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2878
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1829



Thomas Bell



Buy C. SMITH

THE
LIFE AND HUMOURS
OF
FALSTAFF;

A COMEDY

FORMED OUT OF THE TWO PARTS OF

Shakspeare's
HENRY THE FOURTH,
AND A FEW SCENES OF
HENRY THE FIFTH.

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COMPILED, &c. BY C. S. *hot*

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LONDON:
CALKIN AND BUDD,
BOOKSELLERS TO HIS MAJESTY,

PALL MALL.

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M.DCCC.XXIX.
1847

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NOTICE.

AVERSE, on critical principles, to the union of Tragedy and Comedy in the same Play, it had often occurred to me, in reading Shakspeare, that the several scenes in the First and Second Parts of Henry the Fourth, and Henry the Fifth, relative to Falstaff, might, if separated from the tragic and solemn ones,—slightly abridged for the sake of delicacy, and in a very few instances newly arranged, in consequence of the necessary omissions, produce a single Drama equal in point of wit, if not of plot—and if well got up and acted with spirit, equal in amusement and effect on the stage—even to the Merry Wives of Windsor.

Under this impression, and taking advantage of a few days leisure, I have accordingly attempted the arrangement.—Falstaff's Wit must delight wherever found; but it is at least inconvenient to search for it, scattered as it is, through the Scenes of three Plays. The object (and the difficulty) was to collect it into a more tangible shape. How it may affect others, I know not; I would hope with pleasure; but to my own poor judgment, the result equals my expectation.

If it be objected, that there is no regular plot, the answer is, that it is a Narrative of "The Life, Opinions, and Humours of Falstaff," nor is it, at least, without its moral; since it shews, that vice and imprudence, though accompanied with wit, gaiety, and talent, will end only in disease, debt, and disappointment.

As the tragic and serious parts of the three plays have been omitted, I found, on adjusting the acts as drawn from Henry the Fourth, that one campaign only was necessary for the action; the recruiting scene at Justice Shallow's, therefore, appeared to come in with greater propriety and effect before Falstaff's march, with his ragged recruits to Coventry. For a similar reason, and particularly as the scene lies in Eastcheap and London, it struck me, that the character of Chief Justice in the Original Plays, would, as it now stands, be better sustained by the Lord Mayor.

The Play thus condensed, either in description or action, gives the whole Life and History of "Honest Jack Falstaff," and perhaps a more perfect character was never drawn or produced on any stage, antient or modern.

C. S.

Dramatis Personæ.

ACT I.

Mr. QUICKLY	Mr. CARRIERS	Mr. TRAVELLERS	Mr. DRAWERS
Mr. CARRIERS	Mr. TRAVELLERS	Mr. DRAWERS	Mr. CARRIERS
Mr. TRAVELLERS	Mr. DRAWERS	Mr. CARRIERS	Mr. TRAVELLERS
Mr. DRAWERS	Mr. CARRIERS	Mr. TRAVELLERS	Mr. DRAWERS

Mrs. QUICKLY, *Hostess of Eastcheap.*

DOLL TEAR-SHEET.

Officers, Carriers, Travellers, Drawers, &c. &c.



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ERRATA.

<i>Page</i>	<i>line</i>	<i>ult. for tim</i>	<i>read time</i>
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43	„	8 for beary our	— bear your
84	„	10 for they	— thy

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Dramatis Personæ.

HENRY PRINCE OF WALES, *afterwards HENRY V.*

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

POINS, GADSHILL, BARDOLPH, PISTOL, PAGE.

SHALLOW, } *Country Justices.*
SILENCE, }

MOULDY, } *Recruits.*
SHADOW, }
WART, }
FEEBLE, }
BULL-CALF, }

LORD MAYOR.

FANG, } *Officers.*
SNARE, }

Mrs. QUICKLY, *Hostess of Eastcheap.*

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FALSTAFF.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

Enter Henry Prince of Wales, and Falstaff.

Fal. NOW, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?

P. Hen. Thou art so fat-witted, with drinking of old sack, and unbuttoning thee after supper, and sleeping upon benches after noon, that thou hast forgotten to demand that truly which thou wouldst truly know. What the devil hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes capons, and clocks the tongues of bawds. I see no reason, why thou shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time of the day.

Fal. Indeed, you come near me, now, Hal: for we, that take purses, go by the moon and seven stars; and not by Phœbus,—he, “*that wandering knight so fair.*” * And I pray thee, sweet wag, when thou art king,—as, God save thy grace (majesty, I should say, for grace thou wilt have none),—

P. Hen. What, none?

Fal. No, by my troth; not so much as will serve to be prologue to an egg and butter.

P. Hen. Well, how then? come, roundly, roundly.

• Old Song.

Fal. Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let not us, that are 'squires of the night's body, be called thieves of the day's beauty : let us be—Diana's Foresters, Gentlemen of the Shade, Minions of the Moon : and let men say, we be men of good government : being governed, as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we—steal.

P. Hen. Thou say'st well ; and it holds well too : for the fortune of us, that are the moon's men, doth ebb and flow like the sea ; being governed as the sea is, by the moon. As, for proof, now : a purse of gold most resolutely snatched on Monday night, and most dissolutely spent on Tuesday morning ; got with swearing—lay by ; and spent with crying—bring in : now, in as low an ebb as the foot of the ladder ; and, by-and-by, in as a high a flow as the ridge of the gallows.

Fal. By the Lord, thou say'st true, lad. And is not my hostess of the tavern a most sweet wench ?

P. Hen. As the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the castle. And is not a buff jerkin a most sweet robe of durance ?

Fal. How now, how now, mad wag ? what, in thy quips, and thy quiddities ? what a plague have I to do with a buff jerkin ?

P. Hen. Why, what a pox have I to do with my hostess of the tavern ?

Fal. Well, thou hast call'd her to a reckoning, many a tim and oft.

P. Hen. Did I ever call for thee to pay thy part?

Fal. No; I'll give thee thy due, thou hast paid all there.

P. Hen. Yea, and elsewhere, so far as my coin would stretch: and, where it would not, I have used my credit.

Fal. Yea, and so used it, that, were it not here apparent that thou art heir apparent—But I pr'ythee, sweet wag, shall there be gallows standing in England when thou art king? and resolution thus fobbed as it is, with the rusty curb of old father ante, the law? Do not thou, when thou art king, hang a thief.

P. Hen. No; thou shalt.

Fal. Shall I? O rare! By the Lord, I'll be a brave judge.

P. Hen. Thou judgest false already; I mean, thou shalt have the hanging of the thieves, and so become a rare hangman.

Fal. Well, Hal, well; and in some sort it jumps with my humour, as well as waiting in the court, I can tell you.

P. Hen. For obtaining of suits?

Fal. Yea, for obtaining of suits; whereof the hangman hath no lean wardrobe. 'Sblood, I am as melancholy as a gib cat, or a lugged bear.

P. Hen. Or an old lion, or a lover's lute.

Fal. Thou hast most unsavoury similes; and art, indeed, the most comparative, rascalliest—sweet young prince—but, Hal, I pr'ythee trouble me no

more with vanity. I would to heaven thou and I knew where a commodity of good names were to be bought: an old lord of the council rated me the other day in the street about you, sir; but I marked him not: and yet he talked very wisely; but I regarded him not: and yet he talked wisely, and in the street too.

P. Hen. Thou didst well; for wisdom cries out in the streets, and no man regards it.

Fal. O, thou hast damnable iteration; and art, indeed, able to corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal—Heaven forgive thee for it! Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew nothing; and now am I, if a man should speak truly, little better than one of the wicked. I must give over this life, and I will give it over; by the Lord, an' I do not I am a villain; I'll be damned for never a king's son in Christendom.

P. Hen. Where shall we take a purse to-morrow, Jack?

Fal. Where thou wilt, lad, I'll make one; an' I do not, call me villain, and baffle me.

P. Hen. I see a good amendment of life in thee; from praying to purse-taking.

Fal. Why, Hal, 'tis my vocation, Hal; 'tis no sin for a man to labour in his vocation.

Enter Poins.

P. Hen. Good-morrow, Ned.

Poins. Good-morrow, sweet Hal. What says Monsieur Remorse? What says Sir John Sack-and-

Sugar ? But, my lads, my lads, to-morrow morning, by four o'clock, early at Gadshill—There are pilgrims going to Canterbury with rich offerings, and traders riding to London with fat purses : I have visors for you all, you have horses for yourselves : Gadshill lies to-night in Rochester : I have bespoke supper in Eastcheap : we may do it as secure as sleep : if you will go, I will stuff your purses full of crowns ; if you will not, tarry at home, and be hanged.

Fal. Hear ye, Yedward ; if I tarry at home, and go not, I'll hang you for going. Hal, wilt thou make one ?

P. Hen. Who, I rob ? I a thief ? Not I by my faith.

Fal. There's neither honesty, manhood, nor good fellowship in thee, thou camest not of the blood royal, if thou dardest not.

P. Hen. Well, come what will, I'll tarry at home.

Fal. By the Lord, I'll be a traitor then, when thou art king.

P. Hen. I care not.

Poins. Sir John, I pr'ythee, leave the prince and me alone ; I will lay him down such reasons for this adventure, that he shall go.

Fal. Well, may'st thou have the spirit of persuasion, and he the ears of profiting, that what thou speakest may move, and what he hears may be believed, that the true prince may (for recreation sake) prove a false thief ; for the poor abuses of the time want countenance. Farewell : you shall find me in Eastcheap.

P. Hen. Farewell, thou latter spring! Farewell.

[*Exit Falstaff.*]

Poins. Now, my good lord, ride with us to-morrow; I have a jest to execute, that I cannot manage alone. Falstaff, Bardolph, Peto, and Gadshill, shall rob those men that we have way-laid; yourself, and I, will not be there: and when they have the booty, if you and I do not rob them, cut this head from my shoulders.

P. Hen. But how shall we part with them in setting forth.

Poins. Why, we will set forth before or after them, and appoint them a place of meeting, wherein it is at our pleasure to fail; and then will they adventure upon the exploit themselves: which they shall have no sooner achieved, but we'll set upon them.

P. Hen. Ay, but, 'tis like, that they will know us, by our horses, and other appointment.

Poins. Tut! our horses they shall not see, I'll tie them in the wood; our visors we will change, after we leave them; and I have cases of buckram, for the nonce, to mask our noted outward garments.

P. Hen. But I doubt they will be too hard for us.

Poins. Well, for two of them, I know them to be as true-bred cowards as ever turned back; and for the third, if he fight longer than he sees reason, I'll forswear arms. The virtue of this jest will be, the incomprehensible lies that this same fat rogue will tell us, when we meet at supper; how, thirty, at

least, he fought with ; what wards, what blows, what extremities he endured ; and in the reproof of this lies the jest.

P. Hen. Well, I'll go with thee : provide us all things necessary, and meet me in Eastcheap : farewell.

Poins. Farewell, my lord. [*Exit.*

P. Hen. I know you all, and will awhile uphold
The unyok'd humour; of your idleness :
Yet herein will I imitate the sun ;
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world ;
That when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at,
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.
So, when this loose behaviour I throw off,
And pay the debt I never promised,
By how much better than my word I am,
By so much shall I falsify men's hopes :
And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly, and attract more eyes,
Than that which hath no foil to set it off. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An Inn Yard, at Rochester.*

Enter a Carrier, with a lantern in his hand.

Car. Heigh ho ! An't be not four by the day, I'll be hanged : Charles' wain is over the new chimney, and yet our horse not packed. What, ostler !

Ost. (Within.) Anon, anon.

1 *Car.* I pr'ythee, Tom, beat Cut's saddle, put a few flocks in the point ; the poor jade is wrung in the withers out of all cess.

Enter another Carrier, with a lantern in his hand.

2 *Car.* Peas and beans are as dank here as a dog, and that is the next way to give poor jades the bots : this house is turned upside down, since Robin ostler died.

1 *Car.* Poor fellow ! never joyed since the price of oats rose : it was the death of him.

2 *Car.* I think this be the most villanous house in all London road for fleas : I am stung like a tench.

[Catches fleas, and examines them by the light of his lantern.]

1 *Car.* Like a tench ? By the mass there is ne'er a king in Christendom could be better bit than I have been since the first cock. What, ostler ! come away, and be hang'd, come away.

2 *Car.* I have a gammon of bacon, and two razes of ginger, to be delivered as far as Charing Cross.

1 *Car.* 'Odsbody ! the turkeys in my pannier are quite starved.—What, ostler !—A plague on thee ! hast thou never an eye in thy head ? canst not hear ! An't were not as good a deed as drink, to break the pate of thee, I am a very villain. Come, and be hanged : hast no faith in thee ?

Enter Gadskill.

Gads. Good-morrow, carriers. What's o'clock ?

1 *Car.* I think it be two o'clock.

Gads. I pr'ythee, lend me thy lantern, to see my gelding in the stable.

1 *Car.* Nay, soft, I pray ye ; I know a trick worth two of that, i'faith.

Gads. I pr'ythee, lend me thine.

[*Crossing to 2nd Car.*

2 *Car.* Ay, when? canst tell?—Lend me thy lantern, quoth'a?—Marry, I'll see thee hang'd first.

Gads. I say, sirrah carrier, what time do you mean to come to London?

2 *Car.* Time enough to go to bed with a candle, I warrant thee. Come, neighbour Mugs, we'll call up the gentlemen ; they'll along with company, for they have great charge.

[*Exeunt Carriers and Gadshill.*

SCENE III.—*The Road by Gad's Hill.*

Enter Prince of Wales and Poins, disguised.

Poins. Come, shelter, shelter ; I have removed Falstaff's horse, and he frets like a gummed velvet.

Enter Falstaff.

Fal. Poins ! Poins, and be hanged ! Poins !

P. Hen. Peace, ye fat-kidney'd rascal !
What a brawling dost thou keep !

Fal. Where's Poins, Hal ?

