours; take her, or leave her.

Burg. Pardon me, Royal *Lear*, I but demand
The dow'r yourself propos'd, and here I take
Cordelia by the hand, Dutchess of *Burgundy*.

Lear. Then leave her, Sir; for, by a fathe.'s rage,
I tell you all her wealth. Away!

Burg. Then, Sir, be pleas'd to charge the breach
Of our alliance on your own will,
Not my inconstancy. [*Exeunt.*]

Manent *Edgar* and *Cordelia*.

Edg. Has Heav'n then weigh'd the merit of my love,
Or is it the raving of a sickly thought?
Cou'd *Burgundy* forego so rich a prize,
And leave her to despairing *Edgar's* arms?
Have I thy hand, *Cordelia*? Do I clasp it?
The hand that was this minute to have join'd
My hated rival's? Do I kneel before thee,
And offer at thy feet my panting heart?
Smile, Princess, and convince me; for as yet
I doubt, and dare not trust the dazzling Joy.

Cord. Some comfort yet, that 'twas no vicious blot
That has depriv'd me of a father's grace,

But

But merely want of that that makes me rich
 In wanting it; a smooth professing tongue.
 O sisters! I am loth to call your fault
 As it deserves; but use our father well,
 And wrong'd *Cordelia* never shall repine.

Edg. O heav'nly maid! that art thyself thy dow'r,
 Richer in virtue than the stars in light;
 If *Edgar's* humble fortunes may be grac'd
 With thy acceptance, at thy feet he lays 'em.
 Ha! my *Cordelia*! dost thou turn away?
 What have I done t'offend thee?

Cord. Talk'd of love.

Edg. Then I've offended oft; *Cordelia* too
 Has oft permitted me so to offend.

Cord. When, *Edgar*, I permitted your addressee,
 I was the darling daughter of a King;
 Nor can I now forget my Royal birth,
 And live dependent on my lover's fortune;
 I cannot to so low a fate submit;
 And therefore study to forget your passion,
 And trouble me upon this theme no more.

Edg. Thus Majesty takes most state in distress!
 How are we tost on Fortune's fickle flood!
 The wave that with surprizing kindness brought
 The dear wreck to my arms, has snatch'd it back,
 And left me mourning on the barren shore.

Cord. This baseness of the ignoble *Burgundy*, [*Aside.*
 Draws just suspicion on the race of men;
 His love was int'rest, so may *Edgar's* be,
 And he but with more compliment dissemble;
 If so, I shall oblige him by denying.
 But if his love be fix'd, such constant flame
 As warms our breasts, if such I find his passion,
 My heart as grateful to his truth shall be,
 And cold *Cordelia* prove as kind as he. [*Exit.*

Enter Bastard hastily.

Bast. Brother, I've found you in a lucky minute;
 Fly and be safe; some Villain has incens'd
 Our Father against your life.

Edg. Distress'd *Cordelia*! but oh! more cruel!

Bast. Hear me, Sir; your life, your life's in danger.

Edg.

Edg. A resolve to sudden,
And of such black impoittance!

Bast. 'Twas not sudden;
Some villain has of long time laid the train.

Edg. And yet, perhaps, 'twas but pretended coldness,
To try how far my passion would pursue.

Bast. He hears me not; 'wake, 'wake, Sir.

Edg. Say ye, brother?—

No tears, good *Edmund*; if thou bring'st me tidings
To strike me dead, for charity delay not;
That present will befit so kind a hand.

Bast. Your danger, Sir, comes on so fast,
That I want time t'inform you; but retire,
Whilst I take care to turn the pressing stream.
O Gods! for Heaven's sake, Sir—

Edg. Pardon me, Sir, a serious thought
Had seiz'd me; but I think you talk'd of danger,
And wish'd me to retire—Must all our vows
End thus?—Friend, I obey you.—O *Cordelia*! [*Exit.*]

Bast. Ha! ha! fond Man, such credulous honesty
Lessens the glory of my artifice;
His nature is so far from doing wrongs,
That he suspects none: If this letter speed,
And pass for *Edgar's*, as himself would own
The counterfeit, but for the foul contents,
Then my designs are perfect——Here comes *Gloster*.

Enter Gloster.

Glost. Stay, *Edmund*, turn; what paper were you

Bast. A trifle, Sir. [*reading?*]

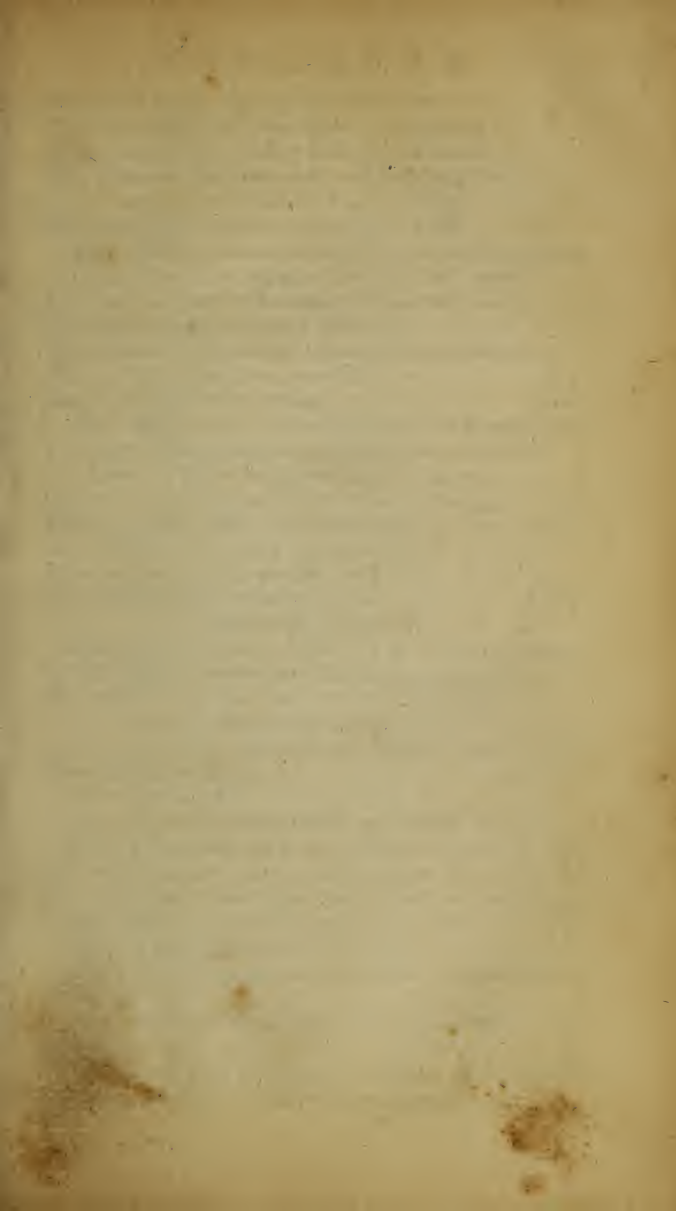
Glost. What needed then that terrible dispatch of it
Into your pocket? Come, produce it, Sir.

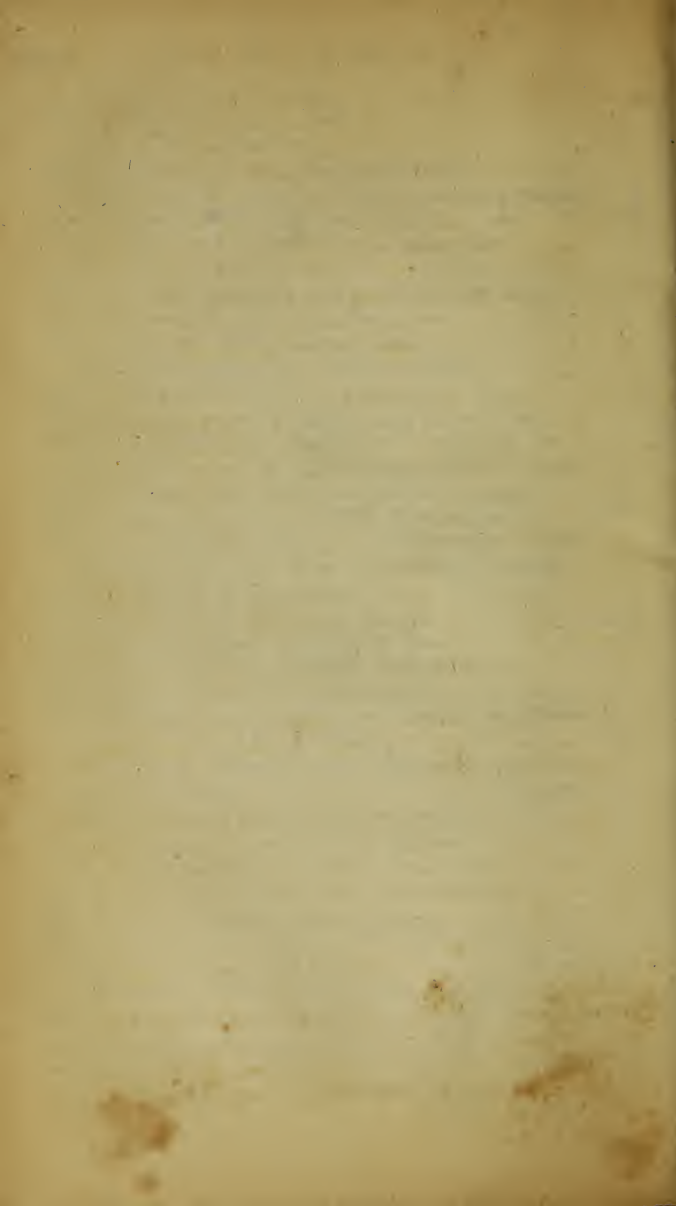
Bast. A letter from my brother, Sir, I had
Just broke the seal, but knew not the contents;
Yet, fearing they might prove to blame,
Endeavour'd to conceal it from your sight.

Glost. 'Tis *Edgar's* Character. [*Reads.*]

This policy of fathers is intolerable, that keeps our fortunes from us 'till age will not suffer us to enjoy them; I am weary of the tyranny: Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his possessions, and live below'd of your brother

E D G A R.





Sleep till I wak'd him! you should enjoy
 Half his possessions! — *Edgar* to write this
 'Gainst his indulgent father! Death and hell!
 Fly, *Edmund*, seek him out; wind me into him,
 That I may bite the traitor's heart, and fold
 His bleeding entrails on my vengeful arm.

Bast. Perhaps 'twas writ, my Lord, to prove my virtue.

Gloster. These late eclipses of the sun and moon
 Can bode no less; love cools, and friendship fails;
 In cities mutiny, in countries discord;
 The bond of nature crack'd 'twixt son and father:
 Find out the villain; do it carefully,
 And it shall lose thee nothing.

[*Exit.*

Bast. So, now my project's firm; but to make sure,
 I'll throw in one proof more, and that a bold one;
 I'll place old *Gloster* where he shall o'er-hear us
 Confer of this design; whilst, to his thinking,
 Deluded *Edgar* shall accuse himself.

Be honesty my int'rest, and I can

Be honest too: And what saint so divine,

That will successful villainy decline?

[*Exit.*

[*Enter Kent disguised.*

Kent. Now, banish'd *Kent*, if thou canst pay thy duty
 In this disguise, where thou dost stand condemn'd,
 Thy master *Lear* shall find thee full of labours.

[*Enter Lear attended.*

Lear. In there, and tell our daughter we are here.
 Now, what art thou?

Kent. A man, Sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess, or would'st with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem, to serve
 him truly that puts me in trust, to love him that's honest,
 to converse with him that's wise and speaks little,
 to fight when I can't chuse, and to eat no fish.

Lear. I say, what art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as
 the King.

Lear. Then art thou poor indeed. — What canst
 thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, mar a curious tale in
 the telling, deliver a plain message bluntly; that which
 ordi-

ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me.

Enter Goneril's Gentleman Usher.

Now, Sir?

Gent. Sir?

[*Exit; Kent runs after him.*]

Lear. What says the fellow; call the clodpo'e back.

Att. My Lord, I know not; but methinks your Highness is entertain'd with slender Ceremony.

Serv. He says, my Lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back when I called him?

Serv. My Lord, he answered me i'th' furliest manner, that he would not

Re-enter Gentleman brought in by Kent.

Lear. I hope our daughter did not so instruct him.

Now, who am I, Sir?

Gent. My Lady's father.

Lear. My Lord's knave.

[*Strikes him.*]

Enter Goneril.

Gent. I'll not be struck, my Lord.

Kent. Nor tript neither, thou vile civet-box.

[*Strikes up his heels.*]

Gon. By day and night! this is insufferable;
I will not bear it.

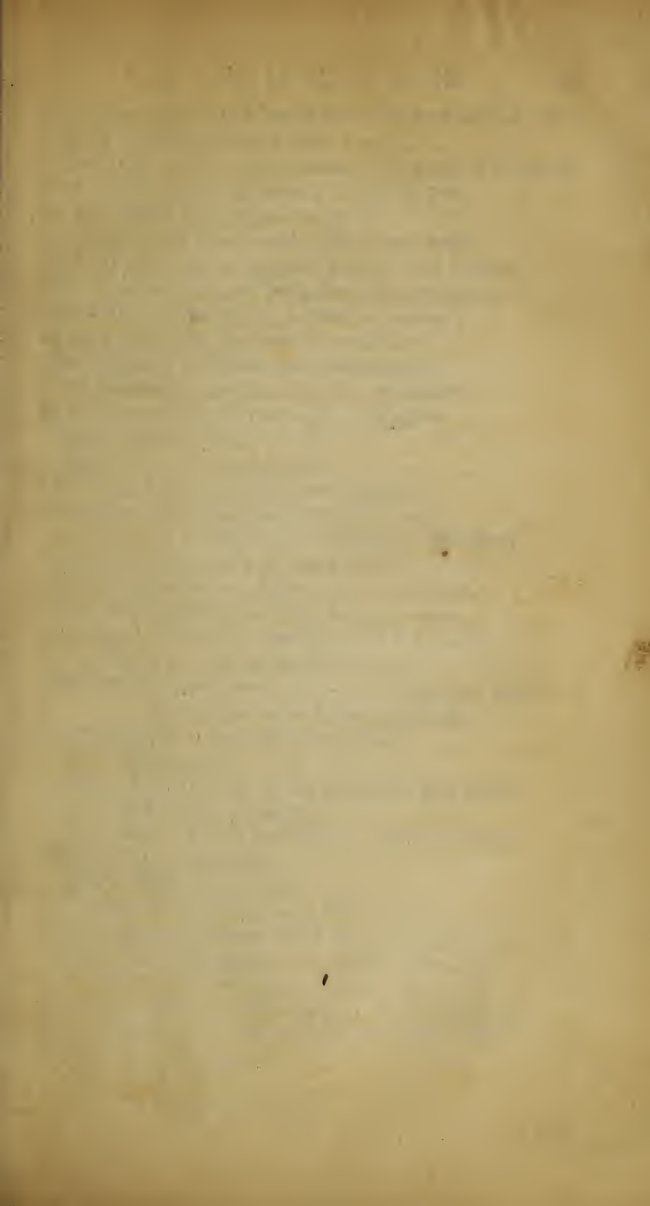
Lear. Now, daughter, why that frontlet on?
Speak, does that frown become our presence?

