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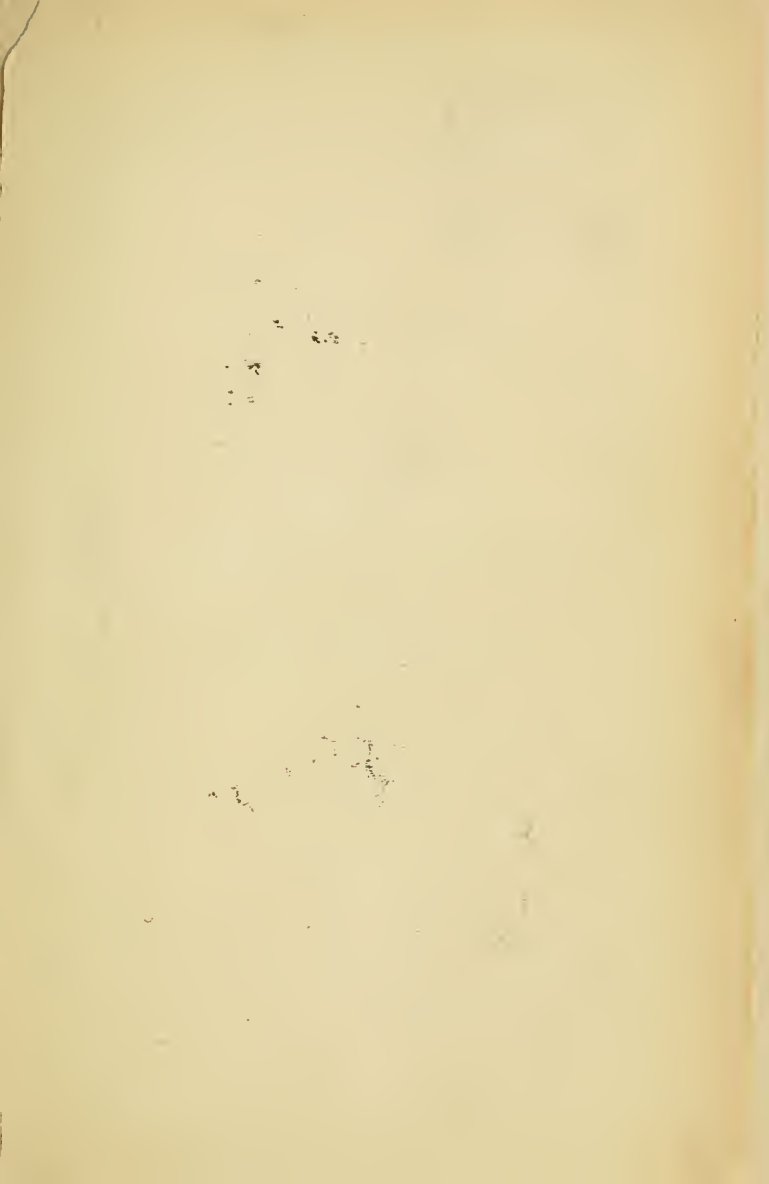
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PRINCE OF DENMARK

*CLARK AND WRIGHT*

London

HENRY FROWDE



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# SHAKESPEARE

SELECT PLAYS

[22]

## HAMLET

PRINCE OF DENMARK

EDITED BY

THE LATE

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## P R E F A C E.

THE story of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, is told in the *Historia Danica* of Saxo Grammaticus, a writer who lived about A. D. 1150-1220, and wrote his work about 1180-1208. The earliest edition of it is that of Paris, 1514. The story as it there appears was incorporated in Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*, of which the earlier volumes contained translations from the Italian of Bandello, and amongst them the tragical history of Romeo and Juliet. The fifth volume of these *Histoires*, in which Hamlet first appears, was printed at Paris in 1570, and the story was thence translated into English. The only edition now extant of this translation is that of 1608, which is reprinted in Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, vol. i., from the only perfect copy known, which is among Capell's books in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge. There were in all probability earlier editions, but none of these are known to have been preserved. The title of this book is 'The Hystorie of Hamblet. London: Imprinted by *Richard Bradocke*, for *Thomas Pauier*, and are to be sold at his shop in Corne-hill, neere to the Royall Exchange, 1608.'

Between the story of Hamlet as it appears in this 'Hystorie' and the story as it appears in Shakespeare there are very marked differences. Except in the case of Hamlet himself and his mother, who is called 'Geruth' in the 'Hystorie,' there is no resemblance whatever between the names of the characters in the 'Hystorie' and in the play. In the former, Hamlet's father is Horvendile, his uncle is Fengon, corresponding to Horvendillus and Fengo in Saxo Grammaticus. The murder of Hamlet's father by his uncle, and the subsequent marriage of the latter with his brother's widow, the feigned madness of Hamlet, the various devices of the uncle to penetrate his secret, the death of Polonius, Hamlet's re-

monstrance with his mother, his voyage to England, his return and revenge, are all incidents of the original story, which goes on to relate how Hamlet after his uncle's death became King of Denmark, how he went again to England and married two wives, by one of whom he was betrayed on his return to Denmark into the power of another uncle, Wiglerus, his mother's brother, and was finally slain in battle. Long before the story assumed the shape in which it is familiar to us, it had in all probability been modified in adapting it for the stage. There is evidence that as early as 1587 a drama on this subject had been written and performed in England. In the preface by Thomas Nash to Robert Greene's *Menaphon*, the first edition of which, according to Dyce, was printed in 1587, though no copy appears to be known of an earlier date than 1589, occurs a passage which certainly refers to a play of Hamlet, and has been thought to contain an attack on Shakespeare. We quote from the reprint of the edition of 1616 as it is given in Sir Egerton Brydges' *Archaica*, vol. i. 'It is a common practice now-a-days, amongst a sort of shifting companions, that run through every art and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *noverint*, whereto they were born, and busy themselves with the endeavours of art, that could scarcely latinise their neck-verse if they should have need : yet English Seneca read by candle-light yields many good sentences, as "Blood is a beggar," and so forth ; and if you intreat him fair in a frosty morning, he will afford you whole Hamlets, I should say, handfulls of tragical speeches.' In Henslowe's Diary, under the date 9 June 1594, is mentioned the performance of a play 'Hamlet' at the Newington Theatre. Lodge, in his 'Wits Miserie, and the Worlds Madnesse,' printed in 1596, thus describes the fiend 'Hate-Virtue' : 'He walks for the most part in black vnder colour of grauity, and looks as pale as the Visard of y<sup>e</sup> ghost which cried so miserally at y<sup>e</sup> Theator like an oister wife, *Hamlet, reuenge.*' This last quotation would alone be sufficient to prove that the play in question was not the Hamlet of Shakespeare, and if the date (1587) which has been given to Greene's *Menaphon* be correct, it is difficult to imagine that

the reference in Nash's Address could be to Shakespeare, who was then only in his twenty-third year.

We now come to something which is undoubtedly connected with Shakespeare. In the Registers of the Stationers' Company is an entry, under the date 26 July 1602, made by James Roberts the printer, of 'A booke, The Revenge of Hamlett prince of Denmarke, as yt latelie was acted by the Lord Chamberlayn his servantes.' This is evidently the book which was printed in the following year with this title: 'The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke, By William Shakespeare. As it hath beene diverse times acted by his Highnesse servants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Unversities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where. At London printed for N. L. and Iohn Trundell, 1603.' Coupling the fact of the entry by Roberts with the fact that the quarto of 1604 was 'Printed by I. R. for N. L.', that is, by James Roberts for Nicholas Ling, we may infer that Roberts also printed the quarto of 1603. When James the First came to the throne 'he accepted the Lord Chamberlain's servants as his own' (Chalmers, *Farther Account of the Early English Stage*, in Boswell's *Shakespeare*, iii. 463), so that 'the Lord Chamberlayn his servants' of the Stationers' Register are the same company with 'his Highnesse servants' of the printed book, and to this company Shakespeare belonged. No evidence has yet been discovered of the occasion on which the play was acted at the two universities; but if we might hazard a conjecture, it seems not improbable that it might have been at some entertainment in honour of the king's accession, and it may have been selected as being connected with the native country of his queen.

In the following year, 1604, appeared for the first time in the shape in which it has come down to us, 'The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. By William Shakespeare. Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much-againe as it was, according to the true and perfect coppie.' The statement with regard to the enlargement of the play is substantially true, for whereas the edition of 1603 contained thirty-two leaves, that of 1604 contained fifty, exclusive of the

title. This last mentioned was followed by other editions in quarto in the years 1605, 1611, 1637, and by one without date which was evidently printed from that of 1611. The text of the play, as it is found in the first folio of 1623 and the subsequent folio editions, is from sources independent of the quartos. The quartos contain many passages which are omitted in the folios, probably for the purpose of shortening the play when acted, and on the other hand there are a few passages which are in the folios but not in the quartos. These we have generally indicated in our notes. But notwithstanding these minor differences the play as it appears in the quarto of 1604 and the folio of 1623 is the same play. It remains to enquire what relation it bears to the edition of 1603.

It is clear upon a very slight examination that the latter is printed from a copy which was hastily taken down and perhaps surreptitiously obtained, either from short-hand notes made during the representation, or privately from the actors themselves. These notes when transcribed would form the written copy which the printers had before them, and would account for the existence of errors which are errors of the copyist rather than of the hearer. But granting all this, we have yet to account for differences between the earlier and later forms of the play which cannot be explained by the carelessness of short-hand writer, copyist, or printer. Mr. Knight, with great ingenuity, maintains that the quarto of 1603 represents the original sketch of the play, and that this was an early work of the poet. We differ from him in respect to this last conclusion, because we can see no evidence for Shakespeare's connexion with the play before 1602. First, there is the complete absence of any positive evidence on the point, and next there is the very strong negative evidence that in the enumeration of Shakespeare's works by one who was an ardent admirer of his genius, Francis Meres, in his *Palladis Tamia, or Wit's Treasury*, published in 1598, there is no mention whatever of Hamlet. That Hamlet should be omitted and *Titus Andronicus* inserted is utterly unintelligible, except upon the supposition that in 1598 the play bearing the former name had not in any

way been connected with Shakespeare. Herr Karl Elze appeals to the omission of Pericles and Henry VI. from the list as a parallel instance, but we submit that there is no reason at all for associating Shakespeare with Pericles at this period, and that his connexion with the three parts of Henry VI. is doubtful. In any case the last-mentioned play would hardly be quoted by an admirer as a proof of his genius; whereas if Hamlet had existed, even in the imperfect form in which it appears in the quarto of 1603, it would have supplied at least as good an instance of his tragic power as Titus Andronicus or Richard III. At some time therefore between 1598 and 1602 Hamlet, as retouched by Shakespeare, was put upon the stage. We are inclined to think that it was acted not very long before the date of Roberts' entry in the Stationers' Registers, namely, 26 July 1602. Our reason for this opinion is, that if the play had been long a popular one and had been frequently represented, the printer or publisher would have had many opportunities of procuring a more accurate copy than that from which the edition of 1603 was made. The errors of this edition, and the manifest haste with which it was printed, seem to show that the play had only been acted a short time before, and that the publisher went to press with the first copy he could obtain, however imperfect. This supposition is favoured by the expression in the Stationers' Register, 'as it was *lately* acted,' which would hardly have been used of a play which had long been popular. Steevens endeavoured, very unfairly we think, to make it appear that Shakespeare's Hamlet was known in 1598, by quoting a MS. note written by Gabriel Harvey in a copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer published in that year. He attributed to the note the date of the book, but Malone has shown that, although Harvey may have purchased the volume in 1598, there is nothing to prove that he wrote the note till after 1600, in which year Fairfax's translation of Tasso, mentioned in another note, was published. In fact, Harvey may have written the note in any one of the thirty years which he lived after the book came into his possession. Malone himself fixed the date of the first performance of Hamlet in the autumn of 1600, because in the

June of that year all players were 'inhibited' except those at the Fortune and the Globe; and this he supposes will explain the reference in ii. 2. 323, 'their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.' But as this passage appears for the first time in 1604 and is not in the edition of 1603, with which Malone was unacquainted, it would seem, if it had any special meaning at all, to refer to something which had happened between those two years.

After a careful examination of the quarto of 1603, and a comparison of the play as there exhibited with its later form, we have arrived at a conclusion which, inasmuch as it is conjectural and based to a large extent upon subjective considerations, we state with some diffidence. It is this:—That there was an old play on the story of Hamlet, some portions of which are still preserved in the quarto of 1603; that about the year 1603 Shakespeare took this and began to remodel it for the stage, as he had done with other plays; that the quarto of 1603 represents the play after it had been retouched by him to a certain extent, but before his alterations were complete; and that in the quarto of 1604 we have for the first time the Hamlet of Shakespeare. It is quite true, as Mr. Knight has remarked, that in the quarto of 1603 we have the whole 'action' of the play; that is to say, the events follow very much the same order and the catastrophe is the same. There are however some important modifications even in this respect. The scene with Ophelia, which in the modern play occurs in iii. 1, is in the older form introduced in the middle of ii. 2. Polonius is Corambis in the older play, and Reynaldo is Montano. The madness of Hamlet is much more pronounced, and the Queen's innocence of her husband's murder much more explicitly stated, in the earlier than in the later play. In fact, the earlier play in these respects corresponds more closely with the original story. In the earlier form it appears to us that Shakespeare's modification of the play had not gone much beyond the second act. Certainly in the third act we find very great unlikeness and very great inferiority to the later play. In fact, in the first, third, and fourth scenes there is hardly a trace of Shakespeare,

and in the second, which is the scene where the play is introduced, there are very remarkable differences. The fourth act in language has very little in common with its present form, and in the first scene of the fifth act there are still some traces of the original play. In the second scene of this act the dialogue between Hamlet and Horatio is not found, and the interview with Osric in its old dress may fairly be put down to the earlier writer. The rest of the scene is much altered, and of course improved, and wherever these improvements come it strikes us with irresistible force that in comparing the later with the earlier form of the play we are not comparing the work of Shakespeare at two different periods of his life, but the work of Shakespeare with that of a very inferior artist. If any one desires to be convinced of this, let him read the interview of Hamlet with his mother, in the two quartos of 1603 and 1604. Going backwards we come to the second act, and here the first scene is so imperfectly given in the quarto of 1603 that it is impossible to say what it really represented. Here and there a line occurs as it now stands, but on the whole it is very defective, and appears to have been set down from memory. The opening of the second scene is changed, and in the quarto of 1603 seems to belong to the original play. On the other hand, the speeches of Corambis (Polonius) and Voltemar (Voltimand) are nearly verbatim the same as the later edition. The rest of the scene is altered and much improved. The first act is substantially the same in the two editions, allowing for the extremely imperfect and careless manner in which it is given in the quarto of 1603. The first scene is fairly rendered, the speeches of Marcellus and Horatio being, so far as they go, almost word for word the same as in the quarto of 1604, where the dialogue is expanded. In the second scene the speeches are very imperfect, and it is difficult to say how far they represent the earlier or the later play; Hamlet's soliloquy is sadly mutilated, as if written down in fragments from memory; but in the interview with Horatio the early quarto agrees closely with the later. The third and fourth scenes are badly reported, but

otherwise contain the groundwork of the present play, and Hamlet's address to the Ghost is given almost verbatim, as is the dialogue which follows. In the fifth scene the order of the dialogue is slightly altered but not materially changed, and Hamlet's soliloquy after the Ghost's disappearance is very much mutilated. The interview with Marcellus and Horatio is but little altered.

In conclusion, we venture to think that a close examination of the quarto of 1603 will convince any one that it contains some of Shakespeare's undoubted work, mixed with a great deal that is not his, and will confirm our theory that the text, imperfect as it is, represents an older play in a transition state, while it was undergoing a remodelling but had not received more than the first rough touches of the great master's hand.

In Mr. Albert Cohn's *Shakespeare in Germany*, the text of a German play on the subject of Hamlet is given (pp. 237-304), the original of which is thought to have been brought to Germany by the English players as early as 1603. If this hypothesis be correct it is probable that the German text even in its present diluted form may contain something of the older English play upon which Shakespeare worked. As in the quarto of 1603 Polonius is Corambis, in the German he is Corambus. It does not appear that the German playwright made use of Shakespeare's Hamlet, or even of the play as represented in the quarto of 1603. The theory that it may be derived from a still earlier source is therefore not improbable.

We have reserved for the preface the discussion of a question which properly belonged to the notes, but which would there have taken up too much space. It is this:—What explanation is to be given of the passage in Act ii. Sc. 2, which refers to the 'tragedians of the city,' who appear to have been compelled to 'travel,' that is to stroll, in consequence of some inhibition? Is there any reference in this to any special act of legislation, and if so, to what? In the quarto of 1603 the passage stands thus:—



*Ham.* How comes it that they trauell? Do they grow restie?

*Gil.* No my Lord, their reputation holds as it was wont.

*Ham.* How then?

*Gil.* Yfaith my Lord, noueltie carries it away,  
For the principall publike audience that  
Came to them, are turned to priuate playes,  
And to the humour of children.

*Ham.* I doe not greatly wonder of it, &c.

Lines 330-351, are omitted, as they are in the other quartos, which have simply,

*Ham.* How chanches if they trauaile? their residence both in reputation, and profit was better both wayes.

*Ros.* I thinke their inhibition, comes by the meanes of the late innoouasion.

*Ham.* Doe they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the City; are they so followed.

*Ros.* No indeede are they not.

*Ham.* It is not very strange, &c.

In the earlier play the tragedians are driven to strolling because the public taste was in favour of the private plays and the acting of children; in the later, they are represented as being prohibited from acting in consequence of what is darkly called an 'innovation.' Both these causes are combined in the play as it stands in the folios, where the 'inhibition' and the 'aery of children' are introduced to account for the tragedians having forsaken the city. Steevens explains the 'inhibition' in this way: 'their permission to act any longer at an established house is taken away, in consequence of the new custom of introducing personal abuse into their comedies,' and then asserts that 'several companies of actors in the time of our author were silenced on account of this licentious practice.' But it is not clear that this is the reference intended. For a very long period there had been a strong opposition in the city to theatrical performances. In March 1573-4 the Lord Mayor and Corporation declined to license a place for them within the city. In 1575 players were again forbidden to act there, and in consequence in 1576 the Blackfriars Theatre was built without the limits of the jurisdiction of the city. In 1581 the Lord Mayor was ordered to allow performances in the city by certain companies of actors on week days only, being holidays; but his inhibition must have remained still in

force, because in the following year, 1582, the Lords of the Council pray the Lord Mayor to revoke his inhibition against playing on holidays. In 1589 Lord Burleigh appears to have directed the Lord Mayor to silence the players of the Lord Admiral's and the Lord Strange's companies for introducing matters of state and religion upon the stage. To this apparently Nash alludes in his *Return of the renowned Cavaliero Pasquile of England*, published in 1589. In this year also, proposals were made to appoint two commissioners to act with the Master of the Revels for the purpose of examining and licensing every play, and so restraining the abuses of the actors. About the year 1590 the children of St. Paul's were silenced, and the interdict was apparently not removed till about 1600. In 1597 the Lord Admiral's players were restrained for a time from playing in consequence of having brought out Nash's *Isle of Dogs*, a play in which personal satire was probably introduced, and for which the author was imprisoned. In 1601 a letter was addressed by the Lords of the Council to certain Justices of the Peace in the county of Middlesex in which the actors at the Curtain Theatre, Shoreditch, are charged with satirizing living persons and introducing personalities into their plays. It is difficult therefore to see at what precise period the explanation offered by Steevens could be true. In 1604 the indulgence of the actors in personal abuse could hardly be called an 'innovation'; on the contrary, it was a practice from which the stage had never been entirely free. If we were to add to the conjectures upon this point we should be disposed to suggest that the 'innovation' referred to was the license which had been given on 30 Jan. 1603-4 to the children of the Queen's Revels to play at the Blackfriars Theatre and other convenient places. The Blackfriars Theatre belonged to the company of which Shakespeare was a member, formerly the Lord Chamberlain's and at this time His Majesty's servants. The popularity of the children may well have driven the older actors into the country and so have operated as an 'inhibition,' though in the strict sense of the word no formal 'inhibition' was issued. If by 'inhibition' Shakespeare merely meant, as we think most

probable, that the actors were practically thrown out of employment, it seems also likely that by 'innovation' he meant the authority given to the children to act at the regularly licensed theatres. It must be borne in mind, in reference to this, that nothing is said either of 'inhibition' or 'innovation' in 1603, but that the sentence containing both is first introduced in 1604. It is to the interval therefore that we must look for the explanation. In offering this conjecture we have not lost sight of the fact that after all, remembering how chary Shakespeare is of contemporary allusions, no special occurrence may be hinted at, although in what follows in the folio edition a satire upon the children's performances was clearly intended.

In Chalmers' Farther Account of the Early English Stage (Shakespeare, ed. Boswell, iii. 423-429) will be found a list of payments, at sundry times during the reign of Elizabeth, to the children of Paul's, Westminster, Windsor, and the Chapel Royal, and an enumeration of the plays performed by them and by the children of the Revels from 1571 to 1633. Most if not all of Lyly's plays were acted by the children of Paul's; Marlowe's *Dido*, Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels* and *Poetaster* by the children of the Chapel; and Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* and Antonio's *Revenge* by the children of Paul's. It is with reference to these performances by the children that a quotation has been frequently given from Heywood's *Apology for actors* (1612) for the purpose of throwing light upon this passage of Shakespeare. It shows indeed that the children indulged in personalities, but not that any 'inhibition' was the consequence. Besides, it refers to a subsequent date. 'Now to speake of some abuse lately crept into the quality, as an inueighing against the State, the Court, the Law, the City, and their gouernements, with the particularizing of priuate mens humors (yet alive) Noble-men & others, I know it distastes many; neither do I any way approue it, nor dare I by any meanes excuse it. The liberty which some arrogate to themselues, committing their bitternesse and liberall inuectiues against all estates, to the mouthes of Children, supposing their iuniority to be a priuiledge for any rayling,

be it neuer so violent, I could aduise all such, to curbe and limit this presumed liberty within the bands of discretion and gouernment. But wise and iudicial Censurers, before whom such complaints shall at any time hereafter come, wil not (I hope) impute these abuses to any transgression in vs, who haue euer been carefull and prouident to shun the like.' There is no evidence that the children were inhibited on account of these personalities, and still less that their offences were visited upon the heads of the older players. Indeed, Heywood's language implies the contrary.

So much has been written on the character of Hamlet and on the action of the play that it is impossible here to discuss the merits of such various criticisms. But we give one, which whether or not in all respects adequate, is at any rate most suggestive. Goethe, in the fourth book of Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship, chapter xiii. (Carlyle's translation), thus gives his estimate of the hero of the tragedy. 'To me it is clear that Shakespeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to me composed. There is an oak-tree planted in a costly jar, which should have borne only pleasant flowers in its bosom; the roots expand, the jar is shivered. A lovely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear, and must not cast away. All duties are holy for him; the present is too hard. Impossibilities have been required of him; not in themselves impossibilities, but such for him. He winds, and turns, and torments himself; he advances and recoils: is ever put in mind, ever puts himself in mind; at last does all but lose his purpose from his thoughts; yet still without recovering his peace of mind.' But Goethe does not recognise the reality of Hamlet's madness, which has formed the subject of special investigation by several writers, among others by Dr. Conolly and Sir Edward Strachey.

W. G. C.

W. A. W.

# HAMLET,

## PRINCE OF DENMARK.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CLAUDIUS, king of Denmark.  
 HAMLET, son to the late, and nephew  
 to the present king.  
 POLONIUS, lord chamberlain.  
 HORATIO, friend to Hamlet.  
 LAERTES, son to Polonius.  
 VOLTIMAND, }  
 CORNELIUS, } courtiers.  
 ROSENCRANTZ, }  
 GUILDENSTERN, }  
 OSRIC, }  
 A Gentleman, }  
 A Priest. }  
 MARCELLUS, } officers  
 BERNARDO, }  
 FRANCISCO, a soldier.

REYNALDO, servant to Polonius.  
 Players.  
 Two Clowns, grave-diggers.  
 FORTINBRAS, prince of Norway.  
 A Captain.  
 English Ambassadors.  
 GERTRUDE, queen of Denmark, and  
 mother to Hamlet.  
 OPHELIA, daughter to Polonius.  
 Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers,  
 Sailors, Messengers, and other  
 Attendants.  
 Ghost of Hamlet's Father.  
 SCENE : *Denmark.*

## ACT I.

SCENE I. *Elsinore. A platform before the castle.*

FRANCISCO *at his post.* Enter to him BERNARDO.

*Ber.* Who's there?

*Fran.* Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

*Ber.* Long live the king!

*Fran.* Bernardo?

*Ber.* He.

*Fran.* You come most carefully upon your hour.

*Ber.* 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

*Fran.* For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,  
 And I am sick at heart.

*Ber.* Have you had quiet guard?

*Fran.*

Not a mouse stirring.

*Ber.* Well, good night.

11

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,  
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

*Fran.* I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who is there?

*Enter* HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

*Hor.* Friends to this ground.

*Mar.* And liegemen to the Dane.

*Fran.* Give you good night.

*Mar.* O, farewell, honest soldier:  
Who hath relieved you?

*Fran.* Bernardo hath my place.  
Give you good night.

[*Exit.*

*Mar.* Holla! Bernardo!

*Ber.* Say,  
What, is Horatio there?

*Hor.* A piece of him.

*Ber.* Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus. 20

*Mar.* What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

*Ber.* I have seen nothing.

*Mar.* Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,  
And will not let belief take hold of him  
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:  
Therefore I have entreated him along  
With us to watch the minutes of this night,  
That if again this apparition come,  
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

*Hor.* Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

*Ber.* Sit down awhile;  
And let us once again assail your ears,  
That are so fortified against our story,  
What we have two nights seen. 31

*Hor.* Well, sit we down,  
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

*Ber.* Last night of all,

When yond same star that's westward from the pole  
 Had made his course to illumine that part of heaven  
 Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,  
 The bell then beating one,—

*Enter Ghost.*

*Mar.* Peace, break thee off ; look, where it comes again !

*Ber.* In the same figure, like the king that's dead. 41

*Mar.* Thou art a scholar ; speak to it, Horatio.

*Ber.* Looks it not like the king ? mark it, Horatio.

*Hor.* Most like : it harrows me with fear and wonder.

*Ber.* It would be spoke to.

*Mar.* Question it, Horatio.

*Hor.* What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,  
 Together with that fair and warlike form  
 In which the majesty of buried Denmark  
 Did sometimes march ? by heaven I charge thee, speak !

*Mar.* It is offended.

*Ber.* See, it stalks away ! 50

*Hor.* Stay ! speak, speak ! I charge thee, speak !

*[Exit Ghost.]*

*Mar.* 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

*Ber.* How now, Horatio ! you tremble and look pale :  
 Is not this something more than fantasy ?  
 What think you on 't ?

*Hor.* Before my God, I might not this believe  
 Without the sensible and true avouch  
 Of mine own eyes.

*Mar.* Is it not like the king ?

*Hor.* As thou art to thyself :  
 Such was the very armour he had on 60  
 When he the ambitious Norway combated ;  
 So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,  
 He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.  
 'Tis strange.

*Mar.* Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,  
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

*Hor.* In what particular thought to work I know not ;  
But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,  
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

*Mar.* Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,  
Why this same strict and most observant watch 71  
So nightly toils the subject of the land,  
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,  
And foreign mart for implements of war ;  
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task  
Does not divide the Sunday from the week ;  
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste  
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day :  
Who is't that can inform me ?

*Hor.* That can I ;  
At least the whisper goes so. Our last king, 80  
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,  
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,  
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,  
Dared to the combat ; in which our valiant Hamlet—  
For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—  
Did slay this Fortinbras ; who, by a seal'd compact,  
Well ratified by law and heraldry,  
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands  
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror :  
Against the which, a moiety competent 90  
Was gaged by our king ; which had return'd  
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,  
Had he been vanquisher ; as, by the same covenant  
And carriage of the article design'd,  
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,  
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,  
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there  
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,  
For food and diet, to some enterprise  
That hath a stomach in't : which is no other— 100



As it doth well appear unto our state—  
 But to recover of us, by strong hand  
 And terms compulsatory, those foresaid lands  
 So by his father lost : and this, I take it,  
 Is the main motive of our preparations,  
 The source of 'this our watch and the chief head  
 Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

*Ber.* I think it be no other but e'en so :  
 Well may it sort, that this portentous figure  
 Comes armed through our watch ; so like the king 110  
 That was and is the question of these wars.

*Hor.* A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.  
 In the most high and palmy state of Rome,  
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,  
 The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead  
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets :  
 As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,  
 Disasters in the sun : and the moist star  
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands  
 Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse : 120  
 And even the like precurse of fierce events,  
 As harbingers preceding still the fates  
 And prologue to the omen coming on,  
 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated  
 Unto our climatures and countrymen.

*Re-enter Ghost.*

But soft, behold ! lo, where it comes again !  
 I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion !  
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,  
 Speak to me :  
 If there be any good thing to be done, 130  
 That may to thee do ease and grace to me,  
 Speak to me :  
 If thou art privy to thy country's fate,  
 Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,  
 O, speak !  
 Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life

Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,  
 For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,  
 Speak of it: stay, and speak! [*Cock crows.*] Stop it,  
 Marcellus.

*Mar.* Shall I strike at it with my partisan? 140

*Hor.* Do, if it will not stand.

*Ber.* 'Tis here!

*Hor.* 'Tis here!

*Mar.* 'Tis gone! [*Exit Ghost.*]

We do it wrong, being so majestic,  
 To offer it the show of violence;  
 For it is, as the air, invulnerable,  
 And our vain blows malicious mockery.

*Ber.* It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

*Hor.* And then it started like a guilty thing  
 Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,  
 The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn, 150  
 Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat  
 Awake the god of day; and at his warning,  
 Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,  
 The extravagant and erring spirit hies  
 To his confine: and of the truth herein  
 This present object made probation.

*Mar.* It faded on the crowing of the cock.  
 Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes  
 Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
 The bird of dawning singeth all night long: 160  
 And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad,  
 The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,  
 No fairy takes nor witch hath power to charm,  
 So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

*Hor.* So have I heard and do in part believe it.  
 But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,  
 Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill:  
 Break we our watch up; and by my advice,  
 Let us impart what we have seen to-night

Unto young Hamlet ; for, upon my life, 170  
 This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him :  
 Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,  
 As needful in our loves, fitting our duty ?

*Mar.* Let's do't, I pray ; and I this morning know  
 Where we shall find him most conveniently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A room of state in the castle.*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES,  
 VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and Attendants.*

*King.* Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death  
 The memory be green, and that it us befitted  
 To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom  
 To be contracted in one brow of woe,  
 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature  
 That we with wisest sorrow think on him,  
 Together with remembrance of ourselves.  
 Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,  
 The imperial jointress to this warlike state,  
 Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,— 10  
 With an auspicious and a dropping eye,  
 With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,  
 In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—  
 Taken to wife : nor have we herein barr'd  
 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone  
 With this affair along. For all, our thanks.  
 Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,  
 Holding a weak supposal of our worth,  
 Or thinking by our late dear brother's death  
 Our state to be disjoint and out of frame, 20  
 Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,  
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,  
 Importing the surrender of those lands  
 Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,  
 To our most valiant brother. So much for him.  
 Now for ourself and for this time of meeting :

Thus much the business is : we have here writ  
 To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—  
 Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears  
 Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress 30  
 His further gait herein ; in that the levies,  
 The lists and full proportions, are all made  
 Out of his subject : and we here dispatch  
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,  
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway ;  
 Giving to you no further personal power  
 To business with the king more than the scope  
 Of these delated articles allow.  
 Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

*Cor.* } In that and all things will we show our duty. 40  
*Vol.* }

*King.* We doubt it nothing : heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?  
 You told us of some suit ; what is't Laertes?  
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,  
 And lose your voice : what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,  
 That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?  
 The head is not more native to the heart,  
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,  
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.  
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

*Laer.* My dread lord, 50  
 Your leave and favour to return to Francé ;  
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,  
 To show my duty in your coronation,  
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,  
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,  
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

*King.* Have you your father's leave ? What says Polonius?

*Pol.* He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave  
 By laboursome petition, and at last  
 Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent : 60  
 I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

*King.* Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,  
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!  
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

*Ham.* [*Aside*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

*Ham.* Not so, my lord: I am too much i' the sun.

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,  
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not for ever with thy veiled lids 70

Seek for thy noble father in the dust:

Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,  
Passing through nature to eternity.

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

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

*Ham.* Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not 'seems.'

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye, 80

Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,

Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,

That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,

For they are actions that a man might play:

But I have that within which passeth show;

These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

*King.* 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,  
Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father:

But, you must know, your father lost a father,

That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound 90

In filial obligation for some term

To do obsequious sorrow: but to persevere

In obstinate condolèment is a course

Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:

It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,

A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,

An understanding simple and unschool'd :  
 For what we know must be and is as common  
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,  
 Why should we in our peevish opposition 100  
 Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,  
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,  
 To reason most absurd, whose common theme  
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,  
 From the first corse till he that died to-day,  
 'This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth  
 This unprevailing woe, and think of us  
 As of a father : for let the world take note,  
 You are the most immediate to our throne ;  
 And with no less nobility of love 110  
 Than that which dearest father bears his son,  
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent  
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,  
 It is most retrograde to our desire :  
 And we beseech you, bend you to remain  
 Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

*Queen.* Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet :  
 I pray thee, stay with us ; go not to Wittenberg.

*Ham.* I shall in all my best obey you, madam. 120

*King.* Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply :  
 Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come ;  
 This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet  
 Sits smiling to my heart : in grace whereof,  
 No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,  
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,  
 And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,  
 Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

*Ham.* O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,  
 Thaw and resolve itself into a dew ! 130  
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! God !

How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable  
 Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
 Fie on't! ah fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,  
 That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature  
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this!  
 But two months dead! nay, not so much, not two:  
 So excellent a king; that was, to this,  
 Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother 140  
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven  
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!  
 Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,  
 As if increase of appetite had grown  
 By what it fed on: and yet, within a month—  
 Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is woman!—  
 A little month, or ere those shoes were old  
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,  
 Like Niobe, all tears, why she, even she—  
 O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason, 150  
 Would have mourn'd longer—married with my uncle,  
 My father's brother, but no more like my father  
 Than I to Hercules: within a month:  
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,  
 She married. O, most wicked speed, to post  
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!  
 It is not nor it cannot come to good:  
 But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

*Enter* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

*Hor.* Hail to your lordship!

*Ham.* I am glad to see you well:  
 Horatio,—or I do forget myself. 161

*Hor.* The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

*Ham.* Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with  
 you:

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?  
 Marcellus?

*Mar.* My good lord—

*Ham.* I am very glad to see you. Good even, sir.  
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

*Hor.* A truant disposition, good my lord.

*Ham.* I would not hear your enemy say so, 170  
Nor shall you do my ear that violence,  
To make it truster of your own report  
Against yourself: I know you are no truant.  
But what is your affair in Elsinore?  
We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

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

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

*Hor.* Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon. 179

*Ham.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked-meats  
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.  
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven  
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!  
My father!—methinks I see my father.

*Hor.* O where, my lord?

*Ham.* In my mind's eye, Horatio.

*Hor.* I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

*Ham.* He was a man, take him for all in all,  
I shall not look upon his like again.

*Hor.* My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

*Ham.* Saw? who? 190

*Hor.* My lord, the king your father.

*Ham.* The king my father!

*Hor.* Season your admiration for a while  
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,  
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,  
This marvel to you.

*Ham.* For God's love, let me hear.

*Hor.* Two nights together had these gentlemen,  
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,  
In the dead vast and middle of the night,  
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,



Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe, 200  
 Appears before them, and with solemn march  
 Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd  
 By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,  
 Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd  
 Almost to jelly with the act of fear,  
 Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me  
 In dreadful secrecy impart they did;  
 And I with them the third night kept the watch:  
 Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,  
 Form of the thing, each word made true and good, 210  
 The apparition comes: I knew your father;  
 These hands are not more like.

*Ham.* But where was this?

*Mar.* My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

*Ham.* Did you not speak to it?

*Hor.* My lord, I did;  
 But answer made it none: yet once methought  
 It lifted up it head and did address  
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak;  
 But even then the morning cock crew loud,  
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,  
 And vanish'd from our sight.

*Ham.* 'Tis very strange. 220

*Hor.* As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;  
 And we did think it writ down in our duty  
 To let you know of it.

*Ham.* Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.  
 Hold you the watch to-night?

*Mar.* }  
*Ber.* } We do, my lord.

*Ham.* Arm'd say you

*Mar.* }  
*Ber.* } Arm'd, my lord.

*Ham.* From top to toe?

*Mar.* }  
*Ber.* } My lord, from head to foot.

*Ham.* Then saw you not his face?

*Hor.* O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up. 230

*Ham.* What, look'd he frowningly?

*Hor.* A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

*Ham.* Pale or red?

*Hor.* Nay, very pale.

*Ham.* And fix'd his eyes upon you?

*Hor.* Most constantly.

*Ham.* I would I had been there.

*Hor.* It would have much amazed you.

*Ham.* Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

*Hor.* While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

*Mar.* }  
*Ber.* } Longer, longer.

*Hor.* Not when I saw't.

*Ham.* His beard was grizzled? no?

*Hor.* It was, as I have seen it in his life, 241  
A sable silver'd.

*Ham.* I will watch to-night;  
Perchance 'twill walk again.

*Hor.* I warrant it will.

*Ham.* If it assume my noble father's person,  
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape  
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,  
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,  
Let it be tenable in your silence still;  
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,  
Give it an understanding, but no tongue: 250  
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well:  
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,  
I'll visit you.

*All.* Our duty to your honour.

*Ham.* Your loves, as mine to you: farewell.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;

I doubt some foul play; would the night were come!  
Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise,  
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

[Exit.

SCENE III. *A room in Polonius's house.*

*Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.*

*Laer.* My necessaries are embark'd: farewell:  
And, sister, as the winds give benefit  
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,  
But let me hear from you.

*Oph.* Do you doubt that?

*Laer.* For Hamlet and the trifling of his favour,  
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,  
A violet in the youth of primy nature,  
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,  
The perfume and suppliance of a minute,  
No more.

*Oph.* No more but so?

*Laer.* Think it no more: 10

For nature crescent does not grow alone  
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes,  
The inward service of the mind and soul  
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,  
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch  
The virtue of his will: but you must fear,  
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;  
For he himself is subject to his birth:  
He may not, as unvalued persons do,  
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends 20  
The safety and health of this whole state;  
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd  
Unto the voice and yielding of that body  
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,  
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it  
As he in his particular act and place  
May give his saying deed; which is no further  
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.

Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,  
 If with too credent ear you list his songs, 30  
 Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open  
 To his unmaster'd importunity.

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,  
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,  
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.  
 The chariest maid is prodigal enough,  
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon :  
 Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes :  
 The canker galls the infants of the spring,  
 Too oft before their buttons be disclosed, 40  
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth  
 Contagious blastments are most imminent.  
 Be wary then ; best safety lies in fear :  
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

*Oph.* I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,  
 As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,  
 Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,  
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven ;  
 Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,  
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads 50  
 And recks not his own rede.

*Laer.* O, fear me not.  
 I stay too long : but here my father comes.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace ;  
 Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

*Pol.* Yet here, Laertes ! aboard, aboard, for shame !  
 The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,  
 And you are stay'd for. There ; my blessing with thee !  
 And these few precepts in thy memory  
 Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
 Nor any unproportion'd thought his act. 60  
 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.  
 Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel,

But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Beware  
 Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,  
 Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.  
 Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice :  
 Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.  
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, 70  
 But not express'd in fancy ; rich, not gaudy ;  
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man,  
 And they in France of the best rank and station  
 Are of a most select and generous chief in that.  
 Neither a borrower nor a lender be ;  
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
 This above all : to thine ownself be true,  
 And it must follow, as the night the day,  
 Thou canst not then be false to any man. 80  
 Farewell : my blessing season this in thee !

*Laer.* Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

*Pol.* The time invites you ; go ; your servants tend.

*Laer.* Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well  
 What I have said to you.

*Oph.* 'Tis in my memory lock'd,  
 And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

*Laer.* Farewell. [*Exit.*

*Pol.* What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you ?

*Oph.* So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

*Pol.* Marry, well bethought : 90  
 'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late  
 Given private time to you, and you yourself  
 Have of your audience been most free and bounteous :  
 If it be so—as so 'tis put on me,  
 And that in way of caution—I must tell you,  
 You do not understand yourself so clearly  
 As it behoves my daughter and your honour.  
 What is between you ? give me up the truth.

*Oph.* He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders  
Of his affection to me. 100

*Pol.* Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,  
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.  
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

*Oph.* I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

*Pol.* Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby,  
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,  
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;  
Or—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,  
Running it thus—you'll tender me a fool.

*Oph.* My lord, he hath importuned me with love 110  
In honourable fashion.

*Pol.* Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

*Oph.* And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,  
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

*Pol.* 'Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,  
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul  
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,  
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,  
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,  
You must not take for fire. From this time 120  
Be something scancer of your maiden presence;  
Set your entreatments at a higher rate  
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,  
Believe so much in him, that he is young,  
And with a larger tether may he walk  
Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,  
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,  
Not of that dye which their investments show,  
But mere implorators of unholy suits,  
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds, 130  
The better to beguile. This is for all:

I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,  
Have you so slander any moment leisure,  
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.  
Look to't, I charge you: come your ways.

*Oph.* I shall obey, my lord.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *The platform.*

*Enter* HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

*Ham.* The air bites shrewdly ; it is very cold.

*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.

*Ham.* What hour now ?

*Hor.* I think it lacks of twelve.

*Mar.* No, it is struck.

*Hor.* Indeed ? I heard it not : it then draws near the season

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off within.*  
What does this mean, my lord ?

*Ham.* The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,  
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels ;  
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down, 10  
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
The triumph of his pledge.

*Hor.* Is it a custom ?

*Ham.* Ay, marry, is't :  
But to my mind, though I am native here  
And to the manner born, it is a custom  
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.  
This heavy-headed revel east and west  
Makes us traduced and tax'd of other nations :  
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase  
Soil our addition ; and indeed it takes 20  
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,  
The pith and marrow of our attribute.  
So, oft it chances in particular men,  
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,  
As, in their birth—wherein they are not guilty ;  
Since nature cannot choose his origin—  
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,  
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,  
Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens

The form of plausible manners, that these men, 30  
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,  
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,—  
 Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,  
 As infinite as man may undergo—  
 Shall in the general censure take corruption  
 From that particular fault: the dram of eale  
 Doth all the noble substance of a doubt (*often doubt*)  
 To his own scandal.

*Enter Ghost.*

*Hor.* Look, my lord, it comes!

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace defend us!  
 Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd, 40  
 Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,  
 Be thy intents wicked or charitable,  
 Thou comest in such a questionable shape  
 That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,  
 King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me!  
 Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell  
 Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,  
 Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,  
 Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,  
 Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws, 50  
 To cast thee up again. What may this mean,  
 That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel  
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
 Making night hideous; and we fools of nature  
 So horridly to shake our disposition  
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?  
 Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[*Ghost beckons Hamlet.*]

*Hor.* It beckons you to go away with it,  
 As if it some impartment did desire  
 To you alone.

*Mar.* Look, with what courteous action 60  
 It waves you to a more removed ground:  
 But do not go with it.

*Hor.* No, by no means.



*Ham.* It will not speak ; then I will follow it.

*Hor.* Do not, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, what should be the fear?  
I do not set my life at a pin's fee ;  
And for my soul, what can it do to that,  
Being a thing immortal as itself?  
It waves me forth again : I'll follow it.

*Hor.* What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,  
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff 70  
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,  
And there assume some other horrible form,  
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason  
And draw you into madness? think of it :  
The very place puts toys of desperation,  
Without more motive, into every brain  
That looks so many fathoms to the sea  
And hears it roar beneath.

*Ham.* It waves me still.  
Go on ; I'll follow thee. 79

*Mar.* You shall not go, my lord.

*Ham.* Hold off your hands.

*Hor.* Be ruled ; you shall not go.

*Ham.* My fate cries out,  
And makes each petty artery in this body  
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.  
Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen.  
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me :  
I say, away ! Go on ; I'll follow thee.

*[Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.]*

*Hor.* He waxes desperate with imagination.

*Mar.* Let's follow ; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

*Hor.* Have after. To what issue will this come?

*Mar.* Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

*Hor.* Heaven will direct it.

*Mar.* Nay, let's follow him. 91

*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE V. *Another part of the platform.**Enter GHOST and HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Whither wilt thou lead me? speak; I'll go no further.

*Ghost.* Mark me.

*Ham.* I will.

*Ghost.* My hour is almost come,  
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames  
Must render up myself.

*Ham.* Alas, poor ghost!

*Ghost.* Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing  
To what I shall unfold.

*Ham.* Speak; I am bound to hear.

*Ghost.* So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

*Ham.* What?

*Ghost.* I am thy father's spirit;  
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night, 10  
And for the day confined to fast in fires,  
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature  
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid  
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,  
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,  
Thy knotted and combined locks to part  
And each particular hair to stand an end,  
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine: 20  
But this eternal blazon must not be  
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!  
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

*Ham.* O God!

*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

*Ham.* Murder!

*Ghost.* Murder most foul, as in the best it is;  
But this most foul, strange and unnatural.

*Ham.* Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift  
As meditation or the thoughts of love, 30  
May sweep to my revenge.

*Ghost.* I find thee apt ;  
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed  
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,  
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear :  
'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,  
A serpent stung me ; so the whole ear of Denmark  
Is by a forged process of my death  
Rankly abused : but know, thou noble youth,  
The serpent that did sting thy father's life  
Now wears his crown.

*Ham.* O my prophetic soul ! 40  
My uncle !

*Ghost.* Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,  
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—  
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power  
So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust  
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen :  
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there !  
From me, whose love was of that dignity  
That it went hand in hand even with the vow  
I made to her in marriage, and to decline 50  
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor  
To those of mine !  
But virtue, as it never will be moved,  
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,  
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,  
Will sate itself in a celestial bed  
And prey on garbage.  
But, soft ! methinks I scent the morning air ;  
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,  
My custom always of the afternoon, 60  
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,  
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,  
And in the porches of my ears did pour  
The leperous distilment ; whose effect

Holds such an enmity with blood of man  
 That swift as quicksilver it courses through  
 The natural gates and alleys of the body,  
 And with a sudden vigour it doth posset  
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,  
 The thin and wholesome blood : so did it mine ; 70  
 And a most instant tetter bark'd about,  
 Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,  
 All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand  
 Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd :  
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,  
 Unhousel'd, disappointed, unaneled,  
 No reckoning made, but sent to my account  
 With all my imperfections on my head :  
 O, horrible ! O, horrible ! most horrible ! 80  
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not ;  
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be  
 A couch for luxury and damned incest.  
 But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,  
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive  
 Against thy mother aught : leave her to heaven  
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,  
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once !  
 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,  
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire : 90  
 Adieu, adieu, adieu ! remember me. [*Exit.*]

*Ham.* O all you host of heaven ! O earth ! what else ?  
 And shall I couple hell ? O, fie ! Hold, hold, my heart ;  
 And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,  
 But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee !  
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat  
 In this distracted globe. Remember thee !  
 Yea, from the table of my memory  
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,  
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past, 100  
 That youth and observation copied there ;  
 And thy commandment all alone shall live

Within the book and volume of my brain,  
 Unmix'd with baser matter : yes, by heaven !  
 O most pernicious woman !  
 O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain !  
 My tables,—meet it is I set it down,  
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain ;  
 At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark : [*Writing.*  
 So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word ; 110  
 It is 'Adieu, adieu ! remember me.'  
 I have sworn't.

*Mar.* } [*Within.*] My lord, my lord !  
*Hor.* }

*Mar.* [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet !

*Hor.* [*Within.*] Heaven secure him !

*Ham.* So be it !

*Hor.* [*Within.*] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord !

*Ham.* Hillo, ho, ho, boy ! come, bird, come.

*Enter* HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

*Mar.* How is't, my noble lord ?

*Hor.* What news, my lord ?

*Ham.* O, wonderful !

*Hor.* Good my lord, tell it.

*Ham.* No ; you will reveal it.

*Hor.* Not I, my lord, by heaven.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord. 120

*Ham.* How say you, then ; would heart of man once  
 think it ?

But you'll be secret ?

*Hor.* }  
*Mar.* } Ay, by heaven, my lord.

*Ham.* There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark  
 But he's an arrant knave.

*Hor.* There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the  
 grave.

To tell us this.

*Ham.* Why, right; you are i' the right;  
 And so, without more circumstance at all,  
 I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:  
 You, as your business and desire shall point you;  
 For every man hath business and desire, 130  
 Such as it is; and for my own poor part,  
 Look you, I'll go pray.

*Hor.* These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

*Ham.* I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;  
 Yes, faith, heartily.

*Hor.* There's no offence, my lord.

*Ham.* Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,  
 And much offence too. Touching this vision here,  
 It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:  
 For your desire to know what is between us,  
 O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends, 140  
 As you are friends, scholars and soldiers,  
 Give me one poor request.

*Hor.* What is't my lord? we will.

*Ham.* Never make known what you have seen to-night.

*Hor.* } My lord, we will not.  
*Mar.* }

*Ham.* Nay, but swear't.

*Hor.* In faith,  
 My lord, not I.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord, in faith.

*Ham.* Upon my sword.

*Mar.* We have sworn, my lord, already.

*Ham.* Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there,  
 truepenny? 150  
 Come on: you hear this fellow in the cellarage:  
 Consent to swear.

*Hor.* Propose the oath, my lord.

*Ham.* Never to speak of this that you have seen,  
Swear by my sword.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Hic et ubique? then we'll shift our ground.  
Come hither, gentlemen,  
And lay your hands again upon my sword:  
Never to speak of this that you have heard,  
Swear by my sword. 164

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so  
fast?

A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good friends.

*Hor.* O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

*Ham.* And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.  
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come;

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,  
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,  
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet 174

To put an antic disposition on,

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,  
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,  
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As 'Well, well, we know,' or 'We could, an if we would,'  
Or 'If we list to speak,' or 'There be, an if they might,'  
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me: this not to do,

So grace and mercy at your most need help you,  
Swear. 184

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! [*They swear.*] So,  
gentlemen,

With all my love I do commend me to you:

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

May do, to express his love and friending to you,

God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;

And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.  
 The time is out of joint : O cursed spite,  
 That ever I was born to set it right !  
 Nay, come, let's go together.

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[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II.

SCENE I. *A room in Polonius's house.**Enter* POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.

*Pol.* Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

*Rey.* I will, my lord.

*Pol.* You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,  
 Before you visit him, to make inquire  
 Of his behaviour.

*Rey.* My lord, I did intend it.

*Pol.* Marry, well said ; very well said. Look you, sir,  
 Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris,  
 And how, and who, what means, and were they keep,  
 What company, at what expense ; and finding  
 By this encompassment and drift of question 10  
 That they do know my son, come you more nearer  
 Than your particular demands will touch it :  
 Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him ;  
 As thus, 'I know his father and his friends,  
 And in part him' : do you mark this, Reynaldo ?

*Rey.* Ay, very well, my lord.

*Pol.* 'And in part him ; but' you may say 'not well :  
 But if't be he I mean, he's very wild ;  
 Addicted so and so' : and there put on him  
 What forgeries you please ; marry, none so rank 20  
 As may dishonour him ; take heed of that ;  
 But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips



As are companions noted and most known  
To youth and liberty.

*Rey.* As gaming, my lord.

*Pol.* Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling:  
You may go so far.

*Rey.* My lord, that would dishonour him.

*unfear*

*Pol.* Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.  
You must not put another scandal on him,  
That he is open to incontinency; 30  
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly  
That they may seem the taints of liberty,  
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,  
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,  
Of general assault.

*Rey.* But, my good lord,—

*Pol.* Wherefore should you do this?

*Rey.*

Ay, my lord,

I would know that.

*Pol.* Marry, sir, here's my drift;  
And I believe it is a fetch of warrant:  
You laying these slight sullies on my son,  
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working, 40  
Mark you,  
Your party in converse, him you would sound,  
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes  
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured  
He closes with you in this consequence;  
'Good sir,' or so, or 'friend,' or 'gentleman,'  
According to the phrase or the addition  
Of man and country.

*Rey.* Very good, my lord.

*Pol.* And then, sir, does he this—he does—what was I  
about to say? By the mass, I was about to say something:  
where did I leave? 51

*Rey.* At 'closes in the consequence,' at 'friend or so,'  
and 'gentleman.'

*Pol.* At 'closes in the consequence,' ay, marry;  
 He closes thus: 'I know the gentleman;  
 I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,  
 Or then, or then, with such, or such, and, as you say,  
 There was a' gaming, there o'ertook in's rouse;  
 There falling out at tennis': or perchance,  
 'I saw him enter such a house of sale,' 60  
 Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.

See you now;  
 Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:  
 And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,  
 With windlasses and with assays of bias,  
 By indirections find directions out:  
 So by my former lecture and advice,  
 Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

*Rey.* My lord, I have.

*Pol.* God be wi' you; fare you well.

*Rey.* Good my lord! 70

*Pol.* Observe his inclination in yourself.

*Rey.* I shall, my lord.

*Pol.* And let him ply his music.

*Rey.* Well, my lord.

