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W^r Porter

from The Author

O B S E R V A T I O N S

ON

H A M L E T.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.

ENTERED AT STATIONER'S HALL:

Lately published,

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

O S W A Y :

A T R A G E D Y .

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.

AND

THE COVENTRY ACT:

A C O M E D Y

PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

OBSERVATIONS

ON

HAMLET;

AND ON THE MOTIVES WHICH MOST PROBABLY INDUCED

SHAKSPEARE

TO FIX UPON THE STORY OF

Amleth,

FROM THE DANISH CHRONICLE OF

SAXO GRAMMATICUS,

FOR THE PLOT OF THAT TRAGEDY:

BEING AN ATTEMPT TO PROVE THAT HE DESIGNED IT AS
AN INDIRECT CENSURE ON

Mary Queen of Scots,

BY JAMES PLUMPTRE, M. A.

*SEASON YOUR ADMIRATION FOR AWHILE,
TILL I MAY DELIVER THIS MARVEL TO YOU.*

HAMLET.

CAMBRIDGE,

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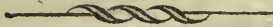
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ADVERTISEMENT.



THE Author of these Observations is aware that haste is in general a bad excuse for incorrectness; yet he hopes some allowances will be made him on that account in the present publication. Having inadvertently mentioned what he deemed a discovery before he had investigated the subject, or intended publishing his Observations on it, a fear of being anticipated has induced him to hurry the work through the press as fast as possible. Some improvements might be made in the arrangement of the arguments; but many of them have been added while the work was going through the press, and after the parts to which they more properly belonged were printed off.

CLARE HALL,
FEB. 22, 1796.

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E R R A T A.

- Page 3, Note 3, Line 21, for *couclude* read *conclude*.
— 6, Note 6, for *Jutoram* read *Jutorum*.
— 23, Line 9, for *come* read *came*.
— 29, Note, for *alluffion* read *allusion*.
— 30, Line 15, for *improbabilities* read *inconsistencies*.



OBSERVATIONS

ON

HAMLET, &c.

WHEN we consider the immense bulk to which the later editions of the works of our immortal Dramatist are swelled, it naturally leads us to imagine that Industry must have exhausted all her patience, and Ingenuity her conjectures, in attempting to elucidate his unrivalled compositions. Yet the contrary appears to be the real state of the case, and the press still teems with new Shakspeares and fresh Shakspeariana. This “vast garden of criticism” still puts forth its flowers and its weeds, and invites the attention of the labourer and the florist. A solitary wanderer, in casually passing through this delightful spot, has accidentally discovered a flower, which appears to have hitherto escaped the notice of its more studious admirers.

When the Author of these Observations was reading lately, in Mr. Tytler's "Inquiry into the Evidence against Mary Queen of Scots," the account of the various artifices used by Queen Elizabeth to blacken the fame of that unfortunate Princess; it occurred to him, from the similarity of the stories, that Shakspeare had perhaps written his Tragedy of Hamlet to flatter the prejudices of his mistress, and exhibit to the world an indirect crimination of her injured rival; what, at that time, appeared to him to be a probable conjecture, an investigation of the subject has ripened into conviction.

Lord Orford has shewn², with equal ingenuity and probability, that our incomparable Bard wrote his Winter's Tale as an indirect apology for Anne Boleyn, the mother of Elizabeth. He who could write an allegorical apology, would well know how to write an allegorical censure.

In the Midsummer Night's Dream, written in 1592, he has paid a compliment to Elizabeth at the expence of Mary³. It is certain then that he had

no

¹ A book which for depth of research, soundness of reasoning, and humanity and candour of sentiment, shews the author to be at once the gentleman, and the scholar.

² Historic Doubts, p. 114.

³ Thou remember'st

Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back,
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,

That

no scruples of delicacy towards her, even after her death⁴. And he, who could write thus in 1592, would

That the rude sea grew civil at the song;
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's musick.

That very time I saw, (but thou could'st not)
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal, throned by the west;
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce an hundred thousand hearts:
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon;
And the imperial votress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.

“ The first thing observable on these words (says Dr. Warburton) is, that this action of the *mermaid* is laid in the same time and place with Cupid's attack upon the *vestal*. By the *vestal* every one knows is meant Queen Elizabeth. It is very natural and reasonable then to think that the *mermaid* stands for some eminent personage of her time. And, if so, the allegorical covering, in which there is a mixture of satire and panegyric, will lead us to conclude, that this person was one of whom it had been inconvenient for the author to speak openly, either in praise or dispraise. All this agrees with Mary Queen of Scots, and with no other. Queen Elizabeth could not bear to hear her commended; and her successor would not forgive her satyrists. But the Poet has so well marked out every distinguished circumstance of her life and character in this beautiful allegory, as will leave no room to doubt about his second meaning. She is called a *mermaid*, 1. to denote her reign over a kingdom situate in the sea, and 2. her beauty, and intemperate lust:

“ ————— *Ur turpiter atrum*

“ *Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne.*”

for as Elizabeth, for her chastity, is called a *vestal*, this unfortunate lady, on a contrary account, is called a *mermaid*. 3. An ancient story may be supposed to be here alluded to. The emperor Julian

would not hesitate four years after (1596, the year
Hamlet

tells us, Epistle 41. that the Sirens (which, with all the modern poets, are *mermaids*) contended for precedency with the Muses, who overcoming them took away their wings. The quarrels between Mary and Elizabeth had the same cause and the same issue.

————— *on a dolphin's back,*] This evidently marks out that distinguishing circumstance of Mary's fortune, her marriage with the Dauphin (formerly spelt Dolphin) of France, son of Henry II.

Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,] This alludes to her great abilities of genius and learning, which rendered her the most accomplished princess of her age. The French writers tell us, that, while she was in that court, she pronounced a Latin oration in the great hall of the Louvre, with so much grace and eloquence, as filled the whole court with admiration.