Gon. Sir, this licentious insolence of your servants
Is most unseemly: hourly they break out
In quarrels, bred by their unbounded riots:
I had fair hope by making this known to you,
To have had a quick redress, but find too late
That you protect and countenance their outrage;
And therefore, Sir, I take this freedom, which
Necessity makes discreet.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. Come, Sir, let me intreat you to make use
Of your discretion, and put off betimes
This disposition that of late transforms you
From what you rightly are.

Lear. Does any here know me? Why, this is not *Lear*;
Does



Does *Lear* walk thus? Speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Who is it that can tell me who I am?

Gon. Come, Sir, this admiration's much o'th' favour
Of o'er your new humours; I beseech you
To understand my purposes aright;
As you are old, you should be staid and wise:
Here do you keep an hundred knights and squires,
Men so debauch'd and bold, that this our palace
Shews like a riotous inn, a tavern, brothel:
Be then advis'd by her that else will take
That she begs, to lessen your attendance;
Take half away, and see that the remainder
Be such as may besit your age, and know
Themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!
Saddle my horses, call my train together.
Degenerate viper, I'll not stay with thee!
I yet have left a daughter——Serpent! Monster!
Lessen my train, and call 'em riotous!
All men approv'd, of choice and rarest parts,
That each particular of duty know.——
How small, *Cordelia*, was thy fault? O *Lear*,
Beat at this gate that let thy Folly in,
And thy dear Judgement out——Go, go, my people.

Going off, meets Albany entering.

Ingrateful Duke, was this your will?

Alb. What, Sir?

Lear. Death! fifty of my followers at a clap?

Alb. The matter, madam?

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause,
But give his dotage way.

Lear. Blasts upon thee!

Th' untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee; old fond eyes,
Lament this cause again; I'll pluck ye out,
And cast ye with the waters that ye lose
To temper clay.——No, *Gorgon*, thou shalt find
That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever.

Gon. Mark ye that.

Alb. I'm ignorant——

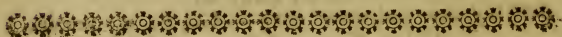
Lear.

Ear. It may be so, my Lord.—Hear, Nature! Dear Goddess, hear; and if thou dost intend To make that creature fruitful, change thy purpose; Pronounce upon her womb the barren curse, That from her blasted body never spring A Babe to honour her—But if she must bring forth, Defeat her joy with some distorted birth, Or monstrous form, the prodigy o'th' time; And so perverse of spirit, that it may live Her torment as 'twas born, to fret her cheeks With constant tears, and wrinkle her young brow, Turn all her mother's pains to shame and scorn, That she may curse her crime too late, and feel How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is To have a thankless child! Away, away. [*Exit cum suis.*]

Gon. Presuming thus upon his num'rous train, He thinks to play the tyrant here, and hold Our lives at will.

Alb. Well, you may bear too far. [*Exeunt.*]


THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.



A C T II.

SCENE, *Gloster's* Houfe.

Enter Bastard.


 HE Duke comes here to-night, I'll take
 advantage
 T Of his arrival to complete my project:
 Brother a word, come forth; 'tis I, your
 Friend. [*Enter* Edgar.

My father watches for you, fly this place;
 Intelligence is giv'n where you are hid;
 Take the advantage of the night; bethink,

Have

Have you not spoke against the Duke of *Cornwall*
 Something might shew you a favourer of
 Duke *Albany's* party?

Edg. Nothing; why ask you?

Bast. Because he's coming here to-night in haste,
 And *Regan* with him—Hark! 'the guards; away.

Edg. Let 'em come on; I'll stay and clear myself.

Bast. Your Innocence at leisure may be heard,
 But *Gloster's* storming rage as yet is deaf,
 And you may perish ere allow'd the hearing. [*Ex* *Edgar*.
Gloster comes yonder: Now to my feigned scuffle—
 Yield, come before my father! Lights here, lights!
 Some blood drawn on me wou'd beget opinion
 Of our more fierce encounter—I have seen
 Drunkards do more than this in sport. [*Stabs his arms*.

Enter Gloster and Servants.

Gloster. Now, *Edmund*, where's the traitor?

Bast. That name, Sir,
 Strikes horror through me; but my brother, Sir,
 Stood here i'th dark

Gloster. Thou bleed'st! Pursue the Villain,
 And bring him piece meal to me.

Bast. Sir, he's fled

Gloster. Let him fly far, this kingdom shall not hide him:
 The noble Duke my patron comes to night;
 By his authority I will proclaim
 Rewards for him that brings him to the stake,
 And death for the concealer.

Then of my lands, loyal and natural boy,
 I'll work the means to make thee capable. [*Exeunt*.

*Enter Kent (disguised still) and Generil's Gentleman-
 Usher, severally.*

Gent. Good morrow, friend; belong'st thou to this

Kent. Ask them will answer thee. [*house?*

Gent. Where may we set our horses?

Kent. I'th' mire.

Gent. I am in haste, prithee an' thou lov'st me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Gent. Why then I care not for thee.

Kent. An I had thee in *Lipsbury* pincold, I'd make
 thee care for mee.

Gent.

Gent. What dost thou mean? I know thee not.

Kent. But, minion, I know thee.

Gent. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. For a base, proud, beggarly, white-liver'd, glafs-gazing, super-serviceable, finical rogue; one that wou'd be a pimp in way of good service, and art nothing but a composition of knave, beggar, coward, pander——

Gent. What a monstrous fellow art thou, to rail at One that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee?

Kent. Impudent slave! not know me, who but two days since tript up thy heels before the King? Draw, miscreant, or I'll make the moon shine through thee.

Gent. What means the fellow? Why, prithee, prithee; I tell thee I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. I know your roguiship's office; you come with letters against the King, taking my young lady *Vanity's* part against her royal father: Draw, rascal.

Gent. Murder, murder, help. [*Exit Kent after him.*]

Flourish. Enter Duke of Cornwall, Regan, attended; Gloster, Bastard.

Gloft. All welcome to your Graces, you do me honour.

Duke. *Gloster*, w've heard with sorrow that your life Has been attempted by your impious son; But *Edmund* here has paid you strictest duty.

Gloft. He did bewray his practice, and receiv'd The hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Duke. Is he pursued?

Gloft. He is, my Lord.

Reg. Use our authority to apprehend The traitor, and do justice on his head.

For you, *Edmund*, that have signaliz'd Your virtue, you from henceforth shall be ours; Nature's of such firm trust we much shall need.

A charming youth, and worth my farther thought! [*Aside*]

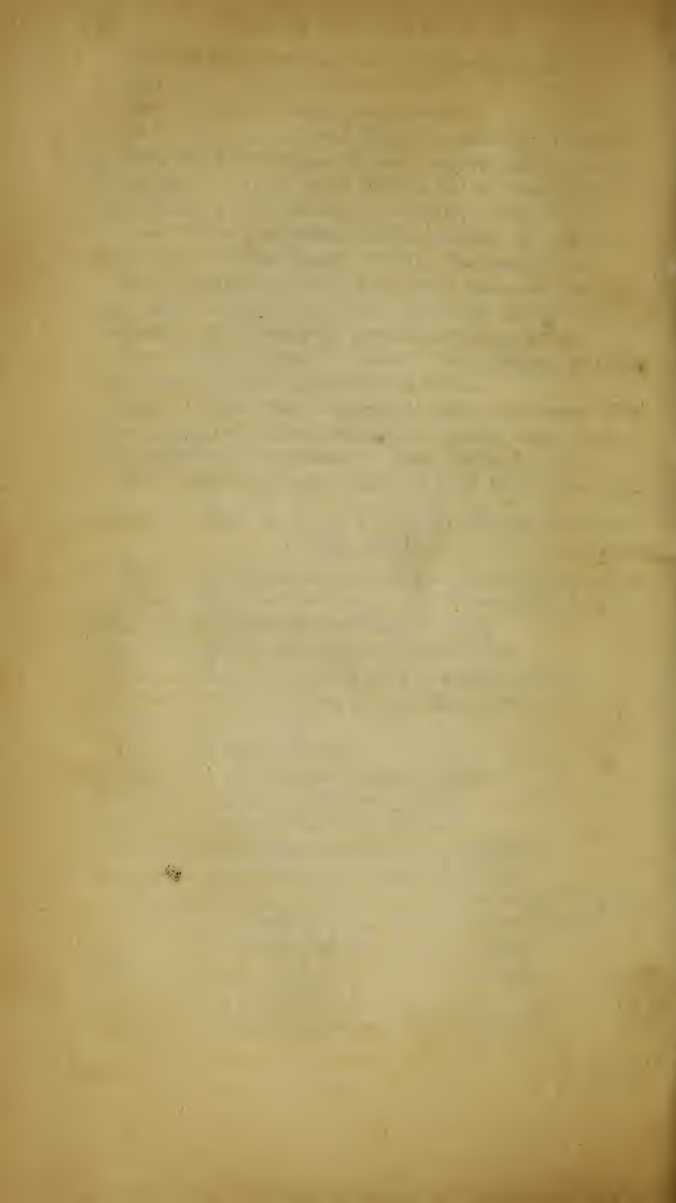
Duke. Lay comfort, noble *Gloster*, to your breast, As we to ours. This night be spent in revels.

We choose you, *Gloster*, for our host to-night,

A troublesome expression of our love.

On, to the sports before us.——Who are these?

Enter



Enter Gentleman Usher, pursued by Kent.

Gloſt. Now, what's the matter?

Duke. Keep peace upon your lives; he dies that
Whence, and what are ye? [strikes.

Att. Sir, they are messengers, the one from your
Sister, the other from the King.

Duke. Your difference? speak.

Gent. I'm scarce in breath, my Lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestir'd your Valour.
Nature disclaims the dastard; a taylor made him.

Duke. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Gent. Sir, this old ruffian here, whose life I spar'd,
In pity to his beard——

Kent. Thou Effence bottle!

In pity to my beard!——Your leave, my Lord,
And I will tread the musk-cat into mortar.

Duke. Know'st thou our presence?

Kent. Yes, Sir, but anger has a privilege.

Duke. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
And have no courage; office, and no honesty.
Not frost and fire hold more antipathy
Than I and such a Knave.

Gloſt. Why dost thou call him Knave?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Duke. No more perhaps does mine, nor his, or hers.

Kent. Plain dealing is my trade; and to be plain, Sir,
I have seen better faces in my time,
Than stand on any shoulders now before me.

Reg. This is some fellow, that having once been prais'd
For bluntness, since affects a saucy rudeness;
But I have known one of these furlly knaves,
That in his plainness harbour'd more design
Than twenty cringing complimenting minions.

Duke. What's the offence you gave him?

Gent. Never any, Sir;

It pleas'd the King, his master, lately
To strike me on a slender misconstruction;
Whilst, watching his advantage, this old lurcher
Tript me behind, for which the King extoll'd him;
And, flush'd with the honour of this bold exploit,
Drew on me here again.

Duke.

Duke. Bring forth the stocks, we'll teach you.

Kent. Sir, I'm too old to learn;

Call not the stocks for me, I serve the King,
On whose employment I was sent to you:
You'll shew too small respect, and too bold malice
Against the person of my Royal master,
Stocking his messenger.

Duke. Bring forth the stocks; as I have life and ho-
There shall he sit till noon. [hour,

Reg. Till noon, my Lord! Till night, and all night
too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You would not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Gloft. Let me beseech your Graces to forbear him;
His fault is much, and the good King his master
Will check him for't, but needs must take it ill
'To be thus slighted in his messenger.

Duke. We'll answer that;
Our sister may receive it worse to have
Her Gentleman assaulted; To our business, lead. [Exit.

Gloft. I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the Duke's plea-
Whose disposition will not be controul'd; [sure,
But I'll intreat for thee.

Kent. Pray do not, Sir. ———
I have watch'd and travell'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle:
Farewell t'ye, Sir. [Exit Gloft.

All weary, and o'erwatch'd,
I feel the drowfy guest steal on me: Take
Advantage, heavy eyes, of this kind slumber,
Not to behold this vile and shameful lodging. [Sleeps.

Enter Edgar.

Edgar. I heard myself proclaim'd,
And by the friendly hollow of a tree,
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free, no place,
Where guards and most unusual vigilance
Do not attend to take me. ——— How easy now
'Twere to defeat the malice of my trail,
And leave my griefs on my sword's reeking point;
But Love detains me from Death's peaceful cell,

Still

Still whispering me, *Cordelia's* in distress;
 Unkind as she is, I cannot see her wretched,
 But must be near to wait upon her fortune.
 Who knows but the white minute yet may come,
 When *Edgar* may do service to *Cordelia*?
 That charming hope still ties me to the oar
 Of painful life, and makes me too submit
 To th' humblest shifts to keep that life a-foot.
 My face I will besmear, and knit my locks;
 The country gives me proof and precedent
 Of *Bedlam* beggars, who, with roaring voices,
 Strike in their numb'd and mortify'd bare arms,
 Pins, iron spikes, thorns, sprigs of rosemary;
 And thus from sheep-cotes, villages and mills,
 Sometimes with pray'is, sometimes with lunatick bans,
 Enforce their charity; poor *Tyrligood!* poor *Tom!*
 That's something yet. *Edgar* I am no more. [Exit.

Kent in the Stocks still; *Enter Lear* attended.

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart from
 And not send back our messenger. [Home,

Kent. Hail, noble master.

Lear. How! mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?
 What's he that has so much mistook thy place,
 To set thee here?

Kent. It is both he and she, Sir; your son and
 Daughter.

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. By *Jupiter*, I swear, no.

Kent. By *Juno*, I swear, ay.

Lear. They durst not do't;

They could not, would not do't; 'tis worse than murder,
 To do upon respect such violent outrage.

Resolve me with all modest haste, which way
 Thou mayst deserve, or they impose this usage.

Kent. My Lord, when at their home
 I did commend your Highness' letters to them,
 Ere I was ris'n, arrived another post,
 Stew'd in his haste, breathless and panting forth,

From *Goneril*, his mistress, salutations;
 Whose message being deliver'd, they took horse,
 Commanding me to follow and attend
 The leisure of their answer; which I did:
 But meeting that other messenger,
 Whose welcome I perceiv'd had poison'd mine,
 Being the very fellow that of late
 Had shewn such rudeness to your highness; I,
 Having more man than wit about me, drew;
 On which he rais'd the house with coward cries:
 This was the trespass, which your son and daughter
 Thought worth the shame you see it suffer here.

Lear. Oh! this spleen swells upwards to my heart,
 And heaves for passage!—Down, thou climbing rage,
 Thy element's below. Where is this daughter?

Kent. Within, Sir, at a masque.

Enter Gloster.

Lear. Now *Gloster*?—Ha! [*Gloster whispers Lear*.
 Deny to speak with me? 'Th'are sick, th'are weary,
 They have travell'd hard to-night?—Mere fetches;
 Bring me a better answer.