*Pol.* Farewell! [Exit Reynaldo.]

*Enter OPHELIA.*

How now, Ophelia! what's the matter?

*Oph.* O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

*Pol.* With what, i' the name of God?

*Oph.* My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,  
 Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced;  
 No hat upon his head: his stockings foul'd,  
 Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle; 80  
 Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other,  
 And with a look so piteous in purport  
 As if he had been loosed out of hell  
 To speak of horrors, he comes before me.

*Pol.* Mad for thy love?

*Oph.* My lord, I do not know;  
But truly I do fear it.

*Pol.* What said he?

*Oph.* He took me by the wrist and held me hard;  
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;  
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
He falls to such perusal of my face 90  
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;  
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,  
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,  
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound  
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk  
And end his being: that done, he lets me go:  
And with his head over his shoulder turn'd,  
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;  
For out o' doors he went without their help,  
And to the last bended their light on me. 100

*Pol.* Come, go with me: I will go seek the king.  
This is the very ecstasy of love,  
Whose violent property fordoes itself  
And leads the will to desperate undertakings  
As oft as any passion under heaven  
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.  
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

*Oph.* No, my good lord; but, as you did command,  
I did repel his letters and denied  
His access to me.

*Pol.* That hath made him mad. 110  
I am sorry that with better heed and judgement  
I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but trifle,  
And meant to wreck thee; but beshrew my jealousy!  
By heaven, it is as proper to our age  
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions  
As it is common for the younger sort  
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:  
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move  
More grief to hide than hate to utter love. 119  
Come. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *A room in the castle.*

*Enter* KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,  
and Attendants.

*King.* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!  
Moreover that we much did long to see you,  
The need we have to use you did provoke  
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard  
Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it,  
Sith nor the exterior nor the inward man  
Resembles that it was. What it should be,  
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him  
So much from the understanding of himself,  
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both, 10  
That, being of so young days brought up with him,  
And sith so neighbour'd to his youth and haviour,  
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court  
Some little time: so by your companies  
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather  
So much as from occasion you may glean,  
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,  
That open'd lies within our remedy.

*Queen.* Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;  
And sure I am two men there are not living 20  
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you  
To show us so much gentry and good will  
As to expend your time with us awhile,  
For the supply and profit of our hope,  
Your visitation shall receive such thanks  
As fits a king's remembrance.

*Ros.* Both your majesties  
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,  
Put your dread pleasures more into command  
Than to entreaty.

*Guil.* But we both obey,  
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent 30

To lay our service freely at your feet,  
To be commanded.

*King.* Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

*Queen.* Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz.  
And I beseech you instantly to visit  
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,  
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

*Guil.* Heavens make our presence and our practices  
Pleasant and helpful to him!

*Queen.* Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some Attendants.*]

*Enter POLONIUS.*

*Pol.* The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,  
Are joyfully return'd. 41

*King.* Thou still hast been the father of good news.

*Pol.* Have I, my lord? I assure my good liege,  
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,  
Both to my God and to my gracious king:  
And I do think, or else this brain of mine  
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure  
As it hath used to do, that I have found  
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

*King.* O, speak of that; that do I long to hear. 50

*Pol.* Give first admittance to the ambassadors;  
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

*King.* Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[*Exit Polonius.*]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found  
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

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

*King.* Well, we shall sift him.

*Re-enter POLONIUS, with VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.*

Welcome, my good friends!  
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

*Volt.* Most fair return of greetings and desires. 60  
 Upon our first, he sent out to suppress  
 His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd  
 To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack ;  
 But, better look'd into, he truly found  
 It was against your highness : whereat grieved,  
 That so his sickness, age and impotence  
 Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests  
 On Fortinbras ; which he, in brief, obeys ;  
 Receives rebuke from Norway, and in fine  
 Makes vow before his uncle never more 70  
 To give the assay of arms against your majesty.  
 Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,  
 Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,  
 And his commission to employ those soldiers,  
 So levied as before, against the Polack :  
 With an entreaty, herein further shown, [*Giving a paper.*  
 That it might please you to give quiet pass  
 Through your dominions for this enterprise,  
 On such regards of safety and allowance  
 As therein are set down.

*King.* It likes us well ; 80  
 And at our more consider'd time we'll read,  
 Answer, and think upon this business.  
 Meantime we thank you for your well-took labour :  
 Go to your rest ; at night we'll feast together :  
 Most welcome home ! [*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

*Pol.* This business is well ended.  
 My liege, and madam, to expostulate  
 What majesty should be, what duty is,  
 Why day is day, night night, and time is time,  
 Were nothing but to waste night, day and time.  
 Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit, 90  
 And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,  
 I will be brief. Your noble son is mad :  
 Mad call I it ; for, to define true madness,  
 What is't but to be nothing else but mad ?  
 But let that go.

*Queen.* More matter, with less art.

*Pol.* Madam, I swear I use no art at all.  
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity;  
And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;  
But farewell it, for I will use no art.  
Mad let us grant him then: and now remains 100  
That we find out the cause of this effect,  
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,  
For this effect defective comes by cause:  
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.  
Perpend.

I have a daughter—have while she is mine—  
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,  
Hath given me this: now gather, and surmise.

[*Reads*]

'To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most beautified  
Ophelia,'— 110  
That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; 'beautified' is a vile  
phrase: but you shall hear. Thus:

[*Reads*]

'In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.'

*Queen.* Came this from Hamlet to her?

*Pol.* Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.

[*Reads*] 'Doubt thou the stars are fire;  
Doubt that the sun doth move;  
Doubt truth to be a liar;  
But never doubt I love. 119

'O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not  
art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best, O most  
best, believe it. Adieu.

'Thine evermore, most dear lady,  
whilst this machine is to him,  
HAMLET.'

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me,  
And more above, hath his solicitings,  
As they fell out by time, by means and place,  
All given to mine ear.

*King.* But how hath she  
Received his love?

*Pol.* What do you think of me? 130

*King.* As of a man faithful and honourable.

*Pol.* I would fain prove so. But what might you think,  
When I had seen this hot love on the wing—  
As I perceived it, I must tell you that,  
Before my daughter told me—what might you,  
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,  
If I had play'd the desk or table-book,  
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,  
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;  
What might you think? No, I went round to work, 140  
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:  
'Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;  
This must not be': and then I prescripts gave her,  
That she should lock herself from his resort,  
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.  
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;  
And he repulsed, a short tale to make,  
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,  
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,  
Thence to a lightness, and by this declension 150  
Into the madness wherein now he raves  
And all we mourn for.

*King.* Do you think this!

*Queen.* It may be, very like.

*Pol.* Hath there been such a time, I'd fain know that,  
That I have positively said "'Tis so,'  
When it proved otherwise?

*King.* Not that I know.

*Pol.* [*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*] Take this from  
this, if this be otherwise:  
If circumstances lead me, I will find  
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed.  
Within the centre.

*King.* How may we try it further? 160



*Pol.* You know, sometimes he walks four hours together  
Here in the lobby.

*Queen.* So he does indeed.

*Pol.* At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him :  
Be you and I behind an arras then ;  
Mark the encounter : if he love her not,  
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon  
Let me be no assistant for a state,  
But keep a farm and carters.

*King.* We will try it.

*Queen.* But look where sadly the poor wretch comes  
reading.

*Pol.* Away, I do beseech you, both away : 170  
I'll board him presently.

*[Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.]*

*Enter HAMLET, reading.*

O, give me leave :

How does my good Lord Hamlet ?

*Ham.* Well, God-a-mercy.

*Pol.* Do you know me, my lord ?

*Ham.* Excellent well : you are a fishmonger.

*Pol.* Not I, my lord.

*Ham.* Then I would you were so honest a man.

*Pol.* Honest, my lord !

*Ham.* Ay, sir ; to be honest, as this world goes, is to  
be one man picked out of ten thousand. 180

*Pol.* That's very true, my lord.

*Ham.* For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being  
a god kissing carrion—Have you a daughter ?

*Pol.* I have, my lord.

*Ham.* Let her not walk i' the sun : conception is a  
blessing ; but as your daughter may conceive,—friend, look  
to't.

*Pol.* *[Aside]* How say you by that ? Still harping on  
my daughter : yet he knew me not at first ; he said I was

a fishmonger : he is far gone : and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love ; very near this. I'll speak to him again. What do you read, my lord? 192

*Ham.* Words, words, words.

*Pol.* What is the matter, my lord?

*Ham.* Between who?

*Pol.* I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

*Ham.* Slanders, sir : for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams : all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set'down ; for yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward. 204

*Pol.* [*Aside*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in't. Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

*Ham.* Into my grave.

*Pol.* Indeed, that's out of the air. [*Aside*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you. 214

*Ham.* You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal : except my life, except my life, except my life.

*Pol.* Fare you well, my lord.

*Ham.* These tedious old fools!

*Enter* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

*Pol.* You go to seek the Lord Hamlet ; there he is.

*Ros.* [*To Polonius*] God save you, sir ! 221

[*Exit Polonius.*]

*Guil.* My honoured lord !

*Ros.* My most dear lord !

*Ham.* My excellent good friends? How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do you both?

*Ros.* As the indifferent children of the earth.

*Guil.* Happy, in that we are not over-happy; On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

*Ham.* Nor the soles of her shoe? 230

*Ros.* Neither, my lord.

*Ham.* Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours? What's the news?

*Ros.* None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

*Ham.* Then is doomsday near: but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

*Guil.* Prison, my lord!

*Ham.* Denmark's a prison. 240

*Ros.* Then is the world one.

*Ham.* A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the worst.

*Ros.* We think not so, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so; to me it is a prison.

*Ros.* Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind. 249

*Ham.* O God, I could be bounded in a nut-shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

*Guil.* Which dreams indeed are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

*Ham.* A dream itself is but a shadow.

*Ros.* Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

*Ham.* Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason. 261

*Ros.* }  
*Guil.* } We'll wait upon you.

*Ham.* No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

*Ros.* To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

*Ham.* Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak. . 272

*Guil.* What should we say, my lord?

*Ham.* Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

*Ros.* To what end, my lord?

*Ham.* That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no. 284

*Ros.* [*Aside to Guildenstern*] What say you?

*Ham.* [*Aside*] Nay, then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

*Guil.* My lord, we were sent for.

*Ham.* I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this

goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory ; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man ! how noble in reason ! how infinite in faculty ! in form and moving how express and admirable ! in action how like an angel ! in apprehension how like a god ! the beauty of the world ! the paragon of animals ! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust ? man delights not me : no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

*Ros.* My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

*Ham.* Why did you laugh then, when I said 'man delights not me' ? 308

*Ros.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you : we coted them on the way ; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

*Ham.* He that plays the king shall be welcome ; his majesty shall have tribute of me ; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target ; the lover shall not sigh gratis ; the humorous man shall end his part in peace ; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere ; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. What players are they ?

*Ros.* Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city. 321

*Ham.* How chances it they travel ? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

*Ros.* I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

*Ham.* Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city ? are they so followed ?

*Ros.* No, indeed, are they not.

*Ham.* How comes it ? do they grow rusty ?

*Ros.* Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace :

but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question and are most tyrannically clapped for 't : these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages—so they call them—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills and dare scarce come thither. 336

*Ham.* What, are they children? who maintains 'em? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players—as it is most like, if their means are no better—their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

*Ros.* Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy: there was for a while no money bid for argument unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question. 346

*Ham.* Is 't possible?

*Guil.* O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

*Ham.* Do the boys carry it away?

*Ros.* Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.

*Ham.* It is not very strange; for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. 356

*[Flourish of trumpets within.]*

*Guil.* There are the players.

*Ham.* Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outwards, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived. 364

*Guil.* In what, my dear lord?

*Ham.* I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

*Re-enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* Well be with you, gentlemen!

*Ham.* Hark you, Guildenstern; and you too: at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling clouts. 371

*Ros.* Happily he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

*Ham.* I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. You say right, sir: o' Monday morning; 'twas so indeed.

*Pol.* My lord, I have news to tell you.

*Ham.* My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

*Pol.* The actors are come hither, my lord. 380

*Ham.* Buz, buz!

*Pol.* Upon my honour,—

*Ham.* Then came each actor on his ass,—

*Pol.* The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these 'are the only men. ?

*Ham.* O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou! 391

*Pol.* What a treasure had he, my lord?

*Ham.* Why,

‘One fair daughter, and no more,  
The which he loved passing well.’

*Pol.* [*Aside*] Still on my daughter.

*Ham.* Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

*Pol.* If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

*Ham.* Nay, that follows not.

400

*Pol.* What follows, then, my lord?

*Ham.* Why,

‘As by lot, God wot,’

and then, you know,

‘It came to pass, as most like it was,’—

the first row of the pious chanson will show you more ; for look, where my abridgement comes.

*Enter four or five Players.*

You are welcome, masters ; welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends. O, my old friend ! thy face is valanced since I saw thee last : comest thou to beard me in Denmark ? What, my young lady and mistress ! By ’r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We ’ll e’en to ’t like French falconers, fly at anything we see : we ’ll have a speech straight : come, give us a taste of your quality ; come, a passionate speech.

418

*First Pl.* What speech, my good lord ?

*Ham.* I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted ; or, if it was, not above once ; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million ; ’twas caviare to the general : but it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgements in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affection ; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved : ’twas Æneas’ tale to Dido ; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam’s slaughter : if it live in your memory, begin at this line : let me see, let me see ;

434

‘The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,’—



It is not so: it begins with 'Pyrrhus':

'The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,  
 Black as his purpose, did the night resemble  
 When he lay couched in the ominous horse,  
 Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd  
 With heraldry more dismal; head to foot 441  
 Now is he total gules; horribly trick'd  
 With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,  
 Baked and impasted with the parching streets,  
 That lend a tyrannous and damned light  
 To their lord's murder: roasted in wrath and fire,  
 And this o'er-sized with coagulate gore,  
 With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus  
 Old grandsire Priam seeks.'

So, proceed you. 450

*Pol.* 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent  
 and good discretion.

*First Pl.*

'Anon he finds him  
 Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,  
 Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,  
 Repugnant to command: unequal match'd,  
 Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;  
 But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword  
 The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,  
 Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top 460  
 Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash  
 Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for lo! his sword,  
 Which was declining on the milky head  
 Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:  
 So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,  
 And like a neutral to his will and matter,  
 Did nothing.

But as we often see, against some storm,  
 A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,  
 The bold winds speechless, and the orb below 470  
 As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder  
 Doth rend the region, so after Pyrrhus' pause  
 Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work;

And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall  
On Mars's armour, forged for proof eterne,  
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword  
Now falls on Priam.

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,  
In general synod take away her power;  
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel, 480  
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven  
As low as to the fiends!'

*Pol.* This is too long.

*Ham.* It shall to the barber's, with your beard. Prithee,  
say on: come to Hecuba.

*First Pl.* 'But who, O, who had seen the mobled  
queen—'

*Ham.* 'The mobled queen!'

*Pol.* That's good; 'mobled queen' is good.

*First Pl.* 'Run barefoot up and down, threatening the  
flames

With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head 490  
Where late the diadem stood; and for a robe,  
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,  
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up:  
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd  
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced:  
But if the gods themselves did see her then,  
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport  
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,  
The instant burst of clamour that she made,  
Unless things mortal move them not at all, 500  
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,  
And passion in the gods.'

*Pol.* Look, whether he has not turned his colour and has  
tears in's eyes. Prithee, no more.

*Ham.* 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest of this  
soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed?  
Do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstract  
and brief chronicles of the time: after your death you were

better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live. 510

*Pol.* My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

*Ham.* God's bodykins, man, much better : use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping ? Use them after your own honour and dignity : the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

*Pol.* Come, sirs.

*Ham.* Follow him, friends : we'll hear a play to-morrow. [*Exit Polonius with all the Players but the First.*] Dost thou hear me, old friend ; can you play the Murder of Gonzago ?

*First Pl.* Ay, my lord. 520

*Ham.* We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in't, could you not ?

*First Pl.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Very well. Follow that lord ; and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player.*] My good friends, I'll leave you till night : you are welcome to Elsinore.

*Ros.* Good my lord.

*Ham.* Ay, so, God be wi' ye.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I ! 530

Is it not monstrous that this player here,  
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,  
Could force his soul so to his own conceit  
That from her working all his visage wann'd ;  
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,  
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting  
With forms to his conceit ? and all for nothing !  
For Hecuba !

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,  
That he should weep for her ? What would he do, 540  
Had he the motive and the cue for passion  
That I have ? He would drown the stage with tears

And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,  
 Make mad the guilty and appal the free,  
 Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed  
 The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,  
 Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,  
 And can say nothing ; no, not for a king, 550  
 Upon whose property and most dear life  
 A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?  
 Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?  
 Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?  
 Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,  
 As deep as to the lungs? who does me this?  
 Ha?

'Swounds, I should take it : for it cannot be  
 But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall  
 To make oppression bitter, or ere this 560  
 I should have fatted all the region kites  
 With this slave's offal : bloody, bloody villain!  
 Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!  
 O, vengeance !

Why, what an ass am I ! This is most brave,  
 That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,  
 Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,  
 Must fall a-cursing, like a very drab,  
 A scullion !

Fie upon't ! foh ! About, my brain ! Hum, I have heard  
 That guilty creatures, sitting at a play, 571  
 Have by the very cunning of the scene  
 Been struck so to the soul that presently  
 They have proclaim'd their malefactions ;  
 For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak  
 With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players  
 Play something like the murder of my father  
 Before mine uncle : I'll observe his looks ;  
 I'll tent him to the quick : if he but blench,  
 I know my course. The spirit that I have seen 580

May be the devil : and the devil hath power  
 To assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and perhaps  
 Out of my weakness and my melancholy,  
 As he is very potent with such spirits,  
 Abuses me to damn me : I'll have grounds  
 More relative than this. The play's the thing *me*  
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. [Exit.]

## ACT III.

SCENE I. *A room in the castle.*

*Enter* KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ,  
 and GUILDENSTERN.

*King.* And can you, by no drift of circumstance,  
 Get from him why he puts on this confusion,  
 Grating so harshly all his days of quiet  
 With turbulent and dangerous lunacy ?

*Ros.* He does confess he feels himself distracted ;  
 But from what cause he will by no means speak.

*Guil.* Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,  
 But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,  
 When we would bring him on to some confession  
 Of his true state.

*Queen.* Did he receive you well? 10

*Ros.* Most like a gentleman.

*Guil.* But with much forcing of his disposition.

*Ros.* Niggard of question, but of our demands  
 Most free in his reply.

*Queen.* Did you assay him  
 To any pastime ?

*Ros.* Madam, it so fell out, that certain players  
 We o'er-raught on the way : of these we told him,  
 And there did seem in him a kind of joy  
 To hear of it : they are about the court,

And, as I think, they have already order 20  
This night to play before him.

*Pol.* 'Tis most true :  
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties  
To hear and see the matter.

*King.* With all my heart ; and it doth much content me  
To hear him so inclined.

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,  
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

*Ros.* We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

*King.* Sweet Gertrude, leave us too ;  
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,  
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here 30  
Affront Ophelia :

Her father and myself, lawful espials,  
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing unseen,  
We may of their encounter frankly judge,  
And gather by him, as he is behaved,  
If't be the affliction of his love or no  
That thus he suffers for.

*Queen.* I shall obey you.  
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish  
That your good beauties be the happy cause  
Of Hamlet's wildness : so shall I hope your virtues 40  
Will bring him to his wonted way again,  
To both your honours.

*Oph.* Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit Queen.*]

*Pol.* Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please you,  
We will bestow ourselves. [*To Ophelia*] Read on this book ;  
That show of such an exercise may colour  
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,—  
'Tis too much proved—that with devotion's visage  
And pious action we do sugar o'er  
The devil himself.

*King.* [*Aside*] O, 'tis too true !  
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience !

The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art, 51  
 Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it  
 Than is my deed to my most painted word :  
 O heavy burthen !

*Pol.* I hear him coming : let's withdraw, my lord.  
 [*Exeunt King and Polonius.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* To be, or not to be : that is the question :  
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
 And by opposing end them ? To die : to sleep ; 60  
 No more ; and by a sleep to say we end  
 The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks  
 That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation  
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep ;  
 To sleep : perchance to dream : ay, there's the rub ;  
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come  
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
 Must give us pause : there's the respect  
 That makes calamity of so long life ;  
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time, 70  
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
 The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,  
 The insolence of office, and the spurns  
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
 When he himself might his quietus make  
 With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels bear,  
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
 But that the dread of something after death,  
 The undiscover'd country from whose bourn  
 No traveller returns, puzzles the will, 80  
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
 Than fly to others that we know not of ?  
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all ;  
 And thus the native hue of resolution  
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,

And enterprises of great pitch and moment  
 With this regard their currents turn awry,  
 And lose the name of action. Soft you now!  
 The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons  
 Be all my sins remember'd.

*Oph.* Good my lord, 90  
 How does your honour for this many a day?

*Ham.* I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

*Oph.* My lord, I have remembrances of yours,  
 That I have longed long to re-deliver;  
 I pray you, now receive them.

*Ham.* No, not I;  
 I never gave you aught.

*Oph.* My honour'd lord, you know right well you did;  
 And with them words of so sweet breath composed  
 As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,  
 Take these again; for to the noble mind 100  
 Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.  
 There, my lord.

*Ham.* Ha, ha! are you honest?

*Oph.* My lord?

*Ham.* Are you fair?

*Oph.* What means your lordship?

*Ham.* That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should  
 admit no discourse to your beauty.

*Oph.* Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than  
 with honesty? 110

*Ham.* Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner  
 transform honesty from what it is than the force of honesty  
 can translate beauty into his likeness: this was sometime  
 a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love  
 you once.

*Oph.* Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

*Ham.* You should not have believed me; for virtue  
 cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it:  
 I loved you not.



*Oph.* I was the more deceived. 120

*Ham.* Get thee to a nunnery : why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me : I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious ; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father? 130

*Oph.* At home, my lord.

*Ham.* Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in 's own house. Farewell.

*Oph.* O, help him, you sweet heavens!

*Ham.* If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry : be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go : farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool ; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go ; and quickly too. Farewell. 140

*Oph.* O heavenly powers, restore him!

*Ham.* I have heard of your paintings too, well enough ; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another : you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't ; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages : those that are married already, all but one, shall live ; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [Exit.

*Oph.* O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown! 150  
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword ;  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,  
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down!  
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,

That suck'd the honey of his music vows,  
 Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,  
 Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh ;  
 That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth  
 Blasted with ecstasy : O, woe is me, 160  
 To have seen what I have seen, see what I see !

*Re-enter* KING *and* POLONIUS.

*King.* Love ! his affections do not that way tend ;  
 Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,  
 Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,  
 O'er which his melancholy sits on brood ;  
 And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose  
 Will be some danger : which for to prevent,  
 I have in quick determination  
 Thus set it down : he shall with speed to England,  
 For the demand of our neglected tribute : 170  
 Haply the seas and countries different  
 With variable objects shall expel  
 This something-settled matter in his heart,  
 Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus  
 From fashion of himself. What think you on't ?

*Pol.* It shall do well : but yet do I believe  
 The origin and commencement of his grief  
 Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia !  
 You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said ;  
 We heard it all. My lord, do as you please ; 180  
 But, if you hold it fit, after the play  
 Let his queen mother all alone entreat him  
 To show his grief : let her be round with him ;  
 And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear  
 Of all their conference. If she find him not,  
 To England send him, or confine him where  
 Your wisdom best shall think.

*King.* It shall be so :  
 Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A hall in the castle.**Enter HAMLET and Players.*

*Ham.* Speak the speech; I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

*First Pl.* I warrant your honour. 14

*Ham.* Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. 32

*First Pl.* I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

*Ham.* O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. 41  
[*Exeunt Players.*]

*Enter* POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! will the king hear this piece of work?

*Pol.* And the queen too, and that presently.

*Ham.* Bid the players make haste. [*Exit Polonius.*]  
Will you two help to hasten them?

*Ros.* } We will, my lord.  
*Guil.* }

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

*Ham.* What ho! Horatio!

*Enter* HORATIO.

*Hor.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.

*Ham.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man  
As e'er my conversation coped withal. 50

*Hor.* O, my dear lord,—

*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter;  
For what advancement may I hope from thee,  
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits  
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?  
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,  
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee  
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?  
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice  
And could of men distinguish, her election  
Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been 60  
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,  
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards  
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those  
Whose blood and judgement are so well commingled,

That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger  
 To sound what stop she please. Give me that man  
 That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him  
 In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,  
 As I do thee. Something too much of this.  
 There is a play to-night before the king ; 70  
 One scene of it comes near the circumstance  
 Which I have told thee of my father's death :  
 I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,  
 Even with the very comment of thy soul  
 Observe my uncle : if his occulted guilt  
 Do not itself unkennel in one speech,  
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen,  
 And my imaginations are as foul  
 As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note ;  
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face, 80  
 And after we will both our judgements join  
 In censure of his seeming. *at present*

*Hor.* Well, my lord :  
 If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,  
 And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

*Ham.* They are coming to the play ; I must be idle :  
 Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN, POLO-  
 NIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and  
 other Lords attendant, with the Guard carrying torches.*

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet ?

*Ham.* Excellent, i' faith ; of the chameleon's dish : I  
 eat the air, promise-crammed : you cannot feed capons so.

*King.* I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet ; these  
 words are not mine. 91

*Ham.* No, nor mine now. [*To Polonius*] My lord, you  
 played once i' the university, you say ?

*Pol.* That did I, my lord ; and was accounted a good  
 actor.

*Ham.* What did you enact ? *at present*

*Pol.* I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready? 100

*Ros.* Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

*Queen.* Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

*Ham.* No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

*Pol.* [*To the King*] O, ho! do you mark that?

*Oph.* You are merry, my lord.

*Ham.* Who, I?

*Oph.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within's two hours.

*Oph.* Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord. 111

*Ham.* So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: but, by'r lady, he must build churches then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is 'For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.'

*Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters.*

*Enter a King and a Queen very lovingly; the Queen embracing him and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts: she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.* [Exeunt.]

*Oph.* What means this, my lord? 119

*Ham.* Marry, this is miching mallecho ; it means mischief.

*Oph.* Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

*Enter Prologue.*

*Ham.* We shall know by this fellow : the players cannot keep counsel ; they'll tell all.

*Pro.* For us, and for our tragedy,  
Here stooping to your clemency,  
We beg your hearing patiently. [Exit.

*Ham.* Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

*Oph.* 'Tis brief, my lord.

*Ham.* As woman's love.

*Enter two Players, King and Queen.*

*Pl. King.* Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round  
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orb'd ground, 131  
And thirty dozen moons with borrowed sheen  
About the world have times twelve thirties been,  
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands  
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

*Pl. Queen.* So many journeys may the sun and moon  
Make us again count o'er ere love be done !  
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,  
So far from cheer and from your former state,  
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust, 140  
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must :  
For women's fear and love holds quantity ;  
In neither aught, or in extremity.  
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know ;  
And as my love is sized, my fear is so :  
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear ;  
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

*Pl. King.* Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too ;  
My operant powers their functions leave to do :  
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind, 150  
Honour'd, beloved ; and haply one as kind  
For husband shalt thou—

*Pl. Queen.* O, confound the rest!  
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:  
In second husband let me be accurst!  
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.

*Ham.* [*Aside*] Wormwood, wormwood.

*Pl. Queen.* The instances that second marriage move  
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:  
A second time I kill my husband dead,  
When second husband kisses me in bed. 160

*Pl. King.* I do believe you think what now you speak;  
But what we do determine oft we break.  
Purpose is but the slave to memory,  
Of violent birth, but poor validity:  
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;  
But fall unshaken when they mellow be.  
Most necessary 'tis that we forget  
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:  
What to ourselves in passion we propose,  
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose. 170  
The violence of either grief or joy  
Their own enactures with themselves destroy:  
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;  
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.  
This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange  
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;  
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,  
Whether love lead fortune or else fortune love.  
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;  
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies. 180  
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend;  
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,  
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,  
Directly seasons him his enemy.  
But, orderly to end where I begun,  
Our wills and fates do so contrary run  
That our devices still are overthrown:  
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:



So think thou wilt no second husband wed ;  
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead. 190

*Pl. Queen.* Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light !  
Sport and repose lock from me day and night !  
To desperation turn my trust and hope !  
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope !  
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy  
Meet what I would have well and it destroy !  
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,  
If, once a widow, ever I be wife !

*Ham.* If she should break it now !

*Pl. King.* 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile ;  
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile 201  
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

*Pl. Queen.* Sleep rock thy brain ;  
And never come mischance between us twain ! [*Exit.*

*Ham.* Madam, how like you this play ?

*Queen.* The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

*Ham.* O, but she'll keep her word.

*King.* Have you heard the argument ? Is there no offence in 't ?

*Ham.* No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest ; no offence  
i' the world. 210

*King.* What do you call the play ?

*Ham.* The Mouse-trap. Marry, how ? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna : Gonzago is the duke's name ; his wife, Baptista : you shall see anon ; 'tis a knavish piece of work : but what o' that ? your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not : let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

*Enter LUCIANUS.*

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

*Oph.* You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

*Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love, if I  
could see the puppets dallying. 221

*Oph.* Still better, and worse.

*Ham.* So you must take your husbands. Begin, murderer; leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: 'the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.'

*Luc.* Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;

Confederate season, else no creature seeing;

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magic and dire property,

230

On wholesome life usurp immediately.

*[Pours the poison into the sleeper's ear.]*

*Ham.* He poisons him i' the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian: you shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

*Oph.* The king rises.

*Ham.* What, frighted with false fire?

*Queen.* How fares my lord?

*Pol.* Give o'er the play.

*King.* Give me some light: away!

240

*All.* Lights, lights, lights!

*[Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.]*

*Ham.* Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungalled play;

For some must watch, while some must sleep:

Thus runs the world away.

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers—if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me—with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

*Hor.* Half a share.

250

*Ham.* A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here

A very, very—pajock.

*Hor.* You might have rhymed.

*Ham.* O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

*Hor.* Very well, my lord.

*Ham.* Upon the talk of the poisoning? 260

*Hor.* I did very well note him.

*Ham.* Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the recorders!

For if the king like not the comedy,

Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.

Come, some music!

*Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Guil.* Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

*Ham.* Sir, a whole history.

*Guil.* The king, sir,—

*Ham.* Ay, sir, what of him?

*Guil.* Is in his retirement marvellous distempered. 270

*Ham.* With drink, sir?

*Guil.* No, my lord, rather with choler.

*Ham.* Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to the doctor: for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

*Guil.* Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame and start not so wildly from my affair.

*Ham.* I am tame, sir: pronounce.

*Guil.* The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you. 280

*Ham.* You are welcome.

*Guil.* Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

*Ham.* Sir, I cannot.

*Guil.* What, my lord?

*Ham.* Make you a wholesome answer ; my wit's diseased : but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command ; or rather, as you say, my mother : therefore no more, but to the matter : my mother, you say,—

*Ros.* Then thus she says ; your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

*Ham.* O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother ! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration ? Impart.

*Ros.* She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

*Ham.* We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us ? 301

*Ros.* My lord, you once did love me.

*Ham.* So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

*Ros.* Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper ? you do surely bar the door upon your own liberty ; if you deny your griefs to your friend.

*Ham.* Sir, I lack advancement.

*Ros.* How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark ? 309

*Ham.* Ay, sir, but ' While the grass grows,'—the proverb is something musty.

*Re-enter Players with recorders.*

O, the recorders ! let me see one. To withdraw with you :—why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil ?

*Guil.* O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

*Ham.* I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe ?

*Guil.* My lord, I cannot.

*Ham.* I pray you.

*Guil.* Believe me, I cannot.

*Ham.* I do beseech you.

*Guil.* I know no touch of it, my lord.

*Ham.* 'Tis as easy as lying : govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

*Guil.* But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony ; I have not the skill. 329

*Ham.* Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me ! You would play upon me ; you would seem to know my stops ; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery ; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass : and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe ? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir !

*Pol.* My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently. 341

*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel ?

*Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

*Ham.* Methinks it is like a weasel.

*Pol.* It is backed like a weasel.

*Ham.* Or like a whale ?

*Pol.* Very like a whale.

*Ham.* Then I will come to my mother by and by. [*Aside.*] They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by and by. 351

*Pol.* I will say so.

[*Exit* Polonius.]

*Ham.* 'By and by' is easily said. Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

'Tis now the very witching time of night,  
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out  
Contagion to this world : now could I drink hot blood,

And do such bitter business as the day  
 Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.  
 O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever  
 The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom: 360  
 Let me be cruel, not unnatural:  
 I will speak daggers to her, but use none;  
 My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;  
 How in my words soever she be shent,  
 To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [Exit.

SCENE III. *A room in the castle.*

*Enter* KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

*King.* I like him not, nor stands it safe with us  
 To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;  
 I your commission will forthwith dispatch,  
 And he to England shall along with you:  
 The terms of our estate may not endure  
 Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow  
 Out of his lunacies.

*Guil.* We will ourselves provide:  
 Most holy and religious fear it is  
 To keep those many many bodies safe  
 That live and feed upon your majesty. 10

*Ros.* The single and peculiar life is bound,  
 With all the strength and armour of the mind,  
 To keep itself from noyance; but much more  
 That spirit upon whose weal depends and rests  
 The lives of many. The cease of majesty  
 Dies not alone, but like a gulf doth draw  
 What's near it with it: it is a massy wheel,  
 Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,  
 To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things  
 Are mortised and adjoin'd; which, when it falls, 20  
 Each small annexment, petty consequence,  
 Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone  
 Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

*King.* Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;  
For we will fetters put upon this fear,  
Which now goes too free-footed.

*Ros.* }  
*Guil.* }

We will haste us.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* My lord, he's going to his mother's closet:  
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,  
To hear the process; I'll warrant she'll tax him home:  
And, as you said, and wisely was it said, 30  
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,  
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear  
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:  
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,  
And tell you what I know.

*King.*

Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit Polonius.*]

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;  
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,  
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,  
Though inclination be as sharp as will:  
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent; 40  
And, like a man to double business bound,  
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,  
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand  
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,  
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens  
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy  
But to confront the visage of offence?  
And what's in prayer but this twofold force,  
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,  
Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up; 50  
My fault is past. But O, what form of prayer  
Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder?'  
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd  
Of those effects for which I did the murder,

My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.  
 May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?  
 In the corrupted currents of this world  
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,  
 And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself  
 Buys out the law : but 'tis not so above ; 60  
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies  
 In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd,  
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,  
 To give in evidence. What then? what rests?  
 Try what repentance can : what can it not?  
 Yet what can it when one can not repent?  
 O wretched state ! O bosom black as death !  
 O limed soul, that struggling to be free  
 Art more engaged ! Help, angels ! make assay !  
 Bow, stubborn knees ; and, heart with strings of steel, 70  
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe !  
 All may be well. [Retires and kneels.

*Enter* HAMLET.

*Ham.* Now might I do it pat, now he is praying ;  
 And now I'll do't : and so he goes to heaven ;  
 And so am I revenged. That would be scann'd :  
 A villain kills my father ; and for that,  
 I, his sole son, do this same villain send  
 To heaven.

O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.  
 He took my father grossly, full of bread, 80  
 With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May ;  
 And how his audit stands who knows save Heaven ?  
 But in our circumstance and course of thought,  
 'Tis heavy with him : and am I then revenged,  
 To take him in the purging of his soul,  
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage ?  
 No !

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent :  
 When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,  
 Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed ; 90



At game, a-swearing, or about some act  
 That has no relish of salvation in't;  
 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,  
 And that his soul may be as damn'd and black  
 As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays :  
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [Exit.]

*King.* [Rising] My words fly up, my thoughts remain  
 below :  
 Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [Exit.]

SCENE IV. *The Queen's closet.**Enter* QUEEN and POLONIUS.

*Pol.* He will come straight. Look you lay home to him :  
 Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,  
 And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between  
 Much heat and him. I'll sconce me even here.  
 Pray you, be round with him.

*Ham.* [Within] Mother, mother, mother !

*Queen.* I'll warrant you, fear me not. Withdraw, I hear  
 him coming. [Polonius hides behind the arras.]

*Enter* HAMLET.

*Ham.* Now, mother, what's the matter ?

*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended. 10

*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much offended.

*Queen.* Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet !

*Ham.* What's the matter now ?

*Queen.* Have you forgot me ?

*Ham.* No, by the rood, not so :  
 You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife ;  
 And—would it were not so !—you are my mother.

*Queen.* Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

*Ham.* Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;

You go not till I set you up a glass 20  
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

*Queen.* What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?  
Help, help, ho!

*Pol.* [*Behind*] What, ho! help, help, help!

*Ham.* [*Drawing*] How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducat,  
dead! [*Makes a pass through the arras.*]

*Pol.* [*Behind*] O, I am slain! [*Falls and dies.*]

*Queen.* O me, what hast thou done?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not: is it the king?

*Queen.* O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

*Ham.* A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,  
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

*Queen.* As kill a king!

*Ham.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word. 30

[*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.*]

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.

Leave wringing of your hands: peace! sit you down,

And let me wring your heart; for so I shall,

If it be made of penetrable stuff,

If damned custom have not brass'd it so

That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

*Queen.* What have I done, that thou darest wag thy  
tongue

In noise so rude against me?

*Ham.* Such an act 40

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,

Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love

And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows

As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed

As from the body of contraction plucks

The very soul, and sweet religion makes  
 A rhapsody of words : heaven's face doth glow ;  
 Yea, this solidity and compound mass,  
 With tristful visage, as against the doom, 50  
 Is thought-sick at the act.

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

*Ham.* Look here, upon this picture, and on this,  
 The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.  
 See, what a grace was seated on this brow ;  
 Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,  
 (An eye like Mars, to threaten and command )  
 A station like the herald Mercury  
 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;  
 A combination and a form indeed, 60  
 Where every god did seem to set his seal  
 To give the world assurance of a man :  
 This was your husband. Look you now, what follows :  
 Here is your husband ; like a mildew'd ear,  
 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ?  
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,  
 And batten on this moor ? Ha ! have you eyes ?  
 You cannot call it love, for at your age  
 The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,  
 And waits upon the judgement : and what judgement 70  
 Would step from this to this ? Sense sure you have,  
 Else could you not have motion ; but sure that sense  
 Is apoplex'd ; for madness would not err,  
 Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd  
 But it reserved some quantity of choice,  
 To serve in such a difference. What devil was 't  
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind ?  
 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,  
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,  
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense 80  
 Could not so mope.  
 O shame ! where is thy blush ? Rebellious hell,  
 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,

To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,  
 And melt in her own fire : proclaim no shame  
 When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,  
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn  
 And reason pandars will.

*Queen.* O Hamlet, speak no more :  
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul ;  
 And there I see such black and grained spots 90  
 As will not leave their tinct. *Yes* . . . . .  
 . . . . . O, speak to me no more ;  
 These words like daggers enter in mine ears ;  
 No more, sweet Hamlet !

*Ham.* A murderer and a villain ;  
 A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe  
 Of your precedent lord ; a vice of kings ;  
 A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,  
 That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,  
 And put it in his pocket !

*Queen.* No more !

*Ham.* A king of shreds and patches—

*Enter Ghost.*

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings, 100  
 You heavenly guards ! What would your gracious figure ?

*Queen.* Alas, he's mad !

*Ham.* Do you not come your tardy son to chide,  
 That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by  
 The important acting of your dread command ?  
 O, say !

*Ghost.* Do not forget : this visitation  
 Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.  
 But look, amazement on thy mother sits :  
 O, step between her and her fighting soul : 110  
 Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works :  
 Speak to her, Hamlet.

*Ham.* How is it with you, lady ?

*Queen.* Alas, how is't with you,

That you do bend your eye on vacancy  
 And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?  
 Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;  
 And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,  
 Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,  
 Start up and stand an end. O gentle son,  
 Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper 120  
 Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

*Ham.* On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!  
 His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,  
 Would make them capable. Do not look upon me;  
 Lest with this piteous action you convert  
 My stern effects: then what I have to do  
 Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood.

*Queen.* To whom do you speak this?

*Ham.* Do you see nothing there?

*Queen.* Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

*Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear?

*Queen.* No, nothing but ourselves.

*Ham.* Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!  
 My father, in his habit as he lived! 132  
 Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[*Exit Ghost.*]

*Queen.* This is the very coinage of your brain:  
 This bodiless creation ecstasy  
 Is very cunning in.

*Ham.* Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,  
 And makes as healthful music: it is not madness  
 That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,  
 And I the matter will re-word; which madness 140  
 Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,  
 Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,  
 That not your trespass but my madness speaks:  
 It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,  
 Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,  
 Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;

Repent what's past, avoid what is to come,  
 And do not spread the compost on the weeds,  
 To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue ;  
 For in the fatness of these pury times 150  
 Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,  
 Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

*Queen.* O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

*Ham.* O, throw away the worser part of it,  
 And live the purer with the other half.  
 Good night : but go not to my uncle's bed ;  
 Assume a virtue, if you have it not.  
 That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,  
 Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,  
 That to the use of actions fair and good 160  
 He likewise gives a frock or livery,  
 That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,  
 And that shall lend a kind of easiness  
 To the next abstinence : the next more easy ;  
 For use almost can change the stamp of nature,  
 And either . . . the devil, or throw him out  
 With wondrous potency. Once more, good night :  
 And when you are desirous to be blest,  
 I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,

[*Pointing to Polonius.*

I do repent : but heaven hath pleased it so, 170  
 To punish me with this and this with me,  
 That I must be their scourge and minister.  
 I will bestow him, and will answer well  
 The death I gave him. So, again, good night.  
 I must be cruel, only to be kind :  
 Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.  
 One word more, good lady.

*Queen.* What shall I do ?

*Ham.* Not this, by no means, that I bid you do :  
 Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed ;  
 Pinch wanton on your cheek, call you his mouse ; 180  
 And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,

Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,  
 Make you to ravel all this matter out,  
 That I essentially am not in madness,  
 But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him know ;  
 For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,  
 Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,  
 Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?  
 No, in despite of sense and secrecy,  
 Unpeg the basket on the house's top, 190  
 Let the birds fly, and like the famous ape,  
 To try conclusions, in the basket creep  
 And break your own neck down.

*Queen.* Be thou assured, if words be made of breath,  
 And breath of life, I have no life to breathe  
 What thou hast said to me.

*Ham.* I must to England ; you know that?

*Queen.* Alack,  
 I had forgot : 'tis so concluded on.

*Ham.* There's letters seal'd : and my two schoolfellows,  
 Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd, 200  
 They bear the mandate ; they must sweep my way,  
 And marshal me to knavery. Let it work ;  
 For 'tis the sport to have the enginer  
 Hoist with his own petar : and 't shall go hard  
 But I will delve one yard below their mines,  
 And blow them at the moon : O, 'tis most sweet,  
 When in one line two crafts directly meet.  
 This man shall set me packing :  
 I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.  
 Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor 210  
 Is now most still, most secret and most grave,  
 Who was in life a foolish prating knave.  
 Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.  
 Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally ; Hamlet dragging in Polonius.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A room in the castle.*

*Enter* KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

*King.* There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves:  
You must translate: 'tis fit we understand them.  
Where is your son?

*Queen.* Bestow this place on us a little while.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Ah, mine own lord, what have I seen to-night!

*King.* What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

*Queen.* Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend  
Which is the mightier: in his lawless fit,  
Behind the arras hearing something stir,  
Whips out his rapier, cries 'A rat, a rat!' 10  
And in this brainish apprehension kills  
The unseen good old man.

*King.* O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there:  
His liberty is full of threats to all;  
To you yourself, to us, to every one.  
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?  
It will be laid to us, whose providence  
Should have kept short, restrain'd and out of haunt,  
This mad young man: but so much was our love,  
We would not understand what was most fit; 20  
But, like the owner of a foul disease,  
To keep it from divulging, let it feed  
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

*Queen.* To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:  
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore  
Among a mineral of metals base,  
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

*King.* O Gertrude, come away!



The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,  
 But we will ship him hence : and this vile deed 30  
 We must, with all our majesty and skill,  
 Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guildenstern !

*Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

Friends both, go join you with some further aid :  
 Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,  
 And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him :  
 Go seek him out ; speak fair, and bring the body  
 Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

*[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]*

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends ;  
 And let them know, both what we mean to do,  
 And what's untimely done . . . . . 40  
 Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,  
 As level as the cannon to his blank,  
 Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name  
 And hit the woundless air. O, come away !  
 My soul is full of discord and dismay. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II. *Another room in the castle.*

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Safely stowed.

*Ros.* }  
*Guil.* } *[Within]* Hamlet ! Lord Hamlet !

*Ham.* But soft, what noise ? who calls on Hamlet ? O,  
 here they come.

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Ros.* What have you done, my lord, with the dead body ?

*Ham.* Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

*Ros.* Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence  
 And bear it to the chapel.

*Ham.* Do not believe it.

*Ros.* Believe what ?

*Ham.* That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge! what replication should be made by the son of a king?

*Ros.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

*Ham.* Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again. 20

*Ros.* I understand you not, my lord.

*Ham.* I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

*Ros.* My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

*Ham.* The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing—

*Guil.* A thing, my lord?

*Ham.* Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *Another room in the castle.*

*Enter KING, attended.*

*King.* I have sent to seek him, and to find the body. How dangerous is it that this man goes loose! Yet must not we put the strong law on him: He's loved of the distracted multitude, Who like not in their judgement, but their eyes: And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd, But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even, This sudden sending him away must seem Deliberate pause: diseases desperate grown By desperate appliance are relieved, Or not at all. 10

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ.*

How now! what hath befall'n?

*Ros.* Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,  
We cannot get from him.

*King.* But where is he?

*Ros.* Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

*King.* Bring him before us.

*Ros.* Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

*Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

*Ham.* At supper.

*King.* At supper! where? 19

*Ham.* Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table: that 's the end.

*King.* Alas, alas!

*Ham.* A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

*King.* What dost thou mean by this?

*Ham.* Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar. 31

*King.* Where is Polonius?

*Ham.* In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

*King.* Go seek him there. [To some Attendants.]

*Ham.* He will stay till you come. [Exeunt Attendants.]

*King.* Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,  
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve 40  
For that which thou hast done, must send thee hence  
With fiery quickness: therefore prepare thyself;

The bark is ready and the wind at help,  
The associates tend, and every thing is bent  
For England.

*Ham.* For England?

*King.* Ay, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good.

*King.* So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

*Ham.* I see a cherub that sees them. But, come; for  
England! Farewell, dear mother.

*King.* Thy loving father, Hamlet. 49

*Ham.* My mother: father and mother is man and wife;  
man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come,  
for England! [*Exit.*]

*King.* Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard;  
Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night:  
Away! for every thing is seal'd and done  
That else leans on the affair: pray you, make haste.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught—  
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,  
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red  
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe 60  
Pays homage to us—thou mayst not coldly set  
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,  
By letters congruing to that effect,  
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;  
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,  
And thou must cure me: till I know 'tis done,  
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV. *A plain in Denmark.*

*Enter FORTINBRAS, a Captain, and Soldiers marching.*

*Fort.* Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;  
Tell him that by his license Fortinbras  
Craves the conveyance of a promised march

Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.  
 If that his majesty would aught with us,  
 We shall express our duty in his eye;  
 And let him know so.

*Capt.* I will do't, my lord.

*Fort.* Go softly on. [*Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.*]

*Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,  
 and others.*

*Ham.* Good sir, whose powers are these?

*Capt.* They are of Norway, sir. 10

*Ham.* How purposed, sir, I pray you?

*Capt.* Against some part of Poland.

*Ham.* Who commands them, sir?

*Capt.* The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

*Ham.* Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,  
 Or for some frontier?

*Capt.* Truly to speak, and with no addition,  
 We go to gain a little patch of ground  
 That hath in it no profit but the name.  
 To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it; 20  
 Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole  
 A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

*Ham.* Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

*Capt.* Yes, it is already garrison'd.

*Ham.* Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats  
 Will not debate the question of this straw:  
 This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,  
 That inward breaks, and shows no cause without  
 Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir. 29

*Capt.* God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit.*]

*Ros.* Will't please you go, my lord?

*Ham.* I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.  
 [*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

How all occasions do inform against me,  
 And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,  
 If his chief good and market of his time  
 Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.  
 + Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,  
 Looking before and after, gave us not  
 That capability and god-like reason  
 To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be  
 Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple  
 Of thinking too precisely on the event,  
 A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom  
 And ever three parts coward, I do not know  
 Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do;'  
 Sith I have cause and will and strength and means  
 To do't. | Examples gross as earth exhort me:  
 Witness this army of such mass and charge  
 Led by a delicate and tender prince,  
 Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd  
 Makes mouths at the invisible event,  
 Exposing what is mortal and unsure  
 To all that fortune, death and danger dare,  
 Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great  
Is not to stir without great argument,  
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw  
When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,  
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,  
 Excitements of my reason and my blood,  
 And let all sleep? while to my shame I see  
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,  
 That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,  
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot  
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,  
 Which is not tomb enough and continent  
 To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,  
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [Exit.

SCENE V. *Elsinore. A room in the castle.*

*Enter* QUEEN, HORATIO, and a Gentleman.

*Queen.* I will not speak with her.

*Gent.* She is importunate, indeed distract :  
Her mood will needs be pitied.

*Queen.* What would she have ?

*Gent.* She speaks much of her father ; says she hears  
There's tricks i' the world, and hems and beats her heart,  
Spurns enviously at straws ; speaks things in doubt,  
That carry but half sense : her speech is nothing,  
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move  
The hearers to collection ; they aim at it,  
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts ; 10  
Which, as her winks and nods and gestures yield them,  
Indeed would make one think there might be thought,  
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

*Hor.* 'Twere good she were spoken with ; for she may  
strew  
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

*Queen.* Let her come in. *[Exit Gentleman.]*  
*[Aside]* To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,  
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss :  
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,  
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt. 20

*Re-enter* Gentleman, with OPHELIA.

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

*Queen.* How now, Ophelia !

*Oph.* *[Sings]*

How should I your true love know  
From another one ?

By his cockle hat and staff, } *pilgrim*  
And his sandal shoon.

*Queen.* Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song ?

*Oph.* Say you ? nay, pray you, mark.

[Sings] He is dead and gone, lady,  
 He is dead and gone ; 30  
 At his head a grass-green turf,  
 At his heels a stone.

Oh, oh !

*Queen.* Nay, but, Ophelia,—

*Oph.* Pray you, mark.

[Sings] White his shroud as the mountain snow,—

*Enter KING.*

*Queen.* Alas, look here, my lord.

*Oph.* [Sings]  
 Larded with sweet flowers ;  
 Which bewept to the grave did go  
 With true-love showers.

*King.* How do you, pretty lady? 39

*Oph.* Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table !

*King.* Conceit upon her father.

*Oph.* Pray you, let's have no words of this ; but when they ask you what it means, say you this :

[Sings] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,  
 All in the morning betime,  
 And I a maid at your window,  
 To be your Valentine.

*King.* How long hath she been thus? 50

*Oph.* I hope all will be well. We must be patient : but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it : and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach ! Good night, ladies ; good night, sweet ladies ; good night, good night. [Exit.

*King.* Follow her close ; give her good watch, I pray you. [Exit *Horatio.*

O, this is the poison of deep grief ; it springs  
 All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,



When sorrows come, they come not single spies, 60  
 But in battalions. First, her father slain :  
 Next, your son gone ; and he most violent author  
 Of his own just remove : the people muddied,  
 Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,  
 For good Polonius' death ; and we have done but greenly:  
 In hugger-mugger to inter him : poor Ophelia  
 Divided from herself and her fair judgement,  
 Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts :  
 Last, and as much containing as all these,  
 Her brother is in secret come from France ; 70  
 Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,  
 And wants not buzzers to infect his ear  
 With pestilent speeches of his father's death ;  
 Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,  
 Will nothing stick our person to arraign  
 In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,  
 Like to a murdering-piece, in many places  
 Gives me superfluous death. [*A noise within.*]

*Queen.* Alack, what noise is this ?

*King.* Where are my Switzers ? Let them guard the door.

*Enter another Gentleman.*

What is the matter ?

*Gent.* Save yourself, my lord : 80  
 The ocean, overpeering of his list,  
 Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste  
 Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,  
 O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord ;  
 And, as the world were now but to begin,  
 Antiquity forgot, custom not known,  
 The ratifiers and props of every word,  
 They cry 'Choose we : Laertes shall be king !'  
 Caps, hands and tongues applaud it to the clouds :  
 'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king !' 90

*Queen.* How cheerfully on the false trail they cry !  
 O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs !

*King.* The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*]

*Enter* LAERTES, *armed*; Danes *following*.

*Laer.* Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all without.

*Danes.* No, let's come in.

*Laer.* I pray you, give me leave.

*Danes.* We will, we will. [*They retire without the door.*]

*Laer.* I thank you: keep the door. O thou vile king,  
Give me my father!

*Queen.* Calmly, good Laertes.

*King.* What is the cause, Laertes,  
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like? 100  
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:  
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,  
That treason can but peep to what it would,  
Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,  
Why thou art thus incensed. Let him go, Gertrude.  
Speak, man.

*Laer.* Where is my father?

*King.* Dead.

*Queen.* But not by him.

*King.* Let him demand his fill.

*Laer.* How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:  
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil! 110  
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!  
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,  
That both the worlds I give to negligence,  
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged  
Most throughly for my father.

*King.* Who shall stay you?

*Laer.* My will, not all the world:  
And for my means, I'll husband them so well,  
They shall go far with little.