P. Hen. He is walked up to the top of the hill ;
I'll go seek him. [*Exit.*

Fal. I am accursed to rob in that thief's company :

the rascal hath removed my horse and tied him I know not where. If I travel but four foot by the square further a-foot, I shall break my wind. Well, I doubt not but to die a fair death for all this, if I 'scape hanging for killing that rogue. I have forsworn his company hourly any time this two-and-twenty years, and yet I am bewitched with the rogue's company. If the rascal have not given me medicines to make me love him, I'll be hanged; it could not be else; I have drunk medicines.—Poins!—Hal!—a plague upon you both!—Bardolph!—Peto!—I'll starve, ere I'll rob a foot further. An't were not as good a deed as drink, to turn true man, and to leave these rogues, I am the veriest varlet that ever chewed with a tooth. Eight yards of uneven ground, is three-score and ten miles a-foot with me; and the stony-hearted villains know it well enough: a plague upon't, when thieves cannot be true to one another! [*they whistle.*] Whew!—A plague upon you all! Give me my horse, you rogues; give me my horse, and be hanged.

P. Hen. Peace, ye fat-guts? lie down; lay thine ear close to the ground, and list if thou canst hear the tread of travellers.

Fal. Have you any levers to lift me up again, being down? 'Sblood, I'll not bear mine own flesh so far a-foot again, for all the coin in thy father's exchequer. I pr'ythee, good prince Hal, help me to my horses; good king's son.

P. Hen. Out, you rogue! shall I be your ostler?

Fal. Go, hang thyself in thy own heir-apparent garters! If I be ta'en, I'll peach for this. An I have not ballads made on you all, and sung to filthy tunes, let a cup of sack be my poison: when a jest is so forward, and a-foot too,—I hate it.

Enter Gadshill.

Gads. Stand.

Fal. So I do, against my will.

Poins. O, 'tis our setter: I know his voice.

Gads. Case ye, case ye: on with your visors; there's money of the king's coming down the hill,—'tis going to the king's exchequer.

Fal. You lie, you rogue; 'tis going to the king's tavern.

Gads. There's enough to make us all—

Fal. To be hang'd.

P. Hen. Sirs, you four shall front them in the narrow lane; Ned Poins and I will walk lower: if they 'scape from your encounter, then they light on us.

Fal. But how many be there of them?

Gads. Some eight or ten.

Fal. Zounds! will they not rob us?

P. Hen. What, a coward, Sir John Paunch?

Fal. Indeed, I am not John of Gaunt, your grandfather; but yet no coward, Hal.

P. Hen. Well, we leave that to the proof.

Poins. Sirrah Jack, thy horse stands behind the hedge: when thou need'st him, there thou shalt find him. Farewell, and stand fast.

Fal. Now cannot I strike him, if I should be hang'd.

P. Hen. Ned, where are our disguises? [*Aside.*

Poins. Here, hard by: stand close. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt the Prince and Poins.*

Fal. Now, my masters, happy man be his dole, say I! Every man to his business.—

[*They put on their visors, &c.*

Enter Travellers.

1 *Trav.* Come, neighbour; the boy shall lead our horses down the hill: we'll walk a-foot awhile, and ease our legs.

Thieves. Stand.

Trav. Jesu bless us?

Fal. Strike; down with them; Ah! whoreson caterpillars! bacon-fed knaves! they hate us youth: down with them; fleece them.

1 *Trav.* O, we are undone.

Fal. Hang ye, gorbellied knaves: are ye undone. No, I would your store were here ye knaves! Young men must live.

[*Exeunt Fal. &c. driving the Travellers out.*

Re-enter Prince Henry and Poins.

P. Hen. The thieves have bound the true men: now could thou and I rob the thieves, and go merrily to London, it would be argument for a week, laughter for a month, and a good jest for ever.

Poins. Stand close, I hear them coming.

Re-enter Falstaff and Companions.

Fal. Come, my masters, let us share, and then to

horse before day. An' the Prince and Poins be not two arrant cowards, there's no equity stirring: there's no more valour in that Poins, than in a wild duck.

P. Hen. Your money. [*Rushing out upon them.*]

Poins. Villains?

[*As they are sharing, the Prince and Poins set upon them. Falstaff, after a blow or two, and the rest, run away, leaving their booty behind them.*]

P. Hen. Got with much ease. Now merrily to horse:

The thieves are scatter'd, and possess'd with fear
So strongly that they dare not meet each other;
Each takes his fellow for an officer.

Away, good Ned. Falstaff sweats to death,
And lards the lean earth as he walks along:
Wer't not for laughing, I should pity him.

Poins. How the rogue roar'd!

[*Exeunt.*]

End of the First Act.

ACT II.—SCENE 1.

Eastcheap. A Room in the Boar's Head Tavern.

Enter Prince Henry and Poins.

P. Hen. NED, pr'ythee, come out of that fat room, and lend me thy hand to laugh a little.

Poins. Where hast been, Hal?

P. Hen. With three or four loggerheads, amongst three or four score hogsheads. I have sounded the very base string of humility. Sirrah, I am sworn brother to a leash of drawers; and can call them all by their Christian names, as—Tom, Dick, and Francis. They take it already upon their salvation, that though I be but prince of Wales, yet I am the king of courtesy; and tell me flatly I am no proud Jack, like Falstaff, but a Corinthian, a lad of mettle, a good boy,—by the Lord! so they call me; and when I am king of England, I shall command all the good lads in Eastcheap. They call—drinking deep, dying scarlet:—To conclude, I am so good a proficient in one quarter of an hour, that I can drink with any tinker in his own language during my life. But, sweet Ned,—to sweeten which name of Ned, I give thee this pennyworth of sugar, clapped even now

into my hand by an undersinker; one that never spake other English in his life, than—*Eight shillings and sixpence*—and—*You are welcome*; with this shrill addition,—*Anon, anon, sir! score a pint of bastard in the Half-moon*, or so. But, Ned, to drive away the time till Falstaff come, I pr'ythee, do thou stand in some bye-room, while I question my puny drawer, to what end he gave me the sugar; and do thou never leave calling—Francis, that his tale to me may be nothing but—anon. Step aside, and I'll show thee a precedent.

Poins. Francis!

P. Hen. Thou art perfect.

Poins. Francis!

[*Exit Poins.*]

Enter Francis.

Fran. Anon, anon, sir.—Look down into the Pomegranate, Ralph.

P. Hen. Come hither, Francis.

Fran. My lord.

P. Hen. How long hast thou to serve, Francis?

Fran. Forsooth, five years and as much as to—

Poins. [*within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, anon, sir.

P. Hen. Five years! by'r lady, a long lease for the clinking of pewter. But, Francis, darest thou be so valiant, as to pay the coward with thy indenture, and to show it a fair pair of heels, and run from it?

Fran. O lord, sir! I'll be sworn upon all the books in England, I could find in my heart—

Poins. [*within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, anon, sir.

P. Hen. How old art thou, Francis? [be—

Fran. Let me see,—about Michaelmas next I shall

Poins. [*within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, sir.—Pray you, stay a little, my lord.

P. Hen. Nay; but mark you, Francis: for the sugar thou gavest me—'twas a pennyworth, was't not?

Fran. O lord, sir! I would it had been two.

P. Hen. I will give thee for it a thousand pound: ask me when thou wilt, and thou shalt have it.

Poins. Francis!

Fran. [*Standing by the Prince.*] Anon, anon.

P. Hen. Anon, Francis? No, Francis, but to-morrow, Francis; or, Francis, on Thursday; or, indeed, Francis, when thou wilt. But, Francis,—

Fran. My lord!

P. Hen. Wilt thou rob this leathern-jerkin, crystal-button, knott-pated, agate-ring, puke-stocking, caddis-garter, smooth-tongue Spanish-pouch—

Fran. O lord, sir, who do you mean?

Poins. Francis!

P. Hen. Away, you rogue; dost thou not hear them call! [*Here they both call him: Francis stands amazed between them, and goes to neither.*]

Enter Hostess.

Host. What! stand'st thou still, and hearest such a calling? Look to the guests within. [*Exit Francis,*]

My lord, old Sir John, with half-a-dozen more, are at the door; shall I let them in?

P. Hen. Let them alone, awhile, and then open the door.—[*Exit Hostess.*—]Poins!

Enter Poins.

Poins. [*advancing.*] Anon, anon, sir.

P. Hen. Sirrah, Falstaff and the rest of the thieves are at the door; shall we be merry?

Poins. As merry as crickets, my lad. But hark ye: what cunning match have you made with this jest of the drawer? Come, what's the issue?

P. Hen. I am now of all humours, that have showed themselves humours since the old days of Goodman Adam, to the pupil age of this present twelve o'clock at midnight. What's o'clock, Francis?

Fran. [*without.*] Six and eight-pence.

P. Hen. That ever this fellow should have fewer words than a parrot, and yet the son of a woman? His industry—is up-stairs, and down-stairs; his eloquence, the parcel of a reckoning.—But I pr'ythee, now call in Falstaff.

SCENE II.

Enter Falstaff, Gadshill, and Bardolph.

Poins. Welcome Jack. Where hast thou been?

Fal. A plague of all cowards I say, and a vengeance too! Marry and amen. Give me a cup of sack, boy.—Ere I lead this life long, I'll sew nether-socks, and mend them, and foot them too. A plague of all

cowards! Give me a cup of sack, rogue. Is there no virtue extant? [*Drinks.*]

P. Hen. Did'st ever see Titan kiss a dish of butter, that melted at the sweet tale of the sun? If thou didst, then behold that compound.

Fal. You rogue, here's lime in this sack too—there is nothing but roguery to be found in villainous man: yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in it; a villainous coward! go thy ways, old Jack; die when thou wilt, if manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring; there live not three good men unchanged in England; and one of them is fat, and grows old: God help the while! a bad world, I say! I would I were a weaver; I could sing psalms or any thing: a plague of all cowards, I say still!

P. Hen. How now, wool-sack? what mutter you?

Fal. A king's son! If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects afore thee, like a flock of wild geese, I'll never wear hair on my face more. You prince of Wales?

P. Hen. Why, you whoreson round man! what's the matter!

Fal. Are you not a coward? answer me to that; and Poins there?

Poins. Zounds, ye fat paunch, an ye call me coward, I'll stab thee.

Fal. I call thee coward! I'll see thee damned ere I call thee coward: but I would give a thousand pound, I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight

enough in the shoulders, you care not who sees your back : call you that backing of your friends ? A plague upon such backing ! give me them that will face me. —Give me a cup of sack :—I am a rogue, if I drunk to-day.

P. Hen. O villain ! thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drunk'st last.

Fal. All's one for that. A plague of all cowards, still say I. [*He drinks.*]

P. Hen. What's the matter ?

Fal. What's the matter ! there be four of us here have ta'en a thousand pound this morning.

P. Hen. Where is it, Jack ? where is it ?

Fal. Where is it ? taken from us it is : a hundred upon poor four of us.

P. Hen. What, a hundred, man ?

Fal. I am a rogue, if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them two hours together. I have 'scap'd by miracle. I am eight times thrust through the doublet ; four, through the hose ; my buckler cut through and through ; my sword hacked like a hand-saw, *ecce signum*. I never dealt better since I was a man ; all would not do. A plague of all cowards !—Let them speak : if they speak more or less than truth, they are villains, and the sons of darkness.

P. Hen. Speak, sirs ; how was it ?

Gads. We four set upon some dozen,——

Fal. Sixteen, at least, my lord.

Gads. And bound them.

Peto. No, no, they were not bound.

Fal. You rogue, they were bound, every man of them ; or I am a Jew else, an 'Ebrew Jew.

Gads. As we were sharing, some six or seven fresh men set upon us,——

Fal. And unbound the rest, and then come in the other.

P. Hen. What, fought ye with them all ?

Fal. All ? I know not what ye call all ; but if I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish : if there were not two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then I am no two-legged creature.

Poins. Pray God, you have not murdered some of them.

Fal. Nay, that's past praying for : for I have peppered two of them : two, I am sure, I have paid ; two rogues in buckram suits. I tell thee what, Hal,—if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face, call me horse. Thou knowest my old ward ;—here I lay, and thus I bore my point. Four rogues in buckram let drive at me,—

P. Hen. What, four ? thou said'st but two, even now.

Fal. Four, Hal ; I told thee four.

Poins. Ay, ay, he said four.

Fal. These four came all a-front, and mainly thrust at me. I made me no more ado, but took all their seven points in my target, thus.

P. Hen. Seven ? why there were but four, even now.

Fal. In buckram.

Poins. Aye, four in buckram suits.

Fal. Seven, by these hilts, or I'm a villain else.

P. Hen. 'Pr'ythee, let him alone ; we shall have more anon. [*Aside.*

Fal. Dost thou hear me, Hal ?

P. Hen. Aye, and mark thee too, Jack.

Fal. Do so ; for it is worth the listening to. These nine in buckram, that I told thee of—

P. Hen. So, two more already. [*Aside.*

Fal. Their points being broken—

Poins. Down fell their hose.

Fal. Began to give me ground ; but I followed me close, came in foot and hand ; and, with a thought, seven of the eleven I paid.

P. Hen. O monstrous ! eleven buckram men grown out of two !

Fal. But, as the devil would have it, three misbegotten knaves, in Kendal Green, came at my back, and let drive at me ;—for it was so dark, Hal, that thou couldst not see thy hand.

P. Hen. These lies are like the father that begets them ; gross as a mountain, open, palpable. Why, thou clay-brained guts, thou knotty-pated fool, thou—

Fal. What, art mad ? art mad ? is not the truth the truth ?

P. Hen. Why, how couldst thou know these men in Kendal Green, when it was so dark thou couldst not see thy hand ? Come, tell us your reason ; what sayest thou to this ?

Poins. Come, your reason, Jack, your reason.

Fal. What, upon compulsion ? No : were I at the strappado, or all the racks in the world, I would not

tell you on compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion ! If reasons were as plenty as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I—

P. Hen. I'll be no longer guilty of this sin ; this sanguine coward, this bed-presser, this horse-back-breaker, this huge hill of flesh—

Fal. [*Following.*] Away, you starveling, you eel-skin, you dried neat's tongue, you stock-fish—Oh, for breath to utter what is like thee !—you tailor's yard, you sheath, you bow-case, you vile standing tuck.—
[*Still following.*]

P. Hen. Well, breathe awhile, and then to it again ; and, when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this.

Poins. Mark, Jack.