Gloster. My dear Lord,

You know the fiery quality of the Duke——

Lear. Vengeance! death! plague! confusion!
 Fiery? what quality?—Why *Gloster*, *Gloster*,
 I'd speak with the Duke of *Cornwall* and his wife.

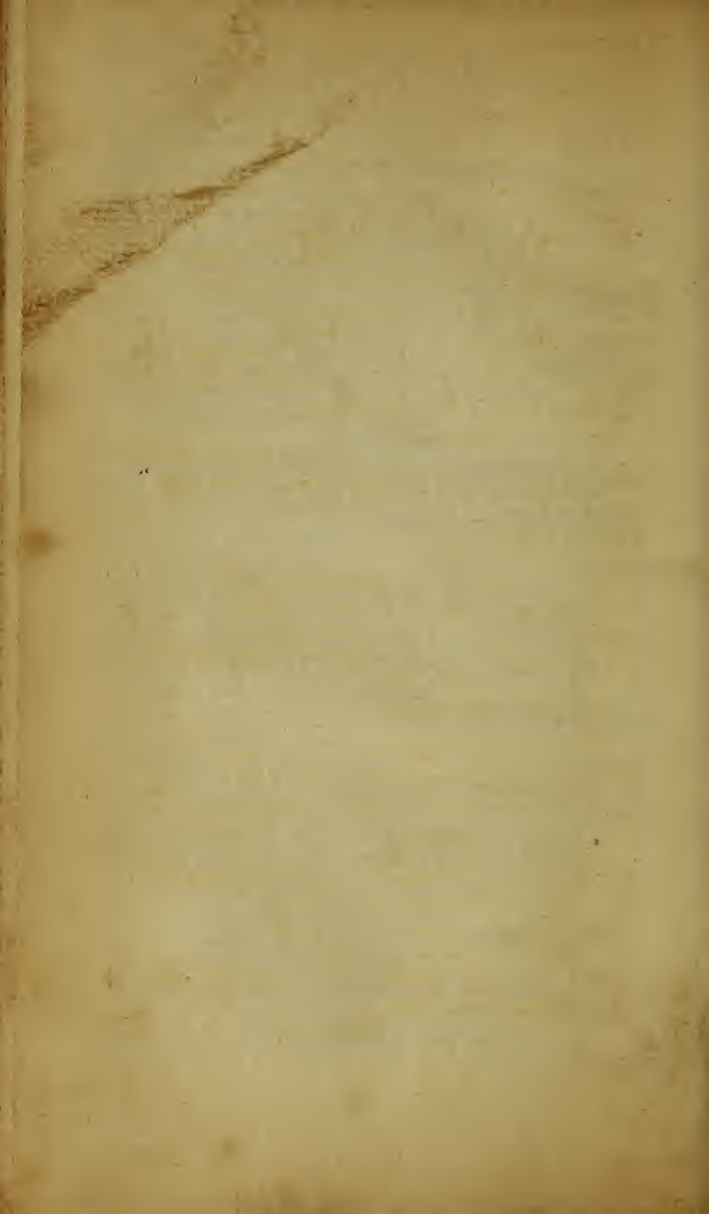
Gloster. I have inform'd them so.

Lear. Inform'd them? dost thou understand me, man?
 I tell thee, *Gloster*,——

Gloster. Ay, my good Lord.

[Father

Lear. The King would speak with *Cornwall*, the dear
 Would with his daughter speak, commands her service.
 Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood!
 Fiery? The fiery Duke? Tell the hot Duke——
 No, but not yet; may be he is not well;
 Infirmary does still neglect all office:
 I beg his pardon, and I'll chide my rashness
 That took the indispos'd and sickly fit
 For the sound man.—But wherefore fits he there?
 Death on my state! this act convinces me
 That this retiredness of the Duke and her



Is plain contempt. Give me my servant forth
 Go tell the Duke and's wife I'd speak with 'em:
 Now instantly.—Bid 'em come forth and hear me;
 Or at their chamber-door I'll beat the drum,
 'Till it cry, Sleep to death ———

Enter Cornwall and Regan.

Oh! are you come?

Duke. Health to the King!

Reg. I am glad to see your Highness.

Lear. *Regan*, I think you are; I know what cause
 I have to think so. Shou'd'st thou not be glad,
 I wou'd divorce me from thy mother's tomb.
 Beloved *Regan*, thou wilt shake to hear
 What I shall utter: thou cou'd'st ne'er ha' thought it—
 Thy sister's naught: O *Regan*, she has ty'd
 Ingratitude like a keen vulture here;
 I scarce can speak to thee.

[*Kent here set at liberty.*]

Reg. I pray you, Sir, take patience; I have hope
 That you know less to value her desert,
 Than she to slack her duty.

Lear. Ha! How's that?

Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
 Would fail in her respects; but if perchance
 She has restrain'd the riots of your followers,
 'Tis on such grounds, and to such wholesome ends,
 As clear her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her!

Reg. O Sir, you're old,
 And shou'd content you to be rul'd and led
 By some discretion that discerns your state
 Better than you yourself; therefore, good Sir,
 Return to our sister, and say you have wrong'd her.

Lear. Ha! ask her forgiveness!

No, no, 'twas my mistake; thou didst not mean so.
 Dear daughter, I confess that I am old:
 Age is unnecessary; but thou art good,
 And wilt dispense with my infirmity.

Reg. Good Sir, no more of these unsightly passions;
 Return back to our sister.

Lear. Never, *Regan*;

She has abated me of half my train,
Look'd black upon me, stabb'd me with her tongue:
All the stor'd vengeance of Heav'n fall
On her ingrateful head. Strike her young bones,
Ye taking airs, with lameness!

Reg. O the blest Gods! thus will you wish on me,
When the rash mood——

Lear. No, *Regan*, thou shalt never have my curse;
Thy tender nature cannot give thee o'er
To such impiety: thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
And dues of gratitude; thou bear'st in mind
The half o'th' kingdom, which our love conferr'd
On thee and thine.

Reg. Good Sir, to th' purpose.

Lear. Who put my man i'th' stocks?

Duke. What trumpet's that?

Reg. I know't, my sister's; this confirms her letters.
Sir, is your lady come?

Enter Goneril's Gentleman Usher.

Lear. More torture still!

This is a slave, whose easy borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows;
A fashion fop, that spends the day in dressing,
And all to bear his lady's flatt'ring message;
That can deliver with a grace her lye,
And with as bold a face bring back a greater.
Out, varlet, from my sight!

Duke. What means your grace?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant? *Regan*, I have hope
Thou didst not know it.

Enter Goneril.

Who comes here? Oh Heav'ns!
If you do love old men; if your sweet sway
Hallow obedience; if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down, and take my part!
Why, *Gorgon*, dost thou come to haunt me here?
Art not ashamed to look upon this beard?
Darkness upon my eyes, they play me false;
O *Regan*, wilt thou take her by the hand?

Gon.

Gon. Why not by th' hand, Sir? How have I offended?
All's not offence that Indiscretion finds,
And Dotage terms so:

Lear. Heart, thou art too tough!

Reg. I pray you, Sir, being old, confess you are so.
If till the expiration of your month,
You will return, and sojourn with our sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me;
I'm now from home, and out of that provision
That shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return with her, and fifty knights dismiss'd?
No, rather I'll forswear all roofs, and chuse
To be companion to the midnight wolf,
My naked head expos'd to th' merc'less air,
Than have my smallest wants supply'd by her.

Gon. At your choice, Sir.

Lear. Now, I prithee daughter, do not make me mad;
I will not trouble thee, my child. Farewell;
We'll meet no more, no more see one another;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it;
I do not bid the Thunder-bearer strike,
Nor tell tales of thee to avenging Heav'n.
Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure;
I can be patient, I can stay with *Regan*,
I, and my hundred knights.

Reg. Your pardon, Sir;

I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome.

Lear. Is this well spoken now?

Reg. My sister treats you fair. What! fifty followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?

Gon. Why might not you, my Lord, receive attendance
From those whom she calls servants, or from mine?

Reg. Why not, my Lord? If then they chance to slack
We cou'd controul them.—If you come to me, [you,
For now I see the danger, I intreat you
To bring but five-and-twenty; to no more
Will I give place.

Lear. Oh Gods! I gave you all!

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Hold now, my temper; stand this bolt unmov'd,

And I am thunder-proof;
 The wicked, when compar'd with the more wicked,
 Seem beautiful; and not to be the worst,
 Stands in some rank of praise. Now, *Goneril*,
 Thou art innocent again, I'll go with thee;
 Thy fifty yet does double five-and-twenty,
 And thou art twice her love.

Gon. Hear me, my Lord.

What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
 To follow in a house, where twice so many
 Have a command t'attend you?

Reg. What need one?

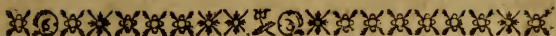
Lear. Blood! fire! here — Leprosies and bluest
 Room, room for Hell to belch her horrors up, [plagues!
 And drench the *Circe's* in a stream of fire;
 Hark, how th' Infernals echo to my rage
 Their whips and snakes!

Reg. How lewd a thing is passion!

Gon. So old and stomachful? [*Lightning and thunder.*

Lear. Heav'ns drop your patience down!
 You see me here, ye Gods, a poor old man,
 As full of griefs as age, wretched in both! —
 I'll bear no more. No, you unnat'ral hags,
 I will have such revenges on you both,
 That all the world shall — I will do such things,
 What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
 The terrors of the earth: You think I'll weep; [*Thunder*
 This heart shall break into a thousand pieces [*again.*
 Before I'll weep. — O Gods! I shall go mad! [*Exit.*
Duke. 'Tis a wild night; come out o'th storm. [*Ex.*

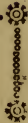
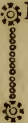


THE END OF THE SECOND ACT.



A C T III.

SCENE, *A desert Heath.*

Enter Lear and Kent in the Storm.

Lear.   LOW, Winds; and burst your cheeks;
rage louder yet;
B Fantastick Lightning finge, finge my
white head;
  Spout cataracts, and hurricanoes fall,
'Till you have drown'd the towns and palaces
Of proud, ingratèful man.

Kent. Not all my best intreaties can persuade him
Into some needful shelter, or to 'bide
This poor slight cov'ring on his aged head,
Expos'd to this wild war of earth and heav'n. [*Thunders.*]

Lear. Rumble thy fill, fight whirlwind, rain and fire;
Not fire, wind, rain or thunder, are my daughters:
I tax not you, ye elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdoms, call'd you children;
You owe me no obedience. Then let fall
Your horrible pleasure;—here I stand your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man.
Yet I will call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Your high engender'd battle 'gainst a head
So old and white as mine. Oh! oh! 'tis foul.

Kent. Hard by, Sir, is a hovel, that will lend
Some shelter from this tempest.

Lear. I will forget my nature. What! so kind a father!
Ay, there's the the point. [*Thunders*]

Kent. Consider, good my liege, things that love night,
Love not such nights as this; these wrathful skies
Frighten the very wand'ers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves; such drenching rain,

Such sheets of fire, such claps of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring winds, have ne'er been known.
[Thunders.]

Lear. Let the great Gods,
That keep this dreadful pudder o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undiscover'd crimes!
Hide, hide, thou murd'rer, hide thy bloody hand—
Thou perjur'd villain, holy hypocrite,
That drink'st the widow's tears, sigh now, and ask
These dreadful summoners grace.—I am a man
More sinn'd against, than sinning.

Kent. Good Sir, to th' hovel.

Lear. My wits begin to burn—
Come on, my boy; how dost, my boy? Art cold?
I'm cold myself; shew me this straw, fellow;
The art of our necessity is strange,
And can make vile things precious. My poor knave,
Cold as I am at heart, I've one place there [Loudly forms.]
That's sorry yet for thee. [Exit.]

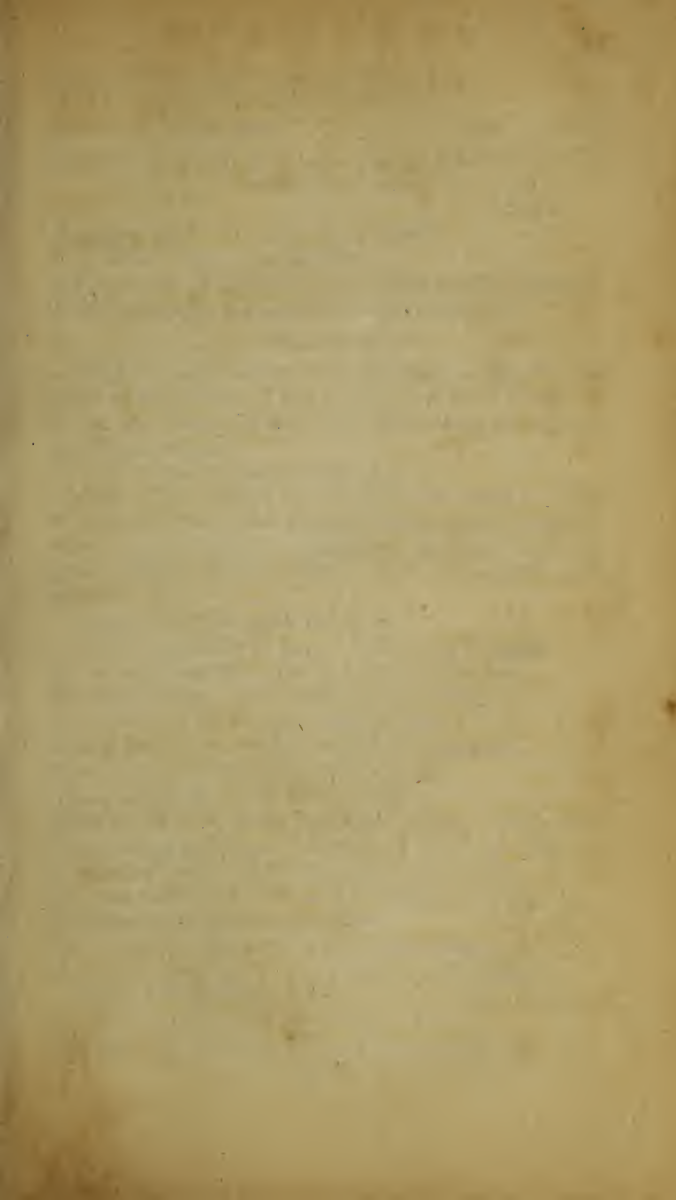
Gloster's Palace. Enter Bastard.