That the rude sea grew civil at her song;] By the *rude sea* is meant Scotland encircled with the ocean; which rose up in arms against the regent, while she was in France. But her return home presently quieted these disorders: and had not her strange ill conduct afterwards more violently inflamed them, she might have passed her whole life in peace. There is the greater justness and beauty in this image, as the vulgar opinion is, that the mermaid always sings in storms:

And certain stars shot madly from their spheres

To hear the sea-maid's musick.] Thus concludes the description, with that remarkable circumstance of this unhappy lady's fate, the destruction she brought upon several of the English nobility, whom she drew in to support her cause. This, in the boldest expression of the sublime, the poet images by *certain stars shooting madly from their spheres*: By which he meant the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, who fell in her quarrel; and principally the great Duke of Norfolk, whose projected marriage with her was attended with such fatal consequences. Here again the reader may observe a peculiar justness in the imagery. The vulgar opinion being that the mermaid allured men to destruction by her songs. To which opinion Shakspeare alludes in his *Comedy of Errors*.

Hamlet was written⁴) still farther to flatter his mistress by adding his drop to the flood of calumny poured out against her rival.

Shakspeare had a story at hand, most admirably adapted for this purpose, in the Danish Chronicle of Saxo Grammaticus: a story which was, in many respects, so exactly the counterpart of the calumnies circulated against Mary, that it seemed, as Mr. Malone observes of that of Dorastus and Fawnia, which furnished the plot for the Winter's Tale, almost to force the subject upon him; and, where he has made alterations, they appear to be for the purpose of adapting the story still farther to his design. The story indeed is so extremely pointed, that, unless Shakspeare wished to apply it to Mary, its similarity would have been a sufficient reason for rejecting it.

It

“ O train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note,

“ To drown me in thy sister's flood of tears.”

On the whole, it is the noblest and justest allegory that was ever written. The laying it in *fairy land*, and out of nature, is in the character of the speaker. And on these occasions Shakspeare always excels himself. He is born away by the magic of his enthusiasm, and hurries his reader along with him into these ancient regions of poetry, by that power of verse, which we may well fancy to be like what:

——— *olim Fauni Vatesque canebant.*”

This very able note is given at full length, as its own merit and its happy illustration of our author's mode of allegorizing will throw a farther light on these pages.

4 She was beheaded Feb. 8. 1587.

5 Vide “Malone's Attempt.” Vol. I. p. 304.

It will be adviseable to take a view of the respective stories, and then to consider them as tending to establish or overthrow this hypothesis.

A brief abstract of the story of AMLETH, taken from the 3d and 4th books of the Danish Chronicle of *Saxo Grammaticus*.

In the reign of Roderic, King of Denmark, Horwendillus and Fengo, sons of Gerwendillus, had the garrison of Jutland committed to their care⁶. Horwendillus, who was the bravest pirate on the seas, was envied by Coller, King of Norway, for the glory of his actions. Coller sailed in pursuit of him, engaged him, and was slain; Horwendillus put to death the King of Norway's sister, Sela; and, having given proofs of his valour for three years, he presents his spoils to Roderic to secure his friendship. After living some time in intimacy with him, he obtains the King's daughter Geruth in marriage, and had a son, named Amleth, by her.

Fengo, fired with envy at his brother's happiness, resolves to ruin him by treachery. An opportunity offers, and he embrues his hands in his blood⁷. He
wins

6 Eodem tempore Horwendillus et Fengo, quorum pater Gerwendillus Jutoram præfexus extiterat, eidem a Roderico in Jutiæ præsidium surrogantur. At Horwendillus triennio tyrannide gesta, &c.

7 At ubi datus parricidio locus, cruenta manu funestam mentis libidinem satiavit.

wins over his brother's wife by dissembling the motives of his villainy, and adds incest to the horrid crime of fratricide.

Amleth feigns madness, that he may not awaken suspicions in his uncle's breast by an over-prudent care for his safety, and covers his real designs by that artifice.

Amleth's madness being suspected as feigned, various stratagems are tried to ascertain the truth of it, but without success. It is at last suggested to Fengo that he should withdraw himself, under the pretence of business of importance, and Amleth be shut up with his mother in her apartment; first taking care to have some one concealed in a secret place, unknown to either of them, who should over-hear all their conversation, thinking Amleth would discover his real state to his mother.

Fengo acquiesces in the plot, and the framer of it conceals himself in the chamber where Amleth and his mother meet. Amleth suspecting the design, discovers and kills him.

Fengo at length resolves to destroy Amleth, but being afraid, on account of his grandfather Roderic and his mother, he purposes to have him put to death by means of the King of Britain.

Amleth,

Amleth, desiring his mother to report him dead at the end of a year, and to celebrate his obsequies in the hall, which he directs to be hung with hangings for that purpose ; and, promising to return at the time, departs with two of Fengo's officers, who carry with them letters to the King of Britain, desiring him to make away with the young man in question.

Amleth discovers these letters while they are sleeping, and substitutes others in their place, desiring the death of the attendants, and that the King of Britain would give his daughter in marriage to Amleth.

The King complies with the purport of the letters, dispatches the attendants, and gives his daughter in marriage to Amleth.

After a year, Amleth returns to Jutland, and enters the hall, while his obsequies are celebrating. He plies the nobles with wine, till they fall asleep with the excess, when he secures them all by means of the hangings, which are let down upon them and fastened, and setting fire to the room, destroys them all, except Fengo, who had retired to his apartment ; he follows him, and there stabs him with a sword.

Amleth convenes the nobles, justifies his conduct to them, and is proclaimed King^s.

Let

Let us now compare the leading circumstances of this story with the falsehoods circulated of Mary.

It was said that she had concurred in the murder of her husband, and immediately married his murderer, the Earl of Bothwell. By her former husband she had a son, James the Sixth, who married the Princess Anne of Denmark. After James's return from this marriage, he was conspired against by many of the nobles.

The plot of Shakspeare's Play, as far as regards the principal characters, is as follows :

Hamlet, King of Denmark, was poisoned by his brother Claudius, who usurps his throne and marries his widow. The ghost of the deceased King appears to his son Hamlet, informs him that he was poisoned in his garden by his brother, who "won to his shameful lust the will of his most seeming-virtuous Queen," and was at once bereft "of life, of crown, of Queen."

Hamlet swears to revenge the murder; and, the better to conceal his designs, feigns madness, which the King suspecting, and being offended likewise with a representation of his wickedness, which Hamlet causes to be played before him, resolves to send him to England to demand the payment of the tribute which had been neglected.