P. Hen. We two saw you four set on four ; you bound them, and were masters of their wealth. Mark now, how plain a tale shall put you down. Then did we two set on you four ; and, with a word, outfaced you from your prize, and have it ; yea, and can show it you here in the house :—and, Falstaff, you carried your guts away as nimbly, with as quick dexterity, and roared for mercy, and still ran and roared, as ever I heard bull-calf. What a slave art thou, to hack thy sword as thou hast done, and then say it was in fight ! What trick, what device, what starting-hole, canst find out, to hide thee from this open and apparent shame ?

[*Fal. hides his face with his shield.*]

Poins. Come, let's hear, Jack—what trick hast thou now ?

Fal. [*peeping over his shield.*] By the lord, I knew ye, as well as he that made ye. Why—hear ye, my masters—was it for me to kill the heir apparent? should I turn upon the true prince? [*throws away his sword.*] Why, thou knowest, I am as valiant as Hercules: but beware instinct: the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter; I was a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and thee during my life: I, for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. [*throws down his shield.*] But, by the lord, lads, I am glad you have the money. Hostess, clap to the doors; watch to-night, pray to-morrow. Gallants, lads, boys, hearts of gold, all the titles of good fellowship come to you! What, shall we be merry? shall we have a play extempore?

P. Hen. Content; and the argument shall be, thy running away.

Fal. Ah! no more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me.

Enter Hostess.

Host. My lord the prince,——

P. Hen. How now, my lady the hostess? what say'st thou to me?

Host. Marry, my lord, there is a nobleman of the court at door, would speak with you: he says he comes from your father.

P. Hen. Give him as much as will make him a royal man, and send him back again to my mother.

Fal. What manner of man is he?

Host. An old man.

Fal. What doth gravity out of his bed at midnight ?
—Shall I give him his answer ?

P. Hen. Pr'ythee, do, Jack.

Fal. 'Faith, and I'll send him packing. [Exit.

P. Hen. Now, sirs ; by'r lady, you fought fair ;—
so did you, Peto ;—so did you, Bardolph : you are
lions too, you ran away upon instinct, you will not
touch the true prince ; no,—fie !

Bard. 'Faith, I ran when I saw others run.

P. Hen. Tell me now in earnest, how came Falstaff's sword so hacked ?

Peto. Why, he hacked it with his dagger : and
said, he would swear truth out of England, but he
would make you believe it was done in fight ; and
persuaded us to do the like.

Bard. Yea, and to tickle our noses with spear-grass,
to make them bleed ; and then to beslobber our garments with it, and swear it was the blood of true men.
I did that I did not this seven year before, I blushed
to hear his monstrous devices.

P. Hen. O villain, thou stolest a cup of sack
eighteen years ago, and wert taken in the manour*,
and ever since thou hast blushed extempore : thou
hadst fire and sword on thy side, and yet thou ran'st
away : what instinct hadst thou for it ? if rightly
taken, halter.

Re-enter Falstaff.

Here comes lean Jack, here comes bare-bone. *How*

i. e. Manœuvre, *n.* Norman French Law term.

now, my sweet creature of bombast? How long is't ago, Jack, since thou saw'st thine own knee?

Fal. Mine own knee? When I was about thy years, Hal, I was not an eagle's talon in the waist; I could have crept into an alderman's thumb-ring. A plague of sighing and grief! it blows a man up like a bladder. There's villainous news abroad: here was sir John Bracy from your father; you must to the court in the morning. That same mad fellow of the north, Percy; and he of Wales, that gave Amaimon the bastinado, and made Lucifer cuckold, and swore the devil his true liegeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook—What a plague call you him?—

Poins. Owen Glendower.

Fal. Owen, Owen; the same:—and his son-in-law Mortimer; and old Northumberland; and that sprightly Scot of Scots, Douglas, that runs o' horseback up a hill perpendicular——

P. Hen. He that rides at high speed, and, with his pistol, kills a sparrow flying.

Fal. You have hit it.

P. Hen. So did he never the sparrow.

Fal. Well, that rascal hath good mettle in him; he will not run.

P. Hen. Why, what a rascal art thou, then, to praise him so for running.

Fal. O' horseback, ye cuckoo!—but, a-foot, he will not budge a foot.

P. Hen. Yes, Jack, upon instinct.

Fal. I grant ye, upon instinct. Well, he is there

too, and a thousand blue caps more: Worcester is stolen away by night; thy father's beard is turned white with the news. You may buy land now as cheap as stinking mackrel.

P. Hen. Then 'tis like, if there come a hot June, and this civil buffeting hold, we shall buy maidens, as they do hobnails, by the hundreds.

Fal. By the mass, lad, thou say'st true; it is like we shall have good trading that way:—But tell me, Hal, art thou not horribly afeard? thou being heir apparent, could the world prick thee out three such enemies again as that fiend Douglas, that spirit Percy, and that devil Glendower? Art thou not horribly afraid? doth not thy blood thrill at it?

P. Hen. Not a whit, i'faith; I lack some of thy instinct.

Fal. Well, thou wilt be horribly chid to-morrow, when thou comest to thy father: if thou love me, practise an answer.

P. Hen. Do thou stand for my father, and examine me upon the particulars of my life.

Fal. Shall I? content:—this chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown.

P. Hen. Thy state is taken for a joint-stool, thy golden sceptre for a leaden dagger, and thy precious rich crown for a pitiful bald crown!

Fal. Well, an the fire of grace be not quite out of thee, now shalt thou be moved.—Give me a cup of sack, to make mine eyes look red, that it may be thought I have wept; for I must speak in passion—and here is my speech. Stand aside nobility—

Mrs. Q. This is excellent sport i'faith !

Fal. Weep not, sweet queen, for trickling tears are vain.

Mrs. Q. O the father ! how he holds his countenance !

Fal. For God's sake, lords, convey my tristful queen, for tears do stop the flood-gates of her eyes.

Mrs. Q. O rare ! he doth it as like one of those harlotry players, as I ever see.

Fal. Peace, good pint-pot, peace, good tickle-brain. Harry, I do not only marvel where thou spendest thy time, but also, how thou art accompanied, for tho' the camomile the more it is trodden on, the faster it grows ; yet youth, the more it is wasted, the sooner it wears. That thou art my son, I have partly thy mother's word, partly my own opinion, but chiefly, a villainous trick of thine eye, and a foolish hanging of thy nether-lip, that doth warrant me. If then thou be son to me, here lies the point ; why, being son to me, art thou so pointed at ? Shall the blessed sun of Heaven prove a micher, and eat blackberries ? A question *not* to be asked. Shall the son of England prove a thief and take purses ? A question *to be* asked. There is a thing, Harry, which thou hast often heard of, and it is known to many in our land by the name of pitch : this pitch, as antient writers do report, doth defile ; so doth the company thou keepest ; for Harry, now I do not speak to thee in drink, but in tears, not in pleasure, but in passion ; not in words only, but in woes also : and yet there is a virtuous man, whom I

have often noted in thy company, but I know not his name.

P. Hen. What manner of man, an it please your majesty?

Fal. A good portly man, i'faith, and a corpulent; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye, and a most noble carriage; and, as I think, his age some fifty, or, by'r lady, inclining to threescore; and now I remember me, his name is Falstaff: if that man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me; for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks. If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then, peremptorily I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff: him keep with, the rest banish. And tell me now, thou naughty varlet, tell me, where hast thou been this month?

P. Hen. Dost thou speak like a king? Do thou stand for me, and I'll play my father.

Fal. Depose me if thou dost it half so gravely, so majestically, both in word and matter, hang me up by the heels for a rabbit-sucker, or a poulter's hare.

P. Hen. Well, here I am set.

Fal. And here I stand:—judge, my masters.

P. Hen. Now, Harry; whence come you?

Fal. My noble lord, from Eastcheap.

P. Hen. The complaints I hear of thee are grievous.

Fal. 'Sblood, my lord, they are false:—(nay, I'll tickle ye for a young prince, i'faith.)

P. Hn. Swear'st thou, ungracious boy? henceforth ne'er look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace: there is a devil haunts thee, in the like-

ness of a fat old man : a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swoln parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly, that reverend vice, that grey iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years? Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it? Wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it? Wherein cunning, but in craft? Wherein crafty, but in villany? Wherein villanous, but in all things? Wherein worthy, but in nothing?

Fal. I would, your grace would take me with you : whom means your grace?

P. Hen. That villanous abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan.

Fal. My lord, the man I know.

P. Hen. I know, thou dost.

Fal. But to say, I know more harm in him than in myself, were to say more than I know. That he his old (the more the pity), his white hairs do witness it : but that he is (saving your reverence) a whoremaster, that I utterly deny. If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked ! If to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old host that I know, is damned : if to be fat be to be hated, then Pharaoh's lean kine are to be loved. No, my good lord ; banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish Poins : but for sweet Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff, and therefore more valiant, being as he

is, old Jack Falstaff, banish not him thy Harry's company; banish plump Jack, and banish all the world.

P. Hen. I do, I will. [*A knocking heard.*

[*Exeunt Hostess, Francis, and Bardolph;*

Re-enter Bardolph running.

Bard. O, my lord, my lord; the sheriff, with a most monstrous watch, is at the door.

Fal. Out, you rogue! play out the play: I have much to say in behalf of that Falstaff.

Re-enter Hostess, hastily.

Host. O Jesu, my lord, my lord!—

Fal. Heigh, heigh! the devil rides upon a fiddlestick: what's the matter?

Host. The sheriff and all the watch are at the door: they are come to search the house. Shall I let them in?

Fal. Dost thou hear, Hal? if you will deny the sheriff, so; if not, let him enter: if I become not a cart, as well as another man, a plague on my bringing up! I hope I shall as soon be strangled with a halter, as another.

P. Hen. Go hide thee behind the arras—the rest walk up above.—Now, my masters, for a true face and good conscience!

Fal. Both which I have had; but their date is out, and therefore I'll hide me.

[*Exit all but the Prince and Poins.*

P. Hen. Call in the sheriff.

SCENE II.

Enter Sheriff and Carrier, &c.

Now, Master sheriff, what is your will with me?

Sheriff. First pardon me, my lord ; a hue and cry hath followed certain men unto this house—

P. Hen. What men ?

Sheriff. One of them is well known, my gracious lord ; a gross fat man.

Carrier. As fat as butter.

P. Hen. Sheriff, I will engage my word to thee, that I will to-morrow send him to answer for any thing he shall be charged withal ; and so let me entreat you leave the house.

Sheriff. I will my lord.

P. Hen. He shall be answerable ; and so farewell.

[*Exeunt Sheriff, &c.*]

This oily rascal is known as well as Paul's. Go, call him forth.

Poins. Falstaff!—fast asleep behind the arras, and snorting like a horse.

P. Hen. Hark, how hard he fetches breath : search his pockets. [*Poins searches*] What hast thou found ?

Poins. Nothing but papers, my lord.

P. Hen. Let's see, what they be : read them.

Poins. Item, a capon, two shillings and twopence. Item, sauce, fourpence.

Item, sack, two gallons, five shillings and eightpence.

Item, anchovies, and sack after supper, two shillings and sixpence.

Item, bread a halfpenny.

P. Hen. O monstrous ! but one halfpennyworth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack !—What there is else, keep close ; we'll read it at more advantage :

there let him sleep till day. I'll to the court in the morning: we must all to the wars, and thy place shall be honourable. I'll procure this fat rogue a charge of foot; and, I know, his death will be a march of twelvescore. The money shall be paid back again with advantage. Be with me betimes in the morning; and so good morrow, Poins. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Boar's-Head Tavern, in Eastcheap.*

Enter Falstaff and Bardolph.

Fal. Bardolph, am I not fallen away vilely, since this last action? do I not bate? do I not dwindle? why, my skin hangs about me like an old lady's loose gown; I am withered like an old apple-John. [*Sits.—Bard. stands.*] Well, I'll repent, and that suddenly, while I am in some liking; I shall be out of heart shortly, and then I shall have no strength to repent. An' I have not forgotten what the inside of a church is made of, I am a pepper-corn, a brewer's horse. Company, villainous company, hath been the spoil of me.

Bard. Sir John, you are so fretful, you cannot live long.

Fal. Why there is it:—come, sing me a song; make me merry. I was as virtuously given, as a gentleman need to be; virtuous enough; swore little; diced, not above seven times a-week; nor went to bordello; paid money that I borrowed, three or four times; lived well, and in good compass; and now I live out of all order, out of all compass.

Bard. Why, you are so fat, sir John, that you must needs be out of all compass; out of all reasonable compass, sir John. [*Fal.* rises.]

Fal. Do thou amend thy face, and I'll amend my life: thou art our admiral, thou bearest the lantern in the poop—but 'tis in the nose of thee; thou art the knight of the burning lamp.

Bard. Why, sir John, my face does you no harm.

Fal. No, I'll be sworn; I make as good use of it as many a man doth of a death's head, or a *memento mori*: I never see thy face, but I think upon hell-fire, and Dives, that lived in purple; for there he is in his robes, burning, burning. When thou ran'st up Gad's Hill in the night to catch my horse, if I did not think thou hadst been an *ignis fatuus*, or a ball of wild-fire, there's no purchase in money. O, thou art a perpetual triumph, an everlasting bonfire-light! Thou hast saved me a thousand marks in links and torches walking with thee in the night betwixt tavern and tavern: but the sack that thou hast drunk me, would have bought me lights as good cheap at the dearest chandler's in Europe. I have maintained that salamander of yours with fire, any time this two-and-thirty years; Heaven reward me for it!

Bard. 'Sblood, I would my face werē in your belly.

Fal. God-a-mercy! so should I be sure to be heart-burned.

Enter Hostess.

How now, dame Partlet the hen? have you inquired yet, who picked my pocket?

Host. Why, sir John ! what do you think, sir John ? Do you think I keep thieves in my house ? I have searched, I have inquired, man by man, boy by boy, servant by servant : the tithe of a hair was never lost in my house before.