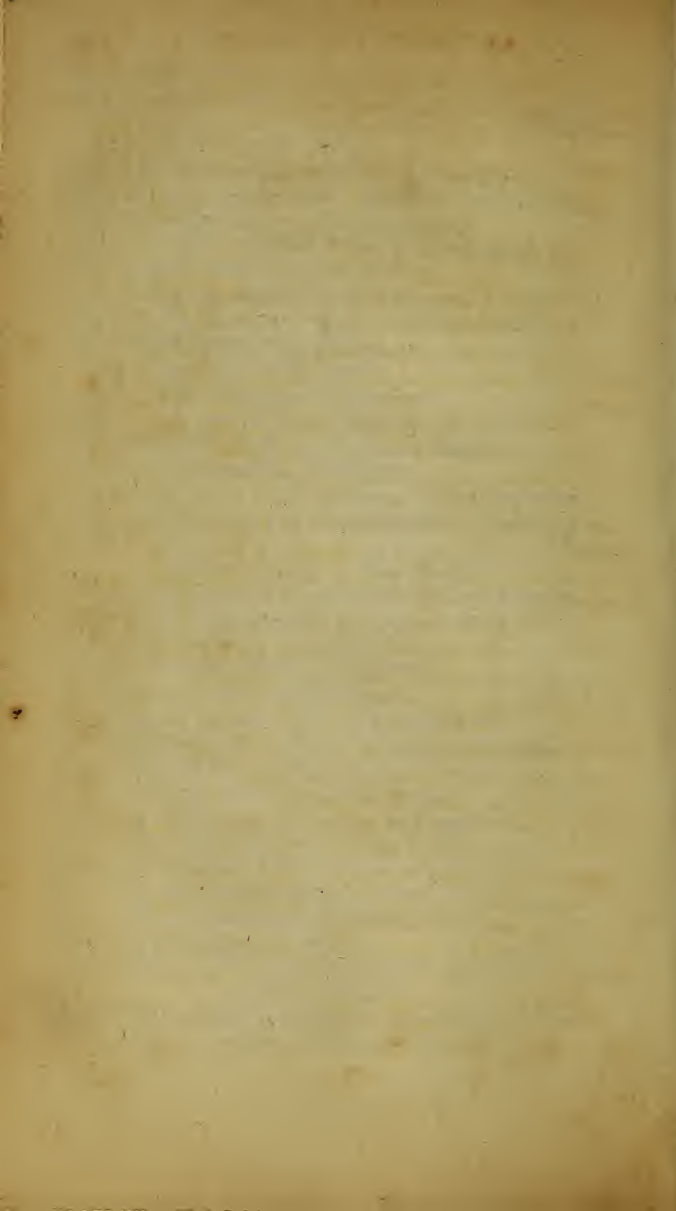
Bast. The storm is in our louder rev'lings drown'd.
Thus wou'd I reign, cou'd I but mount a throne.
The riots of these proud imperial sisters
Already have impos'd the galling yoke
Of taxes, and hard impositions on
The drudging peasant's neck, who bellows out
His loud complaints in vain—Triumphant Queens!
With what assurance do they tread the crowd?
Oh! for a taste of such majestick beauty,
Which none but my hot veins are fit t'engage;
Nor are my wishes desp'rate; for ev'n now,
During the banquet, I observ'd their glances
Shot thick at me; and, as they left the room,
Each cast, by stealth, a kind inviting smile,
The happy earnest—ha!

*Two Pages, from several entrances, deliver him each
a letter, and Exit.*

Reads]Where Merit is so transparent, not to behold it were
blindness, and not to reward it, ingratitude.

Gon:ril.





Enough! Blind and ungrateful should I be
Not to obey the summons of this oracle.

Now for a second letter. [Opens the other.

Reads.] *If modesty be not your enemy, doubt not to find
me your friend.*

Regan.

Excellent *Sybil!* O my glowing blood!

I am already sick of expectation,

And pant for the possession.——Here *Gloster* comes,

With business on his brow; be hush'd, my joys.

Enter Gloster.

Gloster. I come to seek thee, *Edmund*, to impart a business of importance. I know thy loyal heart is touch'd to see the cruelty of these ungrateful daughters against our Royal Master.

Bast. Most savage and unnatural.

Gloster. This change in the state fits uneasy. The Commons repine aloud at their female tyrants; already they cry out for the re-instalment of their good old King, whose injuries, I fear, will inflame them into mutiny.

Bast. 'Tis to be hop'd, not fear'd.

Gloster. Thou hast it, boy; 'tis to be hop'd indeed.

On me they cast their eyes, and hourly court me

To lead them on; and whilst this head is mine,

I'm theirs. A little covert craft, my boy,

And then for open action; 'twill be employment

Worthy such honest daring souls as thine.

Thou, *Edmund*, art my trusty emissary.

Haste on the spur, at the first break of day [Gives him

With these dispatches to the Duke of *Cambray*. [letters.

You know what mortal feuds have always flam'd

Between this Duke of *Cornwall's* family, and his;

Full twenty thousand mountaineers

Th' inveterate prince will send to our assistance.

Dispatch; commend us to his Grace, and prosper.

Bast. Yes, credulous old man,

[Aside.

I will commend you to his Grace,

His Grace the Duke of *Cornwall*——instantly,

To shew him these contents in thy own character,
 And seal'd with thy own signet; then forthwith
 The chol'rick Duke gives sentence on thy life;
 And to my hand thy vast revenues fall,
 To glut my pleasures that 'till now have starv'd. [*Retires.*]

*Gloster going off is met by Cordelia entering, Bastard
 observing at a distance.*

Cord. Turn, *Gloster*, turn; by all the sacred Pow'rs.
 I do conjure you give my griefs a hearing:
 You must, you shall, nay, I am sure you will,
 For you were always stil'd the just and good.

Gloster. What wouldst thou, Princess? Rise, and speak thy.

Cord. Nay, you shall promise to redress 'em too, [griefs.]
 Or here I'll kneel for ever. I entreat
 Thy succour for a Father, and a King,
 An injur'd Father, and an injur'd King.

Bast. O charming sorrow! How her tears adorn her,
 Like dew on flow'rs! But she is virtuous,
 And I must quench this hopeless fire i'th' kindling. [*Aside.*]

Gloster. Consider, princess, [thee.]
 For whom thou beg'st, 'tis for the King that wrong'd.

Cord. O name not that; he did not, cou'd not wrong me.
 Nay, muse not, *Gloster*, for it is too likely
 This injur'd King ere this is past your aid,
 And gone distracted with his savage wrongs.

Bast. I'll gaze no more, — and yet my eyes are
 charm'd. [*Aside.*]

Cord. Or, what if it be worse? — Can there be worse?
 As 'tis too probable, this furious night
 Has pierc'd his tender body; the bleak winds
 And cold rain chill'd, or lightning struck him dead;
 If it be so, your promise is discharg'd,
 And I have only one poor boon to beg,
 That you'd convey me to his breathless trunk,
 With my torn robes to wrap his hoary head,
 With my torn hair to bind his hands and feet,
 Then with a show'r of tears
 To wash his clay smear'd cheeks, and die beside him.

Gloster. Rise, fair *Cordelia*, thou hast piety.
 Enough t'atone for both thy sisters crimes;
 I have already plotted to restore

My injur'd master, and thy virtue tells me
We shall succeed, and suddenly.

[*Exit.*

Cord. Dispatch, *Arante,*

Provide me a disguise; we'll instantly
Go seek the King, and bring him some relief.

Ar. How, Madam! are you ignorant
Of what your impious sisters have decreed,
Immediate death for any that relieve him?

Cord. I cannot dread the Furies in this case.

Ar. In such a night as this? Consider, madam,
For many miles about there's scarce a bush
To shelter in.

Cord. Therefore no shelter for the King,
And more our charity to find him out:
What have not women dar'd for vicious love?
And we'll be shining proofs that they can dare
For piety as much. Blow winds, and lightnings fall,
Bold in my virgin innocence I'll fly, [Thunder
My royal father to relieve or die. [Exit.

Bast. "Provide me a disguise, we'll instantly
Go seek the King!"—Ha! ha! a lucky change:
'That virtue which I fear'd would be my hind'rance,
Has prov'd the bawd to my design.
I'll bribe two ruffians shall at distance follow,
And seize them in some desert place; and there,
Whilst one retains her, t'other shall return
T'inform me where she's lodg'd. I'll be disguis'd too:
Whilst they are poaching for me, I'll to the Duke
With these dispatches; then to the field,
Where, like the vig'rous *Jove*, I will enjoy
This *Semele* in a storm; 'twill deaf her cries,
Like drums in battle, lest her groans should pierce
My pitying ear, and make the am'rous fight less fierce.' *Ex.*

Storm still. The Field Scenc. Enter Lear and Kent.

Kent. Here is the place, my Lord; good my Lord, enter:
The tyranny of this open night's too rough
For nature to endure.

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my Lord, enter.

Lear. Wilt break my heart?

Kent. Beseech you, Sir.

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious
 Invades us to the skin; so 'tis to thee; [storm
 But where the greater malady is fixt,
 The lesser is scarce felt: The tempest in my mind
 Does from my senses take all feeling else,
 Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
 Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
 For lising food to't? — But I'll punish home!
 No, I will weep no more. In such a night [*Thunders.*
 'To shut me out! — Pour on, I will endure —
 In such a night as this! O *Regan, Goneril!*
 Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all —
 O that way madness lies! let me shun that;
 No more of that.

Kent. See, my Lord, here's the entrance.

Lear. Well, I'll go in
 And pass it all; I'll pray, and then I'll sleep. [*Thunders.*
 Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
 'That 'bide the pe'ting of this pitiless storm;
 How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides
 Sustain this shock? your raggedness defend you
 From seasons such as these?
 Oh! I have ta'en too little care of this:
 Take physick, Pomp!
 Expose thy self to feel what wretches feel,
 That thou may'st cast the superflux to them;
 And shew the Heav'ns more just.

Edgar in the Hovel.

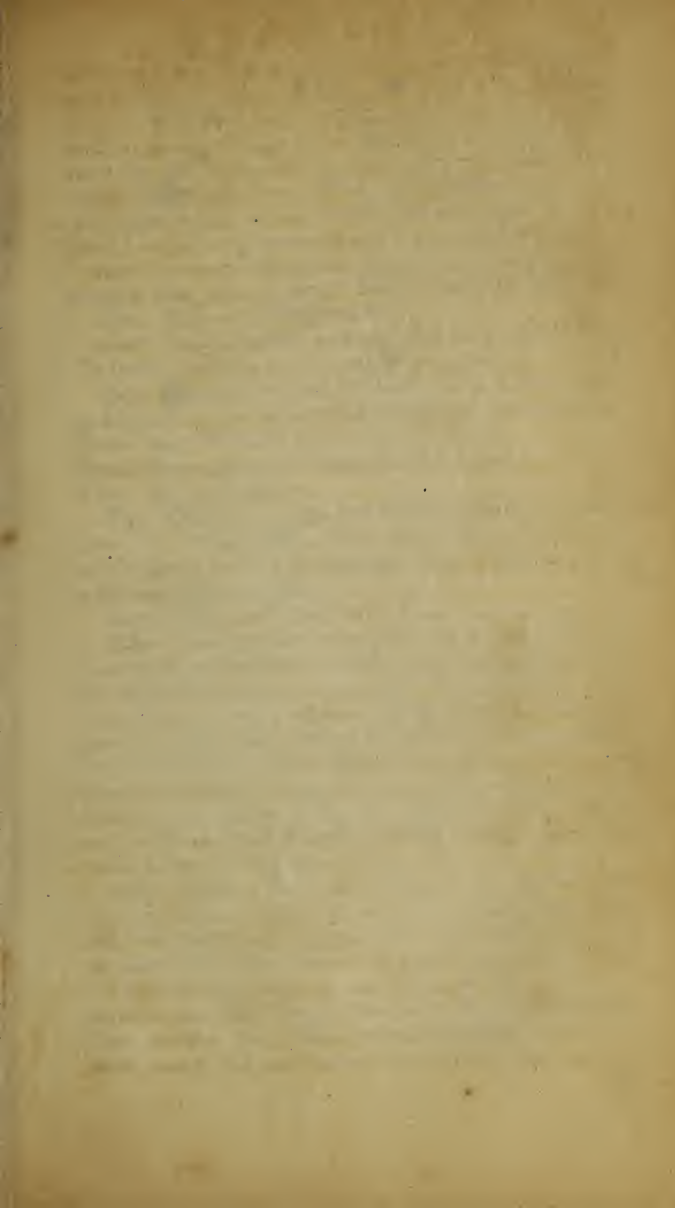
Five fathom and a half, poor *Tom.*

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i'th'
 Come forth. [Straw?

Edg. Away! the foul Fiend follows me — Through
 the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind — Mum,
 go to thy bed and warm thee — Ha! what do I see?
 By all my griefs the poor old king bareheaded,
 And drench'd in this foul storm! Professing *Syrens,*
 Are all your protestations come to this?

Lear. Tell me, fellow, didst thou give all to thy
 [daughters?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor *Tom*, whom the foul
 Fiend has led through fire and through flame, through
 bushes



bushes and bogs; that has laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; that has made him proud of heart to ride on a bay trotting horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor— Bless thy five wits, *Tom's* a-cold. [*Sbivers.*] Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking; do poor *Tom* some charity, whom the foul Fiend vexes. — Sa, sa; there I could have him now, and there, and there agen.

Lear. Have his daughters brought him to this pass? Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give them all?

Kent. He has no daughter, Sir.

Lear. Death, traitor, nothing could have subdu'd Na-
To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters. [*tare*

Edg. Pillicock sat upon Pillicock Hill; hallo, hallo,

Lear. Is it the fashion that disregarded fathers [*hallo.*]
Should have such little mercy on their flesh?

Judicious punishment! 'Twas this flesh begot

Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Take heed of the foul Fiend; obey thy parents; keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array — *Tom's* a cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A serving-man proud of heart; that curl'd my hair; used perfume and washes; that served the lust of my mistress's heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spoke words; and broke them all in the sweet face of Heaven: Let not the paint, nor the patch, nor the rustling of silks, betray thy poor heart to woman; keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from creditors books, and defy the foul Fiend. — Still through the hawthorn blows the cold Wind.

Lear. Death! thou wert better in thy grave, than thus to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the sky. And yet consider him well, and man's no more than this; thou art indebted to the worm for no silk, to the beast for no hide, to the cat for no perfume. — Ha! here's two of us are sophisticated; thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more than such a poor bare forked animal as thou art.

Off,

Off, off, ye vain disguises, empty lendings,
I'll be my original self; quick, quick, uncase me.

Kent. Defend his wits, good heaven!

Lear. One point I had forgot; what is your name?

Edg. Poor *Tom*, that eats the swimming frog, the wall-newt and the water-newt; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul Fiend rages, eats cow-dung for fallads, swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; that drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; that's whipt from tything to tything; that has three suits to his back, six shirts to his body,

Horse to ride, and weapon to wear;

But rats and mice, and such small deer,

Have been *Tom's* food for seven long year:

Beware my follower; Peace, *Smolkin*, peace, thou fould fiend!

Lear. One word more, but be sure true counsel; tell me, is a madman a gentleman or a yeoman?

Kent. I fear'd 'twou'd come to this; his wits are gone.

Edg. *Fraterrato* calls me, and tells me *Nero* is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray innocent, and beware the foul Fiend.

Lear. Right, ha! ha! was it not pleasant to have a thousand with red-hot spits come hissing in upon them?

