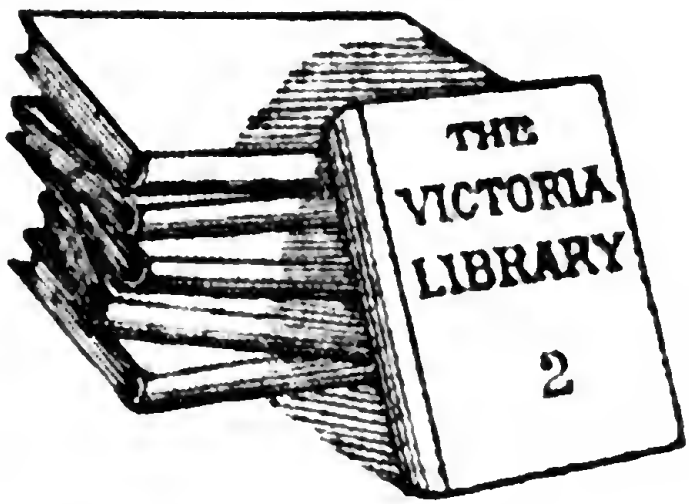
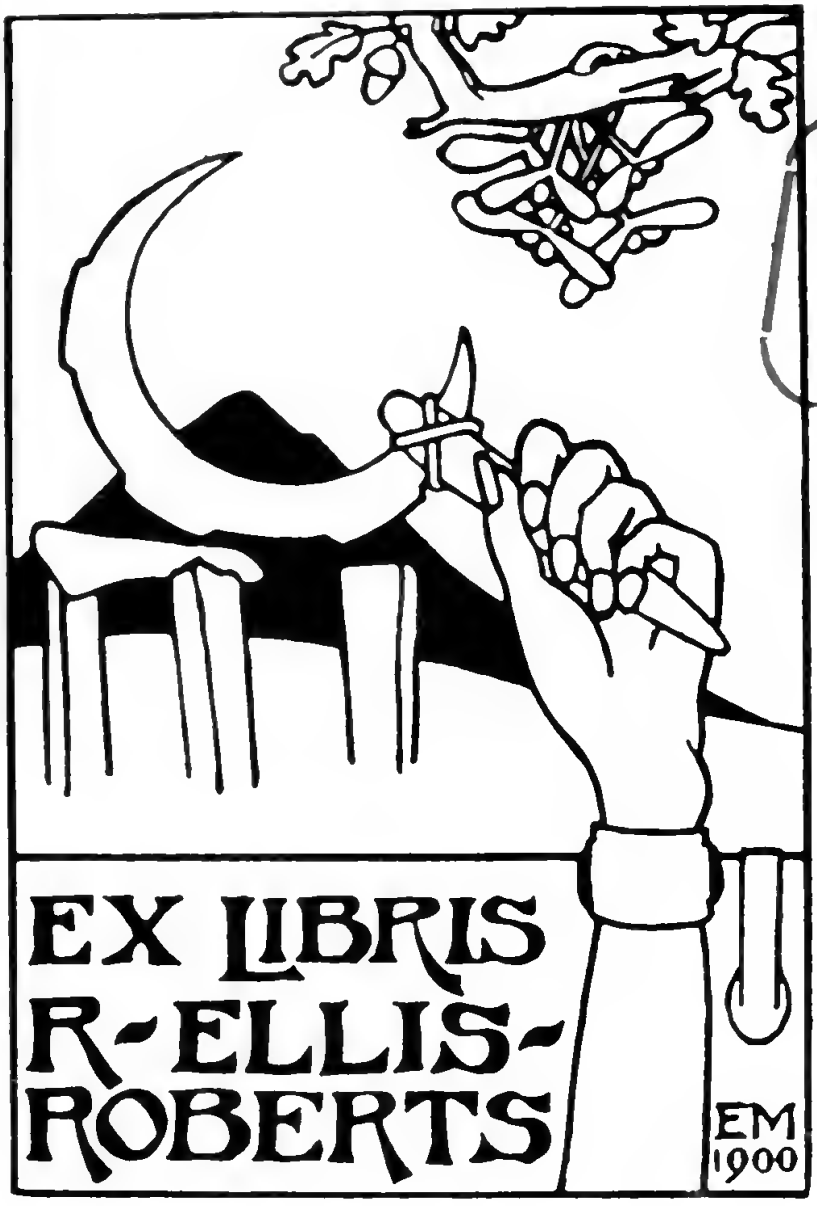
ENGLISH DRAMAS





Now Ready, price 1s., Vol. 2. of the

VICTORIA LIBRARY

A NEW SERIES of STANDARD and POPULAR WORKS in all departments of Literature, to be issued monthly, in handy pocket volumes, well printed and neatly bound in whole cloth.

The Series will comprise Selected Works, in Poetry and Prose, from our Classic Literature, Biographies of Men and Women who have distinguished themselves in Literature, Science or Art, including great Statesmen, Generals, Admirals, Explorers, Inventors, Philanthropists, &c., &c.; Histories of Important Events and Epochs, Descriptions of Places of Note and Interest; with occasional Volumes of approved Fiction.

Vol. 1.—BRITISH ORATORY,

Containing Six famous Speeches, viz.—

Grattan on Irish Liberty,
Pitt on Union,
Peel on the Corn Laws,
Bright on Reform,
Jones on Democracy,
AND
Gladstone on Parliamentary Oaths.

Vol. 2.—OLD ENGLISH DRAMAS.

The Birth of Merlin. | **Thomas, Lord Cromwell.**

London:

L. REEVE & CO., 5, Henrietta St., Covent Garden.

OLD ENGLISH DRAMAS.

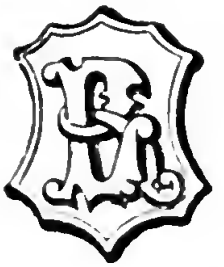

THE
VICTORIA
LIBRARY
2

OLD ENGLISH DRAMAS.

EDITED, WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTIONS, BY

T. EVAN JACOB, B.A.

LATE SCHOLAR OF ST. CATHARINE'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.



LONDON:

L. REEVE & CO.,

5, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN

1889.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, LIMITED,
ST. JOHN'S HOUSE, CLERKENWELL ROAD.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION

TO

THE BIRTH OF MERLIN.

THE TEXT OF THE PRESENT EDITION.

This play was first published by Kirkman and Marsh, in 1662, one of the most slovenly editions that ever issued from the press. The blank verse is printed therein as prose, and the task of restoring the original verse is by no means easy as the orthography is anything but trustworthy, words being abbreviated where the verse required the full form and *vice versâ;* the tenses altered; explanatory words incorporated with the text, and the stage directions sometimes tacked on to the dialogue. In 1869 this play appeared in a volume entitled *Doubtful Plays* of the Tauchnitz edition. The text of the present edition is that of the edition of 1662, but, as this series is, in the main, intended for the million, a compromise has been attempted in this way. The spelling has been modernized, and the obvious misprints and errors of the original text have been corrected.

With these exceptions, scholars may rely on this edition as an accurate reprint of the edition of 1662. In the task of restoring the text, the editor has derived material assistance from the German translation of the play in Ludwig Tieck's *Shakespeare's Vorschule* (1823). In this admirable version the clown is permitted to speak once or twice in blank verse, and the words in question will scan no doubt, as a great deal of prose will; but we have tied the clown to prose on all occasions, as the clowns seldom talked in blank verse, which the Elizabethan dramatists seem to consider as too respectable an instrument for these interesting gentry.

ANALYSIS OF THE PLAY.

The play opens admirably. Donobert, a British nobleman, had two daughters, Constantia and Modestia, the contrast between whose characters is well drawn. Constantia accepted the hand of Cador, Earl of Cornwall. Lord Edwin, the son of the Earl of Gloster, endeavoured to persuade her sister to consent to become his wife. Modestia was of a pious temperament. Success did not crown Edwin's negotiations, for all that she could be induced to promise him was that, if she ever changed her virgin name, it should be for his; but no sooner was her suitor's back turned than she broke out into a fervent eulogy of a nun's life: she said,—

"These models of the world, weak man and woman,
Should have their souls, their making, life and being,
To some more excellent use," than marriage.

She concluded her soliloquy by vowing to dedicate her love to

"that Power
That gave to man his being, speech and wisdom,
Gave it for thankfulness."

In the second scene we learn that the loss of Prince Uter, King Aurelius' brother, was filling the whole court with concern and anxiety. In the midst of these regrets, fears and attempts at cheerfulness, the Saxon Ambassadors arrived tc negotiate a thirty days' truce. The Britons, to a man, were averse to all negotiations with the pagans; and in this they were supported by a reverend hermit who by his miraculous powers had enabled the routed British troops to rally and defeat their Saxon conquerors. King Aurelius was neutral, but willing to listen to the conditions which the Saxons were prepared to accept. But the mouthpiece of the Saxon embassy was Artesia, a great beauty and "a moving orator." Aurelius was by her thrown into a struggle between patriotism and love, in which love asserted, as it generally does, its irresistible might. The enmity of the Saxons was forgotten, the tongue of his councillors peremptorily

silenced, the duty he owed to his country forgotten, as he addressed his enchantress :—

" Most fair Artesia, see the king descends
To give thee welcome with these warlike Saxons,
And now on equal terms both sues and grants.
Instead of truce, let a perpetual league
Seal our united blood in holy marriage."

The hermit is treated with the respect due to his sacred office and great service. " Stand further from destruction," says the hermit : the king replies, " Speak as a man and I shall hope to obey thee." The hermit's denunciations could not shake the obstinacy of the royal captive, who thought to silence this sacred Jeremiah by a most naïve and charming appeal to his manhood : he said :—

" Cast but thine eye
Upon this beauty. Do it : I will forgive thee,
Though jealousy in others finds no pardon :
Then say thou dost not love ; I shall then swear
Thou art immortal and no earthly man."

The passage of the king from the moorings of patriotism and hatred of the Saxon name to forgetfulness of his duty as a king and to a complete surrender of his entire being, body and soul, to the fair ambassador, as well as Artesia's dignity amid the insults of the British king's councillors, her clever diplomacy and her self-confidence growing as the monarch's love became more and

more manifest, are so admirably portrayed as to entirely deserve Tieck's praise—"This scene is masterly" ("Diese scene ist meisterhaft").

The second act brings the reader face to face with a fresh and genuine comic character. A demon Incubus had fallen in love with a daughter of Eve, named Joan of the Gotoot family, residing at Carmarthen, and, in consequence of what had passed, Joan was now wandering about the woods where she had once met her lover. Her companion was a hilarious, but none the less sympathetic, wag of a brother. As poor Joan knew not her lover's name, could, in fact, only tell the clown that her seducer "had a most rich attire, a fair hat and feather, a gilt sword, and most excellent hangers," the search soon resolved itself into an examination of every "two-legged creature" whom they met, "for the child must have a father." The first person met in the woods by Joan and her brother was none other than Prince Uter, who was searching in the same place for some great beauty who there passed him and ran away with his heart. The prince is in the insanity of love, and longs for some listener to whom he might praise the unknown lady's charms :—

"Could I but meet a man to tell her beauties,
These trees would bend their tops to kiss the air
That from my lips should give her praises up."

Aurelius has surrendered himself more and more

into the hands of the Saxons, who have already engrossed the larger share of public offices, and have been the means of disbanding the British army under Edol, an impetuous but brave Celt, who, in argument, could no more control his tongue than he could keep his sword from killing on the field of battle. Edol will not see the king, but freely opens his mind to the British statesmen, whom he rates for not killing that woman. The astonished statesmen exclaim, "My lord!" But Edol stands to his guns: he replies,—

> "The great devil take me, quick! Had I been by,
> And all the women of the world were barren,
> She should have died ere he had married her
> On these conditions."

Edol then left the Court, and made for Chester, whence he might be able to lend aid to his country in her troubles.

After the hermit had nonplussed the Saxon magician in an extremely effective scene from a dramatic point of view, the long-lost prince Uter is announced, who is cordially welcomed by Aurelius as though he had received him back from the dead. The king asks Artesia to give his brother welcome. She did so. Uter thus began his reply:—

> "'Tis she;
> 'Tis she, I swear! Oh, ye good gods, 'tis she!"

He thought he had at length attained his object, eagerly sought the beauty's name, and expressed to Aurelius the fond hopes he cherished with regard to her. The king takes Uter's words as compliments to Artesia, without perceiving, or without caring to perceive, where they had their source, and observes,—

"She is all the good or virtue thou canst name,
My wife, my queen."

Never was love's garrulous eloquence so effectively extinguished as by those four words, "my wife, my queen." Artesia, the unknown beauty he was searching for, was married! The moral being of Prince Uter is there and then divided against itself, virtue and love struggling within him, love obtaining a powerful ally from Artesia's looks, manner, and her words, who, when retiring from company with her husband, said to Uter:—

"Could you speak so,
I would not fear how much my grief did grow."

And she wrung him by the hand. While the prince was pondering these things in his mind, and asking himself whether Artesia may not have repented of her marriage and was in love with him, and while he, virtue triumphing and conquering evil thoughts and evil desires, was singing the song of victory,—

"Heaven pardon me!
She's banished from my bosom now for ever,"—

Artesia's gentlewoman came to the prince, gave him a ring, a present of affection from her mistress. Was it love, or was it mischief, that caused the queen to act thus towards her brother-in-law? Uter resolves to sift the matter to the bottom. The gentlewoman promises to effect a meeting between the two. The scene closes with a soliloquy of Uter's, and it is impossible to tell the state of his heart and mind. Is it passion or virtue, love or mischief? It is a combination of all, but which predominates there is no telling. Literature can show few, if any, scenes more effective—none where the effect has been gained by more simple means. It is a triumph of artless art.

In the third act we find Modestia immovably vowed to single life. Her father, relying on the power of envy, arranged the marriage ceremony of her sister so as to arouse that feeling in Modestia's heart. But honey cannot be extracted from a stone. Modestia did not envy Constantia, but she was hurt that, according to orders, her dear sister passed without speaking. She would be more charitable. The sisters converse. Old Donobert is beginning to flatter himself that his trick is working the desired effect. Constantia's arguments for marriage are what might be expected to have most influence on a woman's heart. She asks Modestia,—

"What say you to that, sister,
The joy of children, a blest mother's name?"

Modestia answers characteristically, and concludes her pious pessimism—

"At best we do but bring forth heirs to die
And fill the coffins of our enemy."

The effect of Donobert's trick was the reverse of what he had anticipated. She who was to be conquered by envy conquered by her virtue. She who was to conquer was conquered. Instead of having two daughters married, Donobert lost both, for both went to a nunnery.

Joan and her brother are still prosecuting their search. They encounter a courtier, Sir Nicodemus Nothing. The dialogue between the Gotoots and this worthy is comedy of the highest order. Though his advice was, under the circumstances, of no value, yet he kept the clown's two angels, the loss of which rendered it impossible for the Gotoots to continue their search. It was not necessary. The father of Joan's child voluntarily came forward, ushered in by the pomp of sonorous poetry as became the dignity of his satanic majesty, took measures to have Joan properly attended to in her confinement, and found a suitable midwife in Hecate. During her preternatural confinement, Joan lost sight of her brother, who was very anxious, until he saw her approach him, accompanied by her baby, Merlin, who walked by her side, a beard on his face, a book in his hand. After the clown had been introduced to his brother-in-law, who created

on him an impression the reverse of favourable, the Gotoots and Merlin, acting under the directions given them by the Devil, proceed towards Wales, where Merlin may have an opportunity of showing his skill.

Meanwhile Ostorius and Octa, the Saxon chiefs, are busily translating their plots into action; sending the disgraced magician Proximus to urge King Vortiger to join his forces with the Saxons with all possible expedition; and bringing their own guards nearer the royal palace, wherein Artesia and Uter were enjoying that conference which the queen's gentlewoman had negotiated between them. It was a most dramatic conference most effectively described. Even yet the prince was hovering between virtue and love. Artesia, the reader perceives, cherished in her heart nothing but mischief, but, even in this scene, she wears the mask of love with consummate skill. What can surpass this instance? She kissed the prince, and then darkly hinted that, if she were convinced of his faith, she would yield her honour to him. Uter declared that he would suffer martyrdom sooner than betray her. Enough: Artesia was satisfied, and immediately called on Aurelius for help. Uter resolved to end her treachery in her blood. Perceiving his intention and alarm, she asks astonished,—

"How now? What troubles you? Is this you, sir,
That but even now would suffer martyrdom

To win your hopes? And is there now such terror
In names of men to fright you?"

Uter was satisfied, and, his virtuous asides notwithstanding, he clearly showed that virtue was not yet restored to its sovereignty over him. As soon as his declarations of love became, if overheard, compromising enough, Artesia, in real earnest, exclaimed, "Treason, treason!" The Saxons rush in, but Uter was rescued by the British, under the command of Edol, who had armed his retainers in defence of his country in spite of the prohibition which the king, now the tool of the Saxons, had issued. After some military blustering on the part of Edol, the two brothers Aurelius and Uter separate, the one casting in his lot with the Saxons, the other, like the patriot that he was, devoting himself to the defence of the Britons, and so this most powerful act ends.

The fourth act shows us Merlin, attended by a little antic spirit, nominally under the protection of Uncle Gotoot, journeying Walesward, and on the journey Merlin and his antic play tricks on the clown, who expresses the hope that his cousin's beard had not overgrown his honesty. Immediately after this boyishness, Merlin gave a display of his preternatural powers by exposing the clown's lucrative motives, and by detailing the state of things at the court of King Vortiger. Almost ere his uncle had ceased

admiring his prodigious knowledge, the boy-prophet expressed his apprehension of that Court where his blood was sought for, the blood of a child born without a father. While the clown was calming his fears, because nobody would take him with such a beard to be a child, Vortiger's messengers, sent to seek for such a fatherless child, came upon the party, who were soon after followed, on the same errand, by Vortiger and the magician Proximus. Merlin's mother was questioned concerning the birth of her son. She narrated, in the most natural and telling manner, the story of her fall, which having heard, Vortiger began to speculate on the nature of Joan's seducer. The boy-prophet, with great dignity, recalled the royal mind from such idle and irrelevant disquisitions about his father:—

"No matter who, my Lord; leave further quest,
Since 'tis as hurtful as unnecessary
More to enquire. Go to the cause, my Lord,
Why you have sought me thus."

The king explained, and Proximus, standing by, eagerly claimed the honour of having given that advice. Merlin, in turn, advised Proximus to write his epitaph, as there was only a minute betwixt him and death. The Saxon magician laughed, but a stone from the roof ended at the same time his laughter and life. The clown gave expression to the general wonder in these

words :—"Cousin Merlin, there's no more of this stone fruit ready to fall, is there? I pray give your uncle a little fair warning." Merlin then explained to Vortiger the reason how the night buried what was built of his castle in the day, reproved the king for murdering Constantius, and for inviting the Saxons, and foretold his doom.

Meanwhile Uter and his Britons were on the march against Vortiger, so that he might be crushed before the Saxons could effect a junction with him. A terrible meteor appeared in the sky which Merlin was sent for to interpret. Having looked at the blazing star, he wept, not only because he read its far-off record, but because at that very moment King Aurelius died, poisoned by Artesia. The Britons, advised by Merlin, marched, burning for revenge, against the Saxons.

The fifth act opens admirably. The Devil came to visit Joan again, she loathed him now. He pleaded that he was still the same, but she confessed that she was changed. From entreaty the Devil proceeded to threats: Joan begged death to come and release her. The furies and the devil-obeying spirits, at the word of command, assemble. Joan utters as piercing a prayer as was ever syllabled by the lips of penitence :—

"Help me, some saving hand!
If not too late, I cry: Let Mercy come.

That cold abstraction was deaf, but Merlin heard the cries of his mother and promptly came to her rescue, which he speedily effected, to his father's great disgust, who asked,—

"Reliev'st thou her to disobey thy father?"

Merlin's reply is beyond praise for its calm dignity and its elevation of thought:—

"Obedience is no lesson in your school.
Nature and kind to her commands my duty.
The part that you begot was against kind."

The Devil storms and threatens. Merlin exercises his spells against his father, a rock obediently opens its jaws and swallows the Devil, so that he shall never "touch a woman more." After this victory over his father, he turned to console his mother, for whom he offered a residence in Merlin's Bower, there by groans and sighs in solitude to purge her of the stains of sin, and over her remains he promised to raise a more than royal sepulchre, to wit, the megalithic enigma of Stonehenge.

The British troops defeated the Saxons, Ostorius slain, Octa fled, Artesia a captive. The king called in accordance with Merlin's interpretation of the blazing star, Uter Pendragon, is seated on his throne, before him the new dragon standard, and his own new dragon shield, and receives the congratulations of his nobles. To make his joy complete he demands the in-

stant punishment of Artesia. One suggests that she should be burned. Edol extends his vindictiveness even to the dead body. The king decides that her doom shall be to be buried alive. But the coolest and least concerned of all the actors was Artesia : she laughs at their refinement of vindictiveness, and asks derisively whether the Britons had not a better torture-monger than Edol. When she heard her doom from the prince's lips, she coolly observed :—

"Then I'll starve death when he comes for his prey,
And i' th' meantime I'll live upon your curses."

Amid cries of "Away with her," she was conducted to her living tomb, dauntless woman, glorying in the crime she had done, regretting what she had failed to do, on behalf of her loved Saxons,—

"With joy, my best of wishes is before ;
The brother's poisoned, but I wanted more."

Here the play should end, and, though what follows is not much, yet it is both outside the action of the drama and exceedingly flat as an ending to a play of such superior excellence in general, and as a conclusion to the masterly scene in which Artesia meets her horrid doom as unconcerned as she would go to bed.

MERITS OF THE PLAY.

The prominent features of the play are naturalness and simplicity, which never abandon the author, even where the effect is the result of consummate art. The plot is most ingenious and skilfully constructed. The reader's interest in the chief characters is maintained from the beginning to the end. The situations are extremely effective and dramatic, but there is never a deviation from nature or any straining after effect. In order to perceive the truth of this, let the reader turn to act iv. sc. 5, where Merlin interprets the meaning of the blazing star. The clown was getting obstructive, so that his nephew was obliged to tie his uncle's tongue, which, until released by Merlin, could utter nothing more than, "Hum! hum! hum!" These exclamations of the clown are introduced most effectively, both as pauses in Merlin's long speech, and as notes of admiration at the contents of that remarkable interpretation. The effect on Uter of those simple words, "My wife, my queen" has been already pointed out. To bring out the effective simplicity of our poet still more, compare the speech Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Henry V. before Harfleur and Prince Uter's simple statement to the inquiries of his nobles respecting Vortiger's fate, act iv. sc. 4:—

"Proud Vortiger beat down by Edol's sword

Was rescued by the following multitudes:
And now for safety's fled unto a castle
Here standing on the hill: but I have sent
A cry of hounds as violent as hunger
To break his stony walls."

Henry V.'s speech almost makes one laugh—it is bombastic: Uter's enlists respect—it is the speech of a natural man who means what he says. There are many poetical gems scattered up and down this play, such as Modestia's soliloquy (act i. sc. 1), in which she concludes that man and woman were born for higher purposes than love and marriage; Prince Uter's apostrophe to the beauty of his unknown charmer (act ii. sc. 1); Modestia's pessimism (act iii. sc. 2); Joan's narrative of her youthful pride and her fall (act iv. sc. 1); Merlin's answer to his father, when the latter rebuked him for disobedience (act v. sc. 1).

The characters are admirably drawn. Modestia is a fine representative of the triumph of the spiritual over the corporeal. Artesia lives for others and for country; hers the impersonal existence of the true patriot: and, though her patriotism led her to commit a flagrant crime, yet, when she finally leaves the stage, dauntless amid the barbarous vindictiveness of her enemies, smiling as she walks, in the bloom of her beauty, to the tomb—all for country's sake, she awakens sympathy in the reader. Prince Uter is an

admirable psychological study; a perfect picture of those who have been dazzled by that beauty which speaks from the eye to the eye, only to be maddened at perceiving the amazing corruption of the beauty's heart; of those who have gazed on the luscious apple whose rind contains nothing but ashes. Like Uter, these lovers in the morning sing, under the trees of the forest, passion's exaggerated lyrics in praise of their beauties, while, in the evening, they bury them alive or hang them to the trees that heard the eulogy.

But Merlin! Who can worthily describe this wonderful creation? Note his character—a baby with the beard and wisdom of a man; a child-prophet, a boy wonder-worker; natural on the mother's side, on his father's preternatural. Mark his actions and words, and it will be observed that they do violence to none of the apparently contradictory elements which constitute his being. He needs no cradle or nursing: the first time he appears before the audience he is reading. On the road with his uncle, he plays as mortal children play; the next moment he soars on the wings of prophecy, only to descend, soon after, to fear for his little life as other children would fear in similar circumstances. He corrects a king's inquisitiveness, and respectfully begs his Majesty to come to the question. Now he dreaded this king; now he fearlessly rebuked him for his crimes, and related to the monarch his doom, a doom not always safe to

utter in royal ears. Above the need of earthly protectors, yet he weeps for the untimely end of good Aurelius. He had cost his mother nothing to bring up, nor was he likely to need her future protection, but, like a dutiful son, he ran to her rescue in the day of danger more promptly than mercy, and put an insurmountable barrier between the teacher of disobedience and woman from that time forth for ever. It may be pretty safely asserted that literature can show no more perfect creation than the Merlin of our author, and the means adopted for that purpose are so simple and so natural that one is tempted to say, however Hibernian the expression may sound, that even its preternaturalness is exceedingly natural.

WHO WAS THE AUTHOR?

In the edition of 1662, the play is ascribed to W. Rowley and W. Shakespeare. This W. Rowley was an actor, and produced many plays, either in collaboration with others or composed by himself. Four of his own plays have been preserved, viz. *A Woman never Vext*, *A Match at Midnight*, *All's Lost by Lust*, *A Shoemaker a Gentleman*. There are two views respecting the authorship of our play, one of which is that of the edition of 1662, the other that of English critics from Malone to the present day. Ludwig Tieck is inclined to accept the Rowley and Shakespeare authorship. Professor Ward denies

that Shakespeare had anything to do with it. I agree with the learned professor, but I am bound to say that my agreement with him is a case of *cum Wardio non propter Wardium*, believing as I do with Tieck that it would be no degradation to Shakespeare to have assisted in the composition of this play. ("Dass sich Shakespeare wohl, ohne sich zu erniedrigen, mit ihm vereinigen konnte.") On the other hand, I cannot think that W. Rowley was capable, unassisted, of producing it, nay, I doubt whether W. Rowley had any more to do with it than Shakespeare, and for the following reasons:—

W. Rowley was a writer of comedies; on other dramatic ground he never ventured, unless supported by another writer. But in our play the serious parts are far more numerous and, to the action, far more important than the comedy, of which the clown is practically the sole representative. Further, the best of W. Rowley's comedies is admitted to be the *Woman never Vext*, an excellent play, to be sure, but in which we cannot discern the slightest trace of the hand or hands that wrote the *Birth of Merlin*. The latter play is natural, as we said, even in its preternaturalness: the former is a perpetual violation of nature. The latter achieves its striking effects by the simplest means; the former attains the same end by means as complicated as unnatural. Nay, more; the clown in the *Woman never Vext* is elaborate and artificial, while the

Clown Gotoot talks his own language: the former exerts himself to be funny, the latter is funny by nature. The comedy of the *Woman never Vext* is, indeed, just what one might expect from the pen of an actor whose literary faculty was not equal to his perception of dramatic effectiveness: the comedy of our play is the natural production of a literary genius. If this criticism be sound, as I believe it is sound, the name of the author of the *Birth of Merlin* is neither W. Rowley nor W. Shakespeare.

THE LANGUAGE OF OUR AUTHOR.

External evidence wanting, recourse must be had to internal evidence. The language of our author proves him to be a sound classical scholar. Merlin's magic formula (act vi. sc. 1) is couched in elegant Latinity. Up and down the play there are not wanting indications that a classical training had influenced the style and diction of our author. The use of the abstract for the concrete is not only frequent, but, unless I am mistaken, the abstractions are particularly Greek, e.g.—

(i) "Give way
And life to this abortive birth now coming."
(Act iii. sc. 3.)

(ii) "The mother of a fame, shall never die."
(Act v. sc. 1.)

We meet with instances of the construction *κατὰ σύνεσιν*; e.g. :—

". . . the white horror; who now, knit together,
Have driven and shut you up in these wild mountains."

(Act iv. sc. 1.)

Not to mention phrases which are the least doubtful with regard to the correct explanation thereof, this play presents us with the following sentence, an unquestionable Hellenism :—

"What's mine in her, speaks yours."

(Act i. sc. 1.)

We see the influence of the classical languages on our poet in the use of single words, as in the word *local* in this line :—

"And fix thee ever in the local fire."

(Act v. sc. 1.)

The language, therefore, and style of our author exclude Shakespeare, and, to judge from his own plays, W. Rowley as well, from the authorship of the *Birth of Merlin*.

THE AUTHOR'S OPINIONS.

One is struck with the high moral tone that, speaking generally, pervades this play. A life of holy seclusion from the world is warmly praised, if, indeed, it be not regarded as the

ideal life. The hermit and Modestia are everywhere treated with marked respect and reverence. Sympathy is, indeed, enlisted for Donobert, whose hopes of a posterity are nipped by the spiritual devotion of his daughters, but not a word or phrase is used that can by any ingenuity be twisted to convey disapprobation of their conduct. When the resolution of the daughters carried them at length within the walls of the nunnery whose gates shut them out for ever from the world, Cador, who was all but married to one of them, and who saw them enter the monastery "secluded from the world and men for ever," does not inveigh against the sisters, but rather looks upon them as having done a deed that required more than ordinary virtue to perform; and, speaking for himself and Lord Edwin, he says, "'Tis both our griefs we cannot," i.e. like them, seclude ourselves from the world and men. The spirit of rationalism which was spreading at the time when the play was written was to the author an abomination. To him it was "Atheism," and to him Atheism was founded on falsehood. In politics he was an advocate of the opinion that to the king's will there was no check known. Aurelius married a pagan. It was, even from the writer's standpoint, a very wrong thing to do. But all the king's councillors are represented, in the scene with Edol, as being unanimous in their opinion that they neither could, nor dared, oppose the

royal will. Even Edol recognized the absolute power of the king when he declared that, if he were on the spot, he would have prevented the marriage: how? by controlling the king? No, but by killing the pagan woman. Aurelius suffered for the impolitic step he took, but not at the hands of his subjects. He was punished by the Almighty, who alone could punish His anointed one.

THE DATE OF THE PLAY.

Tieck, thinking that our play is an early work of Shakespeare's, who, he believes, assisted W. Rowley to improve and prepare it for the stage towards the close of the great poet's life, assigns the date of the play to the year 1613 or thereabouts, for no other reason, apparently, than the fact that Shakespeare died next year. Now, although the play is called *The Birth of Merlin*, or *The Child has found his Father*, a far more suitable title for it, as estimated by the main action of the drama, would be *The Saxon Marriage*, or *The Pagan Marriage*. This is the backbone of the play, to which the story of Merlin is attached naturally, but as a subordinate part, while the part of the daughters of Donobert is to emphasize a principle of Church discipline which, unless the play was written for a purpose, is irrelevant, as, beautiful though many of those religious scenes are, it is a dead weight on

the action of the drama—an artistic failure which can hardly be explained, except on the hypothesis that this play was written for a political and ecclesiastical object; for we take it that our author was too natural and simple in his poetical taste, and too impeccable in his intuitive perception of dramatic unity, to sacrifice what from his point of view must have been regarded as the highest art, unless for the attainment of another object, which from a, to him, higher standpoint, must have been considered of paramount importance.

May not the Saxon marriage of King Aurelius be typical of the Spanish marriage for which James I. struggled so much? Now, from 1614 to 1623, the political parties in England might be better described by the names Spanish and anti-Spanish than perhaps by any other names. In 1623 Prince Charles and Buckingham returned from Spain amid such rejoicings and enthusiasm as were seldom witnessed in England, the Spanish marriage being completely knocked on the head. If our hypothesis be correct, the date of this play is to be sought somewhere about this period, 1614-23.

The ecclesiastical object, may it not have been an advocacy of the opinions of the High Church party, which became a power in the State under the leadership of Laud, and which aimed at assimilating the Church service and discipline more and more with the Roman Catholic? Now

though the supremacy of this party in the Church dates from Laud, the party had been active before Laud stepped to the front. The ecclesiastical view also directs us to seek the date of the play in the same period, 1614-23, but much nearer 1623 than 1614.