*King.* Good Laertes,  
If you desire to know the certainty  
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,

That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe, 121  
Winner and loser?

*Laer.* None but his enemies.

*King.* Will you know them then?

*Laer.* To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;  
And like the kind life-rendering pelican,  
Repast them with my blood.

*King.* Why, now you speak  
Like a good child and a true gentleman.  
That I am guiltless of your father's death,  
And am most sensibly in grief for it,  
It shall as level to your judgement pierce 130  
As day does to your eye.

*Danes.* [*Within*] Let her come in.

*Laer.* How now! what noise is that?

*Re-enter OPHELIA.*

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,  
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!  
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,  
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!  
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!  
O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits  
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?  
Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine, 140  
It sends some precious instance of itself  
After the thing it loves.

*Oph.* [*Sings*]

They bore him barefaced on the bier;  
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;  
And in his grave rain'd many a tear,—

Fare you well, my dove!

*Laer.* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,  
It could not move thus.

*Oph.* [*Sings*] You must sing a-down a-down,  
An you call him a-down-a.

O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

*Laer.* This nothing's more than matter.

*Oph.* There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

*Laer.* A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted.

*Oph.* There's fennel for you, and columbines: there's rue for you; and here's some for me: we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays: O, you must wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy: I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died: they say he made a good end,—

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[Sings] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

*Laer.* Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself; She turns to favour and to prettiness.

*Oph.* [Sings] And will a' not come again?

And will a' not come again?

No, no, he is dead:

Go to thy death-bed:

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He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

All flaxen was his poll:

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan:

God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be wi' you.

[Exit.]

*Laer.* Do you see this, O God?

*King.* Laertes, I must commune with your grief, Or you deny me right. Go but apart,

180

Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will, And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:

If by direct or by collateral hand

They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,

Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,

To you in satisfaction; but if not,

Be you content to lend your patience to us,  
And we shall jointly labour with your soul  
To give it due content.

*Laer.* Let this be so ;  
His means of death, his obscure funeral, 190  
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,  
No noble rite nor formal ostentation,  
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,  
That I must call't in question.

*King.* So you shall ;  
And where the offence is let the great axe fall.  
I pray you, go with me. [Exit.

SCENE VI. *Another room in the castle.*

*Enter HORATIO and a Servant.*

*Hor.* What are they that would speak with me?

*Serv.* Sea-faring men, sir : they say they have letters for you.

*Hor.* Let them come in. [Exit Servant.  
I do not know from what part of the world  
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

*Enter Sailors.*

*First Sail.* God bless you, sir.

*Hor.* Let him bless thee too.

*First Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir : it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England ; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is. 12

*Hor.* [Reads] ' Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king : they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them : on the instant they got clear of our ship ; so I alone became their prisoner. They have

dealt with me like thieves of mercy : but they knew what they did ; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent ; and repair thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldest fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb ; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England : of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell. He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.'

Come, I will make you way for these your letters ; 29  
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me  
To him from whom you brought them. [Exeunt.

SCENE VII. *Another room in the castle.*

*Enter KING and LAERTES.*

*King.* Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,  
And you must put me in your heart for friend,  
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,  
That he which hath your noble father slain  
Pursued my life.

*Laer.* It well appears : but tell me  
Why you proceeded not against these feats,  
So crimeful and so capital in nature,  
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,  
You mainly were stirr'd up.

*King.* O, for two special reasons ;  
Which may to you perhaps seem much unsinew'd, 10  
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother  
Lives almost by his looks ; and for myself—  
My virtue or my plague, be it either which—  
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,  
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,  
I could not but by her. The other motive,  
Why to a public count I might not go,  
Is the great love the general gender bear him ;

Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,  
 Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone, 20  
 Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,  
 Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,  
 Would have reverted to my bow again,  
 And not where I had aim'd them.

*Laer.* And so have I a noble father lost;  
 A sister driven into desperate terms,  
 Whose worth, if praises may go back again,  
 Stood challenger on mount of all the age  
 For her perfections: but my revenge will come. 29

*King.* Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think  
 'That we are made of stuff so flat and dull  
 'That we can let our beard be shook with danger  
 And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more.  
 I loved your father, and we love ourself;  
 And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine—

*Enter a Messenger.*

How now! what news?

*Mess.* Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:  
 This to your majesty; this to the queen.

*King.* From Hamlet! who brought them?

*Mess.* Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:  
 'They were given me by Claudio; he received them 40  
 Of him that brought them.

*King.* Laertes, you shall hear them.  
 Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*]

[*Reads*] 'High and mighty, You shall know I am set  
 naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to  
 see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon  
 thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more  
 strange return. HAMLET.'

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?  
 Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

*Laer.* Know you the hand?

*King.* 'Tis Hamlet's character. 'Naked!'

And in a postscript here, he says 'alone.'  
Can you advise me?

51

*Laer.* I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come ;  
It warms the very sickness in my heart,  
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,  
'Thus didest thou.'

*King.* If it be so, Laertes—  
As how should it be so? how otherwise?—  
Will you be ruled by me?

*Laer.* Ay, my lord ;  
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

*King.* To thine own peace. If he be now return'd, 60  
As checking at his voyage, and that he means  
No more to undertake it, I will work him  
To an exploit now ripe in my device,  
Under the which he shall not choose but fall :  
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,  
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice  
And call it accident.

*Laer.* My lord, I will be ruled ;  
The rather, if you could devise it so  
That I might be the organ.

*King.* It falls right. 70  
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,  
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality  
Wherein, they say, you shine : your sum of parts  
Did not together pluck such envy from him  
As did that one, and that in my regard  
Of the unworhiest siege.

*Laer.* What part is that, my lord?

*King.* A very riband in the cap of youth,  
Yet needful too ; for youth no less becomes  
The light and careless livery that it wears  
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,  
Importing health and graveness. Two months since, 80  
Here was a gentleman of Normandy :—  
I've seen myself, and served against, the French,



And they can well on horseback : but this gallant  
 Had witchcraft in't ; he grew unto his seat,  
 And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,  
 As had he been incorpsed and demi-natured  
 With the brave beast : so far he topp'd my thought  
 That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,  
 Came short of what he did.

*Laer.* A Norman was't?

*King.* A Norman.

90

*Laer.* Upon my life, Lamond.

*King.* The very same.

*Laer.* I know him well : he is the brooch indeed  
 And gem of all the nation.

*King.* He made confession of you,  
 And gave you such a masterly report  
 For art and exercise in your defence  
 And for your rapier most especial,  
 That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed  
 If one could match you : the scrimers of their nation,  
 He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye, 100  
 If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his  
 Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy  
 That he could nothing do but wish and beg  
 Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.  
 Now, out of this—

*Laer.* What out of this, my lord?

*King.* Laertes, was your father dear to you?  
 Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,  
 A face without a heart?

*Laer.* Why ask you this?

*King.* Not that I think you did not love your father ;  
 But that I know love is begun by time, 110  
 And that I see, in passages of proof,  
 Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.  
 There lives within the very flame of love  
 A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it ;

And nothing is at a like goodness still,  
 For goodness, growing to a plurisy,  
 Dies in his own too much : that we would do  
 We should do when we would ; for this 'would' changes  
 And hath abatements and delays as many  
 As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents : 120  
 And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,  
 That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer :  
 Hamlet comes back : what would you undertake,  
 To show yourself your father's son in deed  
 More than in words ?

*Laer.* To cut his throat i' the church.

*King.* No place indeed should murder sanctuarize ;  
 Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,  
 Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.  
 Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home :  
 We'll put on those shall praise your excellence 130  
 And set a double varnish on the fame  
 The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together,  
 And wager on your heads : he, being remiss,  
 Most generous and free from all contriving,  
 Will not peruse the foils ; so that with ease,  
 Or with a little shuffling, you may choose  
 A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice  
 Requite him for your father.

*Laer.* I will do't :  
 And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword.  
 I bought an unction of a mountebank,  
 So mortal that but dip a knife in it,  
 Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,  
 Collected from all simples that have virtue  
 Under the moon, can save the thing from death  
 That is but scratch'd withal : I'll touch my point  
 With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,  
 It may be death.

*King.* Let's further think of this ;  
 Weigh what convenience both of time and means

May fit us to our shape : if this should fail,  
 And that our drift look through our bad performance, 150  
 'Twere better not assay'd : therefore this project  
 Should have a back or second, that might hold  
 If this did blast in proof. Soft ! let me see :  
 We'll make a solemn wager on your cunning's :  
 I ha't :

When in your motion you are hot and dry—  
 As make your bouts more violent to that end—  
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him  
 A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,  
 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck, 160  
 Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise ?

*Enter* QUEEN.

How now, sweet queen !

*Queen.* One woe doth tread upon another's heel,  
 So fast they follow : your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

*Laer.* Drown'd ! O, where ?

*Queen.* There is a willow grows aslant a brook,  
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream ;  
 There with fantastic garlands did she come  
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples  
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name, 170  
 But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them :  
 There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds  
 Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke ;  
 When down her weedy trophies and herself  
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide ;  
 And mermaid-like awhile they bore her up :  
 Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes ;  
 As one incapable of her own distress,  
 Or like a creature native and indued  
 Unto that element : but long it could not be 180  
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
 To muddy death.

*Laer.* Alas, then she is drown'd ?

*Queen.* Drown'd, drown'd.

*Lacr.* Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,  
And therefore I forbid my tears : but yet  
It is our trick ; nature her custom holds,  
Let shame say what it will : when these are gone,  
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord :  
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,  
But that this folly douts it. 190

[*Exit.*]

*King.* Let's follow, Gertrude :  
How much I had to do to calm his rage !  
Now fear I this will give it start again ;  
Therefore let's follow. [*Excunt.*]

## ACT V.

### SCENE I. *A churchyard.*

*Enter two Clowns, with spades, &c.*

*First Clo.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation ?

*Second Clo.* I tell thee she is ; and therefore make her grave straight : the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

*First Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence ?

*Second Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

*First Clo.* It must be 'se offendendo' ; it cannot be else. For here lies the point : if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act : and an act hath three branches ; it is, to act, to do, and to perform : argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

*Second Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

*First Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water ; good : here stands the man ; good : if the man go to this water and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes ; mark you that ; but if the water come to him and drown him, he

drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

*Second Clo.* But is this law? 20

*First Clo.* Ay, marry, is't; crowner's quest law.

*Second Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

*First Clo.* Why, there thou say'st: and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession. 30

*Second Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

*First Clo.* A' was the first that ever bore arms.

*Second Clo.* Why, he had none.

*First Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digged: could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

*Second Clo.* Go to.

*First Clo.* What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter? 41

*Second Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

*First Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come.

*Second Clo.* 'Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?' 50

*First Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

*Second Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

*First Clo.* To't.

*Second Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, afar off.*

*First Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say 'a grave-maker': the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan: fetch me a stoup of liquor. [*Exit Second Clown.*

[*He digs, and sings*]

In youth, when I did love, did love, 60

Methought it was very sweet,

To contract, O, the time, for-a my behove,

O, methought, there-a was nothing-a meet.

*Ham.* Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

*Hor.* Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

*Ham.* 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

*First Clo.* [*Sings*]

But age, with his stealing steps,

Hath claw'd me in his clutch, 70

And hath shipped me intil the land,

As if I had never been such.

[*Throws up a skull.*]

*Ham.* That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

*Hor.* It might, my lord.

*Ham.* Or of a courtier; which could say 'Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, sweet lord?' This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, e'en so : and now my Lady Worm's ; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade : here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on't.

*First Clo.* [*Sings*]

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,  
 For and a shrouding sheet: 90  
 O, a pit of clay for to be made  
 For such a guest is meet.

[*Throws up another skull.*]

*Ham.* There's another : why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quilletts, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries : is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha?

*Hor.* Not a jot more, my lord. 107

*Ham.* Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

*Ham.* They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sirrah?

*First Clo.* Mine, sir.

[*Sings*] O, a pit of clay for to be made  
 For such a guest is meet.

*Ham.* I think it be thine, indeed : for thou liest in't.

*First Clo.* You lie out on't sir, and therefore 'tis not yours : for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

*Ham.* Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine : 'tis for the dead, not for the quick ; therefore thou liest.

*First Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir ; 'twill away again, from me to you.

*Ham.* What man dost thou dig it for? 123

*First Clo.* For no man, sir.

*Ham.* What woman, then?

*First Clo.* For none, neither.

*Ham.* Who is to be buried in't?

*First Clo.* One that was a woman, sir ; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

*Ham.* How absolute the knave is ! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, this three years I have taken note of it ; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-maker? 135

*First Clo.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

*Ham.* How long is that since?

*First Clo.* Cannot you tell that ? every fool can tell that : it was the very day that young Hamlet was born ; he that is mad, and sent into England.

*Ham.* Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

*First Clo.* Why, because a' was mad : a' shall recover his wits there ; or, if a' do not, it's no great matter there.

*Ham.* Why?

*First Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there ; there the men are as mad as he.

*Ham.* How came he mad?

*First Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

*Ham.* How 'strangely'? 150

*First Clo.* Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

*Ham.* Upon what ground?



*First Clo.* Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

*Ham.* How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

*First Clo.* I' faith, if a' be not rotten before a' die, a' will last you some eight year or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

*Ham.* Why he more than another?

*First Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that a' will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your dead body. Here's a skull now: this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

*Ham.* Whose was it? 164

*First Clo.* A mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not.

*First Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

*Ham.* This?

*First Clo.* E'en that. 172

*Ham.* Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chop-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

*Hor.* What's that, my lord? 185

*Ham.* Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

*Hor.* E'en so.

*Ham.* And smelt so? pah! [Puts down the skull.

*Hor.* E'en so, my lord. 190

*Ham.* To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

*Hor.* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

*Ham.* No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel? 200

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,

Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:

O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,

Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

But soft! but soft! aside: here comes the king,

*Enter Priests, &c. in procession; the Corpse of Ophelia, LAERTES and Mourners following; KING, QUEEN, their trains, &c.*

The queen, the courtiers: who is this they follow?

And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken

The corse they follow did with desperate hand

Fordo it own life: 'twas of some estate.

Couch we awhile, and mark. [Retiring with Horatio.

*Laer.* What ceremony else? 211

*Ham.* That is Laertes, a very noble youth: mark.

*Laer.* What ceremony else?

*First Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarged  
As we have warrantise: her death was doubtful;  
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,  
She should in ground unsanctified have lodged  
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,  
Shards, flints and pebbles should be thrown on her:

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants, 220  
 Her maiden strewments and the bringing home  
 Of bell and burial.

*Laer.* Must there no more be done?

*First Priest.* No more be done :  
 We should profane the service of the dead  
 To sing a requiem and such rest to her  
 As to peace-parted souls.

*Laer.* Lay her i' the earth :  
 And from her fair and unpolluted flesh  
 May violets spring ! I tell thee, churlish priest,  
 A ministering angel shall my sister be,  
 When thou liest howling. / X

*Ham.* What, the fair Ophelia ! 230

*Queen.* Sweets to the sweet : farewell !

*[Scattering flowers.]*

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife ;  
 I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,  
 And not have strew'd thy grave.

*Laer.* O, treble woe  
 Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,  
 Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense  
 Deprived thee of ! Hold off the earth awhile,  
 Till I have caught her once more in mine arms :

*[Leaps into the grave.]*

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,  
 Till of this flat a mountain you have made, 240  
 To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head  
 Of blue Olympus.

*Ham.* *[Advancing]* What is he whose grief  
 Bears such an emphasis ? whose phrase of sorrow  
 Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand  
 Like wonder-wounded hearers ? This is I,  
 Hamlet the Dane.

*[Leaps into the grave.]*

*Laer.* The devil take thy soul !

*[Grappling with him.]*

*Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.  
 I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat ;  
 For, though I am not splenitive and rash,  
 Yet have I something in me dangerous,  
 Which let thy wisdom fear : hold off thy hand.

*King.* Pluck them asunder.

*Queen.* Hamlet, Hamlet !

*All.* Gentlemen,—

*Hor.* Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*]

*Ham.* Why, I will fight with him upon this theme  
 Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

*Queen.* O my son, what theme ?

*Ham.* I loved Ophelia : forty thousand brothers  
 Could not, with all their quantity of love,  
 Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

*King.* O, he is mad, Laertes.

*Queen.* For love of God, forbear him.

*Ham.* 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do :  
 Woo't weep ? woo't fight ? woo't fast ? woo't tear thyself ?  
 Woo't drink up eisel ? eat a crocodile ?  
 I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine ?  
 To outface me with leaping in her grave ?  
 Be buried quick with her, and so will I :  
 And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw  
 Millions of acres on us, till our ground,  
 Singeing its pate against the burning zone,  
 Make Ossa like a wart ! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,  
 I'll rant as well as thou.

*Queen.* This is mere madness :  
 And thus awhile the fit will work on him ;  
 Anon, as patient as the female dove,  
 When that her golden couplets are disclosed,  
 His silence will sit drooping.

*Ham.* Hear you, sir ;  
 What is the reason that you use me thus ?

I loved you ever : but it is no matter ; 280  
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,  
 The cat will mew and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*]

*King.* I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[*To Laertes*]

[*Exit Horatio.*]

Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech ;  
 We'll put the matter to the present push.  
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.  
 This grave shall have a living monument :  
 An hour of quiet shortly shall we see ;  
 Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A hall in the castle.*

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.*

*Ham.* So much for this, sir : now shall you see the other ;  
 You do remember all the circumstance ?

*Hor.* Remember it, my lord !

*Ham.* Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,  
 That would not let me sleep : methought I lay  
 Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,  
 And praised be rashness for it, let us know,  
 Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,  
 When our deep plots do pall : and that should learn us  
 There's a divinity that shapes our ends, 10  
 Rough-hew them how we will,—

*Hor.* That is most certain.

*Ham.* Up from my cabin,  
 My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark  
 Groped I to find out them ; had my desire,  
 Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew  
 To mine own room again ; making so bold,  
 My fears forgetting manners, to unseal  
 Their grand commission ; where I found, Horatio,—  
 O royal knavery !—an exact command,  
 Larded with many several sorts of reasons 20

Importing Denmark's health and England's too,  
 With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,  
 That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,  
 No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,  
 My head should be struck off.

*Hor.* Is't possible?

*Ham.* Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.  
 But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

*Hor.* I beseech you.

*Ham.* Being thus be-netted round with villanies,—  
 Or I could make a prologue to my brains, 30  
 They had begun the play,—I sat me down,  
 Devised a new commission, wrote it fair:  
 I once did hold it, as our statist do,  
 A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much  
 How to forget that learning, but, sir, now  
 It did me yeoman's service: wilt thou know  
 The effect of what I wrote?

*Hor.* Ay, good my lord.

*Ham.* An earnest conjuration from the king,  
 As England was his faithful tributary,  
 As love between them like the palm might flourish, 40  
 As peace should still her wheaten garland wear  
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities,  
 And many such-like 'As'es of great charge,  
 That, on the view and knowing of these contents,  
 Without debatement further, more or less,  
 He should the bearers put to sudden death,  
 Not shriving-time allow'd.

*Hor.* How was this seal'd?

*Ham.* Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.  
 I had my father's signet in my purse,  
 Which was the model of that Danish seal; 50  
 Folded the writ up in the form of the other,  
 Subscribed it, gave't the impression, placed it safely,  
 The changeling never known. Now, the next day

Was our sea-fight ; and what to this was sequent  
Thou know'st already.

*Hor.* So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

*Ham.* Why, man, they did make love to this employment ;  
They are not near my conscience ; their defeat  
Does by their own insinuation grow :  
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes 60  
Between the pass and fell incensed points  
Of mighty opposites.

*Hor.* Why, what a king is this !

*Ham.* Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now upon—  
He that hath kill'd my king and stain'd my mother,  
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,  
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,  
And with such cozenage—is't not perfect conscience,  
To quit him with this arm ? and is't not to be damn'd,  
To let this canker of our nature come  
In further evil ? 70

*Hor.* It must be shortly known to him from England  
What is the issue of the business there.

*Ham.* It will be short : the interim is mine ;  
And a man's life's no more than to say 'One.'  
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,  
That to Laertes I forgot myself ;  
For, by the image of my cause, I see  
The portraiture of his : I'll court his favours :  
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me  
Into a towering passion.

*Hor.* Peace ! who comes here ? 80

*Enter OSRIC.*

*Osr.* Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

*Ham.* I humbly thank you, sir. Dost know this water-fly ?

*Hor.* No, my good lord.

*Ham.* Thy state is the more gracious ; for 'tis a vice to  
know him. He hath much land, and fertile : let a beast be

lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

*Osr.* Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty. 90

*Ham.* I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

*Osr.* I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

*Ham.* No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

*Osr.* It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

*Ham.* But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot, or my complexion—

*Osr.* Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, as 'twere,—I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head: sir, this is the matter— 101

*Ham.* I beseech you, remember—

*[Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.]*

*Osr.* Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

*Ham.* Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

*Osr.* Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

*Ham.* The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

*Osr.* Sir?



*Hor.* Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

*Ham.* What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

*Osr.* Of Laertes?

*Hor.* His purse is empty already; all's golden words are spent.

*Ham.* Of him, sir.

*Osr.* I know you are not ignorant—

*Ham.* I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir? 130

*Osr.* You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

*Ham.* I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

*Osr.* I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.

*Ham.* What's his weapon?

*Osr.* Rapier and dagger.

*Ham.* That's two of his weapons: but, well. 139

*Osr.* The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so: three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

*Ham.* What call you the carriages?

*Hor.* I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

*Osr.* The carriages, sir, are the hangers. 149

*Ham.* The phrase would be more germane to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides: I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this 'imponed,' as you call it?

*Osr.* The king, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

*Ham.* How if I answer 'no'? 160

*Osr.* I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

*Ham.* Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

*Osr.* Shall I redeliver you e'en so?

*Ham.* To this effect, sir, after what flourish your nature will. 170

*Osr.* I commend my duty to your lordship.

*Ham.* Yours, yours. [*Exit Osr.*] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

*Hor.* This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

*Ham.* He did comply with his dug before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same breed that I know the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out. 181

*Enter a Lord.*

*Lord.* My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osrice, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

*Ham.* I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

*Lord.* The king and queen and all are coming down.

*Ham.* In happy time. 190

*Lord.* The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play.

*Ham.* She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

*Hor.* You will lose this wager, my lord.

*Ham.* I do not think so: since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

*Hor.* Nay, good my lord,—

*Ham.* It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would perhaps trouble a woman. 201

*Hor.* If your mind dislike any thing, obey it. I will forestal their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

*Ham.* Not a whit; we defy augury: there is special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all; since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

*Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, and Lords, OSRIC, and other Attendants with foils and gauntlets; a table and flagons of wine on it.*

*King.* Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts Laertes' hand into Hamlet's.*]

*Ham.* Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong; But pardon't, as you are a gentleman. 211

This presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd

With sore distraction. What I have done,

That might your nature, honour and exception

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,

And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,

Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it. 220

Who does it, then? His madness: if't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.  
 Sir, in this audience,  
 Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil  
 Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,  
 That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,  
 And hurt my brother.

*Laer.* I am satisfied in nature,  
 Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most  
 To my revenge: but in my terms of honour 230  
 I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation,  
 Till by some elder masters of known honour  
 I have a voice and precedent of peace,  
 To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time,  
 I do receive your offer'd love like love,  
 And will not wrong it.

*Ham.* I embrace it freely,  
 And will this brother's wager frankly play.  
 Give us the foils. Come on.

*Laer.* Come, one for me.

*Ham.* I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance  
 Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night, 240  
 Stick fiery off indeed.

*Laer.* You mock me, sir.

*Ham.* No, by this hand.

*King.* Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin Hamlet,  
 You know the wager?

*Ham.* Very well, my lord;  
 Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

*King.* I do not fear it; I have seen you both:  
 But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

*Laer.* This is too heavy, let me see another.

*Ham.* This likes me well. These foils have all a length?  
[They prepare to play.]

*Osric.* Ay, my good lord. 250

*King.* Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.  
 If Hamlet give the first or second hit,

Or quit in answer of the third exchange,  
 Let all the battlements their ordnance fire ;  
 The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath ;  
 And in the cup an union shall he throw,  
 Richer than that which four successive kings  
 In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups ;  
 And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,  
 The trumpet to the cannoneer without, 260  
 The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,  
 'Now the king drinks to Hamlet.' Come, begin :  
 And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

*Ham.* Come on, sir.

*Laer.* Come, my lord. [*They play.*]

*Ham.* One.

*Laer.* No.

*Ham.* Judgement.

*Osr.* A hit, a very palpable hit.

*Laer.* Well ; again.

*King.* Stay ; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine ;  
 Here's to thy health.

[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*]

Give him the cup.

*Ham.* I'll play this bout first ; set it by awhile.  
 Come. [*They play.*] Another hit ; what say you ?

*Laer.* A touch, a touch, I do confess. 270

*King.* Our son shall win.

*Queen.* He's fat, and scant of breath.  
 Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows :  
 The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good madam !

*King.* Gertrude, do not drink.

*Queen.* I will, my lord ; I pray you, pardon me.

*King.* [*Aside*] It is the poison'd cup : it is too late.

*Ham.* I dare not drink yet, madam ; by and by.

*Queen.* Come, let me wipe thy face.

*Laer.* My lord, I'll hit him now.

*King.* I do not think't. 279

*Laer.* [*Aside*] And yet it is almost against my conscience.

*Ham.* Come, for the third, Laertes: you but dally;  
I pray you, pass with your best violence;  
I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

*Laer.* Say you so? come on. [*They play.*]

*Osr.* Nothing, either way.

*Laer.* Have at you now!

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*]

*King.* Part them; they are incensed.

*Ham.* Nay, come, again. [*The Queen falls.*]

*Osr.* Look to the queen there, ho!

*Hor.* They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord?

*Osr.* How is't, Laertes?

*Laer.* Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osrice;  
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery. 291

*Ham.* How does the queen?

*King.* She swoonds to see them bleed.

*Queen.* No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear  
Hamlet,—

The drink, the drink! I am poison'd. [*Dies.*]

*Ham.* O villany! Ho! let the door be lock'd:  
Treachery! Seek it out.

*Laer.* It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;  
No medicine in the world can do thee good;  
In thee there is not half an hour of life;  
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand, 300  
Unbated and evenom'd: the foul practice  
Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,  
Never to rise again: thy mother's poison'd:  
I can no more: the king, the king's to blame.

*Ham.* The point envenom'd too!  
Then, venom, to thy work. [Stabs the King.]

*All.* Treason! treason!

*King.* O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.

*Ham.* Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,  
Drink off this potion. Is thy union here? 310  
Follow my mother. [King dies.]

*Laer.* He is justly served;  
It is a poison temper'd by himself.  
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:  
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,  
Nor thine on me! [Dies.]

*Ham.* Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.  
I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!  
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,  
That are but mutes or audience to this act,  
Had I but time—as this fell sergeant, death, 320.  
Is strict in his arrest—O, I could tell you—  
But let it be. Horatio, I am dead;  
Thou livest; report me and my cause aright  
To the unsatisfied.

*Hor.* Never believe it:  
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:  
Here's yet some liquor left.

*Ham.* As thou'rt a man,  
Give me the cup: let go; by heaven, I'll have't.  
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,  
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!  
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart, 330  
Absent thee from felicity awhile,  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,  
To tell my story. [March afar off, and shot within.]  
What warlike noise is this?

*Osr.* Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,  
To the ambassadors of England gives  
This warlike volley.

*Ham.* O, I die, Horatio ;  
 The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit :  
 I cannot live to hear the news from England ;  
 But I do prophesy the election lights  
 On Fortinbras : he has my dying voice ; 340  
 So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,  
 Which have solicited. The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

*Hor.* Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet  
 prince :  
 And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest !  
 Why does the drum come hither ? [*March within.*

*Enter FORTINBRAS and the English Ambassadors,  
 with drums, colours, and Attendants.*

*Fort.* Where is this sight ?

*Hor.* What is it you would see ?  
 If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

*Fort.* This quarry cries on havoc. O proud death,  
 What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,  
 That thou so many princes at a shot 350  
 So bloodily hast struck ?

*First Amb.* The sight is dismal ;  
 And our affairs from England come too late :  
 The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,  
 To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd,  
 That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead :  
 Where should we have our thanks ?

*Hor.* Not from his mouth,  
 Had it the ability of life to thank you :  
 He never gave commandment for their death.  
 But since, so jump upon this bloody question,  
 You from the Polack wars, and you from England, 360  
 Are here arrived, give order that these bodies  
 High on a stage be placed to the view ;  
 And let me speak to the yet unknowing world  
 How these things came about : so shall you hear



Of carnal, bloody and unnatural acts,  
 Of accidental judgements, casual slaughters,  
 Of deaths put on by cunning and forced cause,  
 And, in this upshot, purposes mistook  
 Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I  
 Truly deliver.

*Fort.* Let us haste to hear it, 370  
 And call the noblest to the audience.  
 For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:  
 I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,  
 Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

*Hor.* Of that I shall have also cause to speak,  
 And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:  
 But let this same be presently perform'd,  
 Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance  
 On plots and errors happen.

*Fort.* Let four captains 380  
 Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;  
 For he was likely, had he been put on,  
 To have proved most royally: and, for his passage,  
 The soldiers' music and the rites of war  
 Speak loudly for him.  
 Take up the bodies: such a sight as this  
 Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.  
 Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

*[A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies;  
 after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.]*



## NOTES.

THE list of Dramatis Personæ was first prefixed to the play by Rowe in 1709. It is not found in the quartos or folios.

### ACT I.

#### *Scene I.*

In the quartos the play is not divided into acts and scenes. The division was first made in the folio of 1623, 'Actus Primus, Scæna Prima,' &c., but only as far as the second scene of the second act.

No indication of the place of each scene is given in the quartos and folios.

2. *me.* Emphatic.

3. *Long live the king!* The watchword for the night.

6. *upon your hour.* An unusual phrase, meaning 'just as your hour is about to strike.' Compare Richard III, iii. 2. 5, 'upon the stroke of four'; and in the same play, iv. 2. 115, 'upon the stroke of ten'; Tempest, v. 1. 41, 'on the sixth hour.' See also Measure for Measure, iv. 1. 17, 'much upon this time have I promised here to meet.' As Francisco speaks the clock is heard striking midnight.

7. For *now struck* Steevens guessed '*new struck*,' which Elze inserted in his text.

8. *much thanks.* For this use of 'much' with a noun of plural form, compare Luke xii. 19, 'Thou hast much goods laid up for many years.' 'Much,' like the A.S. *micel, mycel, mucel*, from which it is derived, was once used not only, as it is now, with abstract or collective nouns, but generally in the sense of 'great.' So in Richard III, iii. 7. 159, 'Yet so much is my poverty of spirit'; and Measure for Measure, v. 1. 534, 'Thy much goodness.' Abbott's Shakespeare Grammar, § 51.

*Ib. bitter cold.* Here 'bitter' is used adverbially to qualify the adjective 'cold.' So we have 'daring hardy' in Richard II, i. 3. 43. Where the combination is likely to be misunderstood, modern editors generally put a hyphen between the two words.

9. *sick at heart.* So Macbeth, v. 3. 19, 'I am sick at heart.' We have also in Love's Labour's Lost, ii. 1. 185, 'sick at the heart'; and Romeo and Juliet, iii. 3. 72, 'heart-sick groans.'

13. *rivals*. It is remarkable that the quarto of 1603 gives 'partners,' which is the meaning of 'rivals' here. 'Rivals' originally meant those who dwelt by the same 'rivus' or stream, having a right to use it for purposes of irrigation. Hence frequent contentions, and hence the metaphorical sense of the word, so much more used both in Latin and modern languages. This is the only passage of Shakespeare in which the word is employed in its earlier and rarer sense. He has however 'rivality,' meaning 'partnership,' in Antony and Cleopatra, iii. 5. 8, 'Cæsar, having made use of him in the wars 'gainst Pompey, presently denied him rivalry; would not let him partake in the glory of the action.' Ritson quotes from Heywood's Rape of Lucrece (sig. E<sub>2</sub> recto, ed. 1630),

'Tullia. Aruns, associate him.

Aruns. A riual with my brother in his honours.'

And The Tragedy of Hoffman,

'And make thee rival in those governments.'

15. *the Dane*, i. e. the chief Dane, the King of Denmark. So 'the Turk,' for 'the Grand Turk,' in Henry V, v. 2. 322. See i. 2. 44. So 'the French' = the French king, Bacon, Henry VII, p. 67 (ed. Spedding).

16. *Give you*, i. e. 'God give you.' This seems a more probable ellipsis than 'I,' which is suggested by Delius. We do not find the complete phrase 'I give you good night,' or 'I give you good morning,' but we have many examples of the other, as Romeo and Juliet, i. 2. 59, 'God gi' god-den,' i. e. 'God give good even,' and Love's Labour's Lost, iv. 2. 84, 'God give you good morrow, master parson.' Compare Beaumont and Fletcher's Knight of the Burning Pestle, epilogus, 'God give you good night.' We have examples of the same ellipsis in the phrases, 'Bless you,' 'Save you,' for 'God bless you,' 'God save you.' The omission of 'I' before such words as 'pray' is not a parallel case.

19. *A piece of him*. This is, of course, said jestingly. But the German editor Tschischwitz finds a deeper meaning. 'The philosophic Horatio,' he says, 'regards the personality of a man in his merely physical aspect as only a part of himself.' Another editor, Max Moltke, takes the same view. He supposes that Horatio, being a sceptic as to the reality of the Ghost, does not bring with him that belief which predominates in and fills the whole being of Bernardo and Marcellus, and thus the whole Horatio is not present but only a piece of him.

21. *What*. As in line 19, an exclamation, not interrogation. So Julius Cæsar, ii. 1. 1: 'What, Lucius, ho!'

23. *fantasy*, imagination. Both 'fantasy' and 'fancy' are commonly used by Shakespeare in this sense. The former is however found in the modern sense of 'whim,' 'caprice,' in Othello, iii. 3. 299:

'I nothing, but to please his fantasy.'

25. *seen of us.* The quarto of 1603 has 'seen by us.' This use of the preposition 'of' is frequent, as in 1 Corinthians xv. 5-8, 'seen of Cephas,' &c., and with other participles, Luke xiv. 8, and 1 Corinthians xi. 32.

29. *approve,* prove, attest, corroborate. See Merchant of Venice, iii. 2. 79 :

'What damned error, but some sober brow  
Will bless it and approve it with a text?'

33. *What we have two nights seen.* A comma is usually placed after 'story,' and the construction is as if 'let us tell you' had been used instead of 'let us assail your ears.' It is an instance of what the Greek grammarians called *σχῆμα πρὸς τὸ σημαίνόμενον*. But we may omit the comma, and take 'what . . . scen' as an epexegetis of 'story.' Compare Bacon's Advancement of Learning, p. 96, l. 24 : 'For princes in ancient time had, upon point of honour and policy both, journals kept, what passed day by day.'

36. *yond.* This word, used as an adjective or adverb, is spelt indifferently in either sense, 'yond' or 'yon.'

37. *illumine.* Not used elsewhere by Shakespeare. We have however 'relume,' Othello, v. 2. 13.

39. *beating,* striking. The quarto of 1603 has 'towling.'

42. *a scholar,* i. e. able to speak Latin, in which language the formulæ of exorcism prescribed by the Church were of course written. See Much Ado about Nothing, ii. 1. 264, 'I would to God some scholar would conjure her.' Reed quotes Beaumont and Fletcher's Night Walker, ii. 1,

'It grows still longer ;

'Tis steeple-high now . . . .

Let's call the butler up, for he speaks Latin,

And that will daunt the devil.'

'In like manner,' continues Reed, 'the honest butler in Mr. Addison's Drummer recommends the steward to speak Latin to the ghost in that play.' And in Guy Mannering, ch. xlvi, Dominic Sampson endeavours to exorcise Meg Merrilies by his Latin.

44. *harrows.* See i. 5. 16.

45. *It would be spoke to.* It wishes to be spoken to. There was, and is, a notion that a ghost cannot speak till it has been spoken to. For this form of the participle 'spoke,' see our note on Macbeth, i. 4. 3, and on Richard II, iii. 1. 13.

49. *sometimes.* Here used, as in Richard II, i. 2. 54, and v. 5. 75, in the sense of 'sometime.'

55. *on't,* of it. See King Lear, i. 4. 114 : 'Why, this fellow has banished two on's daughters.'

56. *might not*, could not. Compare Hamlet, i. 2. 141, ii. 2. 132, and Measure for Measure, ii. 2. 53 :

'*Ang.* Look, what I will not, that I cannot do.

*Isab.* But might you do 't and do the world no wrong?'

So 'may' for 'can,' Merchant of Venice, i. 3. 7, 'May you pleasure me?' Abbott, § 312.

57. *avouch* does not occur elsewhere as a substantive in Shakespeare. For substantives of similar formation, see our note on Richard II, i. 2. 2, and Abbott, § 451. See also 'cast' in line 73 of the present scene, 'hatch' and 'disclose' in iii. 1. 166, and 'remove,' iv. 5. 62.

61. *Norway*, i. e. the King of Norway, as in i. 2. 28. So also Tempest, i. 2. 109, 'absolute Milan,' i. e. Duke of Milan. So in the Histories 'France' and 'England' repeatedly.

62. *parle*, parley. See note on Richard II, i. 1. 192.

63. *sledded*, from 'sled.' Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives '*Train*, a sled, a drag or dray without wheelcs.' Of the Lappes, says Sir Giles Fletcher (Russe Commonwealth, p. 101, Hakluyt Soc.), 'Their travaile to and fro is upon sleds, drawn by the Olen deer.'

*Ib.* *Polacks*. The quartos have 'pollax,' the two earliest folios 'Pollax,' the third 'Polax,' the fourth 'Poleaxe.' Pope read 'Polack,' and Malone 'Polacks.' The word occurs four times in Hamlet. For 'the sledded Polacks' Moltke reads 'his leaded pole-axe.' But this would be an anticlimax, and the poet, having mentioned 'Norway' in the first clause, would certainly have told us with whom the 'angry parle' was held.

65. *jump*. So the quartos. The folios have 'just,' which means the same thing. We have the former word in Othello, ii. 3. 392,

'And bring him jump when he may Cassio find.'

And again in Hamlet, v. 2. 359,

'So jump upon this bloody question.'

*Ib.* *dead*. See Measure for Measure, iv. 2. 67 :

'Tis now dead midnight.'

67, 68. I know not what special line of thought to follow, but in the general tendency of my views, &c.

68. *in the gross*. Compare Merchant of Venice, iii. 2. 160, 'to term in gross.'

*Ib.* *scope*, field of view, range. Compare King John, v. 2. 122 :

'And, as you answer, do I know the scope

And warrant limited unto my tongue.'

70. *Good now*. Compare Winter's Tale, v. i. 19 :

'Now, good now,

Say so but seldom.'

72. *toils*, causes to toil. Many verbs which we only use as intransitive were used in Shakespeare's time also as transitive, e. g. 'to fear,' 'to learn,' 'to cease,' 'to remember,' and some which we only use as transitive were used as intransitive also, e. g. 'to show,' 'to want,' 'to look.' (All's Well that Ends Well, iii. 6. 115.)

*Ib. the subject*, used collectively for 'the people,' as in i. 2. 33. Compare Measure for Measure, iii. 2. 145: 'The greater file of the subject held the duke to be wise.' In a similar use we have 'the general,' Hamlet, ii. 2. 423.

73. *cast*, casting. See line 57, and compare 'impress,' line 75, and 'know' for 'knowing,' the reading of the folios in v. 2. 44.

74. *mart*, market, marketing, purchasing. See Taming of the Shrew, ii. 1. 329: 'And venture madly on a desperate mart,' where it means a mercantile expedition.

75. *impress*, impressment. Antony and Cleopatra, iii. 7. 37:  
'Ingross'd by swift impress.'

And Troilus and Cressida, ii. 1. 107: 'Ajax was here the voluntary and you as under an impress.'

77. *might* implies a still greater degree of uncertainty than 'may.'

*Ib. toward*, imminent, near at hand, ready. See v. 2. 349.

81. *even but now* occurs in Merchant of Venice, v. 1. 272.

83. *prick'd on*, spurred on. See Macbeth, i. 7. 26:

'I have no spur

To prick the sides of my intent.'

And Richard II, ii. 1. 207, and ii. 3. 78.

*Ib. emulate*, emulous. The word does not occur elsewhere in Shakespeare.

84. Pope, in order to make Shakespeare's lines as smooth as his own, frequently altered them unwarrantably. Here he changed 'combat' to 'fight.'

86. An Alexandrine. Observe the accent of 'compact.' Both as adjective and substantive the word is always accented by Shakespeare on the last syllable, with one exception, 1 Henry VI, v. 4. 163,

'And therefore take this compact of a truce.'

So also 'aspéct,' 'recórd,' are accented on the last. Disyllables, derived from the French, are generally accented by our older writers on the second syllable. See Earle's Philology of the English Tongue, pp. 131 sqq. (ed. 1871). Some of these in Shakespeare have a varying accent, as 'contract,' 'exile,' 'envy.' See our note on Richard II, i. 3. 283.

87. *law and heraldry*. A kind of hendiadys, meaning 'heraldic law,' 'jus fetiale.'

89. *seised of*, possessed of. A legal term. Cotgrave, under the word *Saisi*, gives 'seised, layed hold on, possessed of.'

90. *moiety*, from the French *moitié*, but used generally for any portion. Compare 1 Henry IV, iii. 1. 96, where it means 'a third':

'Methinks my moiety, north from Burton here,  
In quantity equals not one of yours.'

*Ib. competent*, corresponding, adequate. The only other passage of Shakespeare in which the word occurs is Twelfth Night, iii. 4. 270: 'His indignation derives itself out of a very competent injury.'

91. *gaged*, pledged. See our note on Merchant of Venice, i. 1. 130. Both 'gage' and 'wage' come from the Low Latin *vadiare* through the French.

93. *covenant*. This is the reading of the folios. The early quartos have 'comart,' which perhaps Shakespeare wrote, coining the word, and afterwards corrected. One of the later quartos, that of 1676, reads 'compact.'

94. *carriage . . . design'd*, purport of, or meaning borne by, the article drawn up, prescribed.

95. When a pause occurs in the middle of a line, it frequently takes the time of a defective syllable, as ii. 1. 91.

96. *unimproved*, probably means here 'untutored,' not chastened by the lessons of experience. This sense seems to accord best with the context, 'young,' 'hot,' 'full.' Nares takes it to mean 'unimpeached'; Staunton thinks that it is equivalent to 'unreproved,' 'unchecked,' 'ungovernable.' The quarto of 1603 has 'inapproved.' In the Geneva Version of 2 Timothy iv. 2, 'improve' is used in the sense of 'reprove': 'Improve, rebuke, exhorte with all long suffring and doctrine.'

*Ib. mettle*. See our note on Macbeth, i. 7. 73.

97. *skirts*, borders.

98. *Shark'd up*, gathered indiscriminately. By a natural metaphor from the voracious habits of the fish, 'to shark' is also used as a slang word for 'to thieve,' and 'sharker' for 'thief.' See Grose's Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue, s. v., and the old play of Sir T. More (Shakespeare Society ed. p. 27):

'For other ruffians, as their fancies wrought,  
With sealf same hand, sealf reasons, and sealf right,  
Woold shark on you, and men lyke ravenous fishes  
Woold feed on on another.'

*Ib. list*, muster-roll, catalogue.

*Ib. lawless*. So the quartos. The folios have 'landless.'

*Ib. resolute*s, desperadoes.

99. Theobald, offended probably by the pleonasm 'food and diet,' conjectured, 'For food; a d dieted to an enterprise'; but he did not insert this reading in his text.

100. Some enterprise that requires stomach, i. e. courage, in those that



would attempt it. For this sense of 'stomach,' compare Henry V, iv. 3. 35:

'That he which hath no stomach to this fight  
Let him depart.'

103. *compulsatory*. So the quartos. The folios have 'compulsive.' Neither word occurs elsewhere in Shakespeare. He uses however 'compulsive' in this play, iii. iv. 86.

107. *romage*. A nautical term for the thorough clearing out of a ship's cargo. It is probably derived, as Nares says, from 'room,' 'roomage.' Possibly Shakespeare had also 'roam' in his mind, when he added the word to 'post-haste.' See our note on 'the rooky wood,' Macbeth, iii. 2. 51.

108-125. Omitted in the folios.

108. *I think it be*. "Be" expresses more doubt than "is" after a verb of thinking. In 1 Henry IV, ii. 4. 573, the Prince thinks it certain that it is past midnight, the Sheriff thinks it may possibly be two o'clock:

"Prince. I think it is good morrow, is it not?

Sheriff. Indeed, my lord, I think it be two o'clock."

Very significant is this difference in the speech of the doubtful Othello,

"I think my wife be honest and think she is not;"

where the "is" is emphatic. Othello, iii. 3. 384. Abbott, § 299.

*Ib. no other but* occurs in ii. 2. 56.

109. *sort*, suit. See Much Ado about Nothing, v. 4. 7:

'I am glad that all things sort so well.'

112. *mote*, spelt *moth* in three of the early quartos. See Matthew vii. 3, 4, 5, Luke vi. 41, 42, and Love's Labour's Lost, iv. 3. 161, where quartos and folios read *moth*:

'You found his mote; the king your mote did see;

But I a beam do find in each of three.'

114. See Julius Cæsar, ii. 2. 18, 24:

'And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their dead;

. . . . .

And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.'

Shakespeare had probably in his mind the passage in North's Plutarch, 'Julius Cæsar,' p. 739 (ed. 1631): 'Certainly, destinie may easier be foreseene then auoided, considering the strange and wonderfull signes that were said to be seene before Cæsars death. For, touching the fires in the element, and spirits running vp and downe in the night, and also the solitary birds to be seene at noon daies sitting in the great market place, are not all these signes perhaps worth the noting, in such a wonderful chance as happened?' Plutarch also relates that a comet appeared after Cæsar's death for seven nights in succession and then

was seen no more, that the sun was darkened and the earth brought forth raw and unripe fruit.

116. *gibber*, to utter inarticulate sounds. Hence 'gibberish' for jargon.

The obscurity of the following line, which has been the cause of many conjectures, is probably due to the omission of some words.

118. *Disasters*, a term derived from the ancient astrology, and denoting the malevolent influences of the heavenly bodies. Here the reference is to the extraordinary paleness of the sun, mentioned by Plutarch, which was followed by the failure of the products of the earth. Milton had this astrological sense of the word in his mind when he wrote (*Paradise Lost*, i. 597),

'In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds.'

118, 119. *the moist star*, the moon, which governs the tides. See *Winter's Tale*, i. 2. 1 :

'Nine changes of the watery star.'

And again in the same play, i. 2. 427 :

'You may as well

Forbid the sea for to obey the moon !'

120. Referring perhaps to Matthew xxiv. 29.

121. *precurse*, only found here in Shakespeare, though he uses 'precursor' (*Phoenix and Turtle*, 6), and 'precursor' (*Tempest*, i. 2. 201). It includes everything that preceded and foreshadowed the fierce events that followed.

122. *harbingers*. See note on *Macbeth*, i. 4. 45.

123. *omen*, here used for the calamity which the omen indicated. Dr. Farmer quotes from Heywood's *Life of Merlin* :

'Merlin well vers'd in many a hidden spell,  
His countries omen did long since foretell.'

Compare 'ominous,' ii. 2. 439.

124. *demonstrated*. This word is used by Shakespeare with the accent sometimes on the first and sometimes on the second syllable.

125. *climatures*, possibly used for those who live under the same climate. Otherwise it would be better to read 'climature' with Dyce. The French *climature* appears to be a modern word in that language, for it is not found in Cotgrave, and Littré gives no early example of its use.

127. *I'll cross it, though it blast me*. It was an ancient superstition that any one who crossed the path of a ghost was subject to its baleful influence. Blakeway, who gives this explanation, quotes from Lodge's *Illustrations of British History*, iii. p. 48, the following passage referring to the Earl of Derby, who was supposed to have been bewitched : 'On Fryday, in his chamber at Knowsley, aboute 6 of clocke at nighte, there

appeared a man, talle, as hee thoughte, who twise crossed him swyftly, and when he came to the place where hee sawe him, hee fell sycke.'

134. *happily*, haply. See Hamlet, ii. 2. 372, and Measure for Measure, iv. 2. 98,

'Happily,

You something know.'

*Ib. foreknowing*, foreknowledge. See v. 2. 44.

137. For the belief that spirits kept watch over hidden treasure compare 2 Henry IV, iv. 3. 125: 'And learning a mere hoard of gold kept by a devil.' And Marlowe, Jew of Malta, ii. (p. 153, ed. Dyce, 1862):

'And speak of spirits and ghosts that glide by night

About the place where treasure hath been hid.'

Again, Marston, The Insatiate Countesse, iv. (Works, ed. Halliwell, iii. 177):

'The ghosts of misers, that imprison'd gold

Within the harmlesse bowels of the earth.'

See also Heywood, Hierarchie of the blessed Angells, p. 570.

139. Cock crows. This stage direction is omitted in the folios, and placed in the quartos after l. 138.

140. *partisan*, a halbert. Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives 'Pertuisane, a Partisan, or leadingstaffe.' See Romeo and Juliet, i. 1. 80:

'Clubs, bills, and partisans! strike!'

143. *majestical*, majestic. See ii. 2. 296.

150. *morn*. So the quartos. The folios have 'day.'

151. *lofty* and *shrill* are both adverbs to *sounding*.

154. *extravagant*, roving. See Othello, i. 1. 137:

'In an extravagant and wheeling stranger.

*Ib. erring*, wandering. In Wiclif's version of Jude 13 the planets are called 'erringe sterris.' Compare also the phrase in the General Confession, 'We have *erred* and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep.'

155. *confine*, bound, limit. See Tempest, iv. 1. 121, where it occurs with the same accent:

'Spirits, which by mine art

I have from their confines call'd to enact

My present fancies.'

And King John, iv. 2. 246:

'This kingdom, this confine of blood and breath.'

In Richard II, i. 3. 137, the accent is on the first syllable.

156. *probation*, proof. Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives 'Probation: f. A probation, prooffe.' Compare Othello, iii. 3. 365:

'So prove it,

That the probation bear no hinge nor loop

To hang a doubt on.'

161. *dare stir*. The reading of the earlier quartos. The folios have 'can walk.'

162. *strike*. Compare Titus Andronicus, ii. 4. 14:  
'If I do wake, some planet strike me down.'

And Coriolanus, ii. 2. 117:

'With a sudden reinforcement struck  
Corioli like a planet.'

We have still 'moon-struck.'

163. *takes*, infects, as Herne the hunter, in Merry Wives of Windsor, iv. 4. 32:

'And there he blasts the tree and takes the cattle.'

The adjective 'taking,' for infections, occurs in Lear, ii. 4. 166:

'Strike her young bones,

You taking airs, with lameness!'

And 'taking' as a substantive in the sense of infection is found in Lear, iii. 4. 61: 'Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking!'

164. *gracious*, full of grace and goodness. Compare v. 2. 85:  
'Thy state is the more gracious.' And King John, iii. 4. 81:

'There was not such a gracious creature born.'

166. *russet*, grey, ash-coloured.

173. *loves*. For this use of the plural see Hamlet, i. 2. 15, 251, 254, ii. 2. 14; Macbeth, iii. 1. 122; and our note on Richard II, iv. 1. 315.

175. *conveniently*. The reading of the quarto of 1603 and of the folios; the other quartos have 'convenient.'

### Scene II.

2. *befitted*. To mend the metre Pope read 'and that it fitted'; and Steevens conjectured, 'and as befitted.'

4. *brow of woe*, mourning brow. See Love's Labour's Lost, v. 2. 754; 'the mourning brow of progeny.' For similar phrases, see iv. 6. 19; King Lear, i. 4. 306, 'brow of youth' = youthful brow; Merchant of Venice, ii. 8. 42, 'mind of love' = loving mind; and 1 Henry IV, iv. 3. 83, 'brow of justice.'

8. *sometime*. The reading of the quartos. The folios have 'sometimes,' as in i. 1. 49. Compare Colossians i. 21, iii. 7.

9. *jointress*, dowager, a widow possessing a jointure.

*Ib. to*. So the quartos. The folios read 'of.'

10. *defeated*, disfigured, marred. See Othello, i. 3. 346, 'Defeat thy favour with an usurped beard'; and Comedy of Errors, v. 1. 299, 'defeatures.'

11. Compare Winter's Tale, v. 2. 80-82: 'She had one eye declined for the loss of her husband, another elevated that the oracle was fulfilled.'

*Ib. an . . . a.* So the quartos. The folios have *one . . . one*.

*Ib. auspicious*, cheerful, betokening happiness.

*Ib. dropping*, shedding tears, not 'cast down,' as Malone says.

13. *dole*, grief. So in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 1. 283: 'What dreadful dole is here!' The word means the expression of grief, lamentation, in *As You Like It*, i. 2. 139.

14. *barr'd*, excluded, thwarted. See *Cymbeline*, i. 1. 82:

'The pangs of barr'd affections.'

15. *wisdoms*. See note on i. 1. 173.

17. *that you know*, that which you already know. This omission of the relative is too frequent to need examples.

18. *supposal*, notion. Not used by Shakespeare elsewhere.

20. *disjoint and out of frame*. Compare *Macbeth*, iii. 2. 16: 'Let the frame of things disjoint.' Compare, for the form of the participle, 'deject,' *Hamlet*, iii. 1. 154; 'infect,' *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3. 188. See Abbott, § 342.