Fal. You lie, hostess ; Bardolph was shaved, and lost many a hair : and I'll be sworn, my pocket was picked : go to, you are a woman, go.

Host. Who, I ? I defy thee : I was never called so in mine own house before.

Fal. Go to, I know you well enough.

Host. No, sir John ; you do not know me, sir John : I know you, sir John : you owe me money, sir John, and now you pick a quarrel to beguile me of it : I bought you a dozen of shirts to your back.

Fal. Dowlas, filthy dowlas : I have given them away to bakers' wives, and they have made bolters of them.

Host. Now, as I am a true woman, holland of eight shillings an ell. You owe money here besides, sir John, for your diet, and bye-drinkings, and money lent you, four-and-twenty pound.

Fal. He had his part of it ; let him pay.

Host. He ? alas, he is poor ; he hath nothing.

Fal. How ! poor ? look upon his face ; what call you rich ? let them coin his nose, let them coin his cheeks ; I'll not pay a denier. What, will you make a younker of me ? shall I not take mine ease in mine inn, but I shall have my pocket picked ? I have lost a seal-ring of my grand-father's, worth forty mark.

Host. O Jesu ! I have heard the prince tell him, I know not how oft, that that ring was copper.

Fal. How ! the prince is a Jack, a sneak-cup ; and, if he were here, I would cudgel him like a dog, if he would say so.

Enter Prince of Wales, making signs of marching, Falstaff meets him.

How now, lad ? is the wind in that door, i'faith ? —must we all march ?

Bard. Yea, two and two, Newgate-fashion.

Host. My lord, I pray you, hear me.

P. Hen. What say'st thou, mistress Quickly ?

Host. Good my lord, hear me.

Fal. Pr'ythee, let her alone, and list to me.

P. Hen. What say'st thou, Jack ?

Fal. The other night, I fell asleep here behind the arras, and had my pocket picked : this house is turned bawdy-house, they pick pockets.

P. Hen. What did'st thou lose, Jack ?

Fal. Wilt thou believe me, Hal ? Three or four bonds of forty pound a-piece, and a seal-ring of my grand-father's.

P. Hen. A trifle, some eight-penny matter.

Host. So I told him, my lord ; and I said, I heard your grace say so : and, my lord, he speaks most vilely of you, like a foul-mouthed man as he is ; and said, he would cudgel you.

P. Hen. What ! he did not ?

Host. There's neither faith, truth, nor womanhood in me else.

Fal. There's no more faith in thee than in a stewed prune: nor no more truth in thee than in a drawn fox; and for womanhood, maid Marian may be the deputy's wife of the ward to thee. Go, you thing, go.

Host. Say, what thing? what thing?

Fal. What thing? Why, a thing to thank heaven on.

Host. I am no thing to thank heaven on, I would thou shouldst know it; and, setting thy knighthood aside, thou art a knave to call me so.

Fal. Setting thy womanhood aside, thou art a beast to say otherwise.

Host. Say, what beast, thou knave thou?

Fal. What beast, why an otter.

P. Hen. An otter, Sir John? why an otter?

Fal. Why? she's neither fish nor flesh; a man knows not where to have her.

Host. Thou art an unjust man in saying so; thou or any man knows where to have me, thou knave thou!

P. Hen. Thou sayest true, hostess; and he slanders thee most grossly.

Host. So he doth you, my lord; and said this other day, you owed him a thousand pound.

P. Hen. Sirrah, do I owe you a thousand pound?

Fal. A thousand pound, Hal? a million: thy love is worth a million; thou owest me thy love.

Host. Nay, my lord, he called you Jack, and said, he would cudgel you.

Fal. Did I, Bardolph?

Bard. Indeed, sir John, you said so.

Fal. Yea; if he said, my ring was copper.

P. Hen. I say, 'tis copper: darest thou be as good as thy word now?

Fal. Why, Hal, thou knowest, as thou art but man, I dare: but, as thou art prince, I fear thee, as I fear the roaring of the lion's whelp.

P. Hen. And why not, as the lion?

Fal. The king himself is to be feared as the lion: dost thou think, I'll fear thee as I fear thy father? nay, an I do, I pray God, my girdle break!

P. Hen. O, if it should, how would thy guts fall about thy knees! But, sirrah, there's no room for faith, truth, nor honesty, in this bosom of thine: it is filled up with guts and midriff. Charge an honest woman with picking thy pocket! Why, thou whore-son, impudent, embossed rascal, if there were any thing in thy pocket but tavern-reckonings, memorandums of bawdy-houses, and one poor pennyworth of sugar-candy, to make thee long-winded; if thy pocket were enriched with any other injuries but these, I am a villain. And yet you will stand to it; you will not pocket up wrong; art thou not ashamed?

Fal. Dost thou hear, Hal? thou knowest, in the state of innocency, Adam fell, and what should poor Jack Falstaff do, in the days of villany? Thou see'st

I have more flesh than another man, and therefore more frailty. You confess then you pick'd my pocket?

P. Hen. It appears so by the story.

Fal. Hostess, I forgive thee. Go make ready breakfast. Look to thy servants, cherish thy guests, thou shalt find me tractable to an honest reason, thou see'st I am pacified,—Still? Nay pr'ythee begone. (*Kisses her, exit Hostess.*) And now, Hal, to the news at court for the robbery, lad, how is that answered.

P. Hen. The money is paid back again.

Fal. O, I do not like that paying back; it is a double labour.

P. Hen. I am good friends with my father, and may do any thing.

Fal. Rob me the Exchequer the first thing thou dost and do it with unwashed hands too.

Bard. [*Eagerly.*] Do, my lord.

P. Hen. I have procured thee, Jack, a charge of foot.

Fal. I would it had been of horse. Where shall I find one that can steal well? Oh, for a fine thief, of the age of two-and-twenty, or thereabouts! I am heinously unprovided. Well, heaven be thanked for these rebels, they offend none but the virtuous: I laud them, I praise them.

P. Hen. Bardolph—

Bard. My lord.

P. Hen. Go, bear these letters.

[*Exit Bard.*]

Jack, meet me to-morrow, at two i'the afternoon :
then shalt thou know thy charge ; and there receive
money, and order for thy furniture. [Going.

The land is burning ; Percy stands on high :

And either they, or we, must lower lie. [Exit.

Fal. Rare words ! brave world !—Hostess, my
breakfast, come :

O, I could wish this tavern were my drum !

[Exit.

End of the Second Act.

ACT III.—SCENE I.

A court before Justice Shallow's.

*Enter Shallow and Silence, meeting ; Mouldy, Shadow, Wart, Feeble, Bullcalf, and Servants behind.**

Shal. Come on, come on, come on ; give me your hand, sir, give me your hand, sir : an early stirrer, by the rood. And how doth my good cousin, Silence ?

Sil. Good-morrow, good cousin Shallow.

Shal. And how doth my cousin, your bed-fellow ? and your fairest daughter, and mine, my god-daughter Ellen ?

Sil. Alas, a black ouzel, cousin Shallow.

Skal. By yea and nay, sir, I dare say, my cousin William is become a good scholar : he is at Oxford, still, is he not.

Sal. Indeed, sir ; to my cost.

Shal. He must then to the inns of court shortly : I was once of Clement's-inn ; where, I think, they will talk of mad Shallow yet.

* This *Recruiting* scene may properly come in, before the march through Coventry, &c. ; and, the more so, as I introduce but *one* campaign into the action of the Play as altered : The *venue*, therefore, to use the legal expression, may—be just as well in Warwick, as in Glo'stershire.

Sil. You were called—lusty Shallow, then, cousin.

Shal. By the mass I was called any thing; and I would have done any thing, indeed, and roundly too. There was I, and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and black George Bare, and Francis Pickbone, and Will Squele, a Cotswold man,—you had not four such swinge-bucklers in all the inns of court again: and, I may say to you, we knew where the bonarobas were; and had the best of them all at commandment. Then was Jack Falstaff, now sir John, a boy; and page to Thomas Mowbray, duke of Norfolk.

Sil. This sir John, cousin, that comes hither anon about soldiers?

Shal. The same sir John, the very same. I saw him break Skogan's head at the court gate, when he was a crack, not thus high: and the very same day did I fight with one Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer, behind Gray's-inn. O, the mad days that I have spent! and to see how many of mine old acquaintance are dead!

Sil. We shall all follow, cousin.

Shal. Certain, 'tis certain; very sure, very sure; death, as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all; all shall die. How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair?

Sil. Truly, cousin, I was not there.

Shal. Death is certain.—Is old Double of your town living yet?

Sil. Dead, sir,

Shal. Dead!—See, see!—he drew a good bow;—and dead!—he shot a fine shoot:—John of Gaunt

loved him well, and betted much money on his head. Dead!—he would have clapped i'the clout at twelve-score; and carried you a forehand shaft a fourteen and fourteen and a half, that it would have done a man's heart good to see.—How a score of ewes now?

Sil. Thereafter as they be: a score of good ewes may be worth ten pounds.

Shal. And is old Double dead?

Enter Bardolph and one with him.

Sil. Here come two of sir John Falstaff's men, as I think.

Bard. Good morrow, honest gentlemen: I beseech you, which is Justice Shallow?

Shal. I am Robert Shallow, sir; a poor esquire of this county, and one of the king's justices of the peace: what is your good pleasure with me?

Bard. My captain, sir, commends him to you; my captain, sir John Falstaff: a tall gentleman, and a most gallant leader.

Shal. He greets me well, sir! I knew him a good back-sword man: how doth the good knight? may I ask, how my lady his wife doth?

Bard. Sir, pardon; a soldier is better accommodated, than with a wife.

Shal. It is well said, i'faith, sir; and it is well said indeed too. Better accommodated!—it is good; yea, indeed, is it: good phrases are surely, and ever were, very commendable. Accommodated!—it comes

of *accommodo* : very good. It is very just :—Look, here comes good sir John.—

[*The servant Davy crosses behind, having put the table and chairs forward.*

Enter Falstaff.

Shal. Give me your good hand, give me your worship's good hand : by my troth, you look well, and beary our years very well : welcome, good sir John.

Fal. I am glad to see *you* well, good master Robert Shallow ;—master Sure-card, as I think.

Shal. No, sir John ; it is my cousin Silence, in commission with me.

Fal. Good master Silence, it well befits you should be of the peace.

Sil. Your good worship is welcome.

Fal. Well, gentlemen, have you provided me here half a dozen sufficient men ?

Shal. Marry, have we, sir. Will you sit ?

Fal. Let me see them, I beseech you.

[*They sit, Falstaff, Shallow, and Silence.*

Shal. Where's the roll ? where's the roll ? where's the roll ?—Let me see, let me see, let me see. So, so, so, so : Yea, marry, sir :—Ralph Mouldy !—let them appear as I call ;— [Exit *Davy*.
let them do so, let them do so.—Let me see ;—where is Mouldy ?

Enter Mouldy.

Moul. Here, an't please you.

Shal. What think you, sir John? a good-limb'd fellow: young, strong, and of good friends.

Fal. Is thy name Mouldy?

Moul. Yea, an't please you.

Fal. 'Tis the more time thou wert us'd.

Shal. Ha, ha, ha! most excellent, i' faith! things that are Mouldy, lack use: very singular good!—Well said, sir John; very well said. For the other, sir John:—let me see;—Simon Shadow!

Fal. Ay, marry, let me have him to sit under: he's like to be a cold soldier.

Shal. Where's Shadow?

Shad. Here, sir.

Fal. Shadow, whose son art thou?

Shad. My mother's son, sir.

Fal. Thy mother's son! like enough; and thy father's shadow: so the son of the female is the shadow of the male: It is often so, indeed; but not much of the father's substance.

Shal. Do you like him, sir John?

Fal. Shadow will serve for summer,—prick him;—for we have a number of shadows to fill up the muster-book.

Shal. Thomas Wart!

Fal. Where's he?

Wart. Here sir.

Fal. Is thy name Wart?

Wart. Yea, sir.

Fal. Thou art a very ragged Wart.

Shal. Shall I prick him, sir John?

Fal. It were superfluous ; for his apparel is built upon his back, and the whole frame stands upon pins : prick him no more.

Shal. Ha, ha, ha !—you can do it, sir ; you can do it : I commend you well.—Francis Feeble !

Feeble. Here, sir.

Fal. What trade art thou, Feeble ?

Feeble. A taylor, sir.

Fal. Well said, taylor ! well said, most forcible Feeble ! Thou wilt be as valiant as the wrathful dove, or most magnanimous mouse.—Prick him master Shallow.

[*Bardolph puts him behind.*]

Who is next ?

Shal. Peter Bull-calf of the green !

Enter Bull-calf.

Bull. Here, sir.

Fal. Trust me a likely fellow :—Come prick me Bull-calf, till he roar again.

Bull. O lord !—good my lord captain,—

Fal. What, dost thou roar before thou art prick'd ?

Bull. O lord, sir ! I am a disabled man, I have a whoreson cold, sir ; a cough, sir ; which I caught with ringing on the king's coronation day, sir.

Fal. Come, thou shalt go to the wars in a gown ; we will have away thy cold ; and I will take such order, that thy friends shall ring for thee.

[*Bardolph puts him behind.*]

Is here all ?

Shal. There is one more call'd than your number ;

you must have but four here, sir ;—and so, I pray you, go in with me to dinner. [*They rise.*]

Fal. Come, I will go drink with you, but I cannot tarry. I am glad to see you, in good troth, master Shallow.

Shal. O, sir John, do you remember since we lay all night in the windmill in Saint George's Fields?

Fal. No more of that, good master Shallow, no more of that.

Shal. Ha, it was a merry night. And is Jane Night-work alive?

Fal. She lives, master Shallow.

Shal. She could never away with me.

Fal. Never, never; she would always say, she could not abide master Shallow.

Shal. By the mass, I could anger her to the heart. She was then a bona-roba. Doth she hold her own well?

Fal. Old, old, master Shallow.

Shal. Nay, she must be old; she cannot choose but be old; certain, she's old; and had Robin Night-work by old Night-work, before I came to Clement's-inn.

Sil. That's fifty-five years ago.