In Act iii. scene 6, Prince Uter protests to Artesia that, if he should deny that he appreciated her confidence, he would be "more false than atheism can be." Now, the word "atheism" is not found in Shakespeare's works, nor can I recall any allusion or reference in his works to what was meant by the term. In his plays we come across the word *Infidel*—"Lorenzo and his infidel." "Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip" (*Merchant of Venice*); "Turks and infidels" (*Richard II.*), where the term denotes members of a non-Christian church, not those who denied all revealed religions. Shakespeare ceased to write after 1611, according to some after 1608. Probably the rationalist movement had not up to this time become of sufficient public importance to attract his attention. But soon after his death it became an important factor in English thought. In 1623 appeared the *De Veritate* of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, the first of our deistic philosophers. Now, Lord Herbert was anything but an atheist in the literal acceptation of that term. He was a rationalist, and nobody but an unfair opponent or a professional theologian would brand his speculations with the opprobrious mark of atheism.

Putting all these suggestions together—the pagan marriage; the joy of the people at the failure of the pagan intrigues, and the rescue of their prince; the strong High Church leanings of the author and his violent hatred of the spirit of rationalism which was then spreading among English thinkers, and bearing in mind that the first deistical publication appeared in this country in 1623, in which year also the Prince of Wales returned, amid the enthusiastic rejoicings of the people, from his perilous Spanish journey—we are inclined to think that this play first saw the light in 1623-24.

THE AUTHOR.

The name of Shakespeare, attached to the edition of 1662, appears to us to be nothing more than a recognition of the merits of the play, and W. Rowley did not possess, as far as is known, the qualifications of our author, who was a sound classical scholar, and probably a clergyman. But how came the name of W. Rowley to be connected with the play? If our conjecture respecting the date of the play be well founded, only thirty-nine years at most elapsed between its first production and the edition of 1662, while W. Rowley was alive in 1637, in which year he married. But nothing can well be more certain than that W. Rowley could not write this play. Now, there was another dramatist of this period,

named Ralph Rowley; he was a clergyman; "a rare scholler of learned Pembroke Hall, in Cambridge;" and deemed by Francis Meres, Master of Arts of both Universities, one of England's best writers of comedy. In Ralph Rowley we think that the author of the *Birth of Merlin* has been found, and an explanation arrived at of the ascription of the play to W. Rowley, who was a popular actor and playwright at least as late as 1637, that is to say, within twenty-five years of the publication of Kirkman and Marsh's edition. It is necessary to add that Messrs. Cooper, in *Athenæ Cantabrigienses*, assign the death of Ralph Rowley to the year 1604. It is not clear how this date has been arrived at. But if it be even approximately correct, this date effectually cancels the claims of Ralph Rowley to be regarded as the author of the play, the date of which, we are persuaded, cannot be earlier than 1623-24.

THE VARIABLENESS OF THE LITERARY STANDARD.

Professor Ward, in his admirable volumes on English dramatic literature, though he warmly praises much of this play, calls it "rough and rude" in texture, and "coarse" in execution. Now, these epithets would apply equally to more than one play of Shakespeare's. Rough and rude! The people of the sixteenth and seven-

teenth centuries were less squeamish than we; were not afraid of the sound of a word so long as it expressed their meaning; and for this reason precisely their literature is more vigorous and natural, aye, more healthy than ours. The charge of coarseness is surely a slip, because the tone of the play is highly moral and religious. The clown does say "clownish" things; so do Shakespeare's clowns: but then plays are not condemned because the clown's flippancy offends the delicacy of our artificial century, any more than one virtuous character could redeem a really coarse play. The very phrases of our clown, which, it is presumed, offend Professor Ward's delicacy, were the phrases used in that age by high and low; were used by Princess Mary in a letter to the Queen Dowager in the reign of Edward the Sixth. But we maintain that our clown is not only comical but natural, and, if he were coarse but natural, it were better to put up with his coarseness than load literature with shams and unrealities. From a literary point of view there are only two legitimate ways of dealing with rude, rough, and coarse people; either let them speak their own rude, rough and coarse language, or eliminate them altogether. There is no third way: and it is better to have literature one-sided than unnatural.

CONCLUSION.

After reading the *Birth of Merlin* and finding

it to be so rich in plot, in execution so humorous and felicitous, Ludwig Tieck was surprised that it had not made more impression on the age in which it was produced, and that the English who, at the time when the distinguished critic wrote, were republishing many gems of their old literature, had not issued a popular edition of this admirable drama. It is to be hoped that this edition will meet the want here complained of, and bring to the knowledge of the people this unique literary production.

The notes are intended for the million, with the exception of one or two suggested emendations of the text, to which your attention, Mr. Critic, is respectfully called and,

"Si quid novisti rectius istis
Candidus imperti, si non his utere mecum."

T. EVAN JACOB.

London, 1889.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AURELIUS, King of Britain.
VORTIGER, King of Britain.
UTER PENDRAGON, Brother to Aurelius.
DONOBERT, A Nobleman, Father to Constantia and Modestia.
EARL OF GLOSTER, Father to Edwyn.
EDOL, EARL OF CHESTER, General to King Aurelius.
CADOR, Earl of Cornwall, Suitor to Constantia.
EDWYN, Son of Earl of Gloster and Suitor to Modestia.
TOCLIO, } Two Noblemen.
OSWALD, }
MERLIN, The Prophet.
ANSELME, The Hermit, after Bishop of Winchester.
CLOWN, Brother to Joan, Mother of Merlin.
SIR NICODEMUS NOTHING, A Courtier.
THE DEVIL, Father of Merlin.
OSTORIUS, the Saxon General.
OCTA, a Saxon Nobleman.
PROXIMUS, a Saxon Magician.
ARTESIA, Sister to Ostorius.
CONSTANTIA, } Daughters to Donobert.
MODESTIA, }
JOAN GO-TOO'T, Mother of Merlin.
LUCINA, Queen of the Shades.
A Waiting-woman to Artesia.

Two Bishops. Two Saxon Lords. Two of Edol's Captains.

Two Gentlemen. A little Antic Spirit.

THE SCENE—BRITAIN.

THE BIRTH OF MERLIN;

OR,

THE CHILD HATH FOUND HIS FATHER

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter DONOBERT, GLOSTER, CADOR, EDWIN, CONSTANTIA *and* MODESTIA.

Cador. You teach me language, sir, as one that knows
The debt of love I owe unto their virtues,
Wherein like a true courtier I have fed
Myself with hope of fair success, and now
Attend your wished consent to my long suit.

Don. Believe me, youthful Lord,
Time could not give an opportunity
More fitting your desires, always provided
My daughter's love be suited with my grant.

Cador. 'Tis the condition, sir, her promise sealed.

Don. Is't so, Constantia?

Const. I was content to give him words for oaths;
He swore so oft he loved me.
Don. That thou believest him?
Const. He is a man, I hope.
Don. That's in the trial, girl.
Const. However, I'm a woman, sir.
Don. The law's on thy side then, shalt have a husband,
Aye, and a worthy one. Take her, brave Cornwall,
And make our happiness great as our wishes.
Cador. Sir, I thank you.
Glost. Double the fortunes of the day, my Lord,
And crown my wishes too: I have a son here,
Who in my absence would protest no less
Unto your other daughter.
Don. Ha, Gloster, is it so? what says Lord Edwin?
Will she protest as much to thee?
Edwin Else must she want some of her sister's faith, sir.
Modest. Of her credulity much rather, sir.
My Lord, you are a soldier, and methinks
The height of that profession should diminish
All heat of love's desires, being so late
Employed in blood and ruin.
Edwin. The more my conscience ties me to repair
The world's losses in a new succession.

Modest. Necessity, it seems, ties your affections then,
And, at that rate, I would unwillingly
Be thrust upon you; a wife's a dish soon cloys, sir.
Edwin. Weak and diseased appetites it may.
Modest. Most of your making have dull stomachs, sir.
Don. If that be all, girl, thou shalt quicken him.
Be kind to him, Modestia. Noble Edwin,
Let it suffice, what's mine in her, speaks yours.[1]
For her consent, let your fair suit go on;
She is a woman, sir, and will be won.
Edwin. You give me comfort, sir.

Enter TOCLIO.

Don. Now, Toclio?
Toc. The King, my honoured Lords, requires your presence,
And calls a council for return of answer
Unto the parling enemy, whose ambassadors
Are on the way to Court.
Don. So suddenly?
Chester, it seems, has plied them hard at war,
They sue so fast for peace, which, by my advice,
They ne'er shall have, unless they leave the realm.

[1] *What's mine in her speaks yours*, a very Greek sentence, which may be literally rendered into that language—τὰ γὰρ ἐμὰ λέγει τὰ σά.

Come, noble Gloster, let's attend the king;
It lies, sir, in your son to do me pleasure
And save the charges of a wedding dinner.
If you'll make haste to end your love affairs,
One cost may give discharge to both my cares.

[*Exeunt* DON. *and* GLOST.

Edwin. I'll do my best.

Cador. Now, Toclio, what stirring news at Court?

Toc. Oh! my Lord, the Court's all filled with rumour, the city with news, and the country with wonder, and all the bells i' th' kingdom must proclaim it: we have a new holyday a-coming.

Const. A holyday! for whom? for thee?

Toc. Me, Madam! 'sfoot I'd be loath that any Man should make a holyday for me yet.
In brief 'tis thus: there's here arrived at Court,
Sent by the Earl of Chester to the king,
A man of rare esteem for holiness,
A reverend Hermit that by miracle
Not only saved our army,
But without aid of man o'erthrew
The pagan host and with such wonder, sir,
As might confirm a kingdom to his faith.

Edwin. This is strange news, indeed; where is he?

Toc. In conference with the king that much respects him.

Modest. Trust me, I long to see him.

Toc. Faith, you will find no great pleasure in him, for aught that I can see, lady, they say he is half a prophet, too. Would he could tell me any news of the lost prince. There's twenty talents offered to him that finds him.

Cador. Such news was breeding in the morning.

Toc. And now it has birth and life, sir. If fortune bless me, I'll once more search those woods where then we lost him. I know not yet what fate may follow me.

[*Exit.*

Cador. Fortune go with you, sir. Come, fair mistress,
Your sister and Lord Edwin are in game,
And all their wits at stake to win the set.

Const. My sister has the hand yet, we had best leave them:
She will be out anon as well as I;
He wants but cunning to put in a die.

[*Exeunt* CADOR and CONST.

Edwin. You are a cunning gamester, Madam.

Modest. It is a desperate game indeed, this marriage,
Where there's no winning without loss to either.

Edwin. Why, what but your perfection, noble lady,
Can bar the worthiness of this my suit?

If so you please, I count my happiness
From difficult obtaining ;[2] you shall see
My duty and observance.

Modest. There shall be place to neither, noble sir?

I do beseech you, let this mild reply
Give answer to your suit ; for here I vow
If e'er I change my virgin name, by you
It gains or loses.

Edwin. My wishes have their crown.

Modest. Let them confine you then.
As to my promise—you give faith and credence?

Edwin. In your command my willing absence speaks it. [*Exit.*

Modest. Noble and virtuous! Could I dream of marriage,
I should affect thee, Edwin. Oh, my soul!
Here's something tells me that these best of creatures,
These models of the world, weak man and woman,
Should have their souls, their making, life and being
To some more excellent use. If what the sense
Calls pleasure were our ends, we might justly blame
Great nature's wisdom, who reared a building
Of so much art and beauty to entertain

[2] *From difficult obtaining*, a Grecism (?), cf. ἐκ τοῦ χαλεπῶς ἔχειν.

A guest so far uncertain, so imperfect;
If only speech distinguish us from beasts
Who know no inequality of birth or place,
But still to fly from goodness; oh, how base
Were life at such a rate! No, no, that Power
That gave to man his being, speech, and wisdom
Gave it for thankfulness. To him alone
That made me thus, may I thence truly know,
I'll pay to him, not man, the love I owe.

[*Exit.*

Scene II.

[*Flourish of cornets. Enter* Aurelius, King of Britain, Donobert, Gloster, Cador, Edwin, Toclio, Oswald, *and* Attendants.]

Aurel. No tiding of our brother yet? 'Tis strange,
So near the court and in our own land too,
And yet no news of him. Oh, this loss
Tempers the sweetness of our happy conquests
With much untimely sorrow.

Don. Royal sir,
His safety, being unquestioned, should to time
Leave the redress of sorrow. Were he dead,
Or taken by the foe, our fatal loss
Had wanted no quick herald to disclose it.

Aurel. That hope alone sustains me,

Nor will we be so ungrateful unto heaven,
To question what we fear with what we enjoy.
Is answer of our message yet returned
From that religious man, the holy hermit,
Sent by the Earl of Chester to confirm us
In that miraculous act? For 'twas no less,
Our army being in rout, nay, quite o'erthrown,
As Chester writes; even then, this holy man
Armed with his cross and staff, went smiling on,
And boldly fronts the foe, at sight of whom
The Saxons stood amazed, for, to their seeming,
Above the hermit's head appeared such brightness,
Such clear and glorious beams, as if our men
Marched all in fire, wherewith the pagans fled,
And by our troops were all to death pursued.

Glost. 'Tis full of wonder, sir.

Aurel. Oh, Gloster, he's a jewel worth a kingdom.
Where's Oswald with his answer?

Osw. 'Tis here, my royal lord.

Aurel. In writing? Will he not sit with us?

Osw. His orisons performed, he bade me say
He would attend with all submission.

Aurel. Proceed to council, then, and let some give order,
The ambassadors being come, to take our answer,
They have admittance. Oswald, Toclio,
Be it your charge; and now, my lords, observe
The holy counsel of this reverend hermit.

Reads.

"As you respect your safety, limit not
That only power that hath protected you.
Trust not an open enemy too far;
He's yet a loser and knows you have won,
Mischiefs, not ended, are but then begun.
ANSELME THE HERMIT."

Don. Powerful and pithy, which my advice confirms—
No man leaves physic when his sickness slakes,
But doubles the receipts. The word of peace
Seems fair to blood-shot eyes, but being applied
With such a medicine as blinds all the sight,
Argues desire of cure but not of art.

Aurel. You argue from defects: if both the name,
And the condition of the peace be one,
It is to be preferred, and in the offer
Made by the Saxon I see nought repugnant.

Glost. The time of truce required for thirty days
Carries suspicion in it, since half that space
Will serve to strength their weakened regiment.

Cador. Who in less time will undertake to free
Our country from them?

Edwin. Leave that unto our fortune.

Don. Is not our bold and hopeful General
Still master of the field, their legions fallen,
The rest intrenched for fear, half starved, and wounded?

And shall we now give o'er our fair advantage?
Fore heaven, my Lord, the danger is far more
In trusting to their words, than to their weapons.

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. The ambassadors are come, sir.
Aurel. Conduct them in. We are resolved, my Lords,
Since policy failed in the beginning,
It shall have no hand in the conclusion.
That heavenly power that hath so well begun
Their fatal overthrow, I know can end it;
From which fair hope, myself will give them answer.

[*Flourish of cornets. Enter* ARTESIA *with the Saxon Lords.*

Don. What's here? A woman orator?
Aurel. Peace, Donobert!—speak, what are you, Lady?
Artes. The sister of the Saxon General,
Warlike Ostorius, the East Angles' King,
My name Artesia who, in terms of love,
Brings health and peace to great Aurelius,
Wishing she may return as fair a present
As she makes tender of.
Aurel. The fairest present e'er mine eyes were blest with!
Command a chair there for this Saxon beauty—

Sit, Lady, we'll confer: your warlike brother
Sues for peace, you say?
Artes. With endless love unto your state and person.
Aurel. He's sent a moving orator, believe me.
What thinkst thou, Donobert?
Don. Believe me, sir, were I but young again,
This gilded pill might take my stomach quickly.
Aurel. True, thou art old: how soon we do forget
Our own defects! Fair damsel—Oh! my tongue
Turns traitor and will betray my heart,—Sister
To our enemy:—'sdeath! her beauty mazes me,
I cannot speak. If I but look on her,—
What's that we did conclude?
Don. This, royal Lord—
Aurel. Pish! thou canst not utter it.
Fairest of creatures, tell the king, your brother,
That we in love—ha! and honour to our country,
Command his armies to depart our realm,
But if you please, fair soul—Lord Donobert
Deliver you our pleasure.
Don. I shall, sir.
Lady, return, and certify your brother.
Aurel. Thou art too blunt and rude: Return so soon?
Fie, let her stay, and send some messenger
To certify our pleasure.
Don. What means your Grace?

Aurel. To give her time of rest to her long journey.
We would not willingly be thought uncivil.
Artes. Great King of Britain, let it not seem strange
To embrace the princely offers of a friend,
Whose virtues with thine own, in fairest merit,
Both states in peace and love may now inherit.
Aurel. She speaks of love again—
Sure 'tis my fear, she knows I do not hate her.
Artes. Be then thyself, most great Aurelius,
And let not envy, nor a deeper sin
In these thy counsellors, deprive thy goodness
Of that fair honour. We, in seeking peace
Give first to thee, who never use to sue,
But force our wishes: yet, if this seem light,
Oh, let my sex, though worthless your respect,[3]
Take the report of thy humanity,
Whose mild and virtuous life loud fame displays,
As being o'ercome by one so worthy praise.
Aurel. She has an angel's tongue. Speak still.[4]
Don. This flattery is gross, sir; hear no more on 't.
Lady, these childish compliments are needless:

[3] *Though worthless your respect*, a Latinism, *etsi indigna tuo honore.*

[4] *Still* = ever, continually, cp. "Whom the disease of talking *still* once possesseth, he can never hold his peace."—Ben Jonson.

You have your answer; and believe it, madam,
His Grace, though young, doth wear within his breast
Too grave a counsellor to be seduced
By smoothing flattery or oily words.
Artes. I come not, sir, to woo him.
Don. 'Twere folly if you should: you must not wed him.
Aurel. Shame take thy tongue! being old and weak thyself,
Thou dot'st and looking on thine own defects,
Speak'st what thou 'dst wish in me! Do I command
The deeds of others, mine own act not free?
Be pleased to smile or frown, we respect neither:
My will and rule shall stand and fall together.
Most fair Artesia, see the king descends
To give thee welcome with these warlike Saxons,
And now on equal terms both sues and grants;
Instead of truce, let a perpetual league
Seal our united bloods in holy marriage.
Send the East Angles' king this happy news—
That thou with me hast made a league for ever,
And added to his state a friend and brother.
Speak, dearest love, dare you confirm this title?
Artes. I were no woman to deny a good
So high and noble to my fame and country.
Aurel. Live then a Queen in Britain!
Glost. He means to marry her?
Don. Death! he shall marry the devil first!
Marry a pagan, an idolatress?

Cador. He has won her quickly.
Edwin. She was wooed afore she came, sure,
Or came of purpose to conclude the match.
Aurel. Who dares oppose our will? My lord of Gloster,
Be you ambassador unto our brother,
The brother of our queen Artesia,
Tell him, for such our entertainment looks him,
Our marriage adding to the happiness
Of our intended joys; man's good or ill,
In this like waves agree, come double still.

Enter HERMIT.

Who's this? the hermit? Welcome, my happiness,
Our country's hope, most reverend holy man;
I wanted but thy blessing to perfect
The infinite sum of my felicity.
Hermit. Alack, sweet Prince, that happiness is yonder:
Felicity and thou art far asunder.
This world can never give it.
Aurel. Thou art deceived, see here, what I have found,
Beauty, alliance, peace, and strength of friends,
All in this all-exceeding excellence.
The league's confirmed.
Herm. With whom, dear Lord?
Aurel. With the great brother of this beauteous woman
The royal Saxon king.

Herm. Oh, then, I see
And fear thou art too near thy misery.
What magic could so link thee to this mischief?
By all the good that thou hast reaped by me
Stand further from destruction.

Aurel. Speak as a man, and I shall hope to obey thee.

Herm. Idolaters, get hence! Fond king, let go:
Thou hug'st thy ruin and thy country's woe.

Don. Well spoke, old Father; to him! bait him soundly!
Now, by heaven's blest lady, I can scarce keep patience.

First Saxon Lord. What devil is this?

Second Saxon Lord. That cursed Christian by whose hellish charms
Our army was o'erthrown.

Herm. Why do you dally, sir? Oh, tempt not heaven,
Warm not a serpent in your naked bosom,
Discharge them from your Court.

Aurel. Thou speak'st like madness!
Command the frozen shepherd to the shade,
When he sits warm i' the sun; the fever-sick
To add more heat unto his burning pain—
These may obey, 'tis less extremity
Than thou enjoin'st to me. Cast but thine eye
Upon this beauty—do it—I'll forgive thee,
Though jealousy in others finds no pardon;
Then say thou dost not love: I shall then swear
Thou art immortal and no earthly man.

Oh, blame then my mortality, not me.
Herm. It is thy weakness brings thy misery,
Unhappy Prince.
Aurel. Be milder in thy doom.
Herm. 'Tis you that must endure heaven's doom, which fall'n
Remembers just.[5]
Artes. [*aside*] Thou shalt not live to see it.
[*Aloud*] How fares my Lord?
If my poor presence breed dislike, great prince,
I am no such neglected soul will seek
To tie you to your word.
Aurel. My word, dear love! may my religion,
Crown, state and kingdom fail, when I fail thee.
Command Earl Chester to break up the camp,
Without disturbance to our Saxon friends:
Send every hour swift posts to hasten on
The king, her brother, to conclude this league,
This endless happy peace of love and marriage;
Till when, provide for revels, and give charge
That nought be wanting which make our triumphs
Sportful and free to all. If such fair blood
Engender ill, man must not look for good.

[5] Tieck:—

Nein, du muss ihn erdulden
Den schweren Spruch, der dir vom Himmel fällt.

Remembers = reminds, cp:—

Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Shaks. *As You Like It* (Act ii., sc. 7).

[*Flourish. Exeunt all but* HERMIT. *Enter* MODESTIA *reading in a book.*]

Modest. How much the oft report of this blest Hermit
Hath won on my desires; I must behold him:
And sure this should be he. Oh! the world's folly!
Proud earth and dust, how low a price bears goodness!
All that should make man absolute, shines in him—
Much reverend sir, may I without offence
Give interruption to your holy thoughts?
Herm. What would you, lady?
Modest. That which till now
Ne'er found a language in me: I'm in love.
Herm. In love with what?
Modest. With virtue.
Herm. There's no blame in that.
Modest. Nay, sir, with you, with your religious life,
Your virtue, goodness: if there be a name
To express affection greater than that word,
That would I learn and utter. Reverend sir,
If there be anything to bar my suit,
Be charitable and expose it; your prayers
Are the same orisons, which I shall number.
Holy sir,
Keep not instruction back from willingness,
Possess me of that knowledge leads you on

To this humility,[6] for well I know,
Were greatness good, you would not live so low.
Herm. Are you a virgin?
Modest. Yes, sir.
Herm. Your name?
Modest. Modestia.
Herm. Your name and virtues meet, a modest virgin.
Live ever in the sanctimonious[7] way
To heaven and happiness. There's goodness in you.
I must instruct you further: come, look up,
Behold yon firmament—there sits a power
Whose footstool is this earth. Oh, learn this lesson
And practise it; he that will climb so high
Must leave no joy beneath to move his eye.
[*Exit.*
Modest. I apprehend you, sir; on heaven I fix my love,
Earth gives us grief, our joys are all above:
For this was man in innocence naked born,
To show us wealth hinders our sweet return.
[*Exit.*

[6] *That knowledge leads*, for that knowledge that leads, relative omitted.

[7] *Sanctimonious*, in good sense = holy, cp.:—

All *sanctimonious* ceremonies.
Shaks. *Tempest* (Act iv., sc. 1).

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter CLOWN *and his sister great with child.*

Clown. Away! follow me no further, I am none of thy brother. What with child? great with child and knows not who's the father on't. I am ashamed to call thee sister.

Joan. Believe me, brother, he was a gentleman.

Clo. Nay, I believe that he gives arms and legs too, and has made you the herald to blaze 'em. But Joan, Joan, sister Joan, can you tell me his name that did it? How shall we call my cousin, your bastard, when we have it?

Joan. Alas, I know not the gentleman's name, brother: I met him in these woods, the last great hunting. He was so kind, and proffered me so much, as I had not the heart to ask him more.

Clo. Not his name? Why, this shows your country breeding. Now, had you been brought up i' the city, you'd have got a father first, and the child afterwards. Hast thou no marks to know him by?

Joan. He had most rich attire, a fair hat and feather, a gilt sword, and most excellent hangers.

Clo. Pox on his hangers! would he had been gelt for his labour.

Joan. Had you but heard him swear you would have thought—

Clo. Aye, as you did: swearing and lying goes together still. Did his oaths get you with child? We shall have a roaring boy then, i'faith. Well, sister, I must leave you.

Joan. Dear brother, stay; help me to find him out; I'll ask no further.

Clo. 'Sfoot! who should I find? Who should I ask for?

Joan. Alas, I know not. He uses[8] in these woods, and these are witness of his oaths and promise.

Clo. We are like to have a hot suit on't, when our best witness 's but a knight o'the post.

Joan. Do but inquire this forest, I'll go with you. Some happy fate may guide us till we meet him.

Clo. Meet him? and what name shall we have for him when we meet him? 'Sfoot thou neither knowst him, nor canst tell what to call him. Was ever man tired with such a business, to have a sister got with child and know not who did it! Well, you shall see him, I'll do my best for you. I'll make proclamation; if these woods and trees, as you say, will bear any witness, let

[8] *Uses* = frequents, cp.:—

Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers *use*
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks.
Milton, *Lycid.* 136.

them answer. O yes;[9] if there be any man that wants a name, will come in for conscience' sake, and acknowledge himself to be a whore-master, he shall have that laid to his charge in an hour he shall not be rid on in an age: if he have lands, he shall have an heir; if he have patience, he shall have a wife; if he have neither lands nor patience, he shall have a whore, so, ho, boy, so, ho, so, so.

A Voice from the Forest. So, ho, boy, so, ho, illo ho, illo ho.

Clo. Hark, hark, sister! there's one hollows to us. What a wicked world is this! A man cannot so soon name a whore but a knave comes presently; and see where he is: stand close a while, sister.

Enter PRINCE UTER.

Prince. How like a voice that echo spake, but oh!
My thoughts are lost for ever in amazement:
Could I but meet a man to tell her beauties,
These trees would bend their tops to kiss the air
That from my lips should give her praises up.

Clo. He talks of a woman, sister.

[9] *O yes*, barbaric form of *Oyez*, the word with which all proclamations began. Oyez=hear ye, cp.:—

O yes! if any happy eye
This roving wanton shall descry;
Let the finder surely know
Mine is the wag.

Crashaw.

Joan. This may be he, brother.

Clo. View him well, you see he has a fair sword, but his hangers are fallen.

Prince. Here did I see her first, here view her beauty.
Oh, had I known her name, I had been happy.

Clo. Sister, this is he, sure, he knows not thy name either : a couple of wise fools i'faith, to get children and know not one another.

Prince. Yon weeping leaves, upon whose tender cheeks
Doth stand a flood of tears at my complaint,
You heard my vows and oaths—

Clo. La, la, he has been a great swearer too ; 'tis he, sister.

Prince. For having overtook her,
As I have seen a forward bloodhound strip
The swifter of the cry, ready to seize
His wished hopes, upon the sudden view,
Struck with astonishment at his arrived prey,
Instead of seizure stands at fearful bay ;
Or like to Marius' soldier,[1] whom o'ertook
The eyesight-killing Gorgon, at one look

[1] The allusion is to the soldier sent by the local authorities of Minturnæ, in Latium, on the triumph of the aristocratic party under Sulla to kill Caius Marius, who was hiding amid the neighbouring marshes. When the soldier came upon the great captain, now an outlaw, he quailed before the fire of Marius' eye, and fled, exclaiming, "I cannot kill Caius Marius!"

Made everlasting stand: so feared, my power,
Whose cloud aspired the sun, dissolved a shower.
Pygmalion, then I tasted thy sad fate,
Whose ivory picture and my fair were one.
Our dotage past imagination,
I saw and felt desire, but enjoyed not.
Oh, fate! thou hast thy days and nights to feed
On calm affection; one poor sight was all,
Converts my pleasure to perpetual thrall.
Embracing thine, thou lost'st breath and desire,
So I relating mine, will here expire.
For here I vow to you, ye mournful plants,
Who were the first made happy by her fame,
Never to part hence, till I know her name.

Clo. Give me thy hand, sister; the child has found his father. This is he, sure, as I am a man: had I been a woman these kind words would have won me, I should have had a great belly too, that's certain. Well, I'll speak to him. —Most honest and fleshly-minded gentleman, give me your hand, sir.

Prince. Ha! what art thou, that thus rude and boldly
Darest take notice of a wretch
So much allied to misery as I am?

Clo. Nay, sir, for our alliance, I shall be found to be a poor brother-in-law of your worship's. The gentlewoman you spake on is my sister: you see what a clew she spreads, her name is Joan Go-toot, I am her elder, but she has been at it before me: 'tis a woman's fault—pox a this

bashfulness! come forward, Jug, prythee speak to him.

Prince. Have you e'er seen me, lady?

Clo. Seen ye? ha, ha! it seems she has felt you too; here's a young Go-toot a-coming, sir. She is my sister, sir, we all love to Go-toot as well as your worship; she's a maid yet, but you may make her a wife when you please, sir.

Prince. I am amazed with wonder: tell me, woman,
What sin have you committed worthy this?

Joan. Do you not know me, sir?

Prince. Know thee! as I do thunder, hell, and mischief,
Witch, scullion, hag!

Clo. I see he will marry her, he speaks so like a husband.

Prince. Death! I will cut their tongues out for this blasphemy.—Strumpet, villain, where have you ever seen me?

Clo. Speak for yourself with a pox to ye.

Prince. Slaves.
I'll make you curse yourselves for this temptation.

Joan. Oh, sir, if ever you did speak to me
It was in smoother phrase, in fairer language.

Prince. Lightning consume me, if I ever saw thee.
My rage o'erflows my blood, all patience flies me. [*Beats her.*

Clo. Hold! I beseech you, sir; I have nothing to say to you.

Joan. Help, help! Murder, murder!

[*Enter* TOCLIO *and* OSWALD.]

Tocl. Make haste, sir, this way the sound came, it was i'the wood.

Osw. See where she is, and the Prince, the price of all our wishes.

Clo. The Prince, say ye? has made a poor subject of me, I am sure.[2]

Tocl. Sweet Prince, noble Uter, speak, how fare you, sir?

Osw. Dear sir, recall yourself: your fearful absence
Hath won too much already on the grief
Of our sad king, from whom our labouring search
Hath had this fair success in meeting you.

Tocl. His silence and his looks argue distraction.

Clo. Nay, he's mad, sure, he will not acknowledge my sister nor the child neither.

Osw. Let us entreat your Grace along with us.
Your sight will bring new life to the king, your brother.

Tocl. Will you go, sir?

Prince. Yes, anywhither, guide me, all's hell: I see

[2] Tieck:—"Er hat mein Seel einen armseligen Unterthan aus mir gemacht." *Mein Seel* is Tieck's own, not the author's. *Ha's* = he has.

Man may change air, but not his misery.[3]

[*Exeunt* PRINCE *and* TOCLIO.

Joan. Lend me one word with you, sir.

Clo. Well said, sister: he has a feather, and fair hangers too, this may be he.

Osw. What would you, fair one?

Clo. Sure, I have seen you in these woods ere this?

Osw. Trust me, never; I never saw this place,
Till at this time my friend conducted me.

Joan. The more's my sorrow, then.

Osw. Would I could comfort you.
I am a bachelor, but it seems, you have
A husband, you've been foully o'ershot else.

Clo. A woman's fault: we are all subject to go to't, sir.

[*Enter* TOCLIO.]

Tocl. Oswald, away! the Prince will not stir a foot without you.

Osw. I am coming. Farewell, woman!

Tocl. Prythee, make haste.

Joan. Good sir, but one word with you ere you leave us.

Tocl. With me, fair soul?

Clo. She'll have a fling at him too: the child must have a father.

[3] Cp. *μεταλλάττει οὐ τὸν τρόπον ἀλλὰ τὸν τόπον*, and cœlum non animum mutat.

Joan. Have you ne'er seen me, sir?
Tocl. Seen thee! 'sfoot.
I have seen many fair faces in my time.
Prythee look up, and do not weep so: sure,
Pretty wanton, I have seen this face before.
Joan. It is enough, though you ne'er see me more. [*Sinks down.*
Tocl. 'Sfoot, she's fall'n. This place is enchanted, sure: look to the woman, fellow.
Clo. Oh, she's dead! she's dead! As you are a man, stay and help, sir. Joan, Joan, sister Joan, why, Joan Go-toot, I say, will you cast away yourself, and your child, and me too? What do you mean, sister?
Joan. Oh, give me pardon, sir: 'twas too much joy
Oppressed my loving thought: I know you were
Too noble to deny me—ha! where is he?
Clo. Who? the gentleman? he's gone, sister.
Joan. Oh! I am undone then; run, tell him I did
But faint for joy, dear brother haste; why dost thou stay?
Oh, never cease, till he give answer to thee.
Clo. He? which he? what do you call him, trow?[4]
Joan. Unnatural brother, show me the path he took;

[4] *Tro* or *trow* = pray, cp.:—
What means the fool, trow?
Shaks. *Much Ado About Nothing* (Act iii., sc. 4).