Polonius, in the mean time, advises that the Queen shall send for Hamlet, and question him in private as to his behaviour, while he conceals himself to overhear the conversation. On Hamlet's behaving with some harshness to his mother, she cries out, Polonius answers her, and Hamlet stabs him while behind the arras.

Hamlet then sets off for England, accompanied by two lords, who carry letters to the King requesting him to put Hamlet to death on his arrival. Hamlet discovers these, and substitutes others in their place, desiring the King of England to put the bearers to death.

Hamlet, falling into the hands of pirates, is set on shore in Denmark at his own request, and returns to the King, who incites Laertes to murder him by treachery in a fencing-match. Both fall in the encounter; the Queen dies by poison, which the King intended for her son, and he himself is slain by Hamlet.

The first observation to be made on the difference of these stories is, that there is some obscurity respecting the nature of the post which Horwendillus held in Jutland. It appears that he was only *præfectus* and a pirate, but we see immediately after the words "*tyrannide gesta*," as if it was a *kingdom*. And after the murder

murder of Fengo, Amleth “*cenfetur rex.*” It appears first, that the garrison of Jutland was given to the brothers by Roderic, King of Denmark, in whose dominions it was. It does not appear that Horwendillus succeeded Coller after he had slain him, for Fengo usurped Horwendillus’ post, whatever it was, and the history expressly says that Amleth returned from England to Jutland. Amleth’s mother, it is true, was daughter of Roderic, but her husband was not a King by her means, for when Fengo was murdered, Roderic was King of Denmark, and was, at his death, succeeded by Viglet, who usurped the kingdom from Amleth. The mother in the Chronicle is never called *regina*, nor Fengo *rex.*

These observations are made because Shakspeare has put it beyond a doubt, and makes his characters a King and a *Queen*: no doubt to bring the story nearer to his purpose.

In *the Hystorie of Hamblett*, quoted by Mr. Malone, from which he supposes this Play to be taken, we find, “The counsellour entered secretly into the *Queen’s* chamber.” This book, whence the quotation is taken, is dated 1608, but was a republication, according to Mr. Malone: the author has not had an opportunity to consult the book, and therefore has taken his extracts from Mr. Malone’s. But, as this is undoubtedly borrowed, and, in the extracts he has seen, nearly copied from the Chronicle, which is so

obscure, it might perhaps be altered and published from the same motives as he supposes Shakspeare to have been actuated by; or it might be published after the first appearance of the play, as being a popular tale, and while the tragedy was not yet published. We have seen in later times the use of republishing old stories, and extracts from old books, to serve the purpose of party.

He has also removed the Empire from Jutland to Denmark, as no doubt *Denmark* was uppermost in his mind; the son of his Queen having married a princess of that country.

Another observation is, that in the play scene Hamlet says, "Gonzago is the *Duke's* name," which is the reading of all the old copies. In the stage direction for the dumb-show and the subsequent entrance it is "Enter a *King* and *Queen*," and that Shakspeare meant the characters should be so called throughout I have no doubt. For when Hamlet is informed that the players are coming, he says "he that plays the *King* shall be welcome," as it was his intention to have a play represented before the *King* his uncle⁹, the picture of his own villainy, to "catch his conscience."

For

9 One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee, of my father's death.

Observe my uncle: if his acculted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen.

For this purpose, Hamlet superintends the performance, and “has a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines inserted in it,” to make it the more applicable.

Mr. Malone makes no doubt but there was a play, of the same nature with this, introduced in the old play of Hamlett, which is now lost; and that Shakspeare took his idea from that. This conjecture is extremely probable, and also that the character in the main, as well as the secondary play of that, was perhaps a *Duke*, which Shakspeare, for his own purpose, altered to a *King*, but, in the copying or transcribing, overlooked this place; and let the old word stand.

In the chronicle the mother is represented as *not* being accessory to the murder of her husband. The *Hystorie* likewise appears to exculpate her¹. Shakspeare has

¹ Vide Mr. Malone's note upon “*As kill a king!*” Vol. 9. p. 331. Where he seems to think, from the following passage, that the Queen is represented *as guilty*.

“The unfortunate and wicked woman that had received the honour to be the wife of one of the valiantest and wisest princes in the north, imbased herself in such vile sort as to falsifie her faith unto him, and, which is worse, to 'marrie him that had bin the tyrannous murtherer of her lawful husband; *which made diverse men think that she had bin the causer of the murther*, thereby to live in her adulterie without controle.”

But it rather should seem from this that the *Historian* thought her *not guilty*, as he only gives the opinion of *others*; that “*diverse men thought she had bin the causer of the murther*,” *because* “*she had married the murderer of her lawful husband*.” And the following passage favours this idea, or else the two passages contradict each other:

“—much

has therefore unnecessarily deviated from these, unless he meant to join the general accusation against the injured Queen. For that he has represented her as accessory appears not to admit a doubt; and the following lines seem particularly levelled against Mary: the player Queen says

In second husband let me be accurst!

None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

To which Hamlet—who had ordered the play as a trial of innocence—replies “that’s *wormwood*,” and asks his mother pointedly afterwards

“Madam, how like you this play?”

by which he plainly meant to criminate her; and, in the closet scene which follows, after he has killed Polonius, and the Queen exclaims against it as a “bloody deed,” he replies,

A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,

As kill a King, and marry with his brother.

Which immediately convicting her guilty conscience, in surprize that her guilt is discovered, she exclaims, “As kill a King!” When Hamlet perseveres and answers “Ay, Lady, ’twas my word.”

The ghost tells Hamlet that his brother “won to his shameful lust the will of his most seeming-virtuous Queen,” before his murder; and, though he desires him

“———much less offer me that wrong to *suspect* that ever thy mother Geruth once consented to the death and murder of her husband: swearing unto thee by the majesty of the Gods, that if it had layne in me to have resisted the tyrant, although it had beene with the losse of my bloode, yea and of my life, I would surely have saved the life of my lord and husband.”

him not to “ contrive aught against her, but leave her to Heaven and to those thorns that in her bosom lodge to prick and sting her,” yet he never exculpates her from the murder; a plain argument, that she was guilty. Nor does she ever attempt to clear herself.