Shal. Ha, cousin Silence, that thou hadst seen that that this knight and I have seen!—Ha, sir John, said I well?

Fal. We have heard the chimes at midnight, master Shallow.

Shal. That we have, that we have, in faith, sir

John, we have ; our watchword was, *Hem, boys !*—Come, let's to dinner ; come, let's to dinner :—O, the days that we have seen !—Come, come.

[*Exeunt Falstaff, Shallow, and Silence.*]

Bull. Good master corporate Bardolph, stand my friend ; and here is four Harry ten shillings in French crowns for you. In very truth, sir, I had as lief be hanged, sir, as go : and yet for mine own part, sir, I do not care ; but, rather, because I am unwilling, and, for my own part, have a desire to stay with my friends ; else, sir, I did not care, for mine own part so much.

Bard. Go to ; stand aside.

Moul. And good master corporal captain, for my old dame's sake, stand my friend : she has nobody to do any thing about her, when I am gone : and she is old, and cannot help herself : you shall have forty, sir.

Bard. Go to ; stand aside.

Fee. By my troth, I care not ;—a man can die but once !—we owe God a death ;—I'll ne'er bear a base mind :—an't be my destiny, so ; an't be not, so : No man's too good to serve his prince ; and, let it go which way it will, he that dies this year, is quit for the next.

Bard. Well said ! thou'rt a good fellow.

Fee. 'Faith, I'll bear no base mind.

Re-enter Falstaff, Shallow, Silence, and Page.

Fal. Come, sir, which men shall I have ?

Shal. Four, of which you please.

Bard. Sir, a word with you :—I have three pound, to free Mouldy and Bull-calf. [*Takes Falstaff aside.*]

Fal. Go to ; well.

Shal. Come, sir John, which four will you have ?

Fal. Do you choose for me.

Shal. Marry then—Mouldy, Bull-calf, Feeble, and Shadow.

Fal. Mouldy and Bull-calf !—For you Mouldy, stay at home still ; you are past service—and, for your part Bull-calf—grow till you come unto it ; I will none of you.

Shal. Sir John, sir John, do not yourself wrong ; they are your likeliest men, and I would have you serv'd with the best.

Fal. Will you tell me, master Shallow, how to choose a man ? Care I for the limb, the thewes, the stature, bulk, and big assemblance of a man ? Give me the spirit, master Shallow.—Here's Wart—you see what a ragged appearance it is : he shall charge you and discharge you, with the motion of a pewterer's hammer ; come off and on, swifter than he that gibbets-on the brewer's bucket. And this same half-faced fellow, Shadow—he presents no mark to the enemy ; the foe-man may with as great aim level at the edge of a penknife. And for a retreat—how swiftly will this Feeble, the taylor, run off ! O, give me the spare men, and spare me the great ones ! Put me a caliver into Feeble's hand, Bardolph.

Bard. Hold, Feeble, traverse ; thus, thus, thus.

Fal. Come, manageme your caliver. So—very well

—go to—very good—exceeding good. O, give me always a little, lean, old, chopp'd, bald shot!—Well said, Feeble.

Shal. He is not his craft's master, he doth not do it right. I remember at Mile-end Green, when I lay at Clement's Inn (I was then sir Dagonet, in Arthur's show), there was a little quiver fellow, and 'a would manage you his piece thus: and 'a would about and about, and come you in, and come you in: *rah, tah, tah*, would 'a say; *bounce*, would 'a say; and away again would 'a go, and again would 'a come;—I shall never see such a fellow.

Fal. These fellows will do well, master Shallow—God keep you, master Silence, fare you well gentlemen, both; I thank you; I must a dozen mile to-night. Bardolph, give the soldier's coats.

Shal. Sir John, heaven bless you, and prosper your affairs, and send us peace! as you return, visit my house; let our old acquaintance be renewed: peradventure, I will with you to the court.

Fal. I would you would, master Shallow.

Shal. Go to; I have spoke, at a word. Fare you well.

[*Exeunt Shallow and Silence.*]

Fal. Fare you well, gentle gentlemen. On Bardolph; lead the men away. [*Exeunt Bardolph, Recruits, &c.*] As I return, I will fetch off these justices: I do see the bottom of justice Shallow. Lord, lord, how subject we old men are to this vice of lying! This same starved justice hath done nothing but prate

to me of the wildness of his youth, and the feats he hath done about Turnbull-street; and every third word a lie, duer paid to the hearer than the Turk's tribute. I do remember him at Clement's-inn, like a man made after supper of a cheese-paring: when he was naked, he was, for all the world, like a forked radish, with a head fantastically carved upon it with a knife: he was so forlorn, that his dimensions to any thick sight were invisible: he was the very genius of famine; yet lecherous as a monkey, and the whores called him—mandrake: he came ever in the rearward of the fashion; and sung those tunes to the over-scutched huswives that he heard the carmen whistle, and sware—they were his fancies, or his good-nights. And now is this Vice's dagger become a squire; and talks as familiarly of John of Gaunt, as if he had been sworn brother to him: and I'll be sworn he never saw him but once in the Tilt-yard; and then he burst his head, for crowding among the marshal's men. I saw it; and told John of Gaunt, he beat his own name: for you might have truss'd him, and all his apparel, into an eel-skin; the case of a treble hautboy was a mansion for him, a court; and now has he land and beeves. Well; I will be acquainted with him, if I return: and it shall go hard, but I will make him a philosopher's two stones to me: if the young dace be a bait for the old pike, I see no reason, in the law of nature, but I may snap at him. Let time shape, and there an end.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—*The Road near Coventry.*

Enter Falstaff and Bardolph.

Fal. Bardolph, get thee before to Coventry ; fill me a bottle of sack ; [*Gives his flask*] our soldiers shall march through ; we'll to Sutton Colfield to-night.

Bard. Will you give me money, captain ?

Fal. Lay out, lay out.

Bard. This bottle makes an angel.

Fal. An' it do, take it for thy labour ; and, if it make twenty, take them all ; I'll answer the coinage. Bid my lieutenant Peto meet me at the town's end.

Bard. I will, captain : farewell. [*Exit.*

Fal. [*Pointing and laughing.*] If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the king's press damnably. I have got, in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. I press me none but good householders, yeomen's sons : inquire me out contracted bachelors, such as had been asked twice on the banns ; such a commodity of warm slaves, as had as lief hear the devil as a drum ; such as fear the report of a caliver, worse than a struck fowl, or a hurt wild duck. I press me none but such toasts and butter, with hearts in their bellies no bigger than pins' heads, and they have bought out their services ; and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth ; and such as, indeed, were never soldiers ; but discarded unjust serving-men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters, and ostlers

trade-fallen ; the cankers of a calm world, and a long peace : and such have I, to fill up the rooms of them that have bought out their services, that you would think, I had a hundred and fifty tattered prodigals, lately come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks. A mad fellow met me on the way, and told me, I had unloaded all the gibbets, and pressed the dead bodies. No eye hath seen such scare-crows. I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat. Nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had gyves on ; for, indeed, I had the most of them out of prison. There's but a shirt and a half in all my company ; and the half shirt is two napkins tacked together, and thrown over the shoulders, like a herald's coat without sleeves ; and the shirt, to say the truth, stolen from my host of Saint Alban's or the red-nose innkeeper of Daintry. But that's all one ; they'll find linen enough on every hedge.

Enter Prince of Wales and Attendants.

P. Hen. How now, blown Jack ? how now quilt ?

Fal. What, Hal ? How now, mad wag ? what a devil dost thou in Warwickshire ?

P. Hen. The king, I can tell you, looks for us all ; we must away all night.

Fal. Tut, never fear me ; I am as vigilant as a cat to steal cream.

P. Hen. I think to steal cream, indeed ; for thy theft hath already made thee butter. But tell me, Jack ; whose fellows are these that come after ?

Fal. Mine, Hal, mine.

P. Hen. I did never see such pitiful rascals.

Fal. Tut, tut ; good enough to toss ; food for powder, food for powder ; they'll fill a pit, as well as better ; tush, man, mortal men, mortal men.

P. Hen. Ay, but, sir John, methinks, they are exceeding poor and bare ; too beggarly.

Fal. 'Faith, for their poverty,—I know not where they had that : and for their bareness,—I am sure, they never learned that of me.

P. Hen. No, I'll be sworn ; unless you call three fingers on the ribs, bare. But, sirrah, make haste ; Percy is already in the field.

[*Exit prince Henry and Attendants.*]

Fal. Well,

The latter end of a fray, and the beginning of a feast
Fits a dull fighter, and a keen guest. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*Outskirts of a field of Battle.*

Sound of Trumpets, &c. Scattered—dead Soldiers, &c.

Enter Prince Henry and Falstaff.

Fal. Hal, if thou see me down in the battle, and bestride me, so : 'tis a point of friendship.

P. Hen. Nothing but a colossus can do thee that friendship. Say thy prayers, and farewell.

Fal. I would it were bed-time, Hal, and all well.

P. Hen. Why, thou owest heaven a death. [*Exit.*]

Fal. 'Tis not due yet ; I would be loth to pay him before his day. What need I be so forward with him

that calls not on me? Well, tis' no matter : honour pricks me on. Yea ; but how if honour prick me off when I come on? How then? Can honour set-to a leg?—No. Or an arm?—No. Or take away the grief of a wound?—No. Honour hath no skill in surgery then?—No. What is honour?—A word. What is that word honour?—Air. A trim reckoning ! Who hath it? He that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it?—No. Doth he hear it?—No. Is it insensible then?—Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living?—No. Why?—Detraction will not suffer it : therefore I'll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon ; and so ends my catechism. But though I could 'scape shot-free at London, I fear the shot here ; here's no scoring, but upon the pate.—Soft ! who art thou ? Sir Walter Blunt :—*there's honour for you* : here's no vanity !—I am as hot as molten lead, and as heavy too : God keep lead out of me ! I need no more weight than mine own bowels. I have led my raggamuffins where they are peppered : there's but three of my hundred and fifty left alive ; and they are for the town's end to beg during life. Well, if Percy be alive—I'll pierce him. If he do come in my way, so : if he do not, if I come in his, willingly, let him make a carbonado of me. I like not such grinning honour as sir Walter hath : Nay, you shall find no boys play here.

[*Here enters a soldier of the enemy, who attacks Falstaff, he falls down, as if killed,—when the prince enters, and seeing Falstaff on the ground*

—near *Percy*, killed by the prince previously,
though not on the stage—

P. Hen. What ! old acquaintance ! could not all
this flesh

Keep in a little life ? Poor Jack, farewell !

I could have better spar'd a better man.

O, I should have a heavy miss of thee,

If I were much in love with vanity.

Death hath not struck so fat a deer to-day,

Embowell'd will I see thee by and by ;

Till then, in blood by noble *Percy* lie. *[Exit.*

Fal. *[rising slowly.]* Embowelled ! if thou embowel
me to-day, I'll give you leave to powder me, and eat
me too, to-morrow. 'Sblood, 'twas time to counter-
feit, or that hot termagant Scot had paid me scot and
lot too. Counterfeit ? I lie, I am no counterfeit. To
die, is to be a counterfeit ; for he is but the counter-
feit of a man, who hath not the life of a man : but to
counterfeit dying, when a man thereby liveth, is to be
no counterfeit, but the true and perfect image of life
indeed. The better part of valour is—discretion ; in
the which better part, I have saved my life. Zounds,
I am afraid of this gunpowder *Percy*, though he be
dead. *[Seeing the body lying near, though off the stage.]*
How, if he should counterfeit too, and rise ? I am
afraid he would prove the better counterfeit. There-
fore I'll make him sure : yea, and I'll swear I killed
him. Why may not he rise, as well as I ? Nothing
confutes me but eyes, and nobody sees me. Therefore,

sirrah, [*Behind the scenes*] with a new wound in your thigh, come you along with me.

[*Attempts to take Hotspur on his back.*]

Re-enter Prince Henry.

P. Hen. But, soft ! what have we here ?

Did I not see him dead, breathless, bleeding, and on the ground !!— [*Then addressing Falstaff.*]

Art thou alive ? or is it phantasy

That plays upon our eyesight ? 'Pr'ythee speak :

We will not trust our eyes, without our ears ;

Thou art not what thou seem'st.

Fal. No, that's certain ; I am not a double man : but if I be not Jack Falstaff, then am I a Jack. [*Throws the body down.*] There is Percy. If your father will do me any honour, so ; if not, let him kill the next Percy himself. I look to be either earl or duke, I can assure you.

P. Hen. Why, Percy I killed myself, and saw thee dead.

Fal. Didst thou ? Lord, lord, how this world is given to lying ! I grant you, I was down, and out of breath ; and so was he : but we rose both at an instant, and fought a long hour by Shrewsbury clock. If I may be believed, so ; if not, let them that should reward valour, bear the sin upon their own heads. I'll take it upon my death, I gave him this wound in the thigh : if the man were alive, and would deny it, I would make him eat a piece of my sword. And sir

John Coleville of the Dale hath also yielded himself my prisoner.

P. Hen. This is the strangest tale that e'er I heard,
When every thing is ended, then you come :
These tardy tricks of yours will, on my life,
One time or other break some gallows' back.

Fal. Do you think me a swallow, an arrow, or a bullet? have I, in my poor and old motion, the expedition of thought? I have speeded hither with the very extremest inch of possibility ; I have foundered nine score and odd posts : and here, travel-tainted as I am, have, in my pure and immaculate valour, taken sir John Coleville of the Dale, a most furious knight, and valorous enemy : But what of that? he saw me, and yielded ; that I may justly say with the hook-nosed fellow of Rome,—I came, saw, and overcame.

P. Hen. If so it was more of his courtesy than your deserving.

Fal. I know not ; but I beseech your grace, let it be booked with the rest of this day's deeds ; or, by the Lord, I will have it in a particular ballad else, with mine own picture on the top of it, Coleville kissing my foot : To the which course if I be enforced if you do not all show like gilt twopences to me ; and I, in the clear sky of fame, o'ershine you as much as the full moon doth the cinders of the element, which show like pins'-heads to her ; believe not the word of the noble : therefore let me have right, and let desert mount.