Why dost thou dally? speak, oh! which way went he?

Clo. This way, that way, through the bushes there.

Joan. Were it through fire,
The journey's easy, winged with sweet desire.
[*Exit.*

Clo. Hey day! there's some hope of this yet; I'll follow her for kindred's sake; if she miss of her purpose now, she'll challenge all she finds, I see; for if ever we meet with a two-legged creature in the whole kingdom, the child shall have a father, that's certain. [*Exit.*

Scene II.

[*Loud Music. Enter two with the sword and mace,* Cador, Edwin, *two Bishops,* Aurelius, Ostorius *leading* Artesia *crowned,* Constantia, Modestia, Octa, Proximus, *a magician,* Donobert, Gloster, Oswald, Toclio, *all pass over the stage. Manent* Donobert, Gloster, Edwin, Cador.]

Don. Come, Gloster, I don't like this hasty marriage.

Glos. She was quickly wooed and won, not six days since
Arrived an enemy to sue for peace,
And now crowned Queen of Britain: this is strange!

Don. Her brother too, made as quick speed in coming,
Leaving his Saxons and his starved troops,
To take the advantage whilst 'twas offered.
Fore heaven, I fear the king's too credulous.
Our army is discharged too.

Glos. Yes, and our general commanded home.
Son Edwin, have you seen him since?

Edw. He's come to Court, but will not view the presence[5]
Nor speak unto the king, he is so discontent
At this so strange alliance with the Saxon,
As nothing can persuade his patience.

Cador. You know his humour will endure no check,
No if the king oppose it, all crosses
Feed both his spleen and his impatience.
Those affections are in him like powder,
Apt to inflame with every little spark,
And blow up all his reason.

Glos. Edol of Chester is a noble soldier.

Don. So is he, by the rood, ever most faithful
To the king and kingdom, howe'er his passions guide him.

Enter EDOL *with* Captains.

Cador. See where he comes, my Lord.

[5] *Presence* = room in which a prince shows himself to his court, cp.:—

An't please your grace, the two great cardinals
Wait in the *presence*.

Shaks. *Hen. VIII.* (Act iii., sc. 1.)

All Welcome to Court, brave Earl.
Edol. Do not deceive me by your flatteries.
Is not the Saxon here? the league confirmed?
The marriage ratified? the Court divided
With pagan infidels, the least part Christians,
At least in their commands? Oh, the gods!
It is a thought that takes away my sleep,
And dulls my senses so, I scarcely know you.
Prepare my horses, I'll away to Chester.
Capt. What shall we do with our companies, my Lord?
Edol. Keep them at home to increase cuckholds
And get some cases for your captainships;
Smooth up your brows; the war has spoiled your faces,
And few will now regard you.
Don. Preserve your patience, sir.
Edol. Preserve your honours, lords, your country's safety,
Your lives and lands from strangers. What black devil
Could so bewitch the king, so to discharge
A royal army in the height of conquest,
Nay, even already made victorious?
To give such credit to an enemy,
A starved foe, a straggling fugitive,
Beaten beneath our feet, so low dejected,
So servile and so base, as hope of life
Had won them all to leave the land for ever

Don. It was the king's will.
Edol. It was your want of wisdom,
That should have laid before his tender youth
The dangers of a State, where foreign powers
Bandy for sovereignty with lawful kings,
Who, being settled once, to assure themselves,
Will never fail to seek the blood and life
Of all competitors.
Don. Your words sound well, my Lord, and point at safety
Both for the realm and us: but why did you,
Within whose power it lay as general,
With full commission to dispose the war,
Lend ear to parley with the weakened foe?
Edol. Oh, the good gods!
Cador. And on that parley came this embassy.
Edol. You will hear me?
Edwin. Your letters did declare it to the king,
Both of the peace and all conditions
Brought by this Saxon lady, whose fond love
Has thus bewitched him.
Edol. I will curse you all as black as hell,
Unless you hear me! Your gross mistake would make
Wisdom herself run madding through the streets
And quarrel with her shadow! Death!
Why killed ye not that woman?
Don. } Oh, my Lord!
Glost. }

Edol. The great devil take me quick![6] had I
been by,
And all the women of the world were barren,
She should have died ere he had married her
On these conditions.
Cador. It is not reason that directs you thus.
Edol. Then have I none, for all I have directs
me:
Never was man so palpably abused,
So basely marted,[7] bought and sold to scorn.
My honour, fame, and hopeful victories,
The loss of time, expenses, blood, and fortunes,
All vanished into nothing.
Edw. This rage is vain, my Lord:
What the king does, nor they nor you can
help.
Edol. My sword must fail me then.
Cador. 'Gainst whom will you oppose it?
Edol. What's that to you? 'Gainst all the
devils in hell
To guard my country.
Edw. These are airy words.
Edol. Sir, you tread too hard upon my
patience.
Edw. I speak the duty of a subject's faith,
And say again, had you been here in presence,

[6] *Quick* = alive, cp. to judge the quick and the dead.
[7] *Marted* = bought or sold, cp.:—
Poor brats were slaves, of bondmen that were born,
And *marted*, sold.
Marston, *Scourge of Villany* (Act i., sc. 2).

What the king did you had not dared to cross it.
Edol. I'll trample on his life and soul that says it.
Cador. My Lord!
Edw. Come, come!
Edol. Now before heaven!
Cador. Dear sir!
Edol. Not dare? Thou liest beneath thy lungs.
Glos. No more, son Edwin.
Edw. I have done, sir; I take my leave.
Edol. But thou shalt not; you shall take no leave of me, sir.
Glos. For wisdom's sake, my Lord.
Edol. Sir, I'll leave him, and you, and all of you,
The Court and King, and let my sword and friends
Shuffle [8] for Edol's safety. Stay you here
And hug the Saxons till they cut your throats,
Or bring the land to servile flattery.
Such yokes of baseness Chester must not suffer.
Go and repent betimes these foul misdeeds,
For in this league all our whole kingdom bleeds,
Which I'll preserve, or perish.
[*Exeunt* EDOL *and* CAPT.

[8] Tieck :—"Entmüsz'gen."
Shuffle = shift, cp.:—
Your life, good master,
Must *shuffle* for itself.
Shaks. *Cymbeline* (Act v., sc. 5).

Glos. See how his rage transports him!
Cador. These passions set apart, a braver soldier
Breathes not i' the world this day.
Don. I wish his own worth do not court his ruin.
The king must rule, and we must learn to obey:
True virtue still directs the noble way.

Loud music. Enter AURELIUS, ARTESIA, OSTORIUS, OCTA, PROXIMUS, OSWALD, HERMIT.

Aurel. Why is the Court so dull? Methinks each room
And angle of our palace should appear
Stuck full of objects fit for mirth and triumphs,
To show our high content. Oswald, fill wine.
Must we begin the revels? be it so then!
Reach me the cup. I'll now begin a health
To our loved queen, the bright Artesia,
The royal Saxon king, our warlike brother,
Go and command all the whole court to pledge it;
Fill to the hermit there. Most reverend Anselme,
We'll do thee honour first to pledge my queen.
Her. I drink no healths, great king; and if I did,
I would be loath to part with health to those
That have no power to give it back again.

Aurel. Mistake not, 'tis the argument [9] of love
And duty to our queen and us.
Artes. But he owes none, it seems.
Her. I do to virtue, madam. Temperate minds
Covet that health to drink which nature gives
In every spring to man. He that doth hold
His body but a tenement at will
Bestows no cost, but to repair what's ill.
Yet if your healths or heat of wine, fair princes,
Could this old frame, or these crazed limbs restore,
Or keep out death or sickness, then fill more;
I'll make fresh way for appetite—if no,
On such a prodigal who would wealth bestow?
Ostor. He speaks not like a guest to grace a wedding.
Artes. No, sir, but like an envious impostor.
Octa. A Christian slave, a cynic.

Enter Toclio.

Ostor. What virtue could decline your kingly spirit
To such respect of him whose magic spells
Met with your vanquished troops, and turned your arms
To that necessity of fight, which thro'[10] despair

[9] *Argument* = proof, cp.:—
It is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly.
Shaks. *Much Ado, &c.*

[10] Tauchnitz Ed., when the.

Of any hope to stand but by his charms,
Had been defeated in a bloody conquest?
Octa. 'Twas magic, hell-born magic did it, sir;
And that's a course, my Lord, which we esteem,
In all our Saxon wars, unto[1] the last
And lowest ebb of servile treachery.
Aurel. Sure, you are deceived, it was the hand of heaven
That in his virtue gave us victory.
Is there a power in man that can strike fear
Thorough a general camp, or create spirits
In recreant bosoms above present sense?
Ostor. To blind the sense there may, with apparition
Of well-armed troops, within themselves are air,
Formed into human shapes;[2] and such that day
Were by that sorcerer raised to cross our fortunes.

[1] *Esteem unto.* The preposition *unto* after *esteem* was probably common, but I cannot recall another instance of this phrase *esteem unto*.

[2] Tieck:—

Es blenden wohl den Sinn Erscheinungen
Geharn'schter Krieger, die nur lustig sind,
In Menschenbildung.

To blind, *to* inserted where not wanted, cp.:—

Whom when on ground she grovelling saw *to* roll.
Spenser, *F. Q.*, v. 7, p. 32.

There may, for *this may*.

Within themselves are air, read, Which in themselves, &c.

Aurel. There is a law tells us that words want force
To make deeds void: examples must be shown
By instances alike, ere I believe it.
Ostor. 'Tis easily performed, believe me, sir;
Propose your own desires, and give but way
To what our magic here shall straight perform,
And then let his or our deserts be censured.
Aurel. We could not wish a greater happiness,
Than what this satisfaction brings with it.
Let him proceed, fair brother.
Ostor. He shall, sir.
Come, learned Proximus, this task be thine;
Let thy great charms confound the opinion
This Christian by his spells hath falsely won.
Prox. Great king, propound your wishes then; what persons,
Of what state, what numbers, or how armed—
Please your own thoughts; they shall appear before you.
Aurel. Strange art! what think'st thou, reverend hermit?
Her. Let him go on, sir.
Aurel. Wilt thou behold his cunning?
Her. Right gladly, sir; 't will be my joy to tell
That I was here to laugh at him and hell.
Aurel. I like thy confidence.
Artes. His saucy impudence: proceed to th' trial.

Prox. Speak your desires, my Lord, and be it placed
In any angle underneath the moon,
The centre of the earth, the sea, the air,
The region of the fire, nay, hell itself,
And I'll present it.

Aurel. We'll have no sight so fearful, only this:
If all thy art can reach it, show me here
The two great champions of the Trojan war,
Achilles and brave Hector, our great ancestor,[3]
Both in their warlike habits, armour, shields,
And weapons then in use for fight.

Prox. 'Tis done, my lord: command a halt and silence.
As each man will respect his life or danger.
Armel! Plesgeth!

Enter SPIRIT.

Spir. Quid vis?[4]

Prox. Attend me.

Aurel. The apparition comes. On our displeasure,
Let all keep place and silence.

[3] *Ancestor*, alluding to the legendary genealogy of the Britons from a *Brutus*, a scion of Priam's race, who, after the fall of Troy, came at length to this island, which derived its name from him. This genealogy is due, as many vagaries of the middle ages are due, to etymological credulity.

[4] What do you wish?

Within drums beat marches. Enter PROXIMUS *bringing in* HECTOR *attired and armed after the Trojan manner, with target, sword, and battle-axe, a trumpet before him, and a spirit in flame colours with a torch. At the other door* ACHILLES, *with his spear and falchion, a trumpet and a spirit in black before him. Trumpets sound alarm, and they manage their weapons to begin the fight; and after some charges, the* HERMIT *steps between them, at which, seeming amazed, the spirits tremble.*[5] *Thunder within.*

Prox. What means this stay, bright Armel, Plesgeth?
Why fear ye and fall back?
Renew the alarums and enforce the combat,
Or hell and darkness circle you for ever.

Arm. We dare not.

Prox. Ha!

Ples. Our charms are all dissolved. Armel, away!
'Tis worse than hell to us whilst here we stay.
[*Exeunt Spirits.*

Her. What! at a nonplus, sir? Command them back for shame.

Prox. What power o'erawes my spells? Return, you hell-hounds!

[5] Tieck:—"Bei welchem Anblick die Geister erschrecken und zittern." Perhaps we should read, "At which seeming amazed the spirits tremble."

Armel and Plesgeth, double damnation seize you!
By all the infernal powers, the prince of devils
Is in this hermit's habit. What else
Could force my spirits quake and tremble thus?
Her. Weak argument to hide your want of skill.
Does the devil fear the devil, or war with hell?
They have not been acquainted long, it seems.
Know, misbelieving pagan, e'en that power
That overthrew your force still lets you see
He only can control both hell and thee.
Prox. Disgrace and mischief! I'll enforce new charms,
New spells, and spirits raised [6] from the low abyss
Of hell's unbottomed depths.
Aurel. We have enough, sir.
Give o'er your charms, we'll find another time
To praise your art. I dare not but acknowledge
That heavenly power my heart stands witness to.
Be not dismayed, my Lords, at this disaster,
Nor thou, my fairest queen: we'll change the scene
To some more pleasing sports. Lead to your chamber:
Howe'er in this thy pleasures find a cross,
Our joy 's too fixed here to suffer loss.

[6] Tieck:— . . . Ich will . . .
Vom tiefsten Abgrund neue Geister rufen.
Tieck reads, *raise*. *Raised* yields the same meaning:—"I will enforce new spirits, raised from, &c."

Toc.[7] Which I shall add to, sir, with news I bring:
The prince your brother lives.
Aurel. Ha!
Toc. And comes
To grace this high and heaven-knit marriage.
Aurel. Why dost thou flatter me to make me think
Such happiness attends me?

Enter Prince Uter *and* Oswald.

Toc. His presence speaks my truth, sir.
Don. Fore me, 'tis he: look, Gloster.
Glos. A blessing beyond hope, sir.
Aurel. Ha! 'tis he: welcome, my second comfort.
Artesia, dearest love, it is my brother,
My princely brother, all my kingdom's hope.
Oh, give him welcome as thou lov'st my health.
Artes. You have so free a welcome, sir, from me
As this your presence has such power, I swear,
O'er me a stranger, that I must forget
My country, name, and friends, and count this place
My joy and birthright.
Prince 'Tis she!

[7] *Toc.* ("Der indess eingetreten ist."—Tieck). The stage-direction has been here omitted, "who had in the meantime entered," or some such words.

'Tis she, I swear! Oh, ye good gods, 'tis she!
That face within those woods, where first I saw her,
Captived my senses, and thus many months
Barred me from all society of men.
How came she to this place?
Brother Aurelius, speak that angel's name,
Her heaven-blest name: oh, speak it quickly, sir!

Aurel. It is Artesia, the royal Saxon Princess.

Prin. A woman and no deity? no feigned shape
To mock the reason of admiring sense?
On whom a hope as low as mine may live,
Love, and enjoy, dear brother, may it not?

Aurel. She is all the good or virtue thou canst name,
My wife, my queen.

Prin. Ha! your wife!

Artes. Which you shall find, sir, if that time and fortune
May make my love but worthy of your trial.

Prin. Oh!

Aurel. What troubles you, dear brother?
Why with so strange and fixed an eye dost thou
Behold my joys?

Artes. You are not well, sir.

Prin. Yes, yes. Oh, you immortal powers!
Why has poor man so many entrances
For sorrow to creep in at, when our sense

Is much too weak to hold his [8] happiness?
Oh, say I was born deaf and let your silence
Confirm in me the knowing my defect:
At least be charitable to conceal
My sin, for hearing is no less in me,
Dear brother.

Aurel. No more!
I see thou art a rival in the joys
Of my high bliss. Come, my Artesia,
The day's most praised when 'tis eclipsed by night,
Great good must have as great ill opposite.

Prin. Stay, hear but a word—yet now I think on 't,
This is your wedding-night, and were it mine,
I should be angry with least loss of time.

Artes. Envy speaks no such words, has no such looks.

Prin. Sweet rest unto you both.

Aurel. Lights to our nuptial chamber.

Artes. [*aside to the Prince*] Could you speak so,
I would not fear how much my grief did grow,

Aurel. Lights to our chamber; on, on, set on.

[*Exeunt all except the* PRINCE.

Prin. "Could you speak so,
I would not fear how much my grief did grow."
Those were her very words—sure I am waking:

[8] *His=its*, which was post-Shakespearian, and not used originally in the Authorized Version of the Bible; cp. Abbot's *Shakespearian Grammar*, § 2, ed. 3.

She wrung me by the hand, and spoke them to me
With a most passionate affection.
Perhaps she loves, and now repents her choice
In marriage with my brother! Oh, fond man,
How darest thou trust thy traitorous thoughts, thus to
Betray thyself? 'Twas but a waking dream
Wherein thou mad'st thy wishes speak, not her,
In which thy foolish hopes strive to prolong
A wretched being. So sickly children play
With health-loved [9] toys, which for a time delay
But do not cure the fit. Be then a man,
Meet that destruction which thou canst not fly
From; not to live, make it thy best to die;
And call her now, whom thou didst hope to wed,
Thy brother's wife. Thou art too near akin;
And such an act above all name's a sin
Not to be blotted out. Heaven pardon me!
She's banished from my bosom now for ever.
To lowest ebbs men justly hope a flood.
When vice grows barren, all desires are good.

Enter WAITING-GENTLEWOMAN *with a jewel.*

Gent. The noble prince, I take it, sir.
Prin. You speak me, what I should be, lady.
Gent. Know, by that name, sir, Queen Artesia greets you—
Prin. Alas, good virtue, how is she mistaken.
Gent. Commending her affection in this jewel, sir.

[9] *Health-loved*=loved in health.

Prin. She binds my service to her. Ha, a jewel! 'Tis
A fair one, trust me, and methinks it much
Resembles something I have seen with her.
Gent. It is an artificial crab, sir.
Prin. A creature that goes backward.
Gent. True, from the way it looks.
Prin. There is no moral in it alludes to herself?
Gent. 'Tis your construction gives you that, sir:
She's a woman.
Prin. And like this may use
Her legs and eyes two several ways.
Gent. Just like the sea-crab which on the mussel preys,
Whilst he bills at a stone.
Prin. Pretty, in truth.
Prithee, tell me, art thou honest?
Gent. I hope I seem no other, sir.
Prin. And those that seem so, are sometimes bad enough.
Gent. If they will accuse themselves for want of witness,
Let them. I am not so foolish.
Prin. I see th'art wise.
Come, speak me truly, what is the greatest sin?
Gent. That which man never acted. What has been done
Is, at the least, common to all as one.
Prin. Dost think thy lady is of thy opinion?

Gent. She's a bad scholar else ; I have brought her up,
And she dares owe[1] me still.
Prin. Aye, 'tis a fault in greatness ; they dare owe
Many, ere they pay one, but darest thou
Expose thy scholar to my examining ?
Gent. Yes, in good troth, sir ; and pray put her to't too.
'Tis a hard lesson, if she answer it not.
Prin. Thou know'st the hardest.
Gent. As far as a woman may, sir.
Prin. I commend thy plainness.
When wilt thou bring me to thy lady ?
Gent. Next opportunity I attend you, sir.
Prin. Thanks, take this and commend me to her.
Gent. Think of your sea-crab, sir, I pray.
[*Exit.*
Prin. Oh, by any means,[2] lady—
What should all this tend to ?
If it be love or lust that thus incites her,
The sin is horrid and incestuous.
If to betray my life, what hopes she by it ?
Yes, it may be a practice 'twixt themselves,
To expel the Britons, and ensure the state
Through our destructions—all this may be
Veil'd with a deeper reach in villany,
Than all my thoughts can guess at. Howe'er

[1] *Owe=own.*
[2] *By any means=by all means*, now.

I will confer with her, and if I find
Lust hath given life to envy in her mind,
I may prevent the danger; so men wise
By the same step by which they fell, may rise.
Vices are virtues, if so thought and seen;
And trees with foulest roots, branch soonest green. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

Scene I.

Enter Clown *and his sister* Joan.

Clo. Come, sister, thou that art all fool, all madwoman.

Joan. Prithee, have patience, we are now at Court.

Clo. At Court? ha, ha! that proves thy madness. Was there ever any woman in thy taking[3] travelled to Court for a husband? 'Slid! 'tis enough for them to get children and the city to keep 'em, and the country to find nurses. Everything must be done in his due place, sister.

Joan. Be but content a while; for sure I know

[3] *Taking*=distress, cp.:—
What a *taking* was he in, when your husband asked who was in the basket?
Shaks. *Merry Wives of Windsor* (Act iii., sc. 3).

This journey will be happy. Oh, dear brother,
This night my sweet friend came to comfort me;
I saw him and embraced him in mine arms.

Clo. Why did you not hold him and call me to help you?

Joan. Alas! I thought I had been with him still,
But when I waked—

Clo. A pox of all loggerheads! Then you were but in a dream all this while, and we may still go look him. Well, since we are come to Court, cast your cat's eyes about you, and either find him out you dreamt on, or some other, for I'll trouble myself no further.

Enter Don., Cador, Edw., *and* Toclio.

See, see, here comes more courtiers, look about you, come, pray, view 'em all well: the old man has none of the marks about him; the others have both swords and feathers. What thinkest thou of that tall young gentleman?

Joan. He much resembles him; but sure, my friend,
Brother, was not so high of stature.

Don. Come, come, I'll hear no more on't: go, Lord Edwin,
Tell her, this day her sister shall be married
To Cador, Earl of Cornwall, so shall she
To thee, brave Edwin, if she'll have my blessing.

Edw. She is addicted to a single life,
She will not hear of marriage.

Don. Tush, fear it not, go you from me to her,
Use your best skill, my Lord, and if you fail,
I have a trick shall do it : haste, haste, about it.

Edw. Sir, I am gone, my hope is in your help
More than my own.

Don. And, worthy Toclio,
To your care I must commend this business,
For lights and music, and what else is needful.

Toc. I shall, my Lord.

Clo. We would entreat a word, sir. Come forward, sister.

[*Exeunt* Don., Toc., Cador.

Edw. What lack'st thou, fellow?

Clo. I lack a father for a child, sir.

Edw. How, a godfather?

Clo. No, sir, we mean the own father: it may be you, sir, for anything we know. I think the child is like you.

Edw. Like me! Prithee where is it?

Clo. Nay, 'tis not born yet, sir, 'tis forthcoming you see; the child must have a father. What do you think of my sister?

Edw. Why I think if she ne'er had husband, she's
A whore, and thou a fool. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Clo. I thank you, sir. Well, pull up thy heart, sister; if there be any law i'the Court this fellow shall father it, 'cause he uses me so

scurvily. There's a great wedding towards,[4] they say; we'll amongst them for a husband for thee.

Enter Sir Nicodemus *with a letter.*

If we miss there, I'll have another bout with him that abused me. See, look, there comes another hat and feather; this should be a close lecher, he's reading of a love-letter.

Sir Nic. Earl Cador's marriage and a masque to grace it—

So, so: this night shall make me famous for Presentments.—How now? What are you?

Clo. A couple of great Britons, you may see by our bellies, sir.

Sir Nic. And what of this, sir?

Clo. Why thus the matter stands, sir. There's one of your courtiers' hunting nags has made a gap through another man's enclosure. Now, sir, here's the question; who should be at charge of a fur-bush[5] to stop it?

Sir Nic. Ha, ha, this is out of my element. The law must end it.

Clo. Your worship says well, for surely I think some lawyer had a hand in the business: we have such a troublesome issue.

[4] *Towards* = coming on, cp.:—

We have a foolish trifling banquet *towards.*
Shaks. *Rom. and Jul.* (Act i. sc. 5.)

[5] Tieck:—"Strauchwerk."
For *fur-bush*, we should perhaps read, *furze-bush.*

Sir Nic. But what's thy business with me now?

Clo. Nay, sir, the business is done already; you may see by my sister's belly.

Sir Nic. Oh, now I find thee: this gentlewoman, it seems, has been humbled.

Clo. As low as the ground would give her leave, sir, and your worship knows this—though there be many fathers without children, yet to have a child without a father, were most unnatural.

Sir Nic. That's true i' faith: I never heard of a child yet that e'er begot his father.

Clo. Why, true; you say wisely, sir.

Sir Nic. And, therefore, I conclude that he that got the child is without all question the father of it.

Clo. Aye, now you come to the matter, sir; and our suit is to your worship for the discovery of this father.

Sir Nic. Why lives he in the Court here?

Joan. Yes, sir; and I desire but marriage.

Sir Nic. And does the knave refuse it? Come, come, be merry, wench: he shall marry thee and keep the child too, if my knighthood can do anything. I am bound by mine orders to help distressed ladies; and can there be a greater injury to a woman with child than to lack a father for't? I am ashamed of your simpleness. Come, come, give me a courtier's fee for my pains, and I'll be thy advocate myself, and

justice shall be found; nay, I'll sue the law for it, but give me my fee first.

Clo. If all the money I have i' the world will do it, you shall have it, sir.

Sir Nic. An angel[6] does it.

Clo. Nay, there's two for your better eyesight, sir.

Sir Nic. Why, well said. Give me thy hand, wench: I'll teach thee a trick for all this, shall get a father for thy child presently, and this it is, mark now. You meet a man, as you meet me now; thou claimest marriage of me, and layest the child to my charge; I deny it, pish! that's nothing, hold thy claim fast, thy word carries it, and no law can withstand it.

Clo. Is't possible?

Sir Nic. Past all opposition, her own word carries it. Let her challenge any man, the child shall call him father. There's a trick for your money now.

Clo. Troth, sir, we thank you: we'll make use of your trick, and go no further to seek the child a father, for we challenge you, sir. Sister, lay it to him; he shall marry thee; I shall have a worshipful old man to my brother.

Sir Nic. Ha, ha; I like thy pleasantness.

Joan. Nay, indeed, sir; I do challenge you.

Clo. You think we jest, sir.

Sir Nic. Ay, by my troth, do I. I like thy

[6] An old gold coin, value 6*s.* 8*d.*

wit i'faith; thou shalt live at court with me. Didst never hear of Nicodemus Nothing? I am the man.

Clo. Nothing! 'Slid, we are out again. Thou wast never got with child with nothing, sure.

Joan. I know not what to say.

Sir Nic. Never grieve, wench: show me the man, and process shall fly out.

Clo. 'Tis enough for us to find the children; we look that you should find the father, and therefore either do us justice, or we'll stand to our first challenge.

Sir Nic. Would you have justice without an adversary? Unless you can show me the man, I can do you no good in it.

Clo. Why, then, I hope you'll do us no harm, sir; you'll restore my money.

Sir Nic. What, my fee? Marry, law forbid it: find out the party and you shall have justice, your fault closed up, and all shall be amended, the child find his father, and the law ended.[7] [*Exit.*

Clo. Well, he has deserved his fee indeed, for he has brought our suit to a quick end, I promise you: and yet the child has never a father, nor have we no more money to seek after him. A

[7] Tieck:—"Hat durch Gesetz den Vater nur das Kind."

Read, perhaps, "The child have (or ha's) father, and the law be ended."

shame of all lecherous plackets![8] Now you look like a cat had newly kittened. What will you do now, trow? Follow me no further, lest I beat your brains out.

Joan. Impose upon me any punishment
Rather than leave me now.

Clo. Well, I think I am bewitch'd with thee; I cannot find in my heart to forsake her. There was never sister would have abused a poor brother as thou hast done. I am even pined away with fretting; there's nothing but flesh and bones about me. Well, an' I had my money again, it were some comfort. [*It thunders.*] Hark, sister, does it not thunder?

Joan. Oh, yes, most fearfully: what shall we do, brother?

Clo. Marry, e'en get some shelter ere the storm catch us. Away, let's away, I prithee.

Enter THE DEVIL *in man's habit, richly attired, his feet and his head horrid.*

Joan. Ha, 'tis he, stay, brother, dear brother, stay.

Clo. What's the matter now?

Joan. My love, my friend is come, yonder he goes.

Clo. Where, where? show me where, I'll stop him if the devil be not in him.

[8] Plackets=petticoats, cp.:-
Was that brave heart made to pant for a placket?
Beaum. and Flet. *Humorous Lieut.*

Joan. Look there, look yonder!
Oh, dear friend, pity my distress!
For heaven and goodness do but speak to me.

Devil. [*aside*] She calls me, and yet drives me headlong from her.
Poor mortal, thou and I are much uneven,
Thou must not speak of goodness nor of heaven
If I confer with thee; but be of comfort,
Whilst men do breathe and Britain's name be known,
The fatal fruit thou bear'st within thy womb,
Shall here be famous till the day of doom.

Clo. 'Slid, who's that talks so! I can see nobody.

Joan. Then art thou blind or mad, see where he goes
And beckons me to come; oh, lead me forth,
I'll follow thee in spite of fear or death.

[*Exit.*

Clo. Oh, brave! she'll run to the devil for a husband, she's stark mad, sure, and talks to a shadow, for I could see no substance. Well, I'll after her. The child was got by chance, and the father must be found at all adventure.

[*Exit.*

Scene II.

Enter Hermit, Modestia, *and* Edwin.

Modest. Oh, reverend sir, by you my heart hath reached

At the large hopes of holy piety,
And for this have I craved your company,
Here in your sight religiously to vow,
My chaste thoughts up to heaven, and make you now
The witness of my faith.
Her. Angels assist thy hopes.
Edw. What means my love? Thou art my promised wife.
Modest. To part with willingly what friends and life
Can make no good assurance of.
Edw. Oh! find remorse, fair soul, to love and merit
And yet recant thy vow.
Modest. Never.
This world and I are parted now for ever.
Her. To find the way to bliss, oh, happy woman,
Thou'st learned the hardest lesson well, I see.
Now show thy fortitude and constancy;
Let these thy friends thy sad departure weep,
Thou shalt but lose the wealth thou could'st not keep.
My contemplation calls me, I must leave ye.
Edw. Oh, reverend sir, persuade not her to leave me.
Her. My Lord, I do not, nor to cease to love ye;
I only pray her faith may fixed stand:
Marriage was blest I know with heaven's own hand. [*Exit.*

Edw. You hear him, lady: 'tis not a virgin's state,
But sanctity of life must make you happy.
Modest. Good sir! you say you love me, gentle Edwin,
Even by that love I do beseech you leave me.
Edw. Think of your father's tears, your weeping friends
Whom cruel grief makes pale and bloodless for you.
Modest. Would I were dead to all.
Edw. Why do you weep?
Modest. Oh, who would live to see
How men with care and cost seek misery?
Edw. Why do you seek it then? What joy, what pleasure
Can give you comfort in a single life?
Modest. The contemplation of a happy death
Which is to me so pleasing that I think
No torture could divert me. What's this world
Wherein you'd have me walk but a sad passage
To a dread judgment-seat from whence e'en now
We are but bailed upon our good abearing,
Till that great sessions come when death, the crier,
Will surely summon us and all to appear
To plead us guilty or our bail to clear.
What music's this?

Soft music. Enter Two Bishops, Donobert, Gloster, Cador, Constantia, Oswald, *and* Toclio.

Edw. Oh, now resolve and think upon my love!
This sounds the marriage of your beauteous sister,
Virtuous Constantia, with the noble Cador.
Look and behold this pleasure!
Modest. Cover me with night,
It is a vanity not worth the sight.
Don. See, see, she's yonder.
Pass on, son Cador, daughter Constantia.
I beseech you all, unless she first move speech,
Salute her not.—Edwin, what good success?
Edw. Nothing as yet, unless this object take her.
Don. See, see, her eye is fixed upon her sister.
Seem careless all, and take no notice of her.
On afore there, come, my Constantia.
Modest. Not to speak to me, nor deign to cast an eye,
To look on my despised poverty!
I must be more charitable: pray, stay, Lady,
Are not ye she whom I did once call sister?
Const. I did acknowledge such a name to one,
Whilst she was worthy of it, in whose folly[9]

[9] Tieck renders:—

Doch dein thor'ger Sinn,
Der deine Freunde kränkt und deinen Ruf,
Verbietet mir, dich Schwester jetzt zu nennen.

Probably we should read, "Whilst she was worthy on't, but in this folly," &c.

Since you neglect your fame and friends together,
In you I drowned a sister's name for ever.

Modest. Your looks did speak no less.