See also Hamlet’s exclamation after the ghost has left him: “ O most pernicious woman !”

Also, *after the play*, when Guildenstern says to Hamlet that “ The Queen, your mother, in *most great affliction of spirit*, hath sent me to you.” He replies, “ You are welcome,” as if he designed it to touch her.

It is also observable that the chronicle does not represent the mother as being depraved till after the murder of her husband. Mary was accused of adultery with Bothwell before the death of Lord Darnley.

In the chronicle no direct mention is made of the means by which Fengo affected the murder of his brother. It rather appears by *cruenta manu* that he *stabbed* him.

Some time before the death of Lord Darnley, he was seized with a very dangerous and violent distemper, which was imagined to be the effect of *poison*: he however got the better of it. The manner of his death was mysterious: the house in which he lodged was blown up *at night* with gunpowder, and his body was found lying in an adjacent *garden*, untouched by
3
fire,

fire, and with no bruise or mark of violence about him.

How much nearer is Shakspeare's account of the murder of the King to this circumstance than to the chronicle :

'Tis given out, that *sleeping* in my orchard,
A serpent stung me.

sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With *juice of cursed hebenon* in a vial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distillment.

Act. 1. Scene 4.

He *poisons* him i'the GARDEN for his estate.

Act 3. S. 2.

To a Shakspearian mind no doubt there is already sufficient evidence whereon to rest the hypothesis ; but, as some readers will perhaps require further proof, it may be useful, in addition to the sketch of the Danish Chronicle, the calumnies circulated against Mary and the plot of the play, already given, to subjoin the story of Dorastus and Fawnia, on which the Winter's Tale is founded, and from which, (as no one refuses to acknowledge) Shakspeare has adapted an indirect apology for Anne Boleyn ; and shew that the parallel in
that

that is neither so obvious, nor the story so much altered for the particular purpose as the one in question.

After that, some additional arguments in favour of the hypothesis shall be subjoined.

A brief ABSTRACT *of the*
 STORY OF DORASTUS AND FAWNIA,
 WRITTEN BY ROBERT GREENE.

Pandofto, King of Bohemia, married Bellaria, a princess of great beauty and virtue. In due time she was delivered of a son, to whom the King gave the name of Garrinter. Pandofto had from his youth cultivated a friendship with Egiftus King of Sicily. Egiftus, eager to shew his regard for Pandofto, paid him a visit to congratulate him upon his marriage and the birth of his son.

Bellaria received him with great kindness and attention at the request of Pandofto; who, notwithstanding it was his own desire, looked upon these marks of favour with a jealous eye, and, conceiving a violent hatred for Egiftus, employed his cup-bearer Franion to poison him. Franion acquaints Egiftus with the plot against his life, and, laying a plan for his escape, fled with him into Sicily.

On the flight of Egiftus, Pandofto accused Bellaria of adultery, who was soon after delivered of a female
 C child,

child, which Pandosto determined to murder together with her mother. His lords obtained from him a promise not to destroy the infant, and the Queen persuaded him to consult the Oracle at Delphos on her suspected infidelity. Pandosto caused the child to be exposed in a boat at sea, and the Oracle soon after declared Bellaria innocent. Garrinter, at this time, died, and the contending passions in Bellaria, of joy for the declaration of her innocence and grief for the death of her son, put a period to her life.

Bellaria's infant daughter was carried by the waves to the coast of Sicily, where she was found by a shepherd, and brought up as his own, giving her the name of Fawnia. Dorastus, son to Egistus, when Fawnia was grown up, fell in love with her, and, fearing his father's opposition in his wish to marry a shepherd's daughter, determined to carry her off to Italy and there marry her. The ship in which he sailed was driven by a storm to the coast of Bohemia, where, fearing the rage of Pandosto, should he discover his real condition, he passed by a feigned name. But the fame of Fawnia's beauty reaching the King's ears, he sent for them to court, and, accusing them of being spies, imprisoned Dorastus, and solicited Fawnia to comply with his brutal desires, which she rejected.

Egistus hearing from some merchants that his son and Fawnia were in Bohemia, sent ambassadors to demand him, and to desire the death of Fawnia, an attendant who accompanied them, and Porrus, her supposed

supposed father, whom Dorastus had carried off with them. Pandofto, wishing to conciliate the friendship of Egiftus, whom he was now convinced he had injured, and fired with resentment against Fawnia for rejecting his addressees, resolved to comply with the request Porrus, to save his foster-child, disclosed the manner in which he found her, and displayed the chain and jewels she wore. Pandofto recognized his long lost child, and with Dorastus and Fawnia set sail for Sicily, where he was welcomed by Egiftus, who was made happy in the nuptials of his son with the daughter of his friend. But Pandofto, reflecting on his past enormities, put an end to his life, and Dorastus and Fawnia succeeded him in the throne of Bohemia.

Whoever will take the trouble to compare this story with the plot of the Winter's Tale, will find that Shakspeare has made as many or more alterations in treating it, as in the play now in question; and yet, take them all together, there are not so many circumstances to suit his allegorical meaning, as have been here pointed out. Yet surely there cannot be any doubt but that Shakspeare designed the Winter's Tale as an indirect apology for Anne Boleyn, and still less that he designed Hamlet as an indirect censure on Mary.

“ It may not be unentertaining to observe, (says Lord Orford) that there is another of Shakspeare's plays, that may be ranked among the historic, though

not one of his numerous critics and commentators have discovered the drift of it; I mean *The Winter Evening's Tale*, which was certainly intended (in compliment to Queen Elizabeth) as an indirect apology for her mother Anne Boléyn. The address of the Poet appears no where to more advantage. The subject was too delicate to be exhibited on the stage without a veil; and it was too recent, and touched the Queen too nearly, for the bard to have ventured so home an allusion on any other ground than compliment. The unreasonable jealousy of Leontes, and his violent conduct in consequence, form a true portrait of Henry the Eighth, who generally made the law the engine of his boisterous passions. Not only the general plan of the story is most applicable, but several passages are so marked, that they touch the real history nearer than the fable. Hermione on her trial says,

————— for honour,
 'Tis a derivative from me to mine,
 And only that I stand for.

