



SIR FRANCIS BACON'S
O
CIPHER STORY


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Sir Francis Bacon's Cipher Story.

The series of deciphered writings from the Shakespearean Plays, the stage plays of Marlow, the works of Peele, Green, Spenser and Burton, has reached the sixth book, and others in process of translation. The character and scope of the matter so far deciphered, will be indicated by the following

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Synopsis of "The Historical Tragedy of Mary Queen of Scots."

ACT I.—*Scene 1.*—Interview between Queen Elizabeth and Counsellor Francis Bacon. The Law of Treason. * * * Queen Elizabeth commands the presence of Leicester, who arranges to bring Mary to his house in London for an interview.

Scene 2.—Banquet room at house of Leicester. Leicester and Mary at banquet table. Queen Elizabeth secretly enters; hides behind statue. Mary proposes marriage to Leicester, they to be rulers of the French, English and Scottish realms. Elizabeth steps forth,
"Both Scotland make your Majesty our jewel!"

Mary in surprised alarm,

"Alas, I am undone! It is the Queen."

Interview between Elizabeth and Mary; withdrawal of Elizabeth and Leicester.

ACT II.—*Scene 1.*—In front of Tower; time, midnight. Stormy interview between Queen Elizabeth and Leicester; the jealous Queen declares his banishment; thrusts him away and enters. Leicester in rage:

"I'll empty all these veins, and shed my blood

Drop by drop 'till the earth ere I will go!

Let my soul want mercy if I do not join

With Scotland, in her behalf."

Enter Francis Bacon, who counsels a different course. Leicester requests Bacon to plead for him to the Queen.

Scene 2.—Audience room of Palace. Bacon pleads for Leicester; calls upon himself the wrath of the Queen; takes leave.

"No power I have to speak, I know.

And so, farewell, I, and my griefs will go."

Enter Leicester; begs that he be not banished; Queen repents.

"Restrain thy apprehension; I will lay trust upon thee,

And thou shalt find I will preserve and love thee.

I have conferred on thee the commandment of mine army beyond the sea."

ACT III.—*Scene 1.*—Council Chamber of Palace. Lords seated at table; Queen on the throne; Elizabeth announces that Leicester is to command her armies in Ireland. Strongly opposed by the Lord Chancellor; Leicester accused of treason. The Queen overrules the council; makes him General and administers the oath.

Scene 2.—Council Chamber—twelve months later Queen Elizabeth presents the treasons of Mary Queen of Scots; gives letter of commission for her trial.

ACT IV.—*Scene 1.*—Room in Fotheringay Castle; lords, knights, captains, lawyers and gentlemen in attendance. Queen Mary before the Court; notes the absence of the English Queen; demands her presence—Will be tried by her peers, and not by servants of lesser degree; Council show warrant. Mary denies the charges; so impresses and moves the Court that Chief Justice suddenly adjourns the Court to London, fearing that by her eloquence and beauty she be acquitted.

Scene 2.—Room in Tower of London; Court convenes to convict Mary; Montague speaks strongly for her; members cry Guilty! guilty!

ACT V.—*Scene 1.*—Palace of the Queen, Elizabeth and train.

"Q. E. Fie, what a snig is Warwick, he comes not

Totell us whether they will that she shall die or no.

Ah! In good time here comes the sweating lord." (Enter Warwick.)

He announces the decision of "guilty." Enter Lords of Council; they present Elizabeth the warrant for Mary's death. *"She does not sign it."*

"Q. E. My lord, I promise to note it cunningly;

But here come the ambassadors of our brothers of France and Spain."

Enter ambassadors, who plead for the life of Mary.

Scene 2.—Street in London. Enter Burleigh and Secretary of the Queen (Davison); met by Leicester. All enter a public house.

Scene 3.—Private room; Burleigh and Leicester force the Secretary to forge the Queen's name to the warrant for Mary's execution.

Scene 4.—Chamber in Fotheringay Castle—Queen Mary and maids. Enter English Lords.

"Q. M. Welcome, my lords.—Why do you come. Is't for my life?"

Lord Shrewsbury. *'Tis now midnight, and by eight tomorrow thou must be made immortal.*

Q. M. How! My lord! Tomorrow? tomorrow! Oh! that's sudden.

Oh! this subdues me quite.

Good, good my lord, if I must die tomorrow,

Let me have some reverend person

To advise, comfort and pray with me." (This is refused.)

Scene 5.—Hall of Fotheringay Castle, hung with black. Platform and block at end. English Lords and Gentlemen, executioner, and assistants.

Enter Queen Mary dressed in black and red velvet gown. The executioner assures her

"I will be as speedy in your death as all the poisonous potions in the world,

And you shall feel no pain."

Mary addresses the Lords, denies the charges, asserting that they shed innocent blood.

"And if you tell the heavy story right,

Upon my soul the heavens will shed tears,

Yea, even my foes will shed fast falling tears,

And say it was a pitious deed to take me from

The world, and send my soul to heaven."

* * * * *

(She kneels and prays):

"Oh God, have mercy upon me, and receive my fainting soul again! Oh be thou merciful! And let our princely sister be satisfied with our true blood which, as Thou know'st, unjustly must be spilled! Oh God, send to me the water from the well of life, and by my death stop effusion of Christian blood and 'stablish quietness on every side! Let me be blessed for the peace I make. Amen." (Rises.)

"Farewell, sweet Lords; let's meet in heaven,

Good my Lord of Derby, lead me to the block."

(Speaks to Executioner.)

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SIR FRANCIS BACON'S
CIPHER STORY.

DISCOVERED AND DECIPHERED BY
ORVILLE W. OWEN, M. D.

BOOK V.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

The publication of Book IV, including the "Tragedy of Mary Queen of Scots," in the form of a play, has greatly increased the widespread interest in the Cipher Story. Very shortly after its issue, we received letters from England, and many parts of the United States, noting the added pleasure in reading the book from the addition of the names of the characters, and urging, for the sake of clearness, that in future publications, they be inserted in the dialogues. The introduction of so great a number of characters, and the difficulty of identifying them, by those not thoroughly familiar with the history of the period to which the Cipher relates, was not foreseen, and the now apparent inadequacy of the quotation marks, heretofore used and referred to in these letters, has induced us to change the style, and repeat the historic names of the speakers as they appear. In the discourse between Bacon and the decipherer, however, changes of type and quotation marks will be used as heretofore. Thus will be combined narrative and dialogue as in Francis Bacon's work "An Advertisement Touching an Holy War."

Students have recognized histories, in the Shakespeare Plays, other than those indicated by historic titles, but have found irreconcilable inconsistencies in apparently fictitious and misplaced names given to actors in the events recorded. These names, in the 1623 Folio, are usually printed in italics, and are but maskings. When transposed by the translation of the Cipher to their proper places, the hidden histories are found to be authentic.

HOWARD PUBLISHING CO.

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PREFACE.

In Book III of the CIPHER Story, I took pleasure in acknowledging the aid of my assistants in the preparation of that volume. Their work had then demonstrated that the correct use of the CIPHER could be acquired by others.

The present volume, Book V, is entirely their work, and until in print, I purposely refrained from reading or hearing read, any of this part of Bacon's Story of his Life in France. Miss Ollie E. Wheeler, extracted from the original Shakespeare Plays, from Bacon's acknowledged works, and those attributed to Marlowe, Greene, Peele, Spenser and Burton, the passages around the guides and numerous keys. Mrs. Elizabeth W. Gallup and Miss Kate E. Wells, have deciphered and woven these passages, by the rules of the CIPHER, into the poetic form in which they are presented.

These ladies have also prepared the matter for Book VI, which will complete the account of Bacon's Life in France, and be issued shortly.

I congratulate my assistants upon their work, and the world, upon this unanswerable proof of the certainty of the CIPHER system.

I also congratulate myself that whatever may happen, the important results of my ten years' study, will not be lost, and that the work I have undertaken, will not depend solely upon one life for successful completion.

ORVILLE W. OWEN.

Detroit, March, 1895.



BOOK V.

Sir Francis Bacon's Life at The Court of France.

(CONTINUED.)

Navarre. Yes, arm thyself to answer mildly, cousin;
Tut, tut, thou art all ice, thy kindness freezes.

Count M. Why there's no more that's to be said,
Navarre.

N. Are these thy fruits of wit, thy sight in art,
Thy eloquence, thy policy to mock
Thy prince? Then caitiff pack thee hence!

C. M. Good lord, how rage gainsayeth reason's power!
My dear, my gracious and belovèd prince,
The essence of my soul, my God on earth,
I fear my counsel will offend.

N. Tell all, spare naught.

C. M. Alas, my soul! why art thou torn in twain,
For fear thou talk a thing that should displease?

N. Give me thy hand: now do I play the touch
To try if thou be current gold indeed.
Say, have I thy advice and thy assistance?

C. M. Give me some little breath, some pause, dear
lord,
Before I positively speak in this.

N. Cousin, thou wast not wont to be so dull.
Shall I be plain? I wish it suddenly perform'd.

C. M. Whither away so fast?

N. I promise you
I scarcely know myself; but to the Duke,
By God's good grace, I hope to speed ere long,
Hasten his musters and conduct his powers.

C. M. Why do you go Navarre? Budge not a foot
To aid in war; and if my words do savor
Any worth, meditate on naught I pray,
But to be friends with th' King.

N. Better to go
Than tarry and be hang'd! Since that our liege
Has so unkindly dealt, no trust I give him.
Why should a prince, whose power may command,
Obey, be govern'd and suppress'd by will?
I will employ my busy brains for war.
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me. I go about it, be it
Either for death, for fine, or banishment,
Insisting on the old prerogative
And power i' th' truth a' th' cause;
And he that will not follow Bourbon now,
Let him die in shame, in eternal shame.
If any man doth mean to shrink from me,
I will lay down for him such reasons now,
For this adventure, Count, that he shall go.
'Tis time to arm, and more than I have said,
The leisure and enforcement of the time
Forbids to dwell on; yet remember this,
God, and our good cause, fight upon our side,
The prayers of holy saints and wrongèd souls.

Like high-rear'd bulwarks, stand before our faces.
 What shall I say more than I have inferr'd?
 Why stay'st *thou* here, and go'st not to the Duke?
 For God's sake let not us two stay at home.

C. M. Sometimes I unadvisedly do say,
 Which after hours gives leisure to repent.

N. I am assur'd you will not do so now.

C. M. My other self, my counsel's consistory,
 My oracle, my prophet, my dear cousin,
 I, as a child, will go by thy direction.

N. Then we'll not stay behind. Come, cousin, let's
 Devise the fittest time and safest way
 To hide us from pursuit that will be made
 After my flight: as you value your trust,
 Reflect accordingly.

C. M. Methinks I have
 A mind to it. There is some sap in this.
 'Tis vile unless it may be quaintly order'd,
 And better in my mind not undertook.

N. Boy!

Francis Bacon. My lord.

N. Know'st thou not any, whom corrupting gold
 Will tempt unto a close exploit of death?

F. B. How should I? I am but a stranger here!

N. I ask thee, boy, because I do desire
 That thou shalt assist me; and if thou wilt
 Thy work for wealth, and life for gold engage,
 I will, I swear, give thee a thousand pounds:
 Ask me when thou wilt, and thou shalt have it,
 To-morrow Francis, or indeed when thou wilt.

F. B. My lord, I have consider'd in my mind,
 The late request that you did sound me in;

And were it not so very far from reason,
 It should a yielding make within my breast.
 I'm glad you have the gold but I'll not touch it.
 I shall during my life the better think
 Of you and of myself that th' gold of France
 Did not seduce me. Friendship binds me to you,
 Although neither valued to th' money's worth,
 Nor purchas'd by the merit of vile gold.
 No money offer me I pray; that kills my heart.

N. Let be thy bitter scorn, I know thy noble nature—
 How true thou art—and do repent my fault,
 That not to let thy hopeful service perish,
 I thought to advance thee some little money.
 I prithee, pardon and forget it all.

F. B. I quite forget the follies that are past.
 And now, what say you unto this, my lord?
 That which you have requested I will do,
 Well satisfied on this condition, that
 You'll not depart until I set you free.

N. Why, boy, how thou dost talk? Thy back cannot
 Vouchsafe this burden—'tis too weak. Myself
 Will bear a part, co-portion of your pack.
 What hast thou now to offer?

F. B. At this time nothing,
 But I will promise not to serve amiss.
 It will show honestly and's very likely
 To load our purposes with what they travail for.
 I'll bear myself towards your grace no otherwise
 Than if I your own natural brother were.

N. Promising, is the very air o' th' time:
 It opens the eyes of expectation.
 Performance, is ever the duller for his act,

And but in the plainer and simpler kind of people,
The deed of saying is quite out of use.
To promise, is most courtly and fashionable;
Performance is a kind of will or testament
Which argues a great sickness in his judgment
That makes it. So spare thine oaths, my boy.

F. B. Thou show'st a curious and unseasonable
Impatience and solicitude, my lord.
You are so hasty that I know not what to say.

N. Aye, but this answer will not serve me, boy;
About the gold, I'll trust to thy conditions—
If thou list not, leave hast thou to refuse;
But thing refusèd do not afterward accuse.
Yet we much rather would depart than be so check'd.

F. B. I do not think your hope's so small, my lord.
Without delay, you may scot-free escape.

N. What god art thou, compos'd in human shape,
Or bold Triphonius, to decide our doubts?
How know'st thou this?

F. B. Even as I know the means
To work your grace's freedom and your love.

“He answered me with:—

N. Nay, but shall I not
Provide from out my careful mind a plan?
This rash attempt I hold not for the best;
And when you hear my reason, out of doubt
You'll be content to wait and 'tend on me.

F. B. Delay is dangerous, and procureth harm.

“Then thus the Prince 'gan say, but did straight-
way refrain:—

N. Now sith your fortunes thus dispose—

“The Count then quickly said:—

C. M. Let's do as he bids;
I have a mind to do so, for he means
To do us good.

N. I am now courted, Count,
With a double occasion; he may mean well
But it may prove an argument of laughter
To th' rest, and 'mongst lords be thought a fool:
It shows but little love or judgment in him.
Must he my last and only refuge be?
He from the first, for compassing of his ends,
Has sought to manage everything, yet having
Not in good order all his ends arrang'd,
Has much disgrac'd me in 't: I'm angry at him,
That might have known my place. I see no sense for 't.
It is but the prepost'rous subtlety,
Of a vain mind that doth aspire of honour;
And now that the reflected image, I
Have once discover'd rightly, I must be prepar'd.
Thus after such experience, good Count,
I'm nothing slow to slack his haste. He is
A vain braggadocio: what would he do?

C. M. Yet truly, Prince, he has a due respect.
Methinks I feel this youth's perfections
With an invisible, and subtle stealth
To creep in at mine eyes—impetuous
But in beauty and health of mind, superior.

N. Praise whoso list, yet I will him dispraise,
Until he quit him of his guilty blame;
For all his mind on honour fixèd is,
To which he levels all his purposes.
His power, too, I hold of small account.
Pray tell me whoso else did by him gain?

C. M. Thou art too bold in presence here, such talk
Against him for to use. That certainly
Is not the way to gain. Lo, this is best advice:—
'Tis good to look to him betimes, Navarre;
It is our safety and we must embrace
This gentle offer of the perilous time,
For day's bright beam does vanish fast away,
Which fills my mind with strange despairing thoughts.
I would your spirit were easier for advice,
Or stronger for your need. We should at once
Some secret means devise to get away;
Sure this your grace may do.

N. 'Tis with my mind
As with the tide, swell'd up unto his height,
That makes a still-stand, running neither way.
Fain would I go.

C. M. I know you'd fain be gone—

N. But many thousand reasons hold me back.

“I' my mind I could no other do but muse:—
Alas that I should e'er such friendship show,
Whereas now favor none is to be found.
I such a courage had to do him good;
And does he think so backwardly of me now?
But I to set him free intended not to miss,
So thus my mind to him I did in brief express:—

F. B. My lord, why waste you thus the time away?
I freely give you leave to choose whether
I shall you leave or give you liberty.

N. Dost thou not fear the fury of the King?
Would'st thou go hazard life so desperately?
Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold:
If you yourself saw with your eyes,

Or with your judgment knew yourself, the fear
Of your adventure would now counsel you
To a more equal enterprise. We pray you
For your own sake, your own safety t' embrace,
And this attempt give o'er.

F. B. My lord, I know if ever it did come
Unto his ears that I th' occasion was
Of your escape, he'd hang me—that is clear:
But sir, to fear the worst, oft cures the worst.
The mind I sway by, and the heart I bear,
Shall never sag with doubt, nor shake with fear.

N. Most certainly I am right glad to see
Such valiant courage to remain in thee,
As this imports thou hast in heart and mind.

F. B. Say you so, say you so: then do I say
Will you not now re-answer me my question?

N. A question over haughty for thy weed,
Fit for the king himself for to propound.

F. B. But know that under simple weeds the gods
Have mask'd, then deem not with disdain to give
An answer to my question, noble Prince.
My coat includes perhaps as great as yours.
If by the looks one may the mind ahead, your looks
Do show it rests but to confirm my talk.

N. What you should mean hereby, I do not know,
And should it not displease thee it to tell,
I would thyself require thee to reveal.
But lay aside this thy presumptuous mind,
Or else be sure thou shalt the same repent.

F. B. My parts, my title, and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly. You shall see
My deeds shall make my glory shine

As clear as Luna in a winter's night.

N. Well, well, because thou bragg'st so of thy birth,
I'll see how it shall profit thee anon.
Thou mayest be in jest, and counterfeiting
That thou art princely born; but if thou art
Of noble birth, pray tell me how it is,
Thou from thy father cam'st with neither titles
Nor honors, boy?

F. B. My father knows the cause.

N. But what's the reason you should leave him now?

F. B. To answer that, I should confess to you.

And yet no cowardly heart shall cause me
E'er to deny for what I hither came,
For most unwilling and averse was I to leave.

N. But why art thou come here?

F. B. Why? To accomplish what my father will'd.

N. Methinks, indeed, he hath some secret reason,
Not for thy fault, but secret powers unseen,
Why now he wishes you with speedy haste
To move from England's pleasant court and seats.
I fear me you are sent of policy,
To undermine us, for the realm's behoof,
Bacon—a goodly chancellor is he not?

F. B. Mark you I said my father, sir, my father—
I dare not call him king: what needs these questions?
'Tis not in her controlment nor in ours,
But as the realm and parliament shall please.

N. What do you mean?

F. B. My lord, I love you;
And durst commend a secret to your ear
Much weightier than this work. I wish you both
Awhile to pause, and to my words attend.

I charge you, too, that you refrain to say
Aught of me, or of what to you I tell.

N. We will not show one word amiss, that is
To your decree contrary. May we know
For what intent he bare this grudge to thee?

F. B. No quarrel, but a slight contention.

N. About what?

F. B. About the crown of England, which is mine.

N. Yours, boy! By a forg'd process then. Heaven
knows

By what by-paths, and indirect crook'd ways,
To thee it shall descend.

F. B. But I myself know well.

Heaven witness with me, and put in thy mind
Better opinion, better confirmation,
Whenas I show my case. Have I no hope
That you will credit give unto my words?

“To which he half in sport this answer made :—

N. The part of prince you're acting handsomely,
But I much doubt that you too careful are,
For that which lawfully is none of yours.

F. B. Nay, but I hope in the maturity
Of your own times, upon both proofs and grounds
So notable, 'twill yet come up and bear such fruit
That you, right royal prince, shall have no need to doubt.

N. Tush, these but fancies be, which run within your
mind.

Hope a good breakfast is, but a bad supper.
My mind presageth that I shall behold
A spectacle to daunt the pride of those
That climb aloft by force, and not by right;

Nor can it otherwise befall the man,
That keeps his seat and sceptre all in fear,
That wears his crown in eye of all the world,
Reputed theft and not inheritance.

F. B. No crown to me can be so dear, my lord,
As to inflame me with a great desire
T' usurp a throne—far be it from my heart
The thought thereof. Weigh you my words, and when
You have bethought yourself, you will recant I know.
Honor's the spur that pricks the princely mind
To follow rule, and climb the stately chair.
I see 'tis time to speak.

N. Say on your mind.

F. B. Oh, weigh how hardly I can brook to lose
My crown and kingdom without cause. Ah then,
Methinks I should revenge me of my wrongs,
That Leicester and Elizabeth have done.
'Tis time I should inform thee farther, Prince:
Though my revenges were high bent upon him,
It is a quarrel just and reasonable,
To be reveng'd on him that kill'd my hopes.
I was provokèd by her slanderous tongue,
That laid their guilt upon my guiltless shoulders.

C. M. O my prophetic soul! thy father?

F. B. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wits, hath traitorous gifts.

N. O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce! Won to this shameful lust
The will of thy most seeming virtuous Queen:
O, what a falling off was there from dignity!
Son to Elizabeth? thou art a bastard!
Thou art a base born brat!

F. B. Base brat say'st thou? as good a man as thou!

N. Reprove my allegation, if you can,

Or else conclude my words effectual.

F. B. Be you not of that mind for 'tis amiss.

My father's nature rightly read, for he

Persuaded her to marry him, in hopes

That by his marriage he would crownèd be,

No doubt agreeing to bar his progeny

To place himself in the imperial seat.

N. But is that possible? Can that be done?

F. B. Ay, my most gracious lord,—so 'tis decreed,—

And so it fares with me, whose dauntless mind

Ambitious Leicester would now seek to curb;

And with the wings of rancor and disdain,

Full often am I soaring up to heaven

To 'plain me to the gods against them both.

N. Whence have you this, my friend?

F. B. From my father whose name is written here,

For here's a paper written in his hand;

See, lords of France, how I disdain the name,—

Well may I rend his name that rends my heart!

This poor revenge has something eas'd my mind:

So may his limbs be torn, as is this paper!

Hear me, immortal Jove, and grant it too.

N. Nay by the mass, sir, you forget yourself.

Be not your hands with father's blood defil'd

E'en in your thought, since for so small a cause

The strife doth grow betwixt you twain; this grudge

Which you have to each other so shall end:

Your strife should cease.

F. B. I have vow'd to the contrary

Which vow I must defend.

N. Yet not detracting this your vow,
Your country may be shown in what fine scorn
You hold your father's name.

F. B. I'd have him taste the bitterness of death.

N. I warrant thee upon my life,
That he hath not forgot, since he did woo,
The gall of love and all that 'longs thereto:
But lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber upward turns his face:
And when he once attains the upmost round,
He then upon the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend. So Leicester may.
Why was your Queen so coy to one so kind?

F. B. Kind! so methinks, indeed: of highest merit,
So to insinuate his heart's desire
Was her to win because of his true love,
When he did hope from her to take the crown!
O, sacred hunger of ambitious minds,
And impotent desire of men to reign!

C. M. Consider, lord, he is the next of blood,
And heir-apparent to the English Crown;
There's reason he should be displeas'd at it.

F. B. My gracious lord, that which I would discover,
The law of policy bids me conceal,
But when I call to mind your gracious favors,
My duty pricks me on to utter that,
Which else, no earthly good should draw from me.
But for my banishment—

N. Wert banish'd then? Banish'd on pain of death?

F. B. Aye, I was banish'd and do feel the smart of it:
For I do find more pain in banishment

Than death can yield, I do assure you, sir.
 Yet what the heavens appoint I must obey ;
 But law and justice shall o'er-rule in this,
 And by this means I do not doubt that I
 Ere long shall be requited. And I say,
 But for my banishment, my lord, I'd die
 Ere I would bate one breath of the Queen's greatness.

N. Brave boy, how plain this princely mind in thee,
 Argues the height and honor of your birth ;
 But where shall I in all antiquity
 So fair a pattern find, where may be seen
 The goodly praise of princely courtesy,
 As in yourself? It shows, as in a mirror sheen,
 And doth inflame the eyes which thereon fixèd been,
 But meriteth, indeed, an higher name :
 Yet so from low to high, uplifted is your name.
 I have thy forwardness observèd well,
 And in good time I hope this honor's fire,
 Kindled already in regard of right,
 Bursts into open flame and calls for wars,
 Wars, wars, to plant thee true succeeding prince.
 Heaven in thy good cause make thee prosperous.

F. B. I hope your grace, indeed, my state will weigh.

N. You've added worth unto't and luster too,
 And I protest that I'll be true to thee
 Until our bodies turn to elements,
 And both our souls aspire celestial thrones.
 But know thou, noble youth, the time is short
 And we have little leisure to debate of that,
 For 'tis a matter that more space doth crave.

F. B. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.

N. Francis, to you our minds we will unfold :

I must away this night toward Pau,
And it is meet I presently set forth.
I would the state of time had first been whole,—
You must not marvel, Francis, at my course
Which holds not color with the time, nor does
The ministration, and requirèd office
On my particular. Prepar'd I was not
For such a business, therefore am I found
So much unsettled. This drives me to entreat you
That presently you take your way for home,
And rather muse than ask why I entreat you,
For my respects are better than they seem,
And my appointments have in them a need,
Greater than shows itself at the first view,
To you that know them not. I do not think it meet
To lay so dangerous and dear a trust
On any soul remov'd, but on my own;
Yet if I might some such good order frame,
That each one be well pleasèd with the same,
I would be glad to have you my companion.

F. B. Commit not to my youth things of more weight
Than fits a prince so young as I to bear;
Yet fear not, dear Navarre, heaven's great beams
On Atlas' shoulders shall not lie more safe,
Than shall your charge committed to my trust.

N. How high a pitch his resolution soars!
Have you your wits? Know you what 'tis you speak?

F. B. Yes, noble lord, and more than that I will
Be bold and pledge.

N. Ah, ha! boy, say you so?
Then if you mind to hold your true obedience,
Give me assurance with some friendly vow,

That I may never have you in suspect.

F. B. Propose the oath, my lord, and I'll be sworn
On all the books in England. I could find
In my heart, sir, all things to undertake.

N. Darest thou be so valiant?

F. B. My lord, I'll be once in my days so bold.
Here is my hand; the premises observ'd,
Thy will by my performance shall be serv'd.

N. I'll pledge thee straight. Come hither, gentle
Francis,

We owe thee much; within this wall of flesh
There is a soul counts thee her creditor,
And with advantage means to pay thy love:
And, my good friend, thy voluntary oath
Lives in this bosom, dearly cherishèd.

F. B. Sir, I can nothing say but that I am
Your most obedient servant.

N. Give me thy hand; I had a thing to say,
But I will fit it with some better tune.
I would into thy bosom pour my thoughts:
But ah! I will not, yet I love thee well,
And by my troth I think thou lov'st me well.

F. B. So well, that what you bid me undertake,
Though that my death were adjunct to my act,
By heaven, I would do it.

N. Do not I know thou would'st?

F. B. Out of your grace devise, ordain, impose
Some gentle order, and then we shall be blest
To do your pleasure and continue friends.
I do bequeath my faithful services,
And true subjection everlastingly.
Whenever Francis Bacon turns his hate

Upon your grace, but with all duteous love,
Doth cherish you, and yours, God punish me
With hate in those where I expect most love,
When I have most need to employ a friend,
And most assurèd that he is a friend,
Deep, hollow, treacherous, and full of guile,
Be he unto me: this do I beg of heaven,
When I am cold in love, to you, or yours.

N. And the like tender of our love we make;
This interchange of love I here protest
Upon my part, shall be inviolable,
And rest without a spot for evermore.
By heaven, Francis, I am almost asham'd
To say what good respect I have of thee.

F. B. Good friend, thou hast no cause to say so yet,
But thou shalt have: and creep time ne'er so slow
Yet it shall come, for me to do thee good.
Plead what I will be, not what I have been;
Not my deserts, but what I will deserve.
What would your grace have me to do in this?

N. I think thou dost too willingly embrace
Thy charge, yet we'll employ thee in this matter.
I'd rather fly, directly fly, but I
Am now most infinitely tied, because
We have not made good preparation.
We now have but two hours to furnish us.

F. B. You must disguise yourselves.

N. Yes, and soon have
In readiness our horses. Come let us
Go presently about it. What say you, Count?

C. M. We'll willingly accomplish your desire.
Go, Prince, prepare yourself and leave the rest

To us. Most surely by so doing, too,
 You cannot choose but tender your own good.
 Within this hour at most I'll come to you.

N. You press me far and therefore I will yield :
 So fare-you-well till we shall meet again.

C. M. Farewell, Navarre; I'll meet you one hour hence.
 Francis, shall we go prove what's to be done ?

F. B. If you say so, withdraw and prove it too,
 But I must have some further conference
 With our good Prince Navarre. What would'st thou
 Prince ?

N. I do desire you
 Not to deny this imposition,
 The which my love and some necessity
 Now lays upon you.

F. B. My lord, with all my heart,
 I shall obey you in all fair commands.

N. To-morrow shall you bear our full intent
 Unto the king. My boy, see that you bear
 You bravely in't and with a majesty
 Your message do.

F. B. Have you no fear, my lord.

N. Forsooth, I was a coward ; but be sure,
 I will from henceforth rather be myself,
 Mighty, and to be fear'd. What should I fear ?
 As Hercules thou knowest I am valiant,
 But of all humours am I now, that have
 Showed themselves humours since the old days
 Of goodman Adam.

F. B. Perfect art thou, and valiant as a lion ;
 Worthy a mighty General to be :
 In thee in lion's skin doth Hercules appear,

Or mailèd Mars come down to rule these wars.
 For aye may Mighty Power preserve thy state,
 And give thee aid in all thy bold attempts.
 Now must I of my word be mindful; so farewell.

N. Farewell.

“I must awhile forbear to you to tell
 Till that as comes by course, what fortune then
 Unto the Prince did light. The great affairs in mind
 Would not permit to make there longer stay,
 Therefore according to the former charge
 To him deliver'd, straight he went his way.
 Soon we were ready to depart, disguis'd
 In sober robes,—and thought by this device
 As I've before rehears'd, to take our leave
 Quite unsuspected; and this rash attempt
 No doubt accomplish'd might have been
 Had they not, one upon another's fortunes
 A great time stood, debating how they'd go.
 The cause of the delay was this: when we
 Did meet, the Count unto the Prince did say:—

C. M. My lord, the horses that your lordship sent for,
 With all the care I had I saw well chosen;
 Come therefore let us fly, while we may fly:
 Thine stands behind the hedge; when thou need'st him,
 There shalt thou find him.

N. What horse? A roan, a crop ear, is it not?

C. M. It is, my lord.

N. That roan shall be my throne.

Well, I will back him straight. *Esperance.*
 Bid Butler lead him forth into the park,
 I'll follow in a half-hour's time at most.

C. M. I pray you stay not, but in haste to horse,—

The hour is nigh. We must, my lord, make speed
Of our departure.

“He answered :—

N. Do not so,
But stay the very riping of the time.

C. M. You must needs yield your reason.

N. It is this :

Ere we depart I'll talk with Margaret ;
We have some secrets to confer about.
You hear the reason ; I am fully resolute.

C. M. Is it so plain indeed ? Art flatly so resolv'd ?

N. This is my mind and I will have it so.

“To me the Count said in a tone more low :—

C. M. It appears by his small light of discretion
That he is in the wane : but yet in courtesy,
In all reason, we must stay the time.

F. B. But his discretion I am sure, dear Count,
Cannot his valor carry. It is well :
Leave it to his discretion.

C. M. True : proceed.

F. B. That's all I have to say.

N. I will command no more
But this, that Margaret be sent for now.
Run thee to the parlor, there shalt thou find her ;
Whisper her ear, and tell her I and you
Walk in the orchard with the Count proposing ;
And bid her steal into the pleachèd bower,
There will she hide her to listen our purpose.
Be brief, and afterward again come hither.

F. B. I'll make her come, I warrant, presently.

N. But hark ! stay a little : it may be nothing !

What think you, is the garden watch'd by spirits,
That lightly pass as heralds to bear news?

F. B. My lord, your fancy is at play; you jest.

N. If to my flight either of you know

Any impediment, I charge you utter it.

Know you any, Francis?

F. B. None, my lord.

N. Know you any, Count?

C. M. I dare make his answer, none.

N. Let this be so, and doubt not but success

Will fashion the event to better shape,

Than I can lay it down in likelihood.

C. M. Boy, I the plot have perfected, therefore

Without deferring longer time, will you

Unto such order stand here limited

By me? Do you consent to let your aids

Be prest with mine? Say on if you agree.

“And then unto the King he thus appeal'd:—

C. M. I know your grace may him persuade, as reason
Wills no less.

“To which I thus replied:—

F. B. To end all discord, then, I give my glad consent.

C. M. Are you content?

F. B. Yes, since you have the cause

Before me here declar'd, I do agree

All charge to you resign. Now that there rests

No other shift but this, we shall my lord,

Perform what you command us. As for me,

My duty then shall pay me for my pains:

I will no more enforce mine office on you.

C. M. Continue still in this so good a mind

And Henry, though he be infortunate,
 Cannot on thee reproachful speeches wreak.
 Stand to it, boy.

F. B. I shall obey his will,
 And use all the endeavors of a man,
 In all that I can do; so if he please
 My hand is ready, may it do him ease.

N. Fortune doth our disguise confine. Now Francis,
 If please you to be a diligent follower
 Of mine and to serve me, take instant leave,
 And make this haste as your own good proceeding.
 This is thy office, bear thee well in it,
 And with all speed return. Say thine adieux,
 Then go effect this business soundly.