P. Hen. For my part, if a lie may do thee grace,
I'll gild it with the happiest terms I have. [*Exit.*

Fal. I'll follow, as they say, for reward. He that rewards me, God reward him! If I do grow great, I'll grow less; for I'll purge, and leave sack, and live cleanly, as a nobleman should do.

Enter Bardolph.

How now, Bardolph?

Bard. The army is discharged all, and going.

Fal. Let them go. I'll visit master Robert Shallow, esquire: I have him already tempering between my finger and my thumb, and shortly will I seal with him. Come away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Orchard at Shallow's Seat.

Enter Shallow, Falstaff, Bardolph, and Page.

Shal. By cock and pye, sir, you shall not away to-night.—What, Davy, I say!

Fal. You must excuse me, master Robert Shallow.

Shal. I will not excuse you; you shall not be excused; excuses shall not be admitted; there is no excuse shall serve; you shall not be excus'd.—Why, Davy!

Enter Davy, with papers.

Davy. Here, sir.

Shal. Davy, Davy, Davy,—let me see, Davy; let

me see:—yea, marry, William Cook; bid him come hither.—Sir John, you shall not be excus'd.

Davy. Marry, sir, thus; those precepts cannot be serv'd: and, again, sir,—Shall we sow the head-land with wheat?

Shal. With red wheat, Davy. But for William Cook;—Are there no young pigeons?

Davy. Yes, sir.—Here is now the smith's note, for shoeing, and plough-irons.

Shal. Let it be cast, and paid:—Sir John, you shall not be excused.

Davy. Now, sir, a new link to the bucket must needs be had:—And, sir, do you mean to stop any of William's wages, about the sack he lost the other day, at Hinckley fair?

Shal. He shall answer it:—Some pigeons, Davy; a couple of short-legged hens; a joint of mutton; and any pretty little tiny kickshaws, tell William cook.

Davy. Doth the man of war stay all night, sir?

Shal. Yes, Davy. I will use him well; a friend i'the court is better than a penny in purse. Use his men well, Davy; for they are arrant knaves, and will backbite.

Davy. No worse than they are back-bitten, sir; for they have marvellous foul linen.

Shal. Well conceited, Davy. About thy business, Davy.

Davy. I beseech you, sir, to countenance Wil-

liam Visor of Wincot against Clement Perkes of the hill.

Shal. There are many complaints, Davy, against that Visor; that Visor is an arrant knave, on my knowledge.

Davy. I grant your worship, that he is a knave, sir: but yet, God forbid, sir, but a knave should have some countenance at his friend's request. An honest man, sir, is able to speak for himself, when a knave is not. I have served your worship truly, sir, this eight years; and if I cannot once or twice in a quarter bear out a knave against an honest man, I have but a very little credit with your worship. The knave is mine honest friend, sir; therefore, I beseech your worship, let him be countenanced.

Shal. Go to; I say; he shall have no wrong. Look about, Davy. [*Exit Davy.*] Where are you, sir John? Come, off with your boots.—Give me your hand, master Bardolph.

Bard. I am glad to see your worship.

Shal. I thank thee with all my heart, kind master Bardolph:—and welcome, my tall fellow. [*To the Page.*] Come sir John. [*Exit Shallow.*]

Fal. I'll follow you, good master Robert Shallow. Bardolph look to our horses. [*Exeunt Bardolph and Page.*] If I were sawed into quantities, I should make four dozen of such bearded hermit's-staves as master Shallow. It is a wonderful thing, to see the semblable coherence of his men's spirits and his:

They, by observing him, do bear themselves like foolish justices; he, by conversing with them, is turned into a justice-like serving-man; their spirits are so married in conjunction with the participation of society, that they flock together in consent, like so many wild-geese. If I had a suit to master Shallow, I would humour his men, with the imputation of being near their master: if to his men, I would curry with master Shallow, that no man could better command his servants. It is certain, that either wise bearing, or ignorant carriage, is caught, as men take diseases, one of another: therefore, let men take heed of their company. I will devise matter enough out of this Shallow, to keep prince Harry in continual laughter, the wearing-out of six fashions (which is four terms, or two actions), and he shall laugh without *interval-lums*. O, it is much, that a lie, with a slight oath, and a jest, with a sad brow, will do with a fellow that never had the ache in his shoulders!—O, you shall see him laugh, till his face be like a wet cloak ill laid up.

Shal. [*within*] Sir John.

Fal. I come, master Shallow;—I come, master Shallow. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.

Re-enter Davy.

Davy. An' it please your worship, there's one Pistol come from the court with news.

Fal. From the court? let him come in.—

[*Enter Pistol.*—How now, Pistol?

Pist. God save you, sir John!

Fal. What wind blew you hither, Pistol?

Pist. Not the ill wind which blows no man to good.
—Sweet knight, thou art now soon to be one of the
greatest men in the realm.

Sil. By'r lady, I think 'a be ; but goodman Puff of
Barson.

Pist. Puff?

Puff in thy teeth, most recreant coward base!—

Sir John, I am thy Pistol, and thy friend,

And helter-skelter have I rode to thee ;

And tidings do I bring, and lucky joys,

And golden times, and happy news of price.

Fal. I pr'ythee now, deliver them like a man of
this world.

Pist. A foutra for the world, and worldlings base !
I speak of Africa, and golden joys.

And shall good news be baffled?

Shal. Give me pardon, sir ;—If, sir, you come
with news from the court, I take it, there is but two
ways ; either to utter them, or to conceal them. I
am, sir, under the king, in some authority.

Pist. Under which king, Bezonian ? speak, or die.

Shal. Under king Harry.

Pist. Harry the fourth? or fifth?

Shal. Harry the fourth.

Pist. A foutra for thine office ! —
Sir John, thy tender lambkin will soon be king ;
Harry the fifth's the man. I speak the truth :

When Pistol lies, do this ; and fig me, like
The bragging Spaniard.

Fal. What ! is the old king dead ?

Pist. If not dead, dying ;* the things I speak, are
just.

Fal. Away, Bardolph ; saddle my horse.—Master
Robert Shallow, choose what office thou wilt in the
land, 'tis thine.—Pistol, I will double-charge thee
with dignities.

Bard. O joyful day !—I would not take a knight-
hood for my fortune.

Pist. What, do I bring good news ?

Fal. Carry master Silence to bed.—Master Shal-
low, my lord Shallow, be what thou wilt, I am for-
tune's steward. Get on thy boots ; we'll ride all
night :—O, sweet Pistol :—away, Bardolph.—[*Exit*
Bard.] Come, Pistol, utter more to me ; and, with-
all, devise something to do thyself good. Boot, boot,
master Shallow ; I know, the young king will be
sick for me. Let us take any man's horses ; the laws
of England are at my commandment. Happy are
they which have been my friends ; good master Shal-
low ; put money in thy purse, and lend me a thou-
sand pounds, for the young king's service. . Away !
Away ! [Exeunt.]

* King Henry IV. must live a little longer, to introduce the
following scenes with effect.

End of the Third Act.

[From the omission of the tragic and solemn parts of the Play, the character of *Lord Chief Justice* may be well lowered into a *Chief Magistrate*, or Lord Mayor, the Scene being in the City itself.]

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

A Street in London.

Enter Sir John Falstaff, on his return from Shrewsbury, and his Page following him, with his Sword and Buckler.

Fal. Sirrah, you giant, what says the doctor to the water?

Page. He said, sir, you might have more diseases than he knew for.

Fal. Men of all sorts take a pride to gird at me: the brain of this foolish compounded clay, man, is not able to invent any thing that tends to laughter, more than I invent, or is invented on me: I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men.—What said master Dommelton about the satin for my short cloak and my slops?

Page. He said, sir, you should procure him better assurance than Bardolph; he would not take his bond and yours; he lik'd not the security.

Fal. Let him be damn'd like the glutton! a rascally yea-forsooth knave! to bear a gentleman in hand, and then stand upon security!—I had as lief they would put ratsbane in my mouth, as offer to

stop it with security. I look'd he should have sent me two-and-twenty yards of satin, as I am a true knight, and he sends me security.—Where's Bardolph?

Page. He's gone into Smithfield to buy your worship a horse.

Fal. I bought him in Paul's, and he'll buy me a horse in Smithfield: if I could buy me but a wife in the stews, I were mann'd, hors'd, and wiv'd.

Page. Sir, here comes the magistrate that committed the Prince for striking him about Bardolph.

Enter the Lord Mayor, and Apparitors.

Fal. Wait close, I will not see him.

[*Taking the Sword and Buckler from the Page.*

Ld. M. What's he that goes there?

App. Falstaff, a'nt please your worship.

Ld. M. He that was in question for the robbery not long since?—Call him back again.

App. Sir John Falstaff! [*Cross behind to Falstaff.*

Fal. Boy, tell him I am deaf.

Page. You must speak louder, my master is deaf.

Ld. M. I am sure he is to the hearing of any thing good. Go pluck him by the elbow, I must speak with him.

App. Sir John.

[*To Falstaff.*

Fal. What, a young knave, and beg? Is there not war? Is there not employment?

App. You mistake me, sir.

Fal. Why, sir, did I say you were an honest

man? setting my knighthood and my soldiership aside, I had lied in my throat, if I had said so.—Hence! avaunt!

App. Sir, my lord would speak with you.

[*Apparitors stand.*]

Ld. M. Sir John Falstaff, a word with you?

Fal. My good lord! I am glad to see your lordship abroad: I heard say your lordship was sick; and I most humbly beseech your lordship to have a reverend care of your health.

Ld. M. Sir John, I sent for you before your expedition.

Fal. An't please your lordship, I hear his majesty has return'd with some discomfort of health.

Ld. M. I talk not of his majesty—you would not come when I sent for you.

Fal. And I hear moreover his highness is fallen into this same whoreson apoplexy.

Ld. M. Well, heaven mend him!—I pray, let me speak with you.

Fal. This apoplexy, as I take it, is a kind of lethargy, a kind of sleeping in the blood, a whoreson tingling.

Ld. M. What tell you me of it? be it as it is.

Fal. It hath its original from much grief; from study, and perturbation of the brain: I have read the cause of its effects in Galen; it is a kind of deafness.

Ld. M. I think you are fallen into the disease, for you hear not what I say to you.

Fal. Very well, my lord, very well.

Ld. M. I sent for you when there were matters against you for your life, to come to speak with me.

Fal. As I was then advised, by my learned counsel in the laws of this land service, I did not come.

Ld. M. Well, the truth is, Sir John, you live in great infamy; you follow the young prince up and down, like his ill angel.

Fal. My lord, you that are old, consider not the capacities of us that are young; you do measure the heat of our livers with the bitterness of your galls; and we, that are in the vaward of our youth, I must confess, are wags too.

L. M. Do you set down your name in the scroll of youth, that are written down old with all the characters of age? Have you not a moist eye?—a dry hand?—a yellow check?—a white beard?—a decreasing leg?—an increasing belly? Is not your voice broken?—your wind short?—your chin double?—your wit single? and every part about you blasted with antiquity? and will you yet call yourself young? Fie, fie, fie, Sir John.

Fal. My lord, I was born about three of the clock in the afternoon, with a white head, and something o' a round belly. For my voice—I have lost it with holloaing and singing of anthems. To approve my youth further, I will not: the truth is, I am only old in judgment and understanding; and he that will caper with me for a thousand marks, let him lend me the money, and have at him.—For the box o' the ear that the prince gave you—he gave it like a rude

prince, and you took it like a sensible lord mayor. I have check'd him for it, and the young lion repents.

Ld. M. Well, heaven send the prince a better companion !

Fal. Heaven send the companion a better prince ! I cannot rid my hands of him. Good faith, this same young soberblooded boy doth not love me, nor a man cannot make him laugh ;—but that's no marvel, he drinks no wine.—Oh ! if I had a thousand sons, the first human principle I would teach them should be—to forswear thin potations, and to addict themselves to sack and sherris.

Ld. M. Well, be honest, be honest ! and heaven mend you.

Fal. Will your lordship lend me a thousand pound, to furnish me forth after the war ?

Ld. M. Not a penny, not a penny ; you are too impatient to bear crosses. Fare you well.

[*Exeunt Lord Mayor and Apparitors.*]

Fal. A man can no more separate age and covetousness, than he can part young limbs and lechery.—Boy !

Page. Sir ?

Fal. What money is in my purse ?

Page. Seven groats and two pence.

Fal. I can get no remedy against this consumption of the purse : borrowing only lingers and lingers it out, but the disease is incurable. Go bear these letters ; this to the prince ; and this to old mistress Ursula—whom I have weekly sworn to marry,

since I perceived the first white hair on my chin.—About it; you know where to find me. [*Exit Page.*] A plague of this gout! it plays the rogue with my great toe. It is no matter if I do halt; I have the wars for my colour, and my pension shall seem the more reasonable. A good wit will make use of any thing; I will turn diseases to commodity. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Enter Hostess, Fang, and Snare.

Host. Master Fang, have you enter'd the action?

Fang. It is enter'd.—*Snare,* we must arrest Sir John Falstaff.

Snare. It may, chance, cost some of us our lives, for he will stab.

Fang. An' I but fist him once; an' a' come but within my vice;—

Host. I am undone by him; I warrant you, he's an infinitive thing upon my score:—Good master Fang, hold him sure:—good master Snare, let him not 'scape. He's indited to dinner to the Lubbar's-head in Lumbart-street; to master Smooth's the silkman: I pray ye, since my exion is enter'd, and my case so openly known to the world, let him be brought in to his answer. A hundred mark is a long loan for a poor lone woman to bear; and I have borne, and borne, and borne; and have been fubb'd off, and fubb'd off, from this day to that day, that it is a shame to be thought on. There is no honesty in such dealing; unless a woman should be made an ass, and a

beast, to bear every knave's wrong.—Yonder he comes; and that arrant malmsey-nose knave, Bardolph, with him. Do your offices, do your offices, master Fang, and master Snare; do me, do me, do me your offices.

Enter Sir John Falstaff, Bardolph, and the Page.

Fal. How now! whose mare's dead? what's the matter?