This seems to be taken from the very letter of Anne Boléyn to the King before her execution, where she pleads for the infant princess his daughter. Mamillius, the young prince, an unnecessary character, dies in his infancy; but it confirms the allusion, as Queen Anne, before Elizabeth, bore a still-born son. But the most striking passage, and which had nothing to do in the Tragedy, but as it pictured Elizabeth, is,
 where

where Paulina, describing the new-born princess, and her likeness to her father, says, *she has the very trick of his frown*. There is one sentence indeed so applicable, both to Elizabeth and her father, that I should suspect the poet inserted it after her death. Paulina, speaking of the child, tells the King,

————— 'Tis yours;
 And, might we lay the old proverb to your charge,
 So like you, 'tis the worse.

The Winter Evening's Tale was therefore in reality a second part of Henry the Eighth."

Historic Doubts, p. 114.

"This conjecture (Mr. Malone observes) must be acknowledged to be extremely plausible. With respect, however, to the death of the young prince Mamillius, which is supposed to allude to Queen Anne's having had a still-born son, it is but fair to observe, that this circumstance was not an *invention* of our poet, being founded on a similar incident in Lodge's *Dorastus and Fawnia*, in which Garanter, the Mamillius of the *Winter's Tale*, likewise dies in his infancy. But this by no means diminishes the force of the hypothesis which has been just now stated; it only shews, that Shakspeare was not under the necessity of twisting the story to his purpose, and that this, as well as the many other corresponding circumstances between the fictitious narrative of Bellaria, (the Hermione of the present play) and the real history of the
 mother

mother of Elizabeth, almost forced the subject upon him."

Vol. I. part I. p. 350.

In the additional arguments some passages will be brought forward to shew that Shakspeare had the unfortunate Queen *directly* in mind when he wrote them; and in others, that though he did not perhaps intentionally make the kind of parallel there is; yet his *mind was so full of them*, that her story *involuntarily* gave him ideas².

In this place it is scarce possible to refrain from again remarking these lines :

In second Husband let me be accurst!

None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

And

* * * * *
The instances, that second marriage move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love.

Act 3. S. 2.

Which appear to be so strongly marked, as almost of themselves to establish the hypothesis.

The

² Whoever has read Mr. Whiter's ingenious "Attempt to explain and illustrate various passages of Shakspeare, on a new principle of criticism, derived from Mr. Locke's doctrine of the *association of ideas*"—will know in what manner to apply such *involuntary combinations*.

The next point to call the reader's attention to is the stress Hamlet lays on the Queen's *haste* to marry the murderer of her husband, and the *time* which elapsed between the murder and her marriage.

But *two months* dead!—nay, not so much, not two:

O most wicked *speed*, to *post*
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets.

Act 1. S. 2.

Ham. What is your affair in Elsinour?

Hor. My lord, I come to see your *father's funeral*.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
 I think it was to see my *mother's wedding*.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, *it follow'd hard upon*.

Act 1. S. 2.

Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main;
 His father's death and our *o'erhasty* marriage.

Act 2. S. 2

Ham. Look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and
 my father died *within these two hours*.

Oph. Nay, 'tis *twice two months*, my lord.

Ham. O Heavens! die *two months* ago, and not forgotten
 yet?

Act 3. S. 2.

Lord Darnley was murdered on the 10th of Feb. 1567, and Mary was married to Bothwell the 14th of May following, a space of time but just exceeding *three months*. Shakspeare perhaps did not know the *exact* time between the death of Lord Darnley and Mary's marriage with Bothwell; and, wishing to ag-
 gravate

gravate the guilt of the Queen as much as possible, he makes Hamlet reduce it from *two months* to a *little month*.

Hamlet's reproach to his mother for not mourning for her husband is worthy notice.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not forever with thy veiled lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust;
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that live must die,
Passing thro' nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, *it is common*.

Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. *Seems, Madam!* nay, *it is*; I know not *seems*.
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother, &c.

————— *These, indeed, seem:*
For they are *actions* that a man might *play*:
But *I have that within that passeth shew*.

Act I. S. 2.

Observe too the following lines:

King. Therefore our sometime sister, now our Queen,
Have we—&c.

Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
YOUR better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along.

Act I. S. 2.

Bothwell was *recommended* to Mary by the *Nobles* as a fit husband for her. This is an addition of Shakespeare's,

spere's, no mention being made of it in the Chronicle.

Mary's (*pretended*, as it is called) love to Lord Darnley was notorious.

She would hang on him
As if encrease of appetite had grown
With what it fed on.

Act 1. S. 2.

That adulterate beast,
_____ won to his shameful lust
The will of my most *seeming-virtuous* Queen.

Act 1. S. 5.

The pictures given of the Queen's two husbands, and the contrast between them, is remarkable.

So excellent a King ; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a SATYR.

Act 1. S. 2.

* * * * *
O Hamlet, what a falling off was there !
From me, whose love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage ; and to decline
Upon a *wretch*, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine.

But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Tho' lewdness court it in the shape of Heaven ;
So lust, tho' to a *radiant angel* link'd,

Will fate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.

Act 1. S. 5.

* * * *

See what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars to threaten and command;
A station like the Herald Mercury,
New lighted on a Heaven-kissing hill;
A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man.

—————Have you eyes

Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor?

A MURDERER, and a *villain* :

A *Slave*³, that is not twentieth part the tythe
Of your precedent lord :—a *vice* of Kings ;
A *Cut-purse* of the empire and the rule ;
That from the shelf *the precious diadem stole*
*And put it in his POCKET*⁴ : A King
Of shreds and patches.

Act 3. S. 4.

Shakspeare in this description appears to have had the two husbands of Mary in view rather than of the Queen in the play.

Claudius was younger than Hamlet's father, that, unless he was deformed, (which it does not appear he

³ Bothwell's birth was more disproportioned to Mary's than was Lord Darnley's: this has more force in the allegorical, than in the direct application.

⁴ Bothwell never wore the crown.

he was) having youth in his favour, the contrast could not be so very great. Old Hamlet had a son^s thirty years of age at this time, and other passages in the play lead us to suppose both the King and Queen were certainly past the prime of life, not to say old⁶.