Glost. It now begins to work. This sight has moved her.

Don. I knew this trick would take, or nothing.

Modest. Though you disdain in me a sister's name,
Yet charity, methinks, should be so strong
T' instruct ere you reject. I am a wretch,
E'en folly's instance, who perhaps have erred,
Not having known the goodness bears so high
And fair a show in you, which being expressed,
I may recant this low despised life,
And please those friends whom I have moved to grief.

Cador. She is coming, i'faith. Be merry, Edwin.

Const. Since you desire instruction, you shall have it.
What is't should make you thus desire to live
Vowed to a single life?

Modest. Because I know I cannot fly from death.
Oh, my good sister, I beseech you, hear me!
This world is but a masque, catching weak eyes
With what is not ourselves, but our disguise,
A vizard that falls off, the dance being done,
And leaves death's glass for all to look upon.

Our best happiness here lasts but a night,
Whose burning tapers make false ware seem
right.
Who knows not this, and will not now provide
Some better shift before his shame be spied,
And knowing this vain world at last will leave
him,
Shake off these robes, that help but to deceive
him?

Const. Her words are powerful; I am amazed
to hear her.

Don. Her soul's enchanted with infected
spells.

Leave her, best girl, for now in thee
I'll seek the fruits of age, posterity.—
Out o' my sight! Sure I was half asleep
Or drunk when I begot thee.

Const. Good sir, forbear. What say you to
that, sister?[1]

The joy of children, a blest mother's name?
Oh, who, without much grief, can lose such fame?

Modest. Who can enjoy it without sorrow,
rather?

And that most certain where the joy's unsure,
Seeing the fruit that we beget endure
So many miseries, that oft we pray
The heavens to shut up their afflicted day.
At best we do but bring forth heirs to die,

[1] Tieck :—"Was sagst du hiezu?"
Say you to *that?* We should perhaps read, *this.*

And fill the coffins of our enemy.
Const. Oh, my soul!
Don. Hear no more, Constantia.
She's sure bewitched with error. Leave her, girl!
Const. Then must I leave all goodness, sir. Away!
Stand off! I say.
Don. How's this?
Const. I have no father, friend, no husband now.
All are but borrowed robes, in which we masque
To waste and spend the time, when all our life
Is but one good betwixt two ague-days,
Which[2] from the first, ere we have time to praise,
A second fever takes us. Oh, my best sister,
My soul's eternal friend, forgive the rashness
Of my distempered tongue! For how cou she[3]
Knew not herself, know thy felicity,

[2] *Which* may be=*as to which*, cp. Abbott's *S. G.* §272. But it is better, perhaps, to take it=*and*, cp.:—

A jolly pliceman,
Which perhaps his name is X.
Thackeray.

[3] *She knew=she who knew;* the relative being omitted, cp.:—

1. I have a brother is condemned to die.
2. I have a mind presages.
You are one of those
3. Would have him wed again.
Abbott's *S. G.*, § 214.

From which worlds cannot now remove me?
Don. Art thou mad, too? Fond woman, what's thy meaning?
Const. To seek eternal happiness in heaven,
Which all this world affords not.
Cador. Think of thy vow. Thou art my promised wife.
Const. Pray, trouble me no further.
All. Strange alteration!
Cador. Why do you stand at gaze, you sacred priests?
You holy men, be equal to the gods,
And consummate my marriage with this woman.
Bishop. Herself gives bar, my Lord, to your desires
And our performance; 'tis against the law
And orders of the Church to force a marriage.
Cador. How am I wronged? Was this your trick, my Lord?
Don. I am abused past sufferance.
Grief and amazement strive which sense of mine
Shall lose her being first.—Yet let me call
Thee daughter.
Cador. Me, wife.
Const. Your words are air. You speak of want to wealth,
And wish her sickness newly raised to health.
Don. Bewitched girls, tempt not an old man's fury
That hath no strength to uphold his feeble age
But what your sights give life to. Oh, beware,

And do not make me curse you!
Modest (*kneeling*). Dear father,
Here at your feet we kneel, grant us but this,
That in your sight and hearing the good Hermit
May plead our cause; which if it shall not give
Such satisfaction as your age desires,
We will submit to you.
Const. You gave us life,
Save, not our bodies, but our souls, from death.
Don. This gives some comfort yet. Rise with my blessings.—
Have patience, noble Cador, worthy Edwin.
Send for the Hermit that we may confer,
For sure religion ties you not to leave
Your careful father thus. If so it be,
Take you content, and give all grief to me.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

Thunder and lightning. Enter Devil.

Devil. Mix, light and darkness! Earth and heaven, dissolve,
Be of one piece again, and turn to chaos!
Break all your works, you powers, and spoil the world;
Or, if you will maintain earth still, give way
And life to this abortive birth now coming,
Whose fame shall add unto your oracles.
Lucina, Hecate, dreadful queen of night,

Bright Prosperine, be pleased for Ceres' love,
From Stygian darkness summon[4] up the Fates,
And in a moment bring them quickly hither,
Lest death do vent her birth[5] and her together.
[*Thunder.*
Assist you spirits of infernal deeps!
Squint-eyed Erictho, midnight Incubus,
Rise, rise to aid this birth prodigious.

Enter LUCINA *and the three* Fates.

Thanks, Hecate, hail, sister to the gods!
There lies your way: haste with the Fates and help,
Give quick despatch unto her labouring throes
To bring this mixture of infernal seed
To human being. [*Exit* FATES.
And to beguile her pains, till back you come,
Antics shall dance and music fill the room.
[*Dance.*
Thanks, queen of Shades!

Lucina. Farewell, great servant to th' infernal king?
In honour of this child, the Fates shall bring

[4] *Be pleased summon*, for *to summon*. *To* was inserted or dropped by Shakespeare before the infinitive at will. See Abbott's *S. G.*, § 349, and cp.:—

1. You ought not walk.
2. To come view fair Portia.

[5] *Her birth.* What grammarians call putting the abstract for the concrete. Here, *her birth*—her child.

All their assisting powers of knowledge, arts,
Learning, wisdom, all the hidden parts
Of all-admiring prophecy, to foresee
The event of times to come. His art shall stand
A wall of brass to guard the Britain land.
Even from this minute, all his art appears
Manlike in judgment, person, state and years.
Upon his breast the Fates have fixed his name,
And since his birth-place was this forest here,
They now have named him Merlin Silvester.[6]

[*Exit.*

Deril. And Merlin's name in Britain shall live.
Whilst men inhabit here, or Fates can give
Power to amazing wonder; envy shall weep,[7]
And mischief sit and shake her ebon wings,
Whilst all the world of Merlin's magic sings.

[*Exit.*

Scene IV.

[*Enter* Clown.]

Clo. Well, I wonder how my poor sister does after all this thundering. I think she's dead,

[6] *Merlin Silvester.* There were three Merlins, or rather three distinctive epithets attached to the same name, viz. Silvestris, Caledonius, Ambrosius.

[7] Tieck:—

So lang' hier Menschen leben, er giebt Allen
Zum Staunen Anlass, und es weint der Neid.

The meaning is, "So long as the fates give power to Merlin, the wonder who causes amazement to all," &c.

for I can hear no tidings of her. These woods yield small comfort for her; I could meet nothing but a swineherd's wife keeping hogs by the forest-side: but neither she nor none of her sows would stir a foot to help us. Indeed, I think she durst not trust herself among the trees with me, for I must needs confess I offered some kindness to her. Well, I would fain know what's become of my sister. If she have brought me a young cousin, his face may be a picture to find his father by. So, ho, sister Joan, Joan Go-too't, where art thou?

Joan (within). Here, here, brother; stay but a while, I come to thee.

Clo. Oh, brave! she's alive still: I know her voice; she speaks, and speaks cheerfully methinks. How now, what moon-calf has she got with her?

[*Enter* JOAN *and* MERLIN *with a book.*]

Joan. Come, my dear Merlin, why dost thou
fix thine eye
So deeply on that book?
Merl. To sound the depth
Of arts, of learning, wisdom, knowledge.
Joan. Oh, my dear, dear son,
Those studies fit thee when thou art a man.
Merl. Why, mother, I can be but half a man
at best,
And that is your mortality; the rest

In me is spirit. 'Tis not meat nor time
That gives this growth and bigness. No, my years
Shall be more strange than yet my birth appears.
Look, mother, there's my uncle.

Joan. How dost thou know him, son? Thou never saw'st him.

Merl. Yet I know him, and know the pains
He has taken for ye, to find out my father.—
Give me your hand, good uncle.

Clo. Ha, ha! I'd laugh at that i'faith. Do you know me, sir?

Merl. Yes, by the same token that even now you kissed the swineherd's wife in the woods, and would have done more, if she would have let you, uncle.

Clo. A witch, a witch, a witch! Sister, rid him out of your company; he is either a witch or a conjurer, he could never have known this else.

Joan. Pray, love him, brother: he is my son.

Clo. Ha, ha! this is worse than all the rest i'faith: by his beard he is more like your husband. Let me see, is your great belly gone.

Joan. Yes, and this the happy fruit.

Clo. What this artichoke? A child born with a beard on his face.

Merl. Yes, and strong legs to go, and teeth to eat.

Clo. You can nurse up yourself, then. There's some charges saved for soap and candle. 'Slid, I have heard of some that has been born

with teeth, but never none with such a talking tongue before.

Joan. Come, come, you must use him kindly, brother. Did you but know his worth, you would make much of him.

Clo. Make much of a monkey? a child to speak, eat, and go the first hour of his birth; nay, such a baby as had need of a barber before he was born too! Why, sister, this is monstrous, and shames all our kindred.

Joan. That thus, 'gainst nature and our common births,
He comes thus furnished to salute the world,
Is power of Fates, and gift of his great father.

Clo. Why, of what profession is your father, sir?

Merl. He keeps a hothouse i'the Low Countries. Will you see him, sir?

Clo. See him? Why sister has the child found his father?

Merl. Yes, and I'll fetch him, uncle.

[*Exit.*

Clo. Do not uncle me till I know your kindred. For my conscience,[8] some baboon begot thee.

[8] Tieck.—"Auf mein Gewissen."

For my conscience. *For* may be taken—"I lay a wager," cf.—

Now, *for* my life, she's wandering to the Tower.
Shaks. *Rich. III.* (Act iv., sc. 1, 3.)

But, perhaps, we should read, *fore my conscience*, cf. fore God, fore heaven.

Surely, thou art horribly deceived, sister, this urchin cannot be of thy breeding. I shall be ashamed to call him cousin, though his father be a gentleman.

Enter MERLIN *and* DEVIL.

Merl. Now, my kind uncle, see
The child has found his father. This is he.

Clo. The devil it is! Ha, ha, is this your sweetheart, sister? Have we run through the country, haunted the city, and examined the Court to find out a gallant with a hat and feather, and a silken sword, and golden hangers, and do you now bring me to a ragamuffin with a face like a frying-pan?

Joan. Fie, brother! You mistake; behold him better.

Clo. How's this? Do you juggle with me, or are mine eyes matches? Hat and feather, sword and hangers and all! This is a gallant indeed, sister; this has all the marks of him we look for.

Devil. And you have found him now, sir.
Give me your hand, I now must call you brother.

Clo. Not till you have married my sister, for all this while she's but your whore, sir.

Devil. Thou art too plain. I'll satisfy that wrong
To her, and thee, and all with liberal hand.
Come, why art thou fearful?

Clo. Nay, I am not afraid, and[9] you were the devil, sir.

Devil. Thou needest not. Keep with thy sister still
And I'll supply your wants: you shall lack nothing
That gold and wealth can purchase.

Clo. Thank you, brother. We have gone many a weary step to find you. You may be a husband for a lady, for you are far-fetched and dear-bought, I assure you. Pray, how should I call your son, my cousin here?

Devil. His name is Merlin.

Clo. Merlin! Your hand, cousin Merlin. For your father's sake, I accept you into my kindred. If you grow in all things as your beard does, you will be talked on. By your mother's side, cousin, you come of the Go-too'ts, Suffolk bred, but our standing house is at Hocklye i'th' Hole, and Layton-Buzzard. For your father, no doubt, you may from him claim titles of worship, but I cannot describe it: I think his ancestors came first from Hell-bree[1] in Wales, cousin.

Devil. No matter whence we do derive our name,
All Britany shall ring of Merlin's fame,
And wonder at his acts. Go hence to Wales:

[9] *And*=if.

[1] Tieck:—"Bringsherein und Lassnichtloss."
Hollenbrodel.—The Clown's geography is more pleasant than instructive.

There live a while: there Vortiger, the king,
Builds castles and strongholds which cannot stand
Unless supported by young Merlin's hand.
There shall thy fame begin. Wars are a-breeding;
The Saxons practise treason yet unseen,
Which shortly shall break out.—Fair love, farewell!
Dear son and brother! here must I leave you all,
Yet still I will be near at Merlin's call.

[*Exit.*

Merl. Will you go, Uncle?[2]

Clo. Yes, I'll follow you, cousin.—Well, I do most horribly begin to suspect my kindred. This brother-in-law of mine is the devil, sure, and though he hide his horns with his hat and feather, I spied his cloven foot for all his cunning.

[*Exit.*

Scene V.

Enter Ostorius, Octa *and* Proximus.

Ostor. Come, come, time calls our close complots to action.
Go, Proximus, with winged speed fly hence;
Hie thee to Wales, salute great Vortiger
With these our letters; bid the king to arms,

[2] Tieck:—(Merlin geht ab). Stage direction (*Exit*) omitted.

Tell him we have new friends, more forces landed
In Norfolk and Northumberland; bid him
Make haste to meet us. If he keep his word,
We'll part the realm between us.
Oct. Bend all thine art to quit the late disgrace
The Christian hermit gave thee. Make thy revenge
Both sure and home.
Prox. That thought, sir, spurs me on,
Till I have wrought their swift destruction.
Ostor. Go then and prosper. Octa, be vigilant:
Speak, are the forts possessed? the guards made sure?
Revolve, I pray, on how large consequence
The bare event and sequel of our hopes
Jointly consist that have embarked our lives
Upon the hazard of the least miscarriage.
Oct. All's sure. The queen, your sister, hath contrived
The cunning plot so sure, as at an instant
The brothers shall be both surprised and taken.
Ostor. And both shall die. Yet one a while must live
Till we by him have gathered strength and power
To meet bold Edol, their stern general,
That now, contrary to the king's command,
Hath reunited all his cashiered troops,

And this way beats his drums to threaten us.
Oct. Then our plot's discovered.
Ostor. Come, th'art a fool!
His army and his life is given unto us.
Where is the queen, my sister?
Oct. In conference with the prince.
Ostor. Bring the guards nearer, all is fair and good.
Their conference, I hope, shall end in blood.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene VI.

Enter Prince *and* Artesia.

Artes. Come, come, you do but flatter.
What you term love is but a dream of blood,[3]
Wakes with enjoying, and, with open eyes,
Forgot, contemned and lost.
Prin. (*Aside*) I must be wary. Her words are dangerous.
(*Aloud*) True, we'll speak of love no more then.
Artes. Nay, if you will, you may.
'Tis but in jest: and yet so children play
With fiery flames, and covet what is bright,
But, feeling its effects, abhor the light.

[3] *Dream of blood*, as it stands, can scarcely be correct. May it be for *dream o' th' blood?* In which case, we could take *blood* = man of fire. Next line should be read thus:—
And, with open eye's forgot, contemned and lost.

Pleasure is like a building; the more high
The narrower still it grows. Cedars do die
Soonest at top.

Prin. How does your instance[4] suit?

Artes. From art and nature to make sure the root,
And lay a fast foundation, ere I try
The incertain changes of a wavering sky.
Make your example thus:—You have a kiss.
Was it not pleasing?

Prin. Above all name to express it.

Artes. Yet now the pleasure's gone,
And you have lost your joy's possession.

Prin. Yet when you please this flood may ebb again.

Artes. But where it never ebbs, there runs the main.

Prin. Who can attain such hopes?

Artes. I'll show the way to 't. Give me
A taste once more of what you may enjoy.
[*Kiss.*

Prin. (*aside*) Impudent whore!
(*aloud*) I were more false than atheism[5] can be,
Should I not call this high felicity.

Artes. If I should trust your faith, alas, I fear
You soon would change belief.

[4] Instance suit? Tieck:—"Was soll dies Beispiel hier?" But there is nothing amiss with the text.

[5] *Atheism*. This word, and co-derivatives, occur not in Shakespeare. See Introduction.

Prin. I'd covet martyrdom to make 't confirmed.

Artes. Give me your hand on that you'll keep your word.

Prin. I will.

Artes. Enough.—Help, husband, King Aurelius, help!

Rescue betrayed Artesia.

Prin. Nay, then, 'tis I that am betrayed, I see;
Yet with thy blood I'll end thy treachery.

Artes. How now? what troubles you? Is this you, sir,
That but even now would suffer martyrdom
To win your hopes? And is there now such terror
In names of men to fright you?
Nay, then, I see what mettle you are made of.

Prin. Ha! was it but trial? Then I ask your pardon.
What a dull slave was I to be so fearful!
(*Aside*) I'll trust her now no more, yet try the utmost.—
(*Aloud*) I am resolved no brother, no man breathing,
Were he my blood's begetter, should[6] withhold
Me from your love. I'd leap into his bosom

[6] *Should withhold* is attracted to the tense and mood of the subordinate clause, *were he*, &c. The correct syntax after *I am resolved*, would be, *shall withhold*.

And from his breast pull forth that happiness
Heaven had reserved in you for my enjoying.

Artes. Aye, now you speak a lover like a prince.

Treason ! treason !

Prin. Again ?

Artes. Help, Saxon princes !

Enter OSTORIUS, OCTA, *and others.*

Ostor. Rescue the queen. Strike down the villain.

Enter EDOL, AURELIUS, DONOBERT, CADOR, EDWIN, TOCLIO, OSWALD, *at the other door.*

Edol. Call in the guards ! The prince in danger !

Fall back, dear sir, my breast shall buckler you.

Aurel. Beat down their weapons.

Edol. Slave, wert thou made of brass, my sword shall bite thee.

Aurel. Withdraw on pain of death. Where is the traitor ?

Artes. Oh, save your life, my lord, let it suffice

My beauty forced mine own captivity.

Aurel. Who did attempt to wrong thee ?

Prin. Hear me, sir.

Aurel. Oh, my sad soul ! Was't thou ?

Artes. Oh, do not stand to speak ! one minute's stay

Prevents a second speech for ever.

Aurel. Make our guards strong!
My dear Artesia, let us know thy wrongs
And our own dangers.
Artes. The prince, your brother, with these Briton lords,
Have all agreed to take me hence by force
And marry me to him.
Prin. The devil shall wed thee first.
Thy baseness and thy lust confound and rot thee.
Artes. He courted me even now, and in mine ear
Shamed not to plead his most dishonest love;
And their attempts to seize your sacred person,
Either to shut you up within some prison,
Or, which is worse, I fear, to murder you.
All Britons. 'Tis all as false as hell.
Edol. And as foul as she is.
Artes. You know me, sir?
Edol. Yes, deadly sin, we know you.
And shall discover all your villany.
Aurel. Chester, forbear.
Ostor. Their treasons, sir, are plain.
Why are their soldiers lodged so near the Court?
Oct. Nay, why came he in arms so suddenly?
Edol. You fleering antics, do not wake my fury.
Oct. Fury?
Edol. Ratsbane, do not urge me.
Artes. Good sir, keep farther from them.
Prin. Oh, my sick heart!

She is a witch by nature, devil by art.

Aurel. Bite thine own slanderous tongue.
'Tis thou art false.

I have observed your passions long ere this.

Ostor. Stand on your guard, my lord, we are your friends,

And all our force is yours.

Edol. To spoil and rob the kingdom.

Aurel. Sir, be silent.

Edol. Silent! how long? till doomsday? Shall I stand by

And hear mine honour blasted with foul treason,
The state half lost, and your life endangered,
Yet be silent?

Artes. Yes, my blunt lord, unless you speak your treasons.—

Sir, let your guards, as traitors, seize them all;
And then let tortures and divulsive racks
Force a confession from them.

Edol. Wildfire and brimstone eat thee! Hear me, sir.

Aurel. Sir, I'll not hear you.

Edol. But you shall! Not hear me?

Were the world's monarch, Cæsar, living, he
Should hear me.
I tell you, sir, these serpents have betrayed
Your life and kingdom. Does not every day
Bring tidings of more swarms of lousy slaves,
The offal fugitives of barren Germany,
That land upon our coasts, and by our neglect
Settle in Norfolk and Northumberland?

Ostor. They came as aids and safeguards to the king.
Oct. Has he not need, when Vortiger's in arms,
And you raise powers, 'tis thought, to join with him?
Edol. Peace, you pernicious rat.
Don. Prithee, forbear.
Edol. Away! suffer a gilded rascal, a low-bred
Despicable creeper, an insulting toad,
To spit his poisoned venom in my face!
Oct. Sir, sir!
Edol. Do not reply, you cur, for by the gods,
Though the king's presence guard thee, I shall break
All patience, and like a lion roused to spoil
Shall run foul-mouthed upon thee and devour
Thee quick. Speak, sir, will you forsake these scorpions,
Or stay till they have stung you to the heart?
Aurel. Ye are traitors all. This is our wife, our queen.
Brother Ostorius, troop your Saxons up.
We'll hence to Winchester, and raise more powers,
To man with strength the castle Camilot.[7]—
Go hence, false men, join you with Vortiger,

[7] *Camilot*, or *Camelot*, i.e., the palace on the Camel. Cornwall is an important county in the Arthurian legends.

The murderer of our brother Constantine.
We'll hunt both him and you with dreadful
vengeance.
Since Britain fails, we'll trust to foreign friends,
And guard our person from your trait'rous ends.
[*Exeunt* AUREL., OSTOR., OCTA, ARTES., TOC., OSW.
Edw. He's sure bewitched.
Glost. What counsel now for safety?
Don. Only this, sir. With all the speed we
can,
Preserve the person of the king and kingdom.
Cador. Which to effect, 'tis best march hence
to Wales,
And set on Vortiger before he join
His forces with the Saxons.
Edol. On then with speed for Wales and
Vortiger!
That tempest once o'erblown, we come, Ostorius,
To meet thy trait'rous Saxons, thee and them,
That with advantage thus have won the king,
To back your factions and to work our ruin.
This by the gods and my good sword, I'll set
In bloody lines upon thy burgonet.[8]
[*Exeunt.*

[8] *Burgonet*, a kind of helmet, introduced from *Burgundy*, cf.—

This day I'll wear aloft my burgonet,
Even to affright thee with the view thereof.
Shaks. *Hen. VI.* (pt. ii., v. 1.)

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

nter CLOWN, MERLIN, *and a* LITTLE ANTIC SPIRIT.

Merl. How now, uncle? Why do you search your pockets so? Do you miss anything?

Clo. Ha, cousin Merlin, I hope your beard does not overgrow your honesty. I pray remember you are made up of my sister's thread. I am your mother's brother, whosoever was your father.

Merl. Why wherein can you task my duty, uncle?

Clo. Yourself, or your page it must be; I have kept no other company since your mother bound your head to my protectorship. I do find a fault on one side; either it was that sparrowhawk or a cast of Merlin's, for I find a covey of cardecus [9] sprung out of my pocket.

Merl. Why, do you want any money, uncle Sirrah, had you any from him.

Clo. Deny it not, for my pockets are witness against you.

Spirit. Yes, I had, to teach you better wit to look to it.

[9] *Cardecus*, i.e, quart d'écus. The *quart d'écu*, i.e., ¼ écu, was an old silver coin, value 7½*d*.

Clo. Pray, use your fingers better, and my wit may serve as it is, sir.

Merl. Well, restore it.

Spirit. There it is.

Clo. Ay, there's honesty in this. 'Twas a token from your invisible father, cousin, which I would not have to go invisibly from me again.

Merl. Well, you are sure you have it now, uncle?

Clo. Yes, and mean to keep it now from your page's filching fingers too.

Spirit. If you have it so sure, pray show it me again.

Clo. Yes, my little juggler, I dare show it. Ha, cleanly conveyance again. Ye have no invisible fingers, have ye? 'Tis gone, certainly.

Spirit. Why, sir, I touched you not.

Merl. Why, look you, uncle, I have it now. How ill do you look to it? Here, keep it safer.

Clo. Ha, ha, this is fine i'faith. I must keep some other company, if you have these sleights of hand.

Merl. Come, come, uncle, 'tis all my art, which shall not offend you, only I give you a taste of it, to show you sport.

Clo. Oh, but 'tis ill jesting with a man's pockets, though; but I am glad to see you cunning, cousin, for now will I warrant thee a living till thou diest. You have heard the news in Wales here?

Merl. Uncle, let me prevent[1] your care and
counsel,
'Twill give you better knowledge of my cunning.
You would prefer me now, in hope of gain,
To Vortiger, king of the Welch Britons,
To whom are all the artists summoned now,
That seek the secrets of futurity,
The bards, the druids, wizards, conjurers.
Not an arusper[2] with his whistling spells,
No capnomancer with his musty fumes,
No witch or juggler, but is thither sent,
To calculate the strange and feared event
Of his prodigious castle, now in building,
Where all the labours of the painful day
Are ruined still i'the night: and to this place
You would have me go.

Clo. Well, if thy mother were not my sister, I would say she was a witch that begot thee. But this is thy father, not thy mother wit. Thou hast taken my tale into thy mouth, and spake my words before me. Therefore away! shuffle thyself amongst the conjurers, and be a made man before thou comest of age.

Merl. Nay, but stay, uncle. You overslip my
dangers.
The prophecies and all the cunning wizards
Have certified the king that this his castle

[1] *Prevent*=anticipate, cf.—"Prevent us in all our doings," &c.

[2] *Arusper*. Probably for auruspex, a bird-diviner. *Capnomanster*, for *Capnomancer*, a smoke-diviner.

Can never stand, till the foundation's laid
With mortar tempered with the fatal blood
Of such a child whose father was no mortal.

Clo. What's this to thee? If the devil were thy father, was not thy mother born at Carmarden?[3] Diggon for that then. And then it must be a child's blood, and who will take thee for a child with such a beard on thy face? Is there not diggon[4] for that too, cousin?

Merl. I must not go. Lend me your ear a while,
I'll give you reasons to the contrary.

Enter two GENTLEMEN.

1*st Gentle.* Sure this is an endless piece of work the king has sent us about!

2*nd Gentle.* Kings may do it, man; the like has been done to find out the unicorn.

1*st Gentle.* Which will be sooner found, I think, than this fiend-begotten child we seek for.

2*nd Gentle.* Pox of those conjurers that would speak of such a one, and yet all their cunning could not tell us where to find him.

[3] *Carmarden*, i.e., Carmarthen, which the Welsh call Caerfyrddin=the town of Myrddin, the original form of the prophet's name, which was corrupted in English into Merlin. Shakespeare's *Fluelin*, for *Llewelyn*, shows another Welsh letter corrupted.

[4] Tieck:—Genug. The word *diggon*, now spelt *digon*, is Welsh=enough.

1*st Gentle.* In Wales they say assuredly he lives. Come, let's inquire further.

Merl. Uncle, your persuasions must not prevail with me.
I know mine enemies better than you do.

Clo. I say th'art a bastard, then, if thou disobey thine uncle. Was not Joan Go-too't, thy mother, my sister? If the devil were thy father, what kin art thou to any man alive, but bailiffs and brokers? And they are but brothers-in-law to thee neither.

1*st Gentle.* How's this? I think we shall speed here.

2*nd Gentle.* Ay, and unlooked for too. Go near and listen to them.

Clo. Hast thou a beard to hide it? Wilt thou show thyself a child? Wilt thou have more hair than wit? Wilt thou deny thy mother, because nobody knows thy father? Or shall thine uncle be an ass?

1*st Gentle.* Bless ye, friend, pray what call you this small gentleman's name?

Clo. Small, sir! a small man may be a great gentleman: his father may be of an ancient house, for aught we know, sir.

2*nd Gentle.* Why, do you not know his father?

Clo. No, nor you neither, I think, unless the devil be in ye.

1*st Gentle.* What is his name, sir?

Clo. His name is my cousin, sir, his educa-

tion is my sister's son, but his manners are his own.

Merl. Why ask ye, gentlemen? My name is Merlin.

Clo. Yes, and a goshawk was his father, for aught we know, for I am sure his mother was a windsucker.

2nd Gentle. He has a mother, then?

Clo. As sure as I have a sister, sir.

1st Gentle. But his father you leave doubtful.

Clo. Well, sir, as wise men as you doubt whether he had a father or no.

1st Gentle. Sure this is he we seek for.

2nd Gentle. I think no less. And, sir, we let you know the king hath sent for you.

Clo. The more child he; an he had been ruled by me, he should have gone before he was sent for.

1st Gentle. May we not see his mother?

Clo. Yes, and feel her too if you anger her. A devilish thing, I can tell ye, she has been. I'll go fetch her to ye.

[*Exit.*

2nd Gentle. Sir, it were fit you did resolve
for speed.
You must unto the king.

Merl. My service, sir,
Shall need no strict command, it shall obey
Most peaceably. But needless 'tis to fetch
What is brought home. My journey may be
staid;

The king is coming hither with the same quest
You bore before him. Hark! His drum will
tell ye.

[*Within, drums beat a low march.*

1*st Gentle.* This is some cunning indeed, sir.

[*Flourish. Enter* VORTIGER *reading a letter,* PROXIMUS *with drum and soldiers, and others.*

Vorti. Still in our eye your message, Proximus,
We keep to spur our speed. Ostorius
And Octa we shall salute with succour
Against Prince Uter and Aurelius,
Whom now we hear encamps at Winchester.
There's nothing interrupts our way so much
As doth the erection of this fatal castle,
That, spite of all our art and daily labour,
The night still ruins.

Prox. As erst I did affirm, still I maintain,
The fiend-begotten child must be found out
Whose blood gives strength to the foundation,
It cannot stand else.

Enter CLOWN, MERLIN *and* JOAN.

Vorti. Ha! Is it so? Then, Proximus,
By this intelligence he should be found.
Speak, is this he you tell of?

Clo. Yes, sir, and I his uncle, and she his mother.

Vorti. And who is his father?

Clo. Why, she his mother can best tell you that. And yet I think the child be wise enough, for he has found his father.

Vorti. Woman, is this thy son?

Joan. It is, my Lord.

Vorti. What was his father, or where lives he?

Merl. Mother, speak freely and unastonished. That which you dared to act, dread not to name.

Joan. In which I shall betray my sin and shame.
But since it must be so, then know, great king,
All that myself yet knows of him is this :—
In pride of blood and beauty did I live ;
My glass the altar was, my face the idol :
Such was my peevish love unto myself,
That I did hate all other ; such disdain
Was in my scornful eye that I supposed
No mortal creature worthy to enjoy me.
Thus, with the peacock, I beheld my train,
But never saw the blackness of my feet.
Oft have I chid the winds for breathing on me,
And cursed the sun, fearing to blast my beauty.
In midst of this most leperous disease,
A seeming fair young man appeared to me,
In all things suiting my aspiring pride,
And with him brought along a conquering power,
To which my frailty yielded, from whose embraces
This issue came. What more he is, I know not.

Vorti. Some Incubus or spirit of the night
Begot him then, for sure no mortal did it.
Merl. No matter who, my Lord: leave further quest,
Since 'tis as hurtful as unnecessary
More to inquire. Go to the cause, my Lord,
Why you have sought me thus.
Vorti. I doubt not but thou know'st; yet, to be plain,
I sought thee for thy blood.
Merl. By whose direction?
Prox. By mine,
My art infallible instructed me;
Upon thy blood must the foundation rise
Of the king's building, it cannot stand else.
Merl. Hast thou such leisure to inquire my fate,
And let thine own hang careless over thee?
Know'st thou what pendulous mischief roofs thy head,
How fatal and how sudden?
Prox. Pish!
Bearded abortive, thou fortell my danger!
My Lord, he trifles to delay his own.
Merl. No,
I yield myself, and here, before the king,
Make good thine augury as I shall mine.
If thy fate fall not, thou hast spoke all truth,
And let my blood satisfy the king's desires.
If thou thyself wilt write thine epitaph,
Despatch it quickly, there's a minute's time

Betwixt thee and thy death.

Prox. Ha! ha! ha!

Merl. Ay, so thou mayest die laughing.

[*A stone falls and kills* PROXIMUS.

Vorti. Ha! This is above admiration. Look! Is he dead?

Clo. Yes, sir. Here's brains to make mortar of, if you'll use them. Cousin Merlin, there is no more of this stone fruit ready to fall, is there? I pray, give your uncle a little fair warning.