Edg. My tears begin to take his part so much,
They mar my counterfeiting, [*Afide.*]

Lear. The little dogs and all, *Tray*, *Blanch*, and *Sweet-Heart*, see they bark at me.

Edg. *Tom* will throw his head at 'em: 'vaunt, ye curs.

Be thy mouth or black or white.

Tooth that poisons if it bite:

Mastiff, grey-hound, mungrel grim,

Hound, or spaniel, brache, or lym:

Bob-tail tike, or trundle-tail,

Tom will make 'em weep and wail:

For with throwing thus my head,

Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Come, march to wakes and fairs, and market-towns.

—Poor *Tom*, thy horn is dry.

Lear.



Lear. You Sir, I entertain you for one of my hundred, only I do not like the fashion of your garments; you'll say they're *Persian*, but no matter let 'em be changed.

Enter Gloucester.

Edg. This is the foul *Flibbertigibbet*; he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web, and the pin; knits the elflock; squints the eye, and makes the hair-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creatures of the earth.

Swiſthin footed thrice the wold,

He met the night-mare and her nine fold,

'Twas there he did appoint her;

He bid her alight, and her troth plight,

And aroynt the witch, aroynt her.

Gloſt. What, has your Grace no better company?

Edg. The Prince of Darkness is a gentleman; *Modo* he is call'd, and *Mabu*.

Gloſt. Go with me, Sir; hard by I have a tenant. My duty cannot suffer me to obey in all your daughters hard commands, who have enjoin'd me to make fast my doors, and let this tyrannous night take hold upon you. Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out, and bring you where both fire and food are ready.

Kent. Good my Lord, take this offer.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher; say, *Stagyrite*, what is the cause of thunder?

Gloſt. Beseech you, Sir, go with me.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned *Theban*. What is your study?

Edg. How to prevent the Fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you a word in private.

Kent. His wits are quite unsettled; good Sir, let's force him hence.

Gloſt. Can't blame him? His daughters seek his death; this bedlam but disturbs him the more. Fellow, be gone.

Edg. Child *Rowland* to the dark tower came,
His word was still Fie, Foh, and Fum,
I smell the blood of a *British* man.—O! torture! [*Exit.*

Gloſt.

Gloſt. Now, I prithee, friend, let's take him in our arms, and carry him where he ſhall meet both welcome and protection. Good Sir, along with us.

Lear. You ſay right, let 'em anatomize *Regan*, ſee what breeds about her heart; is there any cauſe in nature for theſe hard hearts?

Kent. I beſeech your Graces.

Lear. Hiſt! — Make no noiſe, make no noiſe — ſo, ſo; we'll to ſupper i'th' morning. [Exeunt.]

Enter Cordelia and Arante. [Thunders.]

Ar. Dear madam, reſt ye here, our ſearch is vain; Look, here's a ſhed; beſeech ye, enter here.

Cord. Prithee go in thyſelf, ſeek thy own eaſe; Where the mind's free, the body's delicate; This tempeſt but diverts me from the thought Of what would hurt me more.

Enter two Ruſſians.

1 Ruſſ. We have dogg'd 'em far enough; this place is I'll keep 'em priſoners here within this hovel, [private; Whilſt you return and bring Lord *Edmund* hither; But help me firſt to houſe 'em.

2 Ruſſ. Nothing but this dear devil! [Shews gold.] Should have drawn me through all this tempeſt; But to our work. —

[They ſeize *Cordelia* and *Arante*, who ſbrick out.]

Soft, Madam, we are friends; diſpatch, I ſay.

Cord. Help, murder, help. Gods! ſome kind thund' To ſtrike me dead. [derbolt]

Enter Edgar.

Edg. What cry was that? — Ha! women ſeiz'd by Is this a place and time for villany? [ruſſians?] Avaunt, ye bloodhounds. [Drives them with his quarter-ſtaff.]

Both. The devil, the devil! [Run off.]

Edg. O ſpeak, what are ye that appear to be O' th' tender ſex, and yet unguarded wander Through the dead mazes of this dreadful night, Where (though at full) the clouded moon ſcarce darts Imperfect glimmerings?

Cord. Firſt ſay, what art thou, Our Guardian Angel, that wert pleas'd to 'aſſume

That





That horrid shape to fright the ravishers?
We'll kneel to thee.

Edg. O my tumultuous blood!

By all my trembling veins, *Cordelia's* voice!

'Tis she herself!—My senses sure conform

To my wild garb, and I am mad indeed.

[*Aside.*

Cord. Whate'er thou art, befriend a wretched virgin;
And if thou canst, direct our weary search.

Edg. Who relieves poor *Tom*, that sleeps on the nettle,
with the hedge-pig for his pillow.

Whilst *Smug* ply'd the bellows,

She truck'd with her fellows;

The freckle-fac'd *Mab*

Was a blouze and a drab,

Yet *Swithin* made *Oberon* jealous.—Oh! torture!

Ar. Alack! madam, a poor wand'ring lunatick.

Cord. And yet his language seem'd but now well tem-
Speak, friend, to one more wretched than thyself; [per'd.

And if thou hast one interval of sense,

Inform us, if thou canst, where we may find

A poor old man, who through this heath hath stray'd

The tedious night.—Speak, saw'st thou such a one?

Edg. The king her father, whom she's come to seek
Through all the terrors of this night: O gods!

That such amazing piety, such tenderness

Shou'd yet to me be cruel!—

[*Aside.*

Yes, fair one, such a one was lately here,

And is convey'd by some that came to seek him,

To a neighb'ring cottage; but distinctly where,

I know not.

Cord. Blessings on them!

Let's find him out, *Arante*, for thou see'st

We are in Heaven's protection.

[*Going off.*

Edg. O *Cordelia*!

Cord. Ha!—Thou know'st my name.

Edg. As you did once know *Edgar's*.

Cord. *Edgar*!

Edg. The poor remains of *Edgar*, what your scorn
has left him.

Cord. Do we wake, *Arante*?

Edg. My father seeks my life, which I preserv'd,

In

In hope of some blest minute to oblige
 Distrest *Cordelia*, and the Gods have given it;
 That thought alone prevail'd with me to take
 This frantic dress, to make the earth my bed,
 With these bare limbs all change of seasons 'bide,
 Noon's scorching heat and midnight's piercing cold,
 To feed on offals, and to drink with herds,
 To combat with the winds, and be the sport
 Of clowns, or what's more wretched yet, their pity.

Cord. Was ever tale so full of misery!

Edg. But such a fall as this I grant was due
 To my aspiring love, for 'twas presumptuous,
 Though not presumptuously pursued;
 For well you know I wore my flame conceal'd,
 And silent as the lamps that burn in tombs,
 Till you perceiv'd my grief, with modest grace
 Drew forth the secret, and then seal'd my pardon.

Cord. You had your pardon, nor can you challenge more.

Edg. What do I challenge more?

Such vanity agrees not with these rags:
 When in my prosp'rous state, rich *Gloster's* heir,
 You silenc'd my pretences, and enjoin'd me
 To trouble you upon that theme no more;
 Then what reception must love's language find
 From these bare limbs and beggar's humble weeds?

Cord. Such as a voice of pardon to a wretch condemn'd;
 Such as the shouts

Of succouring forces to a town besieg'd.

Edg. Ah! what new method now of cruelty?

Cord. Come to my arms, thou dearest, best of men,
 And take the kindest vows that e'er were spoke
 By a protesting maid.

Edg. Is't possible?

Cord. By the dear vital stream that bathes my heart,
 These hallowed rags of thine, and naked virtue,
 These abject tassels, these fantastick shreds,
 (Ridiculous even to the meanest clown)
 To me are dearer than the richest pomp
 Of purpled monarchs

Edg. Generous, charming maid!

The Gods alone that made, can rate thy worth!

This most amazing excellence shall be
 Fame's triumph in succeeding ages, when
 Thy bright example shall adorn the scene,
 And teach the world perfection.

Cord. Cold and weary,
 We'll rest a while, *Arante*, on that straw,
 Then forward to find out the poor old King.

Edg. Look, I have flint and steel, the implements
 Of wand'ring lunaticks; I'll strike a light,
 And make a fire beneath this shed, to dry
 Thy storm-drench'd garments, ere thou lie to rest thee;
 Then, fierce and wakeful as th' *Hesperian* Dragon,
 I'll watch beside thee to protect thy sleep:
 Mean while the stars shall dart their kindest beams,
 And angels visit my *Cordelia's* dreams. [Exit.

S C E N E, *The Palace.*

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Bastard, *Servants.* Cornwall
 with *Gloster's Letters.*

Duke. I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.
Regan, see here, a plot upon our state;
 'Tis *Gloster's* character, that has betray'd
 His double trust of subject and of host.

Reg. Then double be our vengeance; this confirms
 Th' intelligence that we now received,
 That he has been this night to seek the King.
 But who, Sir, was the kind discoverer?

Duke. Our eagle, quick to spy, and fierce to seize;
 Our trusty *Edmund.*

Reg. 'Twas a noble service;
 O *Cornwall,* take him to thy deepest trust,
 And wear him as a jewel at thy heart.

Bast. Think, Sir, how hard a fortune I sustain,
 That makes me thus repent of serving you. [Weeps.
 O that this treason had not been, or I
 Not the discoverer!

Duke. *Edmund,* thou shalt find
 A father in our love, and from this minute
 We call thee Earl of *Gloster*; but there yet
 Remains another justice to be done,

And

And that's to punish this discarded traitor;
 But lest thy tender nature should relent
 At his just sufferings, nor brook the sight,
 We wish thee to withdraw.

Reg. The grotto, Sir, within the lower grove
 Has privacy, to suit a mourner's thought. [*To Edmund aside.*]

Bast. And there I may expect a comforter,
 Ha, madam?

Reg. What may happen, Sir, I know not,
 But 'twas a friend's advice. [*Exit Bastard.*]

Duke. Bring in the traitor.

Gloster brought in.

Bind fast his arms.

Gloft. What mean your Graces?

You are my guests, pray do me no foul play.

Duke. Bind him, I say, hard, harder yet.

Reg. Now, traitor, thou shalt find——

Duke. Speak, Rebel, where hast thou sent the King?
 Whom, spight of our decree, thou saw'st last night.

Gloft. I'm ty'd to th' stake, and must stand the course.

Reg. Say where, and why thou hast conceal'd him?

Gloft. Because I wou'd not see thy cruel hands
 Tear out his poor old eyes, nor thy fierce sister
 Carve his anointed flesh; but I shall see
 The swift wing'd vengeance overtake such children.

Duke. See't thou shalt never; slaves, perform your work,
 Out with those treacherous eyes; dispatch, I say;
 If thou see'st vengeance——

Gloft. He that will think to live 'till he be old
 Give me some help.—O cruel! oh! ye gods.

[*They put out his eyes.*]

Serv. Hold, hold, my lord, I ban your cruelty;
 I cannot love your safety, and give way
 To such barbarous practice.

Duke. Ah, my villain!

Serv. I have been your servant from my infancy,
 But better service have I never done you
 Than with this boldness——

Duke. Take thy death, slave.



Serv. Nay, then revenge whilst yet my blood is warm.

[*Fight.*

Reg. Help here——are you not hurt, my lord?

Gloft. *Edmund*, enkindle all the sparks of nature
To quit this horrid act.

Reg. Out, treacherous villain,
Thou call'st on him that hates thee; it was he
That broach'd thy treason, shew'd us thy dispatches;
There—read, and save the *Cambrian* prince a labour.
If thy eyes fail thee, call for spectacles.

Gloft. O my folly!

Then *Edgar* was abus'd; kind gods, forgive me that!

Reg. How is't, my lord?

Duke. Turn out that eyeless villain, let him smell
His way to *Cambray*; throw this slave upon a dunghill.

Regan, I bleed apace; give me your arm, [Exeunt.

Gloft. All dark, and comfortless!

Where are those various objects that, but now,
Employ'd my busy eyes? Where those eyes?
Dead are their piercing rays, that lately shot
O'er flow'ry vales to distant sunny hills,
And drew with joy the vast horizon in.
These groping hands are now my only guides,
And feeling all my sight.

O misery! what words can sound my grief?
Shut from the living whilst among the living;
Dark as the grave amidst the bustling world.

At once from bus'ness, and from pleasure barr'd:

No more to view the beauty of the spring,
Nor see the face of kindred, or of friend;
Yet still one way th' extremest fate affords,
And ev'n the blind can find the way to death.

Must I then tamely die, and unreveng'd?

So *Lear* may fall: No, with these bleeding rings

I will present me to the pitying crowd,
And with the rhetorick of these dropping veins
Inflame them to revenge their king and me;

Then when the glorious mischief is on wing,

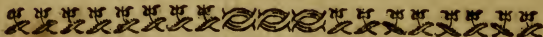
This lumber from some precipice I'll throw,

And dash it on the ragged flint below;

Whence

Whence my freed soul to her bright sphere shall fly,
 Through boundless orbs eternal regions spy,
 And, like the sun, be all one glorious eye. } [Exit.] }

THE END OF THE THIRD ACT.



A C T IV.

SCENE, *A Grotto.*

Edmund and Regan amorously seated, listening to Musick.

Bast. * * * * * HY were those beauties made another's
 right,
 * * * * * W * * * * * Which none can prize like me? Charm-
 * * * * * ing Queen,
 * * * * * Take all my blooming youth; for ever
 fold me

In these soft arms; lull me in endless sleep,
 That I may dream of pleasures too transporting
 For life to bear.

Reg. Live, live, my *Gloster*,
 And feel no death, but that of swooning joy!
 I yield thee blisses on no harder terms,
 Than that thou continue to be happy.

Bast. This jealousy is yet more kind; is't possible
 That I should wander from a paradise
 To feed on sickly weeds? Such sweets live here,]
 That constancy will be no virtue in me.
 And yet must I forthwith go meet her sister, [Aside.
 To whom I must protest as much——
 Suppose it be the same; why, best of all,
 And I have then my lesson ready conn'd.

Reg. Wear this remembrance of me.——I dare now
[Gives a ring.
 Absent myself no longer from the Duke,

Whose

Whose wound grows dangerous, I hope mortal.

Bass. And let this happy image of your *Gloster*

[*Pulling out a picture drops a note.*

Lodge in that breast where all his treasure lies. [*Exit.*

Reg. To this brave youth a woman's blooming beauties
Are due; my fool usurps my bed——What's here?

Confusion on my eyes!

Reads] *Where merit is so transparent, not to behold it were
blindness, and not to reward it ingratitude.*

Goneril.

Vexatious accident! Yet fortunate too;
My jealousy's confirm'd, and I am taught

To cast for my defence—— [*Enter an Officer.*

Now, what mean those shouts, and this thy hasty entrance?

Off. A most surprising and a sudden change;
The peasants are all up in mutiny,
And only want a chief to lead them on
To storm your palace.

Reg. On what provocation?

Off. At last day's public festival, to which
The yeomen from all quarters had repaired,
Old *Gloster*, whom you late deprived of sight,
(His veins yet streaming fresh) presents himself,
Proclaims your cruelty and their oppression,
With the King's injuries: which so enrag'd them,
That now that mutiny, which long had crept,
Takes wing, and threatens your best pow'rs.