21. With this imaginary superiority for his only ally. The quartos read 'this,' the folios 'the.'

22. *He*. The pronoun is here superfluous, as in ii. 1. 84. For a similar use, see *Deuteronomy* i. 30, and *John* i. 18.

*Ib. pester*, trouble. See note on *Macbeth*, v. 2. 23.

23. *Importing*, having for import. See iv. 7. 80, and v. 2. 21.

24. *bands*. So the quartos. The folios read 'bonds,' which means the same thing. See *Richard II*, i. 1. 2, 'According to thy oath and band.'

27. *writ*. Used by Shakespeare both for preterite and participle.

29. *impotent*, invalid. See *Acts* iv. 9, and xiv. 8.

*Ib. bed-rid*. Mr. Earle gives the following ingenious but doubtful etymology of this word: 'The Saxons called a sorcerer "dry": . . . out of this word a verb was made, "be-drian," to bewitch or fascinate. . . . The participle of this verb, "be-drida," a disordered man, has, by a false light of cross analogy, generated the modern "bed-ridden," a half-sister of "hag-ridden."' (Philology of the English Tongue, p. 22.) The etymology commonly given explains it of one who is carried, or rides on a bed. 'Bed-rid' occurs in *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 412.

31. *gait*, proceeding. The word is here used metaphorically. Elsewhere in Shakespeare it means 'walk' or 'mode of walking.'

*Ib. in that*, inasmuch as.

33. *subject*. See i. 1. 72.

37. *delated*. So the quartos. The imperfect quarto of 1603 has 're-

lated'; the folios 'dilated.' According to Minshew, 'delate' is only another form of 'dilate,' meaning 'to speak at large.' Compare 'defused' and 'diffused.' Bacon uses 'delate' in the sense of 'carry,' 'convey.'

38. *allow*. In strict grammar this should be 'allows,' but the verb by a careless construction agrees in number with the nearest noun. So in Julius Cæsar, v. 1. 33 :

'The posture of your blows are yet unknown.'

And in Comedy of Errors, v. 1. 70 :

'The venom clamours of a jealous woman  
Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.'

Again Lear iii. 6. 4 :

'All the powers of his wits have given way to his impatience.'

39. Let your haste shew that you perform your duties well.

41. *nothing*, used adverbially, as in Twelfth Night, ii. 3. 104 :

'She is nothing allied to your disorders.'

And in Coriolanus, i. 3. 111 : 'They nothing doubt prevailing.'

44. *the Danc*. See i. 1. 15.

45. *lose your voice*, speak in vain. So in Richard II, ii. 1. 30, 'that breath wilt thou lose.' And in the present scene, line 118 :

'Let not thy mother lose her prayers.'

47. *native to*, connected by nature with. 'Native' has a similar sense in All's Well that Ends Well, i. 1. 238, 'like native things.' Compare also iv. 7. 179 of this play.

56. *pardon*, leave to depart. So in iii. 2. 285 : 'Your pardon, and my return shall be the end of the business.' It is equivalent to 'leave' in Cymbeline, i. 4. 46 : 'By your pardon, sir, I was then a young traveller.' So also in 3 Henry VI, iv. 1. 87.

58-60. *wrung . . . consent*. Omitted in the folios.

59. *laboursome*, laborious. Compare Cymbeline, iii. 4. 167 :

'Forget

Your laboursome and dainty trims.'

And Sir T. More, Utopia, p. 83 (ed. Arber) : 'The more laboursome sciences be committed to the men.'

62. *Take thy fair hour*, 'carpe diem.'

63. The sixth quarto puts a semi-colon after 'graces,' and some editors have adopted this punctuation. With the punctuation of the text the meaning is, 'Let your best accomplishments employ the time as you please.' We have 'best graces' in Henry VIII, iii. 2. 138.

64. *cousin*. This word was used to denote 'uncle' and 'aunt,' 'nephew' and 'niece,' as well as in the modern sense. Compare Twelfth Night, i. 3. 5, where it means 'niece,' and iii. 4. 68, where it means 'uncle.'

65. Hamlet says that he is more than a mere kinsman, on account of Claudius' incestuous marriage with his mother, and less than kind, because he hates him for the same reason. Dyce quotes from W. Rowley's *Search for Money*, 1602, p. 5, ed. Percy Society: 'I would he were not so neere to us in kindred, then sure he would be neerer in kindnesse.'

67. Farmer supposes that a quibble is intended between 'sun' and 'son.'

68. *nighted*, dark as night. In *King Lear*, iv. 5. 13, 'his nighted life' is applied to the blinded Gloucester.

69. *Denmark*, the King of Denmark. See i. 1. 61.

70. *vailed*, cast down. See *Merchant of Venice*, i. 1. 28:

'Vailing her high top lower than her ribs.'

*Ib.* *lids*, for 'eyelids,' occurs in *Cymbeline*, ii. 2. 20.

72. *lives*. The second and following folios read 'live.'

74, 75. We have 'common' and 'particular' opposed to each other in the very difficult, and probably corrupt, passage of 2 *Henry IV*, iv. 1. 94-96; and 'particular' opposed to 'general' in *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3. 340-342.

77. *inky*, applied to 'brows' in *As You Like It*, iii. 5. 46.

81. *haviour*, demeanour, aspect. This word, like 'behaviour,' from which it comes, is commonly used to signify carriage, bearing, conduct.

82. *shapes*. So the quartos. The folios have 'shewes.'

83. *denote*, characterize, describe. So in *Othello*, iv. 1. 290, and *Merry Wives of Windsor*, iv. 6. 39.

*Ib.* Pope changed 'indeed' to 'may' for the sake of the metre, and for the same reason he omitted 'Hamlet,' in line 87, and 'lost, lost,' in line 90.

87. *commendable* has the accent on the first syllable, as in *Coriolanus*, iv. 7. 51. It has the accent on the second in *Merchant of Venice*, i. 1. 111.

90. *bound*. For a similar ellipsis compare iii. 3. 62.

92. *obsequious*, suitable to obsequies. So *Titus Andronicus*, v. 3. 152:

'To shed obsequious tears upon this trunk.'

*Ib.* *persever*. Compare *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2. 237:

'Ay, do; persever, counterfeit sad looks.'

The word is always accented on the second syllable by Shakespeare.

93. *condolement*, grief.

95. *incorrect to heaven*, unsubdued to the will of heaven.

99. *any the most*. Similarly we find 'one the wisest prince,' in *Henry VIII*, ii. 4. 49. See Abbott, § 18.

105. *he* is ungrammatical.

107. *unprevailing*, unavailing. So in *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 3. 60, 'prevail' is used in the sense of 'avail.'

112. *impart* has no substantive following it. In order to correct the grammar, Theobald proposed to read 'with 't,' for 'with,' in line 110, and Badham suggested 'and with nobility no less of love.' Johnson supposed that 'impart' meant 'impart myself.'

113. Ritson suggests that Shakespeare knew of Wittenberg from the story of Dr. Faustus, the scene of which is laid there; Luther, however, had made it famous all over the world. The mention of it here is a great anachronism, for the University of Wittenberg was not founded till the year 1502.

114. *retrograde*, originally an astrological term.

115. *bend you*, incline. So we have 'bent' for 'inclination,' ii. 2. 30.

118. *lose her prayers*. See line 45 of this scene.

124. By 'sits to my heart' is probably meant 'sits close to my heart.' Delius, however, would connect 'to' with 'smiling.'

127. *Rouse* is said to come from the Danish *ruus*, a surfeit in drinking. Its meaning here seems to be a 'deep draught,' as in i. 4. 8, and *Othello*, ii. 3. 66. See also Ben Jonson's *Silent Woman*, iii. 2, p. 420, ed. Gifford. Compare v. 2. 285-289, 294.

*Ib. bruit*, report loudly. See *Macbeth*, v. 7. 22, and our note.

129. *too too*. Compare *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ii. 4. 205 :

'O, but I love his lady too too much.'

Hunter (*Illustrations of Shakespeare*, ii. 217, 218) gives several examples of this emphatic repetition of 'too.'

130. *resolve*. Compare *Timon of Athens*, iv. 3. 442 :

'The sea's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves  
The moon into salt tears.'

Nares quotes from Lyly's *Euphues*, p. 38 : 'I could be content to resolve myself into teares, to rid thee of trouble.'

132. *canon*, law enforced by religious sanctions. Compare *Timon of Athens*, iv. 3. 60 : 'Religious canons, civil laws, are cruel.'

134. *uses*, customs and habits of life.

137. *merely*, absolutely. Compare *Tempest*, i. 1. 59 :

'We are merely cheated of our lives by drunkards.'

140. *Hyperion* is frequently mentioned by Shakespeare with the accent always on the antepenultimate, as in Chapman's *Homer*, Hymn to the Sun, 5 :

'For the far-fam'd Hyperion took to wife  
His sister Euryphaessa.'

Farmer (*Learning of Shakespeare*, ed. 2, p. 37) says that Spenser has the same error of quantity. See *Henry V*, iv. 1. 292; *Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 3. 207; *Timon of Athens*, iv. 3. 184; *Titus Andronicus*,



v. 2. 56; and Hamlet, iii. 4. 56. Hyperion is by Shakespeare identified with the sun, as in Homer's *Odyssey*, i. 8. In Latin of course, as in Greek, the penultimate is long.

*Ib. to a satyr*, compared to a satyr. So in *Cymbeline*, iii. 3. 26, 'No life to ours,' and Hamlet, i. 5. 52, and iii. 1. 52.

141. *might not*, i. e. could not, because his love ruled all his feelings.

*Ib. betwem*. Connected by Wedgwood with the Dutch *betaemen*. The signification is to 'permit,' 'allow.' It occurs in Golding's Translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, published in 1587:

'Yet could he not beteeme

The shape of any other bird then eagle for to seeme;' where it translates 'dignatur,' bk. x. line 157; and in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, ii. 8. 19:

'So would I, (said th' enchaunter) glad and faine  
Beteeme to you this sword.'

It is found in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 1. 131:

'Belike for want of rain, which I could well  
Beteem them from the tempest of my eyes,'

where Delius takes it in the same sense as in this passage of Hamlet. But there is probably at least a reference to the other sense, 'pour out.' It is quite in Shakespeare's manner to employ a word which has a double sense. See 'romage,' i. 1. 107.

147. *or ere*. This reduplication is found in *Tempest*, i. 2. 11, and 'or ever,' in line 183 of this scene. ~ So we have 'and if' (an if).

150. *discourse of reason*, the reasoning faculty. See *Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 2. 116:

'Or is your blood  
So madly hot that no discourse of reason,  
Nor fear of bad success in a bad cause,  
Can qualify the same?'

And in the same sense 'discourse' is used alone in this play, iv. 4. 36. So 'discourse of thought,' *Othello*, iv. 2. 153. Compare also Plutarch's *Morals*, trans. Holland, p. 566: 'They compare and resemble brave warriors in the highest degree, unto beasts, who in that case are much more excellent than men: the reason is this, for that choler and heat of courage is (as it were) the steele, the file, yea, the very whetstone that giveth the edge unto fortitude; and this doe brute beasts bring with them pure and simple unto fight; whereas in you, it being alway mingled and tempered with some discourse of reason, as if wine were delaied with a little water, it is gone and to seeke in the greatest dangers, and faileth at the very point of opportunity, when it is most to be used.'

155. *flushing*. The verb 'flush' is still used transitively, meaning, to fill with water.

155. *galled*, sore with weeping. Compare Richard III, iv. 4. 53 :

‘That reigns in galled eyes of weeping souls;’

and Troilus and Cressida, v. 3. 55 :

‘Their eyes o’ergalled with recourse of tears.’

157. *dexterity*, not ‘adroitness,’ but ‘celerity.’ So in 1 Henry IV, ii. 4. 286, ‘with as quick dexterity.’ And Heywood, *The Brazen Age* (Works, iii. 180) :

‘With what a swift dexterity he parts  
The mutinous waves.’

158. *nor it cannot*. Observe the double negative, so frequent in older English writers. The latest instance of its use we have noticed in any careful writer, is in Congreve’s *Love for Love*, iv. 4.

163. *I’ll change that name with you*, you shall be my friend, and I will be your servant.

164. *make you*. Compare *As You Like It*, i. 1. 31, ‘Now sir, what make you here?’ and *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 266.

179. *upon*, used adverbially. Compare *Measure for Measure*, iv. 6. 14 :

‘And very near upon  
The duke is entering.’

180. *baked-meats*. We have ‘bakemeats’ in Genesis xl. 17. The word is printed with a hyphen in the edition of the Bible of 1611. It was customary to make a feast at funerals. Malone quotes Hayward’s *Life and Raigne of King Henrie the Fourth*, 1599, to the effect that Richard II was ‘obscurely interred, without the charge of a dinner for celebrating the funeral.’

182. *dearest foe*. ‘Dear’ is used of whatever touches us nearly either in love or hate, joy or sorrow. See 1 Henry IV, iii. 2. 123 :

‘Which art my near’st and dearest enemy;’

and Richard II, i. 3. 151 :

‘The dateless limit of thy dear exile.’

See our note on the passage.

183. *or ever*. See line 147.

188. A lax construction for ‘upon whose like I shall not look again.’

190. *who?* ‘Who’ is used by Shakespeare for the accusative case very generally. Editors have often corrected what they held to be an error. See *Winter’s Tale*, v. 1. 109 :

‘Make proselytes

Of who she bid but follow.’

See also other examples in our notes on *Macbeth*, iii. 1. 122, and *Merchant of Venice*, i. 2. 21.

192. *season*, qualify, temper. See *Merchant of Venice*, iv. 1. 197 :

'When mercy seasons justice.' And again in this play, i. 3. 81, ii. 1. 28, iii. 2. 184.

*Ib.* *admiration*, astonishment, as in iii. 2. 294, and Rev. xvii. 6.

193. *attent*, attentive. It only occurs in one other passage of Shakespeare, *Pericles*, iii. (Gower) line 11. It was then a rare word, and was altered to 'attentive' in the fourth quarto and third folio. 'Attentive' is also the reading of the quarto of 1603. Spenser uses 'attent' as a substantive, *Fairy Queen*, vi. 9. 37:

'And kept her sheepe with diligent attent.'

*Ib.* *deliver*, relate. So in line 209, and v. 2. 370. Compare *Tempest*, v. 1. 313, 'I'll deliver all.'

198. *dead*. See i. 1. 65.

*Ib.* *vast*. This is the reading of the fifth and sixth quartos and of the quarto of 1603. The second, third and fourth quartos and the first folio read 'wast,' spelt 'waste' in the later folios. 'Vast' here means emptiness, the time when no living thing is seen. Compare *Tempest*, i. 2. 327: 'That vast of night.' We have it also in the sense of an empty space in *Winter's Tale*, i. 1. 33, 'Shook hands as over a vast.' 'Wast,' i. e. 'waste,' is in origin the same word as 'vast' and has the same sense. In ii. 2. 232, the word 'waist' is spelt 'wast' in the quartos and 'waste' in the folios, and Malone, in the present passage, so spells the word, quoting from Marston's *Malecontent*, ii. 5. (1604), 'waste of night.' There is of course an easy pun on the two words, but it is not probable that Shakespeare meant to make one in this place.

200. *at point exactly*, at all points. See *Richard II*, i. 3. 2:

'*Mar.* Is Harry Hereford arm'd?

*Aum.* Yea, at all points.'

See our note on *Macbeth*, iv. 3. 135.

*Ib.* *cap-a-pe*, cap-à-pied, from head to foot. See *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 761: 'I am courtier cap-a-pe.'

204. *distill'd*. The first folio reads 'bestil'd.' The word 'distill' was used in a wider sense than at present. It is here equivalent to 'melt,' as in a passage quoted by Dyce from Sylvester's '*Du Bartas*,' p. 221, ed. 1641:

'Melt thee, distill thee, turne to wax or snow.'

207. *impart they did*. This inversion gives formality and solemnity to the speaker's words.

216. *it*. The earlier quartos and folios read 'it,' and so doubtless Shakespeare wrote. In the Cambridge and Globe editions we originally printed 'its' (the reading of the later quartos and folios) in deference to the universal practice of previous editors. The quarto of 1603, followed by Staunton, has 'his,' which was the usual form of the possessive case in

Shakespeare's time. 'Its' was however coming into use, and occurs ten times in the first folio. 'It,' as the possessive, occurs sixteen times.

217. *as*, as if. Compare Hamlet, ii. 1. 91, and King Lear, iii. 4. 15 :

'Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand  
For lifting food to 't?'

See also Othello, iii. 3. 77, and Antony and Cleopatra, iii. 13. 85.

230. *beaver*. The front part of the helmet, supposed to be from 'bavière,' a bib. Another derivation is from 'bevoir,' because it was lifted up to enable the wearer to drink. Compare 2 Henry IV, iv. 1. 120 :

'Their beavers down,  
Their eyes of fire sparkling through bars of steel.'

And Spenser, Fairy Queen, iv. 6. 25 :

'Which yeilded, they their bevers up did reare,  
And shew'd themselves to her such as indeed they were.'

Sometimes it designates the helmet itself, as in 1 Henry IV, iv. 1. 104.

The beaver is figured in Fairholt's 'Costume in England,' p. 365.

*Ib. constantly*, steadily, firmly. So Julius Cæsar, v. 1. 92 :

'To meet all perils very constantly.'

237. *like*, likely. See ii. 2. 341. This use of 'like' for 'likely' has become provincial. Congreve (Way of the World, iv. 4) puts it into the mouth of the rustic Sir Wilfull.

243. *warrant*. Spelt 'warnt' in the quartos, and doubtless so pronounced, as it still is provincially.

245. *gape*, says Staunton, 'perhaps here means to howl, roar,' as in Henry VIII, v. 4. 3: 'Ye rude slaves, leave your gaping.' And so some interpret 'a gaping pig,' Merchant of Venice, iv. 1. 54.

248. *tenable*. So the quartos. That of 1603 spells it 'tenible.' The folio has 'treble,' a mere misprint. The sense is: 'Regard it as a secret which ought to be kept.'

249. *hap*, happen.

251, 254. *loves*. See note on i. 1. 173.

254. *your loves, as mine to you*. Hamlet courteously disclaims the rank of master, and requests them to regard him as an equal and friend. Compare line 163.

256. *doubt*, suspect, fear. So Romeo and Juliet, v. 3. 44 :

'His looks I fear and his intents I doubt.'

### Scene III.

3. *convoy*, means of conveyance. Compare All's Well that Ends Well, iv. 4. 10 :

'To which place  
We have convenient convoy.'

6. *a fashion*, which is changeable and temporary. Compare Lyly's *Euphues*, ed. Arber, p. 81: 'Tush Philantus was liked for fashion sake, but neuer loued for fancie sake.'

*Ib. a toy in blood*, a pastime and fancy, not a deep affection. Compare *Othello*, i. 3. 269:

'Light-wing'd toys  
Of feather'd Cupid.'

For 'blood,' see iii. 2. 64.

7. *primy nature*, nature in its spring-time.

8. To make the metre regular, Rowe read 'tho' sweet,' Capell 'sweet but not.' In Shakespeare a pause in sense often supplies the place of a syllable. And as Abbott says, § 484, 'Monosyllables containing diphthongs and long vowels, since they naturally allow the voice to rest upon them, are often so emphasized as to dispense with an unaccented syllable.' So *Macbeth*, i. 2. 5:

'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend.'

9. *suppliance*, means probably, as Mason says, 'an amusement to fill up a vacant minute'; what supplies, or fills up, a minute.

12. *thews*,-sinews, as in *Julius Cæsar*, i. 3. 81, and 2 *Henry IV*, iii. 2. 277.

12, 13. The mention of 'this temple,' i. e. the body (see *John* ii. 21), suggests the word 'service.'

15. *cautel*, craft, deceit. The word is only once used elsewhere by Shakespeare, viz. in *A Lover's Complaint*, line 303. So 'cautelous' means crafty, deceitful, in *Coriolanus*, iv. 1. 33:

'Be caught  
With cautelous baits and practice.'

*Ib. besmirch*. *Henry V*, iv. 3. 110:

'Our gayness and our guilt are all besmirch'd.'

16. *The virtue of his will*, his virtuous intention.

18. *For . . . birth*. This line is omitted in the folios.

19. *unvalued*, of no worth. In *Richard III*, i. 4. 27, it means 'invaluable.'

21. *safety* must be pronounced as a trisyllable. The folios have 'sanctity.' Hanmer adopted Theobald's conjecture, 'sanity.'

22, 23. The prince's choice of a wife must be limited by the approval and acquiescence of his people.

25, 27. You must believe his promises only so far as his position allows him to fulfil them.

30. *credent*, believing, credulous. Not used by Shakespeare elsewhere in this sense. It means 'credible' in *Winter's Tale*, i. 2. 142.

*Ib. list his songs*. So *Julius Cæsar*, v. 5. 15, 'List a word': and *King Lear*, v. 3. 181, 'List a brief tale.'

40. *buttons*, buds, like 'boutons' in French.

42. *blastments* does not occur again in Shakespeare. Coleridge uses it in the last scene of *Zapolya*, p. 265: 'Shall shoot his blastments on the land.'

44. In the absence of any tempter, youth rebels against itself, i. e. the passions of youth revolt from the power of self-restraint; there is a traitor in the camp.

*Ib.* *though none else near*. The substantive verb is similarly omitted in *Cymbeline*, iv. 4. 23.

46. *good my brother*. So 'good my lord' frequently.

47. *ungracious*, graceless. So *1 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 490.

49. *Whiles like a*. The folios have 'Whilst like a.' The quartos have 'Whiles a.' Perhaps we should read with Seymour 'While as a.'

50. *primrose path*. Compare *Macbeth*, ii. 3. 21.

51. *recks not his own rede*. So Burns, *Epistle to a Young Friend* :

'And may you better reckon the rede  
Than ever did the adviser.'

For 'reck' see *Cymbeline*, iv. 2. 154.

*Ib.* *rede*, counsel. Spelt 'reed' in the quartos, and 'reade' or 'read' in the folios. Not used elsewhere in Shakespeare. See Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, 1216: 'Ther was noon other remedy ne reed.'

*Ib.* *fear me not*, fear not for me. Compare iv. 5. 101, and *Merchant of Venice*, iii. 5. 3, 'I promise ye, I fear you,' and our note on that passage.

56. *sits*. Compare *Merchant of Venice*, i. 1. 18:

'Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind.'

And *Henry V*, ii. 2. 12:

'Now sits the wind fair, and we will aboard.'

And *Richard II*, ii. 1. 265:

'We see the wind sit sore upon our sails.'

59, &c. Mr. Rushton, *Shakespeare's Euphuism*, pp. 45, 46, has pointed out many striking resemblances between the precepts of Polonius and the advice of Euphues to Philautus.

59. *character*, used with the accent either on the first or second syllable. The word as a substantive is found with the latter accent in *Richard III*, iii. 1. 81:

'I say without characters fame lives long.'

And the verb in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ii. 7. 4:

'Who art the table wherein all my thoughts  
Are visibly character'd and engraved.'

60. *unproportion'd*, unsuitable, not in harmony with the occasion.

*Ib.* *his*, for 'its.' See note on i. 2. 216.

61. *vulgar*, common. See Twelfth Night, iii. 1. 135 :

‘For ’tis a vulgar proof  
That very oft we pity enemies;’

where ‘vulgar proof’ = common experience ; as ‘vulgar tongue’ = common language.

62. *and their adoption tried*. The proper construction would be ‘and whose adoption thou hast tried.’ Delius regards it as a participle parenthesis, but ‘tried’ appears to depend on ‘hast.’ Compare i. 2. 90.

63. *Grapple*. Compare Macbeth, iii. 1. 106 :

‘Grapples you to the heart and love of us.’

*Ib. hoops*. Pope read ‘hooks,’ and this makes the figure suggested by ‘grapple’ the very reverse of what Shakespeare intended ; for grappling with hooks is the act of an enemy and not of a friend.

64. *do not dull thy palm*, that is, as Johnson explains it, do not make thy palm callous by shaking every man by the hand. Compare Cymbeline, i. 6. 106 :

‘Join gripes with hands  
Made hard with hourly falsehood.’

*Ib. entertainment*. Compare Timon of Athens, i. 1. 45 :

‘Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hug  
With amplest entertainment.’

65. *comrade*, with the accent on the last syllable, as in 1 Henry IV, iv. 1. 96 :

‘And his comrades, that daff’d the world aside.’

In King Lear, ii. 4. 213, the accent is on the first :

‘To be a comrade with the wolf and owl.’

67. *opposed*, opponent. Changed in the latter quartos to ‘opposer.’

69. *censure*, opinion. See i. 4. 35, and iii. 2. 25.

74. There is some corruption in this line, which no proposed emendation has satisfactorily removed. The quarto of 1603 reads

‘Are of a most select and generall chiefe in that.’

That of 1604,

‘Or of a most select and generous, chiefe in that.’

The folios,

‘Are of a most select and generous cheff in that.’

Rowe, ‘Are most select and generous, chief in that.’

And this reading seems at least as good as any other which has been suggested, unless, as we have conjectured in the preface to the Cambridge Shakespeare, vol. viii, and as Mr. R. G. White reads, the lines should run

‘And they in France of the best rank and station,  
Are most select and generous in that.’

77. *husbandry*, economy. Compare Macbeth, ii. 1. 4 :

‘There’s husbandry in heaven :  
Their candles are all out.’

81. *season*, ripen. Compare Merchant of Venice, v. 1. 107:  
 ‘How many things by season season’d are  
 To their right use and true perfection.’

83. *tend*, attend, wait. See iv. 3. 44.

85, 86. Compare Massinger, Great Duke of Florence, iii. 1:  
 ‘What you deliver to me shall be lock’d up  
 In a strong cabinet, of which yourself  
 Shall keep the key.’

94. *so ’tis put on me*, so it has been urged, impressed upon me. A similar use of the phrase ‘put upon’ occurs in Twelfth Night, v. i. 70:

‘But in conclusion put strange speech upon me;’

that is, addressed me in strange terms. See also Macbeth, iv. 3. 239; Measure for Measure, ii. 2. 133, iv. 2. 120.

101. *green*, immature. See King John, iii. 4. 145:

‘How green you are and fresh in this old world!’

102. *Unsifted*, untried, inexperienced.

*Ib. circumstance*, a collective word.

107. *Tender*, regard. See Two Gentlemen of Verona, iv. 4. 145:

‘I thank you, madam, that you tender her.’

And Richard III, ii. 4. 72.

109. *Running*. This reading, proposed by Collier, was first adopted by Dyce. The quartos have ‘Wrong,’ the folios, ‘Roaming.’ The reading in the text is more in accordance with the figure in the previous line. Compare Chapman, Dramatic Works, i. 65:

‘Heres a poore name run out of breath quickly!’

112. *go to*, an exclamation of contempt and impatience. See Macbeth, v. 1. 51.

114. *almost all the holy*. The folios omit the words ‘almost’ and ‘holy,’ which have the appearance of being insertions for the sake of the metre.

115. *springes*, snares. See v. 2. 290. Compare Gosson, Apologie for the Schoole of Abuse, p. 72 (ed. Arber): ‘When Comedie comes vpon the Stage, Cupide sets vpp a Springe for Woodcockes, which are entangled ere they descrie the line, and caught before they mistruste the snare.’

116. *prodigal*, adjective for adverb. Compare Macbeth, ii. 3. 143:  
 ‘Which the false man does easy.’ See Abbott, § 1.

117. Pope filled up the line by reading ‘Oh, my daughter,’ and Capell by ‘gentle daughter.’

119. *a-making*. Compare ‘a-killing’ in Othello, iv. 1. 188, and see Abbott, § 24 (2).

121. *something*, somewhat. See Macbeth, iii. 1. 132: ‘something from the palace.’



*Ib. scater.* 'Scant' only occurs elsewhere as an adjective, in v. 2. 271.

122. *entreatments.* Not elsewhere found in Shakespeare. Johnson interprets it as 'company, conversation'; like 'entertainment' in line 64. But 'parley' in the next line seems to point to the sense of preliminary negotiations, and so solicitations.

126. *in few*, that is, in few words, in short. See *Tempest*, i. 2. 144:

'In few, they hurried us aboard a bark.'

127. *brokers*, go-betweens, negotiators. See *Lover's Complaint*, line 173.

128. *that dye.* The folios read 'the eye,' using the word in the same sense in which it occurs in the *Tempest*, ii. 1. 55: 'With an eye of green in it'; where it signifies a dash of colour.

*Ib. investments*, vestures. See 2 *Henry IV*, iv. 1. 45:

'Whose white investments figure innocence.'

129. *implorators*, solicitors.

130. *Breathing*, whispering. Compare *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iii. 1. 239:

'If so, I pray thee, breathe it in mine ear.'

And *King John*, v. 7. 65:

'You breathe these dead news in as dead an ear.'

And *Hamlet*, ii. 1. 31, 44.

*Ib. baruds.* Theobald's conjecture. The old reading is 'bonds.'

133. *slander*, abuse or disgrace.

*Ib. moment.* So the folios and earlier quartos. The fourth and subsequent quartos read 'moments.' If the reading of the text be correct, 'moment' must be taken as an adjective. This is very common when the first substantive is the name of a place, as 'Lethe wharf,' i. 5. 33.

135. *come your ways.* See iii. 1. 129, 'Go thy ways.' 'Ways' in this phrase, which is still common, is probably a relic of the old genitive.

#### Scene IV.

1. *shrewdly*, keenly, piercingly.

2. *eager*, sharp, from Fr. *aigre*. See i. 5. 69, and Chapman's *Homer*, *Iliad*, xi. 231:

'The eager anguish did approve his princely fortitude.'

3. *hour.* Here, as often, a disyllable.

8. *wake*, feast late. For a night-feast the word is used in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 2. 318: 'At wakes and wassails.'

*Ib. rouse.* See note on i. 2. 127.

9. *wassail*, revelry; from A.S. *wæs hæl*, 'be of health.' See note on *Macbeth*, i. 7. 64.

9. *up-spring*, the English rendering of the German 'Hüpfanf': according to Elze the last and consequently the wildest dance at the old German merry-makings. It occurs in Chapman's *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, [p. 83. ed. Elze, 1867:]

'We Germans have no changes in our dances,  
An Almian and an up-spring, that is all.'

Some interpreters of the present passage take 'up-spring' as a substantive in the sense of 'up-start,' which Pope actually substitutes for it.

11. Compare i. 2. 125-127, and v. 2. 258-262. The Danish drinking customs were familiar in England. Douce quotes from *Cleveland's Fuscara, or The Bee Errant*:

'Tuning his draughts with drowsie hums  
As Danes carowse by kettle-drums.'

12. *triumph*. In bitterest irony.

17-38. *This heavy-headed revel . . . scandal*. Omitted in the folios.

17. In *Othello*, ii. 3. 79, the Dane is mentioned as a deep drinker with the German and the Hollander. In the present passage there is probably an indirect reflection on the drinking habits of the English, which are directly censured in the same scene of *Othello*. Compare *Beaumont and Fletcher, The Captain*, iii. 2:

'*Lod*. Are the Englishmen  
Such stubborn drinkers?

*Piso*. Not a leak at sea  
Can suck more liquor: you shall have their children  
Christen'd in mull'd sack, and at five years old  
Able to knock a Dane down.'

18. *tax'd*, censured. See *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3. 197:

'They tax our policy and call it cowardice.'

19. *clepe*, call; from A.S. *cleopian*. See *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 1. 23, and *Macbeth*, iii. 1. 93, with our note.

*Ib. swinish phrase*. Could Shakespeare have had in his mind any pun upon 'Sweyn,' which was a common name of the Kings of Denmark?

20. *addition*, title. See *Macbeth*, i. 3. 106.

21. *at height*, to the utmost. Compare *Much Ado about Nothing*, iv. 1. 303, 'In the height.'

22. *The pith . . . attribute*. Johnson explains this to mean 'The best and most valuable part of the praise that would be otherwise attributed to us.' 'Attribute' is used in the sense of 'reputation,' as in *Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 3. 125:

'Much attribute he hath, and much the reason  
Why we ascribe it to him.'

24. *mole of nature*, natural blemish. See i. 2. 4.

25. Malone quotes from Lucrece, 538, 9 :

‘For marks descried in men’s nativity  
Are nature’s faults, not their own infamy.’

26. *his*, for ‘its.’ See note on i. 2. 216.

27. *complexion*. In the old medical language there were four complexions or temperaments; the sanguine, melancholy, choleric, and phlegmatic.

30. *plausive*, pleasing, popular. See All’s Well that Ends Well, i. 2. 53 :

‘His plausive words  
He scatter’d not in ears.’

32. *nature’s livery, or fortune’s star*. A defect which is either natural or accidental.

33. *Their*. Theobald’s correction for ‘His’ of the quartos, which after all Shakespeare may have inadvertently written.

34. *undergo*, endure, support. Johnson explains the line, ‘As large as can be accumulated upon man.’ Compare Measure for Measure, i. 1. 24 :

‘If any in Vienna be of worth  
To undergo such ample grace and honour.’

35. *censure*, opinion. See i. 3. 69.

36, 37. *the dram . . . doubt*. We leave this hopelessly corrupt passage as it stands in the two earliest quartos. The others read ‘ease’ for ‘eale,’ and modern writers have conjectured for the same word, ‘base, ill, bale, ale, evil, ail, vile, lead.’ For ‘of a doubt’ it has been proposed to substitute ‘of worth out,’ ‘soil with doubt,’ ‘oft adopt,’ ‘oft work out,’ ‘of good out,’ ‘of worth dout,’ ‘often dout,’ ‘often doubt,’ ‘oft adoubt,’ ‘oft debase,’ ‘over-cloud,’ ‘of a pound,’ and others.

40. *spirit of health*, a healed, or saved, spirit. See note on i. 2. 4.

43. *questionable*, inviting question, or conversation. Compare Macbeth, i. 3. 43 :

‘Live you? or are you aught  
That man may question?’

In As You Like It, iii. 2. 393, ‘an unquestionable spirit’ means a spirit averse to conversation.

47. *canonized*. Used with the same accent in King John, iii. 1. 177, and iii. 4. 52; and so always. The sacred rites of the funeral were a kind of canonization.

*Ib. hearsed*, entombed. See Ben Jonson’s Epitaph on the Countess of Pembroke: ‘Underneath this marble hearse.’

48. *cerements*. ‘Cerecloth’ occurs in Merchant of Venice, ii. 7. 51, where see our note. The quarto of 1603 here reads ‘ceremonies.’ As this copy is probably derived from short-hand notes taken at the play,

it would seem to show that 'cerements' was pronounced as a trisyllable. The first folio however has 'cerments.' 'Sepulchre' is usually, but not always, accented by Shakespeare on the first syllable.

49. *inurn'd*. This is the reading of the folios, the first having 'enurn'd.' The quartos, including that of 1603, have 'interr'd.' The change can scarcely have been made by any one but the poet himself. 'Inurn'd' is used in a general sense for 'interred,' as 'urn' for 'grave,' in Henry V, i. 2. 228.

52. *complete*. Accented on the first syllable, as in Measure for Measure, i. 3. 3, and on the second in King John, ii. 1. 433.

53. *glimpses*, the glimmering light of the moon struggling through the clouds.

54. *we* ought in strict grammar to be 'us.'

*Ib.* *fools of nature*, playthings of nature, who are completely under her influence. Compare Measure for Measure, iii. 1. 11:

'Merely thou art Death's fool.'

55. *disposition*. See Hamlet, i. 5. 172, iii. 1. 12, and our note on Macbeth, iii. 4. 113.

56. *reaches*. Compare Hamlet, ii. 1. 64, and 2 Henry VI, i. 2. 46: 'Above the reach or compass of thy thought.' The plural is here used as in i. 1. 173.

59. *impartment*, communication.

61. *waves*. So the quartos, as in l. 78. The folios have 'wafts' in both. Either word means 'beckon,' and both are used by Shakespeare. So we have a double form of the verb 'graff' and 'graft.' In line 68 all the copies read 'waves.'

*Ib.* *removed*, remote, retired. See As You Like It, iii. 2. 360: 'so removed a dwelling.'

64. *should* is sometimes used, as the German *sollen*, with reference to the statement or opinion of another. Compare Midsummer Night's Dream, iii. 2. 122: 'Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?' And As You Like It, iii. 2. 182: 'But didst thou hear without wondering how thy name should be hanged and carved upon these trees?' And Macbeth, i. 2. 45:

'You should be women,  
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret  
That you are so.'

65. *fee*, from Anglo-Saxon *feoh* (*vieh* in German), meaning first 'cattle,' then 'money,' like *pecus*, *pecunia* in Latin, for 'the importance of cattle in a simple state of society early caused an intimate connection between the notion of cattle and of money or wealth.' (Wedgwood, Dictionary of English Etymology, s. v.) Cowell, in his Law Dictionary,

derives it from 'fief.' Whatever its origin, it comes to mean 'property,' 'estate.' 'A pin's fee' is 'a pin's worth.'

71. *beetles*, projects, leans over. So 'beetle brows,' Romeo and Juliet, i. 4. 32.

73. *deprive*, here used with the accusative of the thing, not, as usual, of the person. Lettsom quotes Lucrece, 1186:

'Tis honour to deprive dishonour'd life.'

And 1752:

'That life was mine which thou hast here deprived.'

Compare Stow, Annals (1601), p. 1408: 'Depriving all sense and motion.' And Heywood, Golden Age, iii. 14:

'Or else all generative power and appetite  
Deprive me.'

*Ib. sovereignty of reason*, the control which reason exercises over a sane mind. With 'your sovereignty of reason,' compare 'your cause of distemper' in iii. 2. 303.

75. *toys*, idle fancies.

82. *artery*. Spelt 'arture' in the quartos, 'artire' in the folios. Compare Drayton's Elegies, p. 298 (ed. 1631): 'Shewing the artyre.' Cotgrave however always spells it 'artery.'

83. *Nemean lion's*. Compare Love's Labour's Lost, iv. 1. 90:

'Thus dost thou hear the Nemean lion roar.'

*Ib. nerve*, muscle. So Coriolanus, i. 1. 142:

'The strongest nerves and small inferior veins.'

85. *lets me*, hinders me. Compare Romans i. 13, and 2 Thessalonians ii. 7.

89. *Have after*, like 'have with you.' See Richard III, iii. 2. 92: 'Come, come, have with you.' In Foxe's narrative, Latimer said to Ridley on their way to the stake, 'Have after, as fast as I can follow.'

90. *it*. That is, the issue.

*Ib. Nay*, i. e. let us not leave it to heaven, but do something ourselves.

### Scene V.

6, 7. *Speak . . shalt hear*. These words are quoted in Fletcher's Woman-hater (Act ii. sc. 1), written about 1607.

11. *to fast*. 'And moreover the misese of helle shal be in defaute of mete and drink.' (Chaucer, Parson's Tale, ed. Tyrwhitt.)

16. *harrow up*. We have had 'harrow' before, i. 1. 44.

19. *an end*. The quarto of 1603 reads 'on end,' and so Pope altered the text. In such adverbs as 'ajar,' 'asleep,' 'a-tiptoe,' 'a' is an abbreviation of the preposition 'on.' See Abbott, §§ 24, 182. Compare 'on

brood,' iii. 1. 165 of this play, and 'on sleep,' Acts xiii. 36. See also Eastwood and Wright, Bible Word-book, p. 2.

20. *porpentine*. This is the form constantly used by Shakespeare, as Comedy of Errors, iii. 1. 116. There and elsewhere it has been altered by editors to 'porcupine.'

21. *eternal blazon*, revelation of eternity. It may be however that Shakespeare uses 'eternal' for 'infernal' here, as in Julius Cæsar, i. 2. 160, 'the eternal devil,' and Othello, iv. 2. 130, 'Some eternal villain.' 'Blazon' is an heraldic term meaning the verbal description of armorial bearings, hence used for description generally, as in Much Ado about Nothing, ii. 1. 307. The verb 'blazon' occurs in Cymbeline, iv. 2. 170.

27. *in the best*, at best. So 'in the least' for 'at least,' Lear i. 1. 194.

29. *Haste* is used transitively in 1 Henry IV, iii. 1. 143.

32. *shouldst*. We should now say 'wouldst.' There is a similar instance in Merchant of Venice, i. 2. 100.

33. *rots*. -The folios have 'rots,' perhaps rightly. See Antony and Cleopatra, i. 4. 47.

*Ib. Lethe wharf*. See i. 3. 133. 'Lethe' occurs in 2 Henry IV, v. 2. 72 :

'May this be wash'd in Lethe and forgotten?'

37. *process* has here perhaps the sense of an official narrative, coming nearly to the meaning of the French *procès verbal*. By a proclamation dated 18 Aug. 1553, it was forbidden without licence 'to prynte any bookes, matter, ballet, ryme, interlude, processe or treatyse.' The English Drama and Stage (Roxburghe Library), p. 17. So also in The Merchant of Venice, iv. 1. 274 :

'Tell her the process of Antonio's end.'

38. *Rankly*, grossly. So 'rank,' ii. 1. 20.

42. *adulterate*, adulterous; like 'emulate,' i. 1. 83, for 'emulous.' See Lover's Complaint, 175.

50. *decline*, turn aside. Compare Comedy of Errors, iii. 2. 44 :

'Your weeping sister is no wife of mine,  
Nor to her bed no homage do I owe :  
Far more, far more to you do I decline.'

So also Tennyson, Locksley Hall, line 43 :

'Having known me, to decline

On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine.'

52. *To*, compared to. See i. 2. 140.

*Ib. those of mine*. An inaccurate construction, like one found in Bacon's Advancement of Learning, i. 7, § 6, p. 55, ed. Wright : 'And for his government civil, though he did not attain to that of Trajan's,' &c.

53. *virtue* is not followed by a verb. Compare a similar construction in Lucrece, line 1208:

‘My life’s foul deed, my life’s fair end shall free it.’

See Abbott, § 417.

56. *sate*. So the folios. The quartos have ‘sort,’ a misprint, for the quarto of 1603 has ‘fate.’

60. *of*. So the quartos. The folios and the quarto of 1603 read ‘in.’ A somewhat similar use of the preposition occurs in Love’s Labour’s Lost, i. 1. 43: ‘And not be seen to wink of all the day.’ ‘An after dinner’s sleep’ is mentioned in Measure for Measure, iii. 1. 33. Compare Tempest, iii. 2. 95.

61. *secure*, unsuspecting, unguarded, like the Latin *securus*. Compare Judges xviii. 7: ‘They dwelt careless after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure.’ And 1 Henry VI, ii. 1. 11:

‘This happy night the Frenchmen are secure.’

‘Secure’ is accented, as here, on the first syllable, in Othello, iv. 1. 72.

62. *hebenon*. So the folios. The quartos (including that of 1603) have ‘hebona,’ which Shakespeare may have first written and subsequently corrected. In Marlowe’s Jew of Malta, written about 1590, ‘the juice of hebon’ is mentioned as a deadly poison, Act iii. p. 164, ed. Dyce, 1858. The word is generally explained as meaning ‘ebony,’ but we cannot find any evidence that the sap of this tree was considered poisonous. ‘Ebony’ is spelt ‘ebene’ in Holland’s Pliny, and ‘heben’ in Spenser. Pliny (xxv. 4, Holland’s translation, 1601), speaking of the juice of henbane says: ‘An oile is made of the seed thereof, which if it be but dropped into the eares, is ynough to trouble the braine.’ Whence Grey supposed that ‘hebenon’ is for ‘henebon,’ by which Shakespeare meant ‘henbane.’ Steevens quotes Drayton’s Barons’ Wars, bk. iii. st. 7,

‘The poysning hebane and the mandrake drad.’

In the Transactions of the New Shakspeare Society, 1880–2, p. 21, Dr. Nicholson gives reasons for identifying the ‘hebenon’ of Shakespeare and the ‘heben’ of Spenser with the yew (German *eiben*) which ‘was accounted, from ancient times, the most deadly of poisons.’

64. *distilment*, distillation, which Shakespeare elsewhere uses. See Sonnet v. 9, and The Merry Wives of Windsor, iii. 5. 115.

68. *sudden vigour*, rapid and violent action. For ‘vigour’ Staunton conjectures ‘rigour.’

*Ib. posset*. The quartos here have ‘possesse.’ This is the only passage where Shakespeare uses ‘posset’ as a verb.

69. *eager*. Here used in the original sense of the French word. Cotgrave gives: ‘Aigre; Eagre, sharpe, tart, biting, sower.’ So, metaphorically, 3 Henry VI, ii. 6. 68: ‘Vex him with eager words.’

71. *instant*, instantaneous, as in ii. 2. 499.

*Ib. tetter.* Cotgrave explains the French *dartre* by 'tettar, or Ring-worme.' See *Troilus and Cressida*, v. 1. 27.

*Ib. bark'd*, covered as with a bark or crust. The folios have 'bak'd.'

72. *lazar-like.* 'Lazar' is equivalent to 'leper,' and is of course derived from 'Lazarus,' Luke xvi. Compare Henry V, i. 1. 15.

75. *dispatch'd*, deprived, as the quarto of 1603 reads. The author would scarcely have used it with 'crown' and 'queen' if he had not first used it with 'life.' The phrase 'dispatch of life' does not occur again; we have however 'dispatch his nighted life,' in *King Lear* iv. 5. 12.

77. *Unhousel'd*, without the Eucharist. The word comes from the Anglo-Saxon *husel*, the Eucharist, whence the verb *huslian*, and participle *gehuslud*. Compare *King Arthur*, vol. iii. p. 350 (ed. T. Wright), of the death of Launcelot: 'So when hee was howseled and eneled, and had all that a christian man ought to have, hee prayed the bishop that his fellowes might beare his body unto Joyous-gard.' Weston quotes as a parallel passage, Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1071: ἄμοιρον ἀκτέριστον, ἀνόσιον νέκυν.

*Ib. disappointed*, unprepared, unequipped for the last journey. 'Appointment' in the sense of preparation for death is found in *Measure for Measure*, iii. 1. 60:

'Therefore your best appointment make with speed.'

And 'appointed' in the sense of 'equipped' occurs in *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 603:

'It shall be so my care

To have you royally appointed as if

The scene you play were mine.'

*Ib. unaneled*, without having received extreme unction. See the quotation given above in the note on 'Unhousel'd.' Nares quotes from *Sir Thomas More* (Works, p. 345): 'The extreme vnccion or anelynge and confirmacion, he sayed be no sacramentes of the church.'

80. Given by Rann and some other editors to Hamlet.

83. *luxury*, lust, lewdness. Compare *Measure for Measure*, v. 1. 506:

'One all of luxury, an ass, a madman.'

Shakespeare never uses the word in its modern sense. Compare 'luxurious' in *Macbeth*, iv. 3. 58.

89. *matin*, morning. We can find no other instance of this word in the sense here used.

90. *pale*, used transitively only in this passage of Shakespeare.

94. *instant*, instantly.

95. *stiffly*. So the folios. The quartos have 'swiftly,' doubtless a misprint.



96. *memory*. See our notes on Macbeth, i. 7. 65-67.

97. Here Hamlet puts his hand upon his head.

98. *table*, tablet. Compare All's Well that Ends Well, i. 1. 106 :

'To sit and draw

His arched brows, his hawking eye, his curls,  
In our heart's table.'

99. *fond*, foolish. See Merchant of Venice, iii. 3. 9 :

'I do wonder,

Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond  
To come abroad with him at his request.'

*Ib. records*. Accented on the second syllable in Twelfth Night, v. 1.

253.

100. *saws*, sayings, proverbs, maxims. 'See As You Like It, ii. 7. 156 :

'Full of wise saws and modern instances.'

*Ib. pressures*, impressions as of a seal. Compare iii. 2. 23.

107. *my tables*. These words are repeated in the folio. 'Tables,' or 'table-book,' means a memorandum book. Compare 2 Henry IV, iv.

i. 201 :

'And therefore will he wipe his tables clean

And keep no tell-tale to his memory.'

Bacon uses the expression 'a pair of tables,' Adv. of Learning, i. 7, § 25.

110. *word*, watch-word, order of the day.

116. *Hillo*, &c. Expressions of encouragement which the falconer used to his hawks. See Latham's Falconry, p. 47 (ed. 1615), 'crying with a lowd voyce, *Howe, howe, howe*.'

119. *Good my lord*. So ii. 1. 70.

121. *once*, ever. See Antony and Cleopatra, v. 2. 50 :

'If idle talk will once be necessary.'

125. *needs . . . come*. For the omission of 'to' before the infinitive see Abbott, § 349.

127. *circumstance*, circumlocution. See iii. 1. 1, and Merchant of Venice, i. 1. 154 :

'To wind about my love with circumstance.'

132. *go pray*. Compare the phrases 'go sleep,' Tempest, ii. 1. 190 ; 'go kindle,' Two Gentlemen of Verona, ii. 7. 19 ; 'go watch,' Merry Wives of Windsor, i. 4. 7 ; 'go seek,' Hamlet, ii. 1. 101 ; and 'come view,' Merchant of Venice, ii. 7. 43.

133. *whirling*. Spelt 'wherling' in the quarto of 1603, 'whurling' in the other quartos, 'hurling' in the folios.

136. Some have supposed that there is a reference here to St. Patrick's Purgatory, but this does not seem probable.

147. *Upon my sword*. Because the hilt of the sword was in the form of a cross. So Winter's Tale, ii. 3. 168, 'Swear by this sword.'

Compare 1 Henry IV, ii. 4. 371: 'Swore the devil his true liegeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook.'

150. *truepenny*. Said by Collier to be originally a mining term, applied to indications in the soil where ore was to be found. 'A familiar phrase for an honest fellow.' (Johnson.) Steevens quotes from Marston's *Malecontent*, produced 1604 [iii. 3]:

'Illo, ho, ho, ho! arte there, olde true penny?'

Marston evidently had Hamlet in his mind. And so probably had Congreve, when he makes a son irreverently address his father as 'old truepenny,' *Love for Love*, iv. 10.

161. In the folios the Ghost is made to say 'Sweare by his sword.'

163. *pioner*. So the old copies. It is generally altered by editors to 'pioneer,' which means the same thing. So we have 'pioner,' *Henry V*, iii. 2. 92, and *Othello*, iii. 3. 346. Compare 'enginer,' *Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 3. 7, and *Hamlet*, iii. 4. 203; 'mutiner,' *Coriolanus*, i. 1. 256; and 'muleter,' *Antony and Cleopatra*, iii. 7. 36.

The levity displayed by Hamlet is at once the natural expression of a mind oppressed with horror (like the jests of dying men and hysterical laughter), and is also a cunning device to deceive his friends as to the purport of his communication with the Ghost.

165. 'And therefore receive it without doubt or question.' This seems to be the sense of the passage, not, as Warburton says, 'Keep it secret,' nor, as Mason says, 'Seem not to know it.'

167. *your*. For this colloquial and familiar use see *Hamlet*, iii. 2. 3, iv. 3. 24, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, ii. 7. 29: 'Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun, so is your crocodile.'

172. *put on*, assume. See *King Lear*, i. 3. 12:

'Put on what weary negligence you please.'

*Ib. antic*, disguised, as in *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 5. 58;

'What dares the slave

Come hither, cover'd with an antic face,

To flear and scorn at our solemnity?'

'Antic,' or 'antique,' as a substantive, means a grotesque figure, such as appeared in a masque or a pageant.

174. *encumber'd*, folded, intertwined.

176. *an if*, a reduplication, like 'or ere,' i. 2. 147.

177. *list*, pleased. The preterite.

178. *giving out*, profession. Compare *Measure for Measure*, i. 4. 54: 'His givings-out were of an infinite distance from his true-meant design.'

*Ib. to note*. The 'to' is superfluous in the construction, which follows 'never shall,' line 173. Compare *Coriolanus*, v. 3. 123, and *Beaumont and Fletcher*, *The Prophetess*, iv. 4:

'Thou would'st entreat thy prisoners like their births  
And not their present fortune; and to bring 'em  
Guarded into thy tent.'

And Merry Wives of Windsor, iv. 4. 57:

'Then let them all encircle him about  
And, fairy-like, to pinch the unclean knight.'

186. *friending*, friendliness. The word is not found elsewhere in Shakespeare.

187. *lack*, be wanting. So Genesis xviii. 28: 'Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty.'

## ACT II.

### Scene I.

3. *shall*, used where we should now say 'will.' Compare iii. 2. 300, and Macbeth, iii. 4. 57:

'If much you note him,  
You shall offend him and extend his passion.'

*Ib.* *marvellous*, adjective for adverb. Compare i. 3. 116.

4. *inquire*, inquiry. So Pericles, iii. (Gower, 22):

'Fame answering the most strange inquire.'

So 'retire' is used as a substantive, King John, ii. 1. 326, and elsewhere. So 'converse,' ii. 1. 42. See note on i. 1. 57.

7. *me*, enclitic, here having the sense of the dative. Compare Merchant of Venice, ii. 2. 115: 'Give me your present to one Master Bassanio.'

*Ib.* *Danskers*, Danes.

8. *keep*, live. See our note on Merchant of Venice, iii. 3. 19. Compare Troilus and Cressida, iv. 5. 278:

'In what place of the field does Calchas keep?'