Merl. Remove that shape of death. And now, my lord,
For clear satisfaction of your doubts,
Merlin will show the fatal cause that keeps
Your castle down and hinders your proceedings.
Stand there, and by an apparition see
The labour and end of all your destiny.
Mother and uncle, you must be absent.

Clo. Is your father coming, cousin?

Merl. Nay, you must be gone.

Joan. Come, you'll offend him, brother.

Clo. I would fain see my brother-in-law. If you were married, I might lawfully call him so.

[*Exeunt* CLO. *and* JOAN. MERLIN *strikes his wand. Thunder and lightning. Two dragons appear, a white and a red; they fight a while and pause.*

Vorti. What means this stay?

Merl. Be not amazed, my Lord, for on the victory,

Or loss or gain, as these two champions end,
Your fate, your life and kingdom all depend.
Therefore observe it well.

Vorti. I shall. Heaven be auspicious to us!

[*Thunder. The two dragons fight again, and the white dragon drives off the red.*

Vorti. The conquest is on the white dragon's part.
Now, Merlin, faithfully expound the meaning.

Merl. Your grace must then not be offended with me.

Vorti. Is it the weakest part I've found in thee,
To doubt of me so slightly? Shall I blame
My prophet that foretells me of my dangers?
Thy cunning I approve most excellent.

Merl. Then know, my lord, there is a dampish cave,
The nightly habitation of these dragons,
Vaulted beneath where you would build your castle,
Whose enmity and nightly combats there
Maintain a constant ruin of your labours.
To make it more plain—the dragons then
Yourself betoken and the Saxon king.
The vanquished red[5] is, sir, your dreadful emblem.

[5] *Red dragon*, the National standard of the Britons. The Welsh use to this day, in their literary carnivals, the terrible picture of this animal to adorn programmes, &c.

Vorti. Oh! my fate.

Merl. Nay, you must bear with patience, royal sir.

You slew the lawful King, Constantius.
'Twas a red deed, your crown his blood did cement.
The English Saxon, first brought in by you,
For aid against Constantius' brethren,
Is the white horror[6] who, now knit together,
Have driven and shut you up in these wild mountains.
And though they now seek to unite with friendship,
It is to wound your bosom, not embrace it;
And, with an utter extirpation,
To root the Britons out and plant the English.
Seek for your safety, sir, and spend no time
To build the airy castles, for Prince Uter,
Armed with vengeance for his brother's blood,
Is hard upon you. If you mistrust me,
And to my words crave witness, sir; then know,
Here comes a messenger to tell you so.

[*Exit* MERL. *Enter* MESSENGER.

Messen. My Lord, Prince Uter.

[6] *Horror who.* This is an instance of what is called sense construction. The relative here agrees in gender and number, not with the actual antecedent, but with what is therein implied, viz., horrid Saxons. This construction was very common in Greek.

Vorti. And who else, sir?
Messen. Edol, the great general.
Vorti. The great devil!
They are coming to meet us?
Messen. With a full power, my lord.
Vorti. With a full vengeance.
They mean to meet us; so we are ready
To their confront at full march double footing.
We'll lose no ground, nor shall their numbers fright us.
If it be fate, it cannot be withstood.
We got our crown so, be it lost in blood.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Enter Prince Uter, Edol, Cador, Edwin, Toclio, *and* Soldiers *with drum.*

Prince. Stay, and advise. Hold, drum!
Edol. Beat, slave! Why do you pause?
Why make a stand? Where are our enemies?
Or do you mean we fight among ourselves?
Prin. Nay, noble Edol, let us here take counsel.
It cannot hurt;
It is the surest garrison to safety.
Edol. Fie on such slow delays! So fearful men,
That are to pass over a flowing river,
Stand on the bank to parley of the danger,
Till the tide rise and they be swallowed.

Is not the king in field?

Cador. Proud Vortiger, the traitor, is in field.

Edw. The murderer and usurper!

Edol. Let him be the devil, so I may fight with him.

For heaven's love, sir, march on! Oh, my patience!
Will you delay until the Saxons come
To aid his party?

[*A tucket.*

Prince. There's no such fear. Prithee, be calm a while.

Hark!
It seems by this he comes or sends to us.

Edol. If it be for parley, I'll drown the summons,
If all our drums and hoarseness choke me not.

Enter CAPTAIN.

Prin. Nay, prithee, hear! From whence art thou?

Cap. From the King Vortiger.

Edol. Traitor! There's none such.
Alarum drum, strike, slave, or, by mine honour,
I'll break thy head and beat thy drumsticks both
About thine ears.

Prin. Hold, noble Edol!
Let's hear what articles he can enforce.

Edol. What articles or what conditions

Can you expect to value[7] half your wrong?
Unless he kill himself by thousand tortures,
And send his carcase to appease your vengeance,
For the foul murder of Constantius.
And that's not a tenth part neither.
Prin. 'Tis true.
My brother's blood is crying to me now.
I do applaud thy counsel. Hence, begone!
[*Exit* CAPTAIN.
We'll hear no parley now but by our swords.
Edol. And those shall speak home in death-killing words.
Alarum to the fight! Sound, sound the alarum!
[*Exeunt.*

Alarum. Re-enter EDOL, *driving all* VORTIGER'S *forces before him: then exit.*

SCENE III.

Enter PRINCE UTER, *pursuing* VORTIGER.

Vorti. Dost follow me?
Prin. Yes, to thy death, I will.
Vorti. Stay! be advised!
I would not be the only fall of princes.
I slew thy brother.
Prin. Thou didst, black traitor,
And in that vengeance I pursue thee.

[7] *Value*=to be worth, cf.—
The peace between the French and us not values
The cost that did conclude it.
Shaks. *Hen. VIII.* (Act i., sc. 1.)

Vorti. Take mercy for thyself, and fly my sword.
Save thine own life as satisfaction,
Which here I give thee for thy brother's death.
Prin. Give what's thine own—a traitor's heart and head—
That's all thou art right lord of. The kingdom,
Which thou usurp'st, thou most unhappy tyrant,
Is leaving thee. The Saxons, which thou brought'st
To back thy usurpations, are grown great,
And, where they seat themselves, do hourly seek
To blot the records of old Brute and Britons
From memory of man, calling themselves
Hingest-men and Hingest-land, that no more
The Briton name be known. All this by thee,
Thou base destroyer of thy native country.

Enter EDOL.

Edol. What! Stand ye talking? [*Fights.*
Prin. Hold, Edol!
Edol. Hold out, my sword!
And listen not to king or prince's word.
There's work enough abroad. This task is mine.
[*Alarum.*
Prin. Prosper thy valour, as thy virtues shine.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

Enter Cador *and* Edwin.

Cador. Bright victory herself fights on our part,
And, buckled in a golden beaver, rides
Triumphantly before us.
Edw. Justice is with her,
Who ever takes the true and rightful cause.
Let us not lag behind them.

Enter Prince.

Cador. Here comes the prince! How go our fortunes, sir?
Prin. Hopeful and fair, brave Cador.
Proud Vortiger, beat down by Edol's sword,
Was rescued by the following multitudes;
And now for safety's fled unto a castle
Here standing on the hill. But I have sent
A cry of hounds as violent as hunger,
To break his stony walls. Or, if they fail,
We'll send in wildfire to dislodge him thence,
Or burn them all with flaming violence.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

[*Blazing star appears. Flourish trumpets. Enter* Prince, Edol, Cador, Edwin, Toclio, *and* Soldiers *with* Drum.

Prin. Look, Edol. Still this fiery exhalation shoots

His frightful horrors on th' amazed world.
See, in the beam that 'bout his flaming ring,[8]
A dragon's head appears, from out whose mouth
Two flaming lakes of fire stretch east and west.
Edol. And see, from forth the body of the star,
Seven smaller blazing streams directly point
On this affrighted kingdom.
Cador. 'Tis a dreadful meteor.
Edw. And doth portend strange fears.
Prin. This is no crown of peace. This angry fire
Has something more to burn than Vortiger:
If it alone[9] were pointed at his fall,
It would pull in his blazing pyramids,
And be appeased, for Vortiger is dead.
Edol. These never come without their large effects.
Prin. The will of heaven be done! Our sorrow 's this:—
We want a mystic Python[1] to expound
This fiery oracle.

[8] Tieck:—In dem Feuerglanz, der es umgiebt, erscheint.

We must either read here, "that 'bout it flaming ring"; or, taking *'bout* as a verb=to go about, surround, preserve the text, and interpret, "that goes about or surrounds his (the fiery exhalation's) flaming ring."

[9] *Alone*=only, cf.—"Man shall not live by bread *alone*."

[1] *Python.* Allusion to the oracle of Delphi, which was guarded by the dragon Python, until it was killed by Apollo, who then took possession of the oracle.

Cador. Oh, no, my lord,
You have the best that ever Britain bred;
And, durst I prophecy of your prophet, sir,
None like him shall succeed him.
Prin. You mean Merlin?
Cador. True, sir, wondrous Merlin.
He met us in the way, and did foretell
The fortunes of this day successful to us.
Edw. He's sure about the camp. Send for him, sir.
Cador. He told the bloody Vortiger his fate,
And truly, too. And if I could give faith
To any wizard's skill, it should be Merlin's.

Enter MERLIN *and* CLOWN.

And see, my lord,
As if to satisfy your Highness' pleasure,
Merlin is come.
Prin. See!
The comet's in his eye. Disturb him not.
Edol. With what a piercing judgment he beholds it!
Merl. Whither will heaven and fate translate this kingdom?
What revolutions, rise and fall of nations,
Is figured yonder in that star that sings
The change of Britain's state and death of kings?
Ha! he's dead already. How swiftly mischief creeps!
Thy fatal end, sweet prince, e'en Merlin weeps.

Prin. He does foresee some evil. His action shows it;
For ere he does expound, he weeps the story.
Edol. There's another weeps too.—
Sirrah, dost understand what thou lamentest for?
Clo. No, sir. I am his uncle, and weep because my cousin weeps. Flesh and blood cannot forbear.
Prin. Gentle Merlin, speak thy prophetic knowledge
In explanation of this fiery horror,
By which we gather, from thy mournful tears,
Much sorrow and disaster in it.
Merl. 'Tis true, fair prince.
But you must hear the rest with patience.
Prin. I vow I will, though it portend my ruin.
Merl. There's no such fear.
This brought the fiery fall of Vortiger,
And yet not him[2] alone. This day is fall'n
A king more good, the glory of our land,
The mild and gentle, sweet Aurelius.
Prin. Our brother!
Edol. Forefend it heaven!
Merl. He at his palace royal, sir,
At Winchester, this day is dead and poison'd.
Cador. By whom? or by what means, Merlin?
Merl. By the traitrous Saxons.
Edol. I ever feared as much. That devil Ostorius,

[2] *Him.* We should have expected *his*, but *him* is correct, and has a classic flavour about it.

And that damned witch Artesia, sure, have done it.

Prin. Poisoned! Oh, look further, gentle Merlin.

Behold the star again, and do but find
Revenge for me, tho' it cost a thousand lives,
And mine the foremost.

Merl. Comfort yourself. The heavens have given it fully.

All the portentous ills to you are told.
Now hear a happy story, sir, from me,
To you and to your fair posterity.

Clo. Methinks I see something like a peeled onion. It makes me weep again.

Merl. Be silent, uncle. You'll be forced else.

Clo. Can you not find in the star, cousin, whether I can hold my tongue or no?

Edol. Yes; I must cut it out.

Clo. Phu! you speak without book, sir. My cousin Merlin knows.

Merl. True, I must tie it up.—
Now speak your pleasure, uncle.

Clo. Hum, hum, hum, hum!

Merl. So, so! Now observe, my lord, and there behold
Above yon flame-hair'd beam that upward shoots,
Appears a dragon's head, out of whose mouth
Two streaming lights point their flame-feathered darts

Contrary ways, yet both shall have their aims.
Again behold: from the igniferous body
Seven splendent and illustrious rays are spread,
All speaking heralds to this Briton isle.
And thus they are expounded:—the dragon's head
Is the hieroglyphic that figures out
Your prince's self, that here must reign as king.
Those bi-formed fires, that from the dragon's mouth
Shoot east and west, emblem two royal babes,
Which shall proceed from you, a son and daughter:
Her pointed constellation north-west tending
Crowns her a queen in Ireland, of whom first springs
That kingdom's title to the Briton kings.

Clo. Hum, hum, hum!

Merl. But of your son, thus fate and Merlin tells:—
All after times shall fill their chronicles
With fame of his renown, whose warlike sword
Shall pass through fertile France and Germany,
Nor shall his conquering foot be forced to stand,
Till Rome's imperial wreath hath crowned his fame
With monarch of the west; from whose seven hills

With conquest, and contributory [3] kings,
He back returns to enlarge the Briton bounds,
His heraldry adorned with thirteen crowns.

Clo. Hum, hum, hum!

Merl. He to the world shall add another worthy,
And, as a loadstone, for his prowess draw
A train of martial lovers to his court.
It shall be then the best of knighthood's honour,
At Winchester [4] to fill his castle hall,
And at his royal table sit and feast
In warlike orders, all their arms round hurled,
As if they meant to circumscribe the world.

[*He touches the* CLOWN'S *mouth with his wand.*

Clo. Hum, hum, hum! Oh, that I could speak a little!

Merl. I know your mind, uncle. Again be silent. [*Strikes him again.*

Prin. Thou speak'st of wonders, Merlin, prithee, go on,
Declare at full this constellation.

Merl. Those seven beams pointing downwards, sir, betoken

[3] *Contributory* = tributary.

[4] *Winchester.* Merlin is prophesying of Arthur's Knights and the Table Round. The author localises the Table Round at Winchester. According to the usual account Caerleon, on the Usk, was Arthur's capital.

The troubles of this land, which then shall meet
With other fate. War and dissension strive
To make division, till seven kings agree,
To draw this kingdom to a heptarchy.
Prin. Thine art hath made such proof, that we believe
Thy words authentical. Be ever near us,
My prophet and the guide of all my actions.
Merl. My service shall be faithful to your person,
And all my studies for my country's safety.
Clo. Hum, hum, hum!
Merl. Come, you are released, sir.
Clo. Cousin, pray help me to my tongue again. You do not mean I shall be dumb still, I hope.
Merl. Why, hast thou not thy tongue
Clo. Ha, yes, I feel it now. I was so long dumb, I could not well tell whether I spake or no.
Prin. Is 't thy advice we presently pursue
The bloody Saxons that have slain my brother?
Merl. With your best speed, my lord.
Prosperity will keep you company.
Cador. Take then your title with you, royal prince:
'Twill add unto our strength: Long live King Uter.
Edol. Put the addition to 't that heaven hath given you.
The dragon is your emblem; bear it bravely,

And so long live and ever happy, styled
Uter Pendragon, lawful King of Britain.
Prin. Thanks, Edol, we embrace the name and title:
And in our shield and standard shall the figure
Of a red dragon still be borne before us,
To fright the bloody Saxons.—Oh, my Aurelius,
Sweet rest thy soul; let thy disturbed spirit
Expect revenge; think what it would, it hath.
The dragon's coming in his fiery wrath.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I.

[*Thunder, then music.*
Enter Joan *fearfully, the* Devil *following her.*

Joan. Hence, thou black horror! Is thy lustful fire
Kindled again? Not thy loud-throated thunder,
Nor thy adulterate infernal music,
Shall e'er bewitch me more. Oh, too, too much
Is past already!
Devil. Why dost thou fly me?
I come a lover to thee, to embrace,
And gently twine thy body in mine arms.
Joan. Out, thou hell-hound!
Devil. What hound soe'er I be,

Fawning and sporting, as I would with thee,
Why should I not be stroked and played withal ?
Wilt thou not thank the Lion[5] might devour thee,
If he shall let thee pass.
Joan. Yes, thou art he.
Free me, and I'll thank thee.
Devil. Why, whither would'st ?
I am at home with thee, thou art mine own.
Have we not charge of family together ?
Where is your son ?
Joan. Oh, darkness cover me.
Devil. There is a pride which thou hast won by me,
The mother of a fame,[6] shall never die.
Kings shall have need of written chronicles
To keep their names alive, but Merlin none.
Ages to ages shall, like Sabalists,[7]

[5] *The lion might=that might.* Relative omitted.

[6] *Fame*=famous son. Abstract for concrete.

[7] *Sabalists.*—Tieck ignores this word entirely—"doch Merlin's Ruhm Geht von Jahrhundert zu Jahrhundert fort."

The image in the text well agrees with the lampadephoria, a contest in Greece, wherein one runner handed a torch to another, and this other ran with it over his allotted distance to deliver it to the next, &c., till the lighted torch had passed through the hands of all, and reached the goal. Lucretius' fine simile of life drawn from this contest is well known—

Et quasi cursores vitai lampada tradunt.

But who were the Sabalists ? They had nothing to

Report the wonders of his name and glory,
While there are tongues and times to tell his story.
Joan. Oh, rot my memory before my flesh,
Let him be called some hell- or earth-born monster,
That ne'er had hapless woman for a mother:
Sweet death, deliver me!—Hence from my sight!
Why should'st thou now appear? I had no pride
Nor lustful thought about me, to conjure
And call thee to my ruin, when, as at first,
Thy cursed person became visible.
Devil. I am the same I was.
Joan. But I am changed.
Devil. Again I'll change thee to the same thou wert,
Quench[8] to my lust.—Come forth, by thunder led,
My coadjutors in the spoils of mortals,
[*Thunder. Enter Spirits.*
Clasp in your ebon arms that prize of mine,
Mount her as high as pallid Hecate;
And on this rock I'll stand to cast up fumes
And darkness o'er the blue-faced firmament.

do with the *lampadephoria*. May *Sabalists* be a misprint for *Cabalists*, the dealers in tradition *par excellence?*

[8] *Quench.* Here a noun. By means of the article, the Greeks could convert any verb into a noun.

From Britain and from Merlin I'll remove her:
They ne'er shall meet again.
Joan. Help me, some saving hand!
If not too late, I cry: Let mercy come!

Enter MERLIN.

Merl. Stay you, black slaves of night, let loose your hold,
Set her down safe, or, by th' infernal Styx,
I'll bind you up with exorcisms so strong,
That all the black pentagoron[6] of hell
Shall ne'er release you. Save you selves and vanish.

[*Exeunt Spirits.*

Devil. Ha! what is he?
Merl. The child has found his father.
Do you not know me?
Devil. Merlin.
Joan. Oh! help me, gentle son.
Merl. Fear not; they shall not hurt you.

[9] *Pentagoron*—(Tieck: Die gesammte Macht)—conveys no meaning to me. I take it to be a misprint for Pantagoron, compounded clumsily of *pas* (part=all) and *agora* (assembly); and therefore to mean the entire assembly of devils, in fact, *pandemonium*. But *Pentagoron* may, after all, be some technical term of the "magic art," cf.:—

> The great arch-ruler, potentate of hell,
> Trembles when Bacon bids him or his friends
> Bow to the force of his *pentageron*.
>
> Greene, *Friar Bacon*.

See Hunter's Dictionary, sub. voc. *Pentageron*.

Devil. Reliev'st thou her, to disobey thy father?

Merl. Obedience is no lesson in your school.
Nature and kind,[1] to her commands my duty.
The part that you begot was against kind,
So all I owe to you is to be unkind.[2]

Devil. I'll blast thee, slave, to death, and on this rock
Stick thee as an eternal monument.

Merl. Ha, ha! Thy power's too weak. What art thou, Devil,
But an inferior lustful Incubus,
Taking advantage of the wanton flesh,
Wherewith thou dost beguile the ignorant?
Put off the form of thy humanity,
And crawl upon thy speckled belly, serpent,
Or I'll unclasp the jaws of Acheron,
And fix thee ever in the local[3] fire.

Devil. Traitor to hell! Curse that I e'er begot thee.

Merl. Thou did'st beget thy scourge. Storm not, nor stir.

[1] *Kind* = relation by blood, cf.:—

At the last they chased out the Britons so clean
Away unto Wales their kind is I ween.
Robert de Brunne.

[2] This line is probably a gloss on the preceding, and no part of the original play.

[3] *Local* seems to mean *in the place;* so that local fire = the fire that is therein—a use of *local* for which the Dictionaries offer no parallel, but the use of the Greek word ἐγχώριος answers exactly.

The power of Merlin's art is all confirmed
In the fates' decretals. I'll ransack hell,
And make thy masters bow unto my spells.
Thou first shall taste it.

[*Thunder and lightning in the rock.*

[4] Tenebrarum precis, divitiarum et inferorum deus, hunc incubum in ignis eterni abyssum accipite, aut in hoc carcere tenebroso in sempiternum astringere mando.

[*The rock encloses the Devil.*

So! there beget earthquakes or noisome damps,
For never shalt thou touch a woman more.
How cheer you, mother?

Joan. Oh, now my son is my deliverer.
Yet I must name him with my deepest sorrow.

[*Alarum afar off.*

Merl. Take comfort now: past times are ne'er recalled.
I did foresee your mischief and prevent it.
Hark, how the sounds of war now call me hence
To aid Pendragon, that in battle stands
Against the Saxons; from whose aid
Merlin must not be absent. Leave this soil,
And I'll conduct you to a place retired,
Which I by art have raised, called Merlin's bower.

[4] "Oh! prince of darkness, God of riches and of hell, make room for this incubus in the abyss of eternal fire, or I commission you to bind him up in this dark prison for ever." *Precis* misprint for *præses*. *Accipite* is probably an error for *accipere*.

There shall you dwell with solitary sighs,
With groans and passions, your companions,
To weep away this flesh you have offended with,
And leave all bare unto your aerial soul.
And when you die, I will erect a monument[5]
Upon the verdant plains of Salisbury—
(No king shall have so high a sepulcre)—
With pendulous stones that I will hang by art,
Where neither lime nor mortar shall be used,
A dark enigma to the memory,
For none shall have the power to number them.
A place that I will hallow for your rest,
Where no night-hag shall walk, nor werwolf tread,
Where Merlin's mother shall be sepulcred.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Enter Donobert, Gloster, *and* Hermit.

Dono. Sincerely, Gloster, I have told you all.
My daughters are both vowed to single life,
And this day gone unto the nunnery,
Though I begot them to another end,
And fairly promised them in marriage,
One to Earl Cador, th' other to your son,

[5] *Monument.* Our poet regards Stonehenge and its megalithic wonders as the sepulchre of Merlin's mother.

My worthy friend, the Earl of Gloster.
Those lost, I am lost. They are lost, all's lost.
Answer me this, then : Is 't a sin to marry ?
Her. Oh, no, my lord.
Dono. Go to, then ! I will go no further with you.
I persuade you to no ill. Persuade you, then,[6]
That I persuade you well.
Glos. 'Twill be a good office in you, sir.

Enter CADOR *and* EDWIN.

Dono. Which since they thus neglect,
My memory shall lose them now for ever.
See, see the noble lords, their promised husbands !
Had fate so pleased, you might have called me father.
Edw. Those hopes are passed, my lord, for even this minute
We saw them both enter the monastery,
Secluded from the world and men for ever.
Cador. 'Tis both our griefs we cannot, sir.
But from the king take you the time's joy from us.
The Saxon king Ostorius slain, and Octa fled ;
That woman-fury, Queen Artesia,
Is fast in hold, and forced to redeliver
London and Winchester, which she had fortified,

[6] *Then.* Tieck reads, them. No change is necessary.

To princely Uter, lately styled Pendragon,
Who now triumphantly is marching hither,
To be invested with the Briton crown.

Dono. The joy of this shall banish from my breast
All thought that I was father to two children,
Two stubborn daughters that have left me thus.
Let my old arms embrace and call you sons;
For, by the honour of my father's house,
I'll part my estate most equally betwixt you.

Edwin and Cador. Sir, you are most noble.

[*Flourish trumpets. Enter* EDOL *with drum and colours,* OSWALD *bearing the standard,* TOCLIO *the shield, with the red dragon pictured in them; two* BISHOPS *with the crown,* PRINCE UTER, MERLIN, ARTESIA (*bound*), GUARD, *and* CLOWN.

Prin. Set up our shield and standard, noble soldiers.
We have firm hope that, though our dragon sleep,
Merlin will us and our fair kingdom keep.

Clo. As his uncle lives, I warrant you.

Glos. Happy restorer of the Briton's fame,
Uprising sun, let us salute thy glory;
Ride in a day perpetual about us,
And no night be in thy throne's zodiac.—
Why do we stay to bind those princely brows
With this imperial honour?

Prin. Stay, noble Gloster!

That monster first must be expelled our eye,
Or we shall take no joy in it.

Dono. If that be hindrance, give her quick judgment,
And send her hence to death; she's long deserved it.

Edol. Let my sentence stand for all. Take her hence,
And stake her carcase in the burning sun,
Till it be parched and dry; and then flay off
Her wicked skin, and stuff the pelt with straw,
To be shown up and down at fairs and markets.
Twopence a-piece to see so foul a monster
Will be a fair monopoly, and worth the begging.

Artes. Ha, ha, ha!

Edol. Dost laugh, Erictho?

Artes. Yes, at thy poor invention.
Is there no better torture-monger?

Dono. Burn her to dust.

Artes. That is a Phœnix' death, and glorious.

Edol. Ay, that 's too good for her.

Prin. Alive she shall be buried, circled in a wall.—
Thou murderess of a king, there starve to death.

Artes. Then I'll starve death when he comes for his prey,
And i' the meantime I'll live upon your curses.

Edol. Ay, 'tis diet good enough. Away with her!

Artes. With joy, my best of wishes is before ;
The brother's poisoned, but I wanted more.
[*Exit.*

Prin. Why does our prophet Merlin stand apart,
Sadly observing these our ceremonies,
And not applaud our joys with thy hid knowledge ?
Let thy divining art now satisfy
Some part of my desires ; for well I know,
'Tis in thy power to show the full event
That shall both end our reign and chronicle.
Speak, learned Merlin, and resolve my fears,
Whether by war we shall expel the Saxons,
Or govern what we hold in beauteous peace
In Wales and Britain ?

Merl. Long happiness attend Pendragon's reign !
What heaven decrees, fate hath no power to alter.
The Saxons, sir, will keep the ground they have ;
And, by supplying numbers, still increase
Till Britain be no more. So please your grace,
I will, in visible apparitions,
Present you prophecies which shall concern
Succeeding princes, which my art shall raise,
Till men shall call those times the latter days.

Prin. Do it, my Merlin,
And crown me with joy and wonder.
[*Merlin strikes.*

[*Hautboys. Enter a* KING *in armour, his shield quartered with thirteen crowns. At the other door enter divers* PRINCES, *who present their crowns at his feet and do him homage: then enters* DEATH *and strikes him: he, growing sick, crowns* CONSTANTINE.

[*Exeunt.*

Merl. This king, my lord, presents your royal son,
Who in his prime of years shall be so fortunate,
That thirteen several princes shall present
Their several crowns to him; and all kings else
Shall so admire his fame and victories,
That they shall all be glad, through fear or love,
To do him homage.
But death, who favours neither weak nor valiant,
In the midst of all his glories, soon shall seize him,
Scarcely permitting him time to appoint one
In all his purchased kingdoms to succeed him.

Prin. Thanks to our prophet,
For this so wished-for satisfaction.
And hereby now we learn that always fate
Must be observed, whatever that decree.
All future times shall still record this story
Of Merlin's learned worth and Arthur's glory.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

FINIS.

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF

THOMAS LORD CROMWELL.

INTRODUCTION

TO

THOMAS LORD CROMWELL.

ANALYSIS OF THE PLAY.

The first act opens in a forge at Putney. The journeymen of old Cromwell are going early to work, and the conversation turns to the young prodigy in the old smith's house, who, it is said, made a tremendous "coil" last night working at his books and using his scientific instruments, for he was dabbling with the stars. In the meantime young Tom, his head full of thoughts and his mind full of ambitious projects, salutes the morn and apostrophises knowledge, which is to be his guide to fame:—

> "O, learning, how divine thou seemst to me
> Within whose arms is all felicity."

Presently old Cromwell arrives upon the scene and vigorously scolds the loitering journeymen, telling them to set to work at once. But young

Tom endeavours to stop the workmen, because the noise of their hammers interferes with his studies, and gives his father an idea of that splendour which his presaging soul promises to him; among other items in the glorious vision is a palace "as fair as that at Sheen." In order not to expose a father's fond weakness before his journeymen, old Cromwell remarks:—

"Well, had I bound him to some honest trade,
This had not been: but 'twas his mother's doing
To send him to the university."

But probably the father on this occasion dreamed the mother's dreams of his son's future fame, for he says, in an aside, to his son:—

"As fair as that at Sheen? They shall not hear me.
A good boy, Tom; I con thee thank, Tom:
Well said, Tom; gramercy, Tom."

And then, reassuming the tone of a master and of a father who will not stoop to trifles, he gives orders:—

"In to your work, knaves! hence, you saucy boy!"

After this, young Tom takes courage from a consideration of the antecedents of his contemporaries. He asks himself:—

"Why should my birth keep down my mounting spirit?

Are not all creatures subject unto time,
To time who doth abuse the cheated world,
And fills it full of hodge-podge bastardy?
There's legions now of beggars on the earth,
That their original did spring from kings;
And many monarchs now, whose fathers were
The riff-raff of their age; for time and fortune
Wears a noble train to beggary."

There was the river Thames, which from small beginnings grew into a sea, as there was Wolsey, the wonder of his age, though but a butcher's son. These reflections bid him say:—

"Then, Cromwell, cheer thee up, and tell thy soul
That thou may'st live to flourish and controul."

The London merchants were in the habit of employing the blacksmith's son's genius to write petitions for them to the Council, one of whom Mr. Bowser comes to offer him the post of secretary to his company at Antwerp, an offer which the young man's thirst for travel and experience eagerly accepted.

We are now brought face to face with a generous Florentine merchant, of the name of Frescobald; a decayed English trader named Banister; and a most ungrateful wretch, Bagot. Bagot had got Banister arrested at the suit of Frescobald, to whom the latter owed a thousand pounds, and repaired to the Florentine's residence to open his eyes with regard to Banister's wicked

ways, in the hope of a good reward for his officiousness. Frescobald was reluctant to believe Bagot's tale, and his reluctance was converted into a belief in Banister's honesty by the arrival of that unfortunate man, accompanied by his wife and two officers. The Florentine melted at Mrs. Banister's tale of woe, and agreed to wait until her husband would be able to pay him, nobly adding,—

"But yet if still your fortune frown,
Upon my faith I'll never ask a crown."

Bagot departs, in great dudgeon, to buy up Banister's debts in order to be able to wreak his vengeance on the merchant-banker, from whose trencher he had often fed. Thus ends the first Act.

Cromwell is dissatisfied with his position at Antwerp, which was not suitable to his mounting mind, and is setting his house and accounts in order, preparatory to taking his leave for Italy. Mrs. Banister, who with her husband had gone to Antwerp to escape prosecution and imprisonment, has an interview with the secretary, who relieves her immediate wants, and promises to do what he can for her by interceding with Bagot. On the street at Antwerp he meets Bagot, who had followed Banister, as well to feed his revenge, as to do a little business in certain jewels gotten by questionable means. Cromwell's intercession for the Banisters has no

effect on Bagot's heart, which knew only two passions, vindictiveness and avarice. Next, Cromwell meets Hodge, one of his father's journeymen, who had risked a—to him—very unpleasant voyage in order to see his idol. On seeing him, Hodge exclaims:—"Master Thomas, O God! Master Thomas, your hand, glove and all. This is to give you to understand that your father is in health, and Alice Downing here hath sent you a nutmeg, and Bess Makewater a race of ginger; my fellows, Will and Tom, hath between them sent you a dozen of points; and goodman Toll, of the Goat, a pair of mittens; myself came in person." Cromwell asks Hodge if he will bear him company to Italy. The old servant waxes familiar as he replies:—"Will I bear thee company, Tom? What tell'st me of Italy? Were it to the farthest part of Flanders, I would go with thee, Tom: I am thine in all weal and woe; thy own to command."

In another street Bagot is negotiating the sale of jewels with the Governor of the English Factory, who puts in a word on behalf of the Banisters. But Bagot is remorseless. Mrs. Banister has recourse to prayer. In vain, for Bagot coolly observes:—

"Alas, fond woman! I pr'y thee pray thy worst;
The fox fares better still when he is curst."

But Mr. Bowser, who is on the track of Bagot for buying jewels stolen from the treasury,

arrests him. Bagot's cool villainy accepts the situation without repining ; he says :—

"The devil owed me a shame, and now hath paid it."

It was paid on a London gallows, and his confiscated property gave Banister a new start in life, for, as the king assigned that property to the Antwerp Company, that company in turn gave it to Banister,

"A brother of their company,
A man decayed by fortune of the seas."

Thus ends the second act with a high compliment to the virtue of the London guilds in the seventeenth century. But the virtue and the guild have been long dead.