Lord Darnley was the handsomest young man in the kingdom, but of a weak mind: it is remarkable that no compliment is made to the deceased King's intellectual qualifications. Bothwell was twenty years older

5 I have been sexton here, man and boy, *thirty years*.

I came to't the very day that young Hamlet was born.

Act 5. S. 1.

6 Player Queen to P. King—whom I consider as the representatives of Claudius and Gertrude—

But, woe is me, *you are so sick of late,*
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
 That I distrust you.

P. King. Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;

My operant powers their functions leave to do.

Act 3. S. 2.

Ham.—of the Queen—*At your age,*

The hey-day in the blood is tame.

* * *

O shame! where is thy blush? *Rebellious hell,*
 If thou can'st mutiny in a *matron's* bones,
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,

* * *

Since *frost itself* as actively doth burn,
 And reason pander's will.

Act 3. S. 4.

older than Mary, and is represented by the Historians of that time as an ugly man.

Bothwell was likewise noted for his debauchery and drinking⁷, two circumstances which Shakspeare seems never to lose sight of in his character of Claudius.

*No jocund health, that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell;
And the King's rouse the Heaven shall bruit again,
Respeaking earthly thunder.*

ACT I. S. 2.

* 'Tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed; things *rank and gross* in nature
Possess it merely:

ACT I. S. 2.

No doubt alluding to Claudius.

Ham. to Horatio. We'll teach you to *drink deep*, ere you depart.

ACT I. S. 2.

The King doth wake to-night and *takes his rouse*,
Keeps wassel, and the swaggering upspring reels;

And,

⁷ The adventure of the Marquis of Elbeuf and Bothwell at the house of Alifon Craig is well known.

Bothwell's supper is notorious, where, *animis omnium ad hilaritatem solutis*, the bond was signed for taking off Lord Darnley. Vide Sir James Balfour's attested copy of the bond.

“Bothwell was brought up in the Bishop of Murray's palace, a most corrupt house in *drunkenness* and *whoredomes*.”

BUCHANAN.

Bothwell also, at the time of his former marriage, lived with Lady Reres, his kept mistress.

* This world.

And, as he *drains his draughts of rhenish down*,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

Act 1. S. 4.

King. When Voltimand and Cornelius leave him—
Go to your rest; at night we'll *feast* together.

Act 2. S. 2.

Ham. Ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this *slave's* offal. Bloody, *barudy* villain!

Act 2. S. 2.

Guild. The King, sir,
Is, in his retirement, marvellously distempered.

Ham. With *drink*, sir?

Act 3. S. 2.

When he is *drunk*, &c. Act. 3. S. 3.
The *bloat* King tempt you again to bed.

Act 3. S. 3.

And let him for a pair of *reechy* kisses.

Act 3. S. 3.

King. Give me the *soups of wine* upon that table:
————— Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the Heavens, the Heavens to earth,
New the King drinks to Hamlet.

Act 5. S. 2.

Shak-

8 Perhaps the following speech of Ophelia's is an allusion to the King's intemperance:

Shakspeare makes mention likewise of the Queen's beauty.

Oph. Where is the *beauteous* majesty of Denmark.

Act 4. S. 5.

This is incompatible with what has been said before of this Queen's *age*, but applies most justly to Mary, who was celebrated for her exquisite beauty, and was only forty-five when she was beheaded: Her son James was nineteen. In the beginning of the play Hamlet is represented as very young, one who designed going back to School, to the University of Wittenberg: And we have before seen that the Grave-digger makes Hamlet thirty: James was just *thirty* at the writing of this play. In short, Shakspeare seems to have been so blinded by the circumstances he wished to introduce, that he has fallen into many improbabilities between his two plans.

Shakspeare more than once mentions the King having been taken off "in the blossom of his sin," which is incompatible with the ideas we have of the King's *age* in the play, but most truly applicable to Lord Darnley:

Thus was I, *sleeping*, by a brother's hand,
Of *life*, of *crown*, of *Queen*, at once dispatch'd;
Cut off *even in the blossoms of my sin*,

Unhousell'd

Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be.
God be at *your* TABLE.

Act 4. S. 5.

That is, May you have the fear of God before you, while at your table, and not give into excess.

Unhousell'd, disappointed, unanel'd ;
 No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.

Act 1. S. 4.

He took my father grosly, full of bread ;
With all his crimes, full blown, as flush as May.

Act 3. S. 3.

Lord Darnley's religious principles might suggest the following lines :

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit ;
*Doom'd for a certain time to walk the night ;
 And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,
 Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
 Are BURNT and PURG'D away.*

Act 1. S. 5.

Ham. He poisons him i'the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is *extant*, and *written* in very choice Italian.

Act 3. S. 2.

This may perhaps allude to the *letters* said to have been written from Mary to Bothwell.

The delay of revenge in Hamlet is worse managed in the play than in the chronicle: perhaps Shakspeare had in mind the backwardness of James to revenge

revenge his father's murder. Hamlet at last kills Claudius not to revenge his father's, but his own, cause. Bothwell died about the time this tragedy was written.

Yet I

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a King,
Upon whose property, and most dear life,
A damn'd defeat was made.

Act 2. S. 2.

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge.

I do not know

Why yet I live to say, "This thing's to do;"
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,
To do't.

How stand I then

That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep.

Act 4. S. 4.

Great and various were the exertions made by Elizabeth in the course of her reign for the augmentation of her warlike resources. The art of making gunpowder was introduced, *brazen cannon* were cast, and *many ships were built* ⁹.

Eliza-

⁹ Camden, p. 388. Strype, Vol 1. p. 230—336—337.

Elizabeth was likewise involved in wars and troubles, which had their origin in the death of Lord Darnley. These circumstances, no doubt, were in the Poet's mind when he wrote the following lines:

Tell me, &c.

—why such daily *cast of brazen cannon,*
And foreign mart for implements of war?
Why such *imprefs of ship-wrights?* &c.

* * *

—————this portentous figure
Comes armed thro' our watch; so like *the King*
That was and is the question of these wars.

ACT I. S. I.