F. B. My good lords both,
 With all the heed I can I'll to my charge:
 If we no more meet, till we meet in heaven,
 Then joyfully, my noble lords, adieu.

N. Farewell; good luck go with thee. Full of valor be,
 And yet I do thee wrong, to mind thee of it,
 For thou art fram'd of the firm truth of valor.

F. B. Boldness be my friend:
 Arm me, audacity, from head to foot.

“ I then took leave, and to the Count he said :—

N. Until I see them here, by doubtful fear
 My joy of liberty is half eclipsed.
 Here's Margaret; my friends, withdraw awhile,
 Be heedful; hence, and watch.

Enter Margaret.

Vouchsafe at my request, Queen Margaret,
 To step aside into this pleachèd bower,

While I use further conference with thee,
And by and by, thy bosom shall partake
The secrets of my heart.

All my engagements, I will construe to thee,
All the charactery of my sad brows.

Margaret. Aye, speak to me ;
I grant I am a woman ; but withal,
A woman well reputed ; Henry's daughter.
Think you, I am no stronger than my sex
Being so father'd, and so husbanded ?
Tell me your counsels, I will not disclose 'em :
I have made strong proof of my constancy,
Giving myself a voluntary wound :
My lord, can I bear that with patience,
And not my husband's secrets ?

N. Constant you are,
But yet a woman ; and for secrecy,
No lady closer. O Lord of Hosts,
Render me worthy of this noble wife.

“ I, in the confines slyly lurk'd to watch ;
Thereby I overheard all that was said,
And to the consequence a witness was.

N. I am to break with thee of some affairs
That touch me near, wherein thou must be secret,
The which I held my duty speedily
To acquaint thee withal, sithence i' th' loss
That may happen, it concerns thee something
To know it.

M. Well, what would you say my lord ?

N. Thou knowest often ere this day, I have
Rebell'd because I'm fetter'd here at court ;
It wounds my thoughts worse than the sword my flesh.

M. But thought's the slave of life, and life, time's
fool;

And time, that takes survey of all the world,
Must have a stop. The time of life is short.

N. If life did ride upon a dial's point,
Still ending at the arrival of an hour,
To spend that shortness basely were too long.
We see which way the stream of time doth run,
And are enforc'd from our most quiet there
By the rough torrent of occasion.

Now mailèd Mars shall on his altar sit
Up to the ears in blood: I am on fire,
Sweet Queen, and by my state I swear to thee,
I speak no more than what my soul intends,
And that is this: whatever fortune may befall,
To th' face of peril myself I'll dedicate;
And in the view of all the western world,
I'll try the hazard of this dangerous war,
Although my body pay the price of it,
Or I be brought a pris'ner to the palace gate.

M. May I be bold t'acquaint his grace you're gone
About it?

N. Aye, go to him straight, my Queen,
And publish the occasion of our arms;
Tell him we come to speak it with the sword.
For by this hand, he hath arm'd our answer,—
But this I rue not, for it well may serve
A nursery to our gentry, who are sick
For breathing and exploit,—then say to him:—
'You took occasion to be quickly woo'd,
To gripe the general sway into your hand,
Forgot your oath to us at Hallowmas,

And being fed by us, you us'd us so,
As that ungentle gull, the cuckoo's bird,
Useth the sparrow, did oppress our nest,
Grew by our feeding to so great a bulk,
That even our love durst not come near your sight
For fear of swallowing, but with nimble wing
We were enforc'd for safety's sake to fly
Out of your sight, and raise this present head,
Whereby we stand opposèd by such means
As you yourself, have forg'd against yourself,
By unkind usage, dangerous countenance,
And violation of all faith and troth
Sworn to us in younger enterprise.

I take not on me here as a physician,
But rather show a while like fearful war,
To diet rank minds, sick of happiness,
And purge th' obstructions which begin to stop
Our very veins of life.'

Say then to him :—

' I here proclaim myself thy mortal foe :
With resolution, wheresoe'er I meet thee,
(As I will meet thee, if thou stir abroad)
To plague thee, for thy foul mis-leading me.
And so, proud-hearted brother, I defy thee,
And to thy head accuse thee home and home.'

M. 'Tis better said than done, my gracious lord.
Surely, 'tis suit ill spent, and labor ill bestow'd ;
The King would apprehend thee as his enemy ;
And gallant Henry, do but answer this,
What is the body, when the head is off?

N. Yea, but you must not make full show of this,
Till you may do it without controlment ;

You have of late stood out against your brother,
 And he hath ta'en you newly to his grace,
 Where 'tis impossible you should take root,
 But by th' fair weather that you make yourself:
 It is needful that you frame the season
 For your own harvest.

M. That may well be so.

N. I'd rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace; and 't better fits my blood to be disdain'd of all, than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any. I'm trusted with a muzzle and enfranchis'd with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the meantime let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

M. Can you make no use of your discontent?

N. I will make all use of it, for I use it only.

Aid me with what store of power you have,—
 Happily a woman's voice may do some good,—
 Urge the necessity and state of times,
 And be not peevish found in great designs.
 Resolve to put away the loathy blame,
 To hear and see this unexpected end.
 Lay comforts to your bosom, and bestow
 Your needful counsel to our business
 Which craves the instant use. For my poor self,
 I am combinèd by a sacred vow
 And shall be absent. Wend you with this letter,
 This letter from the duke, and offer it
 Next morning to the King. No more is needful,
 But if it were 'twould not be lacking, 'faith;
 Woman's gentle brain can well devise

Something the bitter mock I send to sweeten.

M. It cannot be too sweet for the King's tartness.

N. Command these fretting waters from your eyes
With a light heart, and do your mission well,
Which I presume shall render you no blame
But rather make you thank your pains for it.

M. Trust not my love if I pervert your course.
I know not what the success will be, my lord,
But the attempt I vow with all my heart ;
Now as thou lovest me let me see this letter.

N. Good Margaret, grant me another request.

M. Anything.

N. Do not desire to see this letter.

M. This is to give a dog, and in recompense
Desire my dog again. This is uncivil!
Navarre, you do not keep promise with me.

N. Keep promise, Queen? what do your thoughts
run on?

M. Cannot you trust me?

N. Aye, for I will believe
Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,
And so far will I trust thee, gentle Queen.

M. How, so far?

N. Not an inch further.

M. What portents are these?
Some heavy business hath my lord in hand,
And I must know it ; else he loves me not.

N. O blame me not.

My mind is troubled like a fountain stirr'd,
And I myself see not the bottom of it.

M. Would that 'twere clear again.

N. Remember what I told you ; if the King

Solicit you, you know what is your answer :

If he be too important, tell him this :—

‘ Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere,
 Nor can one country brook a double reign.
 It is the King Navarre, that threatens thee,
 Who never promiseth but he means to pay :
 He weighs time even to the utmost grain
 In braving arms against thee ; and further,
 In person hath set forth intending speedily,
 With strong and mighty preparation,
 To daff the world aside and bid it pass.’
 If he be leaden, icy, cold, unwilling,
 Be thou so too, and so break off the talk,
 And give us notice of his inclination,
 For we to-morrow hold divided counsels,
 Wherein thyself shalt highly be employ’d.
 My mind presageth happy gain and conquest,
 But if you cross me in my soul’s desire,
 Ere I can place myself in strong safeguard,
 I’ll make your Paris Louvre shake for it,
 Were it the mistress court of mighty Europe ;
 Thou and thy brother both shall buy this treason,
 Even with the dearest blood your bodies bear.
 Think not to share with me in glory any more,
 If thou dost ruinate my father’s house,
 Who gave his blood to lime the stones together.

M. Ah ! my sour husband, my hard-hearted lord.
 Remember well thy oath of service to the Pope.

N. To keep that oath were more impiety,
 Than Jephtha’s, when he sacrific’d his daughter.
 Unheedful vows may heedfully be broken,
 And he wants wit, that wants resolvèd will

To learn his wit, t'exchange the bad for better.
I prithee do not hold me to mine oath.

M. Not hold thee to thine oath? O, let thy vow
First made to Heaven, first be to Heaven perform'd;
That is, to be the champion of our church,
What since thou swor'st is sworn against thyself,
And may not be performèd by thyself:
For that which thou hast sworn to do amiss,
Is not amiss when it is truly done;
And being not done, where doing tends to ill,
The truth is then most done not doing it:
The better act of purposes mistook,
Is to mistake again; though indirect,
Yet indirection thereby grows direct;
It is religion that doth make vows kept,
But thou hast sworn against religion:
By what thou swear'st against the thing thou swear'st,
And mak'st an oath the surety for thy truth,
Against an oath the truth, thou art unsure
To swear, swears only not to be forsworn,
Else what a mockery should it be to swear?
But thou dost swear, only to be forsworn,
And most forsworn, to keep what thou dost swear,
Therefore thy later vows, against thy first,
Is in thyself rebellion to thyself:
Bethink you, Henry, for the difference
Is purchase of a heavy curse from Rome,
Or the light loss of England, for a friend:
Forego the easier.

N. That's the curse of Rome.
The Lady Margaret speaks not from her faith,
But from her need.

M. Oh, if thou grant my need,
 Which only lives but by the death of faith,
 That need must needs infer this principle,—
 That faith would live again at death of need;
 O then tread down my need, and faith mounts up;
 Keep my need up, and faith is trodden down.
 And shall these hands so lately purg'd of blood,
 So newly join'd in love, so strong in both,
 Unyoke this seysure, and this kind regreete?
 Play fast and loose with faith? so jest with Heaven,
 Make such unconstant children of ourselves,
 As now again to snatch our palm from palm;
 Unswear faith sworn, and on the marriage bed
 Of smiling peace to march a bloody host,
 And make a riot on the gentle brow
 Of true sincerity? O let it not be so:
 In this, the anticke and well-noted face
 Of plain old form is much disfigurèd.
 O this will make my mother die with grief,
 King Henry rage, and all the court be mov'd;
 And Henry is my brother and my king,
 Whose sovereignty so oft thou hast preferr'd
 With twenty thousand soul-confirming oaths.
 Speak gentle words and humbly bend thy knee,
 Call him thy king and at his hands beg mercy,
 And he shall pardon thee these outrages.

N. He will the rather do it, when he sees
 Ourselves well sinewèd to our defence.

M. O husband, hear me.

N. I prithee, loving wife,
 Put not you on the visage of the times
 And be like them to Henry, troublesome.

Leave these ungentle thoughts; no other do,
Fair lady, than you would be done unto.
A milder mind, sweet looks, not lofty, civil mood,
Become a woman's kind.

M. So shall it be, your Grace.

N. My gracious Queen,
Be not so hasty to confound my meaning:
Forbear awhile and hear a little more,
For you have but mistook me all this while.
I've sworn, I'm firm, impórtune me no further
For how I firmly am resolv'd you know,—
That is to leave the court. Thou mayst think
I love thee not,—let that appear hereafter
And aim better at me, by that I now
Will manifest for the Duke.

M. My brother? I think
He holds you well and in dearness of heart,
For he hath holpe to effect your marriage.

N. He hath now high hopes
He may effect in France a better government.
It shall be briefly done, for with my soldiers
I, too, will go and fight for 't to the last.
I think we are a body strong enough,
Even as we are, to equal with the King's.

M. Can this be so? But you—

N. I will set forwards to-night
To join him; more soldiers shall be levied,
Supplies be brought from forth the neighboring realms,—
When these are gone, our swords shall purchase more,—
And dreadful war shall answer our demand:
The Heavens are just, and time suppresseth wrongs.

N. Now I see the bottom of your purpose.

N. You see it lawful then, and Margaret,
The King shall understand it presently.

M. He must be told on 't, and he shall: the office
Becomes a woman best. I'll take 't upon me,
And my assurance bids me seek his favor.
But now, my lord, is 't not after midnight?
Quick, quick, I pray! without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.

N. Aye, let me think on danger, and be gone
To Anjou, while my fearful head is on.
Adieu, adieu, my Queen.

M. Adieu, my lord, the Heavens thee guard and keep.
But list, O list, my lord!

N. How now, what say'st thou to me?

M. Hark, hark! one doth approach! I fear the King
Possess'd is of your purpose, and hath sent for you.
Then linger not, my lord; away, take horse.

N. What pagan rascal's this?

M. I saw him not.

N. Ha! will he to the King and open lay
All our proceedings? Hang him, let him tell
The King we are prepar'd.

M. 'Tis that I fear.

N. Tush, it can do me no damage.
I love him not, not fear him, there's my creed:
As I am made without him, so I'll stand
If the King please: his curses and his blessings
Touch me alike: th' are breath I not believe in.
It may be heard at court, the which he hearing
(As it is like him) might break out and swear
He'd fetch us in, yet is 't not probable.
The trust I have, is in mine innocence,

And therefore am I bold and resolute ;
 For Margaret, God our hope, will succor us,
 So let my lady apprehend no fear.

M. The purpose that you undertake is dangerous.

N. Why , that's certain : 'tis dangerous to take
 A cold, to sleep, to drink : but I tell you,
 Sweet Margaret, out of this nettle, danger,
 We pluck this flower, safety. List to me.
 Omission to do what is necessary,
 Seals a commission to a blank of danger.
 And danger like an ague subtly taints
 Even then when we sit idly in the sun.
 But this is mere digression from my purpose :
 Sweet Margaret, go in awhile.

M. I must go in—

Aye, me, how weak a thing
 The heart of woman is ! O Henry,
 The Heavens speed thee in thine enterprise.
 Stand gracious, gloomy night, to this device.

“ This pausingly ensued before the man
 Made suit to come into his presence. I,
 Seeing the fellow's quick withdrawal, follow'd him
 And heard unseen his report unto the King.
 What wonder that thereafter I did not
 Lose sight of him.

Gentleman. From enemies, Heaven keep your Majesty : and when they stand against you, may they fall, as those that I am come to tell you of. The Prince and Count Melun walking in my orchard were thus overheard by a man of mine : the Prince discovered to the Count that he meant to take the present time by the top, and

instantly break with you. The conclusion is he will put his purpose in practice presently.

King Henry III. Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

Gent. A good sharp fellow, I will send for him, and question him yourself.

K. Well, we will hear further of it, but let it cool the while, and I will examine if peradventure this be true. This may prove food to my displeasure.

Gent. Yea my lord, but I can cross it.

K. Any bar, any cross, any impediment, will be medicinal to me. I am sick in displeasure to him. And whatsoever comes athwart his will ranges evenly with mine. You will assist me?

Gent. To the death my lord.

K. Go then and bring the fellow into presence. I, in the meantime, will so fashion the matter, that all their preparations shall be overthrown. Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice: be cunning in the working of this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

Gent. Be thou constant, and my cunning shall not shame me.

K. If this go forward, Henry's hope is done, for in you I have found a present help to prevent both his purpose and deceit.

Gent. 'Tis very true.

K. This is the end of the charge. You, Constable, are to present the Prince's own person; if you meet the Prince in the night, you may stay him. Tell him the King of France, on serious business craving quick dispatch, importunes personal conference with his grace.

Constable. Proud of employment, willingly I go.

Gent. Why do you not commit him to the Tower?

K. I dare not for the people love him well.

Gent. My liege, I see your love unto Navarre
Will be the ruin of the realm and you.
Where every horse bears his commanding rein,
And may direct his course as please himself,
As well the fear of harm, as harm apparent,
In my opinion, ought to be prevented.

K. Let not conceit thy subtle sense beguile,
Nor daunted be through envy or disdain.
Now to plain dealing, thou shalt be satisfied.

Navarre. Who comes here?

Con. A nobleman of the court
Would speak with you. The King by me requires
Your presence straight.

N. What is the business?

Con. O sir, I shall be hated to report it.
We go t' determine what it is.

N. Excuse me,
The King has sent me elsewhere: besides
You'll find a most unfit time to disturb him.
Is this an hour for temporal affairs? Ha!
Go to; I'll make you know your times of business:
It's an offence to stay a man against his will.

Con. The compact that I should you hither fetch,
Is firm and true in me, and should be put
To no apparent likelihood of breach.
Therefore, I say your company is urg'd—
Here come I from his grace to tell you so.
Take heed you dally not, for I'll not go
Unless you will accompany me thither.

N. The net has fall'n upon me! I shall perish
Under device, and practice.

Count Melun. I am sorry
To see you ta'en from liberty, to look on
The business present.

N. It will help me nothing
To plead my innocence; for that dye is on me
Which makes my whit'st part black. The will of Heaven
Be done in this and all things: I obey.
Dear Count your hand; fare you well.

C. M. Farewell.

Con. Nay he must bear you company. You must
Contented be to go along with us;
It is his Highness' pleasure, till you know
How he determines further.

C. M. As the Prince said,
The will of Heaven be done, and the King's pleasure
By me obey'd. This did at first so stagger me,
Bearing a state of mighty moment in 't,
And consequence of dread, I had to doubt
You did entreat his Highness to this course
Which you are running here.

N. Got you your leave
To make this present summons unsolicited?
This lawful prove, and by my life, contented
Are we to come before the primest creature,
That's paragon'd o' th' world. We'll prove that we've
Committed naught. Thou shalt not see me blush
Nor change my countenance for this arrest:
A heart unspotted is not easily daunted.
The purest spring is not so free from mud,
As I am free from treason to my sovereign.

Con. Smooth runs the water where the brook is deep.

N. Who can accuse me? Wherein am I guilty?

Canst thou discern one blot? Ah, cruel Fortune!

Why shouldst thou wrest my fair chance thus amiss?

Con. Affairs that walk (as they say spirits do)

At midnight, have in them a wilder nature

Than th' business that seeks dispatch by day.

C. M. O friend, think at what ease

Might corrupt minds procure knaves as corrupt

To swear against you: such things have been done.

You are potently oppos'd, and with a malice

Of as great size. Ween you of better luck?

You take a préceptit for no leap of danger,

And woo your own destruction.

King Henry III. See, hoa! who's there?

Con. 'Tis I,

All service I have done. Thy foe is taken

And their negotiations all must slack,

Wanting his manage.

I did your Highness' message to them all.

K. Proud recreants, traitors all, fetch them hither.

Is the Prince there in person? By my troth,

I knew him not; and who is there with him?

Con. The Queen, and th' Count whom you sent me
to seek.

K. I will make a complimentary assault

Upon the Prince, for my business seethes.

Con. Sudden business, there's a stew'd phrase indeed.

K. Fair be to you my lord, and to all this

Fair company. Why art thou thus attir'd?

N. Because I would be sure to have all well,

To entertain your Highness and your Queen.
Was it well done, O brother, King of France?

K. Well bandied, a set of wit well play'd.
But, good Navarre, indeed you weigh me not :
A reason mighty, strong and effectual
Urg'd me to send for you.

N. Pray sir, your pardon—

K. Nay, hear me speak before you answer, sir.
Of late your Highness has been slack in homage.
Who am I? Ha!

N. A gracious King that pardons all offences,
Malice ne'er meant; and breach of duty in me,
Pray Heaven, the King may never find. I come
To know your royal pleasure.

K. I like it not that thou shouldst grow so pert.
This humor grieves me not, but makes me impatient.
I am advertis'd of thy full intent
T' depart from here and gather flocks of friends.
A noble attempt and honorable deed
Is it not,—trow! thus to assemble aid,
And levy arms against your lawful King?
Thou art worthy to be hang'd, but I'll commit thee
A prisoner to bonds, and no man can affirm
But that these be the operations of a law,
Proceeding forth from th' natural dignity
Of the true King and Sovereign of France.
There shalt thou stay, until to me with knees
Fixèd on ground, thou'lt swear allegiance.

N. Thou art no more my King, for thou'st dishonor'd
me.

And Henry, what art thou but mortal wight?
For all that ever thou hast got, or won by force,

Thou owest to the wicked arts and wily skill,—
Too false and strong from earthly source to spring,—
Of the Queen-mother: all unwares we wrought
Into her wicked will—fair Margaret and I—
And I'm betray'd when least I fear'd ill.

K. Silence, accursèd man! hold thou thy tongue!
What! was I born to be the scorn of kin?
To gather feathers like a hopper-crow
And lose them in the height of all my pomp?
O what are subtle means to climb on high,
When every fall swarms with exceeding shame?
If hell and treason hold their promises,
Then kings may hope for ease and happiness.
Drawn by ambition's golden hooks I rested not,
Until this crown my princely temples grac'd.
But drudges, negroes, slaves and muleteers
Are freer far than is the King of France:
For while I sweat in care, they swink in glee,
Content with silly cates or beds of boards!

“When the King's wrath was pacified he 'gan
Renew the late unfruitful search for aught
Of dishonor, wherewith t' reproach the Prince;
And call'd me to his side, and sternly said:—

K. Divulge these plots you share together, boy;
It is your due unto your Sovereign.
Hast enter'd into a secret conspiracy
To favor the Duke's title to my crown?
Ha! I'll begin to keep a calendar of fools
Like Bresquet, jester to my ancestor
Who bore your name, and boy, I'll put you in 't.
In confidence I'll tell the reason why—

You are full of heavenly stuff, and bear the inventory
 Of your best graces in your mind, the which
 You were now running o'er unheedfully.
 You're fine and brisk as is a cup of wine,
 But you, your love unto the Prince do not conceal,
 While yet the place of your abode is with the King;
 Your heart hath left your body here in court,
 And lies pavilion'd in the fields of France.

F. B. O let the body follow, my dear liege.

K. Tut, tut boy!

I know you venturous and well deserving,
 And you shall be my messenger anon.

“ But what said Henry's Queen?

For I have heard that she was there in place.”

“The royal lady gravely steppeth forth,
 And on the ground herself prostrating low,
 With sober countenance thus to him saith:—

M. O pardon me, my sovereign lord, to show
 How Heaven will one day open the King's eyes.
 Aye! he himself hath such a heavy reckoning
 To make, that ill beseems him, such as I him see
 To work such shame: therefore, I thee exhort
 To change thy will and yield his liberty.
 Think how he's tied unto thy sister dear,
 With sacred rites, and vows forever to abide.
 But if thou tear him from me, leave me thus alone,
 Then galling grief and I may yoke in one.
 What will the people say? They love their Queen,
 And they are chary of my soul and joy.
 List!—Look where the sister of the King of France
 Sits wringing of her hands and beats her breast;

The King I fear hath sore ill-treated her,—
That shalt thou hear if thou do me this wrong.
The lands are lean, where rivers do not run :
Where soul is reft from that it loveth best,
How can it thrive, or boast of quiet rest ?
Thou know'st the Prince's loss must be my death ;
His grief, my grief ; his mischief must be mine ;
O if thou love me, proceed thou not in this.
Summarily deliver him, and to thy credit
'Twill be set down as the most memorable
Of acts, whose glorious bright shining
Lightens the world with its reflecting beams.
O wilt thou let so great a glory slip thy hands ?
The blood and courage that renown'd his father
Runs in his veins ; my thrice puissant liege
Is in the very May-morn of his youth,
Ripe for exploits and mighty enterprises.

K. Silence ! by this pale queen of night I swear
I am so far from granting thy request,
That I despise thee for thy wrongful suit ;
And by and by intend to chide myself,
Even for this time I spend in talking to thee.
Leave me awhile.

M. If I have thought no pains too much,
I beseech thee to think no time too long.

“Then standing at the door she turn'd about
As loathe to see her husband going out.
I follow'd with a thought to comfort him,
And as we walk'd, we discours'd thus :—

F. B. The King
Is pleas'd you shall, some day or two,

Repose you at the Tower; then where you please,
And shall be thought most fit for your best health
And recreation.

N. Aye, and there's no doubt
His Majesty hath straightly given in charge,
That no man shall have private conference
(Of what degree soever) with me now.

F. B. Dear Prince, farewell; I will unto the King,
And whatsoever you will employ me in,
I will perform it to enfranchise you.
Meantime, this deep disgrace in brotherhood
Touches me deeper than you can imagine.

N. I know it pleaseth neither of us well.

F. B. Well, your imprisonment shall not be long;
I will deliver you, or else lie for you:
Meantime, have patience.

N. You have said well,
And 'tis a kind of good deed to say well,
And yet words are no deeds.

F. B. I'll yoke together
My doing well with my well saying, Prince,
And with my deed will crown my word upon you.
The Lord protect us in this business.

N. Be not ta'en tardy by unwise delay.
But speak not further to me; get thee gone.

F. B. Be of good cheer; I'll first take Margaret
hence,
Which done, I then will leave the readiest way,
For there's another secret close intent,
Which I must reach unto.

N. Even so were best to do.

“Here quoth the guard:—

Guard. I do beseech your grace
To pardon me, and withal to forbear
Your conference with this noble youth.

N. I tell you fellow, that he hath done nought;
You may partake of anything we say:
We speak no treason man; we say the King
Is wise and virtuous, and hath a pleasing tongue.
How say you sir? can you deny all this?

G. With this, my lord, myself have nought to do.
I'm charg'd to take you solie to the Tower.
This swears he, as he is a prince, is just,
And as I am a gentleman, I credit him.

F. B. We know thy charge, Captain, and will obey.

N. We are the King's objects and must obey.

“Thus they in dungeon deep did lay him low,
And hand and foot with iron chain did bind him.
Myself heard the King swear he should not ran-
som'd be:

Who then would think that by his subtle trains,
Foul death or deadly pains he could escape?
Have shaken off the thralldom of the Tower
And liv'd to advance the standard of the Duke?
But so the event did prove as thou shalt see.
Confinement irk'd him; this to me he wrote:—

• Nor I, nor any man, that but man is,
With nothing shall be pleas'd, till he be eas'd
With being nothing. Music do I hear?
Ha, hā! keep time: how sour sweet music is
When time is broke, and no proportion kept;
So is it in the music of men's lives:
And here have I the daintiness of ear,

To hear time broke in a disorder'd string :
But for the concord of my state and time,
Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.
I wasted time, and now doth Time waste me :
For now hath Time made me his numb'ring clock ;
My thoughts are minutes ; and with sighs they jar,
Their watches on unto mine eyes, the outward watch,
Whereto my finger, like a dial's point,
Is pointing still, in cleansing them from tears.
Now sir, the sound that tells what hour it is,
Are clamorous groans that strike upon my heart,
Which is the bell : so sighs, and tears, and groans,
Show minutes, hours, and times : but my time
Runs posting on, in the Valois' proud joy,
While I stand fooling here, his jack o' th' clock.
This music mads me, let it sound no more,
For though it have help madmen to their wits,
In me it seems it will make wise-men mad :
Yet blessing on his heart that gives it me ;
For 'tis a sign of love, and love to Henry,
Is a strange brooch, in this all-hating world.

“ For long I cannot with the King prevail,
To win him greater favor than release from bonds :
But when the royal anger hath blown o'er,
The King himself begins to show to him,
A countenance most gracious and benign.
He hath good usage and great liberty,
And often, but attended with weak guard,
Comes hunting this way to disport himself ;
For hunting is his daily exercise,
And Margaret likewise speedeth her time thus.
A well-known voice one morning said to me :—

C. M. Francis, we hunt not we, with horse nor hound,
But hope to pluck some noble game to ground.
This day they both a hunting forth will ride
Into the woods adjoining to these walls ;
Come, come, our Margaret with her sacred wit
To villainy and vengeance consecrate,
Will we acquaint with all that we intend,
And she shall file our engines with advice,
That will not suffer you to square yourselves,
But to your wishes' height advance you both.
The court, alas, is like the house of Fame,
The palace full of tongues, of eyes, of ears :
The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf and dull :
There speak and strike.

F. B. I know thy errand, I will go with thee :
The day, my friend, and all things stay for me.

C. M. The hunt is up, the morn is bright and gray,
The fields are fragrant, and the woods are green,
Uncouple here and let us make a bay,
And rouse the Prince and ring a hunter's peal,
That all the court may echo with the noise :
'Tis thought you have a goodly gift in horning,
And you are singled forth to try experiments.
Here will we wait the Prince and Margaret ;
She posted down not long since from the court,
And he, we hear, has ridden with his lords.
I have been troubled in my sleep this night,
But dawning day new comfort hath inspir'd.
'Tis policy and stratagem that must do
That you affect, and so must you resolve,
That what you cannot as you would achieve
You must perforce accomplish as you may :

A speedier course than ling'ring languishment
 Must we pursue, and I have found the path :
 The forest walks are wide and spacious,
 And many unfrequented plots there are,
 Fitted by kind for secret conference :
 This morning see you do appear before them—
 Th' occasion shall instruct you what to do,
 And well can I trust to your bravery.

F. B. I have advertis'd him by secret means,
 That if about this hour he make this way,
 Under the color of his usual game,
 He shall here find his friends with horse and men,
 To set him free from his captivity.

C. M. Thy counsel lad, smells of no cowardice.

F. B. This motion likes me well ; let us progress
 Withouten stay our utmost aid to give.

“ Fair was their sport among the fallow deer ;
 The Princess kill'd a pricket, and Navarre,
 Foll'wing the hounds brought down a noble stag ;
 When, in the midst of all their gamesome sports,
 Navarre drew rein at the fair Margaret's side :—

N. Indeed this is a hap most fortunate :
 My lovely Margaret, wherefore look'st thou sad,
 When everything doth make a gleeful boast ?
 The birds chant melody on every bush,
 The snake lies rollèd in the cheerful sun,
 The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind,
 And make a checker'd shadow on the ground :
 Under their sweet shade, Margaret, let us sit,
 And whilst the babbling echo mock the hounds,
 Replying shrilly to the well-tun'd horns,

As if a double hunt were heard at once,
 Let us sit down, and mark their yelping noise :
 And after conflict, such as was suppos'd
 The wand'ring Prince and Dido once enjoy'd,
 When with a happy storm they were surpris'd,
 And curtain'd with a counsel-keeping cave,
 We may, each wreathèd in the other's arms,
 (Our pastimes done) possess a golden slumber,
 Whiles hounds, and horns, and sweet melodious birds,
 Be unto us as is a nurse's song
 Of lullaby, to bring her babe asleep.

“ A hunter said aside :—

Hunter. Fond done, done fond,
 This haste hath wings, indeed ; nay, come your ways.

“ But the old keeper answer'd :—

Keeper. By my troth,
 I'm he that dares to leave the two together.
 Come, amorous wag, first banquet and then sleep :
 Fare-you-well, Prince Navarre ; now, fair one, follow.

“ While to the younger men he gave command :—

K. Sons, let it be your charge, as it is ours,
 To attend the Prince's person carefully.

“ Soon all is silent in the shaded lodge,
 And then I well observe how sleep hath overcome
 Keeper and prisoner and all the company,
 And the Count whispers to me :—

C. M. Leave off to wonder why I drew you hither,
 Into the chiefest thicket of the park ;

Thus stands the case, the swifter speed the better :
 To have an open ear, a quick eye, and
 A nimble hand is necessary.

F. B. I understand ; it shall be quickly done.

C. M. Come then, away, let's have no more ado.

“ With all speed, thus I steal close to the place ;
 Still as I stand, I hear with grievous throb
 Him groan, as if his heart were rent in twain,
 Or trouble sore oppress'd his struggling soul.
 Brave Margaret would not for courtesy
 Out of his quiet slumber him abrade,
 Nor seem too suddenly him to invade,
 But time is passing and I dare not wait.
 I wake the Prince with but a touch and say :—

F. B. Up, up, I pray thee ; silence !—follow me.

“ Softly he murmur'd :—

N. Ah my sweet Margaret,
 Sweeter to me than life,—farewell, farewell.

M. More than melodious are these words to me,
 For my desire is thine, my love, my lord.
 My life depends upon my lord's relief.

“ Then followed a long kiss of farewell
 Betwixt these two whose loves were so alike.

F. B. This way, this way ; see where the huntsmen
 stand !

Dear Prince, the time and case requireth haste ;
 Your horse stands ready at the park corner,
 In secret ambush on the forest side.
 Shield you from Henry's frown ; away, away !
 It must be done this afternoon,—do not delay.

N. I thank thee, boy.

F. B. If to have done the thing you gave in charge
Beget your happiness, be happy then,
For it is done. I take my leave, farewell ;
Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you.

N. Farewell, brave boy ; aye, fare-you-well indeed.
Take from my mouth the wish of happy years.
Never did captive with a freer heart,
Cast off his chains of bondage, and embrace
His golden, uncontroll'd enfranchisement,
More than my dancing soul doth celebrate
This feast of battle with mine adversary,
For now I cast my fortunes with the Duke.
As gentle and as jocund as to jest,
Go I to fight. Truth hath a quiet breast.
But Francis, after God, thou set'st me free,
And chiefly therefore I thank God and thee,—
He was the Author, thou the instrument.

F. B. Thy tears have pierc'd the piteous throne of grace,
Thy sighs like incense pleasing to the Lord,
Have been peace-offerings for thy former pride ;
Rejoice, and praise His name that gave thee peace.
But wherefore stay we ? 'Tis no time to talk.

“He speeds away. Hark ! what is this I hear?
'Tis but the Princess come to meet me here.

M. O Francis, help me with thy fainting hand,
If fear hath made thee faint, as me it hath.
Where is my lord, the King ? where left you him ?

F. B. Great Jove will shield your husband, be assur'd ;
Now is he safe forever, being free,
And no man knows of his pretense save Count Melun

And I, and none but we know whither he is gone.
 But, Princess, question me no more, 'beseech thee;
 Here comes a body of thy brother's soldiers,
 And knights and gentlemen at least three-score:
 The park is all alive. Hark! he is miss'd.
 They'll put us to our answer. Well, 'tis done:
 We'll hunt no more to-day, nor seek for danger
 Where there is no profit.

M. Pray you a word.

What I do next, shall be to tell the King
 Of this escape, and whither they are bound,
 Wherein, my hope is, I shall so prevail,
 To force him after: in whose company
 I shall re-view the country, for whose sight,
 I have a woman's longing. Fortune speed us:
 Thus we set on.

F. B. The swifter speed the better.

M. Ha, ha! my brother was too careless of his charge.
 But let us hence, my sweet Prince, to provide
 A salve for any sore that may betide.

F. B. Hark, hark! what says the officer?

King's Officer. Was that the King that spurr'd his
 horse so hard,

Against the steep uprising of the hill?

Forester. I know not, but I think it was not he.
 Whoe'er he was, he show'd a mounting mind.

K. O. Thou dost but jest, thou hateful misty-mouth,
 In most unlucky hour. Nay then, I'll stop
 Thy mouth; go find the King straightway, thou knave.

For. The King? Navarre? he is hunting the deer;
 I am coursing myself.

“But the keeper made answer:—

Keeper. He and his lady both, are at the lodge,
Upon the north side of this pleasant chase;
'Tis not an hour since I left him there.

K. O. We know not where you left him, he's not there.
But there's his lady! See that you make sure
In the first place, of her, then fail thou not
To bring her husband, on pain to be found
Both false and recreant to the King of France.

First Huntsman. This way, my lord, for this way lies
the game.

Second Huntsman. The fox is 'scap'd but here's his
case;
I miss'd him near: 'twas time for him to trudge.

“On their return, they inform'd the King
The state of these affairs, and how the Prince
Was far from any true meaning of peace,
And therefore he must now advise some other course.
Alas, that Henry had no more forecast,
But whiles he thought to steal the single ten,
The King was slyly finger'd from the deck.
He, very angry, rages like a beast:
The court-of-guard is put unto the sword,
And all the watch that thought themselves so sure,
So that not one within the castle breathes,
On whom suspicion rested.”

“Pray let me hear how Margaret did fare,
When she her message to the King did bring.”

“I heard her not at her first interview,
But later as I came with letters for him,—
Feigning to bring them from the Duke myself,
That he imagine not the aid I'd given
Unto the captive when he took his flight,—
I met the Guise crossing the palace court, and said:—

F. B. Come you to hear, my lord, how fares Navarre ?

Guise. Why ? is he not with th' Queen ?

F. B. No, my good lord, he hath forsook the court,
Broken his staff of office, and now flieth
Unto Alençon, as I do suspect.

G. What was his reason ? He was not so resolv'd
When we last spake together.

F. B. But he's gone,
My lord, to offer service to the Duke Anjou ;
Have you forgot the Duke ? All fly to him.

G. Why, foolish boy, the King is left behind,
And in my loyal bosom lies his power.
Were I but now the lord of such hot youth,
As that young Mars and those that follow him,—
Those cull'd and choice-drawn cavaliers, that come
From forth the ranks of many thousand French,
Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof,
Fathers, that like so many Alexanders,
Have in these parts from morn till even fought,—
I'd undertake to manage these our wars.
The dreadful judgment day so dreadful will not be
As th' battles of the Lord of Hosts I'd fight.
But thus it is, and boy, to speak more plainly,—
Being animated by religious zeal,—
All France is over-run with Huguenots,
And more than carefully it us concerns,
To answer royally in our defences.

F. B. But France, my gracious lord, is idly king'd,
Her sceptre so phantastically borne,
By a vain, giddy, shallow, humorous youth,
That fear attends her not. Young as I am,
I have observ'd these things, and understand.

G. You are too much mistaken in this King:
Question, my boy, the late ambassadors,
With what great state he heard their embassy,
How well supplied with noble counselors,
How modest in exception; and withal,
How terrible in constant resolution:
And you shall find, his vanities fore-spent,
Were but the outside of the Roman Brutus,
Covering discretion with a coat of folly,
As gardeners do with ordure hide those roots
That shall first spring, and be most delicate.

F. B. In peace, there's nothing so becomes a man,
As modest stillness, and humility:
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then should we be as the wild beast of prey:
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect:
Let it pry through the portage of the head,
Like the brass cannon; let the brow o'erwhelm it,
As fearfully, as doth a gallèd rock
O'er-hang and jutty his confounded base,
Swill'd with the wild and wasteful ocean.

G. 'Tis in the hearts of those who hate the Church,
Wherein the King stands generally condemn'd.
If judgment lie in them, then so do we,
Because we have been ever near the King.
Besides our nearness to the King in love,
Is near the hate of those love not the King.

F. B. Know you this prophecy so mystical?
'From forth the royal garden, ere long time,
Shall flourish out so rich and fair a bud,
Whose brightness shall deface proud Phoebus' flower,
And overshadow with her leaves all France.

Till then, Mars shall be master of the field;
 But then, the stormy threats of war shall cease,
 The horse shall stamp as careless of the pipe,
 And drums be turn'd to timbrels of delight.'

G. 'Tis of fair Margaret, proud lovely star,
 Catherine's fair daughter, the fairest ever was,
 Approved spouse of Navarre's haughty king.

"Some strange commotion
 Is in his brain. He bites his lip, and starts,
 Stops on a sudden, looks upon the ground,
 Then lays his finger on his temple: straight
 Springs out into fast gait, then stops again.

G. But we shall see what strange event shall happen.
 I mean to muster all the power I can
 To overthrow these factious Puritans.
 Navarre, that cloaks them underneath his wings,
 Shall find the house of Lorraine is his foe,
 Eke though Anjou doth take his part—Anjou,
 Who is so harsh, so blunt, unnatural
 To bend the fatal instruments of war
 Against his brother and his lawful king.

F. B. Guise, and Navarre: what is in that Navarre?
 Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
 Write them together, yours is as fair a name;
 Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;
 Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with 'em,
 And Guise will start a spirit soon as Navarre.
 Now in the names of all the gods at once,
 Upon what meat doth this our Navarre feed,
 That he is grown so great? Age, thou art sham'd.
 France, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods.

When went there by an age, since the great flood,
But it was fam'd with more than with one man?
When could they say, (till now,) that talk'd of Paris,
That her wide walks encompass'd but one man?

G. Think not but I am tragical within
However calm I outward bear myself:
Upon the haughty mountain of my breast
Revenge encamps. For this once, unto them
I too will prophesy, but in such wise
That they shall neither boast, nor we be hurt
In any kind of wise. Follow me, boy!
Work, work your thoughts, and therein see a siege:
Behold the ordnance on their carriages,
With fatal mouths gaping on girded towns:
Suppose the herald from the Duke comes back;
Tells Henry that Navarre doth offer him
The terms of treaty with the Huguenots.
The offer likes not: and the nimble gunner
With linstock now the divellish cannon touches,
And down goes all before them. Still be kind
And eke out our performance with your mind.
What would avail a castle all of steel,
When here, and there, and everywhere enragèd fly
Such fiery balls, such missiles deadly swift?

F. B. These are but wild and hurling words, my lord,
I'm not a schoolboy now, whom you may overawe.
Give me a sword. I too will fight for France,
But I would lend my arm unto the Duke.

G. I'm sorry they offend thee heartily;
Yes, faith, heartily, thou art so gracious.
But wherefore go'st thou to the wars with us?
Thou art a stranger here,—'tis not thy cause.

F. B. Wilt answer me one thing that I shall ask
Of thee? Wherefore hast thou determinèd
So hard a part against these righteous people,
To follow and pursue the banishèd,
Whereas to God alone belongs revenge?
And wherefore vex thy spirit so, my lord?
The Pope and King of Spain are thy good friends;
The King doth seek alliance with thee now.

G. True, and know you the Pope will sell his triple
crown;
Aye, and the Catholic Philip, King of Spain,
Ere I shall want, will cause his Indians
To rip the golden bowels of America.

F. B. Pull off the sprigs from this Hesperian tree,
My lord, to win the golden fruit; the ground
Whereon it grows, the grass, the root of gold;
The body and the bark of gold all glistening;
The leaves of burnish'd gold; the fruits that thereon grow,—
Or thus the fabulous tales told of it,—
Yet all is not gold that doth golden seem:
But if the King of Spain is honest with you,
'Twere well, indeed, and I would say, accept
This Indian gold to coin you French ecues.
But hark you, pray, the King is coming: you
And I must speak with him, and with his sister.
His grace looks cheerfully and smooth this morning,
There's some conceit or other likes him well,
When that he bids good morning with such spirit.
I think there's never a man in Christendom
Can lesser hide his love, or hate, than he,
For by his face straight shall you know his heart.

G. What of his heart perceive you in his face.

By any livelihood he show'd to-day?

F. B. Marry, that with no man here he is offended,
For were he, he had shown it in his looks.

Enter the King, Margaret and Lords.

God bless your majesty, my duty to your Grace.

K. How now? cam'st thou from Francis, Duke Anjou?

F. B. Aye, please your Majesty, and from Navarre,
Who very gallantly's gone off with him.

K. I prithee, pretty boy, who told thee this?

F. B. I cannot tell who told me, but 'tis true.

These letters are for you, sent from your brother;

These from Navarre unto your majesty;

And, madam, these for you, from whom I know not.

K. Letters from him? why comes he not himself?

“I like it well that the fair Margaret
Smiles at her news, while the King frowns at his
And stamps as he were nettled. He is vex'd at
something—

I would 'twere something y would fret the string,
The master-chord on's heart. Why how now, gen-
tlemen,

What see you in those papers, that you lose
So much complexion? Look you how they change;
Their cheeks are paper. Why, what read you there
That have so cowarded and chas'd your blood
Out of apparence. The King's cheek is pale,
The angry spot doth grow upon his brow,
And all the rest look like a chidden train;
The Guise looks with such ferret, and such fiery eyes,
As we have seen him in the chambers oft,
Being cross'd in conference by some Councillors.
I hope all's for the best. Now the King speaks:—

K. What are your news Queen Margaret?

M. Mine, such as fill my heart with unhop'd joys.
And yours, your Majesty?

K. Mine full of sorrow and heart's discontent.
What! has your King married you, sweet sister,
And now to soothe your forgery, and his,
Sends me a paper to persuade me patience?
Is this th' alliance that he seeks with me?
Dare he presume to scorn us in this manner?

M. I told your majesty as much before:
This proveth Francis' love, and Henry's honesty.

Lorraine. Fatal this marriage, cancelling your fame,
Blotting your names from books of memory,
'Razing the characters of your renown,
Undoing all, as all had never been.

M. I prithee, do not strive against my vows.

K. It gives a guerdon of good will to make
My glory glance, so boldly to attempt.
A thing like this here in my father's land!
Feed not thy sovereign's foe, my gentle earth,
Nor with thy sweets comfort his ravenous sense,
But let thy spiders, that suck up thy venom,
And heavy-gaited toads lie in their way,
Doing annoyance to the treacherous feet,
Which with usurping steps do trample thee.
Yield stinging nettles to mine enemies,
And when they from thy bosom pluck a flower,
Guard it, I prithee, with a lurking adder,
Whose double tongue may with a mortal touch
Throw death upon thy sovereign's enemies.

M. Sweet master,
Be patient for your father's remembrance,—

Hardness ever of hardness is mother.

K. Mock not my senseless conjurations, lords;
This earth shall have a feeling, and these stones
Prove armèd soldiers, ere her native king
Shall falter under foul rebellious arms.

L. Fear not my lord, that power that made you king
Hath power to keep you king, in spite of all.

Gent. He means, my lord, that we are too remiss,
Whilst Alençon, through our security,
Grows strong and great, in substance and in friends.

“But Guise said softly, to his majesty:—

G. Comfort my liege, remember who you are.

K. I had forgot myself. Am I not King?
Awake thou sluggard majesty, thou sleepest!
Is not the king's name forty thousand names?

G. King, be thy thoughts imperious like thy name.
Is the sun dimm'd, that gnats do fly in it?
The eagle suffers little birds to sing,
And is not careful what they mean thereby
Knowing that with the shadow of his wings,
He can at pleasure stint their melody.
Even so mayst thou.

K. I thank thee Guise.
Striveth the Duke to be as great as we?
Greater he shall not be. Lo, when this traitor,
Who all this while hath revell'd in the night,
Shall see us rising in our throne, the East,
His treasons will sit blushing in his face,
Not able to endure the sight of day,
But self-affrighted, tremble at his sin.
Not all the water in the rough rude sea

Can wash the balm from an anointed king;
 The breath of worldly men cannot depose
 The deputy elected by the Lord:
 I'll make't my comfort, as thou sayest my lord.

M. Aye me, I see the ruin of my house!
 The tiger now hath seiz'd the gentle hind;
 Insulting tyranny begins to jut
 Upon the innocent and aweless throne
 Of Navarre's petty kingdom.
 O Heaven, that one might read the book of Fate,
 And see the revolution of the times
 Make mountains level, and the continent
 (Weary of solid firmness) melt itself
 Into the sea: and other times, to see
 The beachy girdle of the ocean
 Too wide for Neptune's hips; how chances mock,
 And changes fill the cup of alteration
 With divers liquors. 'Tis not ten years gone,
 Since Henry and my lord Navarre, great friends,
 Did feast together; and in two years after,
 Were they at war.

“Quoth Catherine:—

Catherine. I see (as in a map) the end of all.
 Accursèd and unquiet wrangling days,
 How many of them have mine eyes beheld:
 My husband lost his life,
 And often up and down my sons were tost
 For me to joy, and weep, their gain and loss.
 And being seated, and domestic broils
 Clean overblown, themselves the conquerors,
 Make war upon themselves, brother to brother,

Blood to blood, self against self: O preposterous
And frantic outrage, end thy damnèd spleen,
Or let me die, to look on earth no more.

G. Welcome destruction, blood, and massacre!
Many a year these furious broils let last.
Why should we wish the gods should ever end them?
War only gives us fear. O France, continue
The course of mischief and stretch out the date
Of slaughter: only civil broils make peace.
Sword-girt Orion's side glisters too bright;
War's rage draws near and to the sword's strong hand
Let all laws yield.

“The King seem'd not to hear, and said;—

K. Thus stands my state, betwixt these two distress'd,
Like to a ship, that having scap'd a tempest,
Is straightway calm, and boarded with a pirate.
But now the Duke's driv'n back, his men dispers'd,
And now Navarre's in arms to second him.
Certain 'tis not a thing to rejoice at,
Yet it affrights me not. Let them approach:
Our abbeyes and our priories shall pay
This expedition's charge, and yet, my lords,
For that our kingdom's earth should not be soil'd
With that dear blood which it hath fosterèd,
And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect
Of civil wounds plough'd up with neighbor's swords,
I pray thee Duke of Guise, go and meet him,
And ask him what's the reason of these arms.
Tell him I'll send his marshals to the Tower,
Until his army be dismiss'd from him.

G. I will my lord, and doubt not so to deal,

As all things shall redound unto your good.

K. We love our people well; even those we love
That are misled upon your cousin's part;
And will they take the offer of our grace,
Both he, and they, and you, yea, every man
Shall be my friend again, and I'll be his.
So tell your cousin, and bring me word
What he will do. But if he will not yield,
Rebuke and dread correction wait on us,
And they shall do their office. So begone.
We will not now be troubled with reply;
We offer fair, take it advisedly.

L. It will not be accepted, on my life;
The Duke and the King Navarre both together,
Are confident against the world in arms.
'Tis very like his hand has writ no more
Than his stout heart allows and will perform,
And all the number of his fair demands,
Shall be accomplish'd without contradiction.
The noble Duke hath been too much abus'd,
It stands upon your grace, to do him right.

K. Base men by his endowments are made great.

“Then said the Guise:—

G. My lords of France, pray let me tell you this;
I have had a feeling of my cousin's wrongs,
But in this kind to come in braving arms,
Be his own carver, and cut out his way,
To find out right with wrongs, it may not be;
And you that do abet him in this kind,
Cherish rebellion, and are rebels all.

L. Equality of two domestic powers

Breeds scrupulous faction: the hated grown to strength
Are newly grown to love: th' condemnèd Navarre
Rich in his father's honor, creeps apace
Into the hearts of such as have not thriv'd
Upon the present state, whose numbers threaten,
And quietness grown sick of rest, would purge
By any desperate change in government.
And whither fly the gnats, but to the sun?
And who shines now but Henry's enemies?
O Phœbus! hadst thou never given consent,
That Phæton should check thy fiery steeds,
Thy burning car never had scorch'd the earth.
And Henry, hadst thou sway'd as king should do,
Or as thy father, and his father did,
Giving no ground unto the Huguenots,
They never then had sprung like summer flies:
Aye, and ten thousand in this luckless realm,
Had left no mourning widows for our death,
And thou, this day, hadst kept thy chair in peace.

G. It is not for the Huguenots he fights,—
The noble Duke hath sworn his coming is
But for his own; and Navarre aideth him.

K. Navarre's a man. I lov'd him as my brother;
I would it had been so that he had been
My father's son, then had my prize been less,
And so more equal ballasting to them.
But Francis is a boy, and false as fair,—
As false to thee, fair sister, as to me.
His mind is all as youthful as his blood;
His haughty spirit, wingèd with desire,
Begins a quarrel that will cost my crown,
And much concerns you too, dear Margaret.

“Then Margaret made answer unto him :—

M. Dear brother, I protest in sight of heaven,
 You are deceiv'd, for though our brother hates you,
 He loves me, on my life, and holds me dear.
 When that our princely father bless'd his sons
 With his victorious arm, he little thought
 Of this divided friendship. O my liege,
 The obligation of your blood forbids
 A gory emulation 'twixt you twain.
 Dear brother, think on this,—relent.

“Her words were lost in floods of crystal tears.
 O she that hath a heart of that fine frame
 To pay this debt of love but to a brother,
 How will she love, when the rich golden shaft
 Hath kill'd the flock of all affections else
 That live in her. When liver, brain, and heart,
 These sovereign thrones, are all supplied and fill'd
 Her sweet perfections with one self king :
 Away before me, to sweet beds of flowers,
 Love thoughts lie rich, when canopied with bowers.

K. Alack! when we were boys, we were, fair Queen,
 Two lads, that thought there was no more behind,
 But such a day to-morrow, as to-day,
 And to be boy eternal. In those unfledg'd days,
 There fixèd was no borne 'twixt his and mine.

M. Was not my lord the verier wag o' th' two?

K. He was, i' faith, yet were it true to say
 This boy were like me; we were as twinn'd lambs,
 That did frisk i' th' sun, and bleat the one at th' other :
 Temptations have since then been borne to us—
 My last good deed was to entreat his stay.

M. Then for the strength and safety of our country,
Let former grudges pass; forgive them both,
And replant Henry in his former state.
Renounèd King, how shall poor Henry live,
Unless thou rescue him from foul despair?
In any case be not too rough in terms,
For he is fierce and cannot brook hard language.

K. You better play the orator than I,
But I have reasons strong and forcible.
Yet hark you, lords, and witness what I say;
Sister, these words have turn'd my hate to love,
And I forgive and quite forget old faults.

M. I joy that thou becom'st King Henry's friend.

“Lorraine, the cardinal, mutter'd to himself:—

L. So much his friend, aye, his unfeignèd friend,
That, if Philip vouchsafe to furnish us
With some few bands of chosen soldiers,
I'll undertake to land them on our coast,
To force the tyrant from his seat by war.

“O King, attend! This holy fox, or wolf, or both,
Is equal ravenous as he is subtile,
And as prone to mischief, as able to perform 't.

M. Dear brother, how shall Margaret be reveng'd,
But by thy help to Henry's distress'd queen?
My quarrel and the mother-queen's are one.

G. And mine, fair Lady Margaret, joins with yours.

L. And mine with her's, and thine, and Margaret's.

“The King did muse and presently he said:—

K. Not that I pity Henry's misery,

But seek revenge on Francis' mockery.
 Therefore at last I firmly am resolv'd
 You shall have aid, my gentle Margaret.
 I'll write unto him and entreat them fair.

M. Let me give humble thanks for all at once,
 And let the messenger return in post.

K. Aye, let him go as speedy as he may.

Exit Margaret.

“But when occasion serves, this noble queen
 Doth follow me and bid me sweet farewell.
 Quoth she:—

M. But answer me ere thou dost go,
 What pledge have we of thy firm loyalty?

“Her looks doth argue her replete with modesty,
 Her words doth show her wit incomparable,
 All her perfections challenge sovereignty.
 One way, or other, she is for a king,
 And a king only. I answer'd her:—

F. B. I give my hand to pledge my sacred vow
 To one who well deserves it, gracious Queen,
 And with my hand my faith irrevocable.

M. Forbear this talk, dear Prince, here comes the King!
 But tell Navarre you bring word from his Queen
 That I'll not part with him—I'll be a soldier;
 Tell him my mourning weeds are laid aside,
 And I am ready to put armour on.

“Belike she minds to play the Amazon,
 Never a fairer did a helmet wear.

M. I'll to the wars. Good Francis say that I

Shall in your conduct follow speedily
Were I a man, a duke, and next of blood,
I would remove these tedious stumbling blocks,
And smooth my way upon their headless necks.
And being a woman, I will not be slack
To play my part in Fortune's pageant.
Once more adieu ; be valiant, and speed well !

K. Now gentlemen, say plainly what you think.
My Lord of Lorraine, will't please you draw near ?
What counsel, lords ?

First Lord. Condé from Belgia,
With hasty Germans, and blunt Hollanders,
Hath pass'd in safety and doth march amain
To join the Duke, and this worthy Navarre,
And many giddy people flock to him.
Let's levy men, and beat him back again ;
A little fire is quickly trodden out,
Which being suffer'd, rivers cannot quench.

K. Ha ! that we will. Go messenger,
And tell false Henry, thy supposed King,
That I am sending maskers unto him
To revel it with him, and his fair friends.
Thou see'st what's past, go fear thy King withal :
There's thy reward, begone. Lorraine, withdraw :
Bacon and I must have some private conference,
But be thou near at hand, for we shall presently
Have need of thee. Lords, give us leave.

“ Immediate on the portal's close, the King did say :—

K. Come, boy, thou too shalt be a messenger,
Come, come, away ! take thou my fleetest horse,—

One that will bear thee like a thunder-bolt.
I know thy quality, my boy, thou'rt brave ;
Thou dost thy office fairly. Turn thee back,
And tell Navarre I do not seek him now,
But could be willing to march unto Tours,
Without impeachment. Tell him thus says Henry :—
' Though we seem'd dead we did but sleep, my lord,
And 'twas the sleep too of the wary lion.'
But bid the Duke, our brother, his good pleasure use.
Tell him no choler hath the King surpris'd,
But let him, if he dare, our conquering passage
Repulse. Tell him, in answer of his claim, the King
Says that he savors too much of his youth,
And bids him be advis'd there's nought in France
That can be with a nimble galliard won ;
One cannot revel into dukedoms here.
Tell him, he does but dream on sovereignty,
Like one that stands upon a promontory,
And spies a far-off shore, where he would tread,
Wishing his foot were equal with his eye,
And chides the sea, that sunders him from thence,
Saying,—he'll lade it dry, to have his way :
So doth he wish the crown, being so far off,
And so he chides the means that keeps him from it,
And so (he says) he'll cut the causes off,
Flatt'ring himself with impossibilities.
His eye's too quick, his heart o'erweens too much,
Unless his hand and strength could equal them :
Our strong possession, and our right for us ;
I am his king, and he should bow his knee.

“ When I this message afterward deliver'd
This was the answer Anjou made to me :—

Duke Anjou. His strong possession much more than
his right ;

Well, say there is no kingdom then for Francis ;
What other pleasure can the world afford ?
I'll make my heaven, to dream upon the crown,
And whiles I live, t' account this world but hell,
Until that this aspiring head of mine,
Be round impalèd with a glorious crown.
And yet I know not how to get the crown,
For many lives stand between me and home.
I'll draw my sword in right, and by his kingly leave,
I'll draw it as apparent to the crown,
And in that quarrel, use it to the death,—
For if the Almighty take my brother hence,
By due descent the regal seat is mine.

“ I cannot speak, for scarce I can refrain
The execution of my big swolne heart ;
For this, my quenchless thirst, whereon I build,
Hath often pleaded kindred to the Queen.
For this, this head, this heart, this hand, this sword,
Contrives, imagines, and fully executes
Matters of import aimèd at by many.

N. Why that is spoken like a toward prince ;
Yet we are fighting battles for the faith,
Lèt us to this great cause then rest but true.

“ Unto his Majesty I made reply :—

F. B. With all the speed can possibly be us'd
I shall deliver so, thanks to your Highness.
I'll drink the air before me, and return
Or e'er your pulse twice beat.

K. Ha! that would be swifter than thought.
 'Tis your bold spirit speaks in that, my boy,
 And doth forget the flesh.

F. B. Aye, that is true, but you forget my steed.
 Cusay will fly about the King's desire—
 Cusay, the prince of palfreys, proud Cusay—
Le cheval volant, the Pegasus, *qui a*
Les narines de feu! *ca ha!* When I bestride him,
 I soar, I am a hawk; he trots the air;
 The earth sings when he touches it: the basest horn
 O' his hoof's more musical than the pipe of Hermes.
 'Tis the best horse of Europe—'tis a beast
 For Perseus: he is pure air and fire:
 His neigh is like the bidding of a monarch,
 And his countenance enforces homage.

K. Indeed, it is a most excellent horse.
 Now forth, and quickly bring us word. Adieu.

F. B. Adieu, your Majesty; but on the morrow,
 E'er it draweth toward night, look you to see
 Your herald's swift return.

K. 'Twill be two days ere I shall see thee so,
 But thou'lt be welcome, nimble-footed madcap.
 Before, I lov'd thee as a brother, Francis,
 But now, I do respect thee as my soul.
 Thou dost lend mettle to us all, brave boy;
 Aye yes, in faith, thou bear'st thee like a king,
 Thy body doth contain a kingly spirit.

F. B. A kingdom 'tis, with far too small a bound.

K. But conquering thyself, thou get'st the richest
 spoil,
 And better conquest never canst thou make.

F. B. I thank thee for thy great good will,

But specially I thank thee, that thou choosest me
To be thy messenger to the Duke, thy brother.

K. It seemeth me thou'rt fittest to the task.

F. B. An easy task it is, for willingly
I do it, Sovereign. Please you to dismiss me.

“Then I take leave and on my way do speed—
Youth cannot brook delay—mounted on smoking
steed ;

My turn it is to flee, and long I ride.
The weary sun hath made a golden set,
And by the bright tract of his fiery car
Gives token of a goodly day to-morrow.
The silent hours steal on, and flaky darkness
Breaketh within the east, ere that I join my friends.
Afar I see the camp, and brave Navarre,
Where with his men he pitcheth down his tents ;
White is their hue and on his silver crest,
A snowy feather spangled white he bears
To signify the mildness of his mind.
I find he hath five thousand armèd horse,
And seventeen thousand men that serve on foot ;
Three thousand pioneers, and a thousand coachmen ;
Besides a number, almost numberless,
Of horse-boys, laundresses and courtesans,
And fifteen hundred wagons full of stuff
For noblemen brought up in luxury.
His quick eye from afar sees my approach,
And he among them all is first to greet me.

N. Welcome, thou foolish boy ; dar'st thou endanger
Thyself to travel here at such a time ?
Thou'rt brave ; good angels ever guard thee, Francis ;
What news from th' court ? how fares sweet Margaret ?

Hast thou a message for me from my perjur'd Queen?
And what saith Henry?

“I haste to give the letters and the messages;
Navarre soon speaks:—

N. The King is levying powers; we must straight
make head:

Therefore let our alliance be combin'd,
Our best friends made, our means stretcht,
And let us presently go sit in council,
How covert matters may be best disclos'd
And open perils surest answerèd.

Duke Anjou. Let us do so, for we are at the stake,
And bay'd about with many enemies:
And some that smile have in their hearts, I fear,
Millions of mischiefs.

“Here a messenger
Enter'd in haste and said unto Navarre:—

Messenger. My lord, your nobles, jealous of your
absence,
Seek through your camp to find you.

N. Good old knight, collect them all together
At my tent: I'll be before thee. Brothers both,
Commend me to the princes in our camp,
Do my good morrow to them, and anon
Desire them all to my pavilion.

Both. We shall, my liege.

N. Fellows in arms, and my most loving friends,
My heart is ten times lighter than my looks.
No frolic vain, and no presumptuous mind

Did make us, princes, take these wars in hand :
And now, 'tis true that we are in great danger,
The greater, therefore, should our courage be.
By how much unexpected, by so much
We must awake endeavor for defence,
For courage mounteth with occasion.

A. There is no quailing now, because the King
Is certainly possess'd of all our purposes.

N. If then our enemy will balk our force
Let him draw near. In faith, what service now
Does he command? What men hath he,
Which for their valiant prowess erst were dreaded?
Think you, brave sirs, that we have need to fear?
View well my camp and speak indifferently :
Do not my captains and my soldiers look
As if they meant to conquer everywhere?
Our friends from far will send unto our aid
A hundred thousand horse train'd to the war,
Back'd by stout lancers of Germany,
The strength and sinews of the imperial seat.
The things that threaten'd me, ne'er look'd but on my back ;
When they shall see my face, they're vanishèd,
And fearless therefore will I meet the foe.
Ten thousand soldiers with me I will take,
Whose bloody deeds shall make all Europe quake.

Lord. A braver soldier never couchèd lance,
A gentler heart did never sway in court.
But, brave Navarre, you fight not France alone.
Spain is the council-chamber of the Pope :
Spain is the place where he makes peace and war,
And Guise, for Spain, hath now incens'd the King
To send his power to meet us in the field :

And war and weapons now, and blood and death,
 Wait on the counsels of this cursèd man.
 It is the Guise that hath incens'd the King
 To levy arms and make these civil broils.

N. Tush, they are full of brags I tell you, sir,
 And menace more than they can well perform.
 We will revenge the blood of innocents,
 That Guise hath slain by treason of his heart,
 And brought by murder to their timeless ends.
 Look on thy country, look on fertile France,
 And see the cities and the towns defac'd
 By wasting ruin of the cruel foe.

F. B. A mighty army comes from him with speed,
 Which are already muster'd in the land,
 And mean to meet your Highness in the field.

N. In God's name let them come, I fear them not.
 But canst thou tell who is their general?

F. B. Not yet, my lord, for thereon do they stay.

A. Who is it like should lead his forces hither?

F. B. The Guise, methinks, but I've no certain notice.

N. Dismay not, princes, at this accident,
 Nor grieve that Roan is so recover'd:
 Care is no cure, but rather corrosive,
 For things that are not to be remedied.
 This might have been prevented and made whole
 With very easy arguments of love,
 Which now the manage of two kingdoms must
 With bloody swords decide as Heaven wills.

A. The question then, Prince Henry, standeth thus:
 Whether our present five and twenty thousand
 May hold up head, without Prince Condé here.

N. With him we may.

A. I marry, there's the point :

But if without him we be thought too feeble,
My judgment is, we should not step too far
Till we had his assistance by the hand.
For in a theme so bloody-fac'd as this,
Conjecture, expectation, and surmise
Of aids uncertain, should not be admitted.

Officer. I wonder much,
Being men of such great leading as you are,
That you foresee not what impediments
Drag back our expedition. Certain horse
Of Montmorenci are not yet come up ;
Your uncle's body of horse came but to-day,
And now their pride and mettle is asleep,
Their courage with hard labor tame and dull,
That not a horse is half the half of himself.

N. So are the horses of the enemy
In general journey bated, and brought low :
The better part of ours are full of rest.

Damville. In cases of defence, 'tis best to weigh
The enemy more mighty than he seems,
So the proportions of defence are fill'd :
Which of a weak and niggardly projection,
Doth like a miser spoil his coat with scanting
A little cloth.

N. But by your leave, it never yet did hurt
To lay down likelihoods and forms of hope ;
And lords, wise men ne'er wail their present woes,
But presently prevent the ways to wail :
To fear the foe, since fear oppreseth strength,
Gives in your weakness, strength unto your foe ;
Fear, and be slain, no worse can come to fight,

And fight and die, is death destroying death,
 Where fearing, dying, pays death's servile breath.
 In God's name cheerly on, courageous friends,
 To reap the harvest of perpetual peace,
 By this one bloody trial of sharp war.

D. Stay we no longer, dreaming of renown,
 But sound the trumpets and about our task.
 Then Henry, were thy heart as hard as steel,
 As thou hast shown it flinty by thy deeds,
 I come to pierce it, or to give thee mine.

N. Every man's conscience is a thousand men,
 To fight against this guilty homicide.
 I doubt not but his friends will turn to us.

A. He hath no friends, but what are friends for fear
 Which in his dearest need will fly from him.

N. All for our vantage, then in God's name march.
 True hope is swift, and flies with swallow's wings,
 Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures, kings.
 Let frantic Henry triumph for awhile,
 And like a peacock sweep along his tail;
 We'll pull his plumes, and take away his train,
 If Anjou and the rest will be but rul'd.

D. We have been guided by thee, hitherto,
 And of thy cunning had no diffidence.

Second Lord. Search out thy wit for secret policies,
 And we will make thee famous through the world.

C. M. A stouter champion never handled sword.
 Long since we were resolvèd of thy truth,
 Thy faithful service and thy toil in war:
 Yet never have you tasted our reward,
 Or been reguerdon'd with so much as thanks.

N. I thank you, gentlemen, and feel your worth.

I wish I could be made so many men,
And all of you clapt up together in
A Bourbon, that I might do you service,
So good as you have done.

D. Too modest are you :

More cruel to your good report, than grateful
To us, that give you truly : be it known
As to us, to all the world, that Prince Navarre
Wears this war's garland : in token of the which,
My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,
With all his trim belonging ; and from this time,
For what he did before Orleans, call him,
With all th' applause and clamor of the host
Our king of kings and noble man of men.

N. No more of this, it does offend my heart,
But list to me, I have a thing to say :
Thus far into the bowels of the land
Have we march'd on without impediment,
And here receive we, from sweet Margaret,
Lines of fair comfort and encouragement.
We may depend on her, for what she can
She will do for her lord ; but what she would
She cannot. And in truth she'll hither come
Into our presence ; Bacon will attend her :
This heaven of beauty shall shine at full upon us.

F. L. Is it even so ? nay, then I see our wars
Will turn into a peaceful comic sport,
When ladies crave to be encounter'd with.
You may not (my lord) despise her-gentle suit.

N. Ne'er trust me then : for when a world of men
Could not prevail with all their oratory,
Yet hath a woman's kindness over-rul'd.

Her state and person want no pomp you'll see,
 And for all blot of foul in chastity,
 I record Heaven her heavenly self is clear.
 And here these peers, that on my fortunes wait
 And have been crown'd for provèd worthiness,
 Even by this hand that shall establish them,
 Shall now, adjoining all their hands with mine,
 Invest her here my queen, as it beseems
 A person of her majesty.

All. We shall obey you in all things, Navarre.

N. The time approaches,
 That will with due decision make us know
 What we shall say we have, and what we owe :
 Thoughts speculative, their unsure hopes relate,
 But certain issue, strokes must arbitrate,
 Toward which, advance the war. Have war, say I :
 It exceeds peace as far as day does night :
 It's sprightly walking, audible, and full of vent.
 Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy,
 Mull'd, deaf, sleepy, insensible.
 Let our firm hearts attend the true event,
 And put we on industrious soldiership.
 Hence, therefore, every leader to his charge,
 And God befriend us, as our cause is just.
 Now lords, take leave until we meet again
 Where'er it be, in heaven or in earth.
 Give me your hands all over, one by one.

A. And let us swear our resolution.

N. No, not an oath : if not the face of men
 The sufferance of our souls, the times abuse ;
 If these be motives weak, break off betimes,
 And every man hence, to his idle bed :

So let high-sighted tyranny range on,
Till each man drop by lottery. But if these,
As I am sure they do, bear fire enough
To kindle cowards, and to steel with valor
The melting spirits of women, then countrymen
What need we any spur but our own cause
To prick us to redress?

“Turning to me, he spake:—

N. Much have I said,
So that from point to point, now have you heard
The fundamental reasons of this war,
Whose great decision hath much blood let forth
And more thirsts after. Hear me more plainly:
I have in equal balance justly weigh'd
What wrongs our arms may do, what wrongs we suffer,
And find our griefs heavier than our offences.
When Charles was king this tyranny began.
When we were wrong'd and would unfold our griefs,
We were denied access unto his person,
Even by those men, that most had done us wrong.
The dangers of the days but newly gone,
Whose memory is written on the earth
With yet appearing blood, and the examples
Of every minute's instance (present now)
Hath put us in these ill-beseeming arms:
Not to break peace, or any branch of it,
But to establish here a peace indeed,
Concurring both in name and quality.

F. B. Holy seems the quarrel
Upon your Grace's part: black and fearful
On the Opposer's. For 'tis sacrilegious

To do offence and scathe in Christendom,
 The worst that e'er I heard. List to me, pray.
 By all your good leaves, gentlemen,
 Here I will make my royal choice to stay
 And fight in your behalf, right manfully.
 Set on your foot, and with a heart new fir'd
 I'll follow you, to do I know not what,
 But it sufficeth that Navarre leads on.
 My gracious lord, I tender you my service,
 Such as it is, being tender, raw and young
 Which elder days shall ripen, and confirm
 To more approvèd service and desert.

N. No, no, thou shalt not be so foolish-hardy,
 So to expose those tender limbs of thine,
 To the event of the none-sparing war.

F. B. Methinks I should revive the soldiers' hearts
 Because I ever found them as myself.

N. Thou shalt, brave Francis, be my messenger;
 Commend my duty to our sovereign;
 Wear thou my chain, and carry this to him—
 Thou hast the good advantage of the night.

F. B. Now bid me run and I will strive with things
 Impossible, yea, get the better of them.
 Command me any service to th' world's end,
 I will go on the slightest errand now
 To the antipodes you can devise
 To send me on, or do thee any service.

N. Thy legs will do thee better service than thy
 hands,
 And boy, a good soft pillow for thy head
 Were better than a churlish turf of France.

F. B. Not so my liege, this lodging likes me better

Since I may say,—‘Now lie I like a king.’
I am more antique Roman than an Englishman,
And I prefer some hardship to much ease.

N. Courageous Francis, let me now persuade you—

F. B. Not to be gone from hence, I cannot yield.

N. But now go to thy rest, sleep thou in peace
And wake at morn in joy; thou art o’erwatcht;
Good angels guard thee from this war’s annoy.

“I answer him at last:—

F. B. Thanks, my good liege,
Right politic and good is your advice.

N. Go then to see it speedily perform’d:
Be counselèd by us in this advice.

F. B. A kind direction, I will follow it.
Once more good night, kind lords and gentlemen.

All. Good night, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

“And yet I do not rest a quiet hour,
For my unquiet heart filleth my sleep
With perturbations of the morrow.
Now fiery stars and streaming comets blaze,
That threat the earth and princes of the same,
Presaging, we are told, the fall of kingdoms,—
Through the long night I watch the glowing skies,
And think what may this turbulence portend,—
Strange sights appear: the angry threat’ning gods
Fill both the earth and sky with prodigies;
Great stores of strange and unknown stars are seen
Wand’ring about the north, and rings of fire
Fly in the air; and dreadful bearded stars,
And sundry fiery meteors blaze in heaven—

Now spear-like long, now like a spreading torch ;
 Lightning in silence steals forth without clouds,
 And from the northern climate snatching fire,
 Blasts where it smites, like thunderbolts of Jove.

I hear King Henry walk from watch to watch,
 From tent to tent, issuing his commands ;
 I rise betimes and join him silently,
 Lest I disturb the workings of his thought.
 Unto Anjou he calls :—

N. Good morrow, Duke.

A. Cry mercy, lords and watchful gentlemen,
 That you have ta'en a tardy sluggard here.

N. How have you slept my lord ?

A. The sweetest sleep, and fairest boding dreams,
 That ever enter'd in a drowsy head,
 Have I since your departure had, my lords.
 Methought their souls, whose bodies Guise hath murther'd,
 Came to my tent, and cried on victory :
 I promise you my heart is very jocund,
 In the remembrance of so fair a dream.
 How far into the morning is it, lords ?

N. Upon the stroke of four. There is no time
 To lose. Send out a pursuivant-at-arms,
 Without delay to Condè's regiment—
 (His regiment lies half a mile at least
 South from the mighty forces of the king)
 Commend me to him : bid him bring his power
 Before sunrising, lest his brave troops fall
 Into the blind cave of eternal night.
 He shall make up the right wing of the battle.
 And you, my Duke, shall have in charge the left,

While I myself will follow in the midst.
With the first light of day our troops shall mount
Up higher to the plains, where we'll set forth
In best appointment all our regiments.
Speed then to take advantage of the field.

A. It shall be so, and at the other hill
Command the rest to stand. God and our right.

N. And God forgive the sin of all those souls
That to their everlasting residences,
Before the dew of evening fall, shall fleet
In dreadful trial of our kingdom's king.

A. Amen, amen! Mount chevaliers!—to arms!

N. Give me thy hand, Anjou; be thou my witness
That 'gainst my will, I am compell'd to set
Upon one battle, all our liberties.
You know that I held Montmorenci strong,
And his opinion: now I change my mind,
And partly credit things that do presage.
This morning are the eagles fled away,
And in their steads, do ravens, crows, and kites
Fly o'er our heads, and downward look on us,
As we were sickly prey; their shadows seem
A canopy most fatal, under which
Our army lies, ready to give up the ghost.

A. Believe not so.

N. I but believe it partly,
For I am fresh of spirit and resolv'd
To meet all perils, very constantly.
It seems to me most strange that men should fear,
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come. But now away:
Hie to thy charge. Cheer thou these noble lords,

And hearten those that fight in thy defence.

A. It shall be done, my lord.

N. Most surely will the vengeance of the Highest,
And jealous anger of His fearful arm,
Be pour'd with rigor on our sinful heads,
If we neglect this offer'd victory.

Exit Anjou.

“A drum afar off broke upon our ears.

N. Hark, hark! the enemy's drum a warning bell
Sings heavy music to the timorous soul;
It is too late, I cannot now send forth
To warn Prince Condè of the foe's approach.

D. Let not your private discord, keep away
The levied succours that should lend him aid,
While he, renownèd noble gentlemen,
Yield up his life unto a world of odds.
All the King's forces compass him about,
And Condè perisheth by your default.

N. Alençon set him on, and should have sent him aid.

Off. And he as fast upon your Grace exclaims,
Swearing that you withhold his levied host
Collected for this expedition.

N. He lies! He might have sent and had the horse:
I owe him little duty and less love,
And take foul scorn to fawn on him by sending,—
And yet pride has no place in hour of danger.
Bid him come hither, I'll await him here.
O where hath our intelligence been drunk,
Where hath it slept?

“I join'd the Duke, who with a gentleman
Enter'd his tent before the messenger.

Anjou. Neville!

Neville. What says Alençon?

A. I have a young conception in my brain,
Be you my time to bring it to some shape.

Nev. What is't?

A. This 'tis:

Blunt wedges rive hard knots: the seeded pride
That hath to this maturity blown up
In rank Navarre, must either now be cropt,
Or shedding, breed a nursery of like evil
To over-bulk us all.

Nev. Well, and how?

A. This challenge that the gallant Henry sends,
However it is spread in general name,
Relates in purpose only to Navarre.

Nev. The purpose is perspicuous, e'en as substance
Whose grossness little characters sum up,
And in the publication make no strain,
But that Navarre, e'en were his brain as barren
As banks of Lybia, though Apollo knows,
'Tis dry enough, will with great speed of judgment,
Aye, with celerity, find Henry's purpose
Pointing on him. What says this messenger?

Enter Messenger.

Messenger. The Prince, Navarre, would speak with you.

Exit Messenger

N. Duke of Alençon, this was your default,
That being captain of the watch to-night
Did look no better to that weighty charge.

A. Had all your quarters been as safely kept
As that of which I had the government—

N. Security is mortals' chiefest enemy.

A. You love your enemy.

N. My lord, mine was secure, and for myself
Most part of all this night, in mine own precinct
I was employ'd in passing to and fro
About, relieving of the sentinels:

While you, my lord, lay in your tent and dream'd
Of victory alighting on your banners,
The enemy have gain'd the vantage ground.
The copy of your speed is learn'd by them,
For when you should be told they do prepare,
The tidings come that they are all arriv'd.

A. Wherefore are you impatient with your friend?
At all times will you have my power alike?
Sleeping or waking must I still prevail,
Or will you blame and lay the fault on me?

N. Tut, tut, brave Duke; it irks my heart to hear
Words such as these at such a dangerous hour.

A. A friend should bear his friend's infirmities,
But you do make mine greater than they are.

N. I do not till you practice them on me.

A. You love me not!

N. I do not like your faults.

A. A friendly eye could never see such faults.

N. A flatterer's would not, though they do appear
As huge as high Olympus.

A. You have riv'd my heart with your displeasing
answer.

N. Leave off this foolish strife—this peevish broil:
Amongst the soldiers this is mutter'd,
That whilst a field should be dispatch'd and fought
You are disputing with your generals.

A. One would have ling'ring wars with little cost ;
Another would fly swift but wanteth wings ;
A third doth think, without expense at all,
By guileful fair words peace may be obtain'd.

N. Now resteth naught but that you do agree,
And so to purchase sure tranquillity,
Concur together.

A. Thou'rt ready with advice,
With too much brain and with too little blood.
I pray you let me see you in the field :
We have had pelting wars since you refus'd
The Huguenots' cause.

N. Stand fair, I prithee, let me look on thee.

A. Behold thy fill.

N. Nay, I have done already.

A. Thou art too brief; I've fed mine eyes on thee,
I have with exact view perus'd thee, sir,
And quoted joint by joint. I will the second time,
As I would buy thee, view thee, limb by limb.

N. O, like a book of sport thou'lt read me o'er,
But there's more in me than thou understand'st.
Why dost thou so oppress me with thine eye?

A. Tell me, you Heavens, in which part of his body
Shall I destroy him? whether there, or there, or there,
That I may give the local wound a name,
And make distinct the very breach, where-out
Navarre's great spirit flew. Answer me Heavens.

N. It would discredit the blest gods, proud man,
To answer such a question. Stand again!
Think'st thou to catch my life so pleasantly,
As to prenominate in nice conjecture
Where thou wilt hit me dead?

A. I tell thee, yea.

N. Wert thou the oracle to tell me so,
I'd not believe thee: henceforth guard thee well,
For I'll not kill thee there, nor there, nor there,
But by the forge that stythied Mars his helm,
I'll kill thee everywhere, yea, o'er and o'er.

A. So cowards fight, when they can fly no further,
So doves do peck the falcon's piercing talons,
So desperate thieves, all hopeless of their lives,
Breathe out invectives 'gainst the officers.

N. O Duke Anjou, bethink thee once again,
And in thy thought o'er-run my former time:
And, if thou canst for blushing, view this face,
And bite thy tongue that slanders him with cowardice,
Whose frown hath made thee faint and fly ere this.
You wisest compeers, pardon me this brag;
His insolence draws folly from my lips,
But I'll endeavor deeds to match these words,
Or may I never—

F. L. Do not chafe thee, cousin:
And you, Alençon, let these threats alone
Till accident, or purpose bring you to't.
You may have every day enough o' Navarre
If you have stomach. The general state I fear,
Can scarce entreat you to be odd with him.

A. Nor shall it, Harry, for the hour is come
To end the one of us: and would to Heaven,
Thy name in arms, were now as great as mine.

N. I'll make it greater ere I part from thee,
And all the budding honours on thy crest
I'll crop, to make a garland for my head.

A. I can no longer brook thy vanities.

N. I will not bandy with thee word for word,
But buckler thee with blows twice two for one.
Let it be seen tomorrow in the battle,
Which of us fears.

A. Yea, or tonight.

N. Content.

A. Tonight, say I.

F. L. Come, come, it may not be.

N. To-morrow do I meet thee fell as death,—
To-night, all friends.

A. Thy hand upon that match.

N. Go to my tent, Anjou, enlarge your griefs,
And I will give you audience. Officer,
Bid our commanders lead their charges off
A little from this ground, and let no man
Come to our tent, till we have done our conference.
Saddle white Surrey for the field to-morrow :
Look that my staves be sound and not too heavy.
Use careful watch ; choose trusty sentinels ;
Let two of our best soldiers guard our door.

Off. My liege, 'tis done, and all things are in read-
iness.

“I went with them unto the private tent,
And listen'd to Alençon's peevish plaints :—

A. It is not meet that every nice offense
Should bear your comment. Let me tell you, sir,
That you yourself are much condemn'd for faults.

N. Anjou, remember that I am your friend.

A. Aye, but I do observe you now of late ;
I have not from your eyes that gentleness
And show of love, as I was wont to have :

You bear too stubborn and too strange a hand,
Over your friend that loves you.

N. Alençon,

Be not deceiv'd: if I have veil'd my look,
I turn the trouble of my countenance
Merely upon myself. Vexèd I am
Of late, with passions of some difference,
Conceptions only proper to myself,
Which gives some soil, perhaps, to my behaviors:
But let not therefore my good friends be griev'd,
(Among which number, Francis, be you one,)
Nor construe any further my neglect,
Than that poor Henry, with himself at war,
Forgets the shows of love for other men.

A. Then, Henry, I have much mistook your passion,
By means whereof this breast of mine hath buried
Thoughts of great value, worthy cogitations.
I thank you for your chapter of advice,
I do remember it and take my leave
To go about my preparations.

N. Do so.

“And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And with affection wondrous sensible,
He wrung Alençon's hand, and so they parted.
But ere the Duke pass'd through the tent's low door,
There came a sound of voices from without,
Where an old officer thus wrangl'd with the guard:—

Off. Let me go in to see the Generals;
There is some grudge between 'em, 'tis not meet
They be alone.

Guard. You shall not come to them.

Off. Nothing but death shall stay me!

A. How now! what's the matter?

Off. For shame, you Generals; what do you mean?

Love, and be friends, as two such men should be;

For I have seen more years, I'm sure, than ye.

A. Ha, ha, how vilely doth this cynic rhyme!

Get you hence, sirrah; saucy fellow, hence!

N. Bear with him, Anjou; 'tis his fashion.

A. I'll know his humor when he knows his time.

“As they stept forth together from the tent,
A light caught Navarre's eye.

N. Look, look my Duke!

Are those my tents where I perceive the fire?

A. They are, my lord.

N. Alençon, if thou lovest me,

Mount thou my horse, and hide thy spurs in him

Till he have brought thee up to yonder troops,

And here again, that I may rest assur'd

Whether yond troops are friend or enemy.

A. I will be here again, even with a thought.

“But ere his swift return a soldier came and said:—

Soldier. My liege the army of the King

Encamps upon these hills.

F. B. He fables not, I hear the enemy.

“And quick and sharp Navarre gives the command:—

N. Out some light horsemen, and peruse their wings.

Are not the speedy scouts return'd again,
That dogg'd the mighty army of the King?

Off. They are return'd, my lord, and give it out,
That Guise is marching hither with his power,
To fight with Condé as he march'd along.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Prepare you, lords, for the Guise is at hand,
Ready to fight: therefore be resolute.

N. I thought no less: it is his policy,
To haste thus fast, to find us unprovided.

Off. But he's deceiv'd, we are in readiness.

N. This cheers my heart to see your forwardness.

Off. Here pitch our battle; hence we will not budge.

N. Come go, I will dispatch the horsemen straight:
Within six hours, they will be at his aid.
Away to meet him: while we reason here
A royal battle might be won or lost.

Second Mess. By your espials were discoverèd
Two mightier troops than that Duke of Guise led,
Which join'd with him and made their march together.

N. Too late comes rescue, he is ta'en or slain,
For fly he could not, if he would have fled:
And fly would Condé never, though he might.

“Navarre then sadly mus'd and spake but half
aloud:—

N. If he be dead, brave Condé then adieu;
That gallant spirit hath aspir'd the clouds,
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth:
His fame lives in the world, his shame in thee, Anjou.
O negligent and heedless discipline!
How are we park'd and bounded in a pale!

A little herd of hunted timorous deer,
Maz'd with a yelping kennel of French curs!
If we be hunted deer, be then in blood,—
Not rascal-like to fall down with a pinch,
But rather moody mad,—and, desperate stags,
Turn on the bloody hounds with heads of steel,
And make the cowards stand aloof at bay:
Sell every man his life as dear as mine,
And they shall find dear deer of us my friends.
God and St. Denis, France and Alençon's right,
Prosper our colors in this dangerous fight.

O Thou, whose captain I account myself,
Look on my forces with a gracious eye:
Put in their hands Thy bruising irons of wrath,
That they may crush down with a heavy fall,
Th' usurping helmets of our adversaries:
Make us Thy ministers of chastisement,
That we may praise Thee in Thy victory:
To Thee I do commend my soul,
Ere I let fall the windows of mine eyes:
Sleeping, and waking, O defend me still.
O God of battles, steel my soldiers' hearts,
Possess them not with fear: take from them now
The sense of reck'ning of th' opposèd numbers:
Pluck their hearts from them. Not to-day, O Lord,
O not to-day, think Thou upon the faults
That I have made in heat of youthful blood,
But for the grace and glory of Thy name,
O give us victory.

“The day begins to break, and night is fled,
Whose pitchy mantle overveil'd the earth.

I hear their drums breaking the silence now,
 Like to a dismal clangor heard from far.
 I am my father's son, for I had rather see
 The swords and hear a drum, than look upon
 A schoolmaster. I may not be too forward
 In this matter; they've chid me from the battle,
 But I have set my life upon a cast,
 And I will stand the hazard of the die.
 I will not budge a foot, I swear o' my word.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. Now brave commanders, be in readiness;
 For with a band of thirty-thousand men,
 Two-thousand argolets and ten-thousand horse,
 Cometh Dumain, backing the Duke of Guise,
 And in the towns as they do march along,
 Many do fly to them.

A. They mean to warn us here,
 Answering before we do demand of them.

N. Tut, I am in their bosoms, and I know
 Wherefore they do it: they could be content
 To visit other places, and come down
 With fearful bravery, thinking by this face
 To fasten in our thoughts that they have courage;
 But 'tis not so.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. Prepare you, Generals,—
 The enemy comes on in gallant show;
 Their bloody sign of battle is hung out,
 And something's to be done immediately.

“Darraign your battle for they are at hand,
 And here they stand to answer thee, Navarre,
 Or any he the proudest of thy sort.
 For God's sake, lords, give signal to the fight!

Captain. My liege, the wound that bred this meeting
here,
Cannot be cur'd by words.

N. You said the enemy would not come down,
But keep the hills and upper regions ;
It proves not so : their battles are at hand,
And there, afar, I see the royal troops.
Now higher would I rear my estimate—

A. Why, their battalia trebles that account !
Besides, the King's name is a tower of strength.

C. I hear them come,—shall we encounter them ?

N. Keep all your standings and stir not a foot !
Myself will bide the danger of the brunt.
And here I draw a sword, brave Frenchmen all,
Whose worthy temper I intend to stain
With the best blood that I can meet withal,
In the adventure of this perilous day.
Now *esperance*, Alençon, and set on :
Sound all the lofty instruments of war,
And by that music, let us all embrace,
For heaven to earth, some of us never shall
A second time do such a courtesy.

“Onward they come like angry waves at sea.
There sits Navarre, like warrior cut in stone,
His courser trapp'd in white, and plumes and staves
Of snowy hue ; his knights in fair array,
Waiting their lord's good fortune in the field ;
His armour glitt'ring like the morn's bright ray
His plumes and pendants all as white as swan,
And spear in rest right ready to perform,
What 'longs unto the honor of the day.

Alençon leads the battle softly on,
Upon the left hand of the even field;
Upon the right hand see I Prince Condé,—
'Twas false report that his force was cut off,—
But he already has had part in battle,
I can well see by his dissever'd ranks.
Here on this mole-hill will I sit me down,
In heart-grief and uneasiness, and see
How they come off, for now the forces of the foe
Are nigh,—some horsemen have already led the way,—
And here I view the field in safety. See,
The princes lead their charges to the battle,
In proud array. But I must find
An evident calamity, though I had
My wish which side should win in this affray:
That shall I read at full in my own losses
If I do stay in France. I cannot live here!
I should be free, as free as is the wind:
Here my affairs are servanted to others,—
I must quit all and that without delay.

“Here will I sit before the walls of stone
And will be partner of their weal or woe.
I am boy to them all three: but all they three
Though they would serve me, could not be a man to me.
I'd rather be their servant in my way,
Than sway with them in their's, but in the field
Their glory is not wanting: they are courtiers,
Courtiers as free, as debonaire; unarm'd,
As bending angels: that's their fame in peace;
But when they would seem soldiers, they have galls,
Good arms, strong joints, true swords, and Jove's accord.
Nothing so full of heart, or so imperial.

“Princes of France, the sparkling light of Fame,—
Whose glory’s brighter than the burnish’d gates
From whence Latona’s lordly son doth march,
When mounted on his coach, tinsel’d with flames,
He triumphs in the beauty of the heavens,—
Rests on this place, shines on this glorious field!
But there is a wide difference ’twixt you
And those brave men, who by your sides did stand,
They whom the gods have made preservers of the throne—
Poor soldiers who so richly fought, whose naked breasts
Stepp’d before targe of proof, and in their country’s cause,
Fell bravely and were slain,—who writes their names?
What though the lion’s king of brutish race
Through outrage, sin, shall lambs therefore be slain?
Or is it lawful that the humble die
Because the mighty do gainsay the right?”

“This battle fares like to the morning’s war,
When dying clouds contend with glowing light,
What time the shepherd, blowing of his nails,
Can neither call it perfect day nor night.
Now sways it this way, like a mighty sea,
Forc’d by the tide to combat with the wind;
Now sways it that way, like the self-same sea,
Forc’d to retire by fury of the wind;
Sometime the flood prevails, and then the wind,—
Now one the better, then another best,
Both tugging to be victors, breast to breast,
Yet neither conqueror nor conquerèd,—
So is the equal poise of this fell war.
O would, Navarre, I might deceive the time,
And aid thee in this doubtful shock of arms!
Boldly they fight, spur their proud horses hard,

And ride in blood that stains the fetlocks of their steeds,
Ere it the dry and thirsty earth hath drunk.
Like as a water stream, whose swelling source
Shall drive a mill, within strong banks is pent,—
And long restrainèd of his ready course,
So soon as passage unto him is lent,
Breaks forth, and makes his way more violent,—
Such is the fury of the Duke Dumain.
The valiant Duke, the bane of Protestants,
Breaks through the ranks, and with five-hundred horse,
All men-at-arms, forward and full of might,
Assaults the middle wing and puts to flight,
Eight-thousand harquebuse that serve on foot.
The center then with all his force he charges,
Brushes and batters them without remorse,
That on the ground he leaves full many a corse ;
Ne any able is him to withstand,
But he them overthrows, both man and horse,
That they lie scatt' red over all the land,
As thick as seed after the sower's hand,
Which, when the people round about him see,
They shout aloud for joy at his success ;
Yet he for nought will swerve from his right course,
But still the way doth hold straight to Navarre.
When once he feels his foeman to relent,
He fiercely then pursues and presses sore,
Foll'wing that fair advantage fast. All flock
About Navarre and hard at him do lay :
Now teeth are set and nostrils stretchèd wide,
The breath held hard, and every spirit bold
Bent up to its full height, as on they come ;
But he them all from him full lightly sweeps

And thrusts them from him as the scorn of France.
Like as the tide, that comes from th' ocean main,
Flows up the Thames with a contrary force,
And over-ruling him in his own reign,
Drives back the current of his kindly course
And makes it seem to have some other source,—
But, when the flood is spent, then back again
His borrow'd waters forc'd to redisburse,
He sends the sea his own with double gain,
And tribute eke withal as to his sovereign,—
His stroke redoubles with such might and main,
Awhile the heat of battle with his hand he stays,
And menaces them from the field to beat.
'For France, for France, for it is more than need!'
Cries this same mighty man, and like a giant,
He makes the enemy to fall from him.

“His helm I saw in thickest of the fight;
His brandish'd sword did blind men with its beams,
And the bright gleam of his swift lance's point
Was like a meteor's flash in clearest heaven:
His arms spread wider than a dragon's wings
His sparkling eyes, replete with wrathful fire,
More dazzled and drove back his enemies,
Than mid-day sun fierce bent against their faces.

“Close prest he was by his brave followers,
Who swore to him true fealty for aye.
Didst thou not mark the cheering words he spake?
But now he feels the sharpness of the Sisters' shears,
And with his fellow-soldiers turns him back.
The graces for his many merits due,
Are all to dolours turn'd and lamentation.

“O foul revolt of French inconstancy

That sets itself against the word he speaks!
 France thou shalt rue this hour within this hour!
 'Tis current in our land—'the chopping French.'

“O sovereign Lord, that sit'st on high
 And reign'st in bliss among Thy blessed saints,
 How sufferest Thou such shameful cruelty,
 So long unwreakèd of Thine enemy?
 Or hast Thou, Lord, of good men's cause no heed?
 Or doth Thy justice sleep and silent lie?
 What booteth then the good and righteous deed,
 If goodness find no grace, nor righteousness no meed?
 This day's black fate on mo days doth depend,
 This but begins, the wo others must end.

“What stir is this? What tumult's in the heavens?
 Whence cometh this alarum, and the noise?
 Have I no friend will rid me of this fear,
 None to divorce this terror from my heart?
 The host is full of tumult and of fear!
 I tremble for I hear the lion roar.

“Forespent with toil as runners with a race,
 Navarre comes to my very place of refuge.

Navarre. I lay me down a little while to breathe,
 For strokes receiv'd and many blows repaid
 Have robb'd my strong-knit sinews of their strength,
 And spite of spite, needs must I rest awhile.
 Smile gentle Heaven, or strike ungentle Death,
 For this world frowns, and Henry's sun is clouded.

Enter Anjou and Lieutenant.

How now my lord, what hap? what hope of good?

“He said to Anjou as he join'd him there.

A. Our hap is loss, our hope is sad despair,
Our ranks are broke and ruin follows us.
What counsel give you? whither shall we fly?

Lieut. Bootless is flight, they follow us with wings,
And weak we are and cannot shun pursuit.

N. Stay, stay, my friends and speak not here of flight.

A. But how prevail'd you?

N. Will the time serve to tell? I do not think:
Where is the enemy? Are you lords o' th' field?
If not, why cease you till you are so?

A. Navarre, we have at disadvantage fought,
And did retire to win our purpose.

N. How lies their battle? Know you on which side
They have plac'd their men of trust?

A. As I guess, Navarre,
Their bands in the vaward are their best trust—
Their very heart of hope.

N. Then let the earth be drunken with our blood!
Give me another horse; bind up my wounds!
Why stand we like soft-hearted women here,
Wailing our losses while the foe doth rage?
We all that are engagèd to this loss,
Knew that we ventur'd on such dangerous seas,
That if we wrought out life, was ten to one:
And yet we ventur'd for the gain propos'd,
Chok'd the respect of likely peril fear'd,
And since we are o'er-set, venture again!
Come, we will all put forth, body and goods.
Away my lord, you are slow, for shame,—away!
What are you made of? you'll nor fight nor fly?

A. Now is it manhood, wisdom and defence,
To give the enemy way, and to secure us

By what we can, which can no more but fly!
N. And yet, my lord, can we out-run the heavens?
 O where is faith! O where is loyalty!
 If it be banish'd from our noble France,
 Where shall it find a harbor in the earth?
 I do beseech you, Alençon, my brother,
 By all the battles wherein we have fought,
 By th' blood we've shed together, by th' vows we've made
 To endure friends, that you directly set me
 Against the Guise, and that you not delay,
 But filling th' air with swords advanc'd, and darts,
 We prove this very hour. On, on, brave men!
 Now put your shields before your hearts and fight
 With hearts more proof than shields.

“Navarre's as full of valor as of royal blood:
 Valor and pride excel themselves in him,
 In the extremity of great and little;
 The one almost as infinite as all,
 The other blank as nothing: weigh him well,
 And that which looks like pride, is courtesy.
 He's like brave Richard of the lion-heart:
 O, well did he become that lion's robe,
 That did disrobe the lion of that robe,
 And well doth brave Navarre, also, become
 All emblems of successful feats of arms.
 In war, was never lion rag'd more fierce;
 In peace, was never gentle lamb more mild.

“The trumpets sound retreat!—the day is lost!
 And for this night the furies stay the battle.
 Why droops my lord, like over-ripen'd corn,
 Hanging the head at Ceres' plenteous load?

You cast the events of war (my noble lord)
And summ'd the accompt of chance before you said,—
'Let us make head, and let us bold approach
The ragged'st hour that time and spite dare bring.'
Why doth the great Duke Anjou knit his brows,
As frowning at the favors of the world?
Look not upon me for thine eyes are wounding!
Upon thy eye-balls murderous tyranny
Sits in grim majesty to fright the world.
Why are thine eyes fixt to the sullen earth,
Gazing on that which seems to dim thy sight?
What see'st thou there? King Henry's diadem,
Enchas'd with all the honors of the world?
If so, gaze on and grovel on thy face,
Until thy head be circled with the same.
Thy heaven is on earth, thine eyes and thoughts
Beat on a crown, the treasure of thy heart,
That with foul envy poisons all the mind.
Anjou, Anjou! if thou dost love thy life,
Banish the canker of ambitious thoughts.
Good Duke, I charge thee, fling away ambition,
By that sin fell the angels: how can man then
(The image of his Maker) hope to win by it?
Love thyself last, cherish those hearts that hate thee;
Corruption wins not more than honesty.
Still in thy right hand, carry gentle peace
To silence envious tongues. Be just and fear not;
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy Country's,
Thy God's, and Truth's.

“Last night methought I sate in seat of majesty,
In the cathedral church of Westminster,

And in that chair where kings and queens were crown'd,
 Where Henry and Dame Margaret kneel'd to me,
 And on my head did set the diadem.
 Then said an angel voice divinely clear :—
 'Your grace's title shall be multiplied,
 But you were ill advisèd to take it
 Considering of the dangerous times,
 That have befallne us.' And then more sweet :—
 'Jesus preserve your royal majesty.'
 It then meseem'd the peers were fall'n at jars ;
 A spirit, rais'd from depth of under ground,
 Bade me a trumpet take and to this purpose speak :—
 'No marvel though you bite so sharp at reasons,
 You are so empty of them that your speech hath none,
 But let your reason serve to make the truth appear,
 Where it seems hid.'

“And then I did reflect,—
 It best beseemeth me to speak the truth ;
 Falsehood is worse in kings than 'tis in beggars.
 I will abide all with a prince's courage,
 And yet, alack, why am I sent unto a king,
 Before I have shook off the regal thoughts,
 Wherewith my brain is stirr'd ? I do but think
 How sweet a thing it is to wear a crown,
 Within whose circuit is elysium
 And all that poets fain of bliss and joy.

“I met the Duke yesterday, had much question
 With him : he askt me of what parentage
 I was ; I told him of as good as he—
 To prove that true, needs no more but one tongue.

“*Duke.* Say what art thou, that talk’st of kings and queens?

“*F. B.* More than I seem, and less than I was born to,

A man at least, for less I should not be ;
And men may talk of kings, and why not I?

“*D.* Aye, but thou talk’st as if thou wert a king.

“*F. B.* Why so I am (in mind) and that’s enough.

“*D.* But if thou be a king, where is thy crown?

“*F. B.* My crown is in my heart, not on my head.

“*D.* Ill-weav’d ambition, how much hast thou shrunk !

“So he laugh’d and let me go, but what if he
Had ask’d,—‘ Who might your mother be, brave boy?’
How must I answer? He may say to me:—
‘Tis not her glass but you that flatter her,
And out of you she sees herself more proper
Than any of her lineaments can show her.’
And he would tell a tale that should begin
Like tales of fairy:—‘ Once upon a time
There was a queen—.’ No, no, I’ll hold my peace:
Though I am banish’d, I’ll be true to her.

“But such intelligence hath seldom fail’d
To be proclaim’d without the trumpet’s sound.
The bruit thereof would bring me many friends,
But nought would serve to save the Queen’s renown,
And wisdom ’tis still to conceal the matter
With scrupulous wit; yet is it true, methinks,
That fearless minds climb soonest unto crowns.
I do believe, straight-through, that I am none,
Or like to be: I’m neither like my sire,
Nor like my mother. Had I wiser been,
This banishment had never hapt to me.

If that be right which the Queen says is right,
There is no wrong, but everything is right.

“I will away to Margaret, the sweet queen,
And give her this account with moving words,
For she's a woman to be pitied much :
Her labour with the King's but lost, and yet,
Her sighs will make a batt'ry in his breast ;
Her tears will pierce into a marble heart ;
The tiger will be mild, whiles she doth mourn,
And Nero will be tainted with remorse,
To hear her plaints, and see her brinish tears.
She's on his left side craving aid for Henry,
Whiles he, the injurious Duke, pernicious peer,
That smooths it so with king and commonweal,
Is on his right install'd and tells his title,
Inferreth arguments of mighty strength,
And, in conclusion, wins the King from her, his sister,
With promise to support and strengthen him.
O Margaret, thus 'twill be ; and thou, poor soul,
Art then forsaken, as thou wend'st forlorn,
And all thy happy days die long before thy death.

“They that stand high have many blasts to shake
them,

And if they fall, they dash themselves to pieces.
Good counsel, marry, and the Queen might say,
'It touches you, my lord, as much as me.'
Our ayrie buildeth in the cedar's top,
And dallies with the wind and scorns the sun,
And turns the sun to shade. Alas, alas !
My sun is cast in darkness like to night,
But O, the greedy thirst of royal crown,
That knows no kindred and regards no right!

“Now, will I to the King and tell him all,
But I cannot well be the first to greet him—
These news, as fast as horse can carry, thither goes—
But he himself most earnestly did bid me
Stay for an answer to mine embassy ;
How should he then the tidings hear from me,
Had I not rang'd about and watch'd the fight—
A woful looker-on—from sun to sun,
Amidst this hurly-burly and uproar?
'Twere a disgrace from it to run away,
Yet what a piercing sight it was to see!

“The thunder-hoofed horse, with his proud gait,
Fast bears me to the court, for I am eager
To seek the King ; but yet I did not think
To be so sad to-night, as this has made me.

His Majesty from forth his princely tower,
Hath seen me coming in such posting haste,
And meets me in the open air.

“Quoth he:—

K. Hail, gallant boy! Thou com'st at last to me.
I joy to see thee. Thou art my good youth.

F. B. May many years of happy days befall
King Henry, gracious sovereign of France,
Until the heavens, envying earth's good hap,
Add an immortal title to your crown.

K. Now thou shalt be our royal page, or squire ;
I'll be thy master,—walk with me ; speak freely,
But to the purpose, boy. What letters or what news ?

F. B. My sovereign liege, no letters, and few words
But such as I, without your special pardon,
Dare not relate.

K. Go to, we pardon thee; therefore, in brief,
Tell me their words as near as thou canst guess them.
What may the cause be of this strange and sudden
Distemper?

F. B. It is your Guise, methinks.

K. There is no art
To find the mind's construction in the face.
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust. O worthiest cousin,
It is the curse of kings, to be attended
By slaves that take their humors for a warrant,
To break within the bloody house of life,
And on the winking of authority
To understand a law; to know the meaning
Of dangerous majesty, when perchance it frowns
More upon humor than advis'd respect.
They with this practice have commenc'd a war.
O cursed race of men that traffic guile,
And in the end themselves and kings beguile!
That fox, that cursèd parasite, that Guise,
Hath incens'd me to send the wolf abroad,
That gripes the tender whelp and wounds it. You
Shall find there a man, who is th' abstracts of all faults
That all men follow.

F. B. I must not think
There are evils enow to darken all his goodness:
His faults in him, seem as the spots of heaven,
More fiery by night's blackness; hereditary,
Rather than purchas'd,—what he cannot change,
Than what he chooses.

K. You are too indulgent.

F. B. I never saw but Henry, Duke of Guise,

Did bear him like a noble gentlemen.
Oft have I seen the haughty Cardinal,
More like a soldier than a man o' th' Church,
As stout and proud as he were lord of all,
Swear like a ruffian, and demean himself
Unlike the ruler of a common-weal,
But Guise, your majesty, does nothing so.

K. I tell you boy he is a most arch traitor,
But this helps not myself—gives me no aid.
Asham'd of my suggestions and advice,
Asham'd of life, asham'd that I have err'd,
I'll hide myself. Thus God doth work
With those that purchase fame by flattery!
The love of wicked friends converts to fear;
That fear, to hate; and hate turns one, or both,
To worthy danger, and deservèd death.
I hope in vain for that which now is lost!
Where shall I hide my head! I know the heavens
Are just and will revenge. I know my sins
Exceed compare. O were I dead!

F. B. Pray cease,
Lest I, by marking of your rage, forget
Your worth, your greatness, and nobility.

K. Pardon, my courteous youth, I am at fault.
And yet, if God's good will were so, would I were dead,
For what is in this world, but grief and woe.
O God! methinks it were a happy life,
To be no better than a homely swain,
To sit upon a hill, as I do now,
To carve out dials quaintly, point by point,
Thereby to see the minutes how they run;
How many makes the hour full complete,

How many hours brings about the day,
How many days will finish up the year,
How many years a mortal man may live.
When this is known, then to divide the times;
So many hours, must I tend my flock;
So many hours must I take my rest;
So many hours, must I contemplate;
So many hours, must I sport myself;
So many days, my ewes have been with young;
So many weeks, ere the poor fools will eane;
So many years, ere I shall shear the fleece;
So minutes, hours, days, months, and years,
Past over to the end they were created,
Would bring white hairs to a quiet grave:
Ah! what a life were this! how sweet, how lovely!
Gives not the hawthorn's bush a sweeter shade
To shepherds, looking on their silly sheep,
Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy,
To kings that fear their subject's treachery?
'Tis kingly to amend what is amiss,
And for assurance of mine after life,
I take religious vows before my God.
Coligny's body I've interr'd anew,
And on it have bestow'd more contrite tears,
Than from it issued forcèd drops of blood.
Five-hundred poor I have in yearly pay,
Who twice a day their wither'd hands hold up
Toward heaven, to pardon blood:
And I have built two chauntries,
Where the sad and solemn priests sing still,
For his poor soul. More will I do:
Though all that I can do is nothing worth,

Since that my penitence comes after all,
Imploring pardon. But my gentle friend,
My champions are the Prophets and Apostles,
My weapons, holy saws of Sacred Writ,
My study is my tilt-yard, and my loves
Are brazen images of canonizèd saints.
I thank my God for my humility :
A holy day shall this be kept hereafter,—
The yearly course that brings this day about
Shall never see it but a holy day.

F. B. A wicked day and not a holy day.
What hath this day deserv'd? What hath it done?
I would to God all strifes were well compounded,
Peace made of enmity, fair love of hate,
Between these swelling wrong-incensèd peers.
You know your nobles are your chiefest stays,
And long time have been banish'd from your court.
Thus, while the vulture of sedition,
Feeds in the bosom of such great commanders,
Sleeping neglectation doth betray to loss ;
And no way canst thou turn thee for redress,
But death doth front thee with apparent spoil,
And pale destruction meets thee in the face.
O be not blind to good. Call home thy lords—
These carelessly, O King, thou castest off
To entertain a train of sycophants—
Embrace, and reconcile them to yourself ;
They are your hands whereby you ought to work.

K. Ah! thou hast made my heart too great for what
Contains it, boy, since that thy sight which should
Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
Constrains them weep, and shake with fear and sorrow ,

Making the mother, wife and child, to see
 The son, the husband, and the father, tearing
 The country's bowels out. We must bear all.
 O hard condition, twin-born with greatness,
 Subject to the breath of every fool, whose sense
 No more can feel but his own wringing. Men that make
 Envy and crookèd malice nourishment,
 Dare bite the best. What infinite hearts-ease
 Must kings neglect, that private men enjoy!
 And what have kings, that privates have not too,
 Save ceremony, save general ceremony!
 And what art thou, thou idol ceremony?
 What kind of god art thou, that suffer'st more
 Of mortal griefs than do thy worshippers?
 What are thy rents? what are thy comings-in?
 O ceremony, show me but thy worth!
 This new and gorgeous garment, majesty,
 Sits not so easy on me as you think,
 And e'er a crown's a troublesome bedfellow.
 O polish'd perturbation, golden care,
 That keep'st the ports of slumber open wide,
 To many a watchful night! O majesty!
 When thou dost pinch thy bearer, thou dost sit
 Like a rich armor, worn in heat of day,
 That scald'st with safety. O foolish youth!
 Thou seek'st the greatness that will over-whelm thee.
 Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

" Upon these words, I came and cheer'd him up ;
 He smil'd me in the face, raught me his hand,
 And with a feeble gripe ask'd wearily :—

K. But what said Francis to my messages ?

F. B. He is malevolent to you in all aspects,
Which makes him prune himself, and bristle up
The crest of youth against your dignity.
He, more incens'd against your majesty
Than all the rest, discharg'd me with these words:—
'Tell him from me that he hath done me wrong,
And therefore I'll uncrown him ere't be long.'

K. Ha! durst the traitor breathe out so proud words?
Well, I will arm me, being thus forewarn'd.
They shall have wars and pay for their presumption:
By heaven, his madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turns the beam.

F. B. O most dread Sovereign, may it like your Grace
To let my tongue excuse all. What was purpos'd
Concerning his imprisonment, was rather
(If there be faith in men) meant for his trial
And fair purgation to the world, than malice,
I'm sure. But this I cannot say, my liege,
Concerning the hard part your hand doth bear
Against him now. It is the cruelty
Of the wild beast of prey—the tiger, bear,
Of their prize cheated, or the lioness
Robb'd of her whelps.

K. Go rate thy minions, proud insulting boy
Becomes it thee to be thus bold in terms,
Before a Sovereign and a lawful King?
Shamest thou not, knowing whence thou art extraught,
To let thy tongue detect thy base-born heart?
Remember, sir, thou art a banish'd creature.

“I know not what to say, but I reply
After a silence :—

F. B. I mock my name, great King, to flatter you.
 When you this offer'd homage do despise,
 You pluck a thousand dangers on your head;
 You lose a thousand well-disposèd hearts,
 And prick my tender patience to those thoughts
 Which honor and allegiance cannot think.
 What's the result? You do not meet a man but frowns.

K. Thinkst thou that I will leave my kingly throne,
 Wherein my father and my grandsire sat?
 No! first shall war unpeople this my realm.

F. B. But, your Grace,
 My title's good, and better far than yours.
 I am, indeed, the lawful King to England
 For I am rightful heir unto the crown.
 Begin, O Clio, and recount from hence
 My glorious sovereign's goodly ancestry,
 Till that by due degrees and long pretence,
 Thou have it brought unto her excellence.

K. Thy father was a simple lord, and thou thyself—

F. B. And Adam was a gardener!

K. And what of that?

F. B. Marry, this,—Edmund Mortimer, Earl of
 March,

Married the Duke of Clarence's daughter, did he not?

K. Tut, tut, sir, tell us not that ancient tale!

F. B. From him my lineage I derive aright,—
 'Tis from that line my mother claims the crown,
 And I, her son, inspirèd with the spirit
 Of putting down kings and princes, command
 Silence upon my birth and parentage.
 Here on your royal earth, Henry the Fifth
 Did revel in the very heart of France,

And tam'd the king, and made the Dolphin and the French
To stoop, seiz'd on their towns and provinces,
And had he willed it so, proud Sovereign,
We might have kept that glory to this day,
And all the learnèd counsel of the realm
Have still in state sat in the Council-house,
Early and late debating to and fro,
How France and Frenchmen might be kept in awe.
I never read but England's kings have come
Hither in pomp, in glittering arms adorn'd,
Aye, and their colors—often borne in France
And now in England, to your heart's great sorrow—
Shall be my winding sheet. I do assure you,
France should have torn and rent my very heart
Before I would have yielded to the league.
And when that I am crownèd England's King,
By favor of almighty God, I'll try
My right unto the crown of France itself,
Remembering there has been a French king prisoner
In England, and a king of England crown'd in France.
Know you, O King of France, our countrymen
Are men more order'd, than when Julius Cæsar
Smil'd at their lack of skill, but found their courage
Worthy his frowning at. Their discipline,
(Now wing-led with their courages) will make known
To their approvers, they are people such
That mend upon the world. See, proud Valois,
I'll muster up my friends and loving citizens,
Not mutinous in peace, but bold in war,
And rest in London, circled round with soldiers,
Like to the island girt in with the ocean.
Now stops thy spring, my sea shall suck them dry

And swell so much the higher by their ebb.
 Because that I am little, like an ape,
 You think that you should bear me on your shoulders—
 Thou art no Atlas for so great a weight.
 I would I had thy inches, thou shouldst know
 There was a heart in France.

“The King unto himself aside did say:—

K. With what a sharp provided wit he reasons!
 So cunning, and so young, is wonderful.
 His looks are full of peaceful majesty,
 His head by nature fram'd to wear a crown,
 His hand to wield a sceptre, and himself
 Likely in time to bless a regal throne.
 To mitigate the scorn he gives to me,
 He prettily and aptly taunts himself:
 Oh, 'tis a perilous boy, bold, quick, ingenious,
 Forward, capable: he is all the mother's
 From top to toe.

“And then he said aloud:—

K. Art thou so desperate grown to threat thy friends?
 I crave to give thy English pride a brave.
 Unthink thy speaking, boy, and say no more.

“In silence then, I waited his dismissal.”

“But since the King is tender in all things
 That may but glance upon the friendship of England,
 The amity between the two kingdoms,
 No doubt, stands entire and inviolate.”

“Aye; peace doth still her wheaten garland wear,
 And stands a comma 'tween their amities;
 And that their subjects' swords have clash'd,

Is nothing to the public peace o' th' crowns,
It being a thing very usual
In auxiliary forces of confederates,
The straightest and the best, to meet and draw
Blood in the field."

"But kings stoop not to every common thought,
And 'tis not hard to discern what's a king's own."

"But that which mov'd him most, was that
Being a king that lovèd wealth and treasure,
He could not well endure to have trade sick,
Nor any obstruction to continue
In the gate-vein that disperseth that blood."

"Soon the King rous'd from thought, and seeing
me, said :—

K. I have my wish in that I 'joy thy sight,
And sooner shall the sea o'erwhelm my land,
Than bear the ship that shall transport thee hence.
Wilt please thee pass along into the palace?
Margaret is there, and she will welcome you.

"O dissembling courtesy! How fine this tyrant
Can tickle where he wounds. I something fear
My father's wrath for this, but nothing what
His rage can do on me. I have been rash
And bridl'd not my tongue, and shall incur
I know not how much of his displeasure,
When this comes to his ears.

"To an attendant then he call'd :—

K. Come hither, Count;
Thou art sworn as deeply to effect what we intend,
As closely to conceal what we impart.
Thou know'st our reasons urg'd upon the way.

What think'st thou? Is it not an easy matter?
 A harmful weed, by wisdom rooted out,
 Can never hurt the true ingrafted plant.

Count. My Sovereign, he so loveth the Duke
 That he will not be won to aught against him.

K. Well, I will stoop and humble my intents
 To thy well practic'd wise directions.

C. I wonder that his insolence can brook
 To be commanded under Alençon?

K. Fame, at the which he aims,
 In whom already he's well grac'd, cannot
 Better be held, nor more attain'd than by
 A place below the first; for what miscarries
 Shall be the General's fault, though he perform
 To th' utmost of a man, and giddy censure
 Will then cry out of Henry,—'Oh, if he
 Had borne the business!'

C. Besides, if things go well,
 Opinion that so strikes on Henry, shall
 Of his demerits rob Duke of Alençon.

K. Alas, poor Duke, the task he undertakes
 Is numbering sands, or drinking oceans dry!
 Where one on his side fights, thousands will fly.

“Thus arm in arm the King and he doth march,
 Nay more, the guard upon his lordship waits,
 And all the court begins to flatter him.
 Thus leaning on the shoulder of the King,
 He nods, and scorns, and smiles at those that pass.
 Doth no man take exceptions at the slave?
 All stomach him, but none dare speak a word,—
 Ah! that bewrays their baseness, by my faith!
 Were all these noble peers here of my mind,

We'd hale him from the bosom of the King.
His sale of offices and towns in France
If they were known, as the suspect is great,
Would make him quickly hop without his head.

“I hear him say as they approach more near :—

C. Well, let that peevish Frenchman guard him sure ;
Unless his breast be sword-proof he shall die.

“I'll fetch a turn about the garden now,
And I will leer on him, as he comes by,
Then do but mark the countenance he'll give me !
At this instant he bores me with some trick ;
His eye revil'd me as his abject object,
And in his looks I read matter against me.
I'll follow and out-stare him.

“That I thus linger pleases not the King,
And turning from his friend he says to me :—

K. I bade you sir, go in ; you are awaited,
And courtesy at least forbids delay.

“I see sweet Margaret in an upper room,
And thither wend to greet the Queen of Love,
And bear the messages and letters of Navarre,
For sure I must to her my oath fulfill.
I send no messenger, myself first brings
To my sweet madam these unwelcome tidings.
She meets me ere I enter, with the words :—

Margaret. What news, what tidings, gentle Prince of
Wales?

What of Navarre? what of the Duke, my brother?
Thou tremblest, and the whiteness in thy cheek,

Is apter than thy tongue, to tell thine errand.

F. B. Sweet Queen, I'm out of breath, and scarce
can speak.

M. How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
To say to me, that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.
Is thy news good or bad? answer to that;
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:
Let me be satisfied, is't good or bad?

F. B. I come from your good lord and bring you
letters.

“Then Margaret saith—her tones are piercing
sweet:—

M. Letters?

Ah! with mine eyes I'll drink the words he sends,
Though ink be made of gall. How far'd he in the fight
In honor of our God and country's good?

F. B. Environèd he was with many foes,
And stood against them, as the hope of Troy
Against the Greeks, that would have enter'd Troy:
But Hercules himself must yield to odds,
And many strokes, though with a little axe,
Hews down and fells the hardest-timber'd oak.
I saw his followers, to the eager foe
Turn back, and fly like ships before the wind,
Or lambs pursued by hunger-starvèd wolves.
God knows what hath bechancèd him since then,
But this I know, he hath demean'd himself
Like one born to renown, by life or death.
And when the hardiest warriors did retire,

Navarre cried: 'Charge, and give no foot of ground!'
 And cried: 'A crown, or else a glorious tomb!
 A scepter, or an earthly sepulchre!'

M. Par la mort du dieu, il mourra!

And thus, and thus, thou tellest how they fought,
 Stopping my greedy ear with their bold deeds,
 But in the end (to stop mine ear indeed)
 Thou hast a sigh, to blow away this praise,
 Ending with brother,—husband,—both are dead?

F. B. Take comfort, madam, leave these sad laments:—

Navarre is living and your brother, too.
 Were soldiers' lives valued at thousand worlds,
 They cannot 'scape th' arrest of dreadful death—
 Death that doth seize and summon all alike.
 In few, his death (whose spirit lent a fire
 Even to the dullest peasant in his camp)
 Being bruted once, took fire and heat away
 From the best temper'd courage in his troops,
 For from his mettle was his party steel'd,
 Which once in him abated, all the rest
 Turn'd on themselves, like dull and heavy lead:
 And as the thing that's heavy in itself,
 Upon enforcement, flies with greatest speed,
 So did his men, heavy in Henry's loss,
 Lend to this weight such lightness, in their fear,
 That arrows fled not swifter toward their aim,
 Than did his soldiers (ayming at their safety)
 Fly from the field. The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat,
 As they did budge from rascals worse than they.
 The sum of all is, that the King hath won,
 Yet do I think Navarre is free from harm.

M. If he were dead what would betide on me?

F. B. No other harm but loss of such a lord.

M. The loss of such a lord includes all harms.

As Henry's late presaging prophecy,
Did glad my heart with hope of this young hero,
So doth my heart misgive me, in these conflicts
What may befall him to his harm and ours.

F. B. You were advis'd his flesh was capable
Of wounds, and scars; and that his forward spirit
Would lift him, where most trade of danger rang'd
Yet did you say, go forth: and none of this,
Though strongly apprehended, could restrain
The stiff-born action: what hath then befallen?
Or what hath this bold enterprise brought forth,
More than that being which was like to be?
Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum:
Methinks I see him stamp thus, and call thus,—
'Come on, you cowards! you were got in fear
Though you were born in France:' his bloody brow
With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,
Like to a harvest man, that task'd to mow
Or all, or lose his hire.

M. His bloody brow? Oh Jupiter, no blood!

F. B. It more becomes a man than gilt his trophy.
Himself did say to me: 'The blood I drop
Is rather physical than dangerous to me.'

M. Heaven bless my lord from fell Henry of Guise.

F. B. He'll beat the Guise's head below his knee,
And tread upon his neck.

M. Ah, me! help,—I shall swoond.

“Like to a stricken deer the poor Queen turns:
The holy beauty of her wondrous eyes
Shines on me through her tears.

Mescemeth, as I look, her gentle heart
Would die in tempest of an angry frown,
Or buffets rude of sorrow and of scorn.

F. B. O lady, weep no more, lest I give cause
To be suspected of more tenderness
Than doth become a man. Every minute now
Should be the father of some stratagem,
So soon as I can win the offended King,
I will be known your advocate, sweet Queen.

M. My Prince,—
'Tis very kindly spoke like a true man,
And it is honourable in thee to offer this.
But step aside with me to my retreat ;
We can more safely speak of all our plans.

“ She led the way into a secret bower,
In whose enclosed shadow there was pight
A fair pavilion, scarcely to be seen,
The which was all within most richly dight
With gold, and many a gorgeous ornament,
After the Persian monarch's antique guise,
Such as the maker's self could best devise,
Enchas'd with diamonds, sapphires, rubies,
And fairest pearl of wealthy India ;
The greatest princess it might well delight.

M. Thy honour hath an adamant of power,
But it doth sound,—‘ away, away, away !’
We must with resolute minds resolve to fly :
To-morrow, sir, with you I will set forth
To meet Navarre as is appointed us.
Doth not thy blood thrill at it?—not a whit ?
Art not thou horrible afraid, sweet youth ?

F. B. What man dare, I dare. Yea, my gracious Queen,
I dare do all that may become a man ;
Who dares no more, is none.

M. Thou wilt be chid to-morrow, when thou comest
back.

F. B. The King by this hath happily receiv'd
The news of Guise' success, and when he reads
His personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises will contend,
Which should be greatest.

M. You are right, my friend :
He'd throw away the dearest thing he ow'd
As 'twere a careless trifle. He will have
No thought of you, or me. 'Tis true, 'tis true.
Please thee come something nearer,—list to me ;
I cannot choose but love and honor Henry,
And will prefer his safety 'fore my life,
Whether he hath dishonor'd me or no :
And I will forth to join him in the camp,
Provided, my brave youth, that thou wilt keep
Both watch and ward upon me on the way.

F. B. Dear Queen, if't please you so to employ me,
With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
Than I went forth, I will go back again.
Navarre doth look for my return ere long,
So if you will but trust me, on my honor,
Full well shall you perceive how much I dare.
I'll bring you to him, and deliver you'
In three days' space to the safe keeping of your lord.
And list, sweet Queen, we must away to-night.
If therefore you dare trust my honesty,
Your followers I'll whisper to the business.

M. I humbly thank thee, gentle sir; thy plan
Approves itself to be most excellent.
Thou know'st my lodging; get me ink and paper,
And hire post horses: I will leave to-night.
I do beseech thee, sir, have patience:
Thy looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure!

F. B. Tush, thou art deceiv'd.

M. Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do;
And hire thou horses, I'll be with thee straight.
I am resolv'd, and now let's see for means.
So leave us to ourselves; these words, these looks,
Infuse new life in me. Sweet sir, adieu.

“I kneel to thank this lovely Queen for her sweet
words,

And beg for grace to lay my duty on her hand:
Frankly she gives it and her looks are gracious—
Fain would I kiss her feet to ease my bashful heart:
For such a passion doth embrace my bosom,
My heart beats thicker than a feverous pulse,
And all my powers do their bestowing lose,
Like vassalage, at unawares encount'ring
The eye of majesty. Lower I bend and sigh:—

F. B. O Queen, if you deny me favor let me die!

I kiss your hand, but not in flattery:
Its pleasant touch hath made my heart to dance.

M. What say'st thou, boy? Is my young Prince a
poet?

I am much bounden to thee; fare-thee-well.
Thou art so far before, that swiftest wing
Of recompense is slow to overtake thee:

Would'st thou had less deserv'd, that the proportion
Of thanks and payment had been better mated.

“I look into the lady's face, and in her eyes
I find a wonder, or a wondrous miracle,
And I nor heard nor read so strange a thing,—
A shadow of myself form'd in her eye,
And in this form of beauty read I,—love!
I do protest I never lov'd myself,
Till now infixèd, I behold myself
Drawn in the flattering table of her eye.

M. Speak then, my gentle Prince; and canst thou love?

F. B. Nay, ask me if I can refrain from love,
For I do love thee most unfeignedly.

“With cheeks abash'd I blush, and swear to serve,
Be it unto death and future misery,
This Queen of earthly queens, as goddess so divine,
Who charms with her sweet smile e'en the most
saturnine.

M. Fie, treacherous hue, that will betray with blushing
The close enacts and counsels of the heart!
This tells thy tale, excuse it how thou canst.

F. B. Fair Margaret, the beauty of thy face,
Sufficient to bewitch the heavenly powers,
Hath wrought so much in me, that now of late,
I find myself made captive unto love.
Laura, to thee, was but a kitchen wench;
Dido, a dowdy; Cleopatra, a gypsy;
Helen and Hero, like to market girls.
Thou, Margaret, are like the violets
That strew the green lap of the new-come spring.

Behold the window of my heart, mine eye!
 What humble suit attends thy answer there?
 Impose some service on me for my love.

M. I thank thee, gentle Francis, and be sure
 I count myself in nothing else so happy:
 And as my fortune ripens with thy love,
 It shall be still thy true love's recompense.

F. B. Your presence makes me rich, my gracious
 Queen,

And far surmounts our labor to attain it.

M. Ha, gracious youth, how high thy glory towers,
 When the rich blood of kings is set on fire!
 Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
 What I have spoke; but farewell compliment.
 Doest thou love? I know thou wilt say aye,
 And I will take thy word, yet if thou swear'st,
 Thou mayst prove false: at lovers' perjuries
 They say Jove laugh'd. O gentle Prince of Wales,
 If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully.

F. B. How have I sworn?

M. 'Tis not the many oaths that make the truth,
 But the plain, single vow, that is vow'd true:
 What is not holy, that we swear not by,
 But take the Highest to witness; then pray you tell me,
 If I should swear by Jove's great attributes,
 I loved you dearly, would you believe my oaths,
 When I did love you ill? This has no holding
 To swear by him whom I protest to love,
 That I will work against him. Therefore your oaths
 Are words and poor conditions, but unseal'd,
 At least in my opinion.

F. B. Change it, change it:

Be not so holy cruel. Love is holy,
 And my integrity ne'er knew the crafts
 That you do charge men with. Stand no more off,
 But give thyself unto my sick desires,
 Who then recovers. Say thou art mine, and ever
 My love as it begins, shall so persever.

M. Prince, stand thou up, thou art too highly mov'd,
 Too violently carried; hear me speak:
 Thy zeal must be controll'd; rise, sweet boy, rise;
 'Tis for thy good that I thee thus advise;
 A greater power than we denies all this.
 Wouldst have it said thou temp'st me to forsake
 Navarre, my King, when most he needs my help?
 And are they not by God accurs'd, sweet sir,
 That sever them whom He hath knit in one?

F. B. The law of Heaven will not lead us amiss:
 And here I promise and protest withal
 By Styx, by Heaven's power imperial,
 By all that 'longs to Juno's deity—
 Her crown, her mace, ensigns of majesty,
 Her spotless marriage rites, her league divine—
 To stand in this unto your final judgment.

M. It resteth then that thou be well content.
 How sweetly do you minister to love,
 That know love's grief by his complexion!

F. B. But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
 I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

M. What need y bridge much broader than the stream?
 The fairest grant is the necessity;
 Look, what will serve is fit; but oh! my Prince,
 Fear thou this tyrannous passion, more alas,
 Than e'en my life. I do beseech thee, hear me;

Thou who professest thyself my loyal servant,
My most obedient counselor and friend,
And who dost undertake to be my advocate,
Must keep a gracious and innocent soul,—
The silence of pure innocence persuades,
Where speaking fails. Think not, dear boy, of love;
Love must have ease—'twere inconvenient now,
A fardel, an impediment, sweet sir.
Thou shalt to London presently, and I
Far from the great metropolis will be.
The farther from the court I were remov'd,
The more, I think, of Heaven I were below'd,
Because the court is 'counted Venus' net,
Where gifts and vows for stales are often set;
None but the chaste as Vesta, but shall meet
A curious tongue to charm her ears with sweet;
I 'count of court, my Prince, as wise men do,
'Tis fit for those that know what 'longs thereto.
You look not pleas'd; what doth this silence bode?
Now fear and love have tied thy ready tongue,
From blabbing forth the passions of thy mind.

F. B. Why, Margaret, I see you set at nought
The force of love.

M. In sooth, this is my thought,
Most gracious Prince, that they that little prove,
Are mickle blest from bitter-sweets of love;
And well I wot I heard a shepherd sing,
That like a bee, love hath a little sting:
He lurks in flowers, he percheth on the trees,
He on kings' pillows bends his pretty knees;
The boy is blind, but when he will not spy,
He hath a leaden foot and wings to fly.

F. B. You cannot choose but cast some gift apart,
 Although I see you'll part but with light gifts,
 As may the queen of love to any lover give;
 In weightier things you'll say a beggar nay.

M. Love is too weighty for thy youth to wear.

F. B. I weigh it lightly; were it heavier!

M. Lightly? aha! that's idle, little lord.

F. B. I would that I might thank you as you call me.

M. How?

F. B. Little.

M. Ha! ha! an it pleases not?

F. B. Methinks you mock me; I am not a child!
 Why taunt and scorn me thus opprobriously?

M. I have not seen a more alluring boy.
 Proportion'd as was Paris, when in gray
 He courted Enon in the vale of Troy.
 Great lords have come and pleaded for my love,
 But thou, sweet youth, art England's only flower,
 The royal tree hath left us royal fruit,
 Which mellow'd by the stealing hours of time,
 Will well become the seat of majesty.
 But ere the crown thou lookst for live in peace,
 Ten-thousand bloody crowns of mothers' sons
 Shall ill become the flower of England's face,
 Change the complexion of her maid-pale peace
 To scarlet indignation, and bedew
 Her pasture's grass with faithful English blood.
 'Tis true thy blood had been the dearer then,
 By I know not how much an ounce, but I
 Should miss the matter that my mind aims at.

F. B. What star was opposite when that was thought?
 If you becomes not well, O glorious Queen.

This declaration shall become, in time,
An overture of marriage; this diamond
Shall be the token: it was my mother's,—
Take it, dear heart, but keep it till I woo you
When he, your dearest husband is no more.

M. May he live longer than I've time to tell his years.
These times of woe afford no time to woo.

“Her words did tell me nothing of her heart,
But when she bent on me the light of her sweet eyes,
They gave to me good leave to speak again.

F. B. Sweet Queen, myself, and all on earth I have
Or hope to have, I give you with this ring,
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.
Receive it, Margaret, as my gift to you.

M. Receive it? No, these innocent hands of mine,
Shall not be guilty of so foul a crime.

“And yet, and yet, those lovely 'wilderer eyes
Say not the same, and her soft snowy hand,
Resting in mine accepts the proffer'd ring.
I am afraid all this is but a dream,
Too flattering sweet to be substantial;
Dreams are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain phantasie,
Which is as thin of substance as the air,
And more inconstant than the wind, who woos
Even now the frozen bosom of the North,
And being anger'd puffs away from thence,
Turning his side to the dew-dropping South.
O do I dream? or have I dream'd till now?
I do not sleep! I see, I hear, I speak,—

F. B. Put off thy blushes, Margaret, and avouch
The thoughts o' thy heart with looks of an empress.
Take me by th' hand and say, 'Francis of 'England,
I am thine.'

M. Nay, nay, press me not now: another time I'll
say 't.

F. B. Now at the latest minute of the hour,
Grant me thy love.

M. A time methinks too short
To make a world-without-end bargain in.

F. B. Say but 'I love thee.'

M. Nay, I dare not,—yet
What my tongue dares not, that my heart shall say.
Your pardon, sir, for this. I'll blush my thanks.

F. B. Farewell, farewell; one kiss and I'll descend.

M. Art thou gone so? love, lord, husband, friend,
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
For in a minute there are many days.
O by this count, I shall be much in years,
Ere I again behold my gentle Prince.
Tell me where hast thou been this long month past?

F. B. 'Tis but two days, my Margaret, my Queen.

M. How poorly art thou school'd, ungracious boy?
Fie, fie, away! ne'er look on me again.
Where are your thoughts wide wandering, my lord?
The crescent moon hath wax'd into the full,
And then again worn to a slender thread,
Since thou didst press my lips with that sweet kiss.
Art thou so poor that thou hast only one?
Ah! poor my lord, how nearly art thou beggar'd!

F. B. Farewell, farewell; lend me thy honey'd lips
again.

M. Let me unkiss the oath 'twixt thee and me,—
And yet not so, for with a kiss 'twas made.
I've pledg'd my truth and lasting fealty—
It is no more than my poor life must answer—
And ever will I be your faithful servant.

F. B. My mistress, dearest, and I thus humble ever.

M. My husband then?

F. B. Aye, with a heart as willing,
As bondage e'er of freedom : here's my hand.

M. And mine, with my heart in't ; and now farewell
Till half an hour hence.

F. B. A thousand, thousand
Fondest farewells ; sweet Margaret, be true !

M. Stay :

I prithee, tell me what thou think'st of me.

F. B. That you do think you are not what you are.

M. If I think so, I think the same of you.

F. B. Then think you right ; I am not what I am.

M. I would you were, as I would have you be.

F. B. Would it be better, madam, than I am ?

I wish it might, for now I am your fool.

Once more farewell, sweetest of Margarets,

And keep you up good heart. I will return

When I, my love, have cull'd such necessaries,

As are behooveful for our state to-morrow,

For yet ere supper time, must I perform

Much business appertaining. For these two hours,

Margaret, I will leave thee.

M. Alas, dear love, I cannot lack thee two hours.

F. B. I must attend to many hundred things—

The clock upbraids me with the waste of time—

By two o'clock I'll be with thee again :

But now I'll go, this business asketh haste.
 Pray let the nurse this night sit up with you,
 For I am sure you have your hands full all,
 In this so sudden business.

M. Nay, nurse must leave me to myself to-night:
 For I have need of many orisons,
 To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
 Which well thou know'st is cross and full of sin.
 God shield me, hapless princess and a wife.

“ Ere I could give to her the parting kiss,
 That I had set betwixt two charming words,
 I heard the footsteps of Queen Catherine.

M. Yond' comes my wary mother; Francis, go.

F. B. And must we be divided? must we part?

M. Aye, hand from hand, my love, and heart from
 heart!

F. B. Then fare-thee-well.

“ At that same instant came
 The maid, or nurse, that waits upon the Queen,—

Nurse. Madam, your mother craves a word with you.'

“ Then she did follow me and say :—

Nur. Pray you a word;
 My mistress bids me say I'll go with you
 An' you do need my help.

F. B. No, no, not now, but come this afternoon
 And stay thou, good nurse, behind the abbey wall;
 Within this hour my man shall be with thee,
 And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair,
 Which to the high top-gallant of my joy,

Must be my convoy in the secret night.

Nur. How shall I best convey the ladder thither?

F. B. It will be light, good nurse, that you may bear it
Under a cloak, that is of any length.

Nur. A cloak as long as thine will serve the turn?

F. B. Aye, my good nurse.

Nur. Then let me see thy cloak,
I'll get me one of such another length.

F. B. Why any cloak will serve the turn, woman.

Nur. How shall I fashion me to wear a cloak?

I pray thee let me feel thy cloak upon me.

F. B. Ah nurse, ah nurse, thou art a jolly beggar;
Take it and go, but mind you of the hour.
Farewell, be trusty and I'll 'quite thy pains:
Farewell; commend me to thy mistress.

Nur. Now God in heaven bless thee: hark you, sir!

F. B. What sayst thou my dear nurse?

Nur. Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say
Two may keep counsel putting one away?

F. B. Warrant thee my man as true as steel.

Nur. Well, sir, my mistress is the sweetest lady.
Lord, lord, when 'twas a little prating thing—

F. B. Aye, aye, good nurse; commend me to thy lady.

Nur. Aye, a thousand times.

“Then as I go, I muse and count my way with sighs.
Now old desire doth in his death-bed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir.
There is betwixt that smile I would aspire to,
More pangs and fears than wars or women have!
She is a woman, therefore may be wooed;
She is a woman, therefore may be won:

And she is Margaret, therefore must be lov'd.
 But she is now the wife of brave Navarre—
 'Tis true, Navarre may chance repent she was his wife—
 And by this marriage all men thought to see
 The King and he forever knit together.
 If I were bound to divine of this unity,
 I would not prophesy so, for I think
 The policy of that purpose made more
 In the marriage than the love of the parties;
 The tale is not yet told—the end not yet!
 But since she 'scapes by flight to save her life,
 The rest is ruthful, yet t' beguile the time
 'Tis interlac'd with merriment and rhyme.

“The morn doth shine in beauty fresh and sheen,
 Like to the peerless dame whom I adore,
 The world's sole glory and her sex's grace:
 She's still the rose—her beauties wax not dead:
 She's fair (and virtuous I make no doubt).
 I would abate her nothing though I do profess
 Myself but her adorer, not her friend;
 This shall assure my constant loyalty,
 And I will love her everlastingly.
 I am as constant as the Northern star
 Of whose true-fixt and resting quality,
 There is no fellow in the firmament.
 The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks,
 They are all fire, and every one doth shine;
 But there's but one in all doth hold his place:
 So, in the world,—'tis furnish'd well with men,
 And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
 Yet in the number I do know but one,
 That unassailable holds on his rank,

Unshak'd of motion : and that I am he,
Let me a little show it, even in this,—
That I am constant in my love to her,
And so remain whatever she may do.
True swains in love, shall in the world to come
Approve their truths by Francis : when their rhymes,
Full of protest, of oath, and big compare,
Want similes, truth tired with iteration,—
As true as steel, as plantage to the moon,
As sun to day, as turtle to her mate,
As iron to adamant, as earth to th' center,—
Yet, after all comparisons of truth,
As truth's authentic author to be cited,
As true as Francis, shall crown up the verse
And sanctify the numbers.

“ She's noble born ;
And like her true nobility, she has
Carried herself toward me most graciously.
Yet she is proud withal : this is a creature,
Would she begin a sect, might quench the zeal
Of all professors else ; make proselytes
Of who she but bid follow,—women and men.
Women will love her, that she is a woman
More worth than any man : men, that she is
The rarest of all women. I recall a time
When at the banquet Henry rated her.
These were her words utter'd with mild disdain :—

‘ My lords, before it pleas'd his majesty
To raise my state to title of a queen,
Do me but right, and you must all confess
That I was not ignoble of descent ;
For am I not the daughter of a king ?

The daughter of the bravest king of France?’

“I blame not her she could say little less :
She had the wrong but they did make reply :—

‘Nay if thou be that princely eagle’s bird,
Show thy descent by gazing ’gainst the sun.

“Her answer was a prophecy for thus she spake :—

‘Dazzle mine eyes, or do I see three suns ?

Three glorious suns each one a perfect sun,
Not separated with the racking clouds,
But sever’d in a pale, clear-shining sky.

See, see, they join, embrace, and seem to kiss,
As if they vow’d some league inviolable.

Now are they but one lamp, one light, one sun :

In this the heaven figures some event.

’Tis wondrous strange, the like yet never heard of!’

“If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,

My dreams presage some joyful news at hand :

My bosom’s lord sits lightly in his throne ;

And all this day an unaccustom’d spirit,

Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.

I dreamt my lady came and found me dead,

(Strange dream that gives a dead man leave to think)

And breath’d such life with kisses in my lips,

That I reviv’d and was an emperor.

Ah me, how sweet is love itself possess’d,

When but love’s shadows are so rich in joy.

“I cannot rest : I stalk about her door

Like a strange soul upon the Stygian banks

Staying for waftage. Ha ! there is her nurse !

F. B. God speed, fair nurse, whither so fast away?

Nur. Call you me fair? That fair again unsay.

F. B. Happily met, O be thou my Charon,
And give me swift transportance to those fields,
Propos'd for the deserver. O gentle nurse,
From Cupid's shoulder pluck his painted wings
And fly with me to Margaret.

Nur. Walk here i' th' orchard, I will bring her straight.
She's making her ready, she'll come to thee ;
You must be witty now, she does so blush
And fetches her wind so short as if she were
Fraid with a sprite : i' faith, my lord, she fetches
Her breath so short as a new ta'en sparrow.
I'll fetch her sir.

F. B. No, take this letter to thy mistress rather.
'Twere better she come not to meet me now.
Hie, make you haste, make haste, make haste I say,
For we must leave the town ere it is day.

Nur. There's time enough.

F. B. Nay, gentle nurse, not so. Go, go, I pray,
And tell thy mistress I'll be there straightway,
When night her curtain draws. Now get thee gone :
Hie you, make haste for it grows very late!
And dearest nurse, upon thy life I charge thee,
Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,
And do not interrupt me in my course.

“ Now am I arm'd against the worst can happen ;
And haste is needful in this desperate case.
My heart is wondrous light ! Why do I weep ?
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring ;
Your tributary drops belong to woe,

Which you mistaking, offer up to joy.
 Whether it be through force of your report;
 My beauteous Margaret, or for that
 My tender youth was never yet attain'd
 With any passion of inflaming love,
 I cannot tell : but this I am assur'd,
 I feel such sharp dissension in my breast,
 Such fierce alarums both of hope and fear,
 As I am sick with working of my thoughts.
 I am giddy! expectation whirls me round :
 Th' imaginary relish is so sweet,
 That it enchants my sense : what will it be
 When that the wat'ry palates taste indeed
 Love's thrice reputed nectar? Death, I fear me,
 Sounding destruction, or some joy too fine,
 Too subtile, potent, and too sharp in sweetness,
 For the capacity of my ruder powers ;
 I fear it much, and I do fear besides
 That I shall lose distinction in my joys,
 As doth a battle when they charge on heaps
 The enemy flying. O I'm Fortune's fool,
 Her very plaything! for my mind misgives,
 Some consequence yet hanging in the stars,
 Shall bitterly begin this fearful date
 With this night's revels, and expire the term
 Of a despisèd life clos'd in my breast,
 By some vile forfeit of untimely death.
 Uneven is the course, I like it not.

“Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
 Towards Phœbus' lodging ; such a wagoner
 As Phœton would whip you to the west,
 And bring in cloudy night immediately.

Spread thy close curtain love-performing Night,
That run-away's eyes may wink. Come civil Night,
Leaden-wing'd Night! So tedious is this day,
As is the night before some festival,
To an impatient child that has new robes
And may not wear them. Come, O come sweet Night,
Dear dusky Night, in rusty iron car;
Between you both shorten the time I pray
But let still silence true night-watches keep,
That sacred peace may in assurance reign.

“I long'd to go where I could note the sea,
Where Phoebus dips his amber tresses oft
And kisses Thetis in the day's decline.
The hours were leaden pac'd and slow as age,
Yet never day so long but late would pass.
This one wore out at last, and when the night
Her silver lamps hung in the vault of heaven,
Scaling the ladder, quaintly made of cords,
And cast up with a pair of anchoring hooks,
With step more light than mariner's I came
Unto that lofty nest, and bade the nurse
Go waken Margaret, and trim her up,
(Some minutes ere the time of her awaking).
I heard her softly say unto my love :—

‘Awake, dear heart, awake, thou hast slept well,
Awake!’ Methought the office should be mine
So tenderly to speak, and I drew near;
My Margaret still slept, but at the sound
Of my too eager footfall on the floor,
She spake, and I entreated her come forth.

‘Soft, take me with thee, take me with thee, Prince,’
She whisperèd ere her sweet eyes did ope,
But when she saw my face she quickly askt :—

M. How cam'st thou hither! tell me, and wherefore?
 The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
 And the place, death, considering who thou art,
 If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

F. B. With love's light wings did I o'erperch these
 walls,
 For stony limits cannot hold love out.

M. I would not for the world they saw thee here.

F. B. I have Night's cloak to hide me from their eyes,
 And but thou love me, let them find me here;
 My life were better ended by their hate,
 Than death proroguèd wanting of thy love.

M. By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

F. B. By love that first did prompt me to enquire,
 He lent me counsel and I lent him eyes;
 I am no pilot, yet wert thou as far
 As that vast shore washt with the farthest sea,
 I should adventure for such merchandise,
 My own sweet Margart.

M. If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
 Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
 I'll frown and be perverse, and say thee nay,
 So thou wilt woo: but else not for the world.
 In truth, fair Prince of Wales, I am too fond:
 But trust me gentleman, I'll prove more true,
 Than those that have coying to be strange;
 I should have been more strange, I must confess,
 But that thou overheard'st ere I was ware
 My true love's passion, therefore pardon me,
 And not impute this yielding to light love,
 Which the dark night hath so discoverèd.

F. B. Lady, by yonder moon I vow,

That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops.

M. O swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Least that thy love prove likewise variable.

F. B. What shall I swear by?

M. Do not swear at all:

Or if thou wilt swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

F. B. If my heart's dear love—

M. Well do not swear, although I joy in thee:
I have no joy of this contract to-night,
It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden,
Too like the lightning which doth cease to be
Ere one can say, it lightens. Sweet, good-night:
This bud of love by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet:
Goodnight, goodnight, as sweet repose and rest,
Come to thy heart, as that within my breast.

F. B. O wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

M. What satisfaction can'st thou have to-night?

F. B. Th' exchange of thy love's faithful vow for
mine.

M. I gave thee mine before thou did'st request it:
And yet I would it were to give again.

F. B. Would'st thou withdraw it,
For what purpose love?

M. But to be frank and give it thee again,
And yet I wish but for the thing I have,
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep, the more I give to thee
The more I have, for both are infinite:

I hear some noise within, dear love, adieu :

Within: Madam !

(I come anon :) but if thou mean'st not well,

I do beseech thee—

Within: Madam !

(By and by I come)—

To cease thy strife, and leave me to my grief.

To-morrow will I send.

F. B. So thrive my soul.

M. Francis.

F. B. It is my soul that calls upon my name.

How silver sweet, sound lovers' tongues by night,

Like softest music to attending ears.

M. Francis.

F. B. Margaret.

M. What o'clock to-morrow

Shall I send to thee ?

F. B. By the hour of nine.

M. I will not fail, 'tis twenty years till then.

“ She holds some converse

Aside with her good nurse, then comes she to me

And (with wild looks) bids me devise some means

To rid her from this second marriage vow.

Now am I dumb, but nurse grown sudden bold

Interposes :—

Nur. Beshrew my very heart

I think you are happy in this second match,

For it excels your first: or if it did not,

Your first is dead, or 'twere as good he were,

As living here and you no use of him.

Words, vows, gifts, tears, and love's full sacrifice,

He offers in another enterprise.

“But Margaret vouchsafes her no reply.
Immoderately she weeps,—I count it dangerous
That she should give her sorrows so much sway,—
And therefore have I little talk of love,
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.

F. B. Now do you know the reason of this haste?

“Quoth I, to stop the inundation of her tears,
And Margaret answerèd so sadly sweet:—

M. I would I knew not why it should be slow'd.

F. B. O comfort thee, my lady and my wife—

M. That may be sir, when I may be a wife.

F. B. What must be shall be.

M. That's a certain text.

Hold, Francis, I do spy a kind of hope,
Which craves as desperate an execution
As that is desperate which we would prevent;
But much I fear some ill unlucky thing
In this we undertake. Oh bid me leap
From off the battlements of any tower,
Or walk in thievish ways, or bid me lurk
Where serpents are, chain me with roaring bears,
Or bid me go into a new-made grave,
And I will do it without fear or doubt,
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.
She's not well married, that lives married long,
But she's best married, that dies married young.
Where are my vows I made unto my king?
What shall become of me if I prove false?
Ah, wretched man, would I had died a maid!

F. B. I must be gone, or I shall be distraught
With all these hideous fears and rude delays.

Was the hope drunk wherein you drest yourself?
 Hath it slept since? and wakes it now to look
 So green, and pale, at what it did so freely?
 From this time forth, such I account thy love.
 Art thou afeard, in thine own act and valor,
 To be the same as thou art in desire?
 'Tis well, I will be gone.

M. Are you aweary of me?

F. B. O Margaret! but that the busy day
 Wak'd by the lark, hath rous'd the ribald crows,
 And dreaming night will hide our eyes no longer,
 I would not from thee. Now I must be gone.

M. Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day:
 It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
 That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear,
 Nightly she sings on yond pomegranate tree:
 Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

F. B. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
 No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
 Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
 Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
 Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
 We must away, sweet Margaret; haste thee, haste!

M. Yond light is not daylight, I know it I:
 It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
 To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
 And light thee on thy way unto the camp:
 Therefore stay yet,—thou need'st not to be gone.

F. B. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death,
 I am content so you will have it so.
 I'll say yon gray is not the morning's eye,
 'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;

Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
 The vaulty heaven so high above our heads;
 I have more care to stay than will to go:
 I fly not death, to fly his deadly doom,
 Tarry I here, I but attend on death,
 But fly I hence, I fly away from life.
 Come, death, and welcome! Margaret wills it so.
 How is't my soul? let's talk,—it is not day.

M. It is, it is,—hie hence, begone, away!
 It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
 Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.
 O now be gone, more light and light it grows.

F. B. More light and light,—more dark and dark
 our woes.

M. Aye, dark our woes, dear Francis! Like the lily
 That once was mistress of the field and flourish'd
 I'll hang my head and perish.

“Was ever woman in this humour wooed?
 Was ever woman in this humour won?
 I'll have her but I will not keep her long:
 And yet to win her,—all the world to nothing!
 “And then a noise did scare me from the room,
 And she (too desperate) would not go with me.
 Then since the case so stands as now it doth,
 And things have falne out so unluckily,
 I now am banishèd from all the world:
 If thus put forth from her society,
 There is no world without these Paris walls,
 But purgatory, torture, hell itself:
 Hence banishèd is banisht from the world.
 If aught in this miscarried by my fault,
 Then let my life be sacrific'd before the time.

F. B. What mutterest thou nurse?

“And then she said in my unwilling ear:—

Nur. Guise is the cause that Margaret cannot love,
Nor fix her liking on thee, English Prince.
Take him away and then the effects will fail.

F. B. Accurst be he! I cannot stay to hear!
I cannot brook competitors in love.
Guise, Guise, how hast thou injur'd both thyself and us.
Thou'rt like a foul misshapen stygmatick,
(Fair in thy body but deform'd in soul)
Mark'd by the destinies to be avoided,
As venom toads' or lizards' dreadful stings!
But nurse, wilt thou betray thy noble mistress thus?
I blush to think upon this ignominy.

Nur. Ah, sir! ah, sir!

F. B. Yet Margaret, base Margaret,
A wisp of straw were worth a thousand crowns,
To make this shameless callet know herself:
Helen of Greece was fairer far than thou,
Although thy husband may be Menelaus;
And ne'er was Agamemnon's brother wrong'd
By that false woman, as this king by thee!

Nur. Ah, sir! ah, ah, sir!

F. B. Peace, good nurse, go in,
And tell my lady I am gone, or that I stand
Ready to go, but never to return.

Nur. Go get thee to thy love, as was decreed,
Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her.

F. B. Nay, nay, nurse, say not so. I'll not do it.
Love give me strength, and strength shall help afford:
Console thou me, comfort me, counsel me:

Alack, alack, that Heaven should practice stratagems,
Upon so soft a subject as myself.

“O Margaret, my love, my sweet, sweet love,
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,
Then is it likely thou wilt undertake
A thing like death to chide away this shame,
That cop'st with death himself, to 'scape fro' it.

“He jests at scars that never felt a wound.
But soft, what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east and Margaret is the sun.

Arise fair sun and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou, her maid, art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal liverie is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it, cast it off:

It is my lady, O it is my love,
She speaks, yet she says nothing, what of that?
Her eye discourses, I will answer it:

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Oh speak again bright angel, for thou art
As glorious to this night being o'er my head,
As is a wingèd messenger of heaven
Unto the white upturnèd wondering eyes
Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him,
When he bestrides the lazy puffing clouds,
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

“Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
 As daylight doth a lamp; her eye in heaven
 Would through the airy region stream so bright,
 That birds would sing, and think it were not night.

“ With tears augmenting the fresh morning’s dew,
 Adding to clouds, more clouds with my deep sighs,
 I steal into the covert of the wood;
 But all so soon as the all-cheering sun,
 Shall in the farthest east begin to draw
 The shady curtains from Aurora’s bed,
 Away from light I will steal heavy home,
 And private in my chamber pen myself,
 Shut up my window, lock fair daylight out,
 And make myself an artificial night.
 Aye me, sad hours seem long! and yet, what is
 The sadness that doth lengthen so my hours?
 Not having that, which having makes them short.

“ Westward from the city’s side so early walking,
 I met a friar long well known to me.

F. B. Good morrow, father.

Friar. *Benedicite!*

What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?
 Young son, it argues a distemper’d head,
 So soon to bid good-morrow to thy bed.

F. B. It is the breathing time of day with me.

Fri. Care keeps his watch in every old man’s eye
 And where care lodges, sleep will never lie:
 But where unbruised youth with unstuff’d brain,
 Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign;
 Therefore thy earliness doth me assure,

Thou art uprousd with some distemp'ature;
Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,
And thou art wedded to calamity.
Or if not so, then here I hit it right
Our young friend hath not been in bed to night.

F. B. That last is true, the sweeter rest was mine.

F. God pardon sin: wast thou with Margaret, son?

F. B. With Margaret, my ghostly father? no,—

I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.

Fri. That's my good son, but where hast thou been
then?

F. B. I'll tell thee ere thou ask it me again.

Fri. Thou dost not mark me. I have spoke in vain.

Art thou in love?

F. B. Out.

Fri. Of love?

F. B. Out of her favor where I am in love.

Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising what they look on, and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak: she cannot love.
Now therefore would I have thee to my tutor
How, and which way I may bestow myself
To be regarded in her sun-bright eye.

Fri. Alas that love so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof.

F. B. Alas that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should without eyes, see pathways to his will.

Fri. Within the infant rin'd of this weak flower,
Poison hath residence, and medicine power:
For this being smelt, with that part cheers each part,
Being tasted slays all senses with the heart.

Two such opposèd kings encamp them still,
 In man as well as herbs, grace and rude will :
 And where the worsèr is predominant,
 Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

F. B. I like not that! I tell thee, churlish priest,
 A minist'ring angel shall that fair queen be,
 When thou liest howling.

Fri. What, the fair Margaret?

F. B. Aye, my good lord.

Fri. An earnest prophecy;
 What wilt thou do for her?

F. B. What, cursèd fiend? The devil take thy soul.

Fri. Thou pray'st not well.

F. B. Thy holy office shields thee, else I'd draw.

Fri. Nay, save thyself to fight the King, her brother:
 He tenders her and thou must answer this
 Unto his royal majesty, I ween.

F. B. I lovèd Margaret: forty-thousand brothers,
 Could not (with all their quantity of love)
 Make up my sum. Good father list to me:
 Except I be by Margaret in the night,
 There is no music in the nightingale.
 Unless I look on Margaret in the day,
 There is no day for me to look upon.
 She is my essence, and I leave to thee,
 If I be not by her fair influence
 Foster'd, illumin'd, cherish'd, kept alive.

Fri. Fie, fie, thou sham'st thy shape, thy love, thy wit:
 Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,
 Digressing from the valor of a man;
 Thy dear love sworn, but hollow perjury,
 Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish;

Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,
Misshapen in the conduct of them both,
Like powder in a skill-less soldier's flask,
Is set afire by thine own ignorance,
And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.
You are too shallow, Francis, much too shallow
To sound the bottom of the after-times.

F. B. Amen, amen, but come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
That one short minute gives me in her sight.

Fri. I tell thee this for thine own benefit,
Not that I think you did not love the lady,
But that I know love is begun by time:
And I do see in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it:
And true it is that when the oil is spent,
The light goes out—the wick is thrown away.
Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs,
Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes,
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with loving tears.

F. B. What is it else?

Fri. A madness, most discreet,
A choking gall and a preserving sweet,
A violet in the youth of primy nature;
Froward, not permanent; sweet, not lasting.
But heed me well, and make my words thy guide,
Let not thy love exceed thine honor, son.

F. B. You'd think it strange if I should marry her?

Fri. That would be ten days' wonder at the least.

F. B. That's a day longer than a wonder lasts.

Fri. By so much is the wonder in extremes.

Great men record within their learnèd volumes,

That all extremes end in nought but extremes.
 But my bold youth, my wisdom bids me say,
 Though true as truth, though daughter of a king,
 Though fair as ever living wight was fair,
 Though nor in deed nor word ill-meriting,
 This were a match unmeet. She is too old.

F. B. Too old? by heaven—

Fri. Let still the woman take
 An elder than herself, so wears she to him,
 So sways she level to her husband's heart :
 For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,
 Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
 More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn
 Than women's are.

Then let thy love be younger than thyself,
 Or thy affection cannot hold the bent :
 For women are as roses, whose fair flower
 Being once display'd, doth fall that very hour.

F. B. Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
 Her infinite variety : other women cloy
 The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry,
 When most she satisfies. O holy priest,
 Do you but close our hands with holy words,
 Then love devouring death do what he dare,
 It is enough, I may but call her mine.

Fri. These violent delights have violent ends,
 And in their triumph die like fire and powder,
 Which as they kiss, consume. The sweetest honey
 Is loathsome in his own deliciousness,
 Therefore love moderately, long love doth so,
 Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow

F. B. Or swift or slow I've reach'd the goal, good Friar,

I've read my future in the lady's face—
Joy had the like conception in our eyes
And at that instant, like a babe sprang up.

Fri. Then I'll not say again she is too old,
But thou'rt too young, nor is she free to wed ;
If from her lord divorcèd she shall be,
And his due love's deriv'd unto thy share,
From hope of heaven thou'lt be excluded ever.
Thou most unruly, most bold-facèd boy,
The root of all wrath and despite dost occasion,
Since thou obey'st these rebel passions
When they contend against thy conscience.

F. B. I'm nought thereat dismay'd, my father.
No jot of power hath this to change our loves ;
If she will but be my own Margaret,
When th' laws of England are at my commandment,
England and England's wealth shall wait on her;
And Britain bend unto her Prince's love.

Fri. 'Tis most unnatural, most strange, my son.

F. B. Darest thou check me so, presumptuous priest ?
Or twit me with the laws that Nature loves—
Nature that fram'd us o' th' four elements ?
Are not the great, above this Nature's reach ?
What better precedent than mighty Jove ?
I'll make it lawful, and when we are dead,
I'll seek the rod of valiant Mercury,
With which he wont the Stygian realms invade,
Through ghastly horror and eternal shade,
Of the infernal field, beneath the earth,
(With it he can assuage a sudden fear,
And Orcus tame whom nothing can persuade,
And rule the furies when they most do rave)

That I might look upon my Queen's full eyes,
And treasure take from her sweet ruby lips.

Fri. There mayst thou see one fairer than thy love.

F. B. One fairer than my love? the all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

Fri. Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself pois'd with herself in either eye:
But in that crystal scales, let there be weigh'd
Your lady-love against some other maid,
And she shall scant show well that now shows best.
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

F. B. When the devout religion of my eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fire;
And these who often drown'd could never die,
Transparent heretiques, be burnt for liars.
Think'st thou my thoughts are lunacies of love?

Fri. Are lunacies of love? Oh no! not so.
'Twas but a bolt of nothing, shot at nothing,
Which the brain makes of fumes.

F. B. No, they are brands firèd in Pluto's forge,
Where sits Tisiphone tempering in flames,
Those torches that do set on fire revenge.
I lov'd the dame; but brav'd by her repulse
Hate calls me on to quittance of my ills,
Which first must come by offering prejudice
Unto the Duke of Guise her belov'd love.
Her beauty's exquisite, her favor infinite.

Fri. That's because the one is painted, and the other
Out of all count.

F. B. How painted? and how out of count?

Fri. Marry sir, so painted to make her fair,

That no man doth account of her beauty.

You never saw her since she was deform'd.

F. B. How long hath she been deform'd?

Fri. Ever since you lov'd her.

F. B. I have lov'd her ever since I saw her,
And still I see her beautiful.

Fri. If you love her, you cannot see her.

F. B. Why?

Fri. Because that love is blind: O that you had
mine eyes,

Or your own had the lights they were wont to have.

Our very eyes are sometimes, like our judgments, blind.

F. B. Mine eyes were not in fault for she is beautiful:
Mine ears that hear her flattery, nor my heart,
That thought her like her seeming. It had been vicious
To have mistrusted her.

Fri. Well, come young waverer, come go with me,
In one respect, I'll thine assistant be.

F. B. Believe me, father, I have a sole of lead
So stakes me to the ground I cannot move.

Fri. A lover may bestride the gossamers,
That idles in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall, so light is vanity.
You are a lover, borrow Cupid's wings
And soar with them above a common bound.

F. B. I am too sore empiercèd with his shaft
To soar with his light feathers.

Fri. Ah, it boots thee not.

F. B. What?

Fri. To be in love, where scorn is bought with groans;
Coy looks, with heart-sore sighs; one fading moment's
mirth,

With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights ;
 If haply won, perhaps a hapless gain ;
 If lost, why then a grievous labor won ;
 However : but a folly bought with wit,
 Or else a wit, by folly vanquishèd.

F. B. So, by your circumstance, you call me fool.

Fri. So, by your circumstance, I fear you'll prove.

F. B. 'Tis Love you cavil at, I am not Love.

Fri. But you're a monster and that's mayhap worse.

F. B. In all Cupid's pageant there is presented
 No monster, not nothing monstrous neither.

Fri. They say all lovers swear more performance
 Than they are able, and yet do reserve
 An ability that they never perform :
 Vowing more than the perfection of ten ;
 And discharging less than the tenth part of one.
 They that the voice of lions and the act
 Of hares do have, are they not monsters, sir ?

F. B. But that, good father, proves me not a fool.

Fri. Love is your master, for he masters you,
 And he that is so yokèd by a fool
 Methinks should not be chronicled for wise,

F. B. Yet writers say, as in the sweetest bud
 The eating canker dwells, so eating love
 Inhabits in the finest wits of all.

Fri. And writers say, as a most forward bud
 Is eaten by the canker ere it blow,
 Even so by love, the young and tender wit
 Is turn'd to folly, blasting in the bud,
 Losing his verdure, even in the prime,
 And all the fair effects of future hopes.
 Sir, rouse yourself, and the weak wandering Cupid

Shall from your neck unloose his amorous fold,
And like a dew drop from the lion's mane,
Be shook to airy air, to vaporous nothing.
But wherefore waste I time to counsel thee,
That art a votary to fond desire?

F. B. Pray say not so, your time is wasted not;
Counsel me father, for I know thōu canst;
Assist me father, for I know thou wilt.

Fri. Indeed it is no time to chide thee now.
Affection is not rated from the heart:
If love have touch'd you, naught remains but so,
Redime te captum, quam queas minimo.

“Here taking me apart into his cell,
And bidding me be seated on the floor—
For other beds the priests there usèd none,
But on their mother-earth's dear lap did lie,
And bake their sides upon the cold hard stone—
He to that point fit speeches 'gan to frame,
As he the art of words knew wondrous well,
And to my passionate pleading, coldly said:—

Fri. Twere ill-advis'd to set at naught the laws.

F. B. These laws are too severe, these customs strict:
I tell thee when I'm king I'll change them all.

Fri. That were some love, but little policy.

F. B. But I will—

Fri. Peace, foolish son, and cease thy vows
That make e'en now the very heavens to tremble.
They move me not at all, for I do know
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Gives the tongue vows: these blazes, Francis,
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,

Even in their promise, as it is a making,—
 You must not take for fire: or if it be,
 'Tis said, one fire burns out another's burning.

F. B. So soon extinguish'd? young men's love then
 lies,

Not truly in their hearts but in their eyes.

Fri. 'Tis even so.

F. B. My word shall be my deed; I'll not repent,
 And cannot it revoke, most reverend father.

Fri. Then shall thy word make many bosoms bleed.

F. B. Yet is there no great breach of fealty;
 That which I did against the King, was natural—
 'Twas but a subject's duty to his Queen,
 Who when I saw her first was like sweet May
 Sent back to Hallowmas or short'st of day
 Through his rebuffs. I rid her from despite,
 Believe me. To be brief, you know the tale
 Of sweet Proserpine in meadow straying,
 How Pluto raught Queen Ceres' daughter thence,
 And what did follow of that love offence?
 Then let not any be a Theseus here,
 Lest like to him and his audacious mate,
 He find himself seated never to rise.
 Now by that holy name Proserpine,
 I do protest, Navarre I never injur'd,
 But lov'd him better than thou canst devise,
 Till thou shalt know the reason of my love.
 Time was I did him a desirèd office
 Dear almost as his life, which gratitude
 Through flinty Tartar's bosom would peep forth,
 And answer thanks. Aye, we are friends indeed!
 When I imagine ill against him, may that thought

Be my last breathing in this mortal world !
The force of his own merit makes his way,
And he is noble ; aye, and who dare speak
One syllable against him ?

Fri. Yes, yes, young Francis,
There are that dare and I myself have ventur'd
To speak my mind of him ; and indeed this day,
Sir, (I may tell it you) I think I have
Incens'd the Lords o' th' Council, that he is
(For so I know he is, they know he is)
A most arch-heretic, a pestilence
That does infect the land.

F. B. You are too hard !
The King is young ; and if he step awry,
He may amend, and I will love him still.
Should we disdain our vines because they sprout
Before their time ? or young men, if they strain
Beyond their reach ? no, vines that bloom and spread
Do promise fruits. And young men that are wild,
In age grow wise. He by his untrain'd heart,
Hath marr'd his fortunes, that I know full well.
His nature is too noble for the world :
He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth :
What his breast forges that his tongue must vent ;
And being angry, doth forget that ever
He heard the name of death. To me, good father,
He made a blushing cital of himself,
And chid his truant youth with such a grace,
As if he master'd there a double spirit
Of teaching, and of learning instantly ;
Then did he pause. But let me tell the world,

If he outlive the envy of this day,
Great France did never owe so sweet a hope,
So much misconstrued in his wantonness.

Fri. The times and titles now are alter'd strangely :
Men's evil manners live in brass; their virtues
We write in water; but my son, observe
The stars of inclination, sometimes are
Pal'd by the sun of discipline and virtue;
There is some soul of goodness in things evil,
Would men observingly distill it out:
For naught so vile, that on the earth doth live,
But to the earth some special good doth give:
Nor ought so good, but strain'd from that fair use,
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse.
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,
And vice sometimes by action dignified.
Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,
Which we ascribe to Heaven: the fated sky
Gives us free scope, only doth backward pull
Our slow designs, when we ourselves are dull.

F. B. If to do, were as easy as to know
What were good to do, chapels had been churches
And poor men's cottages, princes' palaces.
It is the good divine follows his own
Instructions.

Fri. I can easier teach twenty
What were good to be done, than to be one
Of the twenty to follow mine own teaching:
The brain may devise laws for the blood, but
A hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree.
Such a hare is madness, the youth, to skip
O'er the meshes of good counsel, the cripple.

But youth should make the things of Heaven its aim :
 Take heed lest thou, like sweet Sebastian,
 Who surfeiting in prime time of his youth
 Upon ambition's poison, dies thereon,
 Drench'd in a lake of human blood and gore.

F. B. O thou good Friar, how hast thou the heart,
 Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
 A sin absolver, and my friend profest,
 To mangle me with words? Prithee, be still.
 It helps not, it prevails not, talk no more.
 By Him that made us all, I am resolv'd
 To have my right.

Fri. O deadly sin, O rude unthankfulness!

F. B. O speak no more for I have heard too much.

Fri. *Jesu Maria!*

How much good counsel thrown away in waste!
 O then, I see that madmen have no ears.

F. B. How should they when wisemen have no eyes?

Fri. Let me despair with thee of thy estate.

F. B. Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel.

Wert thou as young as Margaret, my love,
 Doting like me, and like me banishèd,
 Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear thy hair,
 And fall upon the ground as I do now,
 Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

Fri. Arise, one knocks, good Francis hide thyself.

F. B. Not I, unless the breath of heart-sick groans
 Mist-like enfold me from the search of eyes. *Knock.*

Fri. Hark, how they knock : (who's there?)

Francis, arise; *Knock.*

Thou wilt be taken, (stay awhile,) stand up: *Knock.*

Run to my study : (by and by,) God's will

What simpleness is this! I come, I come,—
 Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's your will?

Nur. Let me come in and you shall know my errand:
 I come from Lady Margaret.

Fri. Welcome then.

Nur. O holy Friar, O tell me holy Friar,
 Where is my lady's lord? where's Francis Bacon?

Fri. There on the ground, with his own tears made
 drunk.

Nur. O he is even in my mistress' case,
 Just in her case, O woful sympathy:
 Piteous predicament, even so lies she.
 Stand up, stand up, stand you and be a man!
 For Margaret's sake, for her sake rise and stand.

F. B. Nurse, where is she? how doth she? and what
 says

My conceal'd lady to our conceal'd love?

Nur. Oh she says nothing sir, but weeps and weeps,
 And now falls on her bed, and then starts up,
 And Henry calls, and then on Francis cries,
 And then falls down again.

F. B. As if that name,
 Shot from the dead level of a gun,
 Did murder her! Oh tell me, Friar, tell me,
 In what vile part of this anatomy
 Doth my name lodge? Tell me, that I may sack
 The hateful mansion.

Fri. Hold thy desperate hand:
 Art thou a man? thy form cries out thou art:
 Thy tears are womanish, thy wild acts denote
 The unreasonable fury of a beast.
 Unseemly woman, in a seeming man,

And ill-beseeming beast in seeming both,
 Thou hast amaz'd me. By my holy order,
 I thought thy disposition better temper'd.
 Wilt thou slay thyself?
 And slay thy lady that in thy life lies
 By doing damnèd hate against thyself?
 Why rail'st thou on thy birth? the heaven and earth?
 Since birth and heaven and earth all three do meet
 In thee at once, which thou at once would'st lose.
 Go before, Nurse, commend me to your lady,
 And bid her there await Prince Francis' coming.

Nur. O Lord what learning is!

My Lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.
 Here sir, a ring she bid me give you sir.

F. B. How well my comfort is reviv'd by this;
 But in my brain only confusion reigns,
 Where every something, being blent together,
 Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
 Express'd, and not express'd: but when this ring
 Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence.

Fri. Hope is a lover's staff, walk hence with that
 And manage it against despairing thoughts.
 Thy letters may be here, though thou art hence,
 Which, being writ to me, shall be deliver'd
 Even in the milk-white bosom of thy love.
 The time now serves not to expostulate;
 As much as I can do, I will effect:
 Come, I'll convey thee through the city-gate,
 And ere I part with thee, confer at large
 Of all that may concern thy love affairs:
 Come let us forth without further delay,
 I'll bring you to the gates.

F. B. Accept distracted thanks.

“As we set forth I said to the good father:—

F. B. Friar, look out upon the gladsome day:
See how the morning opes her golden gates,
And takes her farewell of the glorious sun.

Fri. How well resembles it the prime of youth,
Trimm'd like a yonker prancing to his love.

F. B. The King of Heaven forbid aught stain the
tract,
Of his bright passage to the occident.

Fri. I spy a black suspicious, threat'ning cloud,
That will encounter with our glorious sun,
Ere he attain his easeful western bed.

F. B. A little gale will soon disperse that cloud,
And blow it to the source from whence it came,
And the sun's beams will dry those vapours up,
For every cloud engenders not a storm.

Fri. 'Tis true that every fume turns not to storm,
Yet, nevertheless, it is true that storms,
Though they blow over many times, may fall at last;
Think not to escape for aye things that do threat;
The pitcher breaks that goes oft to the well;
And, as the Spanish proverb truly notes,
The cord at last parts by the weakest pull.

F. B. I had a thing to say, but let it go.
The sun is in the heaven, and the proud day
Attended with the pleasures of the world,
Is all too wanton and too full of gauds
To give me audience. But mark you this,
This injury pertains to me, not you,
And what I do shall rest irrevocably.

The flighty purpose never is o'ertook,
 Unless the deed go with it. From this moment,
 The very firstlings of my thought shall be
 The firstlings of my hand.

Fri. *Est ce donc a tel point votre etat?* Faith, then,
 adieu;

Ill fortune follow thee where'er thou go.

F. B. But that a joy past joy, calls out on me,
 It were a grief, so brief to part with thee:
 Farewell.

“I am dismiss'd without the father's blessing,
 But I'm content. For am I not belov'd,
 And love I not again? aye 'tis too true!
 Now am I double prisoner to sweet Margaret:
 Either she hath bewitch'd me with her words,
 And by the charm of sweetest looks alike,
 Or nature makes me thus relent. So love is lost—
 Lost and recover'd in a day again—and now
 I feed myself on most delicious poison.
 What power is it which mounts my love so high,
 That makes me see and cannot feed my eye?
 Sir Amyas Paulet, my friend, is wont to say,
 When too much haste is made in any matter:—

‘Stay awhile that we may make an end the sooner.’
 He now must be ambassador for me,
 And undertake the treaty of the marriage:
 God grant him victory—and yet I feel
 My luck is loss howe'er my love do speed.
 But I do love thee, my own lovely Queen,
 And 'tis not strange that I am thus bewitch'd.
 Bidst thou me rage? why now thou hast thy wish.

Wouldst have me weep? why now thou hast thy will.
 For raging wind blows up incessant showers,
 And when the rage allays, the rain begins.
 With how contrarious thoughts am I withdrawn;
 I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe:
 Under love's heavy burthen do I sink,
 And to sink in it I should burthen love,—
 Too great oppression for a tender thing.
 Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
 Too rude, too boisterous. Stand I on love?
 Stoop I to Venus' lure? her wily arts?
 Shall such a siren offer me more wrong
 Than they did to the Prince of Ithaca?
 No, as he stops his ears, I'll stop mine eyes.
 The adamant 'tis said, will not be fil'd
 But by itself, and beauty that exceeds,
 By some exceeding favor must be wrought.

"Why linger I 'twixt hope and doubtful fear?
 Here's much to do with hate, but more with love:
 Why then, O brawling love, O loving hate;
 O anything, of nothing first created:
 O heavy lightness, serious vanity,
 Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeing forms,
 Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health.
 Still waking sleep, that is not what it is:
 This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
 But such is love's transgression, and she,
 Like a right gypsy, hath at fast and loose,
 Beguil'd me to the very heart of loss.
 What Eros, Eros! ah, thou spell, avaunt!
 When I would pray, and think, I think, and pray
 To several subjects: heaven hath my empty words,

Whilst my invention, hearing not my tongue,
Anchors on Margaret: Heaven in my mouth,
As if I did but only chew His name,
And in my heart the strong and swelling evil
Of my conception: Pardon love this wrong,
That sings Heaven's praise, with such an earthly tongue.
Why am I thus enrag'd against my love?
Why speak I thus of beauty's self? Not frenzy,
Not absolute madness could so far have rav'd.
I love and hate her, for she's fair and royal,
And that she hath all courtly parts more exquisite,
Than lady, ladies, woman; from everyone
The best she hath, and she of all compounded
Out-sells them all. I love her therefore, yet
Since she throws favors on the haughty Guise,
I will conclude to hate her, nay indeed,
To be reveng'd upon her.

“She sweeps it through the court with troops of ladies,
More like an empress, than King Navarre's wife:
Strangers in court do take her for the Queen:
Her sovereign beauty hath no living peer
Thereto, so bounteous and debonaire
That never any might with her compare!
Whate'er she doth and whithere'er she go
A sweet and pleasing grace attends forsooth:
Or loose, or bind her hair, or comb it up,
She's to be honorèd in what she doth:
Fair Margaret, the fairest living wight!
Can human mind conceive that aught so fair
Should shrine deceit, desire, and lawless lust?
Ah! that deceit should steal such gentle shape,
And with a yirtuous yizor hide deep yice!

Ah! fair, fair Margaret, divine Margaret,
 Fair is too foul an epithet for thee!
 That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose;
 Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell!
 Though all things foul should wear the brows of grace,
 Yet grace must still look so. No, as I am a man,
 There's nothing ill, can dwell in such a temple;
 If the ill-spirit hath so fair a house,
 Good things will strive to dwell with it.
 Would I could see her now. Perchance she weeps.
 Sweet Queen, weep not; for tears are vain, and yet
 To weep, is to make less the depth of grief.
 O gentle Margaret, let me kiss thy lips;
 Or make some sign how I may do thee ease.

“Do I forget, nurse said she lov'd the Guise?
 Nay, I was inly movèd at her speech,
 Well weeting true what she had rashly told,
 Yet with fair semblance sought to hide the breach.
 He'll make demand of her, I'll warrant thee,
 And spend that kiss which is my heaven to have—
 Come sir, come sir, you shall not out-do me,
 I'll wrestle with you in the strength of love.

“My sweet, I'll catch thine eyes though they had wings:
 I'll make thee blithe and wanton by my wit.
 Discourse and laugh on all occasions, sweet;
 Heaven give you many, many merry days,
 Before your loves do take you into grace.

“A voice arrests me—'tis the king's keeper,
 (With him is one of the lords of the court)
 He too would know why I do walk abroad
 At such an hour, tells me it must be love
 And shrewdly guesses where my heart doth rest.
 Quoth he:—

Keeper. My lord, you are not sharp enough :
You must lay lime, to tangle her desires
By wailful sonnets whose composèd rhymes
Should be full-fraught with serviceable vows.

F. B. Much is the force of heaven-bred poesy,—
That have I learnèd in the English Court
Where, being but young, I framèd to the harp
Many an English ditty, lovely well,
And gave the tongue a helpful ornament.

Keeper. Aye, but these fellows of infinite tongue,
That can rhyme themselves into ladies' favors,
Do always reason themselves out again.

“ And the young lord did add :—

Lord. This rhyming knack will stand you in good
stead.

Say that upon the altar of her beauty
You sacrifice your tears, your sighs, your heart :
Write till your ink be dry ; and with your tears
Moist it again, and frame some feeling line,
That may discover such integrity.
After your dire-lamenting elegies,
Visit by night your lady's chamber-window
With some sweet consort ; to their instruments
Tune a deploring dump : the night's dead silence
Will well become such sweet complaining grievance :
This, or else nothing will inherit her.

F. B. This discipline shows thou hast been in love.

“ Thereat the keeper laughed aloud and said :—

Keeper. By m'troth well met ; come sit, sit, and a song.

L. We are for you, sit i' th' middle.

Keep. Shall we clap into't roundly, without hawking,
Or spitting, or saying that we are hoarse,
Which are the only prologues to a bad voice?

F. B. I' faith, y' faith, and both in a tune.

Song.

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o'er the green cornfield did pass,
In the springtime, the only pretty rang time.
When birds do sing hey ding a ding, ding,
Sweet lovers love the spring,
And therefore take the present time,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
For love is crownèd with the prime,
In springtime, etc.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino ;
These pretty country folks would hie,
In springtime, etc.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino :
How that a life was but a flower,
In springtime, etc.

Keep. Still brooding on thy love young gentleman?
Come, come, cheer up; you are too melancholy.
Your heart is full of something that does take
Your mind from pleasure. Sooth, when I was young,
And handed love as you do, I was wont
To load my she with knacks: I would ransack
The peddler's silken treasury and pour't
To her acceptance. So my lord should you

If you make care of happy holding her,
Or rightly winning her.

F. B. Old sir, I know

She prizes not such trifles as these are :
The gifts she looks from me, are packt and lockt
Up in my heart, which I have given already,
But not deliver'd.

Keep. Nay, nay, you are not wise.

Win her with gifts, if she respect not words ;
Dumb jewels often in their silent kind
More than quick words, do move a woman's mind.

F. B. But she did scorn a present that I sent her.

Keep. A woman sometimes scorns what best contents
her.

Send her another : never give her o'er,
For scorn at first, makes after-love the more.
If she do frown, 'tis not in hate of you,
But rather to beget more love in you.
If she do chide, 'tis not to have you gone,
For why, the fools are mad, if left alone.
Take no repulse, whatever she doth say,
For, get you gone, she doth not mean away.
Flatter, and praise, commend, extol their graces :
Though ne'er so black, say they have angel faces,—
That man that hath a tongue, I say is no man,
If with his tongue he cannot win a woman.

F. B. You do not understand.

Keep. Well, well, enough of this :

For my part I'll not meddle nor make no farther,
(For long ago I have forgot to court,
Besides the fashion of the time is chang'd)
But this I know my youthful chevalier,

He that will have a cake out of the wheat,
Must needs tarry the grinding.

F. B. Have I not tarried?

Keep. Aye, the grinding; but you must tarry the bolting.

F. B. Have I not tarried?

Keep. Aye, the bolting; but you must tarry the leav'ning.

F. B. Still have I tarried.

Keep. Aye, to the leavening; but here's yet in the word Hereafter, the kneading, the making of the cake, The heating of the oven, and the baking; Nay, you must stay the cooling too, or you May chance to burn your lips.

F. B. Sir, I am weaker than a woman's tear;
Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance;
Less valiant than the virgin in the night,
And skill-less as unpractic'd infancy.
Immortal gods, O hear me breathe my love
Before this ancient sir, whom it should seem
Hath sometime lov'd: I take thy hand, this hand,
As soft as dove's down, and as white as it
Or Ethiopian's tooth, or the fann'd snow, that's bolted
By th' northern blast twice o'er—

Keep. What follows this?

How prettily the young swain seems to wash
The hand was fair before! I've put you out,—
A thousand pardons, sir.

F. B. Then I protest

That were I crown'd the most imperial monarch
Thereof most worthy: were I the fairest youth
That ever made eye swerve, had force of knowledge

More than was ever man's, I would not prize them
Without her love; for her, employ them all,
Commend them, and condemn them to her service,
Or to their own perdition.

Keep. Fairly offer'd;

This shows a sound affection, my young friend.

F. B. Oh Keeper, that thou knew'st how I do love
her!

Keep. I partly guess, for I have lov'd ere now.

F. B. No Keeper, being old thou canst not guess,
Though in thy youth thou wast as true a lover
As ever sigh'd upon a midnight pillow:
But if thy love were ever like to mine,
As sure I think did never man love so:
How many actions most ridiculous,
Hast thou been drawn to by thy fantasy?

Keep. Into a thousand that I have forgotten.

F. B. Oh thou didst then never love so heartily.
If thou rememberest not the slightest folly,
That ever love did make thee run into,
Thou hast not lov'd.
Or if thou hast not sat as I do now,
Wearing thy hearer in thy mistress' praise,
Thou hast not lov'd.

Come Keeper, we will hear that song again.

Keep. O my good lord, tax not so bad a voice,
To slander music any more than once.

F. B. It is the witness still of excellency,
To put a strange face on his own perfection.
I pray thee sing, and let me woo no more.

Keep. Because you talk of wooing, I will sing,
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit

To her he thinks not worthy, yet he wooes,
Yet will he swear he loves.

F. B. Nay, pray thee come;
Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.

Keep. Sweet youth, I'll sing again.

Song.

Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note,
Unto the sweet bird's throat:
Comé hither, come hither, come hither;
Here shall he see no enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

F. B. More, more, I prithee more.

Keep. It will make you melancholy, Monsieur Francis.

Lord. And as the rain, saith Austin, doth a stone,
So do these perturbations penetrate the mind,
And, if they be reiterated, do
A habit of melancholy produce,
Which having gotten mastery in our souls,
May well be called disease.

F. B. O learned judge!

I thank it: more, I prithee more.

Keep. My voice is ragged, I know I cannot please you.

F. B. I do not desire you to please me,
I desire you to sing:
Come, more, another stanza: call you 'em stanza's?

Keep. What you will Monsieur Francis.

F. B. Nay, I care not for their names, they owe me
nothing.

Will you sing? Come, warble, come.

Song.

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i'th' sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleas'd with what he gets :
Come hither, come hither, come hither,
Here shall he see, etc.

F. B. But all your life is not a summer day.

Lord. Nay, nay, but I've a song for that, young friend,
Which I will sing to you.

Song.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind,
As man's ingratitude ;
My tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho, sing heigh ho, unto the green holly,
Most friendship is feigning ; most loving, mere folly :
Then heigh ho, the holly,
This life is most jolly.
Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh,
As benefits forgot ;
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy tongue is not so sharp,
As friend remember'd not.
Heigh ho, sing, etc.

Keep. Come, come, another song I'll sing you now,
 "Said the old keeper in his rough, kind way.

F. B. You may, you may, but let the song be love.

Lord. This love'll undo us all. O Cupid, Cupid!
 Out of that quiver all my troubles spring,

"Quoth his companion half unto himself.

Keep. Love, gentle boy? Aye, that it shall y'faith.

F. B. Aye, good now, love, love, nothing but love.

Keep. In good troth it begins so. List you now.

Love, love, nothing but love still more :
 For oh, love's bow
 Shoots buck and doe :
 The shaft confounds not that it wounds,
 But tickles still the sore.
 These lovers cry oh, ho ! they die ;
 Yet that which seems the wound to kill,
 Doth turn oh, ho ! to ha, ha, he :
 So dying love lives still,
 O ho ! awhile, but ha, ha, ha,
 O ho, groans out for ha, ha, ha—hey ho.

F. B. Come, come I'll hear no more of this. I like
 it not.

I count it but time lost to hear such foolish songs.

Keep. Aye by my troth, sweet lord, the song is true ;
 But thou hast a fine forehead, and thou'lt live
 Though thou beest so horrible in love :
 For men have died, from time to time, and worms
 Have eaten them, but not for love.

F. B. Sirrah walk off ! I will listen no longer.

“And they passed on, but mockingly methought,
The young lord sang these words :—

Love like a shadow flies,
When substance love pursues,
Pursuing that that flies,
And flying what pursues.

“Then to Italian melody he chang'd
And the wind brought it softly back to me :—

Se Diana nel cielo è una stella
Chiara e lucente, piena di splendore,
Che porge luc' all' affanato cuore ;
Se Diana nel ferno è una dea,
Che da conforto all' anime dannate,
Che per amor son morte desperate ;
Se Diana, ch' in terra è delle ninfe
Reina imperativa di dolci fiori,
Tra bosch' e selve da morte a pastori ;
Io son un Diana dolce e rara,
Che con li guardi io posso far guerra
A Dian' infern', in cielo, e in terra.

“I've not been angry since I came to France
Until this instant, but I know 'tis vain ;
And I've indeed a deeper cause for grief.
Anthony hath his powerful mandate sent
To me, and saith : ‘ You must not stay there longer,—’
Greets me with strange and unacquainted terms,
And speaketh too of merciless proceedings.
These tidings nip me, and I hang the head
As flowers with frost, or grass bent down with storms.
Is Anthony or we at fault for this ?

Anthony only, that would make his will
 Lord of his reason. His speech sticks in my heart.
 O sun, burn the great sphere thou movest in,
 Darkling stand the varying shore o' th' world!
 Against the flint and hardness of my fault,
 I, impotent man, grief madden'd, throw my heart,
 Which being dried with grief, will break to powder,
 And finish all foul thoughts. Oh Anthony,
 Nobler than my revolt is infamous,
 Forgive me in thine own particular,
 But let the world look on me as it will.

“Yet wilt thou, brother, bid me leave my Queen!
 Now, by the ground that I am banish'd from,
 Well could I curse away a winter's night,
 Though standing naked on a mountain top,
 Where biting cold would never let grass grow,
 And think it but a minute spent in sport!
 Hence banishèd is banisht from the world,
 The world's exile is death: then banishèd
 Is death misterm'd: calling death banishèd,
 Thou cut'st my head off with a golden axe,
 And smil'st upon the stroke that murders me.
 Never believe, though in my nature reign'd
 All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
 That it could so preposterously be stain'd,
 To leave for nothing, all thy sum of good,—
 For nothing this wide universe I call,
 Save thou, my Rose,—in it thou art my all.

“Yet I do lack some part that is in Anthony:
 'Tis that we brothers are not, in our blood.
 I am alone the villain of the earth,
 And feel I am so most. Oh Anthony,

Thou mine of bounty, how wouldst thou have paid
My better service, when my turpitude
Thou dost so crown with gold! This blows my heart!
If swift thought break it not, a swifter mean
Shall out-strike thought, but thought will do't. I feel
I fight against thee: no, I will go seek
Some ditch wherein to die: the foul'st best fits
My latter part of life. I blush for shame.
This fever that hath troubled me so long,
Lies heavy on me: oh, my heart is sick!
Ah women, women! Come, we have no friend
But resolution, and the briefest end.

“ Oh, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew:
Or that the Everlasting had not fixt
His canon 'gainst self slaughter! O God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
E'en were I king now, still it were for me,
To throw my sceptre at the injurious gods,
To tell them that this world did equal theirs,
Till they had stolne our jewel, our pure pearl,
The sense and virtue of fair Margaret!
Earth has no treasure now, all is but naught:
Patience is sottish and impatience does
Become a dog that's mad; then is it sin
To rush into the secret house of death,
Ere death can come to us? How vain is all
The struggle of this life: the toil o'th' war,
A pain that only seems to seek out danger
I 'th' name of Fame, and Honour, which dies i'th' search,
And hath as oft a sland'rous epitaph,

As record of fair act. That we shall die we know,
 And he that cuts off twenty years of life,
 Cuts off so many years of fearing death.
 Far better I it deem to die with speed
 Than waste in woe and wailful misery :
 Who dies, the utmost dolour doth aby,
 But who that lives, is left to wail his loss ;
 So life is loss, and death felicity :
 Sad life worse than glad death ; and greater cross.
 Between the death of old men and young men,
 There's but this difference, one of the fathers said,—
 'Old men do go to death, death comes to young men.'
 Then I must wait—well, I will muse no further—
 I will have comfort : all of us have cause
 To wail the dimming of our shining star ;
 But none can help our harms by wailing them.
 In faith I've not intended harm, but love
 Awakes my conscience to confess all this.

“ I have done nothing but in care of thee,
 Of thee, my dear one, thee, my Margaret ;
 My soul's sole-reigning queen, whose beauty claims
 No worse a husband than the best of men ;
 Whose virtues and whose general graces speak
 That which none else can utter. By this marriage
 All little jealousies which now seem great,
 And all great fears, which now import their dangers,
 Would then be nothing. Truths would be tales,
 Where now half tales be truths,—her love to both
 Her wedded lord and that thrice-gallant Duke,
 Should be untold. But now, sweet Queen, thou art
 The mark whereat the enemy doth aim ;
 Thy virtues shall be construed to vice ;

Thine affable discourse, to abject mind;
If coy, detracting tongues will call thee proud,
(Who soothe no vice, who flatter not for gain)
And if thou art in manner gracious,
Then wicked tongues speak thee of little worth.
Thou'rt wrong'd, thou'rt slander'd, thou'rt undone!
O Margaret, I fear thine overthrow,
More than my body's parting with my soul!
Yea, there's the wound, and wounded with that thought,
So let me die, for all my drift is naught,
If aught betides to lovely Margaret,
That wrongs or wrings her honor from content.

“ Ah, other bands there be, that faster tie
Than bands of sovereignty, and yet myself
This fair alliance quickly shall call home
To high promotions, and great dignity.
O gentle Queen, if ever thou be'st mine,
As I've a saving faith within me tells
To me thou shalt in future time, know thou,
That though I want a kingdom, yet in marriage
I may not prove inferior to thyself;
And I, e'en now, can woo thee with a title
That God, the law, my honor, and my love can make.
I do in birth deserve thee, and in fortunes
In graces and in qualities of breeding;
But, more than these, in love I do deserve,
O peerless woman! Yet forgive me, God,
That I do brag thus; this your air of France
Hath blown this vice in me—I must repent.
'Tis said that they brought up from infancy
In courts of kings and their affairs of state,
Scarce e'er attain to honesty of manners,

Deep and sincere. Be that as't may, my Queen,
 I have a sharper sense of honor than thy King,
 And though I do not win my wishèd end,
 Yet, thus far happy I myself do ween,
 That Heaven such happy grace did to me lend,
 As thing on earth so heavenly to have seen,
 My heart's enshrinèd saint, my heaven's queen :
 Fairer than fairest in my faining eye,
 Whose sole aspect I count felicity,
 Thou art my goddess, thou'rt my mighty guide.

“ But see, Venus appears, or one, indeed,
 That overmatches Venus in her shape,—
 Sweet Margaret, beauty's high swelling pride,
 Rich nature's glory and her wealth at once,
 The sweetest sun that e'er I saw to shine.
 See where she comes in guise of a young lord!
 List her soft foot falls! oh, so light a foot,
 Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint!
 Her page is with her, yet doth look less young
 And gracious than her sweet and gracious self:
 She that hath stolne into the wealth of loving looks,
 And tied my thoughts within her lovely locks;
 She that is lov'd, and love unto her king,
 Fairer than was the virgin Danae,
 That waits on Venus with a golden show:
 Oh, who alive can perfectly declare
 The wondrous cradle of thine infancy,
 When the great mother Venus first thee bare,
 The wonder of the earth, the pride of heaven?
 Had I the riches nature locketh up
 To deck her darling beauty when she smiles,
 I'd lavish it on thee, my peerless one,

And I in duty would excel all other,
 As thou in beauty doth exceed Love's mother.
 Or I am mad or else this is a dream :
 Let fancy still my sense in Lethe steep,
 If it be thus to dream, still let me sleep.
 This is the air, that is the glorious sun,
 This pearl she gave me, I do feel't, and see't,
 And though 'tis wonder that enwraps me thus,
 Yet 'tis not madness, nor a fleeting dream.
 Why does my blood thus muster to my heart,
 Making both it unable for itself,
 And dispossessing all the other parts
 Of necessary fitness ?
 So play the foolish throngs with one that swounds,
 Come all to help him, and so stop the air
 By which he should revive. O hark, they sing—

Margaret and boy singing.

Take, O take those lips away,
 That so sweetly were forsworn,
 And those eyes—the break of day
 Lights that do mislead the morn.
 But my kisses bring again, bring again,
 Seals of love, but seal'd in vain, seal'd in vain.

F. B. Fair of all fairs, O welcome, welcome sweet.—

“Quoth I, as I stept forth. Unto the boy she
 spake :—

Margaret. Break off thy song and haste thee quick
 away ;

Here comes a man of comfort, whose advice
 Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.
 I cry you mercy, sir, and well could wish

You had not found me here so musical.
 Let me excuse me, and believe me so,
 My mirth is much displeas'd, but pleas'd my woe.

F. B. 'Tis good; though music oft hath such a charm
 To make bad, good, and good provoke to harm.
 Mine eyes are blest in resting on thy face;
 Ah, Margaret, if the measure of thy joy
 Be heapt like mine, and that thy skill be more
 To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath
 This neighbor air, and let rich Music's tongue,
 Unfold the imagin'd happiness that both
 Receive in either, by this dear encounter.
 Like one of two contending in a prize,
 That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
 Hearing applause and universal shout,
 Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
 Whether those peals of praise be his or no,—
 So, thrice fair lady, stand I even so,
 As doubtful whether what I see be true,
 Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

M. Conceit more rich in matter than in words,
 Brags of his substance, not of ornament;
 They are but beggars that can count their worth.
 Sweeth health and fair desires comfort your grace;
 Thy own wish, wish I thee in every place.

F. B. Margaret, the love I bear thee, can afford
 No better term than this: thou art my treasure,
 Nothing more dear to me. You are abus'd
 Beyond the mark of thought, and the High God
 To do you justice, makes His ministers
 Of us, and those that love you. Best of comfort,
 And ever welcome to us, Margaret,

Each heart in France doth love and pity you.
O my sweet-heart, how do I moan thy wrongs,
Yet triumph in the hope of thee, my joy!

M. I have been seeking thee this hour, my lord.

F. B. But why art thou, O lady, come to range
In this wild forest where no pleasure is,
And dost not it for joyous court exchange?
Amongst thy equal peers, where happy bliss
And all delight does reign, much more than this,
There thou mayst love and dearly lovèd be,
And swim in pleasures which thou here dost miss,
There mayst thou best be seen, and best mayst see:
The wood is fit for beasts, the court for thee,
The court—school-mistress of thy courtesy.

“Quoth she :—

M. Whoso in pomp of proud estate,
Does swim and bathes himself in courtly bliss,
Is far away from sunshine of Heaven’s smile.
Little do men perceive what’s solitude
And how far it extendeth, for a crowd
Is not company, and faces are but
A gallery of pictures, and all talk
Is but a tinkling cymbal, saith Saint Paul,
When there’s no love. Ill it becomes you, Prince,
To scorn the joy that love is glad to seek.
Tell me, dear love, how found you out this place?

F. B. By chance, sweet Queen, as Mars and Venus
met.

M. Why that was in a net, while we are loose.

F. B. O Margaret, hast come indeed to me?

Then may I have a fitter time to woo.

I love thee—I have spoke it—list to me !
 Aye! above thought I love thee, gentle Queen.
 I cannot be without thy company,
 Yet cannot see thee sad, my love : lo, here
 Upon thy cheek the stain doth sit of an old tear.
 Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,
 Which thou wilt propagate to have it prest
 With more of thine ; this love that thou hath shown
 Doth add more grief to too much of mine own,
 And I do feel, by the rebound of yours,
 A grief that suits my very heart at root.
 The bitter northern wind upon the plains,
 The damps that rise upon the queachy plots,
 Nor influence of contagious air should touch,
 My heart's fair flower, my dainty Margaret.
 Better a metropolitan city were sack'd,
 A royal army overcome, and twenty-thousand
 Kings should perish, than that thy little finger ache.
 Thy thoughts, I prithee, sweet, sweet Queen ?

M. I was about to tell them, when my heart,
 As wedgèd with a sigh, would rive in twain,
 Lest Henry, or my mother should perceive me :
 I have (as when the sun doth light a-scorne)
 Buried this sigh in wrinkle of a smile ;
 But sorrow, that is couch'd in seeming gladness,
 Is like that mirth, Fate turns to sudden sadness.

F. B. Tell me, sweet Queen, I pray thee tell me all.

“She turning to her nurse said quietly :—

M. You may withdraw, good Nurse.

Nur. I will withdraw but this intrusion shall,
 Now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall.

M. Oh Francis, let this habit make thee blush.
Be thou asham'd that I have took upon me,
Such an immodest raiment, if shame live
In a disguise of love? I could no less.
It is the lesser blot modesty finds,
Women to change their shapes, than men their minds.

F. B. Than men their minds? 'Tis true: oh heaven,
were man

But constant, he were perfect; that one error
Fills him with faults: makes him run through all th' sins;
Inconstancy falls off, ere it begins.
But Margaret, I am not such a man,
For I do love thee faithfully and well.

M. Why then God forgive me.

F. B. What offence sweet Margaret?

M. You've staid me in a happy hour; I was about
To protest I lov'd you.

F. B. Do it with all thy heart.

M. But I love you with so much of my heart,
That none's left to protest, my gentle lord.

F. B. O happy shall he be whom Margaret loves.

M. Then never say that thou art miserable,
Because, it may be, thou shalt be my love.
Boldness comes to me now, and brings me heart:
Prince Francis, I have lov'd you night and day,
For many weary months.

F. B. Why was my Margaret then so hard to win?

M. Hard to seem won: but I was won, my lord,
With the first glance; that ever pardon me,
If I confess much you will play the tyrant:
I've come to join with thee, and leave the King.
I'll be thine, for I cannot be mine own,

• Nor anything to any, if I be not thine.
 I dare not say I take you, but I give
 Me and my service, ever whilst I live
 Into your guiding power: this is the man
 To whom I promise truest fealty.
 You see, my Prince of England, where I stand,
 Such as I am; though for myself alone
 I would not be ambitious in my wish,
 To wish myself much better, yet for you,
 I would be trebled twenty times myself,
 A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
 More rich, that only to stand high in your account,
 I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
 Exceed account. Sweet, bid me hold my tongue,
 For in this rapture I shall surely speak
 The thing I shall repent; see, see, your silence
 Coming in dumbness, from my weakness draws
 My soul of counsel from me. Stop my mouth.

F. B. And shall, albeit sweet music issues thence.

M. My lord, I do beseech you pardon me,
 'Twas not my purpose thus to beg a kiss:
 I am ashamed; O heavens, what have I done?

F. B. I had good argument for kissing once.

M. But that's no argument for kissing now.

For this time will I take my leave, my lord.

F. B. Your leave, sweet Margaret?

M. Pray you, content you.

F. B. What offends you, lady?

M. Sir, my own company.

F. B. You cannot shun yourself.

M. Let me go and try.

Perchance, my lord, I show more craft than love,

And fell so roundly to a large confession,
To angle for your thoughts : but you are wise,
Or else you love not ; for to be wise and love,
Exceeds man's might,—that dwells with gods above.

F. B. O that I thought it could be in a woman—
As if it can, I will presume in you—
To feed for aye her lamp and flames of love,
To keep her constancy in plight and youth,
Out-living beauties outward, with a mind
That doth renew swifter than blood decays :
Or that persuasion could but thus convince me,
That my integrity and truth to you,
Might be affronted with the match and weight
Of such a winnow'd purity in love :
How were I then uplifted, but alas,
I am as true as truth's simplicity,
And simpler than the infancy of truth.

M. In that I'll war with you.

F. B. O virtuous fight,
When right with right wars who shall be most right.

M. If I be false, or swerve a hair from truth,
When time is old and hath forgot itself ;
When water-drops have worn the stones of Paris :
And blind oblivion swallow'd cities up ;
And mighty states characterless are grated
To dusty nothing ; yet let memory,
From false to false, among false maids in love,
Upbraid my falsehood, when they've said as false,
As air, as water, as wind, as sandy earth ;
As fox to lamb ; as wolf to heifer's calf ;
Pard to the hind, or stepdame to her son ;
Yea, let them say, to stick the heart of falsehood,—

'As false as Margaret.' But I am true
 And to be plain, I think there is not half a kiss
 To choose who loves another best, my Prince,
 For never gaz'd the moon upon the water,
 As you do stand and read as 'twere mine eyes.

F. B. You've rightly guess'd, most admir'd Margaret,
 Indeed the top of admiration, worth
 What's dearest to the world: full many a lady
 I have ey'd with best regard, and many a time
 Th' harmony of their tongues, hath into bondage
 Brought my too diligent ear: for several virtues
 Have I lik'd several women, never any
 With so full soul, but some defect in her
 Did quarrel with the noblest grace she ow'd,
 And put it to the foil. But you, O you,
 So perfect, and so peerless, are created
 Of every creature's best. O sweet, thou art
 The happiest gift, that ever man did give,
 The fairest Queen, that ever King receiv'd!
 That thou art fair, is most infallible:
 True that thou art beauteous, truth itself
 That thou art lovely: more fairer than fair,
 Beautiful than beauteous, truer than truth.
 Swift fame has sounded to our western seas,
 The matchless beauty of fair Margaret,—
 Fairer than was the nymph of Mercury,
 Who, when bright Phœbus mounteth up his coach,
 And tracks Aurora in her silver steps,
 Doth sprinkle from the folding in her lap,
 White lilies, roses and sweet violets.

M. Will you then write me a sonnet in praise
 Of my beauty?

F. B. In so high a style, Margaret,
That no man living shall come over it,
For in most comely truth thou deserv'st it.
The luster in your eye, heaven in your cheek,
Pleads your fair visage, and unto your Prince
You shall be mistress, and command him wholly.
We'll sail from hence to Greece, to lovely Greece,
I'll be thy Jason, thou my golden fleece :
Where Bacchus' vineyards overspread the world,
And woods and forests go in goodly green,
I'll be Adonis, thou shalt be Love's Queen :
The meads and orchards and the primrose lanes,
Instead of sedge and reeds bear sugar canes ;
Thou, Margaret, in those groves, by Dis above,
Shalt live with me and be my love.

M. That year is rare that ne'er feels winter's storms,
That tree is fertile which ne'er wanteth fruit,
And that same Muse hath heapèd well in store,
Which never wanted clients at her door.
'Twere sweet indeed to find eternal spring,
And I would fain this moment fly with thee,
As birds that seek that far off sunny clime.

F. B. But know thou, Margaret, thy lover's in exile,
So that he that is born to a great kingdom, hath
Not ground to set his foot on, more than this
Where he now standeth by thy brother's favor.

M. Francis, behold you, when the surgent seas
Have ebb'd their fill, the waves do rise again
And fill their banks up to the watery brims.
At first I wept and wail'd my state with fury,
But with my love and woman's wit I've argued
And approv'd it : and, Francis, since I saw thee,

Th' affliction of my mind amends, with which
 I fear a madness held me. Now 'tis gone,
 And now to you I give myself, for I am yours.

“ Here nurse comes breathless back and calls to her.
 With her dear smile to me she sweetly saith :—
 ‘ Stay but a little I will come again,’
 And passèd on to conference with her nurse.
 I could but listen to their dialogue
 For every word was so impassionèd.

Nur. Thou must be gone, lady, thou must be gone!
 Thou must unto thy mother, and be gone
 From Lord Francis: 'twill be his death: 'twill be
 His bane, he cannot bear it.

M. O you immortal gods! I will not go.

Nur. Thou must.

M. I will not, Nurse; I have forgot my mother:
 I know no touch of consanguinity:
 No kin, no love, no blood, no soul, so near me,
 As this sweet Francis. Nay, I will not go.

“ When she return'd to me, to her I said :—

F. B. Lady, give me your hand, and as we walk,
 To our own selves bend we our needful talk.
 I would that you would love yourself, sweet Queen,
 And in that love, not unconsider'd leave
 Your honour, nor the dignity you bear.

M. These things seem small and undistinguishable,
 Like far off mountains turnèd into clouds:
 Methinks I see things with a parted eye,
 When everything seems double.

F. B. Wouldst be the aim of every dangerous shot?

A sign of dignity? a breath? a bubble?
A queen in jest only to fill the scene?
More bitterly could I expostulate,
Save that for reverence to some alive,
I give a sparing limit to my tongue.
This, Margaret, is the point of my petition;
And now, since our more mature dignities,
And royal necessities, make separation
Of our society, our encounters,
Though not personal, may be royally
Attorney'd with an interchange of gifts,
Letters and loving embassies, that we
May seem to be together, though absent:
Shake hands as over a vast, and embrace,
As 'twere, from the ends of opposèd winds.

M. The heavens continue our loves.

F. B. My Queen, I think there is not in the world,
Either malice or matter t' alter it.

M. Then good, my lord, take to your royal self
This proffer'd benefit of dignity:
Thy love did read by rote that could not spell:
How often have I told you 'twould be thus?
How often said my dignity would last
But till 'twere known? Francis, that time is now.
The provost knows our purpose and our plot,
The matter being afoot; keep your instruction,
And hold you ever to our special drift,
Though sometimes you do blench from this to that
As cause doth minister: his nods and gestures
Indeed would make one think there would be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

F. B. How should this grow?

M. I know not : but I am sure 'tis safer to
 Avoid what's grown, than question how 'tis borne,
 Hence counsel'd I care of my dignity.

“ Her sight did ravish, but her grace in speech,
 Her words yelad with wisdom's majesty,
 Makes me from wondering, fall to weeping joys,
 Such is the fullness of my heart's content.
 To her I said :—

F. B. It cannot fail, but by
 The violation of my faith, and then
 Let nature crush the sides o' th' earth together,
 And mar the seeds within. Lift up thy looks.

M. Be advis'd.

F. B. I am : and by my fancy, if my reason
 Will thereto be obedient : I have reason :
 If not, my senses better pleas'd with madness,
 Do bid it welcome.

M. This is desperate, sir.

F. B. So call it : but it does fulfill my vow :
 I needs must think it honesty. Margaret,
 Not for all England, nor the pomp that may
 Be thereat glean'd : for all the sun sees, or
 The close earth wombs, or the profound seas hide
 In unknown fathoms, will I break my oath
 To this my fair belov'd. Dear Margaret,
 I cannot make you what amends I would,
 I that lead discontented steps on foreign soil,
 Therefore accept such kindness as I can ;
 And when I'm king of England, gracious Queen,
 Again shalt thou be wife unto a king,
 And all the ruins of distressful times

Repair'd with double riches of content.

What? we have many goodly days to see:

The liquid drops of tears that you have shed,

Shall come again transform'd to orient pearl,

Advantaging our love with interest

Of ten-times double gain of happiness.

But now, sweet Queen, hear me and mark me well;

The strong necessity of time, commands

Our services awhile: but my full heart

Remains in use with you. Sweet, my affairs

Do even drag me homeward, which to hinder,

Were (in your love) a whip to me; my stay,

To you a charge, and trouble: to save both,

Farewell. Tongue-tied, our Queen? Speak you.

M. Pardonnez-moi, I do not understand.

What should I say, my lord?

F. B. The Queen hath sent for me.

M. Ah! to what end?

F. B. That, she must teach me later.

M. Aye, but thou shalt not go.

F. B. I must not break my faith:

You know me dutiful, therefore dear Queen,

Let me not shame respect; but give me leave

To take that course by your consent and voice,

Which you do here forbid me, Margaret.

But let me conjure you by all the rights

Of our fellowship, by the consonancy

Of our youth, by the obligation

Of our ever-preservèd love, and too,

By what more dear a better proposer

Could charge you withal, be you true to me.

And Margaret, I pray you to remember,

'Tis not of my own will I go; I am enforc'd.

M. Art tied to her affection, my dear Prince,
As though your highness were a school-boy still,
And must be awed and govern'd like a child?

F. B. O be not scornful, gentle Margaret,
Indeed with all unwillingness I go.

M. If you have any pity, grace or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But fare-ye-well, 'tis partly my own fault,
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

F. B. Stay gentle Margaret, hear my excuse,
My love, my life, my soul, fair Margaret.

M. O excellent!

F. B. Sweet Queen, I love thee, by my life I do,
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,
To prove him false that says I love thee not.
Yet I, perforce, must now take leave awhile.
How now my love? Why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

M. Belike for want of rain, which I could well
Beteem them, from the tempest of mine eyes.

F. B. For aught that ever I could read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth,
But either it was different in blood.

M. O cross! too high to be enthralld to love.

F. B. Or else misgraffèd, in respect of years.

M. O spite! too old to be engag'd to young.

F. B. Or else it stood upon the choice of merit.

M. O hell! to choose love by another's eye.

F. B. Or if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it;

Making it momentary, as a sound :
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream,
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
That (in a spleen) unfolds both heaven and earth ;
And ere a man hath power to say, behold,
The jaws of darkness do devour it up :
So quick bright things come to confusion.

M. If then true lovers have been ever crost,
It stands as an edict in destiny :
I am undone, there is no living, none,
If Francis be away. It were all one
That I should love a bright particular star,
And think to wed it, he is so far above me
In his bright radiance and collateral light,
Must I be comforted, not in his sphere ;
Th' ambition in my love thus plagues itself :
The hind that would be mated by the lion
Must die for love. Thus must I, Francis, die,
But 'tis no matter since thou know'st the cause.

F. B. Nay, nay, thou'lt live in all thy sweetness, love,
And within three-score days I vow to be
With thee again, if destiny restrain me not,
Protesting thine e'er to remain whilst life doth last.

M. And is there then no remedy? must you depart?

F. B. Let me unfold the many and great reasons.

M. Nay, pray you, seek no color for your going
But bid farewell and go ; run if you will :
And peace attend your steps. Go, Francis, go ;
That you may add to London's dignity
And London's dignity may add to yours.
Throughout the world is lovely London fam'd
So far as any sea comes in with tide,

Whose peace and calm under her royal Queen,
 Hath long been such as like was never seen.
 Yet of your royal presence, I'll adventure
 The borrow of a week, my love, my lord, and king.

F. B. Nay love, I can no longer stay.

M. One seve'night longer.

F. B. Very sooth, to-morrow.

M. We'll part the time

Between us then : in that I'll no gain-saying.

F. B. Margaret, press me not ('beseech you) so :
 There is no tongue that moves ; none, none i'th world
 So soon as yours, could win me : so it should now,
 Were there necessity in your request,
 Although 'twere needful I denied it.

M. You'll stay ?

F. B. No, madame.

M. Nay, but you will ?

F. B. I may not, verily.

M. Verily ?

You put me off with limber vows : but I,
 Though you would seek t' unsphere the stars with oaths,
 Should yet say, sir, no going : verily
 You shall not go ; a lady's verily is
 As potent as a lord's.

F. B. I'm irremovable resolv'd for flight.

M. Resolv'd for flight ? That's, well—the better best,
 Now were I happy, if thy going I could frame
 To serve my turn, save thee from danger, do thee love
 And honour, yet purchase the sight again
 Of that unhappy King, my master, whom
 I so much thirst to see. I must away.

F. B. Have you thought on a place whereto you'll go ?

M. Not any yet :

But as th' unthought-on accident is guilty
To what we wildly do, so we profess
Ourselves to be the slaves of chance and flies,
Of every wind that blows.

F. B. Shall I bring thee on thy way ?

M. No, no, sweet sir.

F. B. But will you hear the King? Is my love sworn
For nought? Quench you the sparkle new begun?

M. Nay, nay, my Prince ; impute my foolish words
To wayward fickleness and idle mood.
I love you, on my life, and hold you dear
So now be merry and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there. * *

Side lights of English History:
Henderson's

P. 5.

Refers to Death of Dudley's ^{wife} and the
true opinions of its cause etc —

" Cecil has given my to Robert, who
they say was married to the Queen in the
presence of his brother and two ladies
of the Chamber."

from Quenda to the King (Phil. II of Spain.)
Nov 20. 1560

PUBLISHERS NOTE.

The present volume, "The Tragical History of Our Late Brother, Earl of Essex," is published separately, out of its consecutive order, being complete in itself, and of the most thrilling interest and historical value, that it may be the earlier enjoyed as one of the marvels of literature, in advance of its appearance as a part of the later books of the series of Sir Francis Bacon's Cipher Writings.

Like its immediate predecessor, "The Tragedy of Mary Queen of Scots," it has been deciphered from the Shakespeare Plays, and other works of Bacon, by means of the Cipher system, discovered by Doctor Owen, through which the hidden histories are being brought to light.

In the first book of the "Cipher Story," issued in October, 1893, was the astounding statement that the great Chancellor was the son of Queen Elizabeth and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester; and that Robert, Earl of Essex, was his brother. Corroboration of this is found in the recently published British "Dictionary of National Biography," Vol. 16, page 114, under the heading "Dudley :—

"Whatever were the Queen's relations with Dudley before his wife's death, they became closer after. It was reported that she was formally betrothed to him, and that she had secretly married him in Lord Pembroke's house, *and that she was a mother already.*"—*January, 1560-1.*

"In 1562 the reports that Elizabeth had children by Dudley were revived. One Robert Brooks, of Devizes, was sent to prison for publishing the slander, and seven years later a man named Marsham, of Norwich, was punished for the same offence."

This Tragedy confirms the statement.

The Comedy referred to in the Prologue is now being translated.

"The players that come forth, will to the life present
The pliant men that we as masks employ:
An excellent device to tell the plot,
And all our cipher practice to display."

HOWARD PUBLISHING CO.

March, 1895.

INTRODUCTION.

The work of deciphering the literature, in which the Cipher of Sir Francis Bacon is found, reveals details of English history of wonderful interest, which only a participant in the events could record. Inwrought into this literature was hidden the "Tragedy of Mary Queen of Scots," embracing Mary's attempts to gain the English crown, her trial, and her tragic end, written as a Play. This was published in December, 1894, and has been pronounced a masterpiece. Portions of it were found in every play attributed to Shakespeare, and in the writings of Spenser, Peele, Greene, Marlow, Burton, and Francis Bacon. Although a remarkable production, it is believed to be the first of Bacon's writings of historical drama in Cipher, and it is chiefly drawn from the earlier works and plays, before they were re-written and enlarged in 1608-17-23, incorporating later histories, and matters of profound philosophical significance.

This "Tragedy of Essex," obtained from the same sources, is a later production, and bears the impress of greater skill, more experience, and far more intense personal feeling. In it are interwoven most important passages of Bacon's own life. It explains Bacon's participation in the trial and conviction of Essex, who had been his benefactor, and the seeming ingratitude which has so long been thought a blot upon the fame of the Lord High Chancellor. It was a life for a life! Essex was foredoomed to death. The Queen sought excuse in law for the deed; her commands were imperative:—

Queen. * * Robert Essex was
A worthy officer i' th' wars, but insolent,
O'er-come with pride, ambitious past all thinking,
Self-loving, and affecting one sole throne,
Without assistance.

Francis Bacon. O, I think not so. * *

Q. Villain! I'll set a point against thy breast.
If thou dost not use most dear employment
In what I further shall intend to do,
By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint,
And strew a hungry churchyard with thy limbs:
The time and my intents are savage wild,
More fierce and more inexorable far,
Than empty tigers, or the roaring sea.
Put not another sin upon my head,
By urging me to fury. O, begone! * *

F. B. To revenge is no valor, but to bear. * *

To be in anger, is impiety.

Q. But who is born that is not angry?

Weigh but the crime with this.

Blood hath bought blood, and blows have answer'd blows;
Strength match'd with strength, and power confronted power;
Both are alike, and both alike we like:
One must prove greatest.

F. B. Believe this, Madam,
No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,
Not the King's crown, nor the deputed sword,
The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,
Becomes them with one half so good a grace
As mercy does. * *

Q. I was not born to die on Essex' sword!

* * In the name o' th' people,
And in the power of us their Queen, we
Will push destruction and perpetual shame
Out of the weak door of our fainting land.
See, here in bloody lines we have set down
And what is written shall be executed;
Your brother is to die, as his offences
Are accounted to the law.

F. B. O your Grace,
Are not you then as cruel as the sentence?
I know no law, Madam, that answering
One foul wrong, lives but to act another.

Q. Be satisfied;

Your treacherous brother dies; be content.

F. B. Oh, it is excellent, your Majesty,
To have a giant's strength: but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant.

Q. Peace, peace sir, peace.

Were I not the better part made of mercy,
I should not seek an absent argument
Of my revenge, thou present, thou traitor.
* * Look to it, thou villain,
Thy life's dependent on thy brother's death.
Let our instruction to thee be thy guide,
Under penalty of thine own false head.

F. B. I do partly understand your meaning.

Q. Why then, go get thee home, thou fragment vile.
Peruse this writing here, and thou shalt know
'Tis death for death, a brother for a brother:
Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure;
Like doth quit like, and measure still for measure.

THE PROLOGUE.

Scattered through the Shakespeare Plays are some of the most beautiful thoughts and poetic conceptions, which have become familiar household words. But they are fragmentary, and interpolated with, and surrounded by, irrelevant and incongruous matters, neither suggesting them, or by them suggested. The appearance of a ghost in Hamlet is inconsistent with

The undiscovered country, from whose borne
No traveller returns.

The Cipher gathers these fragments together in proper sequence, in the Prologue to this Tragedy of Essex, where they take the form of a soliloquy, embodying the deepest philosophy concerning things natural and spiritual, temporal and eternal. It is a retrospect, and a wail of remorse, as well as a speculation as to the future state. This wonderful Prologue can only be measured from the point of view of its author, FRANCIS BACON. Lost in reminiscence and contemplation, he weighs that destiny which has been beyond his control,

Which hath the primal curse upon it, a brother's murder.

To the Seven Ages of Man, so well known as an epitome of human life, the Cipher adds another, which rounds out and finishes the story with the "exit," from human view, of all that is mortal.

Last scene of all
That ends this strange eventful history,
The old man dies; and on the shoulders of his brethren
To the heavy knolled bells is borne,
In love and sacred pity; through the gates
Of the holy edifice of stone, where all in white
The goodly vicar meets them and doth say:—
"I am the resurrection and the life;"
And then doth mount the pulpit stairs and doth begin:—
"O Lord have mercy on us wretched sinners!"
The people answering cry as with one voice:—
"O Lord have mercy on us wretched sinners!"
Then through the narrow winding church-way paths,
With weary task foredone, under the shade
Of melancholy boughs, gently set down
Their venerable burden, and from the presence
Of the sun they lower him into the tomb,
To sleep, perchance to dream; aye, there's th' rub,
For in that sleep of death, what dreams may come,
When we have shuff'd off this mortal coil,

Must give us pause. To die, to sleep, to dream
No more; and by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, is a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. For in our graves,
After life's fitful fever, one sleeps well.

* * * * *

But for our conscience then, we'd rear our hand
And play the Roman fool and die on our own sword:
We, with three inches of this obedient steel,
No better than the earth ourselves could make.
O what a sleep were this, if 'twere perpetual!
But there's a prohibition so divine
Against self-slaughter, in the Holy Scripture,
It cravens our weak hand and doth return
The sword obedient to the scabbard.

The decipherer can understand perhaps better than another, the feeling that the translated text lacks some of the qualities called Shakespearean. The Plays are full of ambiguous incongruities and obscure allusions that have the charm of mystery, and excite wonder at the genius, that from such distant and widely scattered sources could draw its inspiration. The commentators have failed to explain them. When, however these expressions are segregated, and rounded out by the additions which the Cipher brings from the other works, they become smooth, reasonable, and historically accurate, and the great thoughts of that great constructive genius, the author of them all, are presented in their primal form.

ORVILLE W. OWEN.

Detroit, February, 1895.

Synopsis of "The Tragical Historie of the Earl of Essex."

PROLOGUE.

ACT I.—*Scene 1.*—Horns and trumpets sound. Enter Queen Elizabeth with hounds and dogs, returning from hunt. Queen and Huntsman. Enter Earl of Essex and Francis Bacon. Queen dismisses attendants. Essex announces insurrection in Ireland.

Scene 2.—Palace. Stormy discussion over assignment of commander of forces for Ireland. Queen to Essex: "Take thou that." (Boxes his ears.)

Essex assays to draw his sword; defies her and leaves in a rage. Queen relents, and sends the Admiral and Cecil to call him back.

Scene 3.—Cecil, Solus. Enter Essex; the quarrel and blow.

Scene 4.—Queen and Cecil. Prayer of the Queen:

*"I that never weep, now melt with woe,
That my ungracious son doth hate me so."*

Scene 5.—Lady Essex warns the Earl against Cecil. Bacon and Essex. Rival claims to the Crown.

ACT II.—*Scene 1.*—Elizabeth and Lords. Queen announces that Essex will go to Ireland. Dismisses all but Essex, to whom she promises,

" * * * * * The next degree shall be
England's royal throne, for King of England
Shall you be proclaimed in every borough."

Scene 2.—Essex; outlines his purposes in Ireland.

Scene 3.—Essex and Bacon; farewell.

ACT III.—*Scene 1.*—Cecil tells the Queen that Essex is returning with an army.

Scene 2.—Elizabeth walks in her sleep. Her horrible dream. Queen and ladies in prayer.

Scene 3.—Bed chamber of Queen; noisy arrival of Essex. The Queen bids that he be admitted.

*"Bless thee, my blessed boy,
* * * * **

Then, sir, withdraw, and in an hour return"

Ladies in waiting dress the Queen in handsome robes. Essex returns; Queen embraces him. He discourses of Ireland and claims the Dukedom of York. (*Exit.*) Enter Cecil, who frightens the Queen with false reasons for Essex's sudden return.

Scene 4.—Bacon tells Essex of Cecil's intrigues, and bids him fly to France. Enter Queen; Shows displeasure at Essex's return, and bids him go to his home.

ACT IV.—*Scene 1.*—Council Chamber. Queen informs Essex he must appear before the Council.

" * * * * * But if, sir,
You be put in bondage, appeal to us,
And deliver us this ring. * * * * "

Essex before the Council. Insults Cecil.

Scene 2.—Essex commanded to close confinement in his house.

Scene 3.—Quarrels with his brother Francis Bacon.

Scene 4.—Queen and Bacon. Bacon pleads for Essex. Interrupted by news of Essex's revolt.

Scene 5.—Gate of Essex's House. Lords demand his surrender; Essex's soldiers surround and take them away.

Scene 6.—Street in London. Essex endeavors to incite the mob to burn and plunder.

Scene 7.—Front of Essex's House—Essex on walls. Alarms and clash of arms. Summoned to parley; descends; is arrested and conveyed to the Tower.

Scene 8.—Palace.

Queen. "Where is the Earl?"
Cecil. "In the Tower, Your Grace."

ACT V.—*Scene 1.*—Order for the trial of Essex.

Scene 2.—Queen and Francis Bacon; plea for pardon of Essex.

Queen. "Your treacherous brother dies!
* * * * *"

*Thy life's dependent on thy brother's death.
Let our instruction to thee be thy guide,
Under the penalty of thine own false head.*

*Peruse this writing here, and thou shalt know
'Tis death for death, a brother for a brother;
Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure;
Like doth quit like, and measure still for measure."*

Scene 3.—Star Chamber. Trial of Essex. He denounces Cecil. Essex condemned to execution.

Scene 4.—Streets of London. Essex under guard; axe, edge toward him; led to dungeon.

Scene 5.—Garden of Palace. Lady Essex and child before the Queen; pleads for Essex's life. Francis Bacon supports her and supplicates the Queen, without result.

Queen. " * * * * * I'll see that he
Be executed by nine to-morrow morning."

Scene 6.—Dungeon.

Essex. "No bending knee will call me Cæsar now," (Enter Bacon.)
O thou damn'd cur;
Whom to call brother would infect my mouth,
Get thee gone, thou most wicked sir!

Bacon. "Is it my fault that I was forced to plead?
How much thou wrongest me. Heaven be my judge"

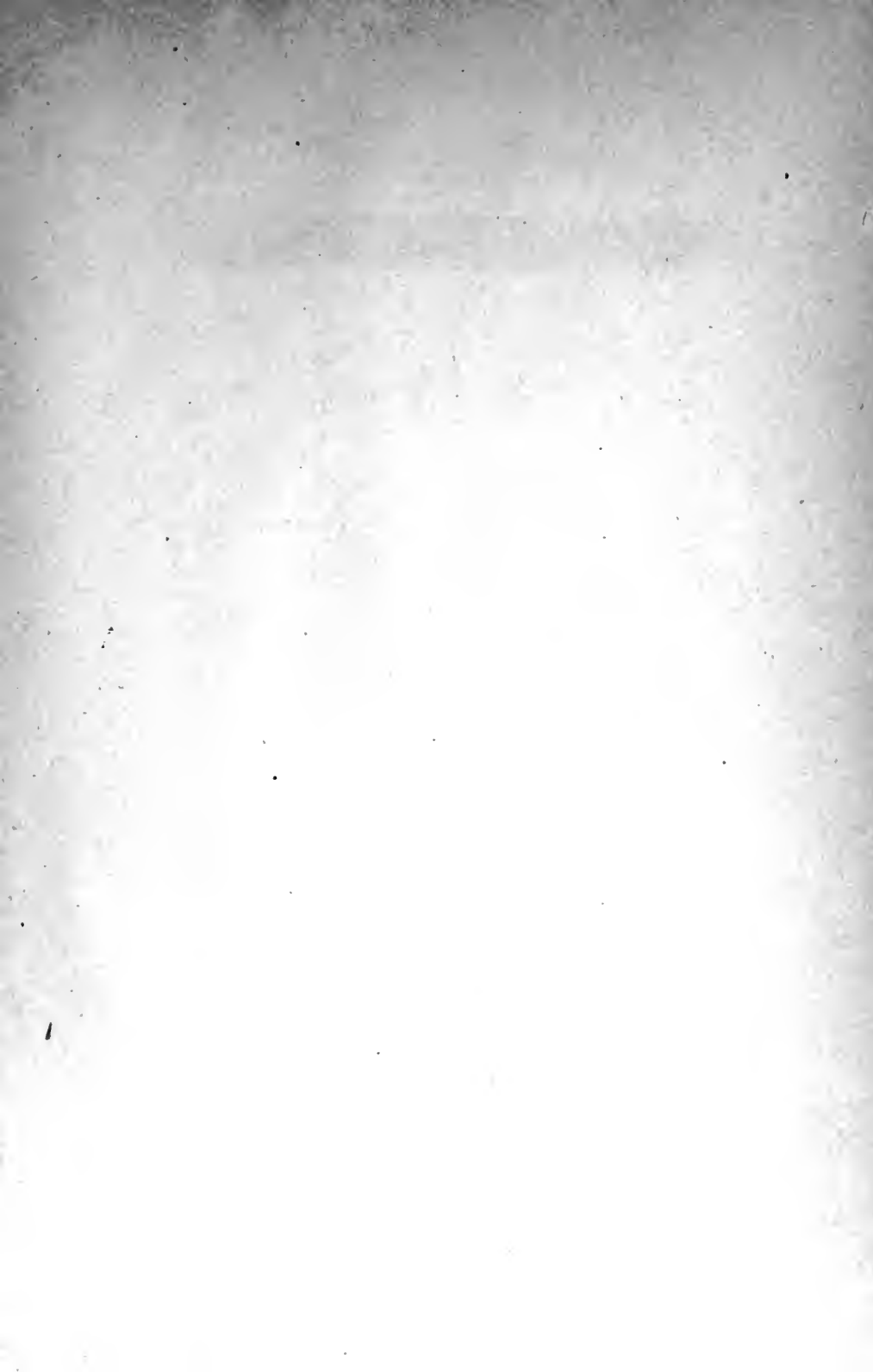
Essex upbraids him with sharpest scorn. Enter Lord Keeper; commands Bacon to depart; gives commission to jailor. Jailors bind Essex in a chair; show him the order,

" * * * * * Must you with hot irons burn out both my eyes?"

*Cut out my tongue so that I may still keep
Both mine eyes" (Jailor tears out one eye, then the other.)*

*"All dark and comfortless!
God enkindle all the sparks of nature
To quit this horrid act!"*

Jailor. "Away with him! lead him to the block!"



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