Master Thomas and Hodge are gaining experience the reverse of pleasant. At the opening of the third act, they are standing, clad in shirts and hats, on the bridge of Florence. Their superfluous clothing had been appropriated by a gang of banditti. They are soliciting the alms of passers-by, a placard having been written to explain the cause of their presenting themselves in such a bare condition. Hodge is lamenting the fact that his companion had never learned to make a horse-shoe. Cromwell is ever hopeful. By-and-by, Frescobald, who loved the English nation, passed, relieved the beggars, and promised further help if necessary. The future Vicar-General thanks his benefactor :—

"Your charity hath helped me in despair,
Your name shall still be in my hearty prayer,"

and sets out for Bononia, in turn to relieve a distressed countryman, a scion of the house of Russell, though Hodge was decidedly of opinion that they could do no better than continue their lucrative calling on Florence bridge, for "we shall get," he says, "more with begging in one day than I shall with making horse-shoes in a whole year."

At Bononia, Russell disdains to surrender his person to the citizens, whom he suspected of a wish to betray him to the French. The English nobleman threatens, in a somewhat hectoring style, to stab the first Bononian that approaches him. While the city authorities were at their wits' end, an insinuating Neapolitan undertakes, by his mere eloquence, to persuade the English nobleman. The Neapolitan and his servant are admitted to the prisoner's chamber, who are, of course, none other than Cromwell and his comical companion Hodge. The nobleman and the farrier exchange clothes, in order to smooth the former's escape. It is a very humorous scene. Cromwell asked Hodge how he felt now that he wore a nobleman's clothes. "How do I feel myself?" quoth Hodge, "why, as a nobleman should do. O, how I feel honour come creeping on! My nobility is wonderful melancholy. Is it not most gentlemanlike to be melancholy?" Then turn-

ing to the Earl of Bedford, he asks:—"But hark, my lord; do you feel nothing bite about you?" Receiving an answer in the negative, he philosophizes thus:—"Ay, they know they want their old pasture. 'Tis a strange thing of this vermin, they meddle not with nobility." Left alone by the departure of the Earl and Cromwell, ennobled by the grace of Russell's tailor, Hodge writes a letter to a friend at home:—"Fellow William, I am not as I have been: I went from you a smith, I write to you as a lord. I am at present writing among the Polonian sausages. I do commend my lordship to Ralph, and to Roger, to Bridget, and to Dorothy, and so to all the youth of Putney."

The scene shifts from Bononia to the house of Sir Christopher Hales, in London, who is having the honour of entertaining the great Cardinal Wolsey, Sir Thomas More, and Gardiner. Sir Christopher doubts not that the banquet will be a success, for the master of the feast is Thomas Cromwell, who is now in his service. The Cardinal perceives that there is a great soul in his host's servant, and asks Sir Christopher to part with him. Wolsey had only to ask: Cromwell is transferred to the Cardinal's service.

The fourth act opens with the Dukes of Norfolk and of Suffolk successfully fishing out of Cromwell's keeping certain writings which are

thought to compromise his fallen master, of whom he says :—

"His sudden death I grieve for, not his fall,
Because he sought to work my country's thrall."

Then promotions are showered on Cromwell. Ere one messenger has finished notifying one ascent on the ladder of honour, another comes to bid the smith's son mount still higher. From simple Thomas he passes through knighthood to the upper chamber, and the first place in the council of the nation, and in the confidence of his king. His success exposes him to the envy of disappointed rivals. Gardiner gives utterance to the sentiments of this faction :—

"My envy with his honour now is bred :
I hope to shorten Cromwell by the head."

Frescobald, the generous Florentine, has been sorely buffeted by fortune since the day he relieved the wants of two distressed Englishmen on Florence bridge. Spurned by those whom he, in the hour of his prosperity, had assisted, and in utter wretchedness, he lies down in a street before Cromwell's door—to die. To the same street come Seely and Joan, mine host and hostess of Hounslow, who had, in days gone by, acted to young Master Tom the part of parents, but now they also were in distress. They are come to see whether the great statesman remembers them, and whether remembering, he will relieve. Joan has no hope, for she quotes

the proverb, "Set beggars a horseback and they'll ride" to a land where gratitude is scorned. Seely is resolved were the vicar-general ten lords to tell him roundly that cheese and bacon were not gotten at Hounslow for nothing. Hodge enters with a tip-staff; then Cromwell with the mace carried before him; following him are the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk. The tip-staff would kick away the beggars who crowded about his master's doors. Seely gives expression to his indignation. But Cromwell recognizes—

"My honest host of Hounslow and his wife"

acknowledges an old debt that he owed to the kind-hearted man, pays him, and gives order that Seely should receive an annuity from the great Lord: to cap all, Seely and Joan are commanded to stay to dinner. Mine host was amazed and rejoiced: he said, "Art not changed? art old Tom still? Now God bless thee, good Lord Tom. Home, Joan, home: I'll dine with my Lord Tom to-day, and thou shalt come next week. Fetch my cow: home, Joan, home." Gardiner joins the procession, between whom and Cromwell a controversy arises respecting certain abbey lands, and the wrongs done to religion. After ordering Hodge to request Frescobald's presence at dinner, Cromwell, surrounded by proud nobles and haughty prelates, proceeds to the Convocation House. Now there enters an old man dressed in the garb of a Yorkshire farmer,

and hearing that one Cromwell was made lord keeper, he resolves to see that Cromwell. There will be no difficulty. Abbey lands, reformation of religion and affairs of state must bide their turn; the great lord keeper will do no violence to his heart. The old man is his father, removed from the Putney forge to till the ground in Yorkshire. What matters it to Lord Cromwell that the pride of England's nobility is around him, and that the old man is clad in homely stuff? That old man is his father—a sufficient answer to all questions. Seeing old Cromwell, the title-ennobling son exclaims:—

"My aged father! State then set aside,
Father, upon my knee I crave your blessing.'

And the old man:—

"Now if I die, how happy were the day!
To see this comfort, rains forth showers of joy."

This dutifulness is better than a palace "as fair as that at Sheen," is it not, old Thomas Cromwell?

While Frescobald is wondering, not without feelings of fear, what the Lord Chancellor wanted him for, Banister and his wife, now in good circumstances, come up to him, repay him the long-standing debt, and assure him that he will find in the Lord Chancellor a "kind and noble gentleman."

The kindred and benefactors of the great minister are in his house awaiting his commands.

Cromwell enters, accompanied by great lords, preceded by the usher, who commands all to uncover. The son's first care was that dear old Yorkshire farmer who, like all the rest, had obeyed the usher. Says the son:—

"Nay, be covered, father:
Although that duty to these noblemen
Doth challenge it, yet I will make bold with them.
Your head doth bear the calendar of care.
What! Cromwell covered, and his father bare?
It must not be!"

Frescobald is next comforted, and Seely obtained a nod of recognition before the Lord Chancellor proceeds to relate a little of his past life and the debt he owes to these three:—

"Here stands my father, that first gave me life;
Alas, what duty is too much for him?
This man in time of need did save my life;
I, therefore, cannot do too much for him.
By this old man I oftentimes was fed,
Else might I have gone supperless to bed.
Such kindness have I had of these three men,
That Cromwell no way can repay again."

In the Bishop of Winchester's house the devil of envy is plotting crime. A servant of Him, who commanded his followers to love their enemies, is making witnesses to swear to this charge for the honour of Holy Church:—

"That you heard Cromwell, the Lord Chancellor,
Did wish a dagger at King Henry's heart."

This is the first step taken by Gardiner to shorten his rival by the head. Norfolk and Suffolk readily enter into the plot to overthrow the upstart plebeian.

The fifth act shows the dark web weaving, the arrest of Cromwell, the haughty contempt of his triumphing rivals, and, sweet as sunshine after shower, Bedford weeping for his friend's cruel destiny. The sight gladdens Cromwell's heart; he says:—

"O dear friend Bedford, dost thou stand so near?
Cromwell rejoiceth one friend sheds a tear."

We hear the opinion of the masses, in the next scene, respecting the great minister; and, as nearly always, their untutored instinct arrives at the true reason of his fall. True, he was generous, charitable, and noble, but he was great; and

"The shrub is safe, when as the cedar shakes."

Cromwell meditates in the Tower on his state and the romance of his life, and fixes his gaze on two points therein, the height of his position and the suddenness of his fall. Now he bethinks him of Bedford's letter which he received yesterday while on the way to Lambeth, and of which he reserved the reading to a more quiet hour. It was a warning to him from the rescued

prisoner of Bononia not to trust himself to Lambeth. Alas, it is all too late now. Presently, the peers and prelates enter to see Cromwell executed, who desires somebody to carry from him a message to the king. Nobody was willing to do him this service. He appealed to his servant, Sir Ralph Sadler, who promptly undertakes the office. But Gardiner handed to the lieutenant the king's warrant for Cromwell's execution. The minister accepted it with dignity, and after warmly denying that he was a traitor, bid the lords tell the king:—

"In what sort his Cromwell died,
To lose his head before his cause was tried;
But let his Grace, when he shall hear my name,
Say only this: Gardiner procured the same."

Having given his son very wholesome advice, forgiven the executioner, and affectionately embraced Bedford, he is led forth to execution, and the reader feels the truth of Bedford's observations, when read in the light of the subsequent events of England's history:—

"Well, lords, I fear that when this man is dead,
You'll wish in vain that Cromwell had a head."

Sir Ralph Sadler duly performed his task, and successfully, for he returned with a reprieve from the king; but it was too late. The possible consequences of the crime are intimated by Gardiner:—

"My conscience now tells me this deed was ill.
Would Christ that Cromwell were alive again!"

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

"Thomas Cromwell" is a biographical drama; a literary field in which it is admittedly difficult to achieve success. The author of this play, however, has achieved considerable success: he has given prominence to the prominent features of his hero's life, its romance, its glory, and tragic termination; he has emphasized the salient points of his hero's character, his large heart and ample benevolence; and he has kept in the background whatever there was in Cromwell's character to awaken hostility or disapprobation. There are in the play several passages of considerable poetic beauty, and many very effective dramatic situations. The reader must not take all the writer's history for facts: for instance, Cromwell was never, as the play tells us he was, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, nor did he succeed Sir Christopher Hales as Master of the Rolls, but filled that office before Sir Christopher.

This play has been ascribed to Shakespeare. Schlegel held it to be one of Shakespeare's best works. The learned German is in error, surely. Neither in its tone, structure, or literary execution is there the least trace of Shakespeare's hand or of Shakespeare's mind. But, perhaps, to the general reader a more conclusive, because

more obvious, proof of the vast gulf which separates our author from Shakespeare will be a comparison of two specific speeches, that of Cromwell meditating on his state (act v. scene 5), beginning with the words, "Now, Cromwell, hast thou time to meditate, &c.," and that of Wolsey's farewell to his greatness (Hen. VIII., act iii. scene 2), beginning with the well-known words, "Farewell! a long farewell, to all my greatness," &c.: the subject of both speeches is practically the same, but how different the execution!

There is no reason to doubt that the author of our play was Wentworth Smith, a poet of considerable ability, who wrote other dramas, such as, "The Puritane, or Widow of Watling Streete" and "The Hector of Germanie," besides "The Life and Death of Thomas, Lord Cromwell." Wentworth Smith was, as it has been observed by the critics, fortunate in the initials of his name. Our play was entered on the Stationers' books in 1602, at which time Shakespeare's "Henry VIII." was acting in London. There is no copy extant of this edition. In 1613, Shakespeare's "Henry VIII." was revived with great success and splendour. In the same year our play was again brought out, advantage being taken of the similarity of time and matter which it shared with the great poet's work, and of the identity of our author's initials with those of Shakespeare. The oldest edition, so far as is

known, of our play, dates from this year, and is the basis of all later editions.

"Thomas Cromwell" was printed in 1810 in the first volume of "The Ancient British Drama." It was translated in 1840 by Ernst Ortlepp into German in his "Nachträge zu Shakespeare's Werken." It appeared again in 1869 in Tauchnitz' edition of "Doubtful Plays."

T. Evan Jacob.

London 1889.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUKE OF NORFOLK.
DUKE OF SUFFOLK.
EARL OF BEDFORD.
CARDINAL WOLSEY.
GARDINER, Bishop of Winchester.
SIR THOMAS MORE.
SIR CHRISTOPHER HALES.
SIR RALPH SADLER.
SIR RICHARD RADCLIFF.
OLD CROMWELL, a Blacksmith of Putney.
THOMAS CROMWELL, his son.
BANISTER, BOWSER, NEWTON, CROSBY, English Merchants.
BAGOT, a Money-broker.
FRESCOBALD, a Florentine merchant.
The Governor of the English Factory at Antwerp.
Governor and other States of Bologna.
Master of an Hotel in Bologna.
SEELY, a Publican of Hounslow.
Lieutenant of the Tower.
YOUNG CROMWELL, the son of Thomas.
HODGE, WILL, and TOM; old Cromwell's servants.
Two Citizens.
MRS. BANISTER.
JOAN, wife to Seeley.

Two Witnesses, a Sergeant-at-arms, a Herald, a Hangman, a Post, Messengers, Officers, Ushers, and Attendants.

SCENE—*Partly in London and the adjoining district; partly in Antwerp and Bologna.*

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF

THOMAS LORD CROMWELL.

ACT I.

Scene I.

Putney. The entrance of a Smith's shop.

Enter Hodge, Will, *and* Tom.

Hodge. Come, masters, I think it be past five o'clock; is it not time we were at work? my old master he'll be stirring anon.

Will. I cannot tell whether my old master will be stirring or no; but I am sure I can hardly take my afternoon's nap, for my young Master Thomas. He keeps such a coil in his study, with the sun, and the moon, and the seven stars, that I do verily think he'll read out his wits.

Hodge. He skill of the stars! There's goodman Car of Fulham (he that carried us to the strong ale, where goody Trundel had her maid

got with child), O, he knows the stars ; he'll tickle you Charles's wain in nine degrees: that same man will tell goody Trundel when her ale shall miscarry, only by the stars.

Tom. Ay ! that's a great virtue indeed ; I think Thomas be nobody in comparison to him.

Will. Well, masters, come ; shall we to our hammers ?

Hodge. Ay, content : first let's take our morning's draught, and then to work roundly.

Tom. Ay, agreed. Go in, Hodge. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

The same. Enter young Cromwell.

Crom. Good morrow, morn ; I do salute thy brightness.
The night seems tedious to my troubled soul,
Whose black obscurity breeds in my mind
A thousand sundry cogitations :
And now Aurora with a lively dye
Adds comfort to my spirit, that mounts on high ;
Too high indeed, my state being so mean.
My study, like a mineral of gold,
Makes my heart proud, wherein my hope's enroll'd ;
My books are all the wealth I do possess,
And unto them I have engag'd my heart.
O, learning, how divine thou seem'st to me,
Within whose arms is all felicity !

[*The smiths beat with their hammers, within.*
Peace with your hammers! leave your knocking there!
You do disturb my study and my rest:
Leave off, I say; you mad me with the noise.

Enter HODGE, WILL, *and* TOM *from within.*

Hodge. Why, how now, Master Thomas? how now? will you not let us work for you?

Crom. You fret my heart with making of this noise.

Hodge. How, fret your heart? ay, but Thomas, you'll fret your father's purse, if you let us from working.

Tom. Ay, this 'tis for him to make him a gentleman. Shall we leave work for your musing? that's well, i' faith. But here comes my old master now.

Enter old CROMWELL.

Old Crom. You idle knaves, what are you loit'ring now?
No hammers, talking, and my work to do!
What, not a heat among your work to-day?

Hodge. Marry, sir, your son Thomas will not let us work at all.

Old Crom. Why, knave, I say, have I thus cark'd and car'd,
And all to keep thee like a gentleman;
And dost thou let my servants at their work,
That sweat for thee, knave, labour thus for thee?

Crom. Father, their hammers do offend my study.

Old Crom. Out of my doors, knave, if thou lik'st it not.

I cry you mercy; are your ears so fine?
I tell thee, knave, these get when I do sleep;
I will not have my anvil stand for thee.

Crom. There's money, father; I will pay your men.

[*Throws money among them.*

Old Crom. Have I thus brought thee up unto my cost,
In hope that one day thou'dst relieve my age;
And art thou now so lavish of thy coin,
To scatter it among these idle knaves?

Crom. Father, be patient, and content yourself:
The time will come I shall hold gold as trash:
And here, I speak with a presaging soul,
I'll build a palace where this cottage stands,
As fine as is King Henry's house at Sheen.

Old Crom. You build a house? you knave, you'll be a beggar!
Now, afore God, all is but cast away,
That is bestow'd upon this thriftless lad!
Well, had I bound him to some honest trade,
This had not been; but 'twas his mother's doing,
To send him to the university.
How? build a house where now this cottage stands,

As fair as that at Sheen ?—They shall not hear me. [*Aside.*
A good boy, Tom ; I con thee thank, Tom ;
Well said, Tom ; gramercy, Tom.—
In to your work, knaves ; hence, thou saucy boy.
[*Exeunt all but young* CROMWELL.

Crom. Why should my birth keep down my mounting spirit ?
Are not all creatures subject unto time,
To time, who doth abuse the cheated world,
And fills it full of hodge-podge bastardy ?
There's legions now of beggars on the earth,
That their original did spring from kings ;
And many monarchs now, whose fathers were
The riff-raff of their age ; for time and fortune
Wears out a noble train to beggary ;
And from the dunghill minions do advance
To state and mark in this admiring world.
This is but course, which, in the name of fate,
Is seen as often as it whirls about.
The river Thames, that by our door doth pass,
His first beginning is but small and shallow ;
Yet, keeping on his course, grows to a sea.
And likewise Wolsey, the wonder of our age,
His birth as mean as mine, a butcher's son ;
Now who within this land a greater man ?
Then, Cromwell, cheer thee up, and tell thy soul,
That thou mayst live to flourish and control.

Enter old CROMWELL.

Old Crom. Tom Cromwell ; what, Tom, I say.

Crom. Do you call, sir?

Old Crom. Here is Master Bowser come to know if you have despatched his petition for the lords of the council, or no.

Crom. Father, I have; please you to call him in.

Old Crom. That's well said, Tom; a good lad, Tom.

Enter BOWSER.

Bow. Now, Master Cromwell, have you despatched this petition?

Crom. I have, sir; here it is: please you peruse it.

Bow. It shall not need; we'll read it as we go By water.
And, Master Cromwell, I have made a motion
May do you good, an if you like of it.
Our secretary at Antwerp, sir, is dead,
And now the merchants there have sent to me,
For to provide a man fit for the place:
Now I do know none fitter than yourself,
If it stand with your liking, Master Cromwell.

Crom. With all my heart, sir; and I much am bound
In love and duty for your kindness shown.

Old Crom. Body of me, Tom, make haste, lest somebody get between thee and honour, Tom. —I thank you, good Master Bowser, I thank you for my boy: I thank you always, I thank you most heartily, sir: ho, a cup of beer here for Master Bowser.

Bow. It shall not need, sir.—Master Cromwell, will you go?

Crom. I will attend you, sir.

Old Crom. Farewell, Tom: God bless thee, Tom! God speed thee, good Tom! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

London. A street before Frescobald's *house.*

Enter Bagot.

Bag. I hope this day is fatal unto some,
And by their loss must Bagot seek to gain.
This is the lodge of Master Frescobald,
A liberal merchant, and a Florentine;
To whom Banister owes a thousand pound.
A merchant-bankrupt, whose father was my master.
What do I care for pity or regard?
He once was wealthy, but he now is fallen;
And I this morning have got him arrested
At suit of this same Master Frescobald;
And by this means shall I be sure of coin,
For doing this same good to him unknown;
And in good time see where the merchant comes.

Enter Frescobald.

Good morrow to kind Master Frescobald.

Fres. Good morrow to yourself, good Master Bagot;

And what's the news, you are so early stirring?
It is for gain, I make no doubt of that.
Bag. 'Tis for the love, sir, that I bear to you.
When did you see your debtor Banister?
Fres. I promise you I have not seen the man
This two months day: his poverty is such,
As I do think he shames to see his friends.
Bag. Why then assure yourself to see him straight,
For at your suit I have arrested him,
And here they will be with him presently.
Fres. Arrest him at my suit? you were to blame.
I know the man's misfortunes to be such,
As he's not able for to pay the debt;
And were it known to some, he were undone.
Bag. This is your pitiful heart to think it so;
But you are much deceiv'd in Banister.
Why, such as he will break for fashion's sake.
And unto those they owe a thousand pound,
Pay scarce a hundred. O, sir, beware of him.
The man is lewdly given to dice and drabs;
Spends all he hath in harlots' companies;
It is no mercy for to pity him.
I speak the truth of him, for nothing else,
But for the kindness that I bear to you.
Fres. If it be so, he hath deceiv'd me much;
And to deal strictly with such a one as he,
Is better sure than too much lenity.
But here is Master Banister himself,
And with him, as I take it, are the officers.

Enter BANISTER, *his* Wife, *and two* Officers.

Ban. O, Master Frescobald, you have undone me :
My state was well-nigh overthrown before,
Now altogether downcast by your means.
Mrs. Ban. O, Master Frescobald, pity my husband's case,
He is a man hath liv'd as well as any,
Till envious fortune and the ravenous sea
Did rob, disrobe, and spoil us of our own.
Fres. Mistress Banister, I envy not your husband,
Nor willingly would I have us'd him thus :
But that I hear he is so lewdly given,
Haunts wicked company, and hath enough
To pay his debts, yet will not own thereof.
Ban. This is that damnèd broker, that same Bagot,
Whom I have often from my trencher fed :
Ungrateful villain, for to use me thus !
Bag. What I have said to him is naught but truth.
Mrs. Ban. What thou hast said springs from an envious heart :
O ! cannibal, that doth eat men alive !
But here, upon my knee, believe me, sir
(And what I speak, so help me God, is true),
We scarce have meat to feed our little babes,
Most of our plate is in that broker's hand :
Which, had we money to defray our debts,

O think, we would not 'bide that penury.
Be merciful, kind Master Frescobald;
My husband, children, and myself will eat
But one meal a day; the other will we keep,
And sell, as part to pay the debt we owe you.
If ever tears did pierce a tender mind,
Be pitiful; let me some favour find.

Fres. (*to Bagot*). Go to, I see thou art an envious man.—
Good Mistress Banister, kneel not to me;
I pray rise up; you shall have your desire.
Hold, officers; be gone; there's for your pains.—
(*To Banister*) You know you owe to me a thousand pound:
Here, take my hand; if e'er God make you able,
And place you in your former state again,
Pay me; but yet, if still your fortune frown,
Upon my faith, I'll never ask a crown.
I never yet did wrong to men in thrall,
For God doth know what to myself may fall.

Ban. This unexpected favour, undeserved,
Doth make my heart bleed inwardly with joy.
Ne'er may aught prosper with me as my own,
If I forget this kindness you have shown.

Mrs. Ban. My children in their prayers, both night and day,
For your good fortune and success shall pray.

Fres. I thank you both; I pray go dine with me.
Within these three days, if God give me leave,
I will to Florence, to my native home.—

Hold, Bagot, there's a portague to drink,
Although you ill deserv'd it by your merit.
Give not such cruel scope unto your heart;
Be sure the ill you do will be requited:
Remember what I say, Bagot; farewell.—
Come, Master Banister, you shall with me;
My fare's but simple, but welcome heartily.
[*Exeunt all but* BAGOT.

Bag. A plague go with you! would you had eat your last!
Is this the thanks I have for all my pains?
Confusion light upon you all for me!
Where he had wont to give a score of crowns,
Doth he now foist me with a portague?
Well, I will be reveng'd upon this Banister.
I'll to his creditors; buy all the debts he owes,
As seeming that I do it for good will;
I'm sure to have them at an easy rate:
And when 'tis done, in Christendom he stays not,
But I will make his heart to ache with sorrow.
And if that Banister become my debtor,
By heaven and earth, I'll make his plague the greater. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Enter CHORUS.

Cho. Now, gentlemen, imagine that young Cromwell
In Antwerp's lieger for the English merchants;

And Banister, to shun this Bagot's hate,
Hearing that he had got some of his debts,
Is fled to Antwerp, with his wife and children ;
Which Bagot hearing, is gone after them,
And thither sends his bills of debt before,
To be reveng'd on wretched Banister !
What doth fall out, with patience sit and see,
A just requital of false treachery.

[*Exit*

SCENE I. *Antwerp.*

CROMWELL *discovered in his study, sitting at a table, on which are placed money-bags and books of account.*

Crom. Thus far my reckoning doth go straight and even.
But, Cromwell, this same plotting fits not thee ;
Thy mind is altogether set on travel,
And not to live thus cloister'd like a nun.
It is not this same trash that I regard :
Experience is the jewel of my heart.

Enter a POST.

Post. I pray, sir, are you ready to despatch me?

Crom. Yes ; here's those sums of money you must carry.
You go so far as Frankfort, do you not?

Post. I do, sir.

Crom. Well, pr'ythee, then, make all the haste thou canst ;

For there be certain English gentlemen
Are bound for Venice, and may haply want,
An if that you should linger by the way:
But in the hope that you will make good speed,
There are two angels, to buy you spurs and wands.

Post. I thank you, sir, this will add wings indeed. [*Exit* Post.

Crom. Gold is of power to make an eagle's speed.

Enter Mistress Banister.

What gentlewoman is this that grieves so much?
It seems she doth address herself to me.

Mrs. Ban. God save you, sir. Pray, is your name Master Cromwell?

Crom. My name is Thomas Cromwell, gentlewoman.

Mrs. Ban. Know you one Bagot, sir, that's come to Antwerp?

Crom. No, trust me, I ne'er saw the man; but here
Are bills of debt I have received against
One Banister, a merchant fallen into decay.

Mrs. Ban. Into decay, indeed, 'long of that wretch.
I am the wife to woeful Banister,
And by that bloody villain am pursu'd,
From London, here to Antwerp, where my husband
Lies in the Governor's hands; and God of heaven,

He only knows how he will deal with him.
Now, sir, your heart is framed of milder temper;
Be merciful to a distressèd soul,
And God, no doubt, will treble bless your gain.

Crom. Good Mistress Banister, what I can, I will,
In anything that lies within my power.

Mrs. Ban. O speak to Bagot, that same wicked wretch:
An angel's voice may move a damnèd devil.

Crom. Why is he come to Antwerp, as you hear?

Mrs. Ban. I heard he landed some two hours since.

Crom. Well, Mistress Banister, assure yourself,
I will speak to Bagot in your behalf,
And win him to all the pity that I can.
Meantime, to comfort you in your distress,
Receive these angels to relieve your need;
And be assur'd, that what I can effect,
To do you good, no way I will neglect.

Mrs. Ban. That mighty God that knows each mortal's heart,
Keep you from trouble, sorrow, grief, and smart.

[*Exit* MISTRESS BANISTER.

Crom. Thanks, courteous woman, for thy hearty prayer.—
It grieves my soul to see her misery:
But we that live under the work of fate,
May hope the best, yet know not to what state

Our stars and destinies have us assign'd ;
Fickle is Fortune, and her face is blind.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A street in Antwerp.*

Enter BAGOT.

Bag. So, all goes well ; it is as I would have it.
Banister, he is with the Governor,
And shortly shall have gyves upon his heels.
It glads my heart to think upon the slave ;
I hope to have his body rot in prison,
And after hear his wife to hang herself,
And all his children die for want of food.
The jewels I have brought with me to Antwerp
Are reckoned to be worth five thousand pound ;
Which scarcely stood me in three hundred pound.
I bought them at an easy kind of rate ;
I care not much which way they came by them,
That sold them me ; it comes not near my heart :
And lest they should be stolen (as sure they are),
I thought it meet to sell them here in Antwerp ;
And so have left them in the Governor's hand,
Who offers me within two hundred pound
Of all my price : but now no more of that.—
I must go see an if my bills be safe,
The which I sent before to Master Cromwell ;
That if the wind should keep me on the sea,

He might arrest him here before I came ;
And in good time, see where he is.

Enter CROMWELL.

God save you, sir.

Crom. And you.—Pray, pardon me, I know you not.

Bag. It may be so, sir ; but my name is Bagot ;
The man that sent to you the bills of debt.

Crom. O, you're the man that pursues Banister.
Here are the bills of debt you sent to me ;
As for the man, you best know where he is.
It is reported you've a flinty heart,
A mind that will not stoop to any pity.
An eye that knows not how to shed a tear,
A hand that's always open for reward.
But, Master Bagot, would you be rul'd by me,
You should turn all these to the contrary :
Your heart should still have feeling of remorse,
Your mind, according to your state, be liberal
To those that stand in need and in distress ;
Your hand to help them that do sink in want,
Rather than with your poise to hold them down :
For every ill turn show yourself more kind ;
Thus should I do ; pardon, I speak my mind.

Bag. Ay, sir, you speak to hear what I would say ;
But you must live, I know, as well as I.
I know this place to be extortionous ;
And 'tis not for a man to keep safe here,
But he must lie, cog with his dearest friend,

And as for pity, scorn it; hate all conscience:—
But yet I do commend your wit in this,
To make a show of what I hope you are not;
But I commend you, and it is well done:
This is the only way to bring you gain.

Crom. Gain? I had rather chain me to an oar,
And, like a slave, there toil out all my life,
Before I'd live so base a slave as thou.
I, like an hypocrite, to make a show
Of seeming virtue, and a devil within!
No, Bagot; if thy conscience were as clear,
Poor Banister ne'er had been troubled here.

Bag. Nay, Master Cromwell, be not angry, sir,
I know full well that you are no such man;
But if your conscience were as white as snow,
It will be thought that you are otherwise.

Crom. Will it be thought that I am otherwise?
Let them that think so, know they are deceiv'd.
Shall Cromwell live to have his faith misconstru'd?
Antwerp, for all the wealth within thy town
I will not stay here full two hours longer.—
As good luck serves, my accounts are all made even;
Therefore I'll straight unto the treasurer.
Bagot, I know you'll to the governor:
Commend me to him; say I'm bound to travel,
To see the fruitful parts of Italy;
And as you ever bore a Christian mind,
Let Banister some favour of you find.

Bag. For your sake, sir, I'll help him all I can—
(*Aside*) To starve his heart out ere he gets a groat;
So, Master Cromwell, do I take my leave,
For I must straight unto the governor.

Crom. Farewell, sir; pray remember what I've said. [*Exit* BAGOT.

No, Cromwell, no; thy heart was ne'er so base,
To live by falsehood, or by brokery.
But it falls out well;—I little it repent;
Hereafter time in travel shall be spent.

Enter HODGE.

Hodge. Your son Thomas, quoth you! I have been Thomass'd. I had thought it had been no such matter to ha' gone by water; for at Putney, I'll go you to Parish Garden for twopence; sit as still as may be, without any wagging or jolting in my guts, in a little boat, too; here, we were scarce four miles in the great green water, but I, thinking to go to my afternoon's nuncheon, as 'twas my manner at home, felt a kind of rising in my guts. At last, one of the sailors spying of me—"Be of good cheer," says he; "set down thy victuals, and up with it; thou hast nothing but an eel in thy belly." Well, to 't went I, and to my victuals went the sailors; and thinking me to be a man of better experience than any in the ship, asked me what wood the ship was made of: they all swore I

told them as right as if I had been acquainted with the carpenter that made it. At last we grew near land, and I grew villanous hungry, and went to my bag. The devil a bit there was, the sailors had tickled me; yet I cannot blame them: it was a part of kindness; for I in kindness told them what wood the ship was made of, and they in kindness eat up my victuals: as indeed one good turn asketh another. Well, would I could find my master Thomas in this Dutch town! he might put some English beer into my belly.

Crom. What, Hodge, my father's man! by my hand, welcome. How doth my father? what's the news at home?

Hodge. Master Thomas, O God! Master Thomas, your hand, glove and all. This is to give you to understand that your father is in health, and Alice Downing here hath sent you a nutmeg, and Bess Make-water a race of ginger; my fellows, Will and Tom, hath between them sent you a dozen of points; and goodman Toll, of the Goat, a pair of mittens: myself came in person; and this is all the news.

Crom. Gramercy, good Hodge, and thou art welcome to me,
But in as ill a time thou comest as may be;
For I am travelling into Italy.
What say'st thou, Hodge? wilt thou bear me company?

Hodge. Will I bear thee company, Tom? what

tell'st me of Italy? Were it to the farthest part of Flanders, I would go with thee, Tom: I am thine in all weal and woe; thine own to command. What, Tom! I have passed the rigorous waves of Neptune's blasts. I tell you, Thomas, I have been in danger of the floods; and when I have seen Boreas begin to play the ruffian with us, then would I down on my knees, and call upon Vulcan.

Crom. And why upon him?