Elizabeth interfered both in the marriages of Mary and of her son James. She broke off the intended match between Mary and the Arch-duke Charles, that between James and the eldest daughter of the King of Denmark, and wished to have prevented the marriage of James and the Princess Anne of Denmark: these marriages suited not the policy of Elizabeth, and the following lines, as spoken of Hamlet, would then exactly suit her sentiments:

His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and the health of the whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body,
Whereof he is the head: Then if he says he loves you,

E

It

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
 As he, in his particular act and place,
 May give his saying deed; which is no further,
 Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.

Nor would the following lines be unpleasing to the ear of her, who had failed in her endeavours to prevent James's marriage, and was displeas'd with the court of Denmark :

Meet it is I set it down,
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
 At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark.

The manner of Hamlet's return, and the King's practising on him after his return from the projected embassy to England, is the alteration and introduction of the Poet.

James on his return from Denmark was conspired against by many of the Nobles.

Here again are traces of the strong impression which all the circumstances relative to Mary, and those concerned in her tragic story, had made upon the mind of the poet.

Among other remarkable coincidences between the plot of Hamlet and the circumstances attendant on Mary and James, we may enumerate that of Dr.

Wotton being sent into Scotland by Elizabeth as a spy upon the actions of James, and who afterwards entered into a conspiracy to deliver him into her hands. This is pretty much the part which Rosencrantz and Guildenstern play against Hamlet. Yet this similitude appears too palpable for Shakspeare to have introduced designedly, as it must have given offence to Elizabeth, and it is likewise too obvious to have been introduced without his observing it¹.

There is one circumstance attending the publication of this play, and which belongs to this alone of all our Author's dramas published in his life time: viz. that
- it

¹ The outlines of the character of Horatio may be found in the Chronicle and History of Hamblett, but it was perhaps finished and coloured from the Duke of Lenox, James's favourite during his minority in Scotland. Of James's friendship for this nobleman Dr. Robertson gives the following account:

“As he was the earliest, and best beloved, he was, perhaps, the most deserving, though not the most able of all James's favourites. The warmth and tenderness of his master's affection for him was not abated by death itself. By many acts of kindness and generosity towards his posterity, the King not only did great honour to the memory of Lenox, but set his own character in one of its most favourable points of view.”

Hist. of Scotland, Vol. 2. p. 99. 14th Edⁿ.

If these instances prove nothing else, they at least point out the remarkable coincidences of the History and Tragedy, and the extreme aptness of the former for the construction of the latter.

It may be observed likewise that the incident of Polonius being murdered in the presence of the Queen in her closet, bears a resemblance to the murder of Rizzio in Mary's apartment.

it was augmented to near as much again in the second as in the first edition, which is supposed to have been published in 1602. Unfortunately there is no copy of that known to be extant. The second, published in 1604, sets forth in the title-page that it was "*newly* imprinted, and enlarged to almost as much again as it was, according to the true and perfect copy." No doubt there was some particular reason, for either suppressing a part of the original at the first publication, or enlarging his design at the second, whichever it was that caused this difference between the two editions; and, could the first edition be discovered, it would most probably throw some new light on this hypothesis.

The last circumstance to be noticed, trifling as it is, is the Queen in the play dying by poison, of which her husband is the involuntary administerer. He is the cause and punisher of her guilt: another hit of the poet's.

Bothwell had poisoned Mary's cup of happiness, and it was her marriage with him which was the cause of her sorrows and her death.

A remark may be here made upon a note of Mr. Malone's. which may perhaps be considered as favouring this hypothesis. He supposes the Winter's Tale to have been planned before, but not written till after, the death of Elizabeth.

“ Sir William Blackstone (says he) has pointed out a passage in the first act of this play, which had escaped my observation, and which, as he justly observes, furnishes a proof that it was not written till after the death of Queen Elizabeth :

—————If I could find example
Of thousands, that had struck anointed Kings,
And flourish'd after, I'd not do it; but since
Nor brass, nor stone, nor parchment, bears not one,
Let villainy itself forswear it.

These lines (he adds) could never have been intended for the ear of her who had deprived the Queen of Scots of her life. To the son of Mary they could not but have been agreeable.”

To this it may be replied that perhaps the passage was levelled against Mary, who had attempted to recover her own rights by cutting off her persecutor, and it applies as well, or better to her, having suffered by it, than to Elizabeth. Some passages in Hamlet of the same nature with this, and which were certainly written after Mary's death, and while Elizabeth was alive, may tend to strengthen this opinion :

The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from 'noyance; but much more,
That spirit, upon whose weal depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulph, doth draw

What's

What's near it, with it: it is a massy wheel,
 Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
 To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
 Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
 Each small annexment, petty consequence,
 Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
 Did the King sigh, but with a general groan.

Act 3. S. 3.

There's such divinity doth hedge a King,
 That treason can but peep to what it would,
 And little of his will.

Act 4. S. 5.

The Author has now gone through the arguments he purposed in favour of his hypothesis; some of them are strong, some slighter, and some perhaps merely the arguments of one wishing to establish an hypothesis; yet, taken together, they form such a body of proof, that the readers, must, surely, by this time, be as fully convinced of the truth of it as the Author himself. They must at least allow—if they will not assent to Shakspeare's having an intention to censure Mary—that the coincidences of what the Poet added, as well as the incidents of the original story, are uncommon.

Shakspeare, it is well known, was a court poet. He took every opportunity of flattering Elizabeth. He complimented her, at the expence of her rival, in the Midsummer Night's dream:

He

He wrote his Richard the Third with all the prejudices, and agreeable to all the legends of the Lancastrians :

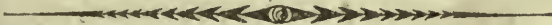
His Merry Wives of Windfor is said to have been written expressly at her desire :

His Henry the Eighth is profuse in flattery,

And the Winter's Tale is written to exculpate her mother.

It is plain therefore that Shakspeare would have been happy in any opportunity of flattering his Queen, by feeding her hatred against Mary. Yet afterwards, when James came to the throne, he paid his court to him :

He apologized for his unbending manner in Measure for Measure, and inserted a compliment to him in Henry the Eighth, at the very time he was heaping praises upon the murderer of his mother. We cannot then suppose him to have been restrained from calumniating Mary either from motives of delicacy or consistency.



These observations, before they went to the press, were shewn to a gentleman, for whose abilities and critical acumen the author entertains the highest respect. He gave it as his opinion, " That Shakspeare had

had no design of censuring Mary when he wrote this Tragedy. A story and play, he observed, had already been taken from the same subject, and, being popular, naturally induced him to fix upon it for the plot of a Tragedy. From the similarity of the stories, the circumstances attached to the incidents of Mary's life, being so fresh in remembrance, naturally suggested themselves, and he perhaps drew his characters from those concerned in her story, without any intention of affixing reproach to her name. Had he designed to criminate her, he would have made the Queen both a more prominent, and a more depraved character. That if any particular allusion was designed, it must have been rather to exculpate than blame her. The natural benevolence of his disposition would restrain him from censure, and the tenderness² with which he

has

² I am far from thinking that Shakspeare has treated the Queen with tenderness. In the closet scene Hamlet treats her with uncommon severity for a son, and nothing but the Queen's accumulated guilt can justify such bitter reproaches. This scene may be considered as a representation of the difference between Mary and her son.

Ham. Leave wringing of your hands : peace, sit you down,
 And let me *wring your heart* : for so I shall,
 If it be made of penetrable stuff ;
 If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
 That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
 In noise so rude against me ?

Ham. Such an *act*,
 That blurs the grace and blush of modesty :
 Calls *virtue*, HYPOCRITE ; takes off the rose

has treated the character of the Queen, and by *not* representing her as accessory to the murder of her huf-

*From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there ; makes marriage vows
As false as DICERS' OATHS. O, such a deed,
As from the body of CONTRACTION plucks
THE VERY SOUL ; and sweet RELIGION makes
A rhapsody of words : &c.*

Queen. Ay me, what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index ?

Act 3. S. 4.

This last speech of the Queen looks as if she *expected some NEW accusation*. Her incestuous marriage was publicly known and reprobated, and she could not be surprized at Hamlet's reproving her for that. But, from this *tremendous index*, she expects some more aggravated guilt to be charged against her.

Hamlet proceeds to his accusation.

Look here, upon this picture, and on this, &c.

And is only interrupted in this bitter reproof by the appearance of his Father's Ghost, who comes to remind him of his promised revenge on his murderer, and to bid him "step between his mother and her fighting soul." Perhaps it is this interference alone which, amid this "whirlwind of his passion," prevents him charging his mother with his father's murder.

A further confirmation of Hamlet's firm persuasion of his mother's guilt—if proof be yet wanting—may be had from his soliloquy at the end of S. 2. Act 3.

Unless he was fully persuaded of her being accessory to his father's murder, he need not fear lest his "heart should lose its nature," and, "the soul of *Nero* enter his firm bosom : " her incestuous marriage he had tamely submitted to, and, if it deserved his punishing, it should have been done long before. But now, having discovered a more flagrant crime than the former, and being in such a disposition of mind that he

husband, appears rather like an apology than a censure."

In reply to this it may be said that of all Shakspeare's indirect allusions, whether complimentary or severe, this is the most pointed. Hermione is a far less prominent character than Gertrude, and less pains are taken to prove her innocence than to expose the criminality of our Queen. With regard to the Queen's being accessary to the murder, as there are different opinions respecting it, those who suppose her guilty will side with this hypothesis, those who believe her innocent will incline to the more favourable side.

The circumstance attending the great difference in the first and second editions of this play, may be accounted for, perhaps, in some measure between these two opinions. Shakspeare might design it originally as an undisguised crimination and publish it as such in 1602, but, when James came to the crown in 1603, the fear of his displeasure would induce him to alter it, and the present character from the edition of 1604,

if

could drink hot blood,
And do such business as the bitter day
Would quake to look on,

It requires all his fortitude to refrain from executing the just punishment she merits, and which his *nature* and the interdiction of his father conspire to prevent. He determines therefore only to *Speak* DAGGERS to her, not to use any;

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent.

if represented as innocent of the murder of her husband, may be softened down from an original, where the Queen was to “see the inmost part of her.” And the reason that no copy of the first edition is now extant, may be from a studious care taken to suppress a work which would give so much offence.

The following passage may be a part of what was added as a compliment to James :

The courtier's *soldier's*, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword ;
 The *expectancy* and rose of the fair state,
 The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
 The observ'd of all observers.

Act 3. S. 1.

It does not appear that Hamlet was a foldier, he was a student only at Wittenberg : James was a Soldier.

This “glass of fashion and mould of form” is likewise represented in Act 5. S. 2. as “fat and scant of breath.” Vide Mr. Steevens' note upon this passage, Malone, Vol. 9. p. 419.

Upon the whole, however opinions may vary respecting some circumstances, the Author flatters himself that no one will doubt, but that Mary (whether Shakspeare thought her guilty or innocent) was the original of his Queen.

He makes no doubt but much more might be brought in favour of the hypothesis, were he to search

after arguments ; but he is little read in the books of that period, and thinks sufficient time and pains have been already bestowed upon the subject.

Let not the reader of these pages think that the Author wishes to detract from the blazonry of fame, which must ever be inseparable from the name of Shakspeare. As a man he was subject to human failings, as a poet his imperfections; like foils, but set off the brilliancy of his beauties :

His eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
 Could glance from Heaven to earth, from earth to Heaven;
 And, as imagination bodied forth
 The forms of things unknown, his magic pen
 Turn'd them to shapes, and gave to airy nothing
 A local habitation and a name.

F I N I S.

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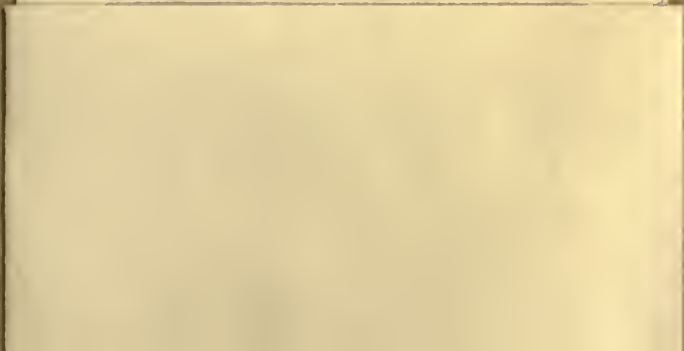
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