Fang. Sir John, I arrest you at the suit of mistress Quickly. *[to Falstaff.]*

Fal. Away, varlets!—Draw, Bardolph; *[Puts Bardolph between himself and Fang—Scuffle between Bardolph, Fang, Snare, and Page,]* cut me off the villain's head; throw the quean in the channel.

Host. Throw me in the channel?—Murder, murder, O thou honey-suckle villain! wilt thou kill heaven's officers, and the king's?

Fal. Keep them off, Bardolph.

Fang. A rescue! a rescue!

Host. Good people, bring a rescue or two.—Thou wo't, wo't thou? thou wo't, wo't thou? do, do, thou rogue! do, thou hemp-seed!

Fal. Away, you scullion! you rampallian! you fustilarian! I'll tickle your catastrophe.

Enter the Lord Mayor, and Apparitors.

Ld. M. What's the matter? keep the peace here, ho!

Host. Good, my lord, be good to me, I beseech you.

Ld. M. How now, Sir John? what are you brawling here? Doth this become you?

[*Fang and Snare hold on Falstaff.*]

Host. O my most worshipful lord, an't please your grace, I am a poor widow of Eastcheap, and he is arrested at my suit.

Ld. M. For what sum?

Host. It is more than for some, my lord; it is for all, all I have; he hath eaten me out of house and home; he hath put all my substance into that fat belly of his.

Ld. M. Fie! Are you not ashamed to enforce a poor widow to so rough a course to come by her own?

Fal. What is the gross sum that I owe thee?

Host. Marry, if thou wert an honest man, thyself and the money too. Thou didst swear to me upon a parcel-gilt goblet, sitting in my Dolphin-chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, on Wednesday, in Whitsun-week, when the Prince broke thy head for liking his father to a singing-man of Windsor; thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in then, and call me gossip Quickly? coming in to borrow a mess of vinegar, telling us she had a good dish of prawns; whereby thou didst desire to eat some; whereby I told thee, they were ill for a green wound: and didst thou not, when she was gone down stairs, desire me to be no more so famili-

arity with such poor people ; saying, that ere long they should call me madam ? And didst thou not kiss me, and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings ? I put thee now to thy book-oath ; deny it, if thou canst.

Fal. My lord, this is a poor mad soul ; and she says, up and down the town, that her eldest son is like you ; she hath been in good case, and, the truth is, poverty hath distracted her. But for these foolish officers, I beseech you, I may have redress against them.

Ld. M. Sir John, Sir John, I am well acquainted with your manner of wrenching the true cause the false way. It is not a confident brow, nor the throng of words that come with such more than impudent sauciness from you, can thrust me from a level consideration : you have, as it appears to me, practis'd upon the easy-yielding spirit of this woman, and made her serve your uses both in purse and person.

Host. Yea, in truth, my lord.

Ld. M. 'Pry'thee, peace :—pay her the debt you owe her, and unpay the villany you have done with her ; the one you may do with sterling money, and the other with current repentance.

Fal. My lord, I will not undergo this sneap without reply. You call honourable boldness impudent sauciness : if a man will make curt'sy, and say nothing, he is virtuous : no, my lord, my humble duty remember'd, I will not be your suitor ; I say to you, I do desire deliverance from these officers, being upon hasty employment in the king's affairs.

Ld. M. You speak as having power to do wrong: but answer in the effect of your reputation, and satisfy the poor woman. [Exit.

Fal. Come hither, hostess. [*Whispering to her.*] As I am a gentleman,—

Host. Nay, you said so before.

Fal. As I am a gentleman;—Come, no more words of it.

Host. By this heavenly ground I tread on, I must be fain to pawn both my plate, and the tapestry of my dining-chambers.

Fal. Glasses, glasses, is the only drinking: and for thy walls,—a pretty slight drollery, or the story of the Prodigal in water-work, is worth a thousand of these fly-bitten tapestries. Let it be ten pound, if thou canst. Come, if it were not for thy humours, there is not a better wench in England. Go, wash thy face, and draw thy action: come, thou must not be in this humour with me; dost not know me? Come, come, I know thou wast set on to this.

Host. 'Pray thee, sir John, let it be but twenty nobles: I am loth to pawn my plate, in good earnest, la.

Fal. Let it alone; I'll make other shift: you'll be a fool still.

Host. Well, you shall have it, though I pawn my gown. I hope you'll come to supper: you'll pay me all together?

Fal. Will I live?—Go with her, with her; hook on, hook on.

Host. Will you have Doll Tear-sheet meet you at supper?

Fal. No more words; let's have her. [Exeunt.

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT V.—SCENE I.

An Apartment of the Prince of Wales's in London.

Enter Prince of Wales and Poins.

P. Hen. Trust me, I am exceeding weary.

Poins. Is it come to that? I had thought weariness durst not have attack'd one of so high blood.

P. Hen. 'Faith it does me; though it discolours the complexion of my greatness to acknowledge it. Doth it not show vilely in me, to desire small beer?

Poins. Why, a prince should not be so loosely studied, as to remember so weak a composition.

P. Hen. Belike then, my appetite was not princely got; for, by my troth, I do now remember the poor creature small beer.

Poins. How ill it follows, after you have labour'd so hard, you should talk so idly! Tell me, how many good young princes would do so, their fathers being so sick as yours at this time is?

P. Hen. Shall I tell thee one thing, Poins?

Poins. Yes; and let it be an excellent good thing.

P. Hen. It shall serve among wits of no higher breeding than thine.

Poins. Go to; I stand the push of your one good thing that you will tell.

P. Hen. Marry, I tell thee.—It is not meet that I should be sad, now my father is sick ; albeit I could tell to thee,—as to one it pleases me, for fault of a better, to call my friend,—I could be sad, and sad indeed too.

Poins. Very hardly, upon such a subject.

P. Hen. By this hand, thou think'st me as far in the devil's book, as thou and Falstaff: but, I tell thee, my heart bleeds inwardly, that my father is so sick ; and keeping such vile company as thou art, hath in reason taken from me all ostentation of sorrow.

Poins. The reason ?

P. Hen. What would'st thou think of me, if I should weep ?

Poins. I would think thee a most princely hypocrite.

P. Hen. It would be every man's thought: every man would think me an hypocrite indeed.—Well, let the end try the man.

Poins. By the mass, here comes Bardolph.

P. Hen. And the boy that I gave Falstaff: he had him from me Christian ; and look, if the fat villain have not transform'd him ape.

Enter Bardolph and Page.

Bard. 'Save your grace !

P. Hen. And yours, most noble Bardolph !—and how doth thy master, Bardolph ?

Bard. Well, my lord. He is just returned and heard of your grace's coming to town ; there's a letter for you.

P. Hen. Deliver'd with good respect.—And how doth the Martlemas, your master?

Bard. In bodily health, sir.

Poins. Marry, the immortal part needs a physician: but that moves not him; though that be sick, it dies not.

P. Hen. I do allow this wen to be as familiar with me as my dog; and he holds his place; for, look you, how he writes.

Poins. [*Reads.*] *John Falstaff, Knight*—Every man must know that, as oft as he has occasion to name himself. Even like those that are kin to the king; for they never prick their finger, but they say, *There's some of the king's blood spilt: How comes that?* says he, that takes upon him not to conceive: the answer is as ready as a borrower's cap; *I am the king's poor cousin, sir.*

P. Hen. Nay, they will be kin to us, or they will fetch it from Japhet. But the letter:—

Poins. *Sir John Falstaff, Knight, to the son of the king, nearest his father, Harry Prince of Wales, greeting.*—Why this is a certificate.

P. Hen. Peace!

Poins. *I will imitate the honourable Romans in brevity:* he sure means brevity in breath; short-winded.—*I commend me to thee, I commend thee, and I leave thee. Be not too familiar with Poins; for he misuses thy favours so much, that he swears, thou art to marry his sister Nell. Repent at idle times as thou may'st, and so farewell. Thine, by yea and no, (which is as*

much as to say, as thou usest him,) Jack Falstaff, with my familiars ; John, with my brothers and sisters ; and Sir John with all Europe.

My lord, I'll steep this letter in sack, and make him eat it.

P. Hen. That's to make him eat twenty of his words. But do you use me thus, Ned ? Must I marry your sister ?

Poins. May the wench have no worse fortune ! but I never said so.

P. Hen. Well, thus we play the fools with the time ; and the spirits of the wise sit in the clouds, and mock us.—Is your master here in London ?

Bard. Yea, my lord.

P. Hen. Where sups he ?

Bard. At the old place, my lord ; in Eastcheap.

P. Hen. What company ? Sup any women with him ?

Page. None, my lord, but old mistress Quickly, and mistress Doll Tear-sheet.

P. Hen. Shall we steal upon them, Ned, at supper ?

Poins. I am your shadow, my lord ; I'll follow you.

P. Hen. Sirrah, you boy,—and Bardolph,—no word to your master, that I am yet come to town : There's for your silence. [Gives his purse.]

Bard. I have no tongue, sir.

Page. And for mine, sir,—I will govern it.

P. Hen. Fare ye well ; go.

[Exeunt Bardolph and Page.]

How might we see Falstaff bestow himself to-night in his true colours, and not ourselves be seen ?

Poins. Put on two leather jerkins and aprons, and wait upon him at his table as drawers.

P. Hen. From a prince to a 'prentice? a low transformation! that shall be mine; for in every thing the purpose must weigh with the folly. Follow me, Ned.

[Exeunt the Prince and Poins.]

SCENE II.—*The Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap.*

Table, bottles, glasses, lights, three chairs.—Hostess, and Doll Tear-sheet discovered.

Host. I' faith, sweetheart, methinks now you are in an excellent good temperality: your pulside beats as extraordinarily as heart would desire, and your colour, I warrant you, is as red as any rose. But, i' faith, you have drunk too much canaries. How do you now?

Doll. Better than I was. Hem!

Host. Why that was well said. A good heart's worth gold. Lo, here comes sir John.

Enter Falstaff with a jug of sack.

Fal. When Arthur first in court—Why, hostess—and was a worthy king.—How now, mistress Doll?

Host. Sick of a calm: yea, good sooth.

Fal. So is all her sect; if they be once in a calm, they are sick. *[Takes a chair and sits down.]*

Doll. You muddy rascal, is that all the comfort you give me? *[Starts up and comes to him.]*

Host. By my troth, this is the old fashion; you two never meet but you fall to some discord: you are both,

in good troth, as rheumatic as two dry toasts; you cannot one bear with another's confirmities. What the good cheer! one must bear, and that must be you: you are the weaker vessel, as they say, the emptier vessel.

[*To Doll.*]

Doll. Come, I'll be friends with thee, Jack: thou art going no one knows where, and whether I shall ever see thee again or no, there is nobody cares.

Enter Page, with sword and buckler, which he lays on a chair.

Page. Sir, ancient Pistol's below, and would speak with you.

Doll. Hang him, swaggering rascal! let him not come hither: it is the foul-mouth'd st rogue in England.

Host. If he swagger, let him not come here: no, by my faith; I must live amongst my neighbours; I'll no swaggerers: I am in good name and fame with the very best. Shut the door;—[*to Page*]*—*there comes no swaggerers here: I have not liv'd all this while to have swaggering now;—shut the door, I pray you.

Fal. Dost thou hear, hostess?—

Host. Pray you, pacify yourself, sir John; there comes no swaggerers here.

Fal. Dost thou hear? it is my ancient.

Host. Tilly-fally, sir John, ne'er tell me; your ancient swaggerer comes not in my doors. I was before master Tisick, the deputy, t'other day; and, as he said to me,—it was no longer ago than Wednesday last,—*Neighbour Quickly*, says he;—master Dumb,

our minister, was by then ;—*Neighbour Quickly*, says he, *receive those that are civil ; for* said he, *you are in an ill name ;*—now he said so, I can tell where-upon ; *for*, says he, *you are an honest woman and well thought on, therefore take heed what guests you receive.* *Receive*, says he, *no swaggering companions.*—There comes none here ;—you would bless you to hear what he said :—no, I'll no swaggerers.

Fal. He's no swaggerer, hostess, a tame cheater, he ; he'll not swagger with a Barbary hen, if her feathers turn back in any show of resistance.—Call him up, boy. *[Exit Page.]*

Host. Cheater call you him ? I will bar no honest man my house, nor no cheater ; but I do not love swaggering ; by my troth, I am the worse, when one says—swagger : feel how I shake, look you, I warrant you.

Doll. So you do, hostess.

Host. Do I ? yea, in very truth do I, an't were an aspen leaf, I cannot abide swaggerers.

Enter Pistol, Bardolph, and Page.

Pist. 'Save you, sir John.

Fal. Welcome, ancient Pistol. Here, Pistol, I charge you with a cup of sack, *[Pistol drinks]* and you discharge upon mine hostess. *[Pistol crosses to Hostess and offers her the cup.]*

Host. I'll drink no more than will do me good for no man's pleasure, I.

Pist. Then to you, mistress Dorothy, I will charge you.

Doll. Charge me? I scorn you scurvy companion. What! you poor, lack-linen, mate! Away, away, I am meat for your master.

Pist. I know you, mistress Dorothy.

Doll. Away you bottle-ale rascal—you!—since when I pray you, sir?—

Pist. I will murder your ruff for this.

Fal. No more, Pistol, I would not have you go off here, discharge yourself of our company, Pistol.

Doll. Thrust him down stairs; I cannot endure such a fustian rascal.

Pist. Thrust him down stairs! know we not Galloway nags?

Bard. Come, get you down stairs.

Pist. What! shall we have incision? shall we imbrew?

Rock me asleep! Come, Atropos, I say!

[*Drawing his sword.*]

Fal. Give me my rapier, boy.

Doll. I pray thee, Jack, I pray thee do not draw.

Fal. Get you down stairs.

[*Falstaff, Bardolph, and Page, drive Pistol out.*]

Host. Here's a goodly tumult! I'll forswear keeping house, afore I'll be in these tirrits and frights. So, murther, I warrant now.

Re-enter Falstaff.

Fal. A rascal! to brame me!

Doll. Ah, you sweet rogue, you!—Thou art as valorous as Hector of Troy, worth five of Agamemnon, and ten times better than the nine worthies.