Reg. White-liver'd slaves!

Our forces rais'd and led by valiant *Edmund*,
Shall drive this Monster of Rebellion back
To her dark cell; young *Gloster's* arm allays
The storm his father's feeble breath did raise.

[*Exit.*

The Field SCENE. *Enter* Edgar.

Edg. The lowest and most abject thing of Fortune
Stands still in hope, and is secure from fear;
The lamentable change is from the best,
The worst returns to better.——Who comes here?

Enter

Enter Gloster, led by an old Man.

My father poorly led! depriv'd of sight!
The precious stones torn from their bleeding rings!
Something I heard of this inhuman deed,
But disbeliev'd it, as an act too horrid
For the hot hell of a curst woman's fury.
When will the measure of my woes be full?

Gloster. Revenge, thou art on foot; success attend thee:
Well have I sold my eyes, if the event
Prove happy for the injured King.

Old M. O, my good lord, I have been your tenant
and your father's tenant these fourscore years.

Gloster. Away, get thee away, good friend, be gone;
Thy comforts can do me no good at all,
Thee they may hurt.

Old M. You cannot see your way.

Gloster. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw: O dear Son *Edgar*,
The food of thy abused father's wrath;
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say I had eyes again.

Edgar. Alas, he's sensible that I was wrong'd,
And should I own myself, his tender heart
Would break betwixt the extremes of grief and joy.

Old M. How now? who's there?

Edgar. A charity for poor *Tom*. Play fair, and defy
the foul Fiend.

O gods! And must I still pursue this trade,
Trifling beneath such loads of misery?

[*Aside.*]

Old M. 'Tis poor mad *Tom*.

Gloster. In the late storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm,
Where is the lunatick?

Old M. Here, my Lord.

Gloster. Get thee now away; if for my sake
Thou wilt o'ertake us hence a mile or two,
I' th' way to *Dover*, do't for ancient love,
And bring some cov'ring for this naked wretch,
Whom I'll intreat to lead me.

Old M. Alack, my Lord, he's mad.

[*blind.*]

Gloster. 'Tis the time's plague when madmen lead the
Do as I bid thee.

Old

Old M. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will. [Exit.

Gloft. Sirrah! naked fellow!

Edg. Poor *Tom*'s a cold.—I cannot fool it longer,
And yet I must—Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed;
Believ't, poor *Tom* ev'n weeps his blind to see 'em.

Gloft. Know'st thou the way to *Dover*?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path:
Poor *Tom* has been scared-out of his good wits. Bless
every true man's son from the foul Fiend.

Gloft. Here take this purse; that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier. Heav'n deal so still!
Thus let the griping Usurer's hoard be scatter'd,
So distribution shall undo excess,
And each man have enough. Dost thou know *Dover*?

Edg. Ay, master.

Gloft. There's a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks dreadfully down on the roaring deep;
Bring me but to the very brink of it,
And I'll repair the poverty thou bear'st
With something rich about me: From that place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm: Poor *Tom* shall guide thee.

Gloft. Soft! for I hear the tread of passengers.

Enter Kent and Cordelia.

Cord. Ah me! Your fear's too true, it was the King;
I spoke but now with some that met him
As mad as the vex'd sea, singing aloud,
Crown'd with rank fumiter, and furrow weeds,
With berries, burdocks, violets, daizies, poppies,
And all the idle flowers that grow
In our sustaining corn: Conduct me to him,
To prove my last endeavours to restore him,
And Heav'n so prosper thee!

Kent. I will, good lady.

Ha! *Gloster* here!—Turn, poor dark man, and hear
A friend's condolment, who at sight of thine
Forgets his own distress; thy old true *Kent*.

Gloft. How, *Kent*? From whence return'd?

Kent. I have not since my banishment been absent,
But in disguise follow'd th' abandon'd King.
Twas me thou saw'st with him in the late storm.

Gloft. Let me embrace thee; had I eyes, I now
Should weep for joy; but let this trickling blood
Suffice instead of tears.

Cord. O misery!

To whom shall I complain, or in what language?
Forgive, O wretched man, the piety
That brought thee to this pafs; 'twas I that caus'd it;
I cast me at thy feet, and beg of thee
To crush these weeping eyes to equal darkness,
If that will give thee any recompence.

Edg. Was ever season so distress'd as this? [*Aside.*]

Gloft. I think *Cordelia's* voice! Rise, pious princess,
And take a dark man's blessing.

Cord. O, my *Edgar!*

My virtue's now grown guilty, works the bane
Of those that do besiege me. Heaven forsakes me,
And when you look that way, it is but just
That you should hate me too.

Edg. O wave this cutting speech, and spare to wound
A heart that's on the rack.

Gloft. No longer cloud thee, *Kent*, in that disguise;
There's business for thee, and of noblest weight;
Our injur'd country is at length in arms,
Urg'd by the King's inhuman wrongs and mine,
And only want a Chief to lead them on.
That task be thine.

Edg. Brave *Britain*, then there's life in't yet. [*Aside.*]

Kent. Then have we one cast for our fortune still.

Come, princess, I'll bestow you with the King,
Then on the spur to head these forces.
Farewell, good *Gloster*; to our conduct trust.

Gloft. And be your cause as prosp'rous as 'tis just. [*Ex.*]

Goneril's Palace. Enter Goneril, Attendants.

Gon. It was great ignorance, *Gloster's* eyes being out,
To let him live; where he arrives, he moves
All hearts against us: *Edmund*, I think, is gone,
In pity to his misery, to dispatch him.

Gent. No, madam, he's return'd on speedy summons
Back to your sister.

Gon. Ah! I like not that,
Such speed must have the wings of love. Where's *Albany*?
Gent.

Gent. Madam, within, but never man so chang'd;
I told him of the uproar of the peasants,
He smil'd at it; when I inform'd him
Of *Gloster's* treason——

Gon. Trouble him no farther,
It is his coward spirit; back to our sister,
Hasten her musters, and let her know
I have given the diltaff into my husband's hands.
That done, with special care deliver these dispatches
In private to young *Gloster*.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. O madam, most unseasonable news:
The Duke of *Cornwall's* dead of his late wound,
Whose loss your sister has in part supply'd,
Making brave *Edmund* General of her forces.

Gon. One way I like this well;
But being a widow, and my *Gloster* with her,
May blast the promis'd harvest of our love.
A word more, Sir—— add speed to your journey.
And if you chance to meet with that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off. [Ex.

The Field SCENE. *Gloster and Edgar.*

Gloster. When shall we come to th' top of that same hill?

Edgar. We climb it now; mark how we labour.

Gloster. Methinks the ground is even.

Edgar. Horribly steep. Hark, do you hear the sea?

Gloster. No truly.

Edgar. Why then your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes anguish.

Gloster. So may it be indeed.

Methinks thy voice is alter'd, and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.

Edgar. You are much deceiv'd; in nothing am I alter'd
But my garments.

Gloster. Methinks you're better spoken.

Edgar. Come on, Sir, here's the place. How fearful
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs, that wing the midway air,
Shew scarce so big as beetles. Half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!
The fishermen that walk upon the beach,

Appear like mice : and yon tall anch'ring bark
Seems lessen'd to her cock ; her cock, a buoy,
Almost too small for fight. The murm'ring surge
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
Lest my brain turn, and the disorder make me
Tumble down headlong.

Gloft. Set me where you stand.

Edg. You are now within a foot of th' extreme verge :
For all beneath the moon I wou'd not now
Leap forward.

Gloft. Let go my hand.

Here, friend, is another pulse ; in it a Jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking. Get thee farther,
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Fare you well, Sir.——That I do trifle thus
With his despair, is with design to cure it.

Gloft. Thus, mighty Gods, this world I do renounce,
And in your sight shake my afflictions off :

If I cou'd bear them longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great oppofeseless wills,
My snuff and feebler part of nature shou'd
Burn itself out. If *Edgar* live, Oh bless him !

Now, fellow, fare thee well.

[*He falls.*]

Edg. Good Sir, farewell.

And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life. Had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past. —— Alive, or dead ?
Hear, Sir ! Friend ! hear you, Sir ? Speak ——
Thus might he pass, indeed —— yet he revives.
What are you, Sir ?

Gloft. Away, and let me die.

Edg. Hadst thou been ought but goss'mer, feathers,
Falling so many fathom down, [air,
Thou'dst shiver'd like an egg ; but thou dost breathe,
Hast heavy substance, bleed'st not ; speak, art found ?
Thy life's a miracle.

Gloft. But have I fall'n, or no ?

Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn :
Look up an height, the shrill-tun'd lark so high
Cannot be seen or heard ; do but look up.

Gloft. Alack, I have no eyes.

Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit
To end itself by death?

Edg. Give me your arm.

Up, so——how is't? Feel you your legs? You stand.

Gloft. Too well, too well.

Edg. Upon the crown o'th' cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you?

Gloft. A poor unfortunate beggar.

Edg. As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were too full moons, wide nostrils breathing fire.
It was some fiend; therefore, thou happy father,
Think that th' all powerful Gods, who make them ho-
Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee. [nours

Gloft. 'Tis wonderful! Henceforth I'll bear affliction
'Till it expire; the gobbling which you speak of,
I took it for a man: Oft-times 'twould say,
The Fiend, the Fiend: He led me to that place. [here?

Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts. But who comes?

Enter Lear, a Coronet of Flowers on his Head.

Wreaths and Garlands about him.

Lear. No, no; they cannot touch me for coining;
I am the King himself.

Edg. O piercing sight!

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect; there's
your press-money: Th' t fellow handles his bow like a
crow keeper: —— Draw me a clothier's yard. A
mouse, a mouse! peace, ho! There's my gauntlet; I'll
prove it on a giant: Bring up the brown bills; O well-
flown barb; i'th' white, i'th' white. ——

Hewgh! Give the word.

Edg. Sweet *Marjoram*.

Lear. Pass.

Gloft. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! *Goneril* with a white beard! They flatter'd
me like a dog, and told me I had white hairs on my
chin, before the black ones were there; to say *ay* and
no to every thing that I said: *Ay* and *no* too, was no
good divinity. When the rain came once to wet me,
and the winds to make me chatter; when the thunder
would not peace at my bidding, there I found 'em,
there I smelt them out. Go to, they are not men of

their words; they told me I was every thing; 'tis a
I am not ague-proof. [lye,

Gloft. That voice I well remember: is't not the King?

Lear. Ay, every inch a King: when I do stare,
See how the subject quakes.

I pardon that man's life.——What was the cause?

Adultery? I thou shalt not die: Die for adultery?

'T he wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly
Engenders in my sight. Let copulation thrive;
For *Gloster's* bastard son was kinder to his father,
Than were my daughters, got i th' lawful bed.

'To't, luxury, *pell mell*; for I lack soldiers.

Gloft. Not all my sorrows past so deep have touch'd me,
As these sad accents; sight were now a torment.——

Lear. Behold that simp'ring lady, she that starts
At pleasure's name, and thinks her ear profan'd
With the least wanton word; wou'd you believe it?
The fitchew, nor the pamper'd steed goes to't
With such a riotous appetite: Down from the waste
they are *centaurs*, though women all above; but to the
girdle do the Gods inherit, beneath is all the Fiends.
There's hell, there's darkness, the sulphurous unfathom'd
——Fie! Fie! Pah!——An ounce of *Civet*, good apo-
thecary, to sweeten my imagination.——There's mo-
ney for thee.

Gloft. Let me kiss that hand.

Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

Gloft. Speak, Sir, do you know me?

Lear. I remember thy eyes well enough: Nay, do
thy worst, blind *Cupid*, I'll not love.——Read me this
Challenge; mark but the penning of it.

Gloft. Were all the letters Suns, I could not see.

Edg. I would not take this from report; wretched
What will thy virtue do, when thou shalt find [*Cordelia!*
This fresh affliction added to the tale
Of thy unparallel'd griefs?

Lear. Read.

Gloft. What! with this case of eyes?

Lear. O ho! are you there with me? No eyes in
your head, and no money in your purse? Yet you see
how this world goes.

Gloft.



Gloſt. I ſee it feelingly.

Lear. What! art mad? A man may ſee how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thy ears: ſee how you Juſtice rails on that ſimple thief; ſhake 'em together, and the firſt that drops, be it thief or Juſtice, is a villain—Thou haſt ſeen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Gloſt. Ay, Sir.

Lear. And the man run from the cur; there thou might'ſt behold the great Image of authority; a dog's obey'd in office. Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand; why doſt thou laſh that ſtrumpet? Thou hotly luſt'ſt to enjoy her in that kind for which thou whip'ſt her; do, do, the Judge that ſentenc'd her has been before-hand with thee.

Gloſt. How ſtiff is my vile ſenſe that yields not yet?

Lear. I tell thee, the uſurer hangs the coz'ner.—
Through tatter'd cloaths ſmall vices do appear;
Robes and ſur-gowns hide all. Plate ſin with gold,
And the ſtrong lance of Juſtice hurtleſs breaks:
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's ſtraw doth pierce it.
Why there 'tis for thee, my friend, make much of it;
It has the power to ſeal the accuſer's lips. Get thee glaſs eyes, and (like a ſcurvy politician) ſeem to ſee the things thou doſt not. Pull, pull off my boots; hard, harder; ſo, ſo.

Gloſt. O matter and impertinency mixt,
Reason in madneſs!

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
I know thee well enough, thy name is *Gloſter*.
Thou muſt be patient: We came crying hither;
Thou know'ſt, the firſt time that we taſte the air,
We wail and cry.—I'll preach to thee, mark.

Edg. Break, lab'ring heart!

Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great ſtage of fools——

Enter two or three Gentlemen.

Gent. O! here he is; lay hand upon him. Sir,
Your deareſt daughter ſends——

Lear. No reſcue? What, a priſoner? I am even the
natural fool of fortune. Uſe me well, you ſhall have

Ransom. — Let me have surgeons. Oh! I am cut to th' brains.

Gent. You shall have any thing.

Lear. No seconds? All myself? I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom; flush'd and pamper'd as a priest's whore. I am a King, my masters; know ye that?

Gent. You are a Royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. It were an excellent stratagem to shoe a troop of horse with felt; I'll put 't in proof.—No noise, no noise.—Now will we steal upon these Sons-in-law, and then—Kill, kill, kill, kill! [*Ex. running.*]

Edg. A fight most moving in the meanest wretch, Past speaking in a King.

Gloſt. Now good, Sir, what are you?

Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's strokes, And prone to pity by experienc'd sorrows. Give me [your hand.]

Gloſt. You ever gentle Gods, take my breath from me, And let not my ill Genius tempt me more To die before you please.

Enter Goneril's Gentleman Usher.

Gent. A proclaim'd Prize! O most happily met! That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh To raise my fortunes. Thou old, unhappy traitor, The sword is out that must destroy thee.

Gloſt. Now let thy friendly hand put strength enough;

Gent. Wherefore, bold peasant, [to't.] Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence, Left I destroy thee too. Let go his arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without 'urther 'casion.