10. *encompassment and drift*, scope and tendency. We have 'drift of circumstance,' iii. 1. 1.

11. *more nearer*. For this double comparative see Merchant of Venice iv. 1. 251:

'How much more elder art thou than thy looks!'

It occurs very frequently. In the present passage 'nearer' is corrected to 'neere' in the second folio, 1632, showing that the double comparative was then growing obsolete.

11, 12. *nearer Than*. The quartos and first folio read 'nearer Than,' 'than' being spelt in those days indifferently 'than' or 'then.' The second folio has 'Than,' and Pope, following a late quarto, that of 1676, reads 'near. Then,' &c. Taking the old punctuation, the sense

seems to be 'Approach indirectly more near to your object than you could by direct and special questions.'

12. *It* 'is sometimes used indefinitely, as the object of a verb, without referring to anything previously mentioned, and seems to indicate a pre-existing object in the mind of the person spoken of.' (Abbott, § 226.) Here the object is in the mind of the speaker.

13. *Take you*, assume.

19. *put on him*, attribute to him. See line 29, and compare Macbeth, ii. 4. 26 :

'Which puts upon them  
Suspicion of the deed.'

20. *rank*, gross. See i. 5. 38.

22. *slips*. Compare Othello, iv. 1. 9: 'Tis a venial slip.' Perhaps Shakespeare had the other sense of the word in his mind, as in 2 Henry IV, iii. 2. 214: 'graft with crab-tree slip.'

28. *season*. Compare i. 2. 192.

31. *breathe*, whisper. See i. 3. 130, and line 44 of this scene.

*Ib.* *quaintly*, skilfully. Compare Merchant of Venice, ii. 4. 6 :

'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd.'

32. *taints*, blemishes. Compare Antony and Cleopatra, v. 1. 30 :

'His taints and honours  
Waged equal with him.'

34. *unreclaimed*, untamed. See Romeo and Juliet, iv. 2. 47 :

'Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd.'

Cotgrave has 'Adomestiquer : To tame, reclaim, make gentle.' A term of falconry.

35. *Of general assault*, such as generally attack youth.

38. The quartos read 'wit.' The folios have 'warrant.' Either makes good sense. A 'fetch of wit' is a cunning contrivance: a 'fetch of warrant,' a justifiable contrivance, or rather one which has been found effectual. With the latter compare 'passages of proof' in iv. 7. 111. In King Lear, ii. 4. 90, 'fetches' mean prettexts, excuses.

42. *converse*, conversation. See Othello, iii. 1. 40, where 'converse' is accented as here.

*Ib.* *him* should be 'he whom.' So Coriolanus, v. 6. 5 :

'Him I accuse  
By this the city ports hath entered.'

See Abbott, § 208.

47. *addition*. See i. 4. 20.

51. *leave*, leave off. So 2 Henry VI, iii. 2. 333 :

'You bade me ban, and will you bid me leave?'

58. *a'*, frequently used familiarly for 'he.'

80. 1.] 200123. 155  
*Ib. o'ertook*, i. e. by intoxication. One of the many euphemisms for drunk.

*Ib. rouse*. See i. 2. 127.

60. *a house of sale*. Compare Perieles, iv. 6. 84, 'a creature of sale.'

64. *of reach*, far-sighted. See i. 4. 56. Compare Love's Labour's Lost, iv. 2. 30, 'we of taste and feeling.' For 'reach' see Naunton, *Fragmenta Regalia* (ed. Arber), p. 36: 'But that after the Queen knew Parries intent, why she should then admit him to private discourse, and Walsingham to suffer it, . . . was a piece of reach and hazard beyond my apprehension.'

65. *windlasses*, winding and circuitous ways. So Golding's Ovid, quoted in the *Edinburgh Review*, July 1869:

'The winged God beholding them returning in a troupe,  
Continued not directly forth but gan me down to stoupe,  
And fetched a windlasse round about.'

Compare also Lyly's *Euphues and his England* (ed. Arber), p. 270: 'I now fetching a windlesse, that I myght better haue a shoote, was pre-  
uented with ready game.'

*Ib. assays of bias*, a metaphor from the game of bowls, in which the player does not aim at the Jack (or 'mistress,' as it was called in Shakespeare's time) directly, but in a curve, so that the bias brings the ball round. 'Assays of bias' are therefore indirect attempts.

66. *indirections*, indirect methods. We find out indirectly, says Polonius, what we wish to know directly. See Julius Cæsar, iv. 3. 75:

'To wring  
From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash,  
By any indirection.'

68. *you have me*, you understand me. Compare iii. 2. 90.

71. 'Judge of his temptations by your own,' or, possibly, 'Conform your own conduct to his inclinations.'

76. *God*. So the quartos. Changed here, as elsewhere in the folio of 1623, to 'heaven,' in pursuance of the Act to restrain the abuses of Players, quoted in our note to *The Merchant of Venice*, i. 2. 99.

77. *closet*. So the quartos. The folios have 'chamber.' 'Closet' was used for a private apartment. Hence the king's private secretary was called 'clerk of the closet.' We have the word again, iii. 2. 298, and King John, iv. 2. 267.

78. *unbraced*, unfastened. Compare Julius Cæsar, i. 3. 48:

'And thus unbraced, Casca, as you see,  
Have bared my bosom to the thunder-stone.'

And in the same play, ii. 2. 262:

'Is it physical  
To walk unbraced and suck up the humours  
Of the dank morning?'

80. *down-gyved to his ancle*, hanging like gyves, or fetters, about his ancle.

82. *purport*, accented on the last syllable.

84. *he* repeated. 'When a proper name is separated from its verb by an intervening clause, then, for clearness, the redundant pronoun is often inserted.' (Abbott, § 242.) See i. 2. 22. In order to complete the line Pope read, 'thus he comes before me.'

90. *perusal*, examination. So Romeo and Juliet, v. 3. 74: 'Let me peruse this face.' Compare also Richard II, iii. 3. 53, and Troilus and Cressida, iv. 5. 232.

91. *As*, as if. See i. 2. 217.

*Ib.* Pope read 'Long time stay'd he so'; but see i. 1. 95.

92. *shaking of*. Compare 3 Henry VI, ii. 5. 3:

'The shepherd blowing of his nails.'

And King Lear, ii. 1. 41.

95. *As*. So the quartos. The folios have 'That.' For 'as' thus used compare Love's Labour's Lost, ii. 1. 174:

'You shall be so received

As you shall deem yourself lodged in my heart.'

*Ib.* *bulk*. Cotgrave has 'Buste: the whole bulke or body of a man from his face to his middle.' Compare Lucrece, 467:

'Her heart . . .

Beating her bulk.'

100. *bended*. We have this form of the preterite in Coriolanus, ii. 1. 281:

'The nobles bended,

As to Jove's statue.'

101. *go seck*. See i. 5. 132.

102. *ecstasy*, madness. See iii. 1. 160; iii. 4. 74, 135, 136, and Macbeth, iii. 2. 22.

103. *fordoes*, destroys. See v. 1. 244. 'For,' like the German *ver*, has a negative sense in composition, as 'forget,' 'forgo,' 'forbear,' 'forbid,' 'for swear.' Sometimes also, like *ver*, it is intensive, as in 'forgive,' 'forwearied,' 'forspent.'

110. *access*, accented sometimes on the first and sometimes on the second syllable. For the latter, see Macbeth, i. 5. 45:

'Stop up the access and passage to remorse.'

112. *quoted*. Spelt 'coted' in the quartos. It means 'observed,' as in Troilus and Cressida, iv. 5. 233:

'I have with exact view perused thee, Hector,  
And quoted joint by joint.'

And Romeo and Juliet, i. 4. 31:

'What curious eye doth quote deformities?'

The word is indifferently spelt 'cote,' 'coat' (or 'coate'), and 'quote' in the old editions. The side (Fr. *côté*) or margin of a book was the place for observations or quotations. See v. 2. 147.

113. *beshrew*, a mild form of imprecation frequent in Shakespeare. See Merchant of Venice, ii. 6. 52.

*Ib.* *jealousy*, suspicion. The word is used by Shakespeare in a wider sense than it is now. Compare As You Like It, ii. 7. 151:

'Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel.'

And see Twelfth Night, iii. 3. 8:

'Jealousy what might befall your travel.'

And King Lear, i. 4. 75: 'Mine own jealous curiosity.' 'To jealous' is provincially used for 'to suspect.'

114. *proper*, appropriate. Compare 2 Henry IV, i. 3. 32:

'Imagination proper to madmen.'

115. *cast* means to 'contrive,' 'design,' 'plan.' Compare Spenser's Fairy Queen, i. 5. 12:

'Of all attonce he cast avengd to be.'

Cotgrave translates the French *minuter*, 'to devise, cast, or lay the first project of a designe.' 'The vice of age,' says Johnson, 'is too much suspicion. Men long accustomed to the wiles of life cast commonly beyond themselves, let their cunning go farther than reason can attend it.'

118, 119. *which . . . love*. In the complets which conclude scenes the sense is frequently sacrificed to the rhyme. The sense here seems to be—Hamlet's mad conduct might cause more grief if it were hidden than the revelation of his love for Ophelia would cause hatred, i. e. on the part of the King and Queen. Yet the Queen afterwards expresses her approval of the match, iii. 1. 38. Compare also v. 1. 231-234.

## Scene II.

2. *Moreover that*, besides that.

5. *so call it*. With this, the reading of the quartos, 'transformation' must be pronounced as five syllables. The folios read, 'so I call it.'

6. *Sith nor*. This is the reading of the quartos. The folios have 'Since not.' And similarly in line 12 the quartos have 'sith,' the folios 'since.' In Lear i. 1. 183, on the contrary, the folios have 'sith,' the quartos 'since.' Mr. Marsh (Lectures on the English Language, pp. 584-586) says that in the latter half of the sixteenth century 'good authors established a distinction between the forms, and used *sith* only as a logical word, and illative, while *sithence* and *since*, whether as prepositions or as adverbs, remained mere narrative words confined to the signification of *time after*.' Shakespeare, it is clear, did not observe

this distinction, whether we take the quartos or the folios to represent his exact text.

8, 9. *put him So much from, &c.* Compare Romeo and Juliet, iii. 5. 109: 'To put thee from thy heaviness.'

10. *dream of.* The 'of' is superfluous, as in Richard III, i. 3. 6: 'What would betide of me?' And see Measure for Measure, iv. 4. 29:

'For my authority bears of a credent bulk.'

The folios have here 'deeme of.'

11. *of so young days.* Compare Acts viii. 11: 'Of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.' And Sir T. More, Richard III (Works, p. 40, col. 1): 'That drifte by the Queene not vnwiselye deuised, whereby her bloode might *of youth* be rooted in the princes fauor, the Duke of Gloucester turned vnto their destruccion.'

12. *neighbour'd to,* intimately associated with. We have this participle in Henry V, i. 1. 62.

*Ib. haviour.* See i. 2. 81. The folio reading is 'humour.'

13. *That* is redundant.

14. *companies.* See i. 1. 173.

17. *Whether . . . thus.* This line is omitted in the folios. 'Whether,' as here, is frequently pronounced in the time of a monosyllable.

22. *gentry,* courtesy, as in v. 2. 107.

26. *remembrance.* So in Two Gentlemen of Verona, ii. 2. 5:

'Keep this remembrance for thy Julia's sake.'

And Merchant of Venice, iv. 1. 422:

'Take some remembrance of us as a tribute.'

27. *of,* used in the sense of 'over,' as in line 286 of this scene for 'on.'

30. *bent.* See i. 2. 115.

38. *Heavens.* Compare Antony and Cleopatra, i. 2. 64:

'Our worser thoughts heavens mend.'

42. *still,* constantly. See Merchant of Venice, i. 1. 136.

51. *admittance.* See Henry V, ii. 4. 66.

52. *fruit,* dessert.

56. *no other but.* See i. 1. 108.

*Ib. the main,* the main cause. So we have 'main' without a substantive following in 2 Henry VI, i. 1. 208.

61. *Upon our first,* i. e. greeting and desire; at the first expression of the ambassador's request.

63. *the Polack.* See i. 1. 63.

64. The adverb 'truly' belongs in sense to 'was,' not to 'found.' For a similar transposition see Midsummer Night's Dream, i. 1. 126:

'Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.'



66. *impotence*. See i. 2. 29.

67. *borne in hand*, deluded. Compare Macbeth, iii. 1. 81 : 'How you were borne in hand.'

*Ib. sends*. Here the requisite pronoun is omitted.

71. *To give the assay of arms*, to put the quarrel to the test of war.

77. *pass*, passage. The word is used in Henry V, ii. (Chorus 39) :

'Charming the narrow seas

To give you gentle pass.'

79. *regards of safety and allowance*, terms securing the safety of the country and regulating the passage of the troops through it.

80. *It likes us well*, it pleases us well. See v. 2. 249. Compare Othello, ii. 3. 49 : 'It dislikes me.' And Henry V, iv. 3. 77.

81. *our more consider'd time*, a time when we have more leisure for consideration.

83. *well-took*. This form of the participle is common in Shakespeare. See Two Gentlemen of Verona, v. 4. 105.

86. *expostulate*, discuss fully. So in Two Gentlemen of Verona, iii. 1. 251 :

'The time now serves not to expostulate.'

Shakespeare also uses the word in its modern and legitimate sense.

90. *wit*, knowledge, understanding. So Merchant of Venice, ii. 1. 18 : 'Hedged me by his wit.'

95. *matter*. So As You Like It, iv. 1. 74 : 'Nay, you were better speak first, and when you were gravelled for lack of matter, you might take occasion to kiss.'

105. *Perpend*, consider. See As You Like It, iii. 2. 69 :

'Learn of the wise, and perpend.'

The word is used here, as 'gather and surmise,' line 108, in accordance with Polonius's pedantic style.

110. *beautified*, endowed with beauty. Our author has used this ill and vile phrase again in Two Gentlemen of Verona, iv. 1. 55. And, as Steevens remarks, Nash dedicated his 'Christ's Tears over Jerusalem' (1593) 'to the most honored, and vertuous beautified ladie, the ladie Elizabeth Carey.'

111. *vile*. So the quartos. The first three folios have 'vilde,' and so the word was frequently spelt.

113. Compare Two Gentlemen of Verona, iii. 1. 250 :

'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.'

116. *doubt*, suspect, as in i. 2. 256.

120. *ill*. Compare Love's Labour's Lost, i. 2. 42 : 'I am ill at reckoning.'

124. *whilst this machine is to him*, whilst this body belongs to him. Hamlet's letter is written in the affected language of euphuism. Compare Cymbeline, v. 5. 383 :

‘ This fierce abridgement  
Hath to it circumstantial branches.’

126. *more above*, moreover.

137. *If I had play'd the desk or table-book*, if I had been the agent of their correspondence. ‘ Table-book ’ occurs in Winter's Tale, iv. 4. 610. It is the same as ‘ tables,’ i. 5. 107.

138. *winking*. The reading of the folios. The quartos have ‘ working.’ ‘ Winking ’ means ‘ connivance,’ as in Henry V, v. 2. 332. In Cymbeline, ii. 4. 89, ‘ two winking Cupids of silver ’ mean two blind Cupids, two Cupids with their eyes shut. So Acts xvii. 30.

140. *round*, direct, straightforward, as in iii. 1. 182, and iii. 4. 5. The adjective is here used for the adverb, as in Bacon's Essay vi : ‘ A shew of fearfulnessse, which in any businesse doth spoile the feathers, of round flying up to the mark.’

141. *bespeak*, address. Twelfth Night, v. 1. 192 : ‘ I bespake you fair.’

*Ib. star*. So the earlier quartos and the first folio. The second folio altered it to ‘ sphere.’ ‘ Star ’ means probably ‘ the position in which fortune has placed you.’ Compare Twelfth Night, ii. 5. 156 : ‘ In my stars I am above thee,’ i. e. in my position. We have had ‘ fortune's star,’ i. 4. 32.

143. *prescripts*. So the quartos. The folios have ‘ precepts.’ For the former see Antony and Cleopatra, iii. 8. 5 :

‘ Do not exceed  
The prescript of this scroll.’

146. *took the fruits of my advice*, took my advice with its consequences.

147. *repulsed*. So the folios. The quartos ‘ repell'd.’

149. *watch*, want of sleep.

150. *lightness*, lightheadedness. Compare Othello, iv. 1. 280 : ‘ Is he not light of brain ? ’ Polonius, says Warburton, ‘ would not only be thought to have discovered this intrigue by his own sagacity, but to have remarked all the stages of Hamlet's disorder, from his sadness to his raving, as regularly as his physician could have done ; when all the while the madness was only feigned. The humour of this is exquisite from a man who tells us, with a confidence peculiar to small politicians, that he could find

“ Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed  
Within the centre.”’

152. *and all we mourn for.* The word 'which' must be supplied from the preceding 'wherein.' For 'mourn' the folios read 'wail.'

160. *centre.* Shakespeare, like Bacon, held to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy. See *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3. 85. Compare *Titus Andronicus*, iv. 3. 12 :

'Tis you must dig with mattock and with spade,  
And pierce the inmost centre of the earth.'

161. *four hours.* Hanmer read 'for hours.' But the same phrase occurs in Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie* (p. 307, Arber's Reprint); 'laughing and gibing with their familiars foure houres by the clocke.' And in Webster, *Duchess of Malfi*, iv. 1: 'She will muse four hours together.'

163. *loose.* A word used more frequently of dogs than men. Compare *As You Like It*, iii. 5. 103.

164. *arras*, tapestry; so called because the most famous manufactory was at the town of Arras.

171. *board*, accost, as in *Twelfth Night*, i. 3. 60.

*Ib.* *presently*, immediately. See *Merchant of Venice*, i. 1. 183.

182, 183. *For . . . carrion.* Mr. Staunton prints this as a quotation from the book *Hamlet* is reading.

183. *god, kissing carrion.* Both quartos and folios have 'good kissing carrion.' Warburton first proposed the change, which Johnson calls 'a noble emendation.' There can be little doubt of its truth. Malone quotes King Edward III (one of the plays printed by Capell as being possibly Shakespeare's):

'The freshest summer's day doth soonest taint

The loathed carrion that it seems to kiss.' (Act ii. sc. 1.)

Compare *Measure for Measure*, ii. 2. 166-168; *Cymbeline*, iii. 4. 166; and *1 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 134.

188. *How say you by that?* 'By' means 'with reference to,' as in *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 9. 26. Compare also *1 Corinthians* iv. 4.

194. *matter.* See line 95 of this scene. Hamlet purposely misunderstands the word to mean 'cause of dispute,' as in *Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 172: 'That is not the matter I challenge thee for.' And *Lear*, ii. 2. 47:

'Edm. How now! what's the matter?

*Kent.* With you, goodman boy, an you please.'

195. *who*, for 'whom,' as in *Othello*, i. 2. 52, 'To who,' and 'with who,' *Othello*, iv. 2. 99. See Abbott, § 274.

197. *the satirical rogue.* Warburton conjectured that the allusion might be to Juvenal, x. 188, &c., but it is at least as probable, without attributing to Shakespeare any unusual amount of originality, that he invented this speech for himself.

199. *purging*, discharging.
203. *should* for 'would,' as in iii. 2. 273. See Abbott, § 322. The quartos read 'shall.'
205. *Though this be madness, &c.* Compare Measure for Measure, v. 1. 60-63.
209. *happiness*, felicity of expression.
216. *withal*. See Abbott, § 196.
- 236-265. *Let me . . . attended*. The whole of this passage is omitted in the quartos.
241. *Then is the world one*. Florio (Ital. Dict.) has, 'Perpetuo carcere, perpetuall prison, taken also for the whole world.'
242. *confines*, places of confinement. See i. 1. 155. The word generally means boundaries, limits.
261. *fay*, a corruption probably of the French *foi*, which in its earlier forms was *feid*, *feit*, *fecy*, *fé*. Compare Romeo and Juliet, i. 5. 128 : 'By my fay it waxes late.'
266. *make*. See i. 2. 164.
270. *a halfpenny*. Theobald read 'of a halfpenny,' and Hanmer 'at a halfpenny.' But the text means the same thing, and needs no change. Compare Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, 8875 : 'dere y-nough a jane' (i. e. a small coin of Genoa): and 12723, 'deere y-nough a leeke.' Compare 'too late a week' in As You Like It, ii. 3. 74.
274. The quartos omit 'why,' and the folios put a full stop after 'thing.'
276. *your modesties*. See i. 1. 173.
280. *consonancy of our youth*. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern had been 'of so young days brought up with him,' line 11.
282. *a better proposer*, one who has a greater power of exposition. Compare 'propose,' Othello, i. 1. 25.
283. *even*, straightforward.
286. *of you*, i. e. upon you. Compare ii. 2. 27.
- Ib.* To have an eye of = to watch. See North's Plutarch, Julius Cæsar (ed. 1579), p. 767 : 'Aurelia (Cæsar's mother) an honest gentlewoman had such an eye of her, that these two louers could not meete as they would, without great perill and difficultie.'
290. *prevent*, anticipate, and so stop.
- Ib.* *discovery*, disclosure. It is used in the same sense in Two Gentlemen of Verona, iii. 1. 45.
296. *majestical*. See i. 1. 143.
- Ib.* *fretted*, from A.S. *frætwan*, to adorn. Compare Cymbeline, ii. 4. 88 :

'The roof o' the chamber  
With golden cherubins is fretted.'

'Fret' is an architectural term which Shakespeare employs in a looser sense. Bacon, in the following passage, uses it more strictly: 'For if that great workmaster had been of an human disposition, he would have cast the stars into some pleasant and beautiful works and orders, like the frets in the roofs of houses; whereas one can scarce find a posture in square, or triangle, or straight line, amongst such an infinite number.' (Adv. of Learning, ii. 14, § 9.)

299. *faculty*. So the folios. The quartos have 'faculties.'

*Ib. express*, exact, fitted to its purpose, as the seal fits the stamp. So in Hebrews i. 3, 'express image' is the rendering of the Greek *χαράκτήρ*.

302. *paragon*. Cotgrave renders the French word by 'A paragon, or peerelesse one; the perfection, or flower of; the most complete, most absolute, most excellent peece, in any kind whatsoever.' Compare Two Gentlemen of Verona, ii. 4. 146: 'She is an earthly paragon.'

303. *quintessence*, a term in alchemy, signifying the subtle essence which remained after the four elements, earth, air, fire, and water, had been removed from any substance. It occurs again in As You Like It, iii. 2. 147.

310. *lenten*, meagre, like the fare proper to Lent. Compare Twelfth Night, i. 5. 9, 'a good lenten answer.'

311. *coted*, came up with, alongside of. See iii. 1. 17:

'Madam, it so fell out that certain players  
We o'er-raught on the way.'

In a secondary sense 'to cote' is to outstrip. Compare Chapman's Homer, Iliad, xxiii. 324:

'My lov'd son, get but to be first at turning in the course,  
He lives not that can cote thee then.'

It is used also as a coursing term. See Drayton, Polyolbion, xxiii. 344:

'When each man runs his horse, with fixed eyes and notes  
Which dog first turns the hare, which first the other coats.'

In line 352, 'to give a coat' = 'to coat.'

316. *humorous*, full of humours or caprices. See King John, iii. 1. 119: 'her humorous ladyship,' i.e. Fortune.

316, 317. *the clown . . . sere*. Omitted in the quartos.

317. *tickle o' the sere*. The folios read 'tickled,' but Mr. Staunton rightly suggested 'tickle,' though, in common with other commentators, he misunderstood the meaning of the phrase. Steevens explains it as signifying 'those who are asthmatical, and to whom laughter is most uneasy.' The real meaning is just the reverse. 'Sere' or 'serre,' now spelt 'sear' or 'scaer,' is the catch in a gunlock which keeps the hammer on half or full cock, and is released by the trigger. In old matchlock muskets the sear and trigger were in one piece. This is proved by a passage from Barret's Theorike and Practike of Modern

Warres (1598), p. 33 [35]: 'drawing down the *serre* with the other three fingers.' He has given directions for holding the stock between the thumb and fore-finger. 'Lungs tickle o' the sere' are therefore lungs easily moved to laughter, like a gun which goes off with the least touch. Douce quotes from Howard's *Defensative*, fol. 31 a (1620): 'Disconering the moods and humors of the vulgar sort (according to the touch of Affrike) to be so loose and tickle of the seare.' It is clear that Hamlet did not anticipate much from the wit of the clown, or from the players generally.

After this note was printed, we found that we had been anticipated in our explanation by Dr. Nicholson, in *Notes and Queries* (Fourth Series, viii. 62). We were led to our conclusion by the passage in Barret which we quote, but of which he does not appear to have been aware.

324, 325. Johnson proposes to transpose the words 'inhibition' and 'innovation,' their 'innovation' meaning their new practice of strolling.

331. *aery*. 'Aire: an ayrie, or nest of haukes.' (Cotgrave.) Here, a young brood, as in *Richard III*, i. 3. 270:

'Your aery buildeth in our aery's nest.'

Malone, in his *Historical Account of the English Stage* (Shakespeare, ed. Boswell, iii. 63), quotes from *Father Hubbard's Tales* (1604): 'to call in at the Blackfriars, where he should see a neaste of boyes able to ravish a man.'

*Ib. children.* See the Preface.

*Ib. eyas*, a nestling, or unfledged bird; from the French *niais*, which Cotgrave explains 'a neastling.' The initial *n* is dropped by mistake, as 'adder' comes from 'nedder,' and 'apron' from the French *naperon*. See *Merry Wives of Windsor*, iii. 3. 22: 'How now, my eyas-musket?' i. e. young hawk.

332. *cry out on the top of question*, means, probably, to speak in a high key, dominating conversation. For 'question' in this sense, see *Merchant of Venice*, iv. 1. 70. Wellesley understands 'question' here in the sense of 'torture,' and the phrase to mean, cry out as one would do on the rack.

333. *tyrannically clapped* probably means 'violently applauded.' The tyrant's part in the old plays was a noisy one. Bottom says, 'My chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Eracles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.' (*Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 2. 31.) Compare Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, v. 1: 'An thou hadst but seen little Ned of Aldgate, drum Ned, how he made it roar again, and laid on like a tyrant.'

338. *escoted*, paid for. Cotgrave has 'Escotter. Euery one to pay his shot, or to contribute somewhat towards it.'

*Ib. the quality*, the profession, i. e. of players. This was the technical

term. So in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. 1. 58, 'in our quality,' i. e. in our profession of brigands. Compare also line 417 of this scene. In *Gosson's Schoole of Abuse*, p. 39 (ed. Arber), we read of the profession of players: 'I speake not this, as though euery one that professeth the qualitie so abused him selfe.' And see *Massinger's Roman Actor*, i. 3, p. 339, ed. Gifford, with the editor's note.

344. *tarre*, set on to fight, especially with reference to dogs. Compare *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3. 392:

'Pride alone

Must tarre the mastiffs on.'

345. *argument*, plot of a play. Compare 2 *Henry IV*, iv. 5. 199:

'For all my reign hath been but as a scene

Acting that argument.'

And *Hamlet*, iii. 2. 121.

349. *carry it away*, carry off the prize, gain the victory. So *Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 3. 228, 'Shall pride carry it?' *Rosencrantz*, in his answer, plays upon the other sense of the words. *Steevens* supposes that he alludes to the *Globe Theatre*, the sign of which was *Hercules carrying the globe*.

353. *mows*. So the folios. The quartos have 'mouths.' In *Hamlet*, iv. 4. 50, the quartos read 'mouths.' The latter passage is not found in the folios. In *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2. 238, we have 'mouths'; in *Cymbeline*, i. 6. 41, 'mows.' In fact, in the phrase 'to make mouths' (*Lear*, iii. 2. 36), 'mouths' is a corruption of 'mows, the original word. The latter was the old reading in *Psalm xxxv. 15* (Prayer-book version), now changed erroneously to 'mouths.'

355. *picture in little*, miniature. Compare *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 148:

'The quintessence of every sprite

Heaven would in little show.'

*Ib.* 'Sblood, that is, God's blood; one of the many forms of oath by the elements of the Eucharist. Compare 'God's bread,' *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 5. 177, and 'God's bodykins,' *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 512.

359. *appurtenance*, proper accompaniment.

360. *comply with you in this garb*, use ceremony with you in this fashion. Compare *B. Jonson*, *Every Man out of his Humour*, iv. 4:

'And there, his seniors give him good slight looks

After their garb.'

And *Heywood*, *The Faire Maid of the West*, v. 1. (Works, ii. 322):

'*Mull.* Say Gentlemen of England, what's your fashion

And garb of entertainment.

*Goodl.* Our first greeting

Begins still on the lips.'

For 'comply' see v. 2. 175.

361. *extent*, condescension ; the behaviour of a superior to an inferior, when he makes the first advances. In much the same sense we have 'extend,' All's Well that Ends Well, iii. 6. 73.

366, 367. 'Handsaw,' is a corruption of 'heronshaw,' or 'hernsew,' which is still used in the provincial dialects for a heron. In Suffolk and Norfolk it is pronounced 'harnsa,' from which to 'handsaw' is but a single step. The corruption was probably old even in Shakespeare's time. For the following explanation, given for the first time, of the earlier part of this obscure passage, we are indebted to Mr. J. C. Heath, formerly Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. 'The expression obviously refers to the sport of hawking. Most birds, especially one of heavy flight like the heron, when roused by the falconer or his dog, would fly down or with the wind, in order to escape. When the wind is from the north the heron flies towards the south, and the spectator may be dazzled by the sun, and be unable to distinguish the hawk from the heron. On the other hand, when the wind is southerly, the heron flies towards the north, and it and the pursuing hawk are clearly seen by the sportsman, who then has his back to the sun, and without difficulty knows the hawk from the hernsew. A curious reader may further observe that a wind from the precise point north-north-west, would be in the eye of the sun at half-past ten in the forenoon, a likely time for hawking, whereas "southerly" includes a wider range of wind for a good view.' A 'hawk' is also a small quadrangular board with a handle underneath, used by plasterers for holding their plaster. The existence of this meaning of the word may have favoured the corruption 'handsaw.'

368. *well be with you*. Compare All's Well that Ends Well, i. 1. 190, 'God send him well'; and Psalm cxxviii. 2, 'Well is thee'; and Chaucer, Canterbury Tales, 16362,

'He loved hir so that well him was therewith.'

372. *happily*, haply. See i. 1. 134.

375. *You say right, sir*. Hamlet pretends to continue a conversation with Rosencrantz, that Polonius may not suspect that they had been talking of him.

381. *Buz, buz!* Blackstone says '*Buz* used to be an interjection at Oxford when any one began a story that was generally known before.' Compare Taming of the Shrew, ii. 1. 207, and Ben Jonson's Silent Woman, iv. 1: 'Wife! buz! *titivilitium!* There's no such thing in nature.'

383. *Then came, &c.* This is probably a line from some lost ballad.

385. In the licence granted to the Globe Company, to which Shakespeare belonged, dated 17 May, 1603, he and his associates are allowed 'freely to use and exercise the Arte and facultie of playing Comedies, Tragedies, Histories, Enterludes, Moralls, Pastoralls, Stage plaies, & such other like.'



386, 387. *scene indivisible*, a play where the unity of place is observed, opposed to the 'poem unlimited,' where no such restriction is imposed.

387, 388. The plays of Seneca and Plautus were familiar as being frequently acted at the Universities. See note on iii. 2. 93. The whole of Seneca's tragedies and the *Menæchmi* of Plautus had been already translated into English.

388. For 'writ' the quarto of 1676, followed by Rowe and most editors, reads 'wit.' In either case it is difficult to find a distinct meaning in Polonius's words. Probably the author did not intend that we should. Taking 'writ,' the sense may be, 'for repeating correctly what was written, and for freedom of improvisation.' Or 'the law of writ and the liberty' may characterise the style of composition illustrated by the plays of Seneca and Plautus respectively.

390. *O Jephthah*. The ballad from which Hamlet makes his quotations was communicated to Percy by Steevens and inserted in the second and following editions of the *Reliques*. The first 'row' or stanza of the 'pious chanson' is as follows:

'Have you not heard these many years ago,  
Jephtha was judge of Israel?

He had one only daughter and no mo,

The which he loved passing well:

And, as by lott,

God wot,

It so came to pass,

As Gods will was,

That great wars there should be,

And none should be chosen chief but he.

407. *abridgement*. Hamlet uses the word probably in a double sense. The players by entering abridge his talk. Technically also 'abridgement' means a dramatic performance. Compare *Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 1. 39:

'Say what abridgement have you for this evening,  
What masque, what music?'

It was probably so called as abridging the time, an entertainment making time pass swiftly. But in *Cymbeline*, v. 5. 382, it occurs in the sense of a brief narrative. And in the present scene, line 507, Hamlet calls the players 'the abstract and brief chronicles of the time.' It may be noted that the folios read 'my abridgements come.'

410. *valanced*, fringed with a beard. 'Valance' means the hangings of a bed, except the curtains. See *Taming of the Shrew*, ii. 1. 356:

'Valance of Venice gold in needle-work.'

The folios here read 'valiant,' probably a mere misprint.

411. In Shakespeare's time, and till after the restoration of Charles II, female parts were played by boys. (Compare *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. 4. 165.) The first woman who ever appeared on the English stage played Desdemona in December, 1660. See Malone's *History of the Stage*, Boswell's *Shakespeare*, vol. iii. p. 129.

413. *chopine*, from the Italian *cioppino*, Spanish *chapin*, defined by Minsheu as 'a high cork shoe.' Cotgrave (*Fr. Dict.*) has 'Choppins: m. Choppines; a kind of high slippers for low women.' In Ben Jonson, *Cynthia's Revels*, ii. 1, we find the word in the Italian form *cioppini*. Coryat, in his *Crudities*, published 1611, describes a chopine, which he calls a 'chapiney,' worn by the ladies of Venice, as a thing made of wood and covered with leather of sundry colours, some with white, some red, some yellow . . . which they wear under their shoes. . . . There are many of these chapineys of a great height, even half a yard high.' Douce, in his *Illustrations*, has given an engraving of a chopine, borrowed by Fairholt, *Costume in England*, p. 387.

414. *cracked within the ring*. 'There was a ring or circle on the coin, within which the sovereign's head was placed: if the crack extended from the edge beyond the ring the coin was rendered unfit for currency.' (Douce.)

415. The French falconers were apparently like the French sportsmen of the present time, who do not disdain to fill their bag with bullfinches and yellowhammers. Sir Thomas Browne (*Miscellany Tracts*, p. 116) says that the 'French artists' 'seem to have been the first and noblest falconers in the western part of Europe,' and afterwards (p. 118) mentions a falcon of Henry of Navarre, 'which Scaliger saith, he saw strike down a buzzard, two wild geese, divers kites, a crane and a swan.' The phrase in Shakespeare 'fly at anything we see,' may not therefore have been intended to express contempt.

417. *quality*. See line 338 of this scene.

*Ib. passionate*, full of feeling. Compare *King John*, ii. 1. 544:

'She is sad and passionate at your highness' tent.'

And *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. 4. 172:

'Madam, 'twas Ariadne passioning

For Theseus' perjury.'

422. *caviare*, a condiment made of sturgeons' roe, and brought from Russia. The trade with Russia was carried on by means of 'the Russian Company' established in London. Caviare is a dainty which only a cultivated taste can appreciate. The early quartos spell the word 'cauiary.'

*Ib. the general*, the public. See *Measure for Measure*, ii. 4. 27:

'The general, subject to a well-wish'd king,

Quit their own part.'

424. *cried in the top of mine*, probably a metaphor from the hunting-field, where, as Henley says, 'to "over-top" is a term applied to a dog when he gives more tongue than the rest of the cry.' But it is the superior authority or value of the judgements, not the greater loudness with which they were delivered, that is indicated here.

427. *sallets*, salads. For the spelling compare All's Well that Ends Well, iv. 5. 18: 'Indeed, sir, she was the sweete margerom of the sallet, or rather the hearbe of grace.' So the first folio. Pope read first 'salts,' then 'salt,' not knowing perhaps that fragrant and piquant herbs were mixed with the salad.

428. *indict of*. We use 'for' with this verb.

*Ib. affection*. So the quartos. The folios read 'affectation,' which is the meaning of the former word. See Love's Labour's Lost, v. 1. 4, 'witty without affection'; and Malvolio is called 'an affectionate ape' in Twelfth Night, ii. 3. 160.

430. *handsome than fine*. We have had a similar distinction before in 'rich not gaudy.'

431. *thereabout*, used as a substantive, like 'whereabout' in Macbeth, ii. 1. 58.

435. *the Hyrcanian beast*, the tiger. Compare Macbeth, iii. 4. 101, 'the Hyrcan tiger,' and our note on the passage.

439. *ominous*, fatal, calamitous. Compare the use of 'omen,' i. 1. 123.

442. *gules*, heraldic word for 'red,' from the French *gueules*, a word of doubtful etymology, perhaps from the Persian *ghul*, a rose. It is used also in Timon of Athens, iv. 3. 59:

'With man's blood paint the ground, gules, gules.'

*Ib. trick'd*. In heraldry a 'trick' is a description in drawing, opposed to 'blazon,' a description in words.

445. *tyrannous*, pitiless, cruel.

447. *o'ersized*. 'Size' is a kind of glue.

448. *eyes like carbuncles*. See Paradise Lost, ix. 500: 'And carbuncle his eyes.'

457. *drives*. Compare 1 Henry IV, ii. 4. 517: 'Four rogues in buckram let drive at me.'

458. Compare Marlowe, Tragedy of Dido, ii. (p. 258, ed. Dyce, 1862):

'Which he disdainig, whisk'd his sword about,  
And with the wind thereof the king fell down.'

465. *painted tyrant*. Compare Macbeth, v. 8. 25-27:

'We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,  
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,  
"Here may you see the tyrant."'

466. *neutral*, not 'standing between his will and matter,' but 'indifferent to both.' So 'neutral' is opposed to 'loyal,' Macbeth, ii. 3. 115.

469. *the rack*. So Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum*, cent. ii. § 115: 'The winds in the upper region (which move the clouds above, which we call the rack, and are not perceived below) pass without noise.' See *Tempest*, iv. 1. 156, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 14. 10.

471. *hush*. For another instance of an interjection becoming an adjective, compare *Tempest*, i. 2. 379:

'Courtsied when you have and kiss'd  
The wild waves whist.'

Cotgrave gives 'Honische' as the French equivalent.

472. *region*. Originally a division of the sky marked out by the Roman augurs. In later times the atmosphere was divided into three regions, upper, middle, and lower. By Shakespeare the word is used to denote the air generally. Compare *Sonnet xxxiii*. 12, 'The region cloud'; and *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 2. 21, 'The airy region'; and Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vii. 425: 'Part loosely wing the region.'

473. *a-work*. We have the word again in 2 *Henry IV*, iv. 3. 124: 'So that skill in the weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it a-work.'

475. *Mars's*. The quartos have 'Marses,' the folios 'Mars his.'

*Ib. proof*, resisting power, See *Richard II*, i. 3. 73, and our note.

*Ib. eterne*, used again in *Macbeth*, iii. 2. 38.

480. *fellies*. 'Iantes: The fellowes of a wheele; the peeces (of wood) whereof the ring, or the rime consists.' (Cotgrave.)

486. *But who, O, who*. This is the reading of the folios and the quarto of 1603. The other quartos have 'who, a woe,' except the sixth, which corrects it to 'who, ah woe,' the reading followed by many editors.

487. *mobled*. The first folio has here 'inobled,' a misprint corrected in the second folio. 'Mobled' is probably a corruption of the word 'muffled.' Farmer quotes Shirley's *Gentlemen of Venice*: 'The moon does mobble up herself.' And Holt White quotes Ogilby's *Fables*: 'Mobbled nine days in my considering cap.' The form 'mabled' is used by Sandys, *Travels*, bk. i. p. 69 (ed. 1637), speaking of Turkish ladies, 'their heads and faces so mabled in fine linen that nothing is to be seen of them but their eyes.' Halliwell, in his *Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words*, gives 'mob' as meaning 'to dress awkwardly.' The word was a rare word in Shakespeare's time, as is shown by Hamlet's interruption; and Polonius's approval perhaps indicates that it was archaic.

490. *bisson*. The word, spelt 'beesen,' is given by Brogden, in his *Provincial Words* still current in Lincolnshire. It occurs in *Coriolanus*, ii. 1. 70: 'Your bisson conspectuities,' where it means 'blind.' Here it is rather 'blinding.'

492. *o'ertoomed*, exhausted by child-bearing.

499. *instant*, instantaneous. See i. 5. 71.

501. *milch*, milk-giving, thence 'moist.' Steevens quotes from Drayton's *Polyolbion* [xiii. 171], 'Exhaling the milch dewe.'

507. *abstract*, always used by Shakespeare as a substantive. The quarto of 1603 has 'Chronicles and briefe abstracts.' Compare King John, ii. 1. 101:

'This little abstract doth contain that large  
Which died in Geoffrey.'

508. *you were better have*, it were better that you had. Compare King John, iv. 3. 94: 'Thou wert better gall the devil.' And Othello, v. 2. 161: 'Peace: you were best.' Originally doubtless the pronouns were datives, but from their position before the verb they slipped into nominatives, as 'Thou.'

512. *bodykins*. Used without the preceding word in *Merry Wives of Windsor*, ii. 3. 46. The reference is originally to the sacramental wafer.

513. *after his desert*, according to his desert. So 'deal not with us after our offences,' in the Liturgy.

534. *her working*. 'Soul,' when personified, is feminine in Shakespeare.

*Ib. wann'd*. We have had an instance of a verb formed from an adjective in 'pale,' i. 5. 90, where it is transitive.

535. *aspect*. Always accented on the last syllable. See *Richard II*, i. 3. 209.

536. *function*. The whole action of the body. Compare *Macbeth*, i. 3. 140, and our note on the passage.

537. *conceit*, conception, idea (of the character he was personating). See *Merchant of Venice*, i. 1. 92, and our note.

541. *cue*. Hamlet uses this technical stage word designedly. Compare Othello, i. 2. 83:

'Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it  
Without a prompter.'

544. *the free*, the innocent, those whose conscience is free from guilt. Compare iii. 2. 216: 'We that have free souls.'

545. *amaze*, confound. Compare King John, iv. 2. 137:

'I was amazed

Under the tide.'

548. *peak*, pine away, mope. Used once more by Shakespeare, in *Macbeth*, i. 3. 23, 'dwindle, peak and pine.'

549. *John-a-Dreams*, John the Dreamer, a name formed like Jack-a-lent, Jack-a-Lantern, John-a-droynes, which Steevens guesses to be a corruption of John-a-Dreams. It occurs in Armin's *Nest of Ninnies*

(Shakespeare Society), p. 49: 'His name is John, indeede, saies the cinnick: but neither John a nods, nor John a dreames.'

549. *unpregnant of my cause*, having no living thoughts within relating to my cause. See Measure for Measure, iv. 4. 23:

'This deed unshapes me quite, makes me unpregnant  
And dull to all proceedings.'

In the same play, i. 1. 12, 'pregnant in' is used for 'filled with knowledge of.'

551. *property* appears here to be used in the sense of 'own person.' Compare 'proper life,' Hamlet, v. 2. 66. Or possibly it may mean his 'kingly right.' The commentators by their silence seem to take it in the ordinary modern sense, which can hardly be.

552. *defeat*, destruction. It is used in the same sense, v. 2. 58. The verb occurs in Othello, iv. 2. 160:

'And his unkindness may defeat my life.'

558. *'Swounds*, God's wounds. For this profane oath the folio has 'why.' See notes on ii. 1. 76, and ii. 2. 355.

559. *pigeon-liver'd*. See Sir Thomas Browne, Vulgar Errors, B. 3, c. 3: 'That a Pidgeon hath no gall.'

*Ib. gall*, metaphorically for 'courage.' So Troilus and Cressida, i. 3. 237:

'But when they would seem soldiers, they have galls.'

561. *fatted*, fattened. The word occurs in Midsummer Night's Dream, ii. 1. 97:

'And crows are fatted with the murrion flock.'

*Ib. region*. See note on line 472 of this scene.

563. *kindless*, unnatural. The opposite is meant by 'kindly,' i. e. natural. See Much Ado about Nothing, iv. 1. 75.

568. *a-cursing*. For participles of this form see Abbott, § 24.

570. *About*, set to work. Steevens quotes from Heywood's Iron Age, Part 2 (Works, iii. 408):

'My brayne about againe, for thou hast found  
New proiect now to worke on.'

But the meaning which he gives, 'be my thoughts shifted in a contrary direction,' is, we think, not the true one.

570-574. Compare Massinger's Roman Actor, ii. 1 (vol. i. p. 231, ed. Gifford).

*Ib.* Heywood, in his Apology for Actors (Shakespeare Society's ed. pp. 57-59), gives two examples of murder being discovered in this way, one at Lynn, the other at Amsterdam.

573. *presently*, immediately; as in line 171 of this scene.

576. Compare Macbeth, iii. 4. 122-126, and Richard II, i. 1. 104,  
105.

579. *tent*, probe. Compare Cymbeline, iii. 4. 118 :

‘Nor tent to bottom that.’

*Ib.* *blench*, flinch. See Troilus and Cressida, ii. 2. 68 :

‘There can be no evasion

To blench from this and to stand firm by honour.’

And see also the same play, i. 1. 28, and Measure for Measure, iv. 5. 5.

585. *abuses*, deceives, deludes. See Tempest, v. 1. 112 :

‘Some enchanted trifle to abuse me.’

586. *relative*, to the purpose. The word is not known to exist elsewhere in this sense.

## ACT III.

### Scene I.

1. *drift* occurs ii. 1. 10, and ‘drift of circumstance’ means round-about method. For ‘circumstance’ in this sense see i. 5. 127, and for the two words see Troilus and Cressida, iii. 3. 113, 114. ‘Circumstance’ is the reading of the folios; the quartos have ‘conference,’ which seems less appropriate. For ‘drift’ see Two Gentlemen of Verona, ii. 6. 43 :

‘Love, lend me wings to make my purpose swift,

As thou hast lent me wings to plot this drift!’

2. *confusion*, must mean confusion of mind.

3. *grating*, disturbing, irritating. Compare Antony and Cleopatra, i. 1. 18. Elsewhere in Shakespeare the verb is used intransitively.

8. Here the nominative is omitted, as in iv. 1. 10, and Winter’s Tale, iv. 4. 168 :

‘They call him Doricles : and boasts himself

To have a worthy feeding.’

See Abbott, § 399.

12. *disposition*, mood, as in i. 4. 55.

13. *of our demands*. ‘Of’ may be either written by attraction from the previous ‘of,’ or it may be used for ‘on,’ as in Marlowe’s Jew of Malta, iv. 4 : ‘Of that condition I will drink it up.’

13, 14. Warburton inverted the position of ‘niggard’ and ‘most free.’ ‘That this is the true reading,’ says he, ‘we need but turn back to the preceding scene, for Hamlet’s conduct, to be satisfied.’ Malone, retaining the old reading, explains : ‘Slow to begin conversation, but free enough in his answers to our demands.’ In truth, however, neither describes the scene accurately. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were completely baffled, and Hamlet had the talk almost to himself. Perhaps they did not intend to give a correct account of the interview.

- 14, 15. *Did you assay him To any pastime?* Briefly expressed for 'Did you try him by the test of any pastime?'
17. *o'er-raught*, overtook. The first folio reads 'ore-wrought,' altered in the third to 'o're-took.' Compare Comedy of Errors, i. 2. 96:  
'The villain is o'er-raught of all my money,'  
where the word is used metaphorically. 'Raught' for 'reached' occurs also in Antony and Cleopatra, iv. 9. 30.
20. *order*. Used in the singular as here, where we should use the plural, in Measure for Measure, ii. 2. 8, 'Hadst thou not order?'
22. *beseech'd*. Many verbs were employed by Shakespeare with both the strong and the weak forms of preterite and participle, where modern usage limits them to one. See above, line 17.
26. *give him a further edge*, whet him on, stimulate him.
29. *closely*, secretly. So King John, iv. 1. 133:  
'Silence; no more: go closely in with me.'
31. *affront*, confront, meet. See Winter's Tale, v. 1. 75:  
'Unless another,  
As like Hermione as is her picture,  
Affront his eye.'
- And Troilus and Cressida, iii. 2. 173.
32. *espials*, spies. So 1 Henry VI, i. 4. 8:  
'The prince's espials have informed me.'
- And 1 Henry VI, iv. 3. 6:  
'By your espials were discovered.'
40. *wildness*, madness. Compare Cymbeline, iii. 4. 9:  
'Ere wildness  
Vanquish my staid senses.'
43. *Gracious*, addressed to the king. For 'gracious' thus used without a substantive compare Othello, i. 3. 33: 'The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,' where it is addressed to the Duke.
44. *Read on this book*. So in Beaumont and Fletcher, Bonduca, v. 2:  
'He has read upon the reformations long.'
47. *too much proved*, proved by too frequent examples.
52. *to*, compared to, as in i. 2. 140.
53. *painted*, fictitious, disguised. Compare King John, iii. 1. 105:  
'Is cold in amity and painted peace.'
56. It has been said that this soliloquy was suggested to Shakespeare by a book of Jerome Cardan, *De Consolatione*, which was translated into English by Thomas Bedingfield in 1576, but the resemblances quoted are not very striking.
59. *take arms against a sea*. Here is a mixed metaphor, or rather two metaphors blended into one. The author's thought would be fully



expressed by 'take arms against a host of troubles which break in upon us like a sea.' Compare Richard II, iii. 190 :

'This ague-fit of fear is overblown.'

And in Henry VIII, ii. 4. 199 sqq. we have conscience first represented as a wild sea buffeting the ship, and then as a sea-sick passenger. See also Hamlet, iii. 1. 86, 87, and 155. We have 'sea of glory,' Henry VIII, iii. 2. 360, and 'sea of joys,' Pericles, v. 1. 194. Theobald first proposed for 'a sea,' 'a siege,' and then 'th' assay.'

65. *the rub*, a term of bowls, meaning an obstacle hindering the bowl in its course. See note on Richard II, iii. 4. 4.

67. *coil*, entanglement, turmoil. The figure here is from a 'coil' of rope. Compare Much Ado about Nothing, iii. 3. 100.

68. *respect*, consideration. See Merry Wives of Windsor, ii. 1. 45 : 'O woman, if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honour!'

69. *of so long life*, so long lived.

70. *of time*. Warburton proposed 'of th' time.' But Hunter (Illustrations of Shakespeare, ii. p. 240) has shown that 'time' was once used for 'the time' or 'the times,' and quotes from Taylor the Water Poet :

'Mock'd in rhyme

And made the only scornful theme of time.'

Compare also Southwell, Saint Peter's Complaint, stanza v. l. 4 :

'The scorne of time, the infamy of fame.'

72. *despised*. The first two quartos have 'despiz'd.' The folios 'dispriz'd.'

74. *takes*, puts up with, does not resent, as in ii. 2. 558.

75. *quietus*. A law term for the official settlement of an account, the full phrase being 'quietus est,' mentioned by Cotgrave as equivalent to 'discharge,' 'acquittance,' and the French *descharge*. It is suggested by 'the law's delay.' Compare Webster, Duchess of Malfy, i. 1 :

'And 'cause you shall not come to me in debt,

Being now my steward, here upon your lips

I sign your "quietus est."

And see Sonnet cxxvi. 12 :

'Her audit, though dclay'd, answer'd must be,

And her quietus is to render thee.'

76. *bodkin*, an old word for dagger. See Chaucer, Canterbury Tales, 3958 :

'With panade or with knyf or boydekyn.'

And 16193, speaking of Cæsar's murder :

'And in the capitoil anoon him hent

This false Brutus, and his other foon,

And stiked him with boydekyns anoon.'

Compare Lyly, Euphues (ed. Arber), p. 117: 'Asiarchus forsaking compane, spoyled himself with his owne bodkin.' A 'bare bodkin' is an unsheathed dagger, but the other sense of 'bare' = mere, was in Shakespeare's mind.

76. *fardels*, bundles. Used in Winter's Tale, iv. 4. 739, 781. Cotgrave (French Dict.) says, 'Fardeau: a fardle, burthen, trusse, packe, bundle.'

77. *grunt*, groan. Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives 'Gronder . . . to grunt, groane, grumble (with threatning) against a commandement.' Compare Julius Cæsar, iv. 1. 22: 'To groan and sweat under the business.'

79. *bound*, boundary, limit. See Winter's Tale, i. 2. 134: 'No bound 'twixt his and mine.'

80. *No traveller returns*. Compare Job x. 21: 'Before I go whence I shall not return.'

83. *conscience does make cowards of us all*. Compare Richard III, i. 4. 137 sqq.

84. *native hue*, natural colour. Compare Love's Labour's Lost, iv. 3. 263:

'For native blood is counted painting now.'

85. *thought*, care, anxiety. See iv. 5. 155. 'Hawis, an alderman of London, was put in trouble, and dyed with thought, and anguish, before his businesse came to an end.' Bacon, Henry VII, p. 230.

86. *pitch*. The quartos read 'pitch,' the folios 'pith.' The former word occurs in Twelfth Night, i. 1. 12:

'Of what validity and pitch soc'er.'

Ritson supposes 'pitch' to allude to pitching or throwing the bar; Staunton, more correctly, to the summit of the falcon's flight. So we have, in Richard II, i. 1. 109,

'How high a pitch his resolution soars!'