Fal. Sit on my knee, Doll. A rascal bragging slave! the rogue fled from me like quicksilver.

Doll. When wilt thou leave fighting, and begin to patch up thine old body for heaven?

[*Enter behind, Prince of Wales and Poins, disguised like drawers.*]

Fal. Peace, good Doll! do not speak like a death's head.

Doll. Sirrah, what humour is the prince of?

Fal. A good shallow young fellow: he would have made a good pantler, he would have chipp'd bread well.

Doll. They say, Poins has a good wit.

Fal. He a good wit? hang him, baboon!—his wit is as thick as Tewksbury mustard; there is no more conceit in him than is in a mallet.

Doll. Why doth the prince love him so, then?

Fal. Because their legs are both of a bigness, and he plays at quoits well, and drinks off candles' ends for flap-dragons, and jumps upon joint stools, and swears with a good grace, and such other gambol faculties he hath, that shew a weak mind and an able body, for the which the prince admits him, for the prince himself is such another; the weight of a hair will turn the scales between their avoirdupois.

P. Hen. Would not this nave of a wheel have his ears cut off?

Poins. Let's beat him before his wench.

P. Hen. Look, if the wither'd elder hath not his poll claw'd like a parrot.

Fal. What stuff wilt have a kirtle of? I shall receive money on Thursday: thou shalt have a cap to-morrow. Thou'lt forget me when I am gone.

Doll. By my troth, thou'lt set me a weeping, an' thou say'st so: prove that I ever dress myself handsome till they return.—Well, hearken the end.

Fal. Some sack, Francis.

P. Hen. Poins. Anon, anon, sir.

[*Comes between Falstaff and Hostess.*]

Fal. Ha! a bastard son of the king's?—and art not thou Poins, his brother?

P. Hen. Why, thou globe of sinful continents, what a life dost thou lead?

Fal. A better than thou: I am a gentleman, thou art a drawer.

P. Hen. Very true, sir; and I come to draw you out by the ears.

[*They throw off their disguises, Falstaff rises.*]

Host. O, the Lord preserve thy good grace! welcome to London. Now heaven bless that sweet face of thine! What are you come from Wales?

Fal. Thou whoreson mad compound of majesty—by this light flesh and corrupt blood, thou art welcome. [*Leaning his hand upon Doll.*]

Doll. How, you fat fool, I scorn you.

Poins. My lord, he will drive you out of your

revenge, and turn all to a merriment, if you take not the heat.—

[Goes a little up, and returns between Falstaff and Doll.]

P. Hen. You whoreson candle-mine, how vilely did you speak of me even now, before this honest, virtuous, civil gentlewoman!

Host. Blessing o' your good heart! and so she is, by my troth.

Fal. Didst thou hear me!

P. Hen. Yes; and you knew me, as you did when you ran away by Gad's-Hill: you knew I was at your back, and spoke it on purpose to try my patience.

Fal. No, no, no; not so. I did not think thou wast within hearing.

P. Hen. I shall drive you then to confess the wilful abuse, and then I know how to handle you.

Fal. No abuse.

P. Hen. No! to dispraise me, and call me—pantler, and bread-chipper, and I know not what!

Fal. No abuse, Hal.

Poins. No abuse!

Fal. No abuse, Ned, in the world; honest Ned, no. I disprais'd him before the wicked, that the wicked might not fall in love with him;—in which doing I have done the part of a careful friend, and a true subject—and his father is to give me thanks for it. No abuse, Hal! Ned, none—no, boys, none.

P. Hen. See, now, whether pure fear and entire

cowardice do not make thee wrong this virtuous gentlewoman to close with us! Is she of the wicked? thine hostess here of the wicked?

Poins. Answer, thou dead elm, answer.

[*A loud knocking without.*

Fal. Who knocks so loud at door! Look to the door there, hostess.

Enter Messenger.

P. Hen. Gower, how now; what news! [*to Gow.*

Gow. The king your father is dying at Westminster.

P. Hen. By heaven, Poins, I feel me much to blame, so idly to profane the precious time—at such a moment too! Give me my sword and cloak.—Falstaff, good night.

[*Exeunt the Prince, Poins and Gow.*

Fal. Now comes in the sweetest morsel of the night, and I hope not, and leave it unpick'd.

[*More knocking at the door without.*

More knocking at the door! How now! what's matter?

Enter Bardolph.

Bard. You must away, sir, instantly. There's business to do that urges.

Fal. Farewel, hostess;—farewel, Doll. You see, good wenches, how men of merit are sought after.—Well.—If I be not sent away post, I'll see you again ere I go.

Dol. [to *Falstaff*.] Well, sweet Jack, have a care of thyself.

Fal. Farewel, farewel.

[*Exit Falstaff*.]

SCENE III.

A Public Place near Westminster Abbey.

Enter two Grooms, strewing rushes.

1 *Groom.* More rushes, more rushes.

2 *Groom.* The trumpets have sounded twice.

1 *Groom.* It will be two o'clock ere they come from the coronation: Despatch, despatch. [*Exeunt Grooms*.]

Enter Falstaff, Shallow, Pistol, Bardolph, and the Page.

Fal. Stand here by me, master Robert Shallow; I will make the king do you grace: I will leer upon him, as a' comes by; and do but mark the countenance that he will give me.

Pist. God bless thy lungs, good knight!

Fal. Come here, Pistol; stand behind me.—O, if I had had time to have made new liveries, I would have bestowed the thousand pound I borrowed of you. [*To Shallow*.] But 'tis no matter; this poor show doth better: this doth infer the zeal I had to see him.

Shal. It doth so.

Fal. It shows my earnestness of affection.

Shal. It doth so.

Fal. My devotion.

Shal. It doth, it doth, it doth.

Fal. As it were, to ride day and night ; and not to deliberate, not to remember, not to have patience to shift me.

Shal. It is most certain.

Fal. But to stand stained with travel, and sweating with desire to see him : thinking of nothing else ; putting all affairs else in oblivion ; as if there were nothing else to be done, but to see him.

Pist. 'Tis all in every part.

Shal. 'Tis so, indeed.

Pist. My knight, I will inflame thy noble liver,
And make thee rage.
Thy Doll, and Helen of thy noble thoughts,
Is in base durance, and contagious prison ;
Haul'd thither by mechanical and dirty hand :—
Rouse up revenge from ebon den with fell Alecto's
snake,

For Doll is in ; Pistol speaks nought but truth.

Fal. I will deliver her.

[*Shouts within, and the trumpets sound.*]

Pist. There roar'd the sea, and trumpet-clangor
sounds.

[*Enter the King and his train, the Lord Mayor among them.*]

Fal. God save thy grace, king Hal ! my royal Hal !

Pist. The heavens thee guard and keep, most royal
imp of fame !

Fal. God save thee, my sweet boy!

King. My lord, speak to that vain man.

Ld. M. Have you your wits? know you what 'tis you speak?

Fal. My king! my Jove! I speak to thee, my heart!

K. Hen. I know thee not, old man: Fall to thy prayers:

How ill white hairs become a fool, and jester!

I have long dream'd of such a kind of man,

So furfeit-swell'd, so old, and so profane;

But, being awake, I do despise my dream.—

Reply not to me with a fool-born jest;

Presume not, that I am the thing I was:

For heaven doth know, so shall the world perceive,

That I have turn'd away my former self:

When thou dost hear I am as I have been,

Approach me; and thou shalt be as thou wast,

The tutor and the feeder of my riots:

Till then, I banish thee;

As I have done the rest of my misleaders,—

Not to come near our person by ten miles.

For competence of life I will allow you,

That lack of means enforce you not to evil;

And as we hear you do reform yourselves,

We will,—according to your strength, and qualities,

Give you advancement.—Be it your charge, my lord,

To see perform'd the tenor of our word.—

[The King retires with his train.]

Fal. Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pound.

Shal. Ay, marry, sir John; which I beseech you it let me have home with me.

Fal. That can hardly be, master Shallow. Do not you grieve at this; I shall be sent for in private to him; look you, he must seem thus to the world. Fear not your advancement; I will be the man yet, that shall make you great.

Shal. I cannot perceive how; unless you give me your doublet, and stuff me out with straw. I beseech you, good sir John, let me have five hundred of my thousand.

Fal. Sir, I will be as good as my word: this that you heard, was but a colour.

Shal. A colour, I fear, that you will die in, sir John.

Fal. Fear no colours; go with me to dinner.—Come ancient Pistol;—come, Bardolph;—I shall be sent for soon at night. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. AND LAST.*

Eastcheap.

Enter Page, calling to Pistol.

Page. Mine host Pistol, you must come to my master—[*Enter Pistol with Bardolph.*]

* This last Scene is taken from Henry Fifth, as a proper conclusion of Falstaff's history. And Mrs. Quickly's account of his death was not to be lost.

Your dame is with him already ; he was suddenly ta'en ill, and is still very sick, and would to bed. [*Exit Pistol.*] Bardolph put thy nose between his sheets, and do the office of warming pan ; faith he is very ill.

Bard. Away you rogue.

Enter Mrs. Quickly.

Quick. As ever you came of woman, come in quickly to sir John. Ah poor heart ! he is so shaken of a burning quotidian tertian, that it is most lamentable to behold. Sweet men, come to him.

[*Exit Mrs. Quickly.*]

Page. By my troth, the poor knight will yield the crow a pudding 'ere long ; the king has killed his heart.

Bard. The king hath run bad humours on the knight ; that's the even of it.

Page. Bardolph, thou hast the right. Pistol would say, his heart was fractured and corroborate.

Bard. The king is a good king, but it must be as it may ; he passes some humours and careers.

Page. But let us go and condole the knight.

[*As going.*]

Re-enter Pistol and Mrs. Quickly.

Pist. My manly heart doth yearn. Bardolph be blithe, and rouse thy vaunting veins. Boy, bristle thy courage up ; for Falstaff he is dead, and we must yearn therefore.

Bard. 'Would I were with him, wheresome'er he is, either in heaven, or in hell!

Quick. Nay, sure, he's not in hell; he's in Arthur's bosom, if ever man went to Arthur's bosom. 'A made a fine end, and went away, an' it had been any Christom child; 'a parted even just between twelve and one, e'en at turning o'the tide: for after I saw him fumble with the sheets, and play with flowers, and smile upon his fingers' ends, I knew there was but one way; for his nose was as sharp as a pen, and 'a babbled of green fields. How now, sir John? quoth I: what, man! be of good cheer. So 'a cried out—God, God, God! three or four times: now I, to comfort him, bid him, 'a should not think of God; I hoped, there was no need to trouble himself with any such thoughts yet: so, 'a bade me lay more clothes on his feet: I put my hand into the bed, and felt them, and they were as cold as any stone; then I felt to his knees, and so upward, and upward, and all was as cold as any stone.

Pist. He cried out for sack.

Quick. Ay, that 'a did.

Pist. And of women.

Quick. Nay, that 'a did not.

Pist. Yes, that 'a did; and said, they were devils incarnate.

Quick. 'A could never abide carnation; 'twas a colour he never liked.

Bard. Well, whatever were his likes or dislikes, his faults or his virtues, the fuel is now gone that maintained the fire.

Pist. Therefore shall we shog off. Come, let's away ; and there's an end.

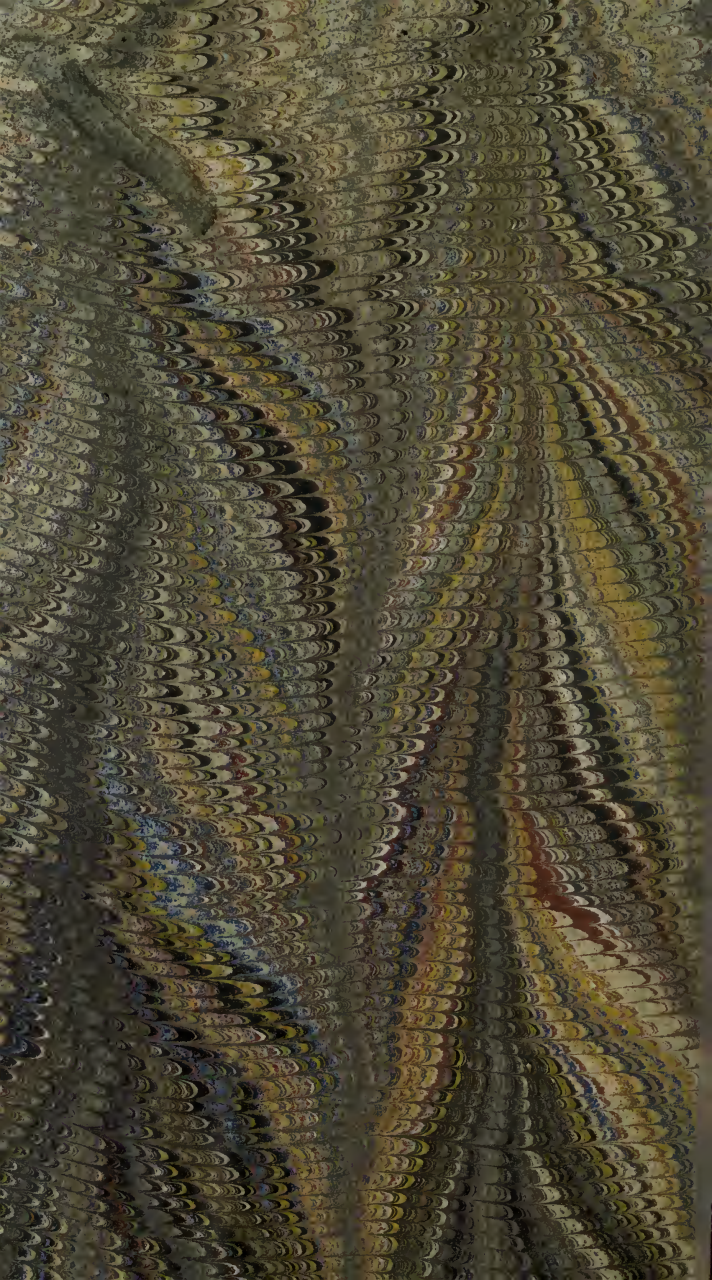
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