Gent. Let go, slave, or thou dieſt.

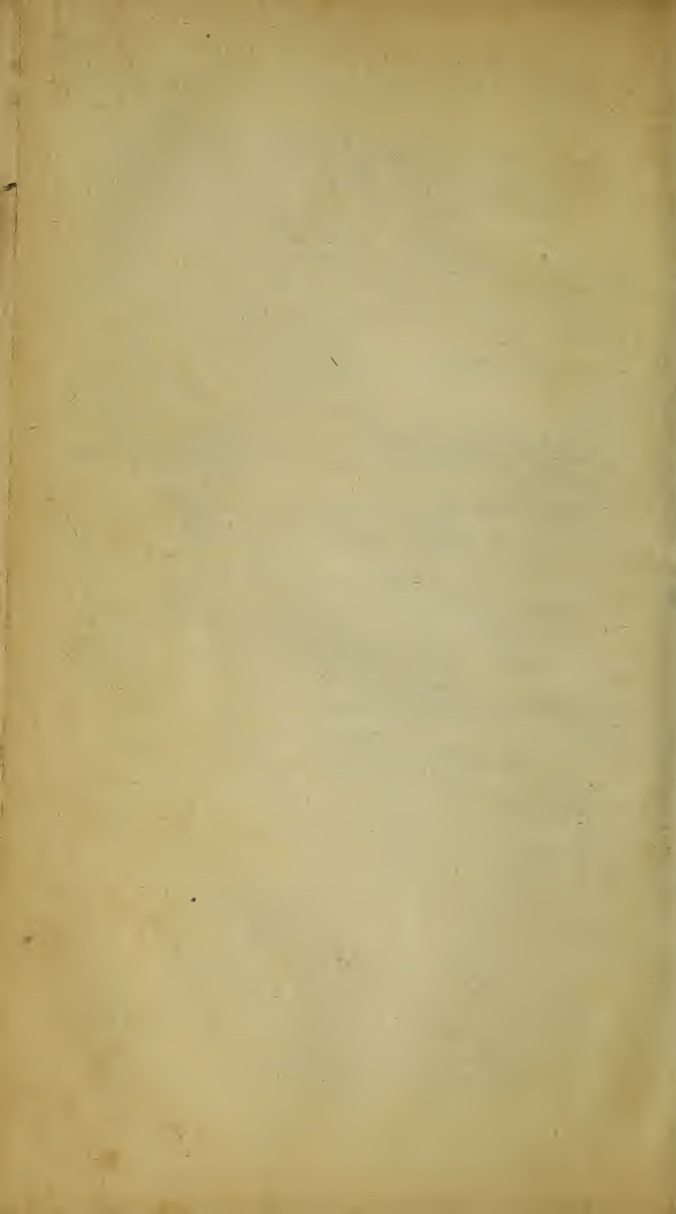
Edg. Good Gentleman go your gate, and let poor-volk pass; and chu'd ha' bin' zwagger'd out of my life, it would not have been zo long as 'tis by a vort-night. —Nay, an' thou com'st near th' old man, I'll try whether your costard or my ballow be th' harder.

Gent. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, zir; come no matter your your soines. [*Edgar knocks him down.*]

Gent. Slave, thou hast slain me; oh! untimely death!

Edg. I know thee well, a serviceable villain;



As duteous to the vices of thy mistress,
As lust could wish.

Gloſt. What! Is he dead?

Edg. Sit you, Sir.

This is a letter carrier, and may have
Some papers of intelligence, that may stand
Our party in good ſtead to know.—Wha' s here?

[*Takes a letter out of his pocket; opens, and reads.*]

To *Edmund Earl of Gloſter.*

*Let our mutual loves be remember'd: you have many
opportunities to cut him off. If he return the
Conqueror, then I am ſtill a priſoner, and his
bed my gaol; from the loath'd warmth of
which deliver me, and ſupply the place for your
Labour.*

Generil.

A plot upon her husband's life,
And the exchange my brother!—Here i'th' ſands
I'll rake thee up, thou meſſenger of luſt;
Griev'd only that thou had'ſt no other death's-man.
In time and place convenient I'll produce
Theſe letters to the ſight of th' injur'd Duke,
As beſt ſhall ſerve our purpoſe. Come, your hands:
Far off methinks I hear the beaten drum;
Come, ſir, I will beſtow you with a friend. [*Exeunt.*]

*A Chamber. Lear aſleep on a Couch; Cordelia and
Attendants ſtanding by him.*

Cord. His ſleep is ſound, and may have good effect
To cure his jarring ſenſes, and repair
This breach of nature.

Phyf. We have employ'd the utmoſt pow'r of art,
And this deep reſt will perfect our deſign.

Cord. O *Regan!* *Generil!* Inhuman ſiſters!
Had he not been your father, theſe white hairs
Had challeng'd ſure ſome pity! Was this a face
To be expos'd againſt the jarring winds?
My enemy's dog, though he had bit me, ſhou'd [*to him*]
Have ſtood that night againſt my fire.—He wakes, ſpeak

Phyf. Madam, do you; 'tis fitteſt. [*Jetty?*]

Cord. How does my royal Lord? How fares your Ma

Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o'th' grave.
Ha! is this too a world of cruelty?

I know my privilege; think not that I will
Be us'd still like a wretched mortal: No,
No more of that.

Cord. Speak to me, Sir; who am I?

Lear. You are a foul in blifs; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, which my own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

Cord. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know; when did you die?

Cord. Still, still, far wide—— [compos'd.

Phys. Madam, he's scarce awake; he'll soon grow more

Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair day-
I am mightily abus'd, I shou'd even die with pity [light?
To see another thus. I will not swear
These are my hands.

Cord. O look upon me, Sir,
And hold your hand in blessing o'er me; nay,
You must not kneel.

Lear. Pray do not mock me;
I am a very foolish fond, old man,
Fourscore and upward; and, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.

Cord. Nay, then farewell to patience: Witness for me,
Ye mighty pow'rs, I ne'er complain'd 'till now!

Lear. Methinks I shou'd know you, and know this man:
Yet I am doubtful; for I'm mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have,
Remembers not these garments; nor do I know
Where I did sleep last night.— Pray do not mock me,
For, as I am a man, I think that lady
To be my child *Cordelia*.

Cord. O my dear, dear father!

Lear. Be your tears wet? Yes faith; pray do not weep.
I know I have giv'n thee cause, and am so humbled
With crosses since that I cou'd ask
Forgiveness of thee, were it possible
That thou cou'dst grant it; but I'm well assur'd
Thou canst not; therefore I do stand thy justice;
If thou hast poison for me I will drink it,
Bless thee, and die.

Cord. O pity, Sir, a bleeding heart, and cease
This killing language.

Lear.

Lear. Tell me, friends, where am I?

Phys. In your own kingdom, Sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Phys. Be comforted, good madam, for the violence
Of his distemper's past; we'll lead him in,
Nor trouble him, 'till he is better settled.
Will't please you, Sir, walk into freer air?

Lear. You must bear with me, I am old and foolish.

[*They lead him off.*]

Cord. The Gods restore you.—Hark, I hear afar
The beaten drum. Old *Kent's* a man of 's word.

Oh! for an arm

Like the fierce thunderer's, when the earth-born Sons
Storm'd Heav'n, to fight this injur'd father's battle!

That I cou'd shift my sex, and dye me deep

In his opposer's blood! But, as I may,

With women's weapons, piety and pray'rs,
I'll aid his cause.—You never-erring Gods,

Fight on his side, and thunder on his foes

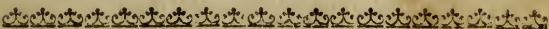
Such tempests as his poor ag'd head sustain'd:

Your image suffers when a monarch bleeds.

'Tis your own cause; for that you succours bring;

Revenge yourselves, and right an injur'd King.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.



A C T V.

SCENE, *A Camp.*

Enter Goneril and Attendants.

Gon. ✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ UR Sister's Pow'rs already are arriv'd,
✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ And she herself has promis'd to prevent
✱ O ✱ ✱ ✱ The night with her approach: have
✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ you provided
✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ The banquet I bespoke for her reception
At my tent?

Att. So, please your Grace, we have.

Gen. But thou, my poisoner, must prepare the bowl
That crowns this banquet; when our mirth is high,
The trumpets sounding, and the flutes replying,
Then is the time to give this fatal draught
To this imperious Sister; if then our arms succeed,
Edmund, more dear than victory, is mine;
But if defeat, or death itself attend me,
'Twill charm my ghost to think I've left behind me
No happy rival. Hark! she comes. [*Trumpet. Exeunt.*
Enter Bastard, in his Tent.

Bast. To both these sisters have I sworn my love,
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder;—neither can be held,
If both remain alive.—Where shall I fix?
Cornwall is dead, and *Regan's* empty bed
Seems cast by fortune for me—But already
I have enjoy'd her, and bright *Goneril*
With equal charms brings dear variety,
And yet untasted beauty; I will use
Her husband's count'nance for the battle, then
Usurp at once his bed and throne. [*Enter officers.*
My trusty scouts, you're well return'd; have ye descry'd
The strength and posture of the enemy?

Off. We have, and were surpris'd to find
The banish'd *Kent* return'd, and at their head;
Your brother *Edgar* on the rear; old *Gloster*
(A moving spectacle) led through the ranks,
Whose powerful tongue, and more prevailing wrongs,
Have so enrag'd their rustick spirit, that with
Th' approaching dawn we must expect a battle.

Bast. You bring a welcome hearing; each to his charge;
Line well your ranks, and stand on your award.
'To night repose you; and i'th' morn we'll give
The Sun a fight that shall be worth his rising. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, a Valley near the Camp.

Enter Edgar and Gloster.

Edg. Here, Sir, take you the shadow of this tree
For your good host; pray that the right may thrive:

IF

If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.

[Exit.]

Gloſt. I hanks, friendly Sir;

The fortune your good cauſe deſerves betide you.

[An alarm; after which Gloſter ſpeaks.]

The fight grows hot; the whole war's now at work,
And the goar'd battle bleeds in every vein,
Whilst drums and trumpets drown loud ſlaughter's roar.
Where's *Gloſter* now, that uſ'd to head the fray,
And ſcour the ranks where deadlieſt danger lay?
Here, like a ſhepherd, in a lonely ſhade,
Idle, unarm'd, and liſt'ning to the fight.
Yet the diſabled courſer, maim'd and blind,
When in his ſtall he hears the rattling War,
Foaming with rage, tears up the batter'd ground,
And tugs for liberty.

No more of ſhelter, thou blind worm, but forth
To th' open field; the war may come this way,
And crush thee into reſt.—Here lay thee down,
And tear the earth; that work befits a mole.

O dark deſpair! When, *Edgar*, wilt thou come
To pardon, and diſmiſs me to the grave? [A retreat.]

Hark! a retreat; the King, I fear, has loſt.— [ſounded.]

Re-enter Edgar, bloody.

Edg. Away, old man; give me your hand, away!
King *Lear* has loſt; he and his daughter ta'en;
And this, ye Gods, is all that I can ſave
Of this moſt precious wreck. Give me your hand.

Gloſt. No farther, Sir: a man may rot, even here.

Edg. What! in ill thoughts again? Men muſt en-
Their going hence, ev'n as their coming hither. [dure]

Gloſt. And that's true too. [Exit.]

Flouriſh. Enter in conqueſt, Albany, Goneril, Regan,
Baſtard.—*Lear*, Kent, Cordelia, Prisoners.

Alb. It is enough to have conquer'd; cruelty
Shou'd ne'er ſurvive the fight. Captain o'th guards,
Treat well your royal priſoners, 'till you have
Our farther orders, as you hold our pleaſure.

Gon. Hark; Sir, not as you hold our husband's
pleaſure,

[To the Captain aſide.]

But

But as you hold your life, dispatch your pris'ners.
 Our empire can have no sure settlement
 But in their death; the earth that covers them
 Binds fast our throne. Let me hear they are dead.

Capt. I shall obey your orders.

Bast. Sir, I approve it safest to pronounce
 Sentence of death upon this wretched King,
 Whose age has charms in it, his title more,
 To draw the commons once more to his side;
 'I were best prevent——

Alb. Sir, by your favour,
 I hold you but a subject of this war,
 Not as a brother.

Reg. That's as we list to grace him.
 Have you forgot that he did lead our pow'rs?
 Bore the commission of our place and person?
 And *that* authority may well stand up,
 And call itself your brother.

Gon. Not so hot;
 In his own merits he exalts himself
 More than in your addition.

Enter Edgar, disguis'd.

Alb. What art thou?

Edg. Pardon me, Sir, that I presume to stop
 A Prince and Conq'ror; yet, ere you triumph,
 Give ear to what a stranger can deliver
 Of what concerns you more than triumph can.
 I do impeach your General there of treason,
 Lord *Edmund*, that usurps the name of *Gloster*,
 Of foulest practice 'gainst your life and honour:
 This charge is true; and wretched though I seem,
 I can produce a champion that will prove
 In single combat what I do avouch,
 If *Edmund* dares but trust his cause and sword.

Bast. What will not *Edmund* dare? My Lord, I beg
 The favour that you'd instantly appoint
 The place where I may meet this challenger,
 Whom I will sacrifice to my wrong'd fame:
 Remember, Sir, that injur'd honour's nice,
 And cannot brook delay.

Alb. Anon, before our tent, i'th' army's view,
 There let the herald cry.

Edg.



Edg. I thank your Highness in my champion's name:
He'll wait your trumpet's call.

Alb. Lead.

[*Exeunt.*

Manent Lear, Kent, Cordelia, guarded.

Lear. O Kent! Cordelia!

You are the only pair that I e'er wrong'd,
And the just Gods have made you witnesses
Of my disgrace; the very shame of fortune,
'To see me chain'd and shackled at these years!
Yet were you but spectators of my woes,
Not fellow-sufferers, all were well.

Cord. This language, Sir, adds yet to our affliction.

Lear. Thou, Kent, didst head the troops that fought
Expos'd thy life and fortunes for a master, [my battle,
'That had (as I remember) banish'd thee.

Kent. Pardon me, Sir, that once I broke your orders:
Banish'd by you, I kept me here disguis'd
'To watch your fortunes, and protect your person:
You know you entertain'd a rough, blunt fellow,
One Caius, and you thought he did you service.

Lear. My trusty Caius, I have lost him too! [*Weeps.*
'Twas a rough honesty.

Kent. I was that Caius,
Disguis'd in that coarse dress to follow you.

Lear. My Caius too! Wer't thou my trusty Caius?
Enough, enough ———

Cord. Ah me, he faints! his blood forsakes his cheek.
Help, Kent. ———

Lear. No, no, they shall not see us weep,
We'll see them rot first.—Guards, lead away to prison.
Come Kent, Cordelia, come;
We two will sit alone, like birds i'th' cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down
And ask of thee forgiveness; thus we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies; hear sycophants
Talk of court news, and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out;
And take upon us the mystery of things,
As if we were Heav'n's spies.

Cord. Upon such sacrifices
The Gods themselves throw incense.

Lear.