Hodge. Because, as this same fellow Neptune is god of the seas, so Vulcan is lord over the smiths; and therefore I, being a smith, thought his godhead would have some care yet of me.

Crom. A good conceit: but tell me, hast thou din'd yet?

Hodge. Thomas, to speak the truth, not a bit yet, I.

Crom. Come, go with me, thou shalt have cheer, good store;

And farewell, Antwerp, if I come no more.

Hodge. I follow thee, sweet Tom, I follow thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Another street in the same.*

Enter the GOVERNOR *of the English Factory,* BAGOT, MR. *and* MRS. BANISTER, *and two* OFFICERS.

Gov. Is Cromwell gone, then, say you, Master Bagot?

On what dislike, I pray you? what was the cause?

Bag. To tell you true, a wild brain of his own;
Such youth as he can't see when they are well.
He is all bent to travel (that's his reason),
And doth not love to eat his bread at home.

Gov. Well, good fortune with him, if the man be gone.
We hardly shall find such a one as he,
To fit our turns, his dealings were so honest.
But now, sir, for your jewels that I have—
What do you say? what, will you take my price?

Bag. O, sir, you offer too much under foot.

Gov. 'Tis but two hundred pound between us, man,
What's that in payment of five thousand pound?

Bag. Two hundred pound! by'r lady, sir, 'tis great;
Before I got so much, it made me sweat.

Gov. Well, Master Bagot, I'll proffer you fairly.
You see this merchant, Master Banister,
Is going now to prison at your suit;
His substance all is gone: what would you have?
Yet, in regard I knew the man of wealth
(Never dishonest dealing, but such mishaps
Have fallen on him, may light on me or you),
There is two hundred pound between us two;
We will divide the same: I'll give you one.

On that condition you will set him free.
His state is nothing ; that you see yourself ;
And where nought is, the king must lose his right.

Bag. O sir, you speak out of your love ; but know
'Tis foolish love, sir, sure, to pity him.
Therefore content yourself ; this is my mind ;
To do him good I will not bate a penny.

Ban. This is my comfort, though thou dost no good,
A mighty ebb follows a mighty flood.

Mrs. Ban. O thou base wretch, whom we have fosterèd,
Even as a serpent, for to poison us !
If God did ever right a woman's wrong,
To that same God I bend and bow my heart,
To let His heavy wrath fall on thy head,
By whom my hopes and joys are butcherèd.

Bag. Alas, fond woman ! I pr'ythee pray thy worst ;
The fox fares better still when he is curst.

Enter BOWSER.

Gov. Master Bowser ! you are welcome, sir, from England.
What's the best news ? and how do all our friends ?

Bow. They are all well, and do commend them to you.
There's letters from your brother and your son :

So, fare you well, sir ; I must take my leave,
My haste and business doth require it so.
Gov. Before you dine, sir? What, go you out of town,
Bow. I' faith unless I hear some news in town.
I must away ; there is no remedy.
Gov. Master Bowser, what is your business? may I know it?
Bow. You may so, sir, and so shall all the city.
The king of late hath had his treasury robb'd,
And of the choicest jewels that he had:
The value of them was seven thousand pound.
The fellow that did steal these jewels is hang'd,
And did confess that for three hundred pound
He sold them to one Bagot dwelling in London.
Now Bagot's fled, and, as we hear, to Antwerp ;
And hither am I come to seek him out ;
And they that first can tell me of his news,
Shall have a hundred pound for their reward.
Ban. How just is God to right the innocent!
Gov. Master Bowser, you come in happy time:
Here is the villain Bagot that you seek,
And all those jewels have I in my hands:
Here, officers, look to him, hold him fast.
Bag. The devil ow'd me a shame, and now hath paid it.
Bow. Is this that Bagot? Fellows, bear him hence ;
We will not stand here for his reply.

Lade him with irons; we will have him tried
In England, where his villanies are known.
Bag. Mischief, confusion, light upon you all!
O hang me, drown me, let me kill myself;
Let go my arms, let me run quick to hell.
Bow. Away; bear him away; stop the slave's mouth.
[*Exeunt* OFFICERS *and* BAGOT.
Mrs. Ban. Thy works are infinite, great God of heaven.
Gov. I heard this Bagot was a wealthy fellow.
Bow. He was indeed; for when his goods were seiz'd,
Of jewels, coin, and plate, within his house
Was found the value of five thousand pound;
His furniture worth fully half so much;
Which being all distrainèd for the king,
He frankly gave it to the Antwerp merchants;
And they again, out of their bounteous mind,
Have to a brother of their company,
A man decay'd by fortune of the seas,
Given Bagot's wealth, to set him up again,
And keep it for him; his name is Banister.
Gov. Good Master Bowser, with this happy news
You have reviv'd two from the gates of death:
This is that Banister, and this his wife.
Bow. Sir, I am glad my fortune is so good
To bring such tidings as may comfort you.
Ban. You have given life unto a man deem'd dead;

For by these news my life is newly bred.
Mrs. Ban. Thanks to my God, next to my sovereign king;
And last to you, that these good news do bring.
Gov. The hundred pound I must receive, as due
For finding Bagot, I freely give to you.
Bow. And, Master Banister, if so you please,
I'll bear you company, when you cross the seas.
Ban. If it please you, sir;—my company is but mean:
Stands with your liking, I will wait on you.
Gov. I'm glad that all things do accord so well.
Come, Master Bowser, let us in to dinner;
And, Mistress Banister, be merry, woman.
Come, after sorrow now let's cheer your spirit;
Knaves have their due, and you but what you merit. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The principal bridge at Florence.

Enter CROMWELL *and* HODGE *in their shirts, and without hats.*

Hodge. Call you this seeing of fashions? marry, would I had stayed at Putney still. O, Master Thomas, we are spoiled, we are gone.
Crom. Content thee, man; this is but fortune.

Hodge. Fortune! a plague of this fortune, it makes me go wet-shod; the rogues would not leave me a shoe to my feet.

For my hose,
They scorn'd them with their heels:
But for my doublet and hat,
O Lord, they embrac'd me,
And unlac'd me,
And took away my clothes,
And so disgrac'd me.

Crom. Well, Hodge, what remedy? What shift shall we make now?

Hodge. Nay, I know not. For begging I am naught; for stealing, worse. By my troth, I must even fall to my old trade, to the hammer and the horse-heels again:—But now the worst is, I am not acquainted with the humour of the horses in this country; whether they are not coltish, given much to kicking, or no: for when I have one leg in my hand, if he should up and lay t'other on my chaps, I were gone; there lay I, there lay Hodge.

Crom. Hodge, I believe thou must work for us both.

Hodge. O, Master Thomas, have not I told you of this? Have not I many a time and often said, "Tom, or Master Thomas, learn to make a horse-shoe, it will be your own another day:" this was not regarded.—Hark you, Thomas! what do you call the fellows that robbed us

Crom. The banditti.

Hodge. The banditti, do you call them? I know not what they are called here, but I am sure we call them plain thieves in England. O, Tom, that we were now at Putney, at the ale there!

Crom. Content thee, man: here set up these two bills;
And let us keep our standing on the bridge.
The fashion of this country is such,
If any stranger be oppress'd with want,
To write the manner of his misery;
And such as are disposed to succour him,
[HODGE *sets up the bills.*
Will do it. What, Hodge, hast thou set them up?

Hodge. Ay, they are up; God send some to read them; and not only to read them, but also to look on us; and not altogether look on us, but to relieve us. O, cold, cold, cold!

[CROMWELL *stands at one end of the bridge, and* HODGE *at the other.*

Enter FRESCOBALD.

Fres. [*reads the bills*]. What's here?
Two Englishmen, and robb'd by the banditti!
One of them seems to be a gentleman.
'Tis pity that his fortune was so hard,
To fall into the desperate hands of thieves:
I'll question him of what estate he is.
God save you, sir Are you an Englishman?

Crom. I am, sir, a distressed Englishman.

Fres. And what are you, my friend?

Hodge. Who, I, sir? by my troth, I do not know myself what I am now; but, sir, I was a smith, sir, a poor farrier, of Putney. That's my master, sir, yonder; I was robbed for his sake, sir.

Fres. I see you have been met by the banditti,
And therefore need not ask how you came thus.
But, Frescobald, why dost thou question them
Of their estate, and not relieve their need?
Sir, the coin I have about me is not much;
There's sixteen ducats for to clothe yourselves,
There's sixteen more to buy your diet with,
And there's sixteen to pay for your horse-hire.
'Tis all the wealth, you see, my purse possesses;
But, if you please for to inquire me out,
You shall not want for aught that I can do.
My name is Frescobald, a Florence merchant,
A man that always lov'd your nation much.

Crom. This unexpected favour at your hands,
Which God doth know, if e'er I shall requite—
Necessity makes me to take your bounty,
And for your gold can yield you naught but thanks.
Your charity hath helped me from despair;
Your name shall still be in my hearty prayer.

Fres. It is not worth such thanks; come to my house;
Your want shall better be reliev'd than thus.

Crom. I pray, excuse me; this shall well suffice,

To bear my charges to Bolognia,
Whereas a noble earl is much distress'd :
An Englishman, Russell the earl of Bedford,
Is by the French king sold unto his death.
It may fall out, that I may do him good ;
To save his life, I'll hazard my heart-blood.
Therefore, kind sir, thanks for your liberal gift ;
I must be gone to aid him, there's no shift.

Fres. I'll be no hinderer to so good an act.
Heaven prosper you in that you go about !
If fortune bring you this way back again,
Pray let me see you : so I take my leave ;
All good a man can wish, I do bequeath.

[*Exit* FRESCOBALD.

Crom. All good that God doth send light on your head !
There's few such men within our climate bred.
How say you, Hodge ? is not this good fortune ?

Hodge. How say you ? I'll tell you what, Master Thomas ; if all men be of this gentleman's mind, let's keep our standings upon this bridge ; we shall get more here, with begging, in one day, than I shall with making horse-shoes in a whole year.

Crom. No, Hodge, we must be gone unto Bolognia,
There to relieve the noble earl of Bedford :
Where, if I fail not in my policy,
I shall deceive their subtle treachery.

Hodge. Nay, I'll follow you. God bless us from the thieving banditti again. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Bolognia. A room in an hotel.

Enter Bedford *and* Host.

Bed. Am I betray'd? was Bedford born to die
By such base slaves, in such a place as this?
Have I escap'd so many times in France,
So many battles have I overpass'd,
And made the French skir, when they heard my name;
And am I now betray'd unto my death?
Some of their hearts' blood first shall pay for it.

Host. They do desire, my lord, to speak with you.

Bed. The traitors do desire to have my blood;
But by my birth, my honour, and my name,
By all my hopes, my life shall cost them dear.
Open the door; I'll venture out upon them,
And if I must die, then I'll die with honour.

Host. Alas, my lord, that is a desperate course:
They have begirt you round about the house.
Their meaning is, to take you prisoner,
And so to send your body unto France.

Bed. First shall the ocean be as dry as sand,
Before alive they send me unto France.
I'll have my body first bor'd like a sieve,
And die as Hector, 'gainst the Myrmidons,
Ere France shall boast Bedford 's their prisoner.

O! treacherous France! that, 'gainst the law of arms,
Hath here betray'd thine enemy to death.
But be assur'd, my blood shall be reveng'd
Upon the best lives that remain in France.

Enter a Servant.

Stand back, or else thou run'st upon thy death.

Ser. Pardon, my lord; I come to tell your honour,
That they have hir'd a Neapolitan,
Who by his oratory hath promis'd them,
Without the shedding of one drop of blood,
Into their hands safe to deliver you;
And therefore craves none but himself may enter
And a poor swain that attends upon him.

Bed. A Neapolitan? bid him come in.

[*Exit* Servant.

Were he as cunning in his eloquence
As Cicero, the famous man of Rome,
His words would be as chaff against the wind.
Sweet-tongued Ulysses, that made Ajax mad,
Were he, and his tongue in this speaker's head,
Alive, he wins me not; then 'tis no conquest dead.

Enter CROMWELL, *in a Neapolitan habit, and* HODGE.

Crom. Sir, are you the master of the house?

Host. I am, sir.

Crom. By this same token you must leave this place,
And leave none but the earl and I together,

And this my peasant here to tend on us.

Host. With all my heart : God grant you do some good.

[*Exit* Host. CROMWELL *shuts the door.*

Bed. Now, sir, what is your will with me ?

Crom. Intends your honour not to yield yourself ?

Bed. No, goodman goose, not while my sword doth last.

Is this your eloquence for to persuade me ?

Crom. My lord, my eloquence is for to save you :

I am not, as you judge, a Neapolitan,
But Cromwell, your servant, and an Englishman.

Bed. How ! Cromwell ? not my farrier's son ?

Crom. The same, sir ; and am come to succour you.

Hodge. Yes, faith, sir ; and I am Hodge, your poor smith : many a time and oft have I shod your dapple-grey.

Bed. And what avails it me that thou art here ?

Crom. It may avail, if you'll be rul'd by me.
My lord, you know, the men of Mantua
And these Bolognians are at deadly strife ;
And they, my lord, both love and honour you.
Could you but get out of the Mantua port,
Then were you safe, despite of all their force.

Bed. Tut, man, thou talk'st of things impossible ;

Dost thou not see that we are round beset ;

How then is't possible we should escape?

Crom. By force we cannot, but by policy.
Put on the apparel here that Hodge doth wear,
And give him yours: The states, they know you not
(For, as I think, they never saw your face);
And at a watch-word must I call them in,
And will desire that we two safe may pass
To Mantua, where I'll say my business lies.
How doth your honour like of this device?

Bed. O, wondrous good.—But wilt thou venture, Hodge?

Hodge. Will I?

O noble lord,
I do accord,
In any thing I can:
And do agree,
To set thee free,
Do Fortune what she can.

Bed. Come then, and change we our apparel straight.

Crom. Go, Hodge; make haste, lest they should chance to call.

Hodge. I warrant you I'll fit him with a suit.

[*Exeunt* Bedford *and* Hodge.

Crom. Heavens grant this policy doth take success,
And that the earl may safely 'scape away!
And yet it grieves me for this simple wretch,
For fear lest they should offer him violence:
But of two evils, 'tis best to shun the greatest;

And better is it that he live in thrall,
Than such a noble earl as this should fall.
Their stubborn hearts, it may be, will relent,
Since he is gone to whom their hate is bent.

Re-enter BEDFORD *and* HODGE.

My lord, have you despatch'd?

Bed. How dost thou like us, Cromwell? is it well?

Crom. O, my good Lord, excellent.—Hodge, how dost feel thyself?

Hodge. How do I feel myself? why, as a nobleman should do. O, how I feel honour come creeping on! My nobility is wonderful melancholy: is it not most gentlemanlike to be melancholy?

Bed. Yes, Hodge: now go, and sit down in the study, and take state upon thee.

Hodge. I warrant you, my Lord; let me alone to take state upon me: But hark, my lord, do you feel nothing bite about you?

Bed. No, trust me, Hodge.

Hodge. Ay, they know they want their old pasture. 'Tis a strange thing of this vermin, they dare not meddle with nobility..

Crom. Go take thy place, Hodge; I will call them in.

Now all is done:—Enter, an if you please.

Enter the GOVERNOR *and other* STATES *and* CITIZENS *of Bolognia, and* OFFICERS *with halberds.*

Gov. What, have you won him? will he yield himself?

Crom. I have, an't please you; and the quiet earl.
Doth yield himself to be dispos'd by you.

Gov. Give him the money that we promis'd him:
So let him go, whither it please himself.

Crom. My business, sir, lies unto Mantua;
Please you to give me a safe conduct thither.

Gov. Go, and conduct him to the Mantua port.
And see him safe deliver'd presently.

[*Exeunt* CROMWELL, BEDFORD, *and an* Officer.
Go draw the curtains, let us see the earl:—

[*An Attendant opens the curtains.*
O, he is writing; stand apart awhile.

Hodge [reads]. *Fellow William, I am not as I have been; I went from you a smith, I write to you as a lord. I am, at this present writing, among the Polonian sausages. I do commend my lordship to Ralph and to Roger, to Bridget and to Dorothy, and so to all the youth of Putney.*

Gov. Sure these are the names of English noblemen,
Some of his special friends to whom he writes:—

[HODGE *sounds a note.*
But stay, he doth address himself to sing.

[HODGE *sings a song.*
My lord, I am glad you are so frolic and so blithe:
Believe me, noble lord, if you knew all,

You'd change your merry vein to sudden sorrow.

Hodge. I change my merry vein? no, thou Polonian, no;
I am a lord, and therefore let me go.
I do defy thee and thy sausages;
Therefore stand off, and come not near my honour.

Gov. My lord, this jesting cannot serve your turn.

Hodge. Dost think, thou black Polonian beast,
That I do flout, do gibe, or jest?
No, no, thou beer-pot, know that I,
A noble earl, a lord par-dy—

[*A trumpet sounds.*

Gov. What means this trumpet's sound?

Enter a Messenger.

Cit. One is come from the states of Mantua.

Gov. What would you with with us? speak, thou man of Mantua.

Mes. Men of Bolognia, this my message is;
To let you know the noble Earl of Bedford
Is safe within the town of Mantua,
And wills you send the peasant that you have,
Who hath deceiv'd your expectation:
Or else the states of Mantua have vow'd,
They will recall the truce that they have made;
And not a man shall stir from forth your town,
That shall return, unless you send him back.

Gov. O this misfortune, how it mads my heart!
The Neapolitan hath beguil'd us all.

Hence with this fool. What shall we do with him.
The earl being gone? a plague upon it all!

Hodge. No, I'll assure you, I am no earl, but a smith, sir; one Hodge, a smith at Putney, sir; one that hath gulled you, that hath bored you, sir.

Gov. Away with him; take hence the fool you came for.

Hodge. Ay, sir, and I'll leave the greater fool with you.

Mes. Farewell, Bolognians.—Come, friend, along with me.

Hodge. My friend, afore; my lordship will follow thee.

[*Exeunt* HODGE *and* Messenger.

Gov. Well, Mantua, since by thee the earl is lost,
Within few days I hope to see thee crost.

[*Exeunt Governor, States, Attendants, &c.*

Enter CHORUS.

Cho. Thus far you see how Cromwell's fortune pass'd.
The earl of Bedford, being safe in Mantua,
Desires Cromwell's company into France,
To make requital for his courtesy;
But Cromwell doth deny the earl his suit,
And tells him of those parts he meant to see,
He had not yet set footing on the land;
And so directly takes his way to Spain;
The earl to France; and so they both do part.

Now let your thoughts, as swift as is the wind,
Skip some few years that Cromwell spent in travel;
And now imagine him to be in England,
Servant unto the Master of the Rolls;
Where in short time he there began to flourish:
An hour shall show you what few years did nourish. [*Exit.*

Scene III.

London. A room in Sir Christopher Hales' *house.*

Music plays; then a banquet is brought in. Enter Sir Christopher Hales, Cromwell, *and two* Servants.

Hales. Come, sirs, be careful of your master's credit;
And as our bounty now exceeds the figure
Of common entertainment, so do you,
With looks as free as is your master's soul,
Give formal welcome to the throngèd tables,
That shall receive the cardinal's followers,
And the attendants of the great Lord Chancellor.
But, Cromwell, all my care depends on thee:
Thou art a man differing from vulgar form,
And by how much thy spirit's rank'd 'bove these,
In rules of art, by so much it shines brighter
By travel, whose observance pleads thy merit,
In a most learn'd, yet unaffected spirit.
Good Cromwell, cast an eye of fair regard

'Bout all my house; and what this ruder flesh,
Through ignorance, or wine, do miscreate,
Salve thou with courtesy. If welcome want,
Full bowls and ample banquets will seem scant.

Crom. Sir, as to whatsoever lies in me,
Assure you, I will show my utmost duty.

Hales. About it, then; the lords will straight be here. [*Exit* CROMWELL.
Cromwell, thou hast those parts would rather suit
The service of the state than of my house:
I look upon thee with a loving eye,
That one day will prefer thy destiny.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Sir, the lords be at hand.

Hales. They are welcome; bid Cromwell straight attend us,
And look you all things be in readiness.
[*Exit* Servant.

The music plays. Enter CARDINAL WOLSEY, SIR THOMAS MORE, GARDINER; CROMWELL, *and* Attendants.

Wol. O, Sir Christopher,
You are too liberal. What! a banquet, too?

Hales. My lords, if words could show the ample welcome
That my free heart affords you, I could then
Become a prater; but I now must deal
Like a feast-politician with your lordships;
Defer your welcome till the banquet end,
That it may then salve our defect of fare:

Yet welcome now, and all that tend on you.

Wol. Our thanks to the kind Master of the Rolls.

Come and sit down ; sit down, Sir Thomas More.
'Tis strange, how that we and the Spaniard differ ;
Their dinner is our banquet after dinner,
And they are men of active disposition.
By this I gather that, by their sparing meat,
Their bodies are more fitter for the wars ;
And if that famine chance to pinch their maws,
Being us'd to fast, it breeds in them less pain.

Hales. Fill me some wine ; I'll answer Cardinal Wolsey.

My lord, we English are of more free souls.
Than hunger-starv'd and ill-complexion'd Spaniards.
They that are rich in Spain spare belly-food,
To deck their backs with an Italian hood,
And silks of Seville ; and the poorest snake
That feeds on lemons, pilchards, and ne'er heated
His palate with sweet flesh, will bear a case
More fat and gallant than his starvèd face.
Pride, the Inquisition, and this belly-evil,
Are, in my judgment, Spain's three-headed devil.

More. Indeed it is a plague unto their nation,
Who stagger after in blind imitation.

Hales. My lords, with welcome, I present your lordships
A solemn health.

More. I love healths well ; but whenas healths do bring

Pain to the head, and body's surfeiting,
Then cease I healths:
Nay, spill not, friend; for though the drops be small,
Yet have they force to force men to the wall.
Wol. Sir Christopher, is that your man?
Hales. An't like
Your grace, he is a scholar, and a linguist;
One that hath travellèd through many parts
Of Christendom, my lord.
Wol. My friend, come nearer; have you been a traveller?
Crom. My lord,
I've added to my knowledge the Low Countries,
With France, Spain, Germany, and Italy;
And though small gain of profit I did find,
Yet it did please my eye, content my mind.
Wol. What do you think then of the several states
And princes' courts as you have travellèd?
Crom. My lord, no court with England may compare,
Neither for state, nor civil government.
Lust dwells in France, in Italy, and Spain,
From the poor peasant to the prince's train.
In Germany and Holland, riot serves;
And he that most can drink, most he deserves.
England I praise not, for I here was born,
But sure she laughs the others unto scorn.
Wol. My lord, there dwells within that spirit more

Than can be discern'd by the outward eye :—
Sir Christopher, will you part with your man ?
Hales. I 've sought to proffer him unto your lordship :
And now I see he hath preferr'd himself.
Wol. What is thy name ?
Crom. Cromwell, my lord.
Wol. Then, Cromwell, here we make thee solicitor
Of our causes, and nearest, next ourself:
Gardiner, give you kind welcome to the man.
[GARDINER *embraces him.*
More. O, my lord cardinal, you 're a royal winner,
Have got a man, besides your bounteous dinner.
Well, my good knight, pray that we come no more :
If we come often, thou mayst shut thy door.
Wol. Sir Christopher, hadst thou given me half thy lands,
Thou couldst not have pleased me so much as with
This man of thine. My infant thoughts do spell,
Shortly his fortune shall be lifted higher ;
True industry doth kindle honour's fire:
And so, kind Master of the Rolls, farewell.
Hales. Cromwell, farewell.
Crom. Cromwell takes leave of you,
That ne'er will leave to love and honour you.
[*Exeunt. The music plays as they go out.*

ACT IV.

Enter CHORUS.

Cho. Now Cromwell's highest fortunes do begin.
Wolsey, that lov'd him as he did his life,
Committed all his treasure to his hands,
Wolsey is dead; and Gardiner, his man,
Is now created Bishop of Winchester.
Pardon if we omit all Wolsey's life,
Because our play depends on Cromwell's death.
Now sit, and see his highest state of all,
His height of rising, and his sudden fall.
Pardon the errors are already past,
And live in hope the best doth come at last.
My hope upon your favour doth depend,
And looks to have your liking ere the end.
[*Exit*

SCENE I. *London. A public walk.*

Enter GARDINER BISHOP OF WINCHESTER, *the Dukes of* NORFOLK *and of* SUFFOLK, SIR THOMAS MORE, SIR CHRISTOPHER HALES, *and* CROMWELL

Nor. Master Cromwell, since Cardinal Wolsey's death,
His Majesty is given to understand
There's certain bills and writings in your hand,
That much concern the present state of England.

My lord of Winchester, is it not so?
Gar. My lord of Norfolk, we two were whilom fellows:
And Master Cromwell, though our master's love
Did bind us, while his love was to the king,
It is no boot now to deny those things,
Which may be prejudicial to the state:
And though that God hath rais'd my fortune higher
Than any way I look'd for, or deserv'd,
Yet may my life no longer with me dwell,
Than I prove true unto my sovereign!
What say you, Master Cromwell? Speak; have you
Those writings, ay, or no?
Crom. Here are the writings:
And on my knees I give them up unto
The worthy Dukes of Suffolk and of Norfolk.
He was my master, and each virtuous part
That liv'd in him, I tender'd with my heart;
But what his head complotted 'gainst the State,
My country's love commands me that to hate.
His sudden death I grieve for, not his fall,
Because he sought to work my country's thrall.
Suf. Cromwell, the king shall hear of this thy duty;
Who, I assure myself, will well reward thee.
My lord, let's go unto his Majesty,
And show these writings which he longs to see.

[*Exeunt* NORFOLK *and* SUFFOLK.

Enter BEDFORD *hastily.*

Bed. How now, who is this? Cromwell? By my soul,
Welcome to England: thou once didst save my life;
Didst thou not, Cromwell?

Crom. If I did so, 'tis greater glory for me
That you remember it, than for myself
Now vainly to report it.

Bed. Well, Cromwell, now's the time for gratitude:
I shall commend thee to my sovereign.
Cheer up thyself, for I will raise thy state:
A Russell yet was never found ingrate.

Hales. O how uncertain is the wheel of fate!
Who lately greater than the Cardinal,
For fear and love? and now who lower lies?
Gay honours are but Fortune's flatteries;
And whom this day pride and promotion swell,
To-morrow envy and ambition quell.

More. Who sees the cobweb tangle the poor fly
May boldly say, the wretch's death is nigh.

Gard. I knew his state and proud ambition
Were too, too violent to last o'erlong.

Hales. Who soars too near the sun with golden wings,
Melts them; to ruin his own fortune brings.

Enter the DUKE OF SUFFOLK.

Suf. Cromwell, kneel down, and, in King Henry's name,
Arise Sir Thomas;—thus begins thy fame.

Enter the DUKE OF NORFOLK.

Nor. Cromwell, the gracious Majesty of England,
For the good liking he conceives of thee,
Makes thee the master of the jewel-house,
Chief secretary to himself, and withal,
Creates thee one of his highness' privy-council.

Enter the EARL OF BEDFORD.

Bed. Where is Sir Thomas Cromwell? is he knighted?

Suf. He is, my lord.

Bed. Then, to add honour to
His name, the king creates him the lord-keeper
Of his privy seal, and master of the rolls,
Which you, Sir Christopher, do now enjoy:
The king determines higher place for you.

Crom. My lords,
These honours are too high for my desert.

More. O content thee, man; who would not choose it?
Yet thou art wise in seeming to refuse it.

Gard. (*Aside*). Here's honours, titles, and promotions:
I fear this climbing will have sudden fall.

Nor. Then come, my lords; let's all together bring
This new-made counsellor to England's king.

[*Exeunt all but* GARDINER.

Gard. But Gardiner means his glory shall be dimm'd.

Shall Cromwell live a greater man than I?
My envy with his honour now is bred:
I hope to shorten Cromwell by the head. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *London. A street before* CROMWELL'S *house.*

Enter FRESCOBALD.

Fres. O Frescobald, what shall become of thee?
Where shalt thou go, or which way shalt thou turn?
Fortune, that turns her too inconstant wheel,
Hath drown'd thy wealth and riches in the sea.
All parts abroad wherever I have been
Grow weary of me, and deny me succour.
My debtors, they that should relieve my want,
Forswear my money, say they owe me none;
They know my state too mean to bear out law:
And here in London, where I oft have been,
And have done good to many a wretched man,
I'm now most wretched and despis'd myself.
In vain it is more of their hearts to try;
Be patient, therefore, lay thee down and die.
[*Lies down.*

Enter SEELY *and* JOAN.

Seely. Come, Joan, come; let's see what he'll do for us now. I wis we have done for him, when many a time and often he might have gone a-hungry to bed.

Joan. Alas, man, now he is made a lord, he'll

never look upon us; he'll fulfil the old proverb, *Set beggars a horseback and they'll ride.* A well-a-day for my cow! such as he hath made us come behind-hand; we had never pawned our cow else to pay our rent.

Seely. Well, Joan, he'll come this way; and by God's dickers I'll tell him roundly of it, an if he were ten lords: a' shall know that I had not my cheese and my bacon for nothing.

Joan. Do you remember, husband, how he would mouch up my cheese-cakes? He hath forgot this now; but now we'll remember him.

Seely. Ay, we shall have now three flaps with a fox-tail: but i' faith I'll jibber a joint, but I'll tell him his own.—Stay, who comes here? O, stand up, here he comes; stand up.

Enter HODGE *with a tipstaff;* CROMWELL, *with the mace carried before him; the Dukes of* NORFOLK *and* SUFFOLK, and Attendants.

Hodge. Come; away with these beggars here. Rise up, sirrah; come out, good people; run afore there, ho.

[FRESCOBALD *rises, and stands at a distance.*

Seely. Ay, we are kicked away, now we come for our own; the time hath been, he would ha' looked more friendly upon us. And you, Hodge, we know you well enough, though you are so fine.

Crom. Come hither, sirrah:—Stay, what men are these?

My honest host of Hounslow, and his wife?
I owe thee money, father, do I not?

Seely. Ay, by the body of me, dost thou. Would thou wouldst pay me: good four pound it is; I hav't o' the post at home.

Crom. I know 'tis true. Sirrah, give him ten angels:—
And look your wife and you do stay to dinner;
And while you live, I freely give to you
Four pound a year, for the four pound I ow'd you.

Seely. Art not changed? Art old Tom still? Now God bless thee, good Lord Tom. Home, Joan, home; I'll dine with my Lord Tom to-day, and thou shalt come next week. Fetch my cow; home, Joan, home.

Joan. Now God bless thee, my good Lord Tom; I'll fetch my cow presently.

[*Exit* JOAN.

Enter GARDINER.

Crom. (*to Hodge*). Sirrah, go to yon stranger; tell him, I
Desire him stay to dinner: I must speak
With him.

Gard. My lord of Norfolk, see you this same bubble?
That's a mere puff? but mark the end, my lord;
But mark the end.

Nor. I promise you, I like not something he hath done:
But let that pass; the king doth love him well.

Crom. Good morrow to my lord of Winchester: I know
You bear me hard about the abbey lands.
Gard. Have I not reason, when religion 's wrong'd?
You had no colour for what you have done.
Crom. Yes, the abolishing of Antichrist,
And of his popish order, from our realm.
I am no enemy to religion;
But what is done, it is for England's good.
What did they serve for, but to feed a sort
Of lazy abbots and of full-fed friars?
They neither plough nor sow, and yet they reap
The fat of all the land, and suck the poor.
Look, what was theirs is in King Henry's hands;
His wealth before lay in the abbey lands.
Gard. Indeed these things you have alleg'd, my lord;
When, God doth know, the infant yet unborn
Will curse the time the abbeys were pulled down:
I pray now where is hospitality?
Where now may poor distressèd people go,
For to relieve their need, or rest their bones,
When weary travel doth oppress their limbs?
And where religious men should take them in,
Shall now be kept back with a mastiff dog;
And thousand thousand—
Nor. O my lord, no more:
Things past redress 'tis bootless to complain.

Crom. What, shall we to the convocation-house?

Nor. We'll follow you, my lord; pray, lead the way.

Enter old CROMWELL, *in the dress of a farmer.*

Old Crom. How! one Cromwell made lord keeper, since I left Putney, and dwelt in Yorkshire? I never heard better news: I'll see that Cromwell, or it shall go hard.

Crom. My aged father here! State set aside,
Father, upon my knee I crave your blessing.
One of my servants, go, and have him in;
At better leisure will we talk with him.

Old Crom. Now if I die, how happy were the day!
To see this comfort rains forth showers of joy.

[*Exeunt old* CROMWELL *and* Servant.

Nor. (*Aside*). This duty in him shows a kind of grace.

Crom. Go on before, for time draws on apace.