'Pitch' seems more appropriately joined to 'moment' than 'pith.' We have had 'pith and marrow' already, i. 4. 22. Whether we read 'pitch,' or 'pith,' there is an equally sudden change of metaphor in 'current.' See line 59.

88. *Soft you now*, hush, be quiet. Compare Much Ado about Nothing, v. 1. 207; 'But soft you, let me be.'

89. *orisons*, prayers. Derived from the French *oraisons*. It occurs in Romeo and Juliet, iv. 3. 3: 'For I have need of many orisons.'

93. *remembrances*, mementos. Compare ii. 2. 26.

99. *their perfume*, the perfume of the words.

103. *honest*, virtuous; as in Winter's Tale, ii. 1. 68 and 76.

107. *honesty*, virtue. So As You Like It, iii. 3. 30: 'For honesty coupled to beauty is to have honey a sauce to sugar.' Johnson proposed to read here, 'You should admit your honesty to no discourse with your

beauty,' which is the sense in which Ophelia understands the words. Hamlet says that honesty or virtue, personified as the guardian of beauty, should allow none, not even himself, to discourse with the latter. The folios read 'your honesty,' the quartos 'you'; but that of 1603 seems to give weight to the reading of the folios.

109. *commerce*, conversation. See Twelfth Night, iii. 4. 191: 'He is now in some commerce with my lady.'

113. *sometime*. See i. 2. 8.

122. *indifferent*, fairly, ordinarily. We have the word in v. 2. 95, and in Troilus and Cressida, i. 2. 242. 'Indifferently' occurs in iii. 2. 33.

129. *Go thy ways*. See i. 3. 135.

144. *jig*. We have 'jigging fools' in Julius Cæsar, iv. 3. 137.

*Ib. amble*, walk effeminately, as in 1 Henry IV, iii. 2. 60:

'The skipping king he ambled up and down.'

*Ib. nick-name*. A nick-name is originally 'an eke name,' an additional name, 'agnomen.' The meaning is 'You give wrong names to God's creatures out of mere wantonness or affectation, and pretend that you do so from ignorance.'

147. *all but one*. This exception would be quite unintelligible to Ophelia, but the audience, who are in Hamlet's secret, see its purport.

151. The right order would be 'scholar's, soldier's,' corresponding to 'tongue, sword,' and this is found in the quarto of 1603. The other quartos and folios read as in the text, probably by oversight. But see Lucrece, 902:

'The poor, lame, blind, halt, creep, cry out for thee.'

And The Merchant of Venice, iii. 1. 64, 65: 'Warned and cooled by the same winter and summer.'

152. *the rose of the fair state*, chief flower and ornament of the state, fair because it was so decorated. For a similar proleptic use of the adjective see Macbeth, iii. 4. 76:

'Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal.'

The weal was gentle after it had been so purged.

154. *of*, used, as it is frequently, where we only use 'by.'

155. *deject*, dejected. Compare Troilus and Cressida, ii. 2. 50:

'Reason and respect

Make livers pale and lustihood deject.'

For similar forms of the participle in which the final *-ed* is omitted after *d* and *t*, see Abbott, § 342.

156. *the honey of his music vows*. Another mixed metaphor. See line 59.

159. *blown*. The metaphor from a flower, as in 152, is resumed here. See Antony and Cleopatra, iii. 13. 39, 'the blown rose'; and Hamlet, iii. 5. 81.

160. *ecstasy*. See ii. 1. 102.

163, 164. For the double negative see note on i. 2. 158.

165. *on brood*, brooding. Compare 'on sleep,' 'on live,' 'on high,' 'on ground,' 'on board,' &c.

166. *doubt*. See i. 2. 256.

*Ib. the hatch and the disclose*. For verbs of this form see i. 1. 57. 'Disclose' is the technical term for the young birds chipping their shell. See v. 1. 276, and i. 3. 40, where it is used of buds. Compare Gervase Markham's Husbandry (1676), p. 112: 'The best time to set Hens to have the best, largest, and most kindly Chickens, is in February, in the increase of the Moon, so that she may hatch or disclose her Chickens in the increase of the next new Moon.'

167. *for to*. Compare Winter's Tale, i. 2. 427:

'Forbid the sea for to obey the moon.'

169. *shall . . . to England*. The verb of motion is frequently omitted after an auxiliary. See ii. 2. 484.

172. *variable*, various. Compare iv. 3. 24, and Coriolanus, ii. 1. 228:

'Ridges horsed

With variable complexions.'

174. *puts*. The singular is used, as if 'the beating of his brains' had preceded as nominative.

175. *fashion of himself*, ordinary habits and bearing.

*Ib. on 't*, of it, as i. 1. 55.

183. *round*. See ii. 2. 140.

184. *in the ear*, within hearing.

185. *If she find him not*, if she does not discover his secret. In All's Well that Ends Well, ii. 3. 216, 'found' is used in the sense of 'found out,' with a pun upon its usual meaning: 'I have now found thee: when I lose thee again, I care not.' See the old play of Sir Thomas More (Shakespeare Soc. ed.), p. 12: 'I finde ye, sir, I finde ye well enough.' And Heywood, First Part of King Edward the Fourth (Works, i. 76): 'Oh, I haue found him now.'

### Scene II.

3. *lief*. From the Anglo-Saxon *leof*, dear. The word is spelt 'live,' or 'lieve,' in the quartos and folios. See Troilus and Cressida, i. 2. 114: 'I had as lief Helen's golden tongue had commended Troilus for a copper nose.'

4. *Nor do not*. See note on i. 2. 158.

8. *robustious* occurs in Henry V, iii. 7. 159: 'The men do sympathize

with the mastiffs in robustious and rough coming on.' And Drayton, *Polyolbion*, i. 250 :

'Through dikes and riuers make, in this robustious play.'

9. *periwig-pated*. Periwigs (the word is derived from the French *perruque*) were worn by actors, not as yet commonly by gentlemen. See *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. 4. 196, and *Comedy of Errors*, ii. 2. 76.

10. *split the ears*. Compare *Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 2. 32 : 'I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.'

*Ib. groundlings*, those who stood on the ground in the pit of the theatre. Nares quotes *Lady Alimony*, i. 1 : 'Besides, sir, all our galleries and groundstands are furnished, and the groundlings within the yard grow infinitely unruly.' The 'groundlings,' it seems, paid one penny for admission. 'Tut! give me the penny, give me the penny! I care not for the gentlemen, I—let me have a good ground.' (Ben Jonson, *The Case is Alter'd*, i. 1.) In the same play, ii. 4, they are called 'the rude barbarous crew, a people that have no brains, and yet grounded judgments; these will hiss anything that mounts above their grounded capacities.' Compare also the *Induction to Bartholomew Fair*, p. 366, ed. Gifford, where the groundlings are called 'the understanding gentlemen o' the ground'; and Decker, *Gull's Hornbook*, c. 6.

13. *Termagant*, in Italian *Trivigante*, was a deity supposed to be worshipped by the Saracens, and frequently represented in the mystery-plays of the middle ages, though none in English containing this character are now known to be extant. But the frequent allusions to *Termagant* show that the character must have been familiar to the English. Todd, in his note on *The Fairy Queen*, vi. 7. 47, quotes Bale's *Acts of English Votaries*: 'Grennyng upon her, like *Termagautes* in a play.' Spenser spells it 'Turmagant.' In *Sir Beues of Hamtoun*, line 659, it is spelt 'Teruagannt.' It occurs as 'Termagaunt' in Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, 15221. Shakespeare uses it as an adjective, *1 Henry IV*, v. 4. 114 : 'that hot termagant Scot.'

*Ib. out-herods*. We have a similar compound in *All's Well that Ends Well*, iv. 3. 305 : 'He hath out-villained villany.'

*Ib. Herod*. A favourite character in the mystery-plays, and of course a furious tyrant. See Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, 3384 :

'He pleyeth Herod on a scaffold hye.'

In the *Coventry miracle-play of the Nativity*, Marriott, p. 83, where Herod appears, after a violent speech the stage-direction follows : 'Here Erode ragis in thys pagond, and in the strete also.' Magnus Herodes is the title of one of the scenes in the *Towneley Mysteries*, p. 140 (ed. Surtees Society).

19. *from*, contrary to. So in *Julius Cæsar*, i. 3. 35, 'Clean from the

purpose'; 1 Henry IV, iii. 2. 31, 'Quite from the flight of all thy ancestors'; and Ben Jonson's Fox, iii. 2, p. 243, vol. ed. Gifford.

23. *pressure*. See i. 5. 100. So 'impressure' is used in As You Like It, iii. 5. 23.

*Ib. come tardy off*, i. e. too feebly represented, where the actor, as it were, limps behind the true conception of the character. Compare Ben Jonson, Every Man out of his Humour, iv. 6: 'It came too perfectly off.' For 'tardy' see Richard II, ii. 1. 22. For the participle 'come' similarly used without 'being' or 'having' compare Lucrece, 1784:

'Weak words, so thick come in his poor heart's aid.'

25. *censure*, judgement, as in i. 3. 69.

*Ib. the which one*. So the folios. The quartos omit 'the.' Whichever reading we follow, it must mean 'the judicious man singly.'

29, 30. *nor man*. So the quartos. The folios have 'or Norman,' the quarto of 1603 'nor Turke,' and Farmer guessed 'nor Mussulman.' 'Nor man' means 'nor even man.'

31. *had made men*. Perhaps we should read 'them' with Rann, as Theobald indeed had suggested, or 'em,' or with Farmer, 'the men.'

33. *indifferently*. See iii. 1. 122.

35. In the infancy of the English Drama the clown made fun for the audience by extemporized buffoonery, of which the quarto of 1603 gives some specimens in the passage corresponding to this. Tarleton was an actor who enjoyed a great reputation for this kind of wit.

37. *there be of them*. For this partitive use of the preposition, see Leviticus iv. 16: 'The priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood.'

38. *barren*, witless, foolish. So Midsummer Night's Dream, iii. 2. 13:

'The shallowest thickskin of that barren sort.'

43. *presently*, immediately, as in ii. 2. 171.

50. *conversation*, converse, intercourse.

*Ib. coped withal*, encountered with. In Merchant of Venice, iv. 1. 412, 'to cope' means to reward.

55. *candied*, covered with a coating of hypocrisy. Compare iii. 1. 48.

*Ib. absurd*. In all other passages Shakespeare accents this word on the second syllable as we do.

56. Shakespeare has here unconsciously made a bold use of the figure synecdoche, when he makes 'the candied tongue' 'crook the hinges of the knee.' Of course by 'the candied tongue' he really means the flatterer himself.

*Ib. pregnant*. Johnson interprets the word in this place as meaning 'quick, ready, prompt.' Nares prefers 'artful, designing, full of deceit.' So the Devil is called 'the pregnant enemy,' Twelfth Night, ii. 2. 29.

But we have 'pregnant to good pity,' King Lear, iv. 6. 227, and 'pregnant and vouchsafed ear,' Twelfth Night, iii. 1. 100, which passages seem to support the interpretation 'ready to bow at the owner's bidding.' In this sense it is opposed to 'stubborn.' See iii. 3. 70.

*Ib. hinges of the knee.* Compare Timon of Athens, iv. 3. 211.

57. *thrift*, gain, as in Merchant of Venice, i. 1. 175:

'I have a mind presages me such thrift.'

In i. 2. 180 of this play, it means economy, saving.

58. *dear.* See i. 2. 182.

59. *of men distinguish.* Compare a similar construction, 2 Henry VI, ii. 1. 130: 'Sight may distinguish of colours.'

59, 60. This is the reading and punctuation of the folios. The quartos read:

'distinguish her election,  
S'hath (i. e. she hath) seal'd,' &c.

In using the words 'election' and 'sealed' the author perhaps was unconsciously imitating the language of the New Testament. Compare John vi. 27.

64. *blood and judgement* are opposed, as passion and reason. For this sense of 'blood,' compare King Lear, iv. 2. 64:

'Were't my fitness  
To let these hands obey my blood.'

See also Hamlet, i. 3. 6, 116.

65, 66. Compare lines 332 sqq. of this scene.

67. 'From this speech, Anthony Scoloker, in his Daiphantus, or The Passions of Love, 1604, has stolen the following lines:

"Oh, I would wear her in my heart's-heart-gore." (Donce.)

Should not 'gore' be 'core'?

74. *with the very comment of thy soul*, with all thy powers of observation.

75. *occulted*, concealed. The word seems to occur in this place only.

76. *unkennel.* Compare Merry Wives of Windsor, iii. 3. 174: 'I'll warrant we'll unkennel the fox.'

79. *stithy*, a smithy, forge, the place where the stith, or anvil, stands. We have the word as a verb, meaning 'to forge,' in Troilus and Cressida, iv. 5. 255: 'The forge that stithied Mars his helm.' It also denoted the anvil itself, as in Coverdale's rendering of Job xli. 24: 'His hert is as harde as a stone, and as fast as the stythye that the hammer man smyteth vpon.'

82. *ccnsure.* See i. 3. 69.

*Ib. seeming*, appearance. Compare 2 Henry IV, v. 2. 129:

'Rotten opinion, who hath writ me down  
After my seeming.'

84. *pay the theft*, i. e. pay for the thing stolen. Compare Romeo and Juliet, i. 1. 244: 'I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.' And for 'theft' in the sense of the thing stolen, see Exodus xxii. 4: 'If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive,' &c.

85. *idle*, not 'unoccupied,' but foolish, light-headed, crazy; a sense in which it is still used in Suffolk. Compare iii. 4. 11, and King Lear, i. 3. 16:

'Idle old man,  
That still would manage those authorities  
That he hath given away!'

In the quarto of 1603, in the interview between Hamlet and his mother, the Queen says:

'But Hamlet, this is onely fantasie,  
And for my loue forget these idle fits.

*Ham.* Idle, no mother, my pulse doth beate like yours,  
It is not madnesse that possesseth Hamlet.'

86. Danish March. The stage direction of the folios, after l. 84; and the rest is substantially given in them.

88. *the chameleon's dish*. This animal was popularly believed to feed on air. See Two Gentlemen of Verona, ii. 1. 179: 'Though the chameleon love can feed on the air.' A grave discussion of the question will be found in Sir Thomas Browne's *Vulgar Errors*, iii. 21.

92, 93. *you played once i' the University*. The halls of the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge were the scenes of theatrical performances on special occasions, such as Commencement at Cambridge, or the visit of royal or distinguished personages. In 1564, on Sunday evening, August the 6th, Queen Elizabeth saw the *Aulularia* of Plautus in the antechapel of King's College Chapel. On the occasion of the visit of James I and Prince Charles to Cambridge in 1614 plays were performed in the Hall of Trinity College; among them the comedies of *Ignoramus* and *Albumazar*, which have escaped oblivion. On the title-page of the quarto of Hamlet 1603, it is said, 'As it hath beene diuerse times acted by his Highnesse seruants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Vniuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where.'

96. *enact*, act, perform. Compare Richard III, v. 4. 2:

'The king enacts more wonders than a man.'

So 'enactures' for 'actions' in this play, iii. 2. 172.

97. *Julius Cæsar*. Malone conjectured that an English play on this subject had existed before Shakespeare's was written. One in Latin was acted at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1582. It is now known that a piece called *Cæsar's Fall* was played in 1602 by Antony Munday, Drayton, Webster, Middleton and others, and it is probable that the *Julius Cæsar* of Shakespeare may have appeared as early as 1601.



98. *i' the Capitol.* This mistake is repeated in Julius Cæsar, and is found in Chaucer's Monk's Tale, line 16191. Cæsar was assassinated in the Curia Pompeii, near the theatre of Pompey in the Campus Martius.

101. *stay upon, await.* So in Macbeth, i. 3. 148 :

'Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.'

108. *your only jig maker.* A jig was not only a lively dance, as in Twelfth Night, i. 3. 138, and Much Ado about Nothing, ii. 1. 77, but a humorous ballad or dialogue. See Cotgrave (French Dict.), 'Farce : f. A (fond and dissolnte) Play, Comedie, or Enterlude ; also, the Iyg at the end of an Enterlude, wherein some pretie knauerie is acted.'

110. *within's.* So both quartos and folios. Pope, following the quarto of 1603, read 'within these.'

113. *for I'll have a suit of sables.* This is the reading of all the quartos and folios, including the quarto of 1603. Those who, like Warburton and Staunton, understand by 'a suit of sables' a suit of sable or black, would read 'fore' instead of 'for.' But it is not certain that the plural 'sables' is ever used like the singular in this sense. Cotgrave has 'Sebelline, Martre Sebel. The Sable Martin ; the beast whose skinne we call Sables.' It clearly denotes the fur which was used for the trimming of rich robes worn by persons of a grave and dignified character. It seems that in this passage there is an intended contrast combined with a play upon words. Hamlet having mentioned 'black,' the word which suggests itself as a contrast to it is one which might be confounded with it. In Massinger's Old Law, ii. 1, there is a similar quivoque :

'A cunning grief,

That's only faced with sables for a show,

But gawdy-hearted.'

It does not seem to be clear from this passage, as might at first appear, that 'sables' were the trimming of mourning garments. They were the attributes of a grave and decorous dress, and so properly contrasted with 'gands,' as the sables and weeds of age are in this play, iv. 7. 79, with the careless livery of youth. Prof. Elze (Athenæum, 11 June 1881) quotes Kyd, Spanish Tragedy, Act iv. (Dodsley's Plays, ed. Hazlitt, v. 144) :

'Clothed in a sable and a saffron robe,'

to prove that bright-coloured robes were trimmed with sable.

115. *by'r lady,* that is, 'by our lady.' A common exclamation. See Much Ado about Nothing, iii. 3. 89 : 'By'r lady, I think it be so.' Compare 'Marry' for 'Mary' in lines 120, 212.

117. *thinking on, remembrance.* See Two Gentlemen of Verona, i. 1. 12 :

'Think on thy Proteus, when thou haply seest

Some rare note-worthy object in thy travel.'

117. *the hobby-horse*, a figure in the country Morris-dances and May-games, the opposition to which on the part of the Puritans of the time may, as Warburton suggests, have provoked satirical ballads, from which Hamlet quotes a line or two. 'The hobby-horse is forgot' occurs again in *Love's Labour's Lost*, iii. 1. 30, and in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Women Pleased*, iv. 1, 'Shall the hobby-horse be forgot then?' See also Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, ii. i. p. 524, ed. Gifford, and Kemp's *Nine Daies Wonder* (1600), sig. B 2 verso:

'With hey and ho, through thicke and thin,  
The hobby horse quite forgotten,  
I follow'd as I did begin,  
Although the way were rotten.'

118. The stage direction is substantially given in the folios.

120. *miching mallecho*, that is, sneaking or skulking mischief. Shakespeare used 'micher' in the sense of 'truant.' 'Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a micher and eat blackberries?' *1 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 451. Minsheu (*The Guide into Tongues*) gives 'To Miche, or secretly to hide himselfe out of the way, as Truants doe from schoole.' It was also spelt and pronounced 'meech.' See Beaumont and Fletcher's *Scornful Lady*, v. 1:

'Sure she has  
Some meeching rascal in her house.'

'Mallecho' is the Spanish *malhecho*. It is printed 'Mallico' in the quartos and 'Malicho' in the folios. Capell conjectured that 'Malhecho' in the Spanish drama corresponded to the Iniquity of the old English moralities.

121. *Belike*, perhaps. See iii. 2. 264, and *Richard II*, iii. 3. 30.

*Ib. argument*, plot; as in ii. 2. 345.

127. *posy of a ring*, the motto on a ring, generally in verse. See *Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 147-150, and Fairholt's *Costume in England*, p. 568.

130. *cart*, chariot. An archaism purposely affected to suit the fustian of the speech. Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, line 2043, has

'The statue of Mars upon a carte stood.'

So in North's *Plutarch*, *Sylla* (1579), p. 513: 'Wherby he tooke away the force of all their armed cartes with sythes.'

131. *salt wash*. Not, as Delius interprets, the land which at high water is washed by the sea, but obviously the sea itself.

*Ib. orbed*, round, spherical. Compare *A Lover's Complaint*, line 25:

'Sometime diverted their poor balls are tied  
To the orbed earth.'

And *Twelfth Night*, v. 1. 278:

'And all those swearings keep as true in soul  
As doth that orb'd continent the fire  
That severs day from night.'

132. *sheen*, lustre. Compare *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii. 1. 29:

'By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen.'

135. *commutual*, an intensified form of 'mutual,' like 'commixture' for 'mixture,' and 'corrival' for 'rival.'

139. *cheer*, cheerfulness. See *Richard III*, v. 3. 74:

'I have not that alacrity of spirit

Nor cheer of mind, that I was wont to have.'

The word originally signified face, countenance, from Fr. *chère* (compare *Merchant of Venice*, iii. 2. 314); hence, 'to be of good cheer' was to exhibit joy in the face. It was then applied to that which produces gratification, and denotes entertainment or fare, as in iii. 2. 194.

140. *I distrust you*, I am filled with distrust on your account. Compare i. 3. 51, 'O fear me not.'

141. The quartos read after this line,

'For women feare too much, even as they love,  
And womens,' &c.

The reading in the text is that of the folios. Johnson conjectured that a line was lost, ending with a rhyme to 'love.'

142. *holds*. For the construction compare *Venus and Adonis*, 988:

'Despair and hope makes thee ridiculous.'

'Hold quantity' = keep their relative proportion. So in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 1. 232, 'quantity' = proportion:

'Things base and vile, holding no quantity,  
Love can transpose to form and dignity.'

In mathematical language fear would be said to vary directly as love.

145. *sized*. Theobald compares *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 15. 4:

'Our size of sorrow,  
Proportion'd to our cause, must be as great  
As that which makes it.'

146. *littlest*. Still used in some provincial dialects for 'smallest.' Compare *Beaumont and Fletcher*, *Queen of Corinth*, iv. 1:

'To hold

The poorest, littlest page in reverence.'

149. *opcrant*, active. Compare *Timon of Athens*, iv. 3. 25:

'Sauce his palate

With thy most operant poison.'

*Ib. leave*, leave off, cease. Compare i. 2. 155, and *Richard II*, v. 2. 4: 'Where did I leave?'

157. *instances*, motives, inducements. Compare Henry V, ii. 2. 119:  
 ‘But he that temper’d thee bade thee stand up,  
 Gave thee no instance why thou shouldst do treason.’

158. *respects*. See iii. 1. 68.

*Ib. thwift*. See iii. 2. 57.

159. *kill dead*. A reduplication which occurs again in Titus Andronicus, iii. 1. 92:

‘He that wounded her

Hath hurt me more than had he killed me dead.’

161, 162. Observe the rhyme.

164. *validity*, strength. See King’s Lectures on Jonas, p. 182:  
 ‘Take me with force and validity of armes.’ It is also used in the sense of worth; as in All’s Well that Ends Well, v. 3. 192:

‘This ring

Whose high respect and rich validity

Did lack a parallel.’

166. *fall . . . when they mellow be*. A change of construction from the singular to the plural, probably due to the intervening word ‘fruit.’ The German editor Tschischwitz goes so far as to say that ‘sticks’ is an archaic plural, but this is only one of many eccentricities with which his commentary abounds.

167. *necessary*, inevitable. See Julius Cæsar, ii. 2. 36.

171, 172. *The violence . . . destroy*. Another instance of the verb agreeing in number with the nearer substantive ‘enactures.’ Compare i. 2. 38. This is more natural than to suppose with Delius that ‘violence’ referring both to grief and joy is a kind of plural.

172. *enactures*, enactments, resolutions. Perhaps it may have the further meaning of carrying purposes into execution.

175. *nor ’tis not*. For the double negative see i. 2. 158.

178. *Whether*, a monosyllable, as in Tempest, v. 1. 111. So ‘neither’ in Merchant of Venice, i. 1. 178; ‘either,’ in Measure for Measure, ii. 2. 96; ‘whither,’ in Hamlet, i. 5. 1.

*Ib. or else*, a reduplication, like ‘or ere,’ ‘an if.’ It occurs in Genesis xlii. 16.

182. *not needs*. For this construction compare Tempest, ii. 1. 121:

‘I not doubt

He came alive to land.’

And Much Ado about Nothing, iv. 1. 175: ‘She not denies it.’

184. *seasons*, ripens, brings to maturity in his true character.

185. *begun*, for ‘began,’ as in Richard II, i. 1. 158:

‘Good uncle, let this end where it begun.’

194. *an anchor’s cheer*, an anchorite’s, or hermit’s fare. The A.S. is *ancor*, or *ancor*, abbreviated from the Greek ἀναχωρητής, one who is

withdrawn from the world. It is applied both to men and women. Compare The Vision of Piers Ploughman, l. 55 :

‘As aneres and heremites,  
That holden hem in hire selles.’

The Ancren Riwele, or the Rules of Nuns, is one of the most valuable publications of the Camden Society.

194. *my scope*, my utmost aim.

195. *opposite*, an opponent, here denotes any obstacle to joy. For the literal sense see v. 2. 62, and Twelfth Night, iii. 4. 293 : ‘He is indeed, sir, the most skilful, bloody, and fatal opposite that you could possibly have found in any part of Illyria.’

*Ib. blanks*, blanches, makes pale, as with fear.

200. *deeply sworn*. Compare King John, iii. 1. 231 : ‘Deep-sworn faith.’

212. *Tropically*, figuratively. The quarto of 1603 reads ‘trapolically’ as if a pun were intended, which indeed may be the case.

216. *free*. See ii. 2. 544.

*Ib. let the galled jade wince*. Steevens quotes from Edwards’s Damon and Pythias, 1582 : ‘I know the gall’d horse will soonest wince.’ See Lyly’s Euphues, p. 119 (ed. Arber) : ‘For well I know none will winch except she bee gawlded.’ See also Mother Bombie, i. 3, and Stubbes, Anatomy of Abuses, Epist. Dedic. (New Shakspeare Soc. ed.) p. vi : ‘None but the wicked and peruerse, whose gawld backes are tutched, will repyne against mee.’

217. *our withers are unwrung*. The withers of a horse is the part between the shoulders. Compare 1 Henry IV, ii. 1. 7 : ‘Poor jade, is wrung in the withers out of all cess.’ And Markham’s Maister Peece (1615), lib. ii. ch. 40 : ‘Both to a horses withers, and also to his backe, do happen many infirmities and sorrances, some proceeding from inward causes, as of the corruption of humors, and sometime of outward causes, as through the galling, pinching, & wringing of some naughty saddle.’

219. *a chorus*, which explained the action of the play, as in Winter’s Tale, Romeo and Juliet, Henry V, and Gower in Pericles.

224, 225. ‘*The croaking raven, &c.*’ Compare The True Tragedie of Richard III (ed. Hazlitt, p. 117) :

‘The screeking Rauen sits croking for reuenge.

Whole hea[r]ds of beasts comes bellowing for renenge.’

227. *Confederate season*, the opportunity conspiring to assist the murderer.

229. *Hecate*, a disyllable, as in Macbeth, ii. 1. 52, and elsewhere.

231. *On wholesome life usurp*. Compare Pericles, iii. 2. 82 :

‘Death may usurp on nature many hours.’

*Ib. wholesome*, healthy. See iii. 4. 65.

233. *writ*. See i. 2. 27.

242. Compare As You Like It, ii. 1, 33, &c.

*Ib. stricken*, the reading of the quarto of 1603. The folios have 'strucken,' and the early quartos 'strooken,' or 'stroken.'

247. *turn Turk*. To 'turn Turk' is to change completely, as from a Christian to an infidel. Compare Much Ado about Nothing, iii. 4. 57: 'Well, an you be not turned Turk, there's no more sailing by the star.'

*Ib. Provincial roses*, that is, rosettes of ribbon in the shape of roses of Provins, or Provence. Douce favours the former, Warton the latter locality. Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives both: 'Rose de Provence. The Prouince Rose, the double Damaske Rose'; and 'Rose de Provins. The ordinarie double red Rose.' In either case it was a large rose. 'The Province or damask Rose was probably the better known. Gerarde, in his Herbal, says that the damask rose is called by some 'Rosa provincialis.' Mr. Fairholt (Costume in England, p. 238) quotes from Friar Bacon's Prophecy, 1604:

'When roses in the garden grew,  
And not in ribbons on a shoe:  
Now ribbon roses take such place,  
That garden roses want their grace.'

At p. 579 he gives several instances of the extravagances to which this fashion led.

248. *razed shoes*, shoes slashed or streaked in patterns. Stubbes, in his Anatomie of Abuses, quoted by Steevens, has a chapter on corked shoes, which he describes as 'some of black veluet, some of white, some of red, some of greene, razed, carued, cut, and stitched all ouer with Silke' (fol. 28, ed. 1585). In Randle Holme's Academy of Armory, Book iii. ch. i. p. 14, we find, 'Pinked or raised Shooes, have the over leathers grain part cut into Roses, or other devices.'

*Ib. cry*, company. Used of a pack of hounds, and metaphorically in Coriolanus, iii. 3. 120: 'You common cry of curs!' and again iv. 6. 148: 'You have made

Good work, you and your cry!'

Compare Cotgrave (French Dict.): 'Meute: f. A kennell, or crie of hounds.'

250. *share*. In Henslowe's Diary (pp. 5, 8) are memoranda of £15 being lent to Francis Henslowe for a share with the Queen's players, and £9 for a half share with another company.

255. *pajock*. This is the reading of the third and fourth folios. The other editions have 'paiock,' 'paiocke,' or 'pajocke,' and in the later quartos the word was changed to 'paicoock' and 'pecock,' whence Pope printed 'peacock.' Dyce says that in Scotland he had often heard the peacock called the 'pea-jock.' Mr. McGrath, in Notes and Queries,

conjectures that the word is the same as 'patchocke' which occurs in Spenser's View of the Present State of Ireland. It is said of the English settled in that country that 'some in Leinster and Ulster are degenerate, and grown to be as very patchockes as the wild Irish' (p. 636, Globe ed.). The latter word may be from the Italian *pazzuccio*. Mr. E. B. Nicholson (Academy, 17 Aug. 1878) conjectures that 'pajock' = pad-jock = pad-ass.

262. *recorders*. The recorder was a kind of flageolet, or flute with a mouthpiece. Milton (Paradise Lost, i. 551) distinguishes 'flutes and soft recorders,' and from Bacon's description of the instrument it had evidently a mouthpiece (Natural History, cent. ii. § 161). Shakespeare uses the word again in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. i. 123: 'He hath played on his prologue like a child on a recorder.'

264. *perdy*, corrupted from *par Dieu*, as in *Comedy of Errors*, iv. 4. 74.

270. *marvellous*, adjective for adverb, as in i. 1. 8.

*Ib. distempered*, disordered, distracted in mind, by passion or emotion. See *Tempest*, iv. 1. 145:

'Never till this day

Saw I him touch'd with anger so distemper'd.'

The word was also used of bodily disorder, and so Hamlet pretends to understand it. Compare 2 *Henry IV*, iii. 1. 41: 'It is but as a body yet distemper'd.'

272. *choler*, anger. See 1 *Henry IV*, i. 3. 129:

'What, drunk with choler? stay and pause awhile.'

And Richard II, i. 1. 153:

'Let's purge this choler without letting blood.'

273. *should*, for 'would,' as in ii. 2. 203.

*Ib. more richer*. Compare 'more better,' *Tempest*, i. 2. 19, and 'more braver,' *Tempest*, i. 2. 439.

275. *put him to his purgation*. A play upon the legal and medical senses of the word. For the former see *As You Like It*, v. 4. 45: 'If any man doubt that, let him put me to my purgation.'

277. *frame*. Compare *Measure for Measure*, v. 1. 61:

'Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense.'

284. *wholesome*, sane, sound, sensible. So *Coriolanus*, ii. 3. 66:

~'Speak to 'em, I pray you,

In wholesome manner.'

285. *pardon*, permission to leave, as in i. 2. 56.

294. *amazement*, perturbation of mind from whatever cause. Compare 1 *Peter* iii. 6.

294. *admiration*. See i. 2. 192.

298. *closet*. See ii. 1. 77.

300. *shall*. See ii. 1. 3.

301. *trade*, business, dealings. Compare Twelfth Night, iii. 1. 83: 'My niece is desirous you should enter, if your trade be to her.'
303. *these pickers and stealers*, that is, these hands. The phrase 'picking and stealing' in the Catechism is familiar, and probably suggested this. 'By this hand!' is a frequent form of asseveration. See Tempest, iii. 2. 56, 78; Merchant of Venice, v. 1. 161; and compare 2 Henry VI, i. 3. 193, 'By these ten bones, my lord.'
304. *your cause of distemper*, the cause of your disorder. So 'your sovereignty of reason' in i. 4. 73.
309. See i. 2. 111, &c.
310. 'While the grass grows the steed starves' is the proverb in full.
312. *To withdraw with you*. For this use of the infinitive compare iii. 4. 213, and King John, i. 1. 236: 'Marry, to confess.' Editors have supposed a corruption of the text to exist. Mason conjectured 'So, withdraw you,' or 'So, withdraw, will you?' Malone added the stage direction, 'Taking Guildenstern aside.' Steevens supposed that Hamlet referred to some gesture used by Guildenstern to suggest a private interview, and read the words interrogatively, 'To withdraw with you?' Staunton imagines them to be addressed to the players, and suggests, 'So, (*taking a recorder*) withdraw with you.'
313. *to recover the wind of me*, a hunting term, signifying to get to windward of the game so as to startle it and make it run in the direction of the toil. Compare Beaumont and Fletcher, The Woman's Prize, iv. 4:  
 'How daintily and cunningly you drive me  
 Up like a deer to the toil! yet I may leap it;  
 And what's the woodman then?'  
 See Cotgrave (Fr. Dict.) s. v. Relancer: 'Relancer vn lievre, To recouer her, or put her off the squat.'
316. Tyrwhitt proposed to read '*not unmannerly*.' Probably Shakespeare intended Guildenstern's words to express an unmeaning compliment. As Hamlet did not well understand them, commentators may be excused from attempting to explain them.
323. *know no touch*. So Richard II, 1. 3. 165:  
 'Put into his hands  
 That knows no touch to turn the harmony.'
324. *ventages*, the holes of the recorder.
325. *thumb*. The quarto of 1604, and that printed from it, read 'the umber,' a mere misprint corrected in the following quartos.
338. *frct*. 'Frcts' on a lute or guitar are pieces of wire fastened on the body of the instrument to serve as guides to the fingers.
349. *by and by*, immediately. Compare Matthew xiii. 21, where 'by and by' translates εὐθὺς.



350. *to the top of my bent*, to the height of my inclination. For 'bent' compare Cymbeline, i. 1. 13:

'Although they wear their faces to the bent  
Of the king's looks.'

357. The reading in the text is that of the folios. In the quartos it is  
'And do such business as the bitter day,' &c.

358. *Soft!* Compare i. 1. 126, and iii. 1. 88.

360. *Nero*, the murderer of his mother Agrippina. Compare King John, v. 2. 152:

'You bloody Neroes, ripping up the womb  
Of your dear mother England.'

362. *speak daggers*. Compare iii. 4. 92, and Much Ado about Nothing, ii. 1. 255: 'She speaks poniards and every word stabs.' See Proverbs xii. 18.

364. *shent*, reprov'd, rebuked, as in Twelfth Night, iv. 2. 112: 'I am shent for speaking to you.'

365. 'To give seals' to, or confirm, his words would be to use daggers as well as speak them. Hamlet shrinks from the guilt of matricide.

### Scene III.

4. *shall along*. Adverbs of direction are frequently used without the verb. So in Winter's Tale, v. 2. 121, 'Let's along.' And in Julius Cæsar, iii. 1. 119, 'Shall we forth?' See also Hamlet, iii. 4. 197.

6. *so near us*. The earlier quartos read 'neer's,' the folios 'dangerous.' The former, which we have adopted, is better suited to the context.

7. *lunacies*. So the folios. The quartos have 'browes,' perhaps a misprint for 'lunes,' which Theobald introduced into the text.

9. *many many*. Compare Henry V, iv. 2. 33: 'A very little little let us do'; and 'too too,' Hamlet, i. 2. 129.

11. *The single and peculiar life* means the private individual, as contrasted with the king.

13. *noyance*, harm. Here used in a stronger sense than our modern 'annoyance.' Spenser, however (Fairy Queen, i. 1. 23), has it with the weaker meaning:

'A cloud of cumbrons gnattes doe him molest,  
All striving to infixe their feeble stinges  
That from their noyance he no where can rest.'

14. For 'weal' the folios misprint 'spirit.'

*Ib. depends and rests*. See note on i. 2. 38.

15. *The cease of majesty* is used here for the king dying, as 'life,' in line 11, is used for the living man.

16. *gulf*, whirlpool. Compare Henry V, ii. 4. 10:  
 'For England his approaches makes as fierce  
 As waters to the sucking of a gulf.'
17. *massy*, massive. Compare Tempest, iii. 3. 67:  
 'Your swords are now too massy for your strengths.'
21. *annexment*. This word is not found elsewhere.
29. *home*, thoroughly. Compare iii. 4. 1, and Cymbeline, iii. 5. 92:  
 'Satisfy me home  
 What is become of her.'
32. *them*, i. e. mothers.
- 32, 33. To 'o'er-hear of vantage' is to overhear from an advantageous position, such as Polonius would have when he could hear without Hamlet knowing that he was present.
38. Hanmer mended the defective metre by reading 'Pray, alas! I cannot.'
39. For 'will' Hanmer read 't will,' and Warburton 'th' ill.' But no change is required.
46. *To wash it white as snow*. Shakespeare doubtless had Psalm li. 7 in his mind.
47. *to confront the visage of offence* is to oppose directly, and so to break down, the sin.
50. *pardon'd*. So the folios. The quartos have 'pardon.'
56. *retain the offence*, retain the advantages gained by the offence. So 'theft' is used in a similar sense, iii. 2. 84, meaning the thing stolen. So also 'ambition' in line 55 means the attainment of ambition's end.
- 57, 58. These lines offer an example of that confusion of metaphor so frequent in Shakespeare. Compare iii. 1. 59.
61. *lies*. Here Shakespeare uses the word in its legal sense.
62. *his*, neuter possessive.
- Ib. we ourselves compell'd*. The substantive verb is omitted, as in i. 2. 90, and Richard II, iv. 1. 129: 'And he himself not present.'
64. *To give in evidence*, to give evidence. See North's Plutarch, Julius Cæsar (1579), p. 764: 'And he had diuers cities of Græce that gaue in evidence against him.'
- Ib. rests*, remains. Compare 3 Henry VI, iv. 2. 13: 'And now what rests?'
68. *limed*, caught with bird-lime. Compare 2 Henry VI, ii. 4. 54:  
 'Have all limed bushes to betray thy wings.'
69. *engaged*, hampered, entangled.
73. *pat*, now. So the folios. The quartos read tamely 'but now.' Compare King Lear, i. 2. 146: 'Pat he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy.'
75. *That would be scann'd*, that ought to be closely examined. Com-

pare 'will,' iv. 5. 3, and Macbeth, i. 7. 34; iv. 3. 194; and see Abbott, § 329.

79. *hire and salary.* So the folios. The quartos, by a singular misprint, have 'base and silly.'

80. *full of bread.* A scriptural phrase. Compare Ezekiel xvi. 49.

81. *broad blown.* Compare what the Ghost says of himself, i. 5. 76, &c.

*Ib. flush.* So the quartos. The folios have 'fresh.' 'Flush' means full of sap and vigour. Compare Antony and Cleopatra, i. 4. 52, 'Flush youth revolt'; and Timon of Athens, v. 4. 8, 'The time is flush.' See also 1 Henry IV, iv. 1. 101.

83. *our circumstance and course of thought,* i. e. the circumstance and course of our thought. We have a similar use of the possessive pronoun, i. 4. 73, and iii. 2. 304. Delius however joins 'our' to 'circumstance,' explaining thus: 'to conclude according to human relations and thoughts.' But the words will hardly bear this meaning. In the Two Gentlemen of Verona, i. 1. 36, and in Troilus and Cressida, iii. 3. 114, 'circumstance' means the details of an argument. So here 'circumstance of thought' means the details over which thought ranges and from which its conclusions are formed.

85. *To take him,* in taking him. For this indefinite use of the infinitive see Abbott, §§ 356, 357.

88. *hent.* The substantive 'hent' does not seem to occur elsewhere. The fourth folio substituted 'bent,' and a late quarto, that of 1676, 'time.' Warburton conjectured 'hest,' and Capell adopted Theobald's guess 'hint.' 'Hent,' as a verb, occurs in Winter's Tale, iv. 3. 133, and in Measure for Measure, iv. 6. 14, meaning to seize, to occupy. If therefore the text be right, 'hent' is equivalent to 'grip,' and Hamlet, as he leaves hold of his sword, bids it wait for a more terrible occasion to be grasped again.

93. *trip,* trip up. See 2 Henry IV, v. 2. 87: 'To trip the course of law.'

#### Scene IV.

1. *home.* See iii. 3. 29.

2. *broad,* unrestrained, open. Compare Macbeth, iii. 6. 21, 'broad words.'

4. *heat,* the anger of the king.

*Ib. sconce.* This is Hanmer's emendation for 'silence,' the reading of the quartos and folios. In the corresponding passage of the quarto of 1603, Corambis says, 'Ile shrowde my selfe behinde the arras.' Compare Merry Wives of Windsor, iii. 3. 96: 'I will ensconce me behind the arras.'

5. *round*. See ii. 2. 140.

7. *fear me not*. See i. 3. 51.

14. *rood*, from A.S. *rôd*, cross, crucifix. The crucifix was placed over the screen between the nave and choir, hence called the 'rood-loft.' This oath is found in 2 Henry IV, iii. 2. 3, Richard III, iii. 2. 78, and Romeo and Juliet, i. 3. 36.

18. *budge*, stir. See Tempest, v. 1. 11 :

'They cannot budge till your release.'

38. *proof and bulwark*. 'Proof,' used here adjectivally, is originally a substantive, as in Macbeth, i. 2. 54, 'lapp'd in proof,' and other passages, and thus suggests 'bulwark,' which would scarcely have been used for an adjective had it stood alone.

*Ib.* *sense*, feeling. Compare Troilus and Cressida, i. 1. 58 :

'Spirit of sense

Hard as the palm of ploughman.'

39. *wag thy tongue*. So in Henry VIII, i. 1. 33 :

'No discerner

Durst wag his tongue in censure.'

40, 41. *Such an act That*. Compare Winter's Tale, i. 2. 263 :

'Such allow'd infirmities that honesty

Is never free of.'

44. *sets a blister there*, brands as a harlot. Compare Comedy of Errors, ii. 2. 138.

46. *contraction*, the making of the marriage contract. The word has probably never been used, before or since, in the same sense.

48. *rhapsody*. The meaning of the word here is well illustrated by the following passage from Florio's Montaigne, p. 68, ed. 1603 : 'This concerneth not those mingle-mangles of many kindes of stuffe, or as the Grecians call them *Rapsodies*.'

49. *this solidity and compound mass* means the earth. Compare Troilus and Cressida, i. 3. 85 :

'The heavens themselves, the planets and this centre.'

In Shakespeare's conception the earth was an immoveable mass at the centre of the universe. See note on ii. 2. 160.

50. *tristful*, sorrowful, occurs once more in Shakespeare, 1 Henry IV, ii. 4. 434 : 'My tristful queen.'

*Ib.* *the doom*. See Macbeth, ii. 3. 83 : 'The great doom's image.'

51. *thought-sick*, sick with anxiety. See iii. 1. 85.

*Ib.* *act*. Compare Macbeth, i. 3. 128 :

'As happy prologues to the swelling act

Of the imperial theme.'

52. *index*. The index, or table of contents, was usually prefixed to

the book in Shakespeare's time. Hence what Hamlet has said is termed the index, or preface, to his coming speech. Compare Othello, ii. 1. 263: 'An index and obscure prologue.' See also Richard III, ii. 2. 149.

53. Hamlet here points to two full-length portraits hanging on the wall of the queen's closet.

54. *counterfeit*. See Merchant of Venice, iii. 2. 116: 'Fair Portia's counterfeit'; i.e. her picture. Here of course the word is used as an adjective. It is given by Cotgrave as an equivalent to the French *pourtraict*.

*Ib.* *presentment*, representation. The word occurs in Timon of Athens, i. 1. 27, in a different sense. In Milton's Comus, line 156, we have,

'Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,  
And give it false presentments.'

56. *Hyperion*. See note on i. 2. 140.

58. *station*, attitude in standing. So in Antony and Cleopatra, iii. 3. 22:

'Her motion and her station are as one.'

*Ib.* Malone supposes that Shakespeare may have derived this image of Mercury 'New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill' from Phaer's Translation of the Æneid (ed. 1620), book iv. [line 246 &c.]:

'And now approaching neere, the top he seeth and mighty lims  
Of Atlas Mountain tough, that Heauen on boystrous shoulders  
beares,

. . . . .

There first on ground with wings of might doth Mercury arriue.' The first seven books of Phaer's translation were published in 1558, the whole Æneid in 1573, the two last books and the major part of the tenth being translated by Thomas Twyne.

65. *wholesome*. See iii. 2. 231, 284.

66, 67. The epithet 'fair' seems either to have suggested the word 'moor' in the following line or to have been suggested by it.

66. *leave*, leave off, cease. See line 34 of this scene, and ii. 1. 51. Compare also Lucrece, 148:

'So that in venturing ill we leave to be  
The things we are for that which we expect.'

67. *batten*, feed grossly, grow fat. Cotgrave gives 'to battle' as equivalent to 'Prendre chair,' s. v. 'Chair.' The word 'battels' is no doubt derived from the same root. Wedgwood connects it with Old English 'bet,' our 'better.' It occurs transitively in Marlowe's Jew of Malta, Act iii: 'Why, master, will you poison her with a mess of rice porridge? that will preserve life, make her round and plump, and

batten more than you are aware' (p. 163, ed. Dyce, 1862). So Milton, Lycidas, 29 :

'Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night.'

And intransitively in Ben Jonson's Fox, i. 1 : 'With these thoughts so battens.'

69. *hey-day* occurs only as an exclamation in three other passages of Shakespeare. Steevens quotes from a play of Ford :

'Must

The hey-day of your luxury be fed  
Up to a surfeit?'

The meaning is obvious, but the derivation uncertain.

71-76. *Sense* : . . . *difference*. Omitted in the folios.

71, 72. *Sense* is here, as in line 38, feeling, and *motion* is emotion, as in Measure for Measure, i. 4. 59 :

'The wanton stings and motions of the sense.'

Warburton unnecessarily changed it to 'notion.'

73. *apoplex'd*. We have 'apoplex,' for 'apoplexy,' in Ben Jonson's Fox, i. 1, p. 188, ed. Gifford : 'How does his apoplex?' And in Beaumont and Fletcher's Philaster, ii. 2 : 'She's as cold of her favour as an apoplex.' The word is not found in Shakespeare; for the reading 'apoplex' in 2 Henry IV, iv. 4. 130 is a conjectural emendation made by Pope for the metre's sake.

*Ib. madness would not err*, i.e. would not err so, the sense being completed by what follows.

74. *ecstasy*. See note on ii. 1. 102.

75. *quantity*, portion. Some disparagement is implied in the word, as in King John, v. 4. 23 :

'Retaining but a quantity of life.'

See also Hamlet, iii. 2. 38.

77. *cozen'd*, cheated. See Merchant of Venice, ii. 9. 38, and many other passages.

*Ib. hoodman-blind*, blind-man's buff. See All's Well that Ends Well, iv. 3. 136 : 'Hood-man comes.' Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives, 'Clignemusset. The childish play called Hodman blind, Harrie-racket, or are you all hid.'

78-81. *Eyes* . . . *mope*. Omitted in the folios.

79. *sans*. Compare As You Like It, ii. 7. 166 :

'Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.'

81. *mope*, be stupid, incapable of reason. See Tempest, v. 1. 239 :

'Even in a dream were we divided from them  
And were brought moping hither.'

83. *mutine*, mutiny. See Ben Jonson's Sejanus, iii. 1 :

'Had but thy legions there rebell'd or mutined.'

The verb 'mutine' does not occur again in Shakespeare. We have however 'mutine' as a substantive, v. 2. 6. Cotgrave gives 'Mutiner: to mutine,' and 'Mutinateur: a mutiner,' i.e. mutineer. This form 'mutiner' occurs in *Coriolanus*, i. 1. 254, but in *Tempest*, iii. 2. 41, the folio has 'mutineere.'

88. *pandars*. The folios have 'panders,' the quartos, 'pardons,' a misprint.

90. *grained*, dyed in grain. The quartos misprint 'greeued.' Cotgrave has 'Graine: . . . graine wherewith cloth is dyed in graine; scarlet dye, scarlet in graine.' 'Grain' is the ovarium of the 'coccus' insect, which from its seed-like form was called 'granum' in Latin, in French 'graine.' (Marsh's *Lectures on the English Language*, p. 67.) Originally the word meant a scarlet dye, but was afterwards applied to any colour which will not wash out.

91. *leave*, give up. See *Merchant of Venice*, v. 1. 172, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. 4. 79:

'It seems you loved not her, to leave her token.'

*Ib. tinct*, dye. Compare *Cymbeline*, ii. 2. 722:

'With blue of heaven's own tinct.'

95. *precedent*. So *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 14. 83: 'Thy precedent services.'

*Ib. a vice of kings*, a buffoon king. The 'vice' in a play was the clown or buffoon, the name being handed down from the moralities of an older time, when virtues and vices were personified. Cotgrave has 'Badiner. To play the foole, or Vice.' Compare 2 *Henry IV*, iii. 2. 343: 'Now is this Vice's dagger become a squire.' The Vice was equipped with a wooden dagger, or 'dagger of lath.' See *Twelfth Night*, iv. 2. 134-136.

96. *cutpurse*. Purses were usually worn outside attached to the girdle.

97. He stole the crown 'from a shelf' like a petty thief, and had not even the courage to take it by violence.

99. In the quarto of 1603 the stage direction is 'Enter the ghost in his night gowne,' that is, in his dressing-gown.

104. *lapsed in time and passion*. Johnson explains: 'having suffered time to go by and passion to cool.' Or rather, the indulgence of mere passion has diverted him from the execution of his purpose.

105. *important*, urgent, requiring immediate attention. Compare *Much Ado about Nothing*, ii. 1. 74: 'If the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in everything.' And *Troilus and Cressida*, v. 1. 89:

'I have important business,  
The tide whereof is now.'

109. *amazement*. See iii. 2. 294.

111. *conceit*, imagination. See Richard II, ii. 2. 33, and our note on the passage.

115. *incorporal*, incorporeal, which is substituted by the quarto of 1676. We have 'corporal' in Macbeth, i. 3. 81, and i. 7. 80. See our note on the former.

117. *alarm*. See our note on Macbeth, v. 2. 4.

118. *bedded*, lying flat, was doubtless suggested by an association of ideas from 'sleeping' in the previous line.

*Ib. excrements*, used of the hair and nails. See Merchant of Venice, iii. 2. 87, and our note. Bacon, Natural History, cent. i. sect. 58, says, 'Living creatures put forth (after their period of growth) nothing that is young but hair and nails, which are excrements and no parts.'

118, 119. We have retained the reading of the earliest quartos and the folios, although the singular 'hair' is thus made to govern two plural verbs 'start,' 'stand.' 'Hair' in fact may be considered as a noun of multitude, and the intervention of the plural substantive 'excrements' would also suggest the plural verb. See note on i. 2. 38. For the sense compare Macbeth, v. 5. 11-13.

126. *capable*, that is, capable of feeling, susceptible. Compare All's Well that Ends Well, i. 1. 106 :

'Heart too capable

Of every line and trick of his sweet favour.'

*Ib. My stern effects*, the accomplishment of my stern purposes.

132. *in his habit as he lived*. There is supposed to be a difficulty in these words, because in the earlier scenes the Ghost is in armour, to which the word 'habit' is regarded as inappropriate. In the earlier form of the play, as it appears in the quarto of 1603, the Ghost enters 'in his night gowne,' and as the words 'in the habite as he lived' occur in the corresponding passage of that edition, it is probable that on this occasion the Ghost appeared in the ordinary dress of the king, although this is not indicated in the stage directions of the other quartos or of the folios.

*Ib. as*, as if, or as when. Compare Othello, iii. 3. 77 :

'Tis as I should entreat you wear your gloves.'

134. Compare Lucrece, 460 :

'Such shadows are the weak brain's forgeries.'

And Macbeth, ii. 1. 38, 39 :

'Or art thou but

A dagger of the mind, a false creation,

Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?'

135. *ecstasy*. See ii. 1. 102.



140. *re-word*, repeat word for word.

149. *Forgive me this my virtue*. Mr. Staunton, with great probability, considers this and the three following lines as an apostrophe addressed by Hamlet to his 'virtue,' and marks them 'Aside.'

160. *pursy*. Compare Timon of Athens, v. 4. 12, 'pursy insolence.' Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives 'Poulsif . . . Pursie, short-winded, breathing with difficultie.'

152. *curb and woo*, bow and beg. 'Curb' is from Fr. *courber*, to bow or bend. See the Vision of Piers Ploughman, l. 617 (ed. T. Wright):

'Thanne I courbed on my knees,  
And cried hire of grace.'

And again l. 880.

154. *worser*. For other instances of this double comparative see Tempest, iv. 1. 27:

'The strong'st suggestion  
Our worser genius can.'

And King Lear, iv. 6. 222, &c.

158, 159. The reading of these lines as given in the text is substantially that of the quartos. The whole passage 'That monster . . . put on' is omitted in the folios. Many conjectures have been made, but the words as they stand yield a very intelligible sense and require no alteration. That monster Custom, who destroys all natural feeling and prevents it from being exerted, and is the malignant attendant on habits, is yet angel in this respect, &c. The double meaning of the word 'habits' suggested the 'frock or livery' in l. 161.

166. *And either . . . the devil, or throw him out*. An imperfect line, which various conjectures have endeavoured to amend, by inserting 'curb,' 'quell,' 'mate,' 'lay,' 'house,' 'aid,' 'usher,' or by reading with Pope, 'And master ev'n the devil.' It seems more probable that something is omitted which is contrasted with 'throw out,' and this may have been 'conch' or 'lay' or 'lodge.' The last was the technical word used in Harsnet's Declaration, c. 12.

170, 171. *heaven hath pleased . . . their minister*. Compare Richard II, i. 2. 6, 7, and our note.

179. *bloat*, bloated. The participle termination *-ed* is often dropped from words which end in a dental. See iii. 1. 155, and Abbott, § 342.

180. *mouse*, a term of endearment. Compare Twelfth Night, i. 5. 69: 'Good my mouse of virtue, answer me'; and Love's Labour's Lost, v. 2, 19:

'What's your dark meaning, mouse, of this light word?'

See also Beaumont and Fletcher, The Knight of the Burning Pestle, i. 1: 'I pr'ythee, mouse, be patient.' 'Muss,' corrupted from 'mouse,' occurs several times in Jonson's Every Man in his Humour, ii. 1.

181. *reechy*, dirty, as with smoke. Compare Coriolanus, ii. 1. 225 :

‘The kitchen malkin pins

Her richest lockram ’bout her reechy neck.’

In Much Ado about Nothing, iii. 3. 143, the quarto and folios read ‘rechie painting,’ and the word there should be printed ‘reechy’ and not ‘reeky,’ although the two are identical in meaning. In the present passage the word may have been suggested by ‘bloat,’ two lines before, which has also the meaning ‘to cure herrings by hanging them in the smoke.’

182. *paddling*. Compare Winter’s Tale, i. 2. 115 :

‘But to be paddling palms and pinching fingers.’

183. *to ravel out*, to unravel, as a tangled skein or a piece of woven work. Compare Richard II, iv. 1. 228 :

‘Must I ravel out

My weaved-up folly?’

187. *a paddock*, a toad. See Macbeth, i. 1. 9.

*Ib. gib*, tom-cat. ‘Gib’ is a contraction of ‘Gilbert.’ In Sherwood’s English-French Dictionary, appended to Cotgrave, we find, ‘A gibbe or old male cat). Macou.’ Graymalkin was the female cat. Compare 1 Henry IV, i. 2. 83 : ‘I am as melancholy as a gib cat,’ and Chaucer’s Romaunt of the Rose, 6207 :

‘Gibbe our cat,

That awaiteth mice and rattes to killen.’

The toad, bat, and cat were supposed to be familiars of witches, and acquainted with their mistresses’ secrets.

188. *concernings*. See Measure for Measure, i. 1. 57 :

‘We shall write to you

As time and our concernings shall importune.’

190-193. The reference must be to some fable in which an ape opened a basket containing live birds, then crept into it himself, and ‘to try conclusions,’ whether he could fly like them, jumped out and broke his neck. No one has yet found any such fable recorded elsewhere.

192. *To try conclusions*, to make experiments so as to see what the result will be. Compare Lucrece, 1160 :

‘That mother tries a merciless conclusion

Who, having two sweet babes, when death takes one,

Will slay the other and be nurse to none.’

And Antony and Cleopatra, v. 2. 358 :

‘She hath pursued conclusions infinite

Of easy ways to die.’

And Merchant of Venice, ii. 2. 39. Launcelot Gobbo, when he says ‘I will try confusions with him,’ means ‘I will try conclusions.’

197. It does not appear how Hamlet had found out that he was to be sent to England. In iv. 3. 45, he affects to hear of the king's purpose for the first time.

199-207. *There's . . . meet.* Not in the folios.

199. *There's* is frequently used as here with a plural noun following, like 'il y a' in French. Compare v. 1. 28, and Twelfth Night, ii. 4. 96.

201. *They.* The nominative repeated for clearness, after an intervening parenthesis. See ii. 1. 84.

203. *the sport.* Compare King John, ii. 1. 396 :

'Smacks it not something of the policy?'

*Ib. engineer.* Changed in the quarto of 1676 to the more modern form 'engineer.' Compare Troilus and Cressida, ii. 3. 8: 'Then there's Achilles, a rare engineer.' For a cognate form 'mutiner,' see note on iii. 4. 83. So we have 'pioner' for 'pioneer,' Othello, iii. 3. 346.

204. *Hoist* may be the participle either of the verb 'hoise' or 'hoist.' In the latter case it would be the common abbreviated form for the participles of verbs ending in a dental.

*Ib. petar.* So spelt in the quartos and by all editors to Johnson, who writes 'petard.' In Cotgrave we have 'Petart: A Petard, or Petarre; an Engine (made like a Bell, or Morter) wherewith strong gates are burst open.'

208. *packing,* contriving, plotting. Compare Titus Andronicus, iv. 2. 155 :

'Go pack with him, and give the mother gold.'

And Taming of the Shrew, v. 1. 121. There is of course a play upon the other sense which the word has in 1 Henry IV, ii. 4. 328.

209. *neighbour,* neighbouring. So 'neighbour states,' Timon of Athens, iv. 3. 94.

213. *to draw.* For the construction compare iii. 2. 312.

## ACT IV.

### Scene I.

10. *Whips.* 'He,' which should govern the verb, is omitted. Compare iii. 1. 8. The folios however read 'He whips his Rapier out.'

11. *brainish,* imaginary, having no ground in fact. It does not occur again in Shakespeare.

13. The king uses the style royal 'us,' 'we.'

18. *kept short,* kept, as it were, tethered, under control; opposed to 'loose,' iv. 3. 2.

18. *out of haunt*, away from the haunts of men. Compare *As You Like It*, ii. i. 15 :

‘This our life exempt from public haunt.’

22. *divulging*, being divulged.

25. *ore*. In the English-French Dictionary appended to Cotgrave ‘ore’ is confined to gold. In this passage the context shows that it is used of precious metal.

26. *mineral* is defined by Minshew to be ‘anything that growes in Mines, and containes mettals.’ We should now say a vein or lode. ‘Mineral’ is also used in the sense of ‘mine,’ as in Hall’s *Satires*, vi. 148 :

‘Shall it not be a wild fig in a wall  
Or fired brimstone in a minerall?’

Marlowe, *Jew of Malta*, iii. p. 184 (ed. Dyce, 1862) :

‘In Malta are no golden minerals.’

And Browne, *Britannia’s Pastorals*, i. 2. 631 :

‘Some of the blond by chance did downward fall,  
And by a veine got to a minerall.’

40. To fill up the gap in the text, the words ‘So haply slander,’ were first inserted by Capell, who adopted Theobald’s conjecture with a slight modification, reading ‘So’ for ‘For.’ Some such insertion is obviously required to complete the sense. The folios omit further lines 41–44, *Whose whisper . . . air*. Malone read ‘So viperous slander,’ and Mr. Staunton proposes ‘Thus calumny.’

42. *blank*, mark, so called perhaps because it was painted white. Compare *Winter’s Tale*, ii. 3. 5 :

‘Out of the blank

And level of my brain.’

And *Othello*, iii. 4. 128 :

‘Within the blank of his displeasure,’

where we should say ‘within the range.’

44. *woundless air*, the invulnerable air, as in i. i. 145. Similarly ‘viewless winds,’ in *Measure for Measure*, iii. i. 124.

### Scene II.

3. *But soft*, omitted in the folios.

6. *Compounded it with dust*. So 2 *Henry IV*, iv. 5. 116 :

‘Only compound me with forgotten dust.’

12. *of*, by. See *Macbeth*, iii. 6. 27.

*Ib. replication*, reply. Used of echo, *Julius Cæsar*, i. i. 51. In law it has the technical sense of ‘the reply of the plaintiff in matters of fact to the defender’s plea.’ (Webster, s. v.)

15. *countenance*, favour. So in i. 3. 113, and v. 1. 26, and Coriolanus, v. 6. 40: 'He waged me with his countenance.'

16. *authorities*, officers of authority.

17. *like an ape*. The quarto of 1603 has 'as an Ape doth nuttes,' which Staunton has introduced into the text, thus certainly made clearer.

22. *a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear*. This sentence, now become proverbial, like so many passages in Hamlet, is probably of Shakespeare's coinage.

26. *The body is with the king*, &c. Hamlet is talking nonsense designedly.

29. *A thing of nothing*, a thing of no value. Nares quotes Beaumont and Fletcher's Humorous Lieutenant, iv. 6:

'And though a thing of nothing, thy thing ever.'

The phrase is of frequent occurrence. We find 'a thing of nought,' Psalm cxliv. 4 (Prayer Book version).

*Ib. Hide fox, and all after*. A children's game apparently, like 'All hid,' 'Hide-and-seek.' In Much Ado about Nothing, ii. 3. 44, Warburton has with great probability conjectured 'hid fox' for 'kid fox.'

### Scene III.

21. *Your*, used here as in iii. 2. 108.

24. *variable*, various, as in iii. 1. 172.

26-28. The king's exclamation and Hamlet's following speech are omitted in the folios.

27. *hath eat*. The same form of the participle is in Richard II, v. 5. 85.

34. *nosc*, smell, as in Coriolanus, v. 1. 28: 'Still to nose the offence.'

40. *dearly*, heartily.

42. *With fiery quickness*, with hot haste. These words are omitted in the quartos.

43. *at help*. For the phrase compare 'at friend,' Winter's Tale, v. 1.

140. In the next line the folios read 'at bent.' Compare 'at foot' line 53.

44. *tend*, attend, wait, as in i. 3. 83.

53. *at foot*, at heel, close to his steps.

54. *I'll have him hence*. Compare iii. 3. 4.

57. *at aught*, at any value. 'At' is commonly used to signify price.

58. *As*, used in parenthetical expressions with the sense of 'for so.' Compare iv. 7. 157.

59. *cicatrice*. Here used in its proper sense of scar of a wound, as in Coriolanus, ii. 1. 164: 'There will be large cicatrices to show the people,

when he shall stand for his place.' It is used improperly in *As You Like It*, iii. 5. 23 :

'Lean but upon a rush,  
The cicatrice and capable impressure  
Thy palm some moment keeps.'

60. *free awe*, awe still felt, though no longer enforced by the presence of Danish armies.

61. *coldly set*, treat with indifference, esteem slightly. 'Set' would not have been thus used had it not been familiar in the phrases 'set at nought,' 'set at a pin's fee,' &c.

62. *process*, procedure, action.

63. *congruing*. So the quartos. The folios have 'conjuring,' probably a misprint, although it yields a fair sense.

65. *a hectic*. We find this word used as a substantive in Cotgrave: 'Hectique: Sicke of an Hectick, or continuall Feauer.' This is the only passage where it occurs in Shakespeare either as substantive or adjective.

67. For 'haps' Johnson conjectured 'hopes.'

*Ib. were ne'er begun*. So the folios. The quartos 'will nere begin.'

#### Scene IV.

3. *Craves*. So the quartos. The folios read 'Claimes.'

6. *in his eye*, in his presence. Compare i. 2. 116, and Antony and Cleopatra, ii. 2. 212 :

'Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,  
So many mermaids, tended her i' the eyes.'

And *Twelfth Night*, ii. 2. 16: 'If it be worth stooping for, there it lies in your eye.'

8. *softly*, gently, slowly. Compare Bacon, *Essay* vi. p. 19: 'Like the going softly by one that cannot well see.'

9. Enter Hamlet, &c. This, with all the rest of the scene, is omitted in the folios.

*Ib. powers*, forces. 'Power' is also used in the singular with the same sense, as in *Macbeth*, iv. 3. 185.

14. *old Norway*. See i. 2. 28.

15. *the main*, the chief power. See ii. 2. 56, and Bacon's *Life and Letters* (ed. Spedding, vii. 490): 'In the year that followed, of 1589, we gave the Spaniards no breath, but turned challengers, and invaded the main of Spain.'

17. For the metre's sake Pope read 'speak it,' and Capell 'speak, sir.'

20. *five ducats, five*. Theobald conjectured 'five ducats fine,' but he did not adopt it in his text. The meaning is 'I would not farm it on the condition of paying a rent of five ducats, only five.'

22. *ranker*, more abundant, richer. The word is always used elsewhere in a bad sense.

*Ib. sold in fee*, sold in fee-simple, with absolute possession. For 'fee' compare i. 4. 65, and our note on Macbeth, iv. 3. 196.

27. *imposthume*, an abscess. The word is also written 'impostem' and is supposed to be a corruption of 'apostem' from the Greek ἀπόστημα (Todd's Johnson's Dictionary, s.v.). The Latin 'apostema,' an abscess, is used by Pliny, xxx. 5. 12. Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives, 'Apostume: f. An Impostume; an inward swelling full of corrupt matter.'

34. *market of his time*, 'that for which he sells his time' (Johnson): or possibly, 'the business in which he employs his time.'

36. *discourse*, range of reasoning faculty. Compare i. 2. 150.

39. *fust*, grow stale or mouldy. The word does not occur elsewhere in Shakespeare. It is perhaps formed from 'fusty' which is derived from the French *fusté*.

40, 41. *scruple Of thinking*, scruple which consists in thinking or results from thinking.

45. *Sith* = sithence, since. Compare iv. 7. 3. Shakespeare uses all these forms without any distinction: See ii. 2. 6.

46. *gross*, large, obvious. The word is used in its primary sense in King Lear, iv. 6. 14:

'The crows and choughs that wing the midway air  
Show scarce so gross as beetles.'

50. *Makes mouths*. See ii. 2. 353.

51. *unsure*, insecure, uncertain. So Macbeth, v. 4. 19:

'Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate.'

53, 54. Pope made a bold alteration here, and read

'Tis not to be great,  
Never to stir without great argument,'

supposing that the sentence as it stood was contradictory. But the meaning is: 'When honour is at stake, it is the greatest of all "arguments" and the slightest pretext justifies a quarrel then.'

54. *argument*, subject, matter in dispute. Compare Troilus and Cressida, i. 1. 95:

'I cannot fight upon this argument;  
It is too starved a subject for my sword.'

58. *blood*, which is stirred by passion, is here, as frequently, antithetical to reason and reflection. See iii. 2. 64.

61. *trick of fame*. The words 'of fame' belong both to 'fantasy' and 'trick': a deceptive appearance or artifice which promises fame.

62. *plot of ground*. So Richard II, ii. 1. 50:

'This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.'

64. *continent*, here used in its primitive sense, that which holds or contains. Compare Antony and Cleopatra, iv. 14. 40 :

‘ O cleave, my sides !

Heart, once be stronger than thy continent,  
Crack thy frail case !’

*Scene V.*

The stage direction in the folios is ‘ Enter Queene and Horatio,’ and the two speeches assigned in the quartos to ‘ a Gentleman ’ are given in the folios to Horatio. Lines 11–13, so cautiously obscure, seem better suited to an ordinary courtier than to Horatio.

2. *distract*, the abbreviated form of the participle which, as we have already mentioned, is common in the case of verbs ending in a dental. Shakespeare also used the forms ‘ distracted,’ ‘ distraught.’

3. *will*. Compare iii. 3. 75.

5. *There’s tricks*. See iii. 4. 199. .

6. *enviously*. ‘ Envy ’ frequently means ‘ hatred,’ ‘ malice,’ as in Merchant of Venice, iv. 1. 10, and Henry VIII, iii. 1. 113 :

‘ You turn the good we offer into envy.’

See also Julius Cæsar, iii. 2. 179. In Ophelia’s distraction she conceives hatred of the most trivial and innocent things.

9. *collection*, attempt to gather meaning from her disjointed speech. Compare Cymbeline, v. 5. 430 :

‘ This label on my bosom ; whose containing  
Is so from sense in hardness, that I can  
Make no collection of it.’

Scot, Discoverie of Witchcraft, B. xi. c. 17, uses ‘ collection ’ in the sense of inference : ‘ These are their collections, and as vaine, as if they said that the building of Tenderden steeple was the cause of Goodwine sands, or the decaie of Sandwich haven.’

*Ib. aim*. The quartos have ‘ yawne,’ doubtless a misprint from ‘ ayme ’ as the word is spelt in the first and second folios. ‘ Aim ’ means here ‘ to guess,’ as in Romeo and Juliet, i. 1. 211 :

‘ I aim’d so near when I supposed you loved.’

12. *might*. So the quartos. The folios read ‘ would.’ The general sense of this ill-expressed sentence is more easily understood than paraphrased. The speaker is afraid of committing himself to any definite statement. If he had spoken out he would have said : ‘ Her words and gestures lead one to infer that some great misfortune has happened to her.’



14-16. The quartos continue Horatio's speech to include the words 'let her come in.' The folios give the whole from 'Twere good' to 'spilt,' to the Queen. The arrangement in the text was first suggested by Blackstone.

15. *ill-breeding minds*, minds that conceive mischief.

18. Each trifle seems prelude to some great disaster. For 'amiss' as a substantive, see Sonnet xxxv. 7:

'Myself corrupting, salving thy amiss.'

And Sonnet cli. 3. Steevens quotes from Lyly's *Woman in the Moon*, 1597:

'Pale be my looks, to witness my amiss.'

Again, Heywood, *Second Part of King Edward the Fourth* (Works, i. 119) has:

'We are content to bear with their amisse.'

19. *jealousy*, suspicion. So in *Henry V*, iv. 1. 302: 'Your nobles jealous of your absence.' The meaning is: 'Guilt is so full of suspicion that it unskilfully betrays itself in fearing to be betrayed.'

21. The quarto of 1603 has here a stage-direction: 'Enter Ofelia playing on a Lute, and her haire downe singing.' The other quartos have merely 'Enter Ophelia'; the folios, 'Enter Ophelia distracted.'

26. *shoon*. This form of the plural was already archaic in Shakespeare's time. The only other passage of his plays in which it occurs is in a speech of Jack Cade's, 2 *Henry VI*, iv. 2. 195:

'Spare none but such as go in clouted shoon.'

36. *larded*, garnished, dressed with. The word occurs again in a metaphorical sense, v. 2. 20. And in Ben Jonson's *Sejanus*, iii. 2. p. 86, ed. Gifford:

'A quiet and retired life

Larded with ease and pleasure.'

Cotgrave (*French Dict.*) gives 'Larder. To lard; to sticke, season, or dresse with lard.'

37. *did go*. Pope's emendation for 'did not go,' which is the reading of both quartos and folios. The quartos have 'ground,' except that of 1603, which agrees with the folios in reading 'graue.'

40. *God'ild you*, God yield you, God reward you. The quartos have 'good dild you.' See *As You Like It*, iii. 3. 76: 'God'ild you for your last company.' *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 2. 33: 'the gods yield you for't.' Tennyson, *Gareth and Lynette*, l. 18, 'Heaven yield her for it.'

*Ib.* *the owl was a baker's daughter*. Douce relates a story told by the common people in Gloucestershire, how that our Saviour, asking for bread, was churlishly received by a baker's daughter, whom in punishment he transformed into an owl. The words of Ophelia which follow are also suggested by her recollection of this story.

43. *Conceit*, thought, imagination, as in ii. 2. 533, 537. Ophelia seems to blend in her mind the death of her father with the loss of her lover, though the king attributes her madness entirely to the former cause.

46. *St. Valentine's day*, February 14. No reason has been assigned for the customary celebration of this day, except that it is about the pairing time of birds.

57. *this is*, to be pronounced as one syllable.

58. The quartos read, 'And now behold, O Gertrude, Gertrude.' The addition interrupts the regular flow of the metre; the author probably wrote at first the words 'And now behold,' and then 'O Gertrude, Gertrude,' as a substitute for them. We therefore follow the folios.

60, 61. An expansion of the proverb, 'Misfortunes never come single.' 'Single spies,' or scouts, are sent before the main army.

63. *remove*, removal. See i. i. 57, and Measure for Measure, i. i. 44:  
'In our remove be thou at full ourself.'

63, 64. In using the words 'muddied,' 'thick,' 'unwholesome,' the poet has in his mind the 'bad blood' which Polonius' death had stirred up among the people.

65. Pope, in order to reduce the line to its normal length, substituted 'We've' for 'and we have.'

*Ib. greenly*, foolishly, without reflexion, as inexperienced persons might do. Compare 'green in judgement,' Antony and Cleopatra, i. 5. 73, 74:

'My salad days,

When I was green in judgement.'

And King John, iii. 4. 145:

'How green you are and fresh in this old world!'

66. *In hugger-mugger*. The origin of this colloquial phrase, which is still in use, is doubtful. The meaning is however clear, combining the notion of secrecy with that of hurried haste. In the appendix to Cotgrave we have 'In hugger mugger. En cachette, à calimini, sous terre.' See also Cotgrave, s. v. Ieu. The editor of the quarto of 1676 substituted 'Obscurely,' and Pope 'In private,' for the phrase, which seemed to them below the dignity of tragedy. Steevens quotes appositely North's translation of Plutarch [Brutus, p. 999, ed. 1631]: 'Antonius thinking good . . . that his bodie should be honourably buried, and not in hugger-mugger.'

69. *as much containing*, as important.

71. *Feeds on his wonder*. The reading in the text is made up of that of the quartos and folios. The former have 'Feeds on this wonder,' the latter 'Keeps on his wonder.' For 'wonder' Hanmer read 'anger,' but no change is needed. The mysterious death of Polonius filled his son with doubt and amazement.

*Ib. keeps himself in clouds*, keeps his intentions secret.

72. *buzzers*, whisperers. The quarto of 1676 substitutes 'whispers.' Compare Richard II, ii. 1. 26:

'Where doth the world thrust forth a vanity . . .  
That is not quickly buzz'd into his ears?'

74-76. *Wherein*, &c. In which pestilent speeches, the speakers, having no ground of truth, are forced to have recourse to fiction, and will not hesitate to accuse us by whispering in every ear.

75. *person*. So the quartos. The folios have 'persons.'

77. *a murdering-piece*, or 'murderer,' is a cannon loaded not with a single ball, but with case-shot, so as to scatter death more widely. Steevens quotes Beaumont and Fletcher's *Double Marriage* [iv. 2]:

'And, like a murdering piece, aims not at one,  
But all that stand within the dangerous level.'

And again from Smith's *Sea Grammar*, 1627: 'A case shot is any kinde of small bullets, nailes, old iron, or the like, to put into the case, to shoot out of the ordnances or murderers.' Cotgrave gives 'murthering peece' as equivalent to the French *meurtrière*; and one of the meanings he assigns to *Fricassée* is 'a kind of charge for a Morter, or murthering peece, of stones, bullets, nailes, and peeces of old yron closed together with grease, and gunpowder.'

79. *Switzers*. In Shakespeare's time Switzers, or Swiss, were employed to guard the person of the King of France, as Scotchmen had formerly been. Probably the same usage extended to other continental courts. To this day the Pope's body-guard consists of Swiss. Being foreigners, and therefore unconnected with any local faction, they could be better trusted. Malone quotes from Nashe's *Christ's Teares over Jerusalem*, 1594: 'Law, logicke, and the Switzers, may be hired to fight for anybody.'

81. *list*, boundary. Compare All's Well that Ends Well, ii. 1. 53: 'You have restrained yourself within the list of too cold an adieu.' And Othello, iv. 1. 76:

'Confine yourself but in a patient list.'

83. *in a riotous head*. 'A head' is an armed force, as in 1 Henry IV, i. 3. 284:

'To save our heads by raising of a head.'

And iii. 2. 167:

'A mighty and a fearful head they are.'

See also the same play, iv. 4. 25, 28; v. 1. 66. For 'in' see *Coriolanus*, i. 10. 14:

'I thought to crush him in an equal force.'

85. *as*, as if. Compare *Troilus and Cressida*, iii. 3. 167:

'And with his arms outstretch'd as he would fly.'

86. *forgot*, forgotten, as in iii. 2. 118, and elsewhere.

87, 88. Hammer most unnecessarily transposed these lines, making

'caps, hands and tongues' 'the ratifiers and props of every word.' For 'word' Tyrwhitt proposed, and Capell read, 'work.' But no change is required.

91. *on the false trail they cry.* Compare Merry Wives of Windsor, iv. 2. 208: 'If I cry out thus upon no trail, never trust me when I open again.'

92. *counter.* Hounds are said to 'run counter,' when they follow the scent in the wrong direction. See Comedy of Errors, iv. 2. 39: 'A hound that runs counter.' In Holme's Academy of Armory, Book II, c. ix, p. 187, 'counter' is defined, 'When a hound hunteth backwards, the same way that the chase is come.'

101. *fear.* See i. 3. 51. The Queen throws herself between the King and Laertes, and clings round the latter to prevent him from striking.

108. *his fill*, to his heart's content. So Timon of Athens, v. 4. 73: 'Pass by and curse thy fill.'

112. *To this point I stand.* Compare 2 Henry IV, ii. 1. 70: 'I beseech you, stand to me.'

113. *both the worlds*, this world and the next. Compare Macbeth, iii. 2. 16:

'But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,' where the phrase means the celestial and terrestrial worlds.

115. *thoroughly*, thoroughly. Compare Matthew iii. 12.

116. *My will*, only my own will shall stay me.

*ib. world.* So the folios. The quartos read 'worlds,' perhaps rightly. The extravagant hyperbole 'all the worlds,' which Laertes would thus use in reference to his former words 'both the worlds,' is not unsuitable to his excited state of mind. Hammer read 'world's,' which might be the meaning of the reading of the quartos, in which no apostrophe is used to distinguish the genitive singular from the nominative plural.

120. *writ in your revenge.* Compare i. 2. 222.

121. *swoopstake.* The quartos and folios read 'soopstake.' We are guided to the true reading by the quarto of 1603 which has 'Swoop-stake-like.' Heywood, Second Part of King Edward the Fourth (Works i. 116), has,

'I would the diuel were there to cry swoopstake.'

Pope altered the word to 'sweepstake,' which means the same thing. The metaphor is from a game at cards, where the winner sweeps, or 'draws,' the whole stake. The meaning is somewhat confused by this admixture of metaphor. 'Are you determined to involve both friend and foe in your revenge?'

124. *thus wide.* With appropriate gesture. See Troilus and Cressida, iii. 3. 167.

125. *pelican.* The first folio has a curious misprint here—'Politician.' The allusion is to the well-known fable of the pelican piercing her own

breast to feed her young. In Richard II, ii. 1. 126, and King Lear, iii. 4. 77, the young pelicans are represented as piercing their mother's breast to drink her blood, an illustration of filial impiety, not parental love. But Rushton, Shakespeare's Euphuism, p. 9, quotes from Lyly's Euphues and his England: 'the Pelicane who stricketh blood out of hir owne bodye to do others good' (p. 341, ed Arber).

126. *Repast*, feed. This verb is not used elsewhere by our author.

129. *sensibly*. The folios read 'sensible.' Either word yields a satisfactory meaning. Indeed 'sensible' may be used adverbially. We should say 'feelingly.' Compare Merchant of Venice, ii. 8. 48: 'With affection wondrous sensible.'

130. *level to your judgement pierce*. The folios read 'pierce,' the quartos 'peare,' whence Johnson 'pear' i.e. appear. 'Pierce' suits the metaphor better. Compare iv. 1. 42.

131. The quartos give the words 'Let her come in' to Laertes. The folios give as a stage direction 'A noise within. Let her come in,' and this is represented in the text. Laertes did not know what, or who, was the cause of the noise without.

132. Re-enter Ophelia. The quarto of 1603 gives the stage direction, 'Enter Ofelia as before,' i.e. dressed as it had described, line 21.

133. *virtue*, strength, power. So Love's Labour's Lost, v. 2. 348: 'The virtue of your eye.'

135. *with weight*. So the quartos. The folios have 'by weight.'

140-142. *Nature . . . loves*. Omitted in the quartos. The sense is obscurely expressed. 'Fine' seems to mean 'delicately tender,' and 'instance' 'proof' or 'example.' 'The thing it loves' is here Polonius, the 'precious instance' Ophelia's natural soundness of mind. Her sanity has followed her father to the grave.

144. The refrain 'Hey non nonny,' &c., is not in the quartos. In the next line the folios have 'raines' for 'rain'd.'

151. It is doubtful whether 'wheel' here means the refrain or burden of the song, or the spinning-wheel to which the song might be sung. No satisfactory example has been found of the word in the former sense.

*Ib.* Nothing is known of the story of the false steward to which Ophelia refers.

153. *matter*. See ii. 2. 95.

154. *rosemary* was supposed to strengthen the memory, hence it came to symbolize remembrance and fidelity. Compare Winter's Tale, iv. 3. 74-76:

'For you there's rosemary and rue; these keep  
Seeming and savour all the winter long:  
Grace and remembrance be to you both!'

It was therefore worn at funerals and at weddings. See *Romeo and Juliet*, iv. 5. 79. See Drayton, *Eclogue ix.* 19, 20 :

‘Him Rosemary his sweetheart, whose intent  
Is that he her should in remembrance haue.’

On the other hand, Cotgrave says, s. v., that ‘*Donner du rosmarin*’ was equivalent to ‘dismiss a lover.’

See Clement Robinson, *A Hand-full of Pleasant Delights* (ed. Arber), p. 4 : ‘*Rosemarie* is for remembrance ;’ ‘*Fenel* is for flaterers ;’ ‘*Violet*’ is for faithfulness.’

155. *pansies*, from the French *pensées*. Ophelia gives rosemary and pansies to her brother.

156. *document*, used apparently in its literal sense of precept, instruction. Cotgrave gives ‘*Document* ; m. A document, precept ; instruction, admonition ; experiment, example.’ Compare Spenser, *Fairy Queen*, i. 10. 19, quoted in the *Edinburgh Review* for July 1869 :

‘And heavenly documents thereout did preach.’

158. Ophelia gives fennel and columbines to the King. Fennel is said to be emblematic of flattery. In Florio’s *Worlde of Wordes*, 1598, ‘*Dare finocchio*’ (to give fennel) is translated ‘to flatter, to dissemble.’ Compare Greene’s *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, p. 7 (Collier’s reprint) : ‘*Uppon a banke, bordring by, grewe womens weedes, Fenell I meane for flatterers, fit generally for that sexe.*’

*Ib. columbine* is mentioned by Chapman in *All Fools*, act. ii. sc. 1 :

‘What’s that? a columbine?’

No : that thankless flower fits not my garden.’

If it were an emblem of thanklessness it would be suitable enough to be given to the King.

159. She gives rue to the Queen. The meaning is clearly shown in *Richard II*, iii. 4. 104, &c. :

‘I’ll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace ;

Rue, even for ruth, here shortly shall be seen,

In the remembrance of a weeping queen.’

Cotgrave gives ‘*Rue* : *Rue*, *Hearbe grace*.’ In Lyte’s *Herball*, p. 294, ed. 1595, there is a description of ‘*Rue* or *Herbe Grace*.’ To rue is to repent, therefore rue was called ‘herb of grace,’ or ‘herb-grace.’ As Ophelia says, it may fitly bear its religious name on Sundays. There is a curious passage in Greene’s *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, p. 9 (Collier’s reprint) : ‘But as these upstart changelings went strouting like *Philopolimarchides*, the bragart in *Plautus*, they lookte so proudly at the same that they stumbled on a bed of *Rue* that grewe at the bottome of the banke where the *Time* was plánted, which fall upon the dew of so bitter an herbe taught them that such proude peacockes as over hastily out run their fortunes, at last to speedily fall to repentaunce ; and yet

some of them smild and said Rue was called herbe grace, which though they scorned in their youth, they might weare in their age, and it was never too late to say *Miserere.*'

160, 161. *with a difference.* This was a term in heraldry meaning the slight change made in a coat of arms to distinguish one member of a family from another. Ophelia no doubt means that the Queen and she had different causes of ruth.

161. It does not appear to whom she gives the daisy; probably either to the King or Queen. Henley has quoted Greene's Quip for an Upstart Courtier [p. 11, Collier's reprint]: 'Next them grewe the dessembling daisie.'

*Ib. violets.* Malone quotes from a collection of 'Sonnets,' by Clement Robinson and others, published in 1584: 'Violet is for faithfulness.' Perhaps she says this to Horatio.

164. *Bonny sweet Robin* was a well-known ballad, of which Ophelia sings a line. It is mentioned by Beaumont and Fletcher, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, ii. 1:

'I can sing the Broom,  
And Bonny Robin.'

The tune is given in Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, p. 234.

165. *Thought, care, anxiety*, as in iii. 1. 85.

176. *God ha' mercy.* The folios have 'Gramercy.'

177. *And of all Christian souls, I pray God.* Many epitaphs closed with such a pious prayer as this. 'Of' is not strictly grammatical according to modern usage, but in Shakespeare's time it was frequently used for 'on.' See *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 2. 100-104, and *1 Henry IV*, ii. 4. 127.

181. That is, 'of your wisest friends, whom you will.'

184. *touch'd*, implicated in the guilt of Polonius' murder.

190. *His means of death*, that is, the means of his death. Compare i. 4. 73, iii. 2. 304.

*Ib. obscure* with the accent on the first syllable, as in *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 7. 51:

'To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.'

194. *That*, used without any preceding 'so.' Compare *Julius Cæsar*, i. 1. 50; *Macbeth*, i. 2. 58, and i. 7. 8.

### *Scene VI.*

11, 12. *let to know*, caused to know, informed. Compare the phrase 'do to wit.'

14. *means to the king*, means of access to the king.

16. *appointment*, equipment. Compare Richard II, iii. 3. 53 :  
 'That from this castle's tatter'd battlements  
 Our fair appointments may be well perused.'
20. *thieves of mercy*, merciful thieves. See note on i. 2. 4.
23. *as thou wouldst fly death*. We must either take 'as' = as though, or supply 'withal' after 'death.'
24. *will*, i. e. which will. See iv. 7. 130. The relative is so frequently omitted, as here, that it is needless to give instances. Abbott, § 244.
25. *the bore of the matter*. A metaphor from a gun-barrel, which in proportion to the size of its bore requires a heavier charge.
29. *make*. So the fourth and following quartos. The word is omitted in the earlier quartos. The folios read 'give.'

### Scene VII.

3. *Sith*. See iv. 4. 45.
4. *which*, used frequently of persons, as in the Lord's Prayer.
7. *crimeful*. The quartos have 'criminall,' but probably the folios are right in giving the rarer word, which is not used elsewhere by Shakespeare.
8. *safety*. The quartos read 'safety, greatness,' which makes the line an Alexandrine. But this is no grave objection, as the next line is an Alexandrine also.
10. *unsinew'd*, wanting nerve, weak. Not used again by Shakespeare. 'Sinewed' occurs in King John, v. 7. 88 :  
 'Ourselves well sinewed to our defence.'
11. *But*. So the quartos. The folios read 'And.'
13. *be it either which*, whichever of the two it be. Abbott, § 273, suggests that there is perhaps a confusion between 'be it either' and 'be it whichever of the two.'
14. *conjunctive*. See Othello, i. 3. 374 : 'Let us be conjunctive in our revenge.'
17. *count*, account, trial.
18. *gender*, race, here used of men. It is applied to herbs, Othello, i. 3. 326. 'The general gender' is the common race, 'general' having much the same sense as in ii. 2. 423.
20. Instead of 'Would,' the reading of the folios, the quartos have 'Worke,' thus making 'Convert' indicative instead of infinitive. But 'would convert' seems required by the context.
- Ib.* Reed thinks that the spring to which Shakespeare refers is the dropping-well at Knaresborough, which encrusts with a calcareous deposit the objects placed beneath it. 'The simile,' says Johnson, 'is neither very seasonable in the deep interest of the conversation nor very



accurately applied. If the spring had changed metals to gold the thought had been more proper.' Lyly (Euphues, p. 63, ed. Arber) has 'Would I had sipped of that ryuer in Caria, which turneth those that drinke of it to stones.'

21. *gyves*, fetters round the ankles. See *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 2. 180:

'Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves.'

The king means: Had Hamlet been arrested and put in prison on the charge of killing Polonius, the people would have loved him all the more. Compare Antony and Cleopatra, ii. 2. 213: 'And made their bends adornings.'

22. *loud a wind*. Here the quartos have 'loued arm'd,' a curious misprint. Steevens quotes Ascham's *Toxophilus*, ed. 1589, p. 57: 'Weake bowes and lighte shaftes cannot stand in a rough winde.'

24. *and not where*. To complete the sense some such word as 'gone' must be supplied.

27. *if praises may go back again*, if I may praise what she was, not what she is.

30. *sleepe*. See i. 1. 173.

32. *shook*, preterite form used as participle. So *Richard II*, iv. 1. 163:

'Before I have shook off the regal thoughts  
Wherewith I reign'd.'

*Ib.* Danger is very near when it shakes the beard. See ii. 2. 554. Mr. George Macdonald quotes Chaucer's description of the Shipman, *Prol.* to *C. T.* 408:

'With many a tempest hadde his berd ben schake.'

'With' is found in constructions where we should now use 'by.' Compare *Winter's Tale*, v. 2. 68: 'He was torn to pieces with a bear.'

41. *Of*. We should say 'from.' Compare v. 2. 315: 'Heaven make thee free of it,' i. e. from it. And Bacon, *Essay xxvii.* p. 109 (ed. W. A. Wright): 'A man might have thought, that this had proceeded of an abundant goodnesse of nature.' The words 'Of him that brought them' are omitted in the folios.

44, 45. *your kingly eyes*. See iv. 4. 6.

49. *abuse*, cheat, delusion. See *Measure for Measure*, v. 1. 205: 'This is a strange abuse.' We have had the verb in a like sense, ii. 2. 585.

50. *character*, handwriting, as in *Twelfth Night*, v. 1. 354:

'This is not my writing,

Though, I confess, much like the character.'

We have had the verb 'character,' i. 3. 59.

53. *lost*, perplexed.

57. *As how should it be so?* We should have expected 'how should it *not* be so?' Keightley conjectured, 'how should it *but* be so?' But perhaps the first clause refers to Hamlet's return, the second to Laertes' feelings.

61. *checking at.* So the folios. The earlier quartos have a curious blunder, 'the king at,' conjecturally altered in a later quarto to 'liking not.' The metaphor is taken from falconry, and is technically applied to a falcon that forsakes her proper game to fly after some other bird. Compare *Twelfth Night*, ii. 5. 124: 'With what wing the staniel checks at it'; and iii. 1. 71, of the same play:

'And like the haggard checks at every feather  
That comes before his eye.'

The use of the word is not quite the same here, because the voyage was Hamlet's 'proper game,' which he abandons.

66. *uncharge*, make no accusation against. The word is probably coined by Shakespeare for the nonce.

*Ib. practice*, plot, stratagem, treachery. See *Coriolanus*, iv. 1. 33: 'Cautelous baits and practice.' And *Hamlet*, iv. 7. 137, v. 2. 301.

67-80. *My lord . . . graveness.* Omitted in the folios.

69. *organ*, instrument. In *Measure for Measure*, i. 1. 21:

'All the organs

Of our own power.'

*Ib. It falls right.* My scheme coincides with your wish.

75. *siege*, seat, thence 'rank,' because people sat at table, and elsewhere, in order of precedence. Compare *Measure for Measure*, iv. 2. 101:

'Upon the very siege of justice.'

And *Othello*, i. 2. 22: 'Men of royal siege.'

79. *sables.* See iii. 2. 113.

80. *importing*, implying, denoting. See i. 2. 23.

*Ib. health*, care for, or attention to, health, such as characterises elder men.

83. *can.* The folios read, by misprint or a mistaken correction, 'ran.' We find 'can' without a verb following in *King Lear*, iv. 4. 8:

'What can man's wisdom

In the restoring of his bereaved sense?'

And in Bacon, *Essay xi.* p. 40: 'In evil the best condition is not to will, the second not to can.' And with an accusative, *Phoenix and Turtle*, 14:

'Let the priest in surplice white,  
That defunctive music can.'

See also *Tempest*, iv. 1. 27:

'The strong'st suggestion  
Our worser genius can.'

84. *unto*. So the quartos. The folios read 'into.'

86. *As had he*. All the early copies have the words in this order. The sixth quarto first changed the order to 'as he had,' which is generally adopted in modern texts.

*Ib. incorpsed*, incorporate, of one body with.

87. *topp'd*, surpassed, exceeded, as in *Macbeth*, iv. 3. 57, 'to top *Macbeth*'; and *King Lear*, i. 2. 21 (Capell's reading):

'Edmund the base

Shall top the legitimate.'

88. *forgery*, imagination. See *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii. 1. 81:  
'These are the forgeries of jealousy.'

And *Lucrece*, 460:

'Such shadows are the weak brain's forgeries.'

91. *Lamond*. Written in the folios 'Lamound,' in the quartos 'Lamord.' The name appears to be altogether fictitious.

92. *brooch*. See our note on *Richard II*, v. 5. 66. The brooch, being worn in the hat, was of course very conspicuous.

94. *confession* is here used because Lamond would reluctantly admit the superiority of Laertes to his countrymen.

95. *masterly report*, a report which describes Laertes as a master of fence.

97. *especial*. So the quartos. The folios have 'especially.'

99. *scrimers*, fencers, from the French *escrimeurs*.

*Ib. their nation*. We should have expected 'his' not 'their,' but in the oratio recta Lamond might have said 'our nation' with propriety.

100. *motion*. A fencing term. See *Lear*, ii. 1. 52:

'In fell motion,

With his prepared sword, he charges home

My unprovided body.'

And *Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 304: 'He gives me the stuck in with such a mortal motion, that it is inevitable.'

105. The king pauses before coming to the terrible gist of his story.

111. *passages of proof*, circumstances which prove that time abates love. Compare ii. 1. 38.

112-122. *There lives . . . ulcer*: omitted in the folios.

115. *still*, constantly.

116. *plurisy*, plethora. So used probably from an erroneous idea that the word was derived from *plus pluris*. Shakespeare does not employ it elsewhere, but it is not uncommon in writers contemporary with him. For instance, in Massinger's *The Picture*, iv. 2, p. 202, ed. Gifford:

'A plurisy of ill blood you must let out  
By labour.'

Compare The Two Noble Kinsmen, v. 1 :

‘ That heal’st with blood  
The earth when it is sick, and cur’st the world  
O’ the plurisy of people.’

121. *spendthrift sigh*. This, which in all probability is the genuine reading, is an emendation found for the first time in the sixth quarto, the earlier ones reading with variable spelling ‘ spendthrifts sigh.’ The meaning is that the mere recognition of a duty without the will to perform it, while it satisfies for a moment, enfeebles the moral nature. We have the same notion of sighs wasting the vital powers in 2 Henry VI, iii. 2. 63 : ‘ blood-drinking sighs.’ See also *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, iii. 2. 97 :

‘ Pale of cheer  
With sighs of love that costs the fresh blood dear.’

126. *sanctuarize*. The verb is probably invented by Shakespeare. No place should protect murder (such as that which Hamlet has perpetrated) from punishment. Compare Richard III, iii. 1. 42 :

‘ The holy privilege  
Of blessed sanctuary.’

And Coriolanus, i. 10. 19.

130. *those shall*. The relative omitted, as in i. 2. 17, iv. 6. 24, and frequently elsewhere.

133. *remiss*, a word seldom if ever used now except with reference to some particular act of negligence. Here it means ‘ careless,’ ‘ indifferent.’ So in 1 Henry VI, iv. 3. 59 :

‘ Thus we die, while remiss traitors sleep.’

135. *peruse*, examine. See ‘ perusal,’ ii. 1. 90.

137. *unbated*, unblunted, with no button on the point. See v. 2. 301. The two forms of the verb ‘ bate’ and ‘ abate’ are used in the same sense. See *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, i. 1. 6 :

‘ That honour which shall bate his scythe’s keen edge.’

And Richard III, v. 5. 35 :

‘ Abate the edge of traitors, gracious Lord.’

So also ‘ rebate,’ *Measure for Measure*, i. 4. 60 :

‘ Doth rebate and blunt his natural edge.’

*Ib.* a *pass of practice*, a treacherous thrust. For ‘ practice’ see line 62 of this scene.

140. *unction*, ointment. In iii. 4. 143, where the word is used metaphorically, the word may either mean ‘ ointment’ or the act of anointing.

*Ib.* *mountebank*, quack-doctor. See *Othello*, i. 3. 61, ‘ medicines bought of mountebanks’; and in Bacon’s *Advancement of Learning*, ii. 10. § 2 : ‘ Nay, we see the weakness and credulity of men is such, as they will often prefer a mountebank or witch before a learned physician.’ In Ben

Jonson's Fox, Volpone, disguised as a mountebank, has a multitude of medicines to sell. In Italian he is called *ciarlatano*, whence the French *charlatan*, for which among others Cotgrave gives as equivalents, 'A Mountebanke, a cousening drug-seller, a pratling quack-saluer.'

141. *mortal*, deadly. See Richard II, iii. 2. 21 :

'A lurking adder

Whose double tongue may with a mortal touch

Throw death upon thy sovereign's enemies.'

142. *cataplasme*. For the French *cataplasme* Cotgrave gives 'A cataplasme, or poultis; a (soft or moist) plaister.'

143. *simples*, herbs, so called as being the simple ingredients of compound mixture. Compare As You Like It, iv. 1. 16: 'A melancholy of mine own compounded of many simples.' And in Romeo and Juliet, v. 1. 40, the apothecary is described as 'culling of simples.'

144. *virtue*, medicinal power or efficacy. See Macbeth, iv. 3. 156, where 'virtue' is applied to the healing powers of Edward the Confessor.

146. *contagion*, used like 'unction,' line 140, for a material object, abstract for concrete, the thing which gives contagion.

*Ib. that*, so that, as in iv. 6. 193, and Macbeth, ii. 2. 7 :

'I have drugg'd their possets,

That death and nature do contend about them,

Whether they live or die.'

149. *fit us to our shape*, enable us to act our proposed part.

153. *blast in proof*. A metaphor taken from cannon which burst when being proved. We find no other example of 'blast' used intransitively.

157. *As*, used in parentheses, meaning 'and so,' or 'for so.' Compare iv. 3. 58, Merchant of Venice, i. 3. 73, Macbeth, i. 7. 78, and Richard II, i. 3. 15.

158. *that* follows 'when,' after a parenthesis or other intervening words (compare King Lear, ii. 1. 47), completing the conjunction 'When that,' which is used by Shakespeare, as e. g. Julius Cæsar, iii. 2. 96: 'When that the poor have cried.'

159. *for the nonce*, for the special occasion. Compare 1 Henry IV, i. 2. 201: 'I have cases of buckram for the noncc.' The phrase was originally 'for then ones,' or 'for then anes.'

160. *stuck*, or 'stock,' a fencing term, equivalent to *stoccado*, or *stoccata*, the Spanish and Italian terms. Compare Twelfth Night, iii. 4. 303: 'He gives me the stuck in with such a mortal motion, that it is inevitable.'

161. *How now, sweet queen?* These words are omitted in the quartos.

*Ib. But stay, what noise?* Omitted in the folios.

163. Compare Pericles, i. 4. 63 :

‘One sorrow never comes but brings an heir  
That may succeed as his inheritor.’

In *Lochrine*, one of the plays inserted in the third and fourth folios as Shakespeare's, of which the first edition is dated 1595, a passage occurs (act v. sc. 5) which Shakespeare may have had in his mind. *Sabren* (i. e. *Sabrina*) drowns herself, and *Guendeline* speaks as follows :

‘One mischief follows on another's neck.

Who would have thought so young a maid as she  
With such a courage would have sought her death?’

166, &c. This speech of the Queen is certainly unworthy of its author and of the occasion. The enumeration of plants is quite as unsuitable to so tragical a scene as the description of the Dover cliff in *King Lear*, iv. 6. 11-24. Besides there was no one by to witness the death of *Ophelia*, else she would have been rescued.

*Ib.* For ‘aslant a brook’ which the folios have, the quartos read ‘ascant the brook.’ The indefinite article is more appropriate.

167. *hoar leaves*. The under side of the willow leaf is white. Compare *Virgil's Georgics*, ii. 13 :

‘*Glauca canentia fronde salicta.*’

169. *crow-flowers*. In *Gerard's Herbal*, ed. 1597, pp. 480, 481, *crow-flowers* are identified with ‘*Wilde Williams*,’ ‘*Marsh gilloflowers*,’ and ‘*Cuckowe gilloflowers*.’ ‘*These*,’ he adds, ‘are not vsed either in medicine or in nourishment : but they serue for garlands and crowns, and to decke up gardens.’ These plants mentioned by *Gerard* as having various names, Latin and English, in common, are more precisely distinguished by *Prior*, *Popular Names of British Plants*, p. 92.

*Ib.* *long purples*, says *Prior*, p. 138, ‘are supposed to be the purple-flowered *Orchis Masculata*.’

170. *liberal*, licentious. See *Much Ado about Nothing*, iv. 1. 93 : ‘most like a liberal villain.’ Or rather perhaps here its meaning is ‘free-spoken,’ as in *Richard II*, ii. 1. 229 : ‘a liberal tongue.’

173. *sliver*, a branch stripped from the tree. The verb ‘*slive*’ or ‘*sliver*,’ to strip off, occurs twice in the latter form in Shakespeare. See *King Lear*, iv. 2. 34 :

‘She that herself will sliver and disbranch  
From her material sap, perforce must wither  
And come to deadly use.’

And *Macbeth*, iv. 1. 28 :

‘Slips of yew  
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse.’

177. *Which time*. Compare *Twelfth Night*, iv. 3. 30 :

‘What time we will our celebration keep.’

And 3 Henry VI, ii. 5. 3 :

‘What time the shepherd blowing of his nails.’

For the omission of the preposition in adverbial expressions of time, &c., see Abbott, § 202.

177. *tunes*. So the folios, for ‘landes,’ which is the reading of the quartos. We retain ‘tunes,’ which is found in the quarto of 1603.

178. *incapable*, unable to feel. Compare ‘capable,’ King John, iii. 1. 12 :

‘For I am sick and capable of fears.’

In the sense of ‘able to understand’ we have had ‘capable’ in this play, iii. 2. 11.

179. *native*. See i. 2. 47 ; and our note.

*Ib. indued*, endowed with qualities fitting her for living in the water. ‘Indue,’ or ‘endue,’ is used as equivalent to ‘endow.’ See Twelfth Night, i. 5. 105 : ‘Now Mercury endue thee with leasing.’

182. *the poor wretch* is said of Hamlet, ii. 2. 169.

187. *trick*, habit. See All’s Well that Ends Well, iii. 2. 9 : ‘This trick of melancholy.’ And Love’s Labour’s Lost, v. 2. 416.

189. *the woman will be out*. Compare Henry V, iv. 6. 31 :

‘But I had not so much of man in me,  
And all my mother came into mine eyes  
And gave me up to tears.’

And Twelfth Night, ii. 1. 41-43 : ‘I am yet so near the manners of my mother, that upon the least occasion more mine eyes will tell tales of me.’

191. *douts*. ‘Dout’ is a contraction of ‘do out.’ See Henry V, iv. 2. 11 :

‘That their hot blood may spin in English eyes,  
And dout them with superfluous courage.’

## ACT V.

### Scene I.

2. *salvation*. It is scarcely necessary to remark that the clowns here use words conveying the opposite meaning to that intended, as Launcelot, Mrs. Quickly, Dogberry and Verges, &c., do.

4. *straight*, immediately, as in ii. 2. 451, and iii. 4. 1.

12. *argal*. ‘Ergo’ is the word meant.

13. *delver*. We have had the verb ‘delve,’ iii. 4. 205.

21. *quest*, inquest. See Richard III, i. 4. 189:

‘What lawful quest have given their verdict up  
Unto the frowning judge?’

where the word specially means the jury who undertook the inquest. This elaborately absurd exposition of ‘crown’s quest law’ is supposed by Sir J. Hawkins to be intended as a satire on the case of Dame Hales, 3rd Elizabeth, whose husband Sir James Hales, had drowned himself. On this occasion the argument of Serjeant Walsh and the Judges was as pedantic and as full of quibbles as that of our ‘first clown.’ The case is reported in Plowden’s Commentaries, which were not translated from French into English till long after Shakespeare’s time.

25. *There thou say’st*, speakest to the purpose.

26. *countenance*, favour, encouragement, as in iv. 2. 15.

27. *even Christian*, fellow-Christian. In Anglo-Saxon we find the compound *efen-bisceop*, a co-bishop, *efen-esne*, a fellow-servant. In Forshall and Madden’s Glossary to the Wycliffite Versions of the Bible, we find ‘*enene-caytif*,’ a fellow-prisoner, ‘*euen disciplis*,’ fellow-disciples, ‘*euen-seruaunt*,’ fellow-servant, and others. ‘*Even cristen*,’ i. e. christian, is found in Chaucer’s Parson’s Tale, p. 193, col. i. ed. T. Wright.

28. *There is*. See note on iii. 4. 199.

29. *hold up*, maintain. See Merry Wives of Windsor, v. 5. 110: ‘Hold up the jest no higher.’

51. *unyoke*, when you have done guessing, as men do when they have finished their work.

54. *Mass*. We have had the full oath ‘By the mass,’ ii. 1. 50, and iii. 2. 344.

59. *to Yaughan*. So the folios. It is impossible to detect the meaning which lies under this corruption. The quarto of 1603 has ‘get thee gone,’ and the other quartos merely ‘get thee in.’ Dr. Nicholson (Notes and Queries, Fourth Series, viii. 81) conjectures that Yaughan may be a corruption of Johan, and that this may have been the name of a foreign Jew who kept an alehouse near the Globe Theatre. Such an alehouse is known to have existed, and ‘deaf John,’ the keeper of such a house is mentioned in Ben Jonson’s Alchemist, i. 1. and ‘a Jew, one Johan,’ is alluded to in Every Man out of his Humour, v. 4.

*Ib. a stoup of liquor*. The word ‘stoup,’ meaning a drinking-cup, is still used in college halls. It was applied to vessels of various sizes, and occurs again in Twelfth Night, ii. 3. 129, ‘A stoup of wine, Maria!’ and in Othello, ii. 3. 30, ‘Come, lieutenant, I have a stoup of wine.’

60, &c. The three stanzas sung by the grave-digger are taken from a song in Tottel’s Miscellany (pp. 173-175), of which two editions were printed in 1557, and which forms one of Arber’s English Reprints. The



song is attributed to Thomas Lord Vaux, in a MS. in the British Museum. We give the three stanzas corresponding to those in the text :

'I lothe that I did loue,  
 In youth that I thought swete:  
 As time requires for my behoue  
 Me thinkes they are not mete.

For age with stelyng steppes,  
 Hath clawed me with his cowche, (al. 'crowch')  
 And lusty life away she leapes,  
 As there had bene none such.

A pikeax and a spade  
 And eke a shrowdyng shete,  
 A house of claye for to be made,  
 For such a gest most mete.'

The third line in the second stanza, sung by the clown, occurs later in the original :

'Apd shipped me into the lande.'

Chappell, in his *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, pp. 200, 216, says that these stanzas are by stage tradition sung to the tune of 'The Children in the Wood.'

62. This line has no sense, and doubtless Shakespeare made it unintelligible, in order to suit the character of the singer. So 'for-a,' 'there-a,' 'nothing-a,' represent the drawling notes in which he sings. Compare *Winter's Tale*, iv. 2. 133 :

'Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,  
 And merrily hent the stile-a :  
 A merry heart goes all the day,  
 Your sad heart tires in a mile-a.'

Webbe, *A Discourse of English Poetrie*, 1586 (p. 36, ed. Arber) says, 'And perhappes obserue iust number of sillables, eyght in one line, sixe in an other, and there withall an A to make a iercke in the ende.'

66. *a property of easiness*. 'Property' here means individual peculiarity, and 'of easiness' is used with adjectival force, as in i. 2. 4.

68. *daintier*, softer, more delicate. Compare *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 1. 59 :

'Spirit of sense  
 Hard as the palm of ploughman.'

71. *intil*. See Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, 2064 :  
 'Ther saugh I Dyane turned intil a tree.'

Similarly in *Passionate Pilgrim*, 382 :

'She, poor bird, as all forlorn  
 Lean'd her breast up-till a thorn.'

74. *jowls*, knocks. The word occurs in All's Well that Ends Well, i. 3. 58: 'They may jowl horns together, like any deer i' the herd.'

76. *politician*, conspirator, schemer, plotter. The word is always used in a bad sense by Shakespeare, as I Henry IV, i. 3. 241:

'This vile politician, Bolingbroke.'

*Ib. o'er-reaches*. So the quartos. The folios have, with various spelling, 'o'er-offices,' a word otherwise unknown. If it be not a misprint, it must mean 'to be higher in office.' The grave-digger now is superior in official rank to the politician who had always been plotting for that rank.

81, 82. Compare Timon of Athens, i. 2. 216-218.

84. *mazzard*, skull. See Othello, ii. 3. 155: 'Let me go, sir, or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.'

85. *trick*, acquired habit, or skill, or art. Compare Love's Labour's Lost, v. 2. 466:

'That smiles his cheek in years and knows the trick

To make my lady laugh when she's disposed.'

87. *loggats*, diminutive of 'log.' The game so called resembles bowls, but with notable differences. First it is played not on a green, but on a floor strewn with ashes. The Jack is a wheel of lignum-vitæ or other hard wood, nine inches in diameter and three or four inches thick. The loggat, made of apple-wood, is a truncated cone 26 or 27 inches in length, tapering from a girth of 8½ or 9 inches at the one end to 3½ or 4 inches at the other. Each player has three loggats which he throws, holding lightly the thin end. The object is to lie as near the Jack as possible. The only place we have heard of where this once popular game is now played is the Hampshire Hog Inn, Norwich. We have to thank the Rev. G. Gould for a detailed description of the game, which we have abridged as above. Perhaps Hamlet meant to compare the skull to the Jack at which the bones were thrown. In Ben Jonson's Tale of a Tub, iv. 6:

'Now are they tossing of his legs and arms

Like loggats at a pear-tree.'

90. *For and*. For these words the copy of the ballad as printed in Percy's Reliques has 'And eke,' which is equivalent in meaning. Modern editions print for the most part erroneously thus: 'For—and.' Dyce quotes among other instances, Beaumont and Fletcher's Knight of the Burning Pestle, ii. 3:

'For and the squire of damsels, as I take it.'

'But and' seems to mean both 'besides' and 'except.'

94. *quiddities*. So the quartos: the folios have 'quiddits.' Either word comes from the scholastic term *quidditas*, formed like *qualitas* and *quantitas*, and means here 'captious arguments,' 'subtleties.' Compare

1 Henry IV, i. 2. 51: 'What! in thy quips and thy quiddities?' And Lyly's *Euphues*, p. 138 (ed. Arber); 'Wherefore it behoueth youth with all industry to search not onely the hard questions of the Philosophers, but also the fine cases of the Lawyers, not only the quirks and quiddities of the Logicians, but also to have a sight in the numbers of the Arithmeticians.'

94. *quilllets*, corrupted from *quidlibet*, as probably is the verb 'to quibble.' It means much the same as 'quiddities.' Compare 1 Henry IV, ii. 4. 17: 'These nice sharp quilllets of the law.'

96. *sconce*, head. It is a colloquial and jocose term like 'costard,' 'pate,' 'mazzard,' &c.

99. *statutes*. 'Statute, statutum, has divers significations; as first it signifies an Act of Parliament . . . Statute, in another signification, is a short Writing called a Statute-Merchant or a Statute-Staple, which are in the nature of Bonds . . . and are called Statutes, because made according to the forms expressly provided by Statutes, which direct both before what persons and in what manner they ought to be made.' Cowel's Law Dictionary, s. v.

*Ib. recognizances*. 'Recognisance . . . is as a Bond or Obligation of Record testifying the Recognisor to owe to the Recognisee a certain sum of money.' Cowel, s. v. All the other legal terms enumerated by Hamlet are explained by Cowel, or by Jacob in his Law Dictionary.

100. *the fine of his fines*. Here is a play on the other meaning of 'fine,' i. e. end, in which sense it occurs in All's Well that Ends Well, iv. 4. 35: 'still the fine's the crown.'

104. *a pair of indentures*. Indentures were agreements made out in duplicate, of which each party kept one. Both were written on the same sheet of paper, or parchment, which was cut in two in a crooked or indented line (whence the name), in order that the fitting of the two parts might prove the genuineness of both in case of dispute.

105. *inheritor*, possessor. See Love's Labour's Lost, ii. 1. 5:

'To parley with the sole inheritor  
Of all perfections that a man may owe.'

And Richard II, ii. 1. 83:

'Whose hollow womb inherits nought but bones.'

110. *assurance*. For the legal sense of the word see Jacob s. v.: 'Assurance of lands, is where lands or tenements are conveyed by deed.' Here of course there is a reference also to the ordinary meaning.

120. *quick*, alive, as in the Creed. See v. i. 239, 268, and Henry V, ii. 2. 79:

'The mercy that was quick in us but late  
By your own counsel is suppress'd and kill'd.'

The other sense of 'quick,' opposed to 'slow,' is alluded to in the next line.

130. *absolute*, positive. See *Cymbeline*, iv. 2. 106:

'I am absolute

'Twas very Cloten.'

131, 132. *speak by the card*. 'Card' means sometimes the circular card on which the points of the compass are marked, and over which the needle moves, as in *Macbeth*, i. 3. 17. Sometimes it means a chart or map, as in *Bacon's Essays*, Of Travel, xviii. In either of these senses, 'to sail by the card' meant to sail carefully. Hence 'to speak by the card' is to speak carefully.

133. *picked*, precise, smart. Compare *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 1. 14: 'He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd.' And *King John*, i. 1. 193: 'My picked man of countries.' *Cotgrave* (*French Dict.*) gives; 'Misté, Neat, spruce, compt, quaint, picked, minion, trickesie, tine, gay.' There may possibly be a covert reference in this word to the pointed shoes which were once in fashion.

134. *kibe*, a chilblain on the heel. See *Tempest*, ii. 1. 276:

'If 'twere a kibe,

'Twould put me to my slipper.'

And *King Lear*, i. 5. 9: 'If a man's brains were in 's heels, were 't not in danger of kibes?'

136. Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 3. 16:

'Even or odd, of all days in the year,

Come Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen.'

140. *Blackstone* calls attention to the discrepancy between the statement here with regard to *Hamlet's* age, by which he must have been thirty years old, and that in the early part of the play where he is described as a very young man, a student at the University (i. 2. 113).

147. Compare *Marston's Malcontent*, iii. 1: 'Your lordship shall ever finde . . . amongst a hundred Englishmen, fourscore and ten madmen.'

169. *Rhenish*. See i. 4. 10.

170. *Yorick*. Mr. *Magnússon* suggests to us that this name may be a corruption of *Rorick*, *Saxo's Roricus*, *Hamlet's* grandfather on the mother's side. Mr. *Ainger* conjectures that it was connected with the Danish form of the name *George*.

178. *gibes*, jeers, sarcasms. Compare *Othello*, iv. 1. 83:

'Do but encave yourself,

And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorns,

That dwell in every region of his face.'

180. *on a roar*. We say still 'to set on fire,' and in Exodus xix. 18 we find 'on a smoke' for 'smoking.'

182. *chamber*. So the folios and the quarto of 1603. The other quartos have 'table,' that is, dressing-table.

183. *favour*, applied in Shakespeare's time to the features of the face. So Bacon, Essay xliii: 'In beauty, that of favour is more than that of colour, and that of decent and gracious motion more than that of favour.'

201. *Imperious*, imperial. Compare Troilus and Cressida, iv. 5. 172:

'I thank thee, most imperious Agamemnon.'

204. *flaw*, blast of wind. Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives: 'Tourbillon de vent. A whirlwind; also, a gust, flaw, berrie, sudden blast, or boisterous tempest, of wind.' Compare Coriolanus, v. 3. 74:

'Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw.'

207. *maimed*, imperfect, curtailed. By the English law a person who committed suicide was formerly buried at the meeting of cross roads with a stake driven through his body and without any form of burial service.

209. *Fordo*, undo, destroy. See ii. 1. 103.

*Ib. it.* The reading of the first and second folios and all the early quartos. The sixth quarto has 'its' and the third and fourth folios 'it's.' See note on i. 2. 216.

*Ib. estate*, rank. See Cymbeline, v. 5. 22:

'I create you

Companions to our person, and will fit you

With dignities becoming your estates.'

210. *Couch*, lie down, and so hide. Compare Merry Wives of Windsor, v. 2. 1: 'Come, come, we'll couch i' the castle-ditch till we see the light of our fairies.'

214. *enlarged*. See 1.207. In Ophelia's case there was some form of burial service though not the complete one.

215. *warranty*, warrant, permission. See Merchant of Venice, i. 1. 132. Cotgrave (French Dict.) has, 'Garentage: m. Warrantie, warrantize, warrantage.' The first folio has 'warrantis,' and hence Dyce reads 'warrantise.' Whalley suggests that there may be a reference 'to the coroner's warrant, directed to the minister and churchwardens of a parish and permitting the body of a person, who comes to an untimely end, to receive Christian burial.' This is supported by the conversation of the clowns at the beginning of the scene, but is scarcely consistent with what follows in the next line where 'great command' evidently refers to the influence of the king which had been exercised so as to interfere with the usual proceedings. The rubric before the Burial

Office forbids it to be used for persons who have laid violent hands upon themselves.

220. *crants*, garland. The word in German is *kranz*, in other Teutonic dialects *krants*, *kranz*, and *crance*, the latter being Lowland Scotch, and having *cransis* for plural. No other instance has been found of this word in English, but Shakespeare would scarcely have used it if it had been unintelligible to his audience. The editors of the folios changed it to 'rites.' It appears from Brand's Popular Antiquities, ii. p. 302, &c., that it was the custom in various parts of England to have a garland of flowers and sweet herbs carried before a maiden's coffin, and afterwards to suspend it in the church. Dr. Johnson affirms that it was in his time still the custom in rural parishes. See Atkinson's Cleveland Glossary, s. v. *Arval*.

221. *strewments*. A full account of the custom of strewing flowers on the corpse and on the grave is given in Brand, ii. 307, &c. Compare with lines 231-234 *Romeo and Juliet*, iv. 5. 79 :

'Dry up your tears and stick your rosemary  
On this fair corse.'

And line 89 of the same scene :

'Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corpse.'

And v. 3. 281 :

'He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave.'

See also *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 128, 129, and *Cymbeline*, iv. 2. 218, &c.

*Ib. bringing home*. In these words reference is still made to the marriage rites, which in the case of maidens are sadly parodied in the funeral service. See *Romeo and Juliet*, iv. 5. 85, 86. As the bride was brought home to her husband's house with bell and wedding festivity, so the dead maiden is brought to her last home 'with bell and burial.'

226. *peace-parted*, a singularly-formed compound, of which there is no other example, for 'peacefully parted,' 'departed in peace.' A similar irregularity is found in the compound 'death-practised,' *King Lear*, iv. 6. 284.

234. *have strew'd*, an irregular construction for 'to have strew'd.' The folios have 't' have strew'd.'

235. *ten times treble*. Compare *Richard III*, iv. 4. 324 :

'Of ten times double gain of happiness.'

236. *ingenious*, intelligent, keen in apprehension. Compare *King Lear*, iv. 6. 287 :

'How stiff is my vile sense,  
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling  
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract :  
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,

And woes by wrong imaginations lose  
The knowledge of themselves.'

239. *quick*. See v. I. 120.

241. *skyish*, belonging to, or commingling with the sky.

244. *wandering stars*, the planets, of which Cotgrave says (s. v. 'Planette') 'they bee also called, Wandering starres, because they neuer keepe one certaine place or station in the firmament.'" In Albumazar, i. 1, they are called 'wanderers':

'Your patron Mercury in his mysterious character  
Hold all the marks of the other wanderers.'

250. *splenitive*. Shakespeare uses 'spleeny,' Henry VIII, iii. 2. 99, and 'spleenful,' Titus Andronicus, ii. 3. 191, in the same sense. The spleen was supposed to be the seat of anger. Compare 1 Henry IV, v. 2. 19:

'A hare-brain'd Hotspur, govern'd by a spleen.'

252. *wisdom*. The quartos read 'wisdome,' the folios 'wisenesse,' or 'wiseness.'

256. *wag*, move. The word had not the grotesque signification which it now has, and might be used without incongruity in the most serious passages. Compare iii. 4. 39, and Merchant of Venice, iv. 1. 76, where the verb is transitive. It is intransitive, as here, in Titus Andronicus, v. 2. 87:

'For well I wot the empress never wags  
But in her company there is a Moor.'

259. *quantity*. Compare iii. 4. 75, and note. Here the context implies that the word has a depreciatory meaning.

263. *'Swounds*. This profane oath is changed in the folios to 'Come.' See ii. 2. 355.

264. *Woo't*. The quartos and folios (except the imperfect quarto of 1603, which has 'Wilt') agree in reading 'Woo't,' a colloquialism, by which Hamlet marks his contempt for Laertes. In Antony and Cleopatra, iv. 2. 7, and iv. 15. 59, it indicates affectionate familiarity.

265. *drink up*, drink off. For instances of 'up' used as intensive, see As You Like It, ii. 1. 62:

'To fright the animals and to kill them up.'

And King John, iv. 3. 133:

'Enough to stifle such a villain up.'

*Ib.* *eisel*, vinegar, from O. Fr. *aisil*. Compare Sonnet cxi. 10:

'I will drink

Potions of eisel against my strong infection.'

Hamlet challenges Laertes to perform any feat which is painful, repulsive, or as in the next clause, impossible. In a MS. Herbal in the Library

of Trinity College, Cambridge (O. I. 13), occurs 'Acetosum an<sup>co</sup> vynegre or aysel.'

It has been suggested by Mr. De Soyres in Notes and Queries (Aug. 10, 1872) that the reference here is to a Lake Esyl which figures in Scandinavian legends. He says, 'I have a distinct remembrance that in one of these mention was made of a Lake Esyl, and one of the impossible feats demanded of Thor by the giants was to drink this lake dry.' We consulted Mr. Magnússon on this point and he writes as follows: 'No such lake as Esyl is known to Norse mythology or folklore. Thor's only trial at drinking an impossible draught was at Útgarðaloki's, where he had to empty a horn the other end of which mouthed into the sea; in consequence he only achieved drinking the ocean down to the ebb mark.'

272. *an*, if, spelt most commonly 'and' in the old editions.

276. *golden couplets*. The pigeon lays only two eggs at a time, and the newly hatched birds are covered with yellow down.

*Ib. disclosed*, hatched. Compare iii. i. 165. Steevens quotes from 'The Book of Huntynge, Hawkyng, Fyshing, &c.,' an undated black-letter book: 'First they ben eges; and after they ben disclosed, haukes; and commonly goshaukes ben disclosed as sone as the coughes.' In Holme's Academy of Armoury, B. ii. c. 11. p. 238, he says: '*Disclose*, is when the young just peeps through the shell. It is also taken for laying, hatching, or bringing forth young: as she disclosed three birds.' Warburton, for 'when that,' read 'e'er that,' followed by Johnson ('ere that'), because they thought that the patient tranquillity of the dove would be specially marked by sitting upon her yet unhatched eggs. But, according to Steevens, the dove, for three days after the hatching, 'never quits her nest except for a few moments in quest of a little food for herself; as all her young require in that early state is to be kept warm, an office which she never entrusts to the male.'

284. *the present push*, the instant test. For 'present' see Winter's Tale, i. 2. 281:

'I would not be a stander-by to hear  
My sovereign mistress clouded so, without  
My present vengeance taken.'

For 'push' in the sense of 'crisis,' 'critical moment,' see the same play, v. 3. 129:

'There's time enough for that;  
Lest they desire upon this push to trouble  
Your joys with like relation.'

And Macbeth, v. 3. 20:

'This push

Will cheer me ever, or disseat me now,  
where it may either signify 'crisis,' or 'effort,' or 'assault.'



286. *living*, perhaps, is used by the speaker in a double sense, first, that of 'enduring,' as the Queen would understand it; secondly, Laertes would be cognisant of the deeper meaning, by which the life of Hamlet is menaced.

*Scene II.*

6. *mutines*, mutineers. Compare King John, ii. 1. 378:

'Do like the mutines of Jerusalem.'

For the verb 'to mutine' see this play, iii. 4. 83.

*Ib. bilboes*, stocks or fetters used on board ship, and made of a bar of iron, with rings attached to it, in which the legs of the prisoners were placed. Steevens gives a figure of them as they are preserved in the Tower of London among the spoils of the Spanish Armada. The word is derived from Bilbao or Bilboa in Spain, which was famous, as early as the time of Pliny, for the manufacture of iron and steel. For the same reason a sword-blade made there was called a 'bilbo.' See Merry Wives of Windsor, i. 1. 165; iii. 5. 112.

*Ib. Rashly*, hastily. What follows, to the end of Hamlet's speech, is parenthetical. Compare Richard III, iii. 5. 43:

'What, think you we are Turks or infidels?  
Or that we would, against the form of law,  
Proceed thus rashly to the villain's death?'

7. Tyrwhitt proposed to read:

'And prais'd be rashness, for it lets us know,' &c.,

putting the passage 'And prais'd . . . certain' in a parenthesis. The folios mark only the words 'And prais'd be rashness for it' as parenthetical.

*Ib. let us know*, that is, recognise and acknowledge.

9. *deaf*. So the quartos. The folios have 'dear.'

*Ib. pall*, grow vapid and tasteless, like wine: hence, become vain and worthless. Compare Antony and Cleopatra, ii. 7. 88:

'I'll never follow thy pall'd fortunes more.'

*Ib. learn*. So the quartos. The folios have 'teach,' a sense in which 'learn' was frequently used; as e. g. Richard II, iv. 1. 120:

'True noblesse would

Learn him forbearance from so foul a wrong.'

11. *Rough-hew*. Florio gives: 'Abbozzare: to rough-hew or cast any first draught.' The metaphor is of course from carpenters' work. Dr. Farmer informed Steevens that 'a wool-man, butcher and dealer in skewers, lately observed to him that his nephew (an idle lad) could only assist him in making them; "he could rough-hew them, but I was obliged to shape their ends."'

13. *sea-gown*. Cotgrave says: 'Esclavine . . . a sea-gowne; or a course, high-collered, and short sleeued gowne, reaching downe to the mid leg, and vsed most by sea-men, and Saylor's.'

*Ib. scarf'd*, thrown on like a scarf, i. e. without putting the arms through the sleeves. Compare *Much Ado about Nothing*, ii. 1. 197: 'About your neck, like an usurer's chain? or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf?'

14. *find out them*. 'Find out' is here used as if it were a compound verb. Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, iv. 2. 41, and *Julius Cæsar*, i. 3. 134:

'Cassius. Cinna, where haste you so?

Cinna. To find out you.'

The objective personal pronoun is frequently placed after, and not before, the preposition which belongs to the verb. See Abbott, § 240. Modern usage only admits this order where the pronoun is emphatic.

16, 17. *making so bold . . . to unseal*. Compare *Merchant of Venice*, iii. 3. 10:

'So fond

To come abroad.'

And *Macbeth* ii. 3. 55:

'I'll make so bold to call.'

The omission of 'as' is frequently found in similar passages.

17. *unseal*. The quartos here have 'unfold,' which is doubtless a misprint, the compositor's eye having caught the concluding letters of the previous line.

19. *O royal knavery*. So the folios, spelling 'oh.' The quartos have 'A royal knavery,' meaning perhaps, 'Ah, royal knavery.'

20. *Larded*. Compare iv. 5. 36.

*Ib. reasons*. So the quartos. The folios have 'reason.'

21. *Importing*. See i. 2. 23, and iv. 7. 80. Here the word is used in a somewhat different sense, 'gravely affecting,' 'concerning.' Compare *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 1. 57:

'This letter is mistook; it importeth none here.'

22. *bugs*, bugbears, objects of terror. Compare *Winter's Tale*, iii. 2. 93:

'The bug which you would fright me with I seek.'

In Coverdale's translation of the Psalms (Ps. xc. or according to the present numbering xci. 5) we find: 'So y<sup>e</sup> thou shalt not nedc to be afrayed for eny bugges by night ner for arrowe that flyeth by daye.' In Cotgrave 'Goblin' and 'Bug' are given as translations of the French *Gobelin*.

*Ib. in my life*, in my continuing to live.

23. *on the supervise*, on the supervision, on the first reading. For

substantives taking the form of the simple verb, see i. 1. 57. The verb 'supervise' occurs in *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 2. 124: 'Let me supervise the canzonet.'

*Ib. no leisure bated.* The leisure is to be taken out of the interval of time between the receiving of the command and its execution. The execution must follow immediately without any exception of leisure.

24. *stay*, wait for. Compare *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 1. 25: 'Nay, you must stay the cooling too.'

27. *hear me how.* So *Antony and Cleopatra*, v. 1. 51: 'We'll hear him what he says.' And *King Lear*, i. 1. 272: 'I know you what you are.'

29. *villanies.* So the quartos, with various spelling. The folios 'villaines,' or 'villains.'

30. *Or.* So the quartos. The folios read 'Ere.' We have 'or' in this sense frequently in Chaucer and the earlier writers, as e. g. in the *Knight's Tale*, 1685: 'Cleer was the day, as I have told or this.' We find the pleonastic combination of both in *The Tempest*, i. 2. 11. In *Hamlet*, i. 2. 183, we have, according to the second and following quartos, 'Or ever I had,' where that of 1603 reads 'Ere ever I had,' and the folios 'Ere I had ever.'

31. *They*, i. e. the brains, not the 'villains,' as *Delius* and *Elze* suppose, reading line 29 as the folios: 'My brains began instinctively to act before I could frame a scheme.'

33. *statists*, statesmen. See *Cymbeline*, ii. 4. 16:

'Statist though I am none.'

And *Milton*, *Paradise Regained*, iv. 354:

'Statists indeed,

And lovers of their country.'

*Ib.* *Ritson* quotes from *Florio's translation of Montaigne*, ed. 1603, p. 125 [i. c. 39]; 'I have in my time seene some who by writing did earnestly get both their titles and living, to disavow their apprentissage, marre their pen, and affect the ignorance of so vulgar a qualitie.' *Blackstone* says: 'Most of the great men of *Shakespeare's times*, whose autographs have been preserved, wrote very bad hands: their secretaries very neat ones.'

36. *yeoman's service*, good and faithful service, such as formerly the yeomen, or small freeholders, rendered in war. They composed the mass of the infantry. Their formidable character is mentioned by *Bacon* in his *Essay 'Of the true greatnesse of Kingdomes and Estates'*, p. 122, ed. *W. A. Wright*. Compare *Henry V*, iii. 1. 25, &c.

42. *comma* is here used as opposed to 'period,' or full stop, and in this view a mark of connexion, not division.

43. *charge*, load, burden, weight. 'A quibble is intended between

“as,” the conditional particle, and “ass,” the beast of burden. Compare Twelfth Night, ii. 3. 184, 185:

*Sir And.* And your horse now would make him an ass.

*Mar.* Ass, I doubt not.’

That “charged” anciently signified “loaded” may be proved by the following passage in *The Widow’s Tears*, by Chapman, 1612: “Thou must be the ass charged with crowns to make way.” (Johnson.) And *Romeo and Juliet*, v. 2. 18:

‘The letter was not nice, but full of charge.’

44. *knowing of*. So the quartos. The folios have ‘know of.’ We have ‘knowing’ as a substantive in *Macbeth*, ii. 4. 4:

‘This sore night

Hath trifled former knowings.’

45. *debatement*. See *Measure for Measure*, v. 1. 99: ‘After much debatement.’

47. *Not shriving-time*, no time for making confession and receiving absolution. Compare *Richard III*, iii. 4. 97:

‘Make a short shrift: he longs to see your head.’

48. *ordinant*, ordaining, arranging. For ‘was ordinant’ compare ‘was sequent,’ l. 54.

50. *model*, the exact counterpart. Compare *Richard II*, iii. 2. 153:

‘And that small model of the barren earth,  
Which serves as paste and cover to our bones.’

51. *writ*, writing. Compare ii. 2. 388, and 2 *Henry VI*, i. 4. 60:

‘Now, pray, my lord, let’s see the devil’s writ.’

*Ib.* *in the form*. So the quartos. The folios omit the article as in *Julius Cæsar*, iii. 1. 216, ‘In number of our friends’; and *Abbott*, § 89.

54. *sequent*, following. Compare *All’s Well that Ends Well*, v. 3. 197:

‘Conferr’d by testament to the sequent issue.’

56. *go to’t*, perish. So *Heywood*, *Second Part of King Edward the Fourth* (Works, i. 135):

‘The guiltlesse passcnger must first go toot.’

57. *Why . . . employment*, omitted in the quartos.

58. *near my conscience*. So in *Henry VIII*, ii. 2. 18:

‘It seems the marriage with his brother’s wife  
Has crept too near his conscience.’

*Ib.* *defeat*, misprinted ‘debate’ in the folios. See ii. 2. 552.

59. *insinuation*, artful intrusion into the business, crooked policy.

62. *opposites*, opponents. So in *Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 253: ‘Your opposite hath in him what youth, strength, skill and wrath can furnish man withal.’

63. *thinks’t thee*. The quartos have ‘thinke thee,’ or ‘think thee’; the folios ‘thinkst thee,’ or ‘think’t thee.’ *Sidney Walker* suggested the

reading of the text, 'thinks't thee,' i. e. 'thinks it thee.' Perhaps the true reading is 'thinks thee,' the final *s* of the quarto being mistaken for *e*. The word 'think' in this passage is not the same in origin as 'think' used personally, but comes from A. S. *thincan*, to seem, appear, which is used impersonally with all personal pronouns. The other word is *thencan*, to think, and the distinction is maintained in the German *dünken* and *denken*. In Richard III, iii. 1. 63,

'Where it seems best unto your royal self,'

for 'seems,' which is the reading of the earliest quartos, the later editions have 'thinkst,' or 'think'st.'

*Ib. stand me now upon*, is it not incumbent upon me? Compare Richard II, ii. 3. 138:

'It stands your grace upon to do him right.'

In the present passage the construction is interrupted by the parenthesis.

66. *angle*, a fishing-hook and line. Compare Antony and Cleopatra, ii. 5. 10: 'Give me mine angle.'

*Ib. proper*, own. So Coriolanus, i. 9. 57:

'One that means his proper harm.'

68-80. *to quit . . . here?* omitted in the quartos.

70. *In*, into. So Richard III, i. 2. 261:

'But first I'll turn yon fellow in his grave.'

78. *court*. Rowe's emendation for 'count,' the reading of the folios.

79. *bravery*, ostentatious display. Compare Julius Cæsar, v. 1. 10:

'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.'

83. *water-fly*. 'A water-fly,' says Johnson, 'skips up and down upon the surface of the water, without any apparent purpose, and is thence the proper emblem of a busy trifler.' See Troilus and Cressida, v. 1. 38: 'Ah, how the poor world is pestered with such waterflies, diminutives of nature!' The name is given to several kinds of flies haunting water, in Mouffet's Theater of Insects, ed. 1658, p. 943.

85. *gracious*. See i. 1. 164.

88. *chough*. See note on Macbeth, iii. 4. 125, and Tempest, ii. 1. 265:

'I myself could make

A chough of as deep chat.'

*Ib. dirt*. Compare Beaumont and Fletcher, Scornful Lady, i. 2: 'He has too much land: hang it, dirt.'

89. *lordship*. The folios have a curious misprint, 'friendship.'

95. *indifferent*. See iii. 1. 122.

96, 97. *or my complexion*— So Warburton. The quartos have no mark of interruption. The folios read 'for my complexion.' See i. 4. 27.

102. *I beseech you remember*—The full phrase is found in Love's Labour's Lost, v. 1. 103: 'I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy; I beseech thee, apparel thy head.'

103. *for mine ease*. Compare Marston's Malcontent, Induction:

*Cun.* I beseech you, sir, be coverd.

*Sly.* No, in good faith, for mine ease.'

See also Massinger's New Way to Pay Old Debts, ii. 3:

'Is't for your ease

You keep your hat off?'

Malone quotes appositely from Florio's Second Frutes (1591), p. 111:

'Why do you stand bareheded? . . . .

Pardon me good sir, I doe it for mine ease.'

104-136. *Sir, here . . . unfellowed*. Instead of this the folios have only, 'Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon.'

105. *absolute, perfect*. So Merry Wives of Windsor, iii. 3. 66: 'Thou wouldst make an absolute courtier.'

*Ib. differences*, distinctions marking him out from the rest of men. This affected phrase was probably suggested by the heraldic use of the word.

107. *card*. See v. 1. 131.

*Ib. card or calendar of gentry*, 'the general preceptor of elegance; the card by which a gentleman is to direct his course; the calendar by which he is to choose his time, that what he does may be both excellent and seasonable.' (Johnson.) 'Gentry' is here used as equivalent to 'gentility.' See ii. 2. 22. One of Greene's pamphlets (1584) was called 'Gwydonius. The carde of Fancie.'

108. *continent*. See iv. 4. 64. Laertes comprises in himself, like a complete map, every part or accomplishment which a gentleman would look for. 'Part' is here used in a double sense, first keeping up the simile of the map, and next in the same sense as in iv. 7. 64.

109. *defincement*, definition. The only illustration which can be given of the language of this dialogue, in which Hamlet talks nonsense intentionally, and Osric without knowing it, is the dialect of Parolles, in All's Well that Ends Well, and of Don Armado and Holofernes in Love's Labour's Lost.

111. *and yet but yaw neither*. If this passage stands as Shakespeare wrote it, any meaning it may have had has defied the penetration of commentators to detect. 'Yaw' is the reading of the quarto of 1604 only. The others have 'raw.' Warburton conjectured 'slow,' Tschischwitz 'row.' Dyce reads 'it' for 'yet.' Staunton suggested 'wit.' 'To yaw' is a nautical phrase, used of a ship which moves unsteadily and does not

answer her helm. The word occurs as a substantive in Massinger's *Very Woman*, iii. 5 :

'Tis good strong wine; O, the yaws that she will make!  
If 'yet' is a mistake for 'yt' or 'it,' we should require some such word as 'let' or 'make' to precede. The sense would then be, 'to attempt to catalogue his perfections would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and make it stagger, as it were, in pursuit of his swift-sailing ship.' The two metaphors are a little difficult to separate.

113. *a soul of great article*, explained by Johnson to mean 'a soul of large comprehension, of many contents,' articles being the particulars of an inventory.

*Ib. infusion*, essential qualities.

*Ib. dearth*, scarcity, dearthness.

114. *semblable*. Compare *Timon of Athens*, iv. 3. 22 :

'His semblable, yea, himself, Timon disdains.'

115. *trace*, follow. See 1 *Henry IV*, iii. 1. 48 :

'And bring him out that is but woman's son  
Can trace me in the tedious ways of art,  
And hold me pace in deep experiments.'

And Gorges' translation of *Lucan*, bk. i. p. 36 (ed. 1614) :

'And in their turnes next to them trace  
Prelates of an inferior place.'

*Ib. umbrage*, shadow.

119. *more rawer*. See note on ii. 1. 11.

121. *another tongue*. Johnson and Malone conjectured 'a mother tongue'; but it may simply mean 'other than this affected language.'

122. *do't*. The quarto of 1604 has 'too't.'

123. *nomination*. Compare *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 138: 'I will look again on the intellect of the letter, for the nomination of the party writing to the person written unto.'

130. *it would not much approve me*, would not be much to my credit.

135. *imputation*, repute, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3. 339 :

'Our imputation shall be oddly poised  
In this wild action.'

136. *meed*, merit; generally, the reward of merit. Compare 3 *Henry VI*, iv. 8. 38; 'My meed hath got me fame.'

141. *he has imponed*, or staked, Theobald's reading. The folios have 'he impon'd'; the quartos, 'he has impaund,' or 'impawn'd.' 'Imponed' seems more appropriate to Osric's affected language, and besides, it is repeated in l. 155 in the folios, but omitted in the quartos.

142. *assigns*, appendages, belongings.

143. *hangers*, the straps by which the sword was attached to the girdle. Florio (*Italian Dict.*), among other meanings of 'Pendente,' gives 'a

paire of hangers for a rapier.' Steevens quotes Chapman's Homer, Iliad, xi. 27:

'The scabbard was of silver-plate, with golden hangers grac'd.'

145. *liberal conceit*, elaborate design.

147, 148. Horatio's speech is omitted in the quartos.

147. *the margent*, the margin, where the comment was frequently given. Compare Romeo and Juliet, i. 3. 86:

'And what obscured in this fair volume lies,  
Find written in the margent of his eyes.'

153. *germane*, akin; and so, appropriate. See Timon of Athens, iv. 3. 344: 'Wert thou a leopard, thou wert german to the lion.'

155. *imponed as*. The quartos have 'all.'

156. Johnson has pointed out the impossibility of this wager, but Elze understands it to mean that in the twelve passes Hamlet could only afford to be hit seven times, and Laertes four times, without losing. This is no doubt true, but it does not explain the form in which the wager is put.

159. *answer*. Compare Cymbeline, iv. 2. 161:

'I would revenges,  
That possible strength might meet, would seek us through,  
And put us to our answer.'

164. *the breathing time of day*, the time of relaxation and rest. Compare Much Ado about Nothing, ii. 1. 378: 'Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing,' Claudio's marriage being put off a week. And Troilus and Cressida, ii. 3. 121:

'He hopes it is no other  
But for your health and your digestion sake  
An after-dinner's breath.'

168. *re-deliver*, report. See i. 2. 209.

174. *This lapwing*, &c. It was believed that the young lapwings were in such haste to be hatched, that they ran off with the shell upon their heads. The bird was therefore the symbol of a forward fellow. Steevens quotes from Greene's Never Too Late, 1616: 'Are you no sooner hatched, with the lapwing, but you will run away with the shell on your head?' It was also, from its habit of alluring intruders from its nest by crying far away from it, a symbol of insincerity. Compare Measure for Measure, i. 4. 32:

'Though 'tis my familiar sin  
With maids to seem the lapwing and to jest,  
Tongue far from heart.'

Osric was both forward and insincere.

175. *comply*. See ii. 2. 360.

176. *many more of the same breed*. The reading of the quartos.



The first folio had 'mine more of the same Beany.' The other folios read 'nine.'

178. *and outward habit.* The quartos read 'and out of an habit.' The 'outward habit of encounter' is the external address appropriate to an interview.

*Ib. yesty.* So the folios. The quartos have 'histry,' and 'mistry.' The former of these may have been a mistake for 'hasty.'

*Ib. collection.* A 'yesty collection' is a frothy and superficial knowledge, gathered in fragments. See iv. 5. 9.

179. *fond and winnowed.* The reading of the folios. The quartos have 'prophane and trennowed,' or 'trennowned.' Both may be pronounced to be corruptions. Perhaps the true reading may be 'Profound and winnowed,' as Tschischwitz has it. 'Profound and winnowed,' or well-sifted opinions, are properly contrasted with 'yesty collection.' Other conjectures are 'fann'd' and 'sound.' The metaphor is a mixed one, as is so frequently the case in Shakespeare. Osric, and others like him, are compared to the chaff which mounts higher than the sifted wheat, and to the bubbles which rise to the surface through the deeper water.

182-193. Enter . . . *instructs me.* Omitted in the folios.

182. *commended him.* Compare As You Like It, iv. 3. 92:

'Orlando doth commend him to you both.'

190. *In happy time.* Like the French *à la bonne heure.* Compare Othello, iii. 1. 32: 'In happy time, Iago.' In Richard III, iii. 4. 22, the quartos read, 'Now in good time,' &c.: the folios, 'In happie time.'

196. *at the odds,* with the advantage I have given me.

199. *gain-giving,* misgiving. Compare 'gainsay.' Other compounds, similarly formed, are 'gainstand,' and 'gainstrive'; but, like 'gaingive,' these are obsolete.

203. *repair.* See note on i. 1. 57.

205. See Matthew x. 29.

207, 208. *since no man . . . betimes? Let be.* The first folio has, 'since no man ha's ought of what he leaves. What is't to leave betimes?' and this, spelling apart, is the reading of the other folios. The quarto of 1604, followed substantially by the rest, reads, 'since no man of ought he leanes, knowes what ist to leaue betimes, let be.' Perhaps the true reading is that of Johnson: 'since no man knows aught of what he leaves,' &c.

208. *Let be,* no matter.

*Ib.* The stage direction is mainly from the folios.

212. *This presence,* abstract for concrete. Compare 'audience,' l. 224, and Antony and Cleopatra, ii. 2. III:

'You wrong this presence; therefore speak no more.'

216. *exception*, in the sense of 'objection,' 'dislike,' occurs most commonly in the phrase 'to take exception.' The best comment on this passage is All's Well that Ends Well, i. 2. 40:

'His honour,

Clock to itself, knew the true minute when  
Exception bid him speak, and at this time  
His tongue obey'd his hand.'

224. *Sir, in this audience*. Omitted in the quartos.

225. *disclaiming from*. Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives 'Desadvoüement: m. A disaduowing, or disclaiming from.'

228. *brother*. The folios read 'mother.'

231. *reconciliation*, reconciliation. Bacon, Essay iii. p. 10, has 'witty reconcilements.'

233. *a voice and precedent of peace*, an opinion and precedent which will justify me in making peace.

234. *ungored*. Compare Troilus and Cressida, iii. 3. 228:

'I see my reputation is at stake;  
My fame is shrewdly gored;'

where the figure is evidently taken from bull-baiting.

241. *Stick fiery off*, stand in brilliant relief. Compare Antony and Cleopatra, i. 4. 12, 13:

'His faults in him seem as the spots of heaven,  
More fiery by night's blackness.'

'Indeed' seems rather to belong to Laertes' speech.

243. *Cousin*. See i. 2. 64.

245. *the odds* must here refer to the greater value of the king's stake, and not to the terms of the wager, as in l. 247.

247. *better'd*. The reading of the folios. The quartos have 'better.'

249. *likes*. See ii. 2. 80.

251. *stoups*. See v. 1. 59. Here it is equivalent to the 'flagons' of the stage direction, and to 'cups' in l. 258.

253. *quit in answer of the third exchange*, pay off (Laertes) in meeting him at the third encounter.

256. *union*. So the folios. The quarto of 1604 has 'vnice,' which the later editions corrupted into 'onyx,' variously spelt. Florio (Italian Dict.) gives 'Vnione . . . a great, faire, and orient pearle.' See also Heywood, Hierarchie of the blessed Angells, p. 570:

'Of Vnions, Stones, and Gems esteemed high.'

Mr. King (Natural History of Precious Stones, &c., p. 267) says: 'As no two pearls were ever found exactly alike, this circumstance gave origin to the name "unio" (unique). But in Low Latin "Margarita(um)," and "perla" became a generic name, "unio" being restricted to the fine spherical specimens.' Compare Holland's Pliny, ix. 35: 'And

hereupon it is, that our dainties and delicates here at Rome, have devised this name for them, and call them Vniones; as a man would say, Singular, and by themselves alone.' In the same chapter Pliny tells the story of Cleopatra dissolving a pearl in vinegar and drinking it off to win a bet of Antony.

259. *kettle*, kettledrum. Compare i. 4. 11.

266. *this pearl is thine*. The King, under pretence of throwing the pearl, or union into the cup, drops poison into it. See l. 310.

271. *He's fat and scant of breath*. There is a tradition that this line was appropriate to Richard Burbage, who first acted the character of Hamlet. In some lines from an elegy upon him, quoted in Collier's Memoirs of the Principal Actors in Shakespeare's plays, p. 52, we find:

'No more young Hamlet, though but scant of breath,  
Shall cry "Revenge!" for his dear father's death.'

272. *napkin*, handkerchief. Compare Othello, iii. 3. 290,

'I am glad I have found this napkin:

This was her first remembrance from the Moor,'

with iii. 4. 55:

'That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give.'

282. *pass*. See iv. 7. 137.

283. *make a wanton of*, play the fool with, sport or trifle with. Compare Richard II, iii. 3. 164:

'Or shall we play the wantons with our woes?'

286. The stage direction of the folios is 'In scuffling they change Rapiers;' but in the quarto of 1603 it is more elaborate: 'They catch one anothers Rapiers, and both are wounded, Leartes falles downe, the Queene falles downe and dies.' The other quartos have nothing.

287. *ho!* Mr. Staunton supposes this to be a signal to the combatants to stop, as in the tournament between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, described by Holinshed. See Preface to Richard II, p. xii.

290. *springs*. Compare i. 3. 115.

292. *swounds*. The spelling of the third and fourth folios. The earlier quartos and folios have 'sounds.'

301. *Unbated*. See iv. 7. 137.

*Ib. practice*. See iv. 7. 66, 137.

305. *The point envenom'd too!* Mr. Staunton reads 'The point—envenom'd too!'

310. *thy union*. The reading of the folios, and of the quarto of 1603. The other quartos have 'the onixe,' or 'onyx.' See l. 256.

312. *temper'd*, mixed, compounded. Compare Exodus xxix. 2: 'cakes unleavened tempered with oil.' And Love's Labour's Lost, iv.

3. 347:

'Never durst poet touch a pen to write  
Until his ink were temper'd with Love's sighs.'

319. *mutcs*, the dumb personages who take part in a play.

320. *as*. Compare iv. 3. 58, iv. 7. 157, for similar instances of the usage of 'as' in a parenthesis.

*Ib. fell*, cruel. Compare Sonnet lxxiv. 1 :

'When that fell arrest,  
Without all bail shall carry me away.'

*Ib. sergeant*, a sheriff's officer. See Henry VIII, i. 1. 198. When Buckingham is arrested, Brandon says: 'Your office, sergeant; execute it'; the sergeant in this case being the sergeant-at-arms. Cotgrave (French Dict.) gives, 'Sergent: m. A Sergeant, Officer, Pursuivant, Apparitor.' Malone quotes from Sylvester's *Du Bartas* [The third Day of the first Weeke, p. 88 (86), third ed.]:

'And Death, drad Seriant of th' eternall Iudge,  
Coms very late to his sole seated Lodge.'

325. *an antique Roman*. Compare Macbeth, v. 8. 1 :

'Why should I play the Roman fool, and die  
On mine own sword?'

The accent of 'antique' is always on the first syllable in Shakespeare. See *As You Like It*, ii. 1. 31 :

'Under an oak, whose antique root peeps out.'

329. *live*. Mr. Staunton compares *Much Ado about Nothing*, iii. 1. 110 :

'No glory lives behind the back of such.'

333. The stage direction is that of Steevens, who substituted 'shot' for 'shout,' as the folios have it.

337. *o'ercrows*, triumphs over, as a cock over his beaten antagonist. Johnson quotes from Spenser's *View of the Present State of Ireland* [Globe ed. p. 660]: 'A base varlett, that being but of late grown out of the dounghill beginneth nowe to overcrowe soe high mountaynes, and make himselfe greate protectour of all outlawes and rebels that will repayre vnto him.'

340. *voice*. See iii. 2. 308.

341. *occurents*, occurrences, circumstances. Compare Holland's Pliny, xxv. 2: 'This occurrent fell out in Lacetania, the nearest part unto vs of Spain.'

342. *which have solicited*, urged, prompted. The sentence is apparently incomplete. Compare *Richard II*, i. 2. 2 :

'Alas, the part I had in Woodstock's blood  
Doth more solicit me than your exclaims.'

*Ib. The rest is silence*. Compare Sophocles, *Ajax* 865, τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἐν Αἴδου τοῖς κάτω μνησομαι. The quartos have 'which have solicited, the

rest is silence.' The folios, 'Which have solicited. The rest is silence. O, o, o, o. *Dyes.*' If Hamlet's speech is interrupted by his death, it would be more natural that the words 'The rest is silence,' should be spoken by Horatio.

343. *Now cracks a noble heart.* Compare Coriolanus, v. 3. 9 :

'Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to Rome.'

And Antony and Cleopatra, v. 1. 14, 15, of Antony's death :

'The breaking of so great a thing should make  
A greater crack.'

348. *quarry*, literally, the game hunted. Randle Holme, in his Academy of Armory (Book II, c. xi. p. 240), defines it as 'the Fowl which the Hawk flyeth at, whether dead or alive.' Here it denotes the pile of dead. See Macbeth, iv. 3. 206.

*Ib. cries on*, cries, utters the cry of. Compare Othello, v. 1. 48 :

'Whose noise is this that cries on murder?'

And Richard III, v. 3. 231 :

'Methought their souls, whose bodies Richard murder'd,  
Came to my tent, and cried on victory.'

*Ib. havoc.* Compare Coriolanus, iii. 1. 275 :

'Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt  
With modest warrant.'

And Julius Cæsar, iii. 1. 273 :

'Cry Havoc, and let slip the dogs of war.'

'This quarry cries on havoc' seems to mean, this pile of corpses urges to merciless slaughter, where no quarter is given. In the Statutes of Warre, &c., by King Henry VIII (1513), quoted in Todd's edition of Johnson's Dictionary, it is enacted, 'That noo man be so hardy to crye havoke, upon payne of hym that is so founde begynner, to dye therefore; and the remenaunt to be emprysoned, and theyr bodyes punyshed at the kynges will.' See also the Ordinances of War of Richard II and Henry V, published in the Black Book of the Admiralty (ed. Twiss), i. 286, 455, 462. The etymology of the word is purely conjectural. Some derive it from the Welsh *hafog*, destruction; others from the A.S. *hafoc*, a hawk; others from the French *hai, voux!* a cry to hounds.

349. *feast.* Compare King John, ii. 1. 354, of Death :

'And now he feasts, mousing the flesh of men.'

*Ib. toward.* See i. 1. 77.

*Ib. eternal.* There are two or three passages in which Shakespeare seems to use this word as equivalent to 'infernal.' See i. 5. 21. Compare Julius Cæsar, i. 2. 160 :

'There was a Brutus once, who would have brook'd  
The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome  
As easily as a king.'

And Othello, iv. 2. 130 :

‘ I will be hang’d, if some eternal villain,  
Some busy and insinuating rogue,  
Some cogging, cozening slave, to get some office,  
Have not devised this slander.’

356. *his mouth*. That is, the king’s.

359. *jump*. See i. 1. 65.

360. *Polack*. See i. 1. 63.

365. *carnal*. Some of the later quartos read ‘ cruell.’ The word has much the same sense in Richard III, iv. 4. 56 :

‘ How do I thank thee that this carnal cur  
Preys on the issue of his mother’s body.’

The reference in this line is to the murder of the elder Hamlet by Claudius, and his incestuous marriage ; in the next to the death of Polonius ; and in l. 367 to the execution of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

367. *put on*, instigated. Compare Coriolanus, ii. 1. 272 :

‘ Which time shall not want,  
If he be put upon’t.’

See note on i. 3. 94.

*Ib. forced cause*. So the folios. The quartos read ‘ for no cause.’

368. *in this upshot*, in this conclusion of the tragedy. In archery, the ‘ upshot ’ was the final shot, which decided the match. It is used in the same metaphorical sense as here in Twelfth Night, iv. 2. 76 : ‘ I cannot pursue with any safety this sport to the upshot.’

*Ib. mistook*, mistaken. Compare 2 Henry IV, iv. 2. 56 :

‘ My father’s purposes have been mistook.’

370. *deliver*. See i. 2. 193.

373. *some rights of memory*, some rights which are remembered.

381. *put on*, put to the test.

387. The concluding stage direction is Capell’s. The quartos have ‘ Exeunt.’ The folios, with slight variations, ‘ Exeunt Marching : after the which, a Peale of Ordenance are shot off.’

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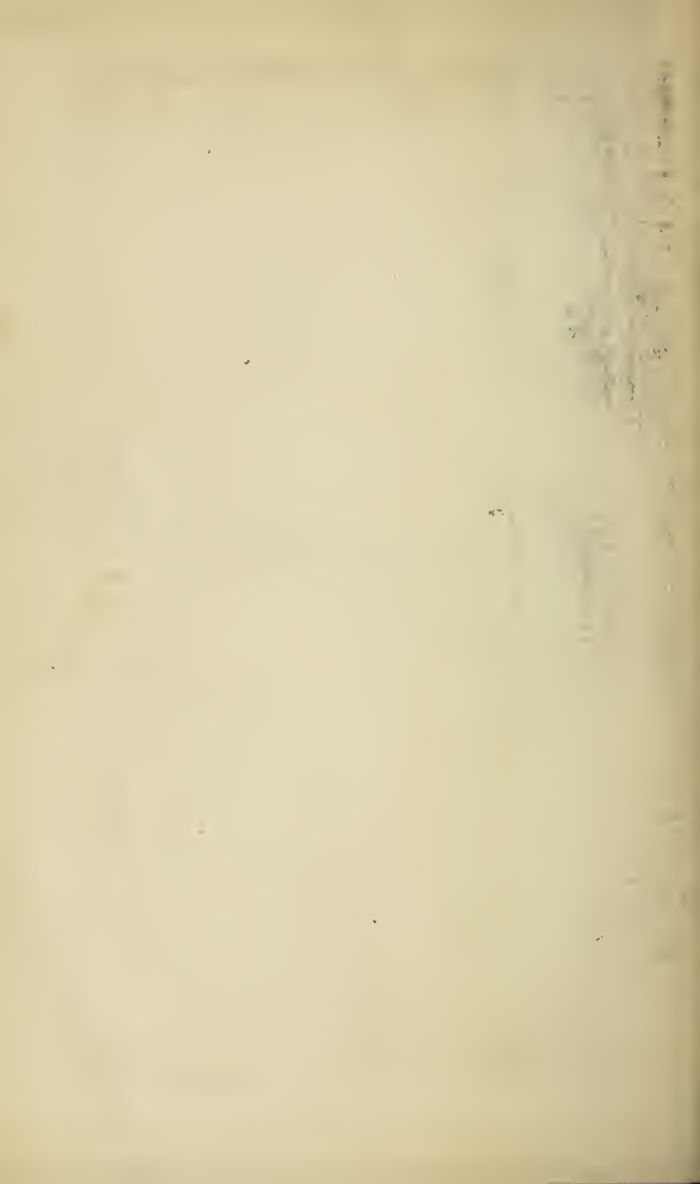
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