Lear. Have I caught ye?

He that parts us, must bring a brand from Heav'n:
Together we'll out-toil the spite of Hell,
And die the wonders of the world; away.

[*Exeunt guarded.*

Flourish. Enter before the Tents, Albany, Goneril,
Regan, Guards and Attendants; Goneril speaking a-
part to the Captain of the Guards entering. [mand-

Gon. Here's gold for thee, thou know'st our late com-
Upon your prisoners lives; about it straight, and at
Our evening banquet let it raise our mirth,
To hear that they are dead.

Capt I shall not fail your orders. [Ex.

Albany, Goneril, Regan, take their Seats.

Alb. Now, *Gloster*, trust to thy single virtue; for thy
All levied in my name, have in my name [soldiers,
'Took their discharge: Now let our trumpets speak,
And herald read out this: [Herald reads.

*If any man of quality within the lists of the
army will maintain upon Edmund suppos'd
Earl of Gloster that he is a manifold traitor,
let him appear by the third sound of the trum-
pet; he is bold in his defence ——— again,
again.* [Trumpet answers from within.

Enter Edgar arm'd.

Alb. Lord Edgar!

Bast. Ha! my brother!

This is the only combatant that I cou'd fear,
For in my breast guilt duels on his side:
But, conscience, what have I to do with thee?
Awe thou thy dull legitimate slaves: but I
Was born a libertine, and so I keep me.

Edg. My noble Prince, a word; — ere we engage,
Into your Highness' hands I give this paper;
It will the truth of my impeachment prove,
Whatever be my fortune in the fight.

Alb. We shall peruse it.

Edg. Now, *Edmund*, draw thy sword,
That if my speech has wrong'd a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee Justice; Here i'th' presence

Of this high Prince, these Queens, and this crown'd list,
I brand thee with the spotted name of traytor;
False to thy Gods, thy father, and thy brother,
And, what is more, thy friend; false to this Prince:
If then thou shar'st a spark of *Gloster's* virtue,
Acquit thyself; or if thou shar'st his courage,
Meet this defiance bravely.

Bast. And dares *Edgar*,
The beaten, routed *Edgar*, brave his conqueror?
From all thy troops and thee I forc'd the field:
Thou hast lost the gen'ral stake, and art thou now
Come with thy petty single stock to play
This after-game?

Edg. Half-blooded man,
Thy father's sin first, then his punishment;
The dark and vicious place where he begot thee
Cost him his eyes; from thy licentious mother
Thou draw'st thy villany; but for thy part
Of *Gloster's* blood, I hold thee worth my sword.

Bast. Thou bear'st thee on thy mother's piety,
Which I despise; thy mother being chaste,
Thou art assur'd thou art but *Gloster's* son:
But mine, disdaining constancy, leaves me
To hope that I am sprung from nobler blood,
And possibly a King might be my sire:
But be my birth's uncertain chance as 'twill,
Who 'twas that had the hit to father me.
I know not: 'tis enough that I am I:
Of this one thing I'm certain——that I have
A daring soul, and so have at thy heart.

Sound trumpet. [Fight, Bastard falls.]

Gon. and Reg. Save him! save him!

Gon. This was practice, *Gloster*;
Thou won'st the field, and wast not bound to fight
A vanquish'd enemy. Thou art not conquer'd,
But couzen'd and betray'd.

Aib. Shut your mouth, Lady,
Or with this paper I shall stop it.——Hold, madam!
Thou worse than any name, read thy own evil——
No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it.

Gon.

Gon. Say, if I do, who shall arraign me for't?
The laws are mine, not thine.

Alb. Most monstrous! Ha! Thou know'st it too!

Bast. Ask me not what I know,
I have not breath to answer idle questions.

Alb. I have resolv'd. ——— Your right, brave fir, has
conquer'd. [To Edgar.
Along with me: I must consult your father. [Ex. Albany

Reg. Help every hand to save a noble life; [ana Edg.
My half o'th' kingdom for a man of skill
To stop this precious stream,

Bast. Away, ye empiricks,
Torment me not with your vain offices;
The sword has pierc'd too far; legitimacy
At last has conquer'd.

Reg. The pride of nature dies.

Gon. Away, the minutes are too precious;
Disturb us not with thy impertinent sorrow.

Reg. Art thou my rival then profess?

Gon. Why, was our love a secret? Cou'd there be
Beauty like mine, and gallantry like his,
And not a mutual love? Just Nature then
Had err'd. Behold that copy of perfection,
That youth, whose story will have no foul page,
But where it says he swoopt to *Regan's* arms:
Which yet was but compliance, not affection;
A charity to begging, ruin'd beauty!

Reg. Who begg'd when *Goneril* writ that? Expose it,
[Throws her a letter.

And let it be your army's mirth, as 'twas
This charming youth's and mine, when in the bow'r
He breath'd the warmest extasies of love;
Then panting on my breast, cry'd, Matchless *Regan!*
That *Goneril* and thou shou'd e'er be kin!

Gon. Die, *Circe*, for thy charms are at an end;
Expire before my face, and let me see
How well that boasted beauty will become
Congealing blood, and death's convulsive pangs:
Die and be hush'd; for at my tent last night
Thou drank'st thy bane, amidst thy rev'ling bowls:
Ha! Dost thou smile? Is then thy death thy sport?
Or has the trusty potion made thee mad?

Reg.

Reg. Thou com'st as short of me in thy revenge,
As in my *Gloster's* love; my jealousy
Inspir'd me to prevent thy feeble malice,
And poison thee at thy own banquet.

Gon. Ha!

Bast. No more, my Queens, of this untimely strife;
You both deserv'd my love, and both possess it.
Come, soldiers, bear me in; and let
Your royal presence grace my last minutes;
Now, *Edgar*, thy proud conquest I forgive:
Who wou'd not chuse, like me, to yield his breath,
T' have rival Queens contend for him in death?

SCENE, *A Prison.*

Lear asleep, with his head on Cordelia's Lap.

Cord. What toils, thou wretched King, hast thou en-
To make thee draw, in chains, a sleep so sound? [dur'd,
Thy better Angel charm thy ravish'd mind
With fancy'd freedom! Peace is us'd to lodge
On cottage straw. Thou hast the beggar's bed,
Therefore should'st have the beggar's careless thought.
And now, my *Edgar*, I remember thee:
What fate has seiz'd thee in this general wreck
I know not, but I know thou must be wretched,
Because *Cordelia* holds thee dear.

O Gods! a sudden gloom o'erwhelms me, and the image
Of death o'erspreads the place.—Ha! Who are these?

Enter Captain and Officers with Cords.

Capt. Now, sir, dispatch; already you are paid
In part, the best of your reward's to come. [halts.

Lear. Charge, charge upon their flank; their last wing
Push, push the battle, and the day's our own.
Their ranks are broken, down, down with *Albany*.
Who holds my hands?—O thou deceiving sleep,
I was this very minute on the chace,
And now a pris'ner here!—What mean the slaves?
You will not murder me?

Cord.

Cord. Help, earth and Heaven!
For your souls sake, dear Sirs, and for the Gods.

Offi. No tears, good lady; no pleading against gold!
Come, sirs, make ready your cords. [and preferment.

Cord. You, Sir, I'll seize,
You have a human form; and if no prayers
Can touch your soul to spare a poor King's life,
If there be any thing that you hold dear,
By that I beg you to dispatch me first.

Capt. Comply with her request; dispatch her first.

Lear. Off, hell-hounds! by the Gods I charge you spare:
'Tis my *Cordelia*, my true pious daughter; [her:
No pity? — Nay, then take an old man's vengeance.

*Snatches a partisan, and strikes down two of them;
the rest quit Cordelia, and turn upon him.*

Enter Edgar and Albany.

Edg. Death! Hell! ye vultures, hold your impious
Cord take a speedier death than you wou'd give. [hands,

Capt. By whose command?

Edg. Beho'd the Duke, your Lord.

Alb. Guards, seize those instruments of cruelty.

Cord. Oh, my *Edgar*!

Edg. My dear *Cordelia*! Lucky was the minute
Of our approach; the Gods have weigh'd our sufferings;
W' have pass'd the fire, and now must shine to ages.

Gent. Look here, my Lord; see where the generous King
Has slain two of 'em.

Lear. Did I not, fellow?

I've seen the day, with my good biting falchion
I cou'd have made 'em skip: I am old now,
And these vile crosses spoil me; out of breath,
Fie, oh! quite out of breath, and spent.

Alb. Bring in old *Kent*; and, *Edgar*, guide you hither
Your father, whom you said was near; [Exit *Edgar*.
He may be an ear-witness at the least
Of our proceedings. [*Kent brought in here.*

Lear. Who are you?

My eyes are none o'th' best; I'll tell you straight:
Oh, *Albany*! Well, Sir, we are your captives,
And you are come to see death pass upon us.

Why this delay? — Or is't your Highness' pleasure

To give us first the torture? Say ye so?
 Why here's old *Kent*, and I, as tough a pair
 As e'er bore tyrant's stroke.—But my *Cordelia*,
 My poor *Cordelia* here, O pity——

Alb. Take off their chains.—Thou injur'd Majesty,
 The wheel of fortune now has made her circle,
 And blessings yet stand 'twixt thy grave and thee.

Lear. Com'st thou, inhuman Lord, to sooth us back
 To a fool's paradise of hope, to make
 Our doom more wretched? Go to, we are too well
 Acquainted with misfortune, to be gull'd
 With lying hope; no, we will hope no more.

Alb. I have a tale t'unfold, so full of wonder,
 As cannot meet an easy faith;
 But by that royal injur'd head 'tis true.

Kent. What wou'd your Highness?

Alb. Know, the noble *Edgar*
 Impeach'd Lord *Edmund*, since the fight, of treason,
 And dar'd him for the proof to single combat,
 In which the Gods confirm'd his charge by conquest;
 I left ev'n now the traitor wounded mortally.

Lear. And whither tends this story?

Alb. Ere they fought,
 Lord *Edgar* gave into my hands this paper;
 A blacker scroll of treason and of lust
 Than can be found in the records of Hell:
 There, sacred sir, behold the character
 Of *Goneril*, the worst of daughters, but
 More vicious wife.

Cord. Cou'd there be yet addition to their guilt?
 What will not they that wrong a father do?

Alb. Since then my injuries, *Lear*, fall in with thine,
 I have resolv'd the same redress for both.

Kent. What says my Lord?

Cord. Speak, for methought I heard
 The charming voice of a descending God.

Alb. The woops, by *Edmund* rais'd, I have disbanded:
 Those that remain are under my command.
 What comfort may be brought to cheer your age,
 And heal your savage wrongs, shall be apply'd;
 For to your Majesty we do resign

Your

Your kingdom, save what part yourself conferr'd
On us in marriage.

Kent. Hear you that, my liege?

Cord. Then there are Gods, and Virtue is their care.

Lear. Is't possible?

Let the spheres stop their course, the sun make halt,
The winds be hush'd, the seas and fountains rest;
All nature pause, and listen to the change.

Where is my *Kent*, my *Caius*?

Kent. Here, my liege.

Lear. Why I have news that will recall thy youth:
Ha! didst thou hear't, or did th' inspring Gods
Whisper to me alone? Old *Lear* shall be
A King again.

Kent. The Prince, that like a God has pow'r, has said it.

Lear. *Cordelia* then shall be a Queen, mark that:
Cordelia shall be Queen; winds catch the sound,
And bear it on your rosy wings to Heav'n——
Cordelia is a Queen.

Re-enter Edgar with Gloster.

Alb. Look, Sir, where pious *Edgar* comes,
Leading his eyeless father. O my liege!
His wond'rous story well deserves your leisure;
What he has done and suffer'd for your sake,
What for the fair *Cordelia*'s.

Gloster. Where's my liege? Conduct me to his knees, to
His second birth of empire: My dear *Edgar* [hail
Has with himself reveal'd the King's blest restoration.

Lear. My poor dark *Gloster*!

Gloster. O let me kiss that once more scepter'd hand!

Lear. Hold, thou mistak'st the Majesty: kneel here;
Cordelia has our pow'r, *Cordelia*'s Queen.
Speak, is not that the noble, suff'ring *Edgar*?

Gloster. My pious son, more dear than my lost eyes.

Lear. I wrong'd him too, but here's the fair amends.

Edg. Your leave, my liege, for an unwelcome message.
Edmund (but that's a trifle) is expir'd.

What more will touch you, your imperious daughters,
Goneril and haughty *Regan*, both are dead,
Each by the other poison'd at a banquet:
This, dying, they confess'd.

Cord.



Cord. O fatal period of ill-govern'd life!

Lear. Ingrateful as they were, my heart feels yet
A pang of nature for their wretched fall. —

But, *Edgar*, I defer thy joys too long:

Thou serv'dst distress'd *Cordelia*; take her crown'd,

Th' imperial grace fresh blooming on her brow:

Nay, *Gloster*, thou hast here a father's right,

Thy helping hand t'heap blessings on their heads.

Kent. Old *Kent* thro'as in his hearty wishes too.

Edg. The Gods and you too largely recompence
What I have done; the gift strikes merit dumb.

Cord. Nor do I blush to own myself o'erpaid
For all my suff'rings past.

Gloster. Now, gentle Gods, give *Gloster* his discharge.

Lear. No, *Gloster*, thou hast business yet for life;

Thou, *Kent*, and I, retir'd to some close cell,

Will gently pass our short reserves of time

In calm reflexions on our fortunes past,

Cheer'd with relation of the prosperous reign

Of this celestial pair; thus our remains

Shall in an even course of thoughts be past,

Enjoy the present hour, nor fear the last

Edg. Our drooping country now erects her head,
Peace spreads her balmy wings, and Plenty blooms.

Divine *Cordelia*, all the Gods can witness

How much thy love to empire I prefer!

Thy bright example shall convince the world

(Whatever storms of fortune are decreed)

That Truth and Virtue shall at last succeed.

[*Ex. omnes.*]

EPILOGUE.

*I*nconstancy, the reigning sin o' th age,
Will scarce endure true lovers on the stage:
You hardly ev'n in plays with such dispense,
And poets kill'em in their own defence.
Yet one bold proof I was resolv'd to give,
That I cou'd three hours constancy out-live.
You fear, perhaps, whilst on the stage we're made
Such Saints, we shall indeed take up the trade:
Sometimes we threaten, — but our virtue may
For truth (I fear) with your pit-va'lour weigh:
For (not to flatter either) I much doubt,
When we are off the stage, and you are cut,
We are not quite so coy, nor you so stout.
We talk of nunneries — but, to be sincere,
Whoever lives to see us cloister'd there,
May hope to meet our criticks at Tangier.
For shame, give over this inglorious trade
Of worrying poets, and go maul th' alcade.
Well — since you're all for blust'ring in the pit,
This play's reviver humbly does admit
Your abs'lute pow'r to damn his part of it.
But still so many master-toucbes shine
Of that vast hand that first laid this design,
That, in great Shakespear's right, he's bold to say,
If you like nothing you have seen to-day,
The play your judgement damns, not you the play.

F I N I S.