[*Exeunt all but* FRESCOBALD.

Fres. I wonder what this lord would have with me,
His man so strictly gave me charge to stay:
I never did offend him, to my knowledge.
Well, good or bad, I mean to bide it all;
Worse than I am now, never can befall.

Enter BANISTER *and his* Wife.

Ban. Come, wife,

I take it to be almost dinner time;
For Master Newton and Master Crosby sent
To me last night, they would come dine with me,
And take their bond in. Pray thee, hie thee home,
And see that all things be in readiness.

Mrs. Ban. They shall be welcome, husband; I'll go before:
But is not that man Master Frescobald?

[*She runs and embraces him.*

Ban. O heavens! it is kind Master Frescobald:
Say, sir, what hap hath brought you to this pass?

Fres. The same that brought you to your misery.

Ban. Why would you not acquaint me with your state?
Is Banister, your poor friend, then forgot,
Whose goods, whose love, whose life and all is yours?

Fres. I thought your usage would be as the rest,
That had more kindness at my hands than you,
Yet look'd askance when as they saw me poor.

Mrs. Ban. If Banister would bear so base a heart,
I ne'er would look my husband in the face,
But hate him as I would a cockatrice.

Ban. And well thou mightest, should Banister so deal.
Since that I saw you, sir, my state is mended;
And for the thousand pound I owe to you,

I have it ready for you, sir, at home:
And though I grieve your fortune is so bad,
Yet that my hap's to help you makes me glad.
And now, sir, will it please you walk with me?
Fres. Not yet I cannot, for the Lord Chancellor
Hath here commanded me to wait on him:
For what, I know not; pray God it be for good.
Ban. Never make doubt of that; I'll warrant you,
He is as kind and noble a gentleman,
As ever did possess the place he hath.
Mrs. Ban. Sir, my brother is his steward: if you please,
We'll go along and bear you company;
I know we shall not want for welcome there.
Fres. With all my heart, but what's become of Bagot?
Ban. He is hang'd for buying jewels of the king's.
Fres. A just reward for one so impious.
The time draws on, sir, will you go along?
Ban. I'll follow you, kind Master Frescobald.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

The same. Another street.

Enter Newton *and* Crosby.

New. Now Master Crosby, I see you have a care
To keep your word, in payment of your money.

Cros. By my faith, I have reason on a bond ;
Three thousand pound is far too much to forfeit ;
And yet I doubt not Master Banister.
New. By my faith, sir, your sum is more than mine ;
And yet I am not much behind you too,
Considering that to-day I paid at court.
Cros. Mass, and 'tis well remember'd ; what's the reason
That the Lord Cromwell's men wear such long skirts
Upon their coats ? they reach down to their hams.
New. I will resolve you, sir ; and thus it is:
The Bishop of Winchester, that loves not Cromwell
(As great men are envied as well as less),
A while ago there was a jar between them ;
And it was brought to my Lord Cromwell's ear
That Bishop Gardiner would sit on his skirts:
Upon which word he made his men long blue coats,
And in the court wore one of them himself ;
And meeting with the bishop, quoth he, "My lord,
Here's skirts enough now for your grace to sit on ;"
Which vex'd the bishop to the very heart.
This is the reason why they wear long coats.
Cros. 'Tis always seen, and mark it for a rule,
That one great man will envy still another ;

But 'tis a thing that nothing concerns me:—
What, shall we now to Master Banister's?

New. Ay, come, we'll pay him royally for our dinner.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

The same. A room in Cromwell's *house.*

Enter the Usher, *and the* Sewer. *Several* Servants *cross the stage with dishes in their hands.*

Ush. Uncover there, gentlemen.

Enter Cromwell, Bedford, Suffolk, *old* Cromwell, Frescobald, Seely, *and* Attendants.

Crom. My noble lords of Suffolk and of Bedford,
Your honours are welcome to poor Cromwell's house.
Where is my father? nay, be cover'd, father;
Although that duty to these noblemen
Doth challenge it, yet I'll make bold with them.
Your head doth bear the calendar of care.
What! Cromwell cover'd, and his father bare?
It must not be.—Now, sir, to you: is not
Your name Frescobald, and a Florentine?

Fres. My name was Frescobald, till cruel fate
Did rob me of my name, and of my state.

Crom. What fortune brought you to this country now?

Fres. All other parts have left me succourless

Save only this. Because of debts I have,
I hope to gain, for to relieve my want.
Crom. Did you not once, upon your Florence bridge,
Help a distress'd man, robb'd by the banditti!
His name was Cromwell.
Fres. I never made my brain
A calendar of any good I did:
I always lov'd this nation with my heart.
Crom. I am that Cromwell that you there reliev'd.
Sixteen ducats you gave me for to clothe me,
Sixteen to bear my charges by the way,
And sixteen more I had for my horse-hire.
There be those several sums justly return'd:
Yet 'twere injustice, serving at my need,
For to repay thee without interest:
Therefore receive of me these several bags:
In each of them there are four hundred marks:
And bring to me the names of all your debtors;
And if they will not see you paid, I will.
O, God forbid that I should see him fall,
That help'd me in my greatest need of all.
Here stands my father, that first gave me life;
Alas, what duty is too much for him?
This man in time of need did save my life;
I therefore cannot do too much for him.
By this old man I oftentimes was fed,
Else might I have gone supperless to bed.
Such kindness have I had of these three men,
That Cromwell no way can repay again.

Now in to dinner, for we stay too long;
And to good stomachs is no greater wrong.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

The same. A room in the Bishop of Winchester's *house.*

Enter Gardiner *and a* Servant.

Gard. Sirrah, where be those men I caus'd to stay!

Serv. They do attend your pleasure, sir, within.

Gard. Bid them come hither, and stay you without:
[*Exit* Servant.

For by those men the fox of this same land,
That makes a goose of better than himself,
Must worried be even to his latest home:
Or Gardiner will fail in his intent.
As for the dukes of Suffolk and of Norfolk,
Whom I have sent for to come speak with me;
Howsoever outwardly they shadow it,
Yet in their hearts I know they love him not.
As for the Earl of Bedford, he's but one,
And dares not gainsay what we do set down.

Enter the two Witnesses.

Now, my good friends, you know I sav'd your lives,
When, by the law, you had deserved death;

And then you promis'd me, upon your oaths,
To venture both your lives to do me good.

Both Wit. We swore no more than that we will perform.

Gard. I take your words: and that which you must do,
Is service for your God and for your king:
To root a rebel from this flourishing land,
One that's an enemy unto the church:
And therefore must you take your solemn oaths,
That you heard Cromwell, the lord chancellor,
Did wish a dagger at King Henry's heart.
Fear not to swear it, for I heard him speak it;
Therefore we'll shield you from ensuing harms.

Both Wit. If you will warrant us the deed is good,
We'll undertake it.

Gard. Kneel down, and I will here absolve you both;
This crucifix I lay upon your heads,
And sprinkle holy water on your brows:
The deed is meritorious that you do,
And by it shall you purchase grace from heaven.

First Wit. Now, sir, we'll undertake it, by our souls.

Sec. Wit. For Cromwell never lov'd none of our sort.

Gard. I know he doth not; and for both of you,
I will prefer you to some place of worth.
Now get you in, until I call for you,

For presently the dukes mean to be here.

Exeunt Witnesses

Cromwell, sit fast; thy time's not long to reign.
The abbeys that were pull'd down by thy mean
Are now a mean for me to pull thee down.
Thy pride also thy own head lights upon,
For thou art he hath changed religion:—
But now no more, for here the dukes are come.

Enter SUFFOLK, NORFOLK, *and* BEDFORD.

Suf. Good even to my lord bishop.

Nor. How fares my lord? what, are you all alone!

Gard. No, not alone, my lords; my mind is troubled.

I know your honours muse wherefore I sent,
And in such haste. What, came you from the king?

Nor. We did, and left none but Lord Cromwell with him.

Gard. O, what a dangerous time is this we live in!

There's Thomas Wolsey, he's already gone,
And Thomas More, he follow'd after him:
Another Thomas yet there doth remain,
That is far worse than either of those twain;
And if with speed, my lords, we not pursue it,
I fear the king and all the land will rue it.

Bed. Another Thomas? pray God, it be not Cromwell.

Gard. My lord of Bedford, it is that traitor Cromwell.

Bed. Is Cromwell false? my heart will never think it.

Suf. My lord of Winchester, what likelihood
Or proof have you of this his treachery?

Gard. My lord, too much.—Call in the men within.

Enter the Witnesses.

These men, my lord, upon their oaths, affirm
That they did hear Lord Cromwell in his garden
Wishing a dagger sticking at the heart
Of our King Henry: what is this but treason?

Bed. If it be so, my heart doth bleed with sorrow.

Suf. How say you, friends? What, did you hear these words?

First Wit. We did, an't like your grace.

Nor. In what place was Lord Cromwell when he spake them?

Sec. Wit. In his garden; where we did attend a suit,
Which we had waited for two years and more.

Suf. How long is 't since you heard him speak these words?

Sec. Wit. Some half-year since.

Bed. How chance that you conceal'd it all this time?

First Wit. His greatness made us fear; that was the cause.

Gard. Ay, ay, his greatness, that's the cause indeed,

And to make his treason here more manifest,
He calls his servants to him round about,
Tells them of Wolsey's life, and of his fall ;
Says that himself hath many enemies,
And gives to some of them a park, or manor,
To others leases, lands to other some :
What need he do this in his prime of life,
And if he were not fearful of his death ?

Suf. My lord, these likelihoods are very great.

Bed. Pardon me, lords, for I must needs depart ;
Their proofs are great, but greater is my heart.

[*Exit* BEDFORD.

Nor. My friends, take heed of that which you have said ;
Your souls must answer what your tongues report :
Therefore take heed, be wary what you do.

Sec. Wit. My lord, we speak no more but truth.

Nor. Let him
Depart, my lord of Winchester : and let
These men be close kept till the day of trial.

Gard. They shall, my lord : ho, take in these two men.

[*Exeunt* Witnesses, *&c.*

My lords, if Cromwell have a public trial,
That which we do is void, by his denial :
You know the king will credit none but him.

Nor. 'Tis true ; he rules the king even as he pleases.

Suf. How shall we do for to attach him, then?
Gard. Marry, thus, my lords; by an act he made himself,
With an intent to entrap some of our lives;
And this it is: *If any counsellor*
Be convicted of high treason, he shall
Be executed without public trial:
This act, my lords, he caus'd the king to make.
Suf. He did, indeed, and I remember it;
And now 'tis like to fall upon himself.
Nor. Let us not slack it; 'tis for England's good:
We must be wary, else he'll go beyond us.
Gard. Well hath your grace said, my good lord of Norfolk:
Therefore let us go presently to Lambeth;
Thither comes Cromwell from the court to-night.
Let us arrest him; send him to the Tower;
And in the morning cut off the traitor's head.
Nor. Come, then, about it; let us guard the town:
This is the day that Cromwell must go down.
Gard. Along, my lords. Well, Cromwell is half dead;
He shaked my heart, but I will shake his head.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A street in London.

Enter BEDFORD.

Bed. My soul is like a water greatly troubled ;
And Gardiner is the man that makes it so.
O Cromwell, I do fear thy end is near ;
Yet I'll prevent their malice if I can :
And, in good time, see where the man doth come,
Who little knows how near's his day of doom.

Enter CROMWELL, *with his train.* BEDFORD *makes as though he would speak to him.* CROMWELL *goes on.*

Crom. You're well encounter'd, my good lord of Bedford.
I see your honour is address'd to talk.
Pray, pardon me ; I am sent for to the king,
And do not know the business yet myself :
So fare you well, for I must needs be gone.
[*Exit* CROMWELL, *&c.*

Bed. Be gone you must ; well, what the remedy ?
I fear too soon you must be gone indeed.
The king hath business ; but little dost thou know,
Who's busy for thy life ; thou think'st not so.

Re-enter CROMWELL, *attended.*

Crom. The second time well met, my lord of Bedford :
I am very sorry that my haste is such.
Lord Marquis Dorset being sick to death,
I must receive of him the privy seal.
At Lambeth soon, my lord, we'll talk our fill.
[*Exit.*

Bed. How smooth and easy is the way to death!

Enter a Messenger.

Mes. My lord, the dukes of Norfolk and of Suffolk,
Accompanied with the Bishop of Winchester,
Entreat you to come presently to Lambeth,
On earnest matters that concern the state.

Bed. To Lambeth! so: go fetch me pen and ink ;
I and Lord Cromwell there shall talk enough:
Ay, and our last, I fear, an if he come. [*Writes.*
Here, take this letter,—bear it to Lord Cromwell;
Bid him read it; say it concerns him near:
Away, be gone, make all the haste you can.
To Lambeth do I go a woful man. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A street near the Thames.

Enter CROMWELL, *attended.*

Crom. Is the barge ready? I will straight to Lambeth:
And, if this one day's business once were past,
I'd take my ease to-morrow after trouble.

Enter Messenger.

How now, my friend, what, wouldst thou speak with me?

Mes. Sir, here's a letter from my lord of Bedford.

[*Gives him a letter.* CROMWELL *puts it in his pocket.*

Crom. O good, my friend, commend me to thy lord:
Hold, take these angels; drink them for thy pains.

Mes. He doth desire your grace to read it straight,
Because he says it doth concern you near.

Crom. Bid him assure himself of that. Farewell.
To-morrow, tell him, he shall hear from me.—
Set on before there, and away to Lambeth.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Lambeth.

Enter GARDINER, SUFFOLK, NORFOLK, BEDFORD. Lieutenant *of the Tower*, *a* Sergeant-at-Arms, *a* Herald, *and* Halberds.

Gard. Halberds, stand close unto the water-side;
Sergeant-at-arms, be you bold in your office;
Herald, deliver now your proclamation.

Her. *This is to give notice to all the king's subjects, the late Lord Cromwell, lord chancellor of*

England, vicar-general over the realm, him to hold and esteem as a traitor against the crown and dignity of England. So God save the king.

Gard. Amen.

Bed. Amen, and root thee from the land!
For whilst thou liv'st, the truth can never stand.

Nor. Make a lane there, the traitor is at hand.
Keep back Cromwell's men; drown them, if they come on.
Sergeant, your office.

Enter CROMWELL, *attended. The halberd-men make a lane.*

Crom. What means my Lord of Norfolk by these words?
Sirs, come along.

Gard. Kill them, if they come on.

Ser. Lord Thomas Cromwell, in King Henry's name,
I do arrest your honour of high treason.

Crom. Sergeant, me of treason?

[CROMWELL's Attendants *offer to draw.*

Suf. Kill them, if they draw a sword.

Crom. Hold; I charge you, as you love me, draw not a sword.
Who dares accuse Cromwell of treason now?

Gard. This is no place to reckon up your crime;
Your dove-like looks were view'd with serpent's eyes.

Crom. With serpent's eyes, indeed; by thine they were.

But, Gardiner, do thy worst: I fear thee not.
My faith compar'd with thine, as much shall pass
As doth the diamond excel the glass.
Attach'd of treason, no accusers by!
Indeed, what tongue dares speak so foul a lie?
Nor. My lord, my lord, matters are too well known;
And it is time the king had note thereof.
Crom. The king! let me go to him face to face;
No better trial I desire than that.
Let him but say that Cromwell's faith was feign'd,
Then let my honour and my name be stain'd.
If e'er my heart against the king was set,
O, let my soul in judgment answer it!
Then if my faith's confirmèd with his reason,
'Gainst whom hath Cromwell then committed treason?
Suf. My lord, my lord, your matter shall be tried:
Meantime, with patience pray content yourself.
Crom. Perforce I must with patience be content:—
O, dear friend Bedford, dost thou stand so near?
Cromwell rejoiceth one friend sheds a tear.
And whither is't? Which way must Cromwell now?
Gard. My lord, you must unto the Tower. Lieutenant,
Take him unto your charge.
Crom. Well, where you please; but yet before I part,
Let me confer a little with my men.

Gard. Ay, as you go by water, so you shall.
Crom. I have some business present to impart.
Nor. You may not stay: Lieutenant, take your charge.
Crom. Well, well, my lord, you second Gardiner's text.
Norfolk, farewell! thy turn will be the next.
[*Exeunt* CROMWELL *and* Lieutenant.
Gard. His guilty conscience makes him rave, my Lord.
Nor. Ay, let him talk; his time is short enough.
Gard. My Lord of Bedford, come; you weep for him
That would not shed a single tear for you.
Bed. It grieves me for to see his sudden fall.
Gard. Such success wish I unto traitors all.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *London. A street.*

Enter Two Citizens.

First Cit. Why, can this news be true? Is't possible?
The great Lord Cromwell arrested upon treason?
I hardly will believe it can be so.
Sec. Cit. It is too true, sir. Would 'twere otherwise,
Condition I spent half the wealth I have!
I was at Lambeth, saw him there arrested,
And afterward committed to the Tower.
First Cit. What, was't for treason that he was committed?

Sec. Cit. Kind, noble gentleman! I may rue the time:
All that I have, I did enjoy by him;
And if he die, then all my state is gone.
First Cit. It may be hopèd that he shall not die,
Because the king did favour him so much.
Sec. Cit. O, sir, you are deceiv'd in thinking so.
The grace and favour he had with the king
Hath caus'd him have so many enemies.
He that in court secure will keep himself,
Must not be great, for then he's envied at.
The shrub is safe, when as the cedar shakes;
For where the king doth love above compare,
Of others they as much more envied are.
First Cit. 'Tis pity that this nobleman should fall,
He did so many charitable deeds.
Sec. Cit. 'Tis true; and yet you see in each estate
There's none so good, but some one doth him hate;
And they before would smile him in the face,
Will be the foremost to do him disgrace.
What, will you go along unto the court?
First Cit. I care not if I do, and hear the news,
How men will judge what shall become of him.
Sec. Cit. Some will speak hardly, some will speak in pity.
Go you to the court? I'll go into the city;

There I am sure to hear more news than you.
First Cit. Why, then, we soon will meet again.
Adieu. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *A room in the Tower.*

Enter Cromwell.

Crom. Now, Cromwell, hast thou time to meditate,
And think upon thy state, and of the time.
Thy honours came unsought, ay, and unlook'd for;
Thy fall as sudden, and unlook'd for too.
What glory was in England that I had not?
Who in this land commanded more than Cromwell?
Except the king, who greater than myself?
But now I see what after-ages shall;
The greater men, more sudden is their fall.
And now I do remember, the Earl of Bedford
Was very desirous for to speak to me;
And afterward sent unto me a letter,
The which I think I still have in my pocket;
Now may I read it, for I now have leisure,
And this I take it is: [*Reads.*
My Lord, come not this night to Lambeth,
For, if you do, your state is overthrown;
And much I doubt your life, an' if you come:
Then if you love yourself, stay where you are.
O God, O God! had I but read this letter,
Then had I been free from the lion's paw:
Deferring this to read until to-morrow,
I spurn'd at joy, and did embrace my sorrow.

Enter Lieutenant of the Tower, Officers, *&c.*

Now, Master Lieutenant, when's this day of death?

Lieu. Alas, my lord, would I might never see it!

Here are the Dukes of Suffolk and of Norfolk,
Winchester, Bedford, and Sir Richard Radcliff,
With others still; but why they come I know not.

Crom. No matter wherefore. Cromwell is prepar'd,
For Gardiner has my life and state ensnar'd.
Bid them come in, or you shall do them wrong,
For here stands he who some think lives too long.
Learning kills learning, and, instead of ink
To dip his pen Cromwell's heart-blood doth drink.

Enter the Dukes *of* Suffolk *and* Norfolk; *the* Earl of Bedford, Gardiner Bishop of Winchester, Sir Richard Radcliff, *and* Sir Ralph Saddler.

Nor. Good morrow, Cromwell. What, alone, so sad?

Crom. One good among you, none of you are bad.
For my part, it best fits me be alone;
Sadness with me, not I with any one.
What, is the king acquainted with my cause?

Nor. He is; and he hath answer'd us, my Lord.

Crom. How shall I come to speak with him myself?

Gard. The king is so advertised of your guilt,
He'll by no means admit you to his presence.

Crom. No way admit me! am I so soon forgot?
Did he but yesterday embrace my neck,
And said that Cromwell was even half himself?
And are his princely ears so much bewitch'd
With scandalous ignomy, and slanderous speeches,
That now he doth deny to look on me?
Well, my lord of Winchester, no doubt but you
Are much in favour with his majesty:
Will you bear a letter from me to his grace?

Gard. Pardon me; I will bear no traitor's letters.

Crom. Ha!—Will you do this kindness then, to tell him
By word of mouth what I shall say to you?

Gard. That will I.

Crom. But, on your honour, will you?

Gard. Ay, on my honour.

Crom. Bear witness, lords.—Tell him, when he hath known you,
And tried your faith but half so much as mine,
He'll find you to be the falsest-hearted man
Living in England: pray you, tell him this.

Bed. Be patient, good my lord, in these extremes.

Crom. My kind and honourable lord of Bedford,
I know your honour always lov'd me well:
But, pardon me, this still shall be my theme;

Gardiner's the cause makes Cromwell so extreme.
Sir Ralph Sadler, I pray a word with you;
You were my man, and all that you possess
Came by my means: sir, to requite all this,
Say will you take this letter here of me,
And give it with your own hands to the king?

Sad. I kiss your hand, and never will I rest
Ere to the king this be deliverèd. [*Exit* SADLER.

Crom. Why then yet Cromwell hath one friend in store.

Gard. But all the haste he makes shall be but vain.
Here 's a discharge, sir, for your prisoner,
To see him executed presently:
[*To the* Lieutenant.
My lord, you hear the tenure of your life.

Crom. I do embrace it; welcome my last date,
And of this glistering world I take last leave:
And, noble lords, I take my leave of you.
As willingly I go to meet with death,
As Gardiner did pronounce it with his breath.
From treason is my heart as white as snow;
My death procurèd only by my foe.
I pray, commend me to my sovereign king,
And tell him in what sort his Cromwell died,
To lose his head before his cause was tried;
But let his grace, when he shall hear my name,
Say only this: Gardiner procur'd the same.

Enter young CROMWELL.

Lieu. Here is your son, sir, come to take his leave.

Crom. To take his leave? Come hither,
Harry Cromwell;
Mark, boy, the last words that I speak to thee:
Flatter not Fortune, neither fawn upon her;
Gape not for state, yet lose no spark of honour;
Ambition, like the plague, see thou eschew it;
I die for treason, boy, and never knew it.
Yet let thy faith as spotless be as mine,
And Cromwell's virtues in thy face shall shine:
Come, go along, and see me leave my breath,
And I'll leave thee upon the floor of death.

Son. O father, I shall die to see that wound.
Your blood being spilt will make my heart to swound.

Crom. How, boy! not dare to look upon the axe?
How shall I do then to have my head struck off?
Come on, my child, and see the end of all;
And after say, that Gardiner was my fall.

Gard. My lord, you speak it of an envious heart;
I have done no more than law and equity.

Bed. O, my good lord of Winchester, forbear:
'Twould better have beseem'd you to be absent,
Than with your words disturb a dying man.

Crom. Who, me, my lord? no: he disturbs not me.
My mind he stirs not, though his mighty shock
Hath brought more peers' heads down unto the block.—

Farewell, my boy! all Cromwell can bequeath,
My hearty blessing;—so I take my leave.
Exec. I am your death's-man; pray, my lord, forgive me.
Crom. Even with my soul. Why, man, thou art my doctor,
And bring'st me precious physic for my soul.—
My lord of Bedford, I desire of you
Before my death a corporal embrace.
[CROMWELL *embraces him.*
Farewell, great lord; my love I do commend,
My heart to you; my soul to heaven I send.
This is my joy, that ere my body fleet,
Your honour'd arms are my true winding-sheet.
Farewell, dear Bedford; my peace is made in heaven.
Thus falls great Cromwell, a poor ell in length,
To rise to unmeasur'd height, wing'd with new strength,
The land of worms, which dying men discover:
My soul is shrin'd with heaven's celestial cover.
[*Exeunt* CROMWELL, Officers, *&c.*
Bed. Well, farewell Cromwell! sure the truest friend
That ever Bedford shall possess again.—
Well, lords, I fear that when this man is dead,
You'll wish in vain that Cromwell had a head.

Enter an Officer, *with* CROMWELL'S *head.*

Offi. Here is the head of the deceasèd Cromwell.

Bed. Pray thee, go hence, and bear his head away
Unto his body; inter them both in clay.
[*Exit* Officer.

Enter Sir Ralph Sadler.

Sad. How now, my lords? What, is Lord Cromwell dead?
Bed. Lord Cromwell's body now doth want a head.
Sad. O God, a little speed had saved his life.
Here is a kind reprieve come from the king,
To bring him straight unto his majesty.
Suf. Ay, ay, Sir Ralph, reprieves come now too late.
Gard. My conscience now tells me this deed was ill.
Would Christ that Cromwell were alive again!
Nor. Come, let us to the king, who, well I know,
Will grieve for Cromwell, that his death was so.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

FINIS.

GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, LD., ST JOHN'S HOUSE, CLERKENWELL.

SELECT LIST OF WORKS

PUBLISHED BY

L. REEVE & CO.,

5, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden.

COLLECTIONS AND RECOLLECTIONS OF NATURAL HISTORY AND SPORT IN THE LIFE OF A COUNTRY VICAR. By the Rev. G. C. Green. Illustrated with Woodcuts from Sketches by the Author. *7s. 6d.*

"Will prove most attractive to boys."—*Athenæum.*

"Charming reminiscences of pleasant successes and amusing failures."—*Whitehall Review.*

"A most entertaining little volume."—*Land and Water.*

"Cannot fail to commend itself to a very wide circle of scientific and sporting readers."—*County Gentleman.*

"Animated reminiscences of red-letter days with rod and gun."—*Saturday Review.*

"Far more wholesome and instructive than many a volume of sermons."—*Scotsman.*

"We feel, whilst reading Mr. Green's book, how much a knowledge of natural history can sweeten human life."—*Science Gossip.*

HANDBOOK OF THE BRITISH FLORA; a Description of the Flowering Plants and Ferns indigenous to, or naturalized in, the British Isles. For the use of Beginners and Amateurs. By George Bentham, F.R.S. 5th Edition, revised by Sir J. D. Hooker, C.B., K.C.S.I., F.R.S. *10s. 6d.*

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE BRITISH FLORA; a Series of Wood Engravings, with Dissections, of British Plants, from Drawings by W. H. Fitch, F.L.S., and W. G. Smith, F.L.S., forming an Illustrated Companion to Bentham's "Handbook," and other British Floras. New Edition, revised and enlarged. 1311 Wood Engravings, *10s. 6d.*

OUTLINES OF ELEMENTARY BOTANY, as Introductory to Local Floras. By George Bentham, F.R.S., President of the Linnæan Society. New Edition, *1s.*

BRITISH WILD FLOWERS, Familiarly Described in the Four Seasons. By THOMAS MOORE, F.L.S. 24 Coloured Plates, 16*s*.

BRITISH FERNS; an Introduction to the Study of the FERNS, LYCOPODS, and EQUISETA indigenous to the British Isles. With Chapters on the Structure, Propagation, Cultivation, Diseases, Uses, Preservation, and Distribution of Ferns. By M. PLUES. With 16 Coloured Plates, and 55 Wood Engravings, 10*s*. 6*d*.

FERNY COMBES; a Ramble after Ferns in the Glens and Valleys of Devonshire. By CHARLOTTE CHANTER. Third Edition. 8 Coloured Plates and a Map of the County, 5*s*.

BRITISH GRASSES; an Introduction to the Study of the Gramineæ of Great Britain and Ireland. By M. PLUES. With 16 Coloured Plates and 100 Wood Engravings, 10*s*. 6*d*.

BRITISH SEAWEEDS; an Introduction to the Study of the Marine ALGÆ of Great Britain, Ireland, and the Channel Islands. By S. O. GRAY. With 16 Coloured Plates, 10*s*. 6*d*.

THE YOUNG COLLECTOR'S HANDYBOOK OF BOTANY. By the Rev. H. P. DUNSTER, M.A. 66 Wood Engravings, 3*s*. 6*d*.

THE YOUNG COLLECTOR'S HANDYBOOK OF RECREATIVE SCIENCE. By the Rev. H. P. DUNSTER, M.A. Cuts, 3*s*. 6*d*.

HANDBOOK OF BRITISH MOSSES, containing all that are known to be natives of the British Isles. By the Rev. M. J. BERKELEY, M.A., F.L.S. 24 Coloured Plates, 21*s*.

SYNOPSIS OF BRITISH MOSSES, containing descriptions of all the Genera and Species (with localities of the rarer ones) found in Great Britain and Ireland. By CHARLES P. HOBKIRK, F.L.S. New Edition, entirely revised, 7*s*. 6*d*.

OUTLINES OF BRITISH FUNGOLOGY, containing Characters of above a Thousand Species of Fungi, and a Complete List of all that have been described as Natives of the British Isles. By the Rev. M. J. BERKELEY, M.A., F.L.S. 24 Coloured Plates, 30*s*.

THE ESCULENT FUNGUSES OF ENGLAND. Containing an account of their Classical History, Uses, Characters, Development, Structure, Nutritious Properties, Modes of Cooking and Preserving, &c. By C. D. BADHAM, M.D. Second Edition. Edited by F. CURREY, F.R.S. 12 Coloured Plates, 12*s*.

THE BOTANICAL MAGAZINE; Figures and Descriptions of New and Rare Plants suitable for the Garden, Stove, or Greenhouse. By Sir J. D. HOOKER, K.C.S.I., C.B., F.R.S., late Director of the Royal Gardens, Kew. Third Series, Vols. I. to XLIV., each 42*s*. Published Monthly, with 6 Plates, 3*s*. 6*d*. coloured. Annual Subscription, 42*s*.

BRITISH INSECTS. A Familiar Description of the Form, Structure, Habits, and Transformations of Insects. By E. F. STAVELEY. With 16 Coloured Plates, 14*s*.

BRITISH BEETLES; an Introduction to the Study of our Indigenous COLEOPTERA. By E. C. RYE. 16 Coloured Steel Plates, 10*s*. 6*d*.

BRITISH BEES; an Introduction to the Study of the Natural History and Economy of the Bees indigenous to the British Isles. By W. E. SHUCKARD. 16 Coloured Plates, 10*s*. 6*d*.

BRITISH BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS; an Introduction to the Study of our Native LEPIDOPTERA. By H. T. STAINTON. 16 Coloured Plates, 10*s*. 6*d*.

BRITISH SPIDERS; an Introduction to the Study of the ARANEIDÆ found in Great Britain and Ireland. By E. F. STAVELEY. 16 Coloured Plates, 10*s*. 6*d*.

BRITISH ZOOPHYTES; an Introduction to the Hydroida, Actinozoa, and Polyzoa found in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Channel Islands. By ARTHUR S. PENNINGTON, F.L.S. 24 Plates, 10*s.* 6*d.*

THE EDIBLE MOLLUSKS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, with the Modes of Cooking them. By M. S. LOVELL. Second Edition. With 12 Coloured Plates, 10*s.* 6*d.*

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF PLANTS. By H. BAILLON, President of the Linnæan Society of Paris. Super-royal 8vo. Vols. I. to VIII., with 3545 Wood Engravings, 25*s.* each.

THE COLEOPTERA OF THE BRITISH ISLANDS. A Descriptive Account of the Families, Genera, and Species indigenous to Great Britain and Ireland, with Notes as to Localities, Habitats, &c. By the Rev. Canon FOWLER, M.A., F.L.S., Secretary to the Entomological Society of London, and Editor (for Coleoptera) of the *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine*. Vol. I., 14*s.*; Vol. II., 18*s.*; Vol. III., 16*s.* Large Paper Illustrated Edition, Vol. I., 36 Coloured Plates, 48*s.* Vol. II., 34 Coloured Plates, 58*s.*; Vol. III., 28 Coloured Plates, 48*s.*

THE BUTTERFLIES OF EUROPE. Described and Figured by H. C. LANG, M.D., F.L.S. With 82 Coloured Plates, containing upwards of 900 Figures. 2 vols., super-royal 8vo, £3 18*s.*

"This is the completest work of the kind yet published, whilst the high finish of the coloured plates raises its artistic merits to the highest rank."—*Science Gossip.*

A MANUAL OF BRITISH ARCHÆOLOGY. By CHARLES BOUTELL, M.A. 20 Coloured Plates, 10*s.* 6*d.*

SACRED ARCHÆOLOGY; a Popular Dictionary of Ecclesiastical Art and Institutions from Primitive to Modern Times. By MACKENZIE E. C. WALCOTT, B.D. Oxon., F.S.A., Precentor and Prebendary of Chichester Cathedral.

L. REEVE & CO.,

5, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN.