Hamlet
A NEW VARIORUM EDITION

OF

SHAKESPEARE

EDITED BY

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OF WIMAR

HAMLET

VOL. I

TEXT

[SIXTEENTH EDITION]

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PREFACE

The plan of the preceding volumes of this edition has been followed in the preparation of the present volumes. It is modified only by the necessity of making the impossible attempt to condense within a certain number of pages a whole literature.

Of the imperfect success which has crowned the labour no one can be so fully aware as the Editor. Nevertheless, the work is given to the public in the trust that it will furnish some facilities to the study of this great poem, and aid in preparing the way for better editions than this.

The First Volume contains The Text, with a collation of the texts of the Quartos and Folios, and of some thirty modern editions, together with Notes and Comments from the Editors whose texts are collated, and, added to these, such verbal and grammatical criticisms from other quarters as seemed to be valuable; in some instances, notes are given that have little or no value, except as hints of the progress or of the madness of Shakespearian criticism.

As a general rule, in the Commentary preference is given to verbal over aesthetic criticism. Whenever editors whose texts are collated have indulged in aesthetic suggestions, these, in the main, have been retained. But in other cases aesthetic criticisms have been reserved for Volume II, except where the notes were of too brief and fragmentary a character to be separated from the context.

This difference in the treatment of verbal and aesthetic criticism is observed solely with reference to the arrangement of the mass of material, not because aesthetic criticism is inferior in value to verbal. Indeed, does not the value of the latter depend in many cases more or less directly upon the former?
There is a disposition abroad to disparage æsthetic criticisms of Shakespeare. An excellent edition of the Poet, now issuing from the press, discards it wholly; the editor, whose opinions are entitled to great respect, regarding it as an impertinence, and stigmatising it generally as 'sign-post criticism.' Unquestionably, there has been much commenting upon Shakespeare, which, ignoring the humblest intelligence in the reader, is flat, stale, and unprofitable, a nuisance and a weariness of the flesh. But shall we ignore the possible existence of a keener insight than our own? Is the gift of reading between the lines, so essential to the appreciation of dramatic literature, universal? Have the generality of us eyes to see what is there written? Who can fail to be enlightened and delighted with such fine criticism (as is given in Volume II, p. 167) of the very first scene of this tragedy, and which the Editor regrets did not come to his notice in time to be inserted in the Commentary, where it vitally belongs? Are we not to listen eagerly and reverently when Coleridge or Goethe talks about Shakespeare? Can we fail to prize the flashes of light (all too few) thrown here and there upon Shakespeare by Charles Lamb, that genius, wasted in the India House, whom, had England known the gift of God, she would have pensioned bountifully and set to recording the thoughts these plays evoked in him, that we might be brought into nearer communion with the great Poet than, with all our laborious verbal criticism, we have yet been able to reach?

To be sure, such commentators as these, and Schlegel, and Hazlitt, and Mrs Jameson, and Christopher North, and Garrick (such acting as his was æsthetic criticism of a high order) are rare, and exception may be made in favour of all master-minds like these. But the present Editor, in full memory of the many weeks and months spent in reading criticisms on Hamlet, fully agrees with a keen and eloquent critic in Blackwood's Magazine (more likely than not, Thomas Campbell) when he says: 'We ask not for a picture of the 'whole landscape of the soul, nor for a guide who shall point out all its 'wonders. But we are glad to listen to every one who has travelled 'through the kingdoms of Shakespeare. Something interesting there 'must be even in the humblest journal; and we turn with equal pleasure 'from the converse of those who have climbed over the magnificence
of the highest mountains there, to the lowlier tales of less ambitious pilgrims, who have sat on the green and sunny knoll, beneath the whispering tree, and by the music of the gentle rivulet.'

Moreover, the present Editor freely acknowledges the great interest he has taken in witnessing the power of Shakespeare's genius as shown in its stimulating effect upon minds of a high order. In the endeavour to solve the mystery of Hamlet, the human mind, not only in its clear radiance but in the sad twilight of its eclipse, has been subjected to the most searching analysis. This ideal character, Hamlet, has been assumed to be very nature, and if we fail to reach a solution of the problem it presents, the error lies in us and in our analysis; not in Shakespeare. Such have been the revelations of the wisdom and genius of the First of Poets found in the works which attempt to ravel all this matter out, and from which extracts have been made in the second of these volumes, that the present Editor was not long in making up his mind to bear patiently, for the sake of these, the sea of troubles (sign-post criticisms) that he has been compelled to encounter in the prosecution of his work.

To appreciate what is beautiful is one thing; to be informed of what it is that delights us is a different and an added pleasure. To vary the language of another: 'The worth of [Shakespeare] must rise as his grandeurs are comprehended, and our joy in his harmony and beauty will be heightened the more fully he is understood.

"I grieve not that ripe knowledge takes away
'The charm that [Shakespeare] to my boyhood bore,
'For with the insight cometh day by day
'A greater bliss than wonder was before.'"

The Editor has availed himself of the liberty to form his own text afforded him by the fact that the texts of all the ancient authoritative editions are virtually printed on the same page. He has followed no other. If his text appears to follow the Cambridge Edition, it is merely because that edition has been used to print from.

It has been his settled principle, as it was that of Dr Johnson: 'that the reading of the ancient books is probably true, and there-
'for not to be disturbed for the sake of elegance, perspicuity, or mere improvement of the sense. For though much credit is not due to the fidelity, nor any to the judgement of the first publishers, yet they who had the copy before their eyes were more likely to read it right than we who read it only by imagination. . . . My first labour is always to turn the old text on every side, and try if there be any interstice through which light can find its way. . . . 'I have adopted the Roman sentiment, that it is more honourable to save a citizen than to kill an enemy, and have been more careful to protect than to attack.' A list of editions collated in the Textual Notes, and an explanation of the abbreviations and symbols there employed will be found at the close of the Appendix.

In the Second Volume is given, first: a Reprint of the Quarto of 1603. This earliest Quarto differs from the rest so materially that a full or intelligible record of its various readings in the form of foot-notes is simply impossible. In a note on 'The Date and the Text' will be found an account of the different theories respecting its origin.

Then follows The Hystorie of Hamblet, the story on which, perhaps, was founded either this tragedy or the lost original drama which SHAKESPEARE afterward changed to its present shape.

After this comes a translation of a curious old German tragedy called Fratricide Punished, or Prince Hamlet of Denmark. An account of it will be found in a short prefatory note.

Then come the English Critics, and a discussion of the one great insoluble mystery of Hamlet's sanity. Without for one moment wishing to assume the responsibility of umpire, the present Editor thinks it no more than right to call attention to one fact which it seems to him should be kept in view on entering upon this discussion—viz. where the testimony of experts is invoked, and their testimony is unanimous, the speculations and opinions of others, laymen and inexpert, cannot be expected to carry much weight. In courts of justice, every day, the testimony of experts is accepted in cases involving liberty or confinement, life or death, and we
cannot, it is submitted, be so inconsistent as wholly to rule out that testimony here. If, therefore, we listen to experts at all, we can hardly refuse our assent to their unanimous verdict. Despite all this, the present Editor's opinion, which, after what he has just said, he cannot, as a layman, expect to have any value, and which, in view of the magnitude of the discussion, he would be the last, as an Editor, to set forth at length, is that Hamlet is neither mad, nor pretends to be so. And in view of the fact that he has faithfully read and reported all the arguments on that side, the Editor begs the advocates of the theory of feigned insanity to allow him, out of reciprocal courtesy, to ask how they account for Hamlet's being able, in the flash of time between the vanishing of the Ghost and the coming of Horatio and Marcellus, to form, horror-struck as he was, a plan for the whole conduct of his future life?

Then follow Notes on The Names and Characters, on the Duration of the Action, on Garrick's Version, and on Actors' Interpretations; it is greatly to be regretted that in this last department our accounts of how great actors spoke are so meagre. As Cibber says of Betterton: 'Pity it is that the momentary Beauties flowing from an 'harmonious Elocution cannot, like those of Poetry, be their own 'Record: That the animated Graces of the Player can live no 'longer than the instant Breath and Motion that presents them, 'or at best, can but faintly glimmer through the Memory or im- 'perfect Attestation of a few surviving Spectators. Could how Bet- 'terton spoke be as easily known as what he spoke, then might you 'see the Muse of Shakespeare in her Triumph, with all her Beau- 'ties, rising into real Life, and charming the Beholder. But, since 'this is so far out of the reach of description, how shall I show 'you Betterton?'

Next comes the German Criticism.

With the rashness of ignorance, the present Editor, in laying out his plan for this edition, proposed to himself to preface it with an essay upon the remarkable literature which this great drama has created in Germany. His idea was to give the views of all the writings on Hamlet which have appeared down to the present time in that country,—of a l, that is, which he could procure. But, in the
work of preparation for such an essay, after going carefully through what, at a rough and moderate computation, amounts to some two thousand pages and upwards, he finds himself,—no surprising discovery,—quite unequal to the task. The sense of his incompetency is, however, greatly relieved by the one very clear conviction with which he emerged from the metaphysical atmosphere: the proposed essay, could it be written, would utterly defeat a purpose to be kept religiously in view in the preparation of this edition of *Hamlet,*—namely, compression. It would far exceed in bulk all the rest of the volumes. The Editor therefore must restrict himself to a simple statement of the principles by which he has been guided in the selection of extracts from the German critics.

First: All unfavourable criticism of fellow-critics is excluded as much as possible. Although our German friends are somewhat jealous of their well-deserved reputation as a nation of thinkers, they sometimes seem, individually, very much disposed to grudge one another a share in that distinction. The propriety of the exclusion observed is obvious. To confound Goethe, Schlegel, or Tieck is one thing, to elucidate Shakespeare is another. It is curious to observe how much of Shakespearian criticism,—and this applies to English as well as German,—is devoted to hostile criticism of fellow-critics, living and dead. It is submitted that this it is, and not 'sign-post criticism' alone, which has tended to bring disrepute on this branch of literature. 'I know not,' says Dr Johnson, 'why our editors should with such implacable anger persecute their predecessors. Οὐ νεχρόν Μὴ δάκνονσαι, the dead, it is true, can make no resistance, they may be attacked with great security; but, since they can neither feel nor mend, the safety of mauling them seems greater than the pleasure; nor, perhaps, could it much misbecome us to remember, amidst our triumphs over the nonsensical and senseless, that we likewise are men; that debemur morti, and, as Swift observed to Burnet, shall soon be among the dead ourselves.'

Second: The selection is confined as closely as possible to one point: the character of Hamlet. It has been hardly possible to observe this rule with absolute strictness. Tieck's theory in regard to Ophelia's relationship to Hamlet bears so intimately upon the cha-
racter of both, and has made so deep an impression upon the popular mind, as to demand its insertion here.

Lastly: Whatever has been found that is strikingly original, although not of necessity true, has been included among these extracts; such as the wonderful connection which Karff imagines he has discovered between the 'courtier's kibe' and Thor's frozen toe, and Flathe's opinions concerning the family of Polonius. Of course the reader will not suppose where no bracketed exclamation-marks appear, that all these criticisms or commentaries are adopted by the present Editor; and this remark the Editor wishes most emphatically to apply to all the comments and notes, English and German, throughout these volumes. He has an especial aversion to that cheap and easy way of expressing dissent, or, as it most commonly reads, contempt. He can recall but one instance of its use, and even there it would have been avoided could the structure of the sentence, condensed to save space, have left the paternity of the note unambiguous.

Those who read or study these volumes may be safely trusted to discover for themselves the wisdom or the folly of the critics, and the Editor gladly forgoes the pleasure of displaying how much wiser he is than those whom he cites.

The endeavour, in all honesty, has been to select from every author the passages wherein he appears to most advantage, and wherein also he contributes his best thought to the elucidation of the great tragedy. At the same time, it must be confessed, there has been a little amusement had, now and then, in citing passages where our admirable friends stumble and fall in the interpretation of words, as when Gerth states that slings (in the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune') are the cables with which buoys are attached to sunken anchors or are placed to indicate hidden reefs or shoals.

Notwithstanding these trivial deductions, no one who has made any acquaintance with the labours of Shakespeare students in Germany can fail to be impressed by the excellence they show even in the department of verbal criticism. It is too late a week with Schmidt's Lexicon and a dozen Shakespeare Yearbooks on our shelves to cast any slurs on German Shakespeare criticism. Were such the intention, German criticism could well endure them with
equanimity. For the indefatigable labour, the keen analysis, the sympathetic and loving appreciation which characterise the treatment of SHAKESPEARE by German men of letters, command the warmest admiration. Their devotion to this tragedy in particular is impressive. Everywhere throughout the length and breadth of their land commentators on it arise; not only at the prominent centres of culture, but in towns and villages, whose names English-speaking people have perhaps never heard of, do these writers spring up. Even while the Editor is closing his labours, two more volumes on Hamlet have been added to the list. Although it would be a comfort to think that he had collected all, yet,—Rusticus exspectat, &c. Verily, given a printing-press on German soil (and the printing-press is indigenous there), and, lo! an essay on Hamlet. Let Germans themselves ridicule this devotion if they will. No man born to the inheritance of the language of SHAKESPEARE can regard it otherwise than with respectful admiration and pride, or fail to welcome the aid which it contributes to an enlightened appreciation of the great Poet. We all hold ourselves partakers of his glory, and such fine adoration of our household divinity we accept as a flattering tribute to ourselves.

And what a tribute is it to SHAKESPEARE’s genius! Here, at last, we may venture to set a limit to his imagination. Not even he could have imagined such a fame. No one of mortal mould (save Him ‘whose blessed feet were nailed for our advantage to the bitter ‘cross’) ever trod this earth, commanding such absorbing interest as this Hamlet, this mere creation of a poet’s brain. No syllable that he whispers, no word let fall by any one near him, but is caught and pondered as no words ever have been, except of Holy Writ. Upon no throne built by mortal hands has ever ‘beat so fierce a light’ as upon that airy fabric reared at Elsinore.

In SHAKESPEARE’s allusions to Wittenberg the Germans have found a direct intimation that Hamlet was written with especial reference to their own nation; and FREILIGRATH struck a keynote, which found an echo in all hearts, when he exclaimed: ‘Germany ‘is Hamlet.’ LESSING, that most healthy and earnest of German scholars, ‘the Englishman born in Germany’, was the first, now
more than a hundred years ago, to announce to his countrymen the advent of SHAKESPEAR. His masterly criticisms of the Hamburg Theatre, written in the interest of the great English Poet, levelled Voltaire and the French school of taste, and opened the path ten years later for the extraordinary success that attended BROCKMANN's Hamlet. The enthusiasm which BROCKMANN inspired in this character was unprecedented in Germany, and can be paralleled only by Mr IRVING's recent success in London. Fine steel engravings appeared, representing different scenes of the tragedy; silver medals were struck in honour of the popular actor, and, what was before unheard of on the Berlin stage, he was called before the curtain after the play.

The enthusiasm for Hamlet, thus kindled, has not died out to this day. GOETHE's interpretation, everywhere as widely known as the play itself, quickened the popular admiration by apparently relieving the tragedy of its painful mystery; and although there are not wanting keen critics who dissent from GOETHE's interpretation of Hamlet's character, yet as a piece of criticism it filled Lord MACAULAY 'with wonder and despair,' and still underlies most of the theories, English and German, that have since appeared.

The last theory of Hamlet's character, which has arrested special attention in Germany by the bold and animated way in which it has been set forth by its chiefest expounder, WERDER, was first proposed in strong terms by KLEIN. It sweeps aside every vestige of GOETHE's explanation, with all theories akin to it. It affirms Hamlet to be a man of action, never at a loss, neverwavering, taking in at once the position of affairs, adjusting himself thereto with admirable sagacity, and instantly acting with consummate tact as occasions require. A theory so directly opposed to all accepted ideas of Hamlet claims a full exposition. It has been found impossible, in justice, to compress it into a narrower space than it occupies in the Appendix.

The Editor is well aware that he incurs some hazard in thus selecting extracts from the German essayists. If he has unwittingly committed any injustice, and omitted to notice theories for which their authors claim originality, he can only plead innocence of in-
tention, and the difficulty he has found in fathoming the precise meaning of metaphysical treatises, dive as deeply as he might into 'the depths of his consciousness.'

German actors and stage-managers have long felt a want unknown in English-speaking lands. There are probably not three theatres in Germany that use the same translation or adaptation of Shakespeare. To meet this want of uniformity, a selection of the dramas was issued by Eduard and Otto Devrient, a name that will ensure everywhere a respectful attention to all suggestions thus endorsed,—suggestions, be it understood, never the crude conceits of the moment, but practically tested during many years of highly-famed practice on the stage. In their rendition of Hamlet by the Messrs Devrient, it is a noteworthy fact that for scenic representation the First Quarto has been proved by them to be more effective than the Second Quarto or Folio, which is the basis of the ordinary acting copies. Over thirty years ago Hunter in England and Rapp in Germany maintained the higher dramatic power of the First Quarto over the Second Quarto in the order of the scenes and in its general effectiveness. But it was reserved for the Messrs Devrient to put these theories to the test with the best possible result, as they say, and as their fame warrants the belief.

The claim for Hamlet's youth, urged by the Messrs Devrient, deserves attention. Hamlet as a youth of nineteen or twenty certainly possesses a charm which can hardly belong to the maturer age of thirty; besides, this idea of him reconciles many discrepancies which have set commentators at variance. It accords with his wish to return to Wittenberg; with the election of his uncle over him as king by the nobles; and it also lessens the age of the Queen and our disgust at the mutiny in a matron's bones. A discussion of this question will be found in the notes on V, i, 153. This puzzle about Hamlet's age arises, to a large extent, it is submitted, from our losing sight of Shakespeare's method of dealing with the dramatic element of time,—a method whereby in the most artful manner he conveys two opposite ideas of its flight: swiftness and slowness; by one series of allusions we receive the impression that the action of the drama is driving ahead in storm, while by
another series we are insensibly beguiled into the belief that it extends over days and months. Attention was called to this wondrous art of Shakespeare's by both Halpin and Christopher North, at about the same time; the former admirably analyzed, with reference to it, the Merchant of Venice, and the latter revealed its working in the case of Macbeth and Othello. If we turn to this present play of Hamlet, we see how throughout, wherever time comes in as an element, we are subject to Shakespeare's glamour and gramarye. Horatio is introduced to us as one familiar with all the every-day occurrences in Denmark, the gossip of the court, the cause of the post haste and rummage in the land; in the next scene, on the very same day, Hamlet greets him with such surprise that we get the impression that he is fresh from Wittenberg; if we stop to think, we remember that he came to see the old king's funeral, and that took place nearly two months before, and in that time he might well have learned all the political news; but then he must have been about the court, and it is a little strange that Hamlet had not met him. As spectators of the play, we do not stop to think this out, but accept without question each impression that the poet intends to make on us. Again, Polonius, who assuredly knew the latest item of court gossip, seems as much surprised at Ophelia's account of Hamlet's strange behaviour as Ophelia herself; it was evidently a new thing to him, and yet when he goes directly to the King, the latter has been so long cognisant of Hamlet's 'transformation' that he had sent for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to help him find out its cause; and Polonius, too, speaks of Hamlet's 'lunacy' as a fact well known and of long standing; and the very next day after this Hamlet has a second interview with Ophelia, when she asks him how he does 'this many a day,' and tells him that she has remembrances of his which she has longed long to re-deliver. Again, Hamlet tells Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that he has 'of late foregone all custom of exercises.' In the last scene Hamlet tells Horatio that he has been in 'continual practice of late.' These are not inconsistencies. They are not oversights on the part of Shakespeare. They belong to the two series of
times, the one suggestive and illusory, and the other visible and explicitly indicated. Halpin calls them the protractive series and the accelerating series. Christopher North calls them Shakespeare's 'two clocks.' As another instance of the way in which the long time is adroitly insinuated in this Play, note the passage, where Claudius describes to the Queen the events that have followed the death of Polonius: 'the people are muddied, thick, 'and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,' which of course was the work not of an hour nor of a day, but perhaps of weeks; it must have taken some time for this knowledge to have reached the king's ears; then Laertes has 'returned in secret 'from France, feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds.' This, too, consumes time, and the very time which we feel, without stopping to compute it, is necessary for Laertes to gather the populace to his side and mature his plans for rebellion. From what we here learn, Laertes may have returned from France weeks before, and yet when he bursts into the King's presence and demands his father, the short time which is essential for keeping up the tension of the passion comes into play, and we get the impression that Laertes has just landed and has rushed in hot haste to the King's palace. And so vivid is this impression that Laertes is always held up by critics and commentators as an example to Hamlet in the speed with which he sweeps to avenge his father's death; whereas, as we see from this speech of Claudius, Laertes may have been almost as dilatory as Hamlet, and may have allowed 'buzzers' day after day 'to infect his ears,' or kept himself 'in clouds' for weeks. The short time is again thrust upon us by showing us Laertes ignorant of Ophelia's insanity. Apparently, Laertes has not even taken the time to go to his own home after landing from France. And these instances may be multiplied, doubtless, by any attentive reader of the tragedy. Indeed, is not the whole theory of Hamlet's procrastination to a large extent due to this 'legerdemain' of Shakespeare's in the matter of time? There are not wanting critics who, counting off the days on only one of 'Shakespeare's clocks,' conclude
the whole action within a week or ten days,—scant room for procrastination, where the killing of a king is the aim. As Christopher North says: 'Shakespeare, in his calmer constructions, shows in a score of ways, weeks, months; that is therefore the true time, or call it the historical time. Hurried himself, and hurrying you, on the torrent of passion, he forgets time; and a false show of time, to the utmost contracted, arises. . . . If any wiseacre should ask, 'How do we manage to stand the known together-proceeding of two times?' the wiseacre is answered, 'We don't stand it,—for we know nothing about it. 'We are held in a confusion and a delusion about the time.' We have effect of both,—distinct knowledge of neither. We have suggestions to our Understanding of extended time,—we have movements of our Will by precipitated time. . . . If you ask me,—which judiciously you may,—what or how much did the Swan of Avon intend and know of all this astonishing legerdemain, when he sang thus astonishingly? Was he, the juggler, juggled by aerial spirits,—as Puck and Ariel? I put my finger to my lip, and nod to him to do the same. . . . A good-natured Juggler has cheated your eyes. You ask him to show you how he did it. He does the trick slowly,—and you see. "Now, 'good Conjurer, do it slowly and cheat us." "I can't. I cheat you by doing it quickly. To be cheated, you must not see what I do; but you must think that you see." When we inspect the Play in our closets, the Juggler does his trick slowly. We sit at the Play, and he does it quick.' Just as Shakespeare has dealt with the time of the whole tragedy he has dealt with the age of Hamlet; in the earlier scenes he is in the very hey-day of primy nature, but the effect of the fearful experience which he undergoes is to quicken and stimulate mightily his powers of thought,—to ripen his intellect prematurely. Therefore at the close, as though to smoothe away any discrepancy between his mind and his years, or between the execution of his task and his years, a chance allusion by the Grave-digger is thrown out, which, if we are quick enough to catch, we can apply to Hamlet's age, and we have before us Hamlet in his full maturity.
In the selection of French Criticisms which follow the German, it may be thought strange that no reference is to be found to Ducis’s version of Hamlet,—that unlucky butt for English and German ridicule. No extracts would do it justice, and to insert the whole was impossible. But would it not be well, between our fits of laughter over it, to recall the year in which it first appeared? In 1769 the first German translation of Hamlet was only three years old, and Lessing almost single-handed was in the thick of his battle-royal with the French school of art, then supreme in Germany, and of which Ducis’s Hamlet is no unfair representative in the main features; seven years later, Brockmann, the idol of the German stage, played Hamlet at first in Heufeld’s version, in which Laertes is omitted and Hamlet is the prosperous successor of Claudius (afterwards, it is true, Brockmann acted Schroeder’s version, which is nearer the original, although Hamlet survives the King’s attempt to poison him, and the fencing-scene is omitted). And at that time, on the English stage, Garrick and his ‘showmen’ were ‘drawing about’ Lear with Nahum Tate’s ‘hook in the nostrils of the Leviathan.’ It is to be apprehended that no German nor English tongue dare wag in rude noise at Ducis, who, after all, did not assume to translate Shakespeare, but merely adapt him. From the French point of view (and is it not unreasonable to demand that a Frenchman should have any other?) it is not difficult to regard Ducis’s version as a powerful drama; and we know that in the hands of Talma its effect was signal.

There now remains the agreeable duty to record the names of those from whom I have received aid.

At the very outset, however, it is with sorrow that I am reminded that Professor Allen, upon whom in years past I leaned so heavily, and to whom it was a pleasure to be indebted, has joined the group of

‘Precious friends, hid in death’s dateless night.’

Had he lived, many an error now lurking in these volumes would
PREFACE

have been detected and obliterated. I am reconciled to their presence, since they show how much I have been indebted to him in the past.

My cordial thanks are hereby extended to J. Payne Collier, esq., Mr Albert Cohn, Professor Corson, Joseph Crosby, esq., Rev. F. G. Fleay, Prof. Dr Elze, F. J. Furnivall, esq., Dr Hering, Rev. H. N. Hudson, Dr Kellogg, Dr Ray, W. J. Rolfe, esq., William Lowes Rushton, esq., S. Timmins, esq., Richard Grant White, esq., Justin Winsor, esq., and William Aldis Wright, esq.

My especial acknowledgements are due to Dr C. M. Ingleby for valuable suggestions prompted by his keen, critical taste and varied learning, and for stray notes and readings which might otherwise have escaped my notice; to A. I. Fish, esq., for the valuable contribution he has made to Hamlet literature in the English Part of the Bibliography; and to J. Parker Norris, esq., for his selections in reference to Actors' Interpretations, and for numberless acts of thoughtful kindness; and to Mr L. F. Thomas, the reader of the proofs, the excellent representative of a class to whom authors are under deep though often unacknowledged obligations.

There yet remain three: to my father, Rev. Dr Furness, I am indebted for all the translations from the German (except the Bestrafte Brudermord) in the Second Volume; the mere statement of this debt reveals my utter bankruptcy in adequate expressions of gratitude. More is his due than more than all can pay. Be it remembered, that I alone am responsible for the selection of the extracts.

To my sister, Mrs A. L. Wister, for the fine translation of Freiligrath's Deutschland ist Hamlet.

And to Mrs Furness for the Index in the First Volume and the Table of Contents in the Second.

In conclusion, let me add that I do not flatter myself that this is an enjoyable edition of Shakespeare; I regard it rather as a necessary evil,—so evil that I should sometimes question the propriety of its existence were it not that I am encouraged by the words of Dr Johnson, for whose Preface to his edition of Shakespeare advancing years add only increasing admiration. 'Let
'him,' says Dr Johnson, 'that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakespeare, and who desires to feel the greatest pleasure that the drama can give, read every play, from the first scene to the last, with utter negligence of all his commentators. 'When his fancy is once on the wing, let it not stoop at correction or explanation. When his attention is strongly engaged, let it disdain alike to turn aside to the name of Theobald and of Pope. Let him read on through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue and his interest in the fable. And when the pleasures of novelty have ceased, let him attempt ex actness and read the commentators.'

H. H. F.

March, 1877.
Hamlet.
DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Claudius, King of Denmark.
Hamlet, son to the late, and nephew to the present, King.
Fortinbras, Prince of Norway.
Polonius, Lord Chamberlain.
Horatio, friend to Hamlet.
Laertes, son to Polonius.
Voltemand,
Cornelius,
Rosencrantz, Courtiers.
Guildenstern,
Osric,
A Gentleman,
A Priest.
Marcellus,
Bernardo,
Francisco, a soldier.
Reynaldo, servant to Polonius.
Players.
Two Clowns, grave-diggers.
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: Elsinore.

1 Dramatis Personæ] First given by Rowe.
THE TRAGEDY OF

HAMLET

PRINCE OF DENMARK

ACT I

SCENE I. Elsinore. A platform before the castle.

FRANCISCO at his post. Enter to him BERNARDO.

BER. Who's there?

Francisco...] Dyce. Francisco upon guard. Sta.
Cap. Enter Barnardo and Francisco, two
Centinels. QqFF (Bernardo Q) Rowe +.
Francisco on guard. Sta.

1—5. Who's...] Tese Two lines, the first ending unfold Cap. Steev. Var.

Elsinore.]

Who's there? [Remarks, &c., 1709, p. 404] This scene, I have been assured, Sh. wrote in a Charnal House, in the midst of the Night. SEYMOUR (p. 138): This whole scene appears unnecessary to the design and conduct of the play, and might with advantage be omitted. The hand of Sh. is visible in it occasionally, but it is part of that undigested plan which is manifest throughout the play. [Seymour finds the same fault in Macbeth and Lear. Ed.]

CAMBRIDGE EDITORS: In this play the Acts and Scenes are marked in the Ff only as far as II, ii, and not at all in the Qq.

1. Who's there] Coleridge (p. 148): That Shakespeare meant to put an effect in the actor's power in these very first words is evident from the impatience expressed by the startled Francisco in the line that follows. A brave man is never so peremptory as when he fears that he is afraid. TSCHISCHWITZ finds a 'psychological motive' in thus representing Bernardo as so forgetful of all military use and wont as to challenge Francisco who is on guard. Evidently Bernardo is afraid to meet the Ghost all alone, and it is because he feels so unmanned that his last words to Francisco are to bid Horatio and Marcellus make haste. [For other instances of irregularities in metre, which may be explained by the custom of placing ejaculations, appellations, &c. out of the regular verse, see Abbott, § 512. Ed.]
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.


7. struck] ñrooke Qq. ñrook F.

Barnardo. QqF,

6. carefully] cheerfully F,F,F,

twelve] twelve Qq,F.


conj. El. Heussi.

2. me] Jennens: This is the emphatic word. [Hanmer printed it in italics. Ed.] Francisco, as the sentinel on guard, has the right of insisting on the watch-word, which is given in Bernardo's answer.

3. king] Malone supposed this sentence to have been the watch-word, but Pye (p. 308) believes that it corresponds to the former usage in France, where, to the common challenge Qui vive? the answer was Vive le Roi, like the modern answer, 'A friend.' And Delius points out that shortly afterwards to the same challenge Hor. and Mar. give a different response.

6. upon your hour] Clarendon: An unusual phrase, meaning 'just as your hour is about to strike.' Compare Rich. III: III, ii, 5; IV, ii, 115; Meas. for Meas. IV, 1, 17. As Fran. speaks the clock is heard striking midnight. [See Abbott, § 191; Macb. III, i, 16; V, iii, 7.]

7. now] Dyce: Is not the sense the same whether we read new or 'now'?

8. much] Abbott, § 51: Much, more, is frequently used as an ordinary adjective like the Scotch muckle, and the Early English muchel.

9. heart] Hunter (ii, 212): As no particular reason appears for the melancholy of this insignificant personage, it is probable that the poet meant by this little artifice to prepare the minds of the spectators for a tragical story. Such a remark at the opening of a play disposed their minds, unconsciously perhaps to themselves, to the solemnity of thought and feeling which suited the awful scenes soon to be unfolded. Strachey (p. 24): The key-note of the tragedy is struck in the simple preludings of this common sentry's midnight guard, to sound afterwards in ever-spreading vibrations through the complicated though harmonious strains of Hamlet's own watch through a darker and colder night than the senses can feel.

10. Not a mouse stirring] Coleridge (p. 148): The attention to minute sounds,—naturally associated with the recollection of minute objects, and the more familiar and trifling, the more impressive from the unusualness of their producing any impression at all,—gives a philosophic pertinency to this image; but it has likewise its dramatic use and purpose. For its commonness in ordinary conversation tends to produce the sense of reality, and at once hides the poet, and yet approxi-
Ber. Well, good night.
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.

11—13. As in Q. Prose, F, Rowe. +, Mob. QqFF (after line 13), et cet. +
14. Stand, ho] Stand ho Q. Stand liegemen] Liege-men F, Leedge-
men Q, Q, Leegemen Q, Q. F, ho] Om. F, Rowe, Pope, Knt,
Who is]. who's F, Rowe, Pope. Two lines, QqF, Rowe+.
Enter...] Dyce, White, Sta. Glo. 16. solier] soldiers Q.

mates the reader or spectator to that state in which the highest poetry will appear, and in its component parts, though not in the whole composition, really is the language of nature. If I should not speak it, I feel I should be thinking it;—the voice only is the poet's,—the words are my own.

13. rivals] Warburton: That is, partners [which is the word used here in Q.].—White. Ritson: Thus, in Heywood's Rape of Lucrece, 1636: 'Tullia. Aruns, associate him. Aruns. A rival with my brother in his honours.' And in The Tragedy of Hoffman, 1631 [II, iii, p. 29. Reprint 1852], 'And make thee rival in those governments.' See also rivalry in Ant. & Cleop. III, v, 8. Warner (Var. 1821): Read '—- Horatio, and Marcellus The rival of &c. because Hor. is a gentleman of no profession, and there is but one person in each watch. Caldecott: See corrival, 1 Hen. IV: I, iii, 207, and IV, iv, 31. Wedgwood: Lat. rivalis, explained in different ways from rivus, a brook; by some from the struggles between herdsmen using the same watercourses; by others as signifying those who dwell on opposite sides of the stream. Clarendon: This is the only passage of Sh. in which the word is employed in its earlier and rarer sense [as given by Warburton].

14. Coleridge (p. 148): Observe the gradual transition from the silence and the still recent habit of listening in Francisco's 'I think I near them,'—to the more cheerful call out, which a good actor would observe, in the 'Stand ho! Who is there?'

16. Give] Caldecott: That is, May He, who has the power of giving, so dispense; or, I give you good night, like the Latin dare salutem. Clarendon: The more probable ellipsis is 'God give you.' We do not find the complete phrase 'I give you good night,' but we have many examples of 'God give you good even,
as Rom. & Jul. I, ii, 56, and Love's Lab. Lost, IV, ii, 84. The omission of 'I before such words as 'pray' is not a parallel case. [Compare 'the owl . . . Which gives the stern'st good-night,' Macb. II, ii, 3.—Ed.]

1 *
Who hath relieved you?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place.

Give you good night.

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

[Exit.

What, is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus.

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

17. Who hath] who has Q's6. hath my]. ha's my F,F6 has my F,F6, Rowe, F,F6, Coll. Dyce, El.

18. [Exit.] Exit Fran. or Francisco.

QqFf. Bernardo! Bernardo,—Theob.

Warb. Say,] say Q,Qs. Say. Knt.

19. A piece] WARBURTON: He says this as he gives his hand [to this effect Warburton inserted a stage-direction]. HEATH and STEEVENS: It is merely a humorous, cant expression. TSCHISCHWITZ: The philosophic Horatio conceives the personality of man, in its outward manifestation merely, as only a piece of himself. MOLTKE: It is not without significance that Sh. makes Horatio return a different answer to this question than did Bernardo. The latter by his reply of 'He' implies that he is present body and soul (for he and Marcellus have no longer any doubt; they have already seen the apparition with their own eyes); whereas Horatio by his answer implies that owing to his incredulity he is not wholly present, that he is not there with his body and soul, but that he had undertaken to share the watch with the corporeal part only of his entire individuality. MOBERLY: As we say, 'something like him.'

20. COLERIDGE (p. 149): The actor should be careful to distinguish the expectation and gladness of Bernardo's 'Welcome, Horatio!' from the mere courtesy of his 'Welcome, good Marcellus!'

21. Whether this should be spoken by Mar. or Hor. has occasioned discussion. CAPELL (i, 122) asks, 'Can it be imagined that the same person, who, but a line or two after, calls the apparition "this dreaded sight," should, in this line, call it "this thing"?' The levity of the expression, and the question itself, are suited to the unbelieving but eager Hor.' COLLIER gives it to Hor., because Hor. had come purposefully to inquire about the Ghost. TSCHISCHWITZ: Mar. is a firm believer in the Ghost, and the allusion to it as a 'thing' betokening contempt and doubt can come only from the skeptic, Hor. HUDSON: There is a temperate skepticism well befitting a scholar in this speech of Horatio's. On the other hand, ELZE advocates Mar. Horatio, being the invited guest, remains in the background, attentive and expectant, while Marcellus is more forward in his zeal to convince Horatio of the truth of his story.' WHITE: Horatio does not yet believe that the Ghost appeared at all.

21. again] COLERIDGE (p. 149): Even the word 'again' has its credibilitius.
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 two nights have seen.

23. our] a Q,Q,

fantasy] fantasia F,Qq. phan-
tasia F,F,F., F.


26, 27. along With us to] Knt. along, With us to Qq, Cap. Steev. Var. along With us, to Ff, Rowe ii +, Cald. Coll. El. White. along, With us, to Rowe i.

27. minutes] minutes Q,Q,Q,Q.

28. apparition] apparition Q,Q,

29. Tush, tush.] Om. Q,76.

30. a-while] a while Q,Q,Q,F,F,

33. two nights have] Ff, Rowe, Dyce, El. White, Sta. Kity, Del. Huds have two nights Qq et cet.

effect. From speaking of 'this thing' Mar. rises into 'This dreaded sight,' which immediately afterwards becomes 'this apparition,' and that, too, an intelligent spirit that is to be spoken to.

23. fantasy] CLARENDON: Both this word and 'fancy' are commonly used by Sh. in the sense of imagination. The former is, however, found in the modern sense of whim, caprice in Oth. III, iii, 299.

25. dreaded] FRANCKE: Conf. i Hen. VI: IV, v, 8, 'unavoided danger.'

26. along] ABBOTT, § 30: Perhaps we ought (to the advantage of the rhythm) to place a comma after 'along.' [See III, iii, 4, where the verb of motion is omitted; as in 'Let's along,' which Abbott says is 'still a common Americanism; it is probably local rather than common; I have never heard it.—ED.]

27. minutes] STEEVENS: See Ford, The Fancies Chaste and Noble, V, i: 'Ere the minutes of the night warn us to rest.'

29. approve] JOHNSON: Add a new eyes to that of our eyes. CALDECOTT: To approove or confirme. Ratum habere aliquid.—Baret's Avicearie. TSCHISCH WITZ: Exactly corresponding to the Ital. approvare.

31, 32. assail, fortify] ELZE: Appropriate in the mouth of a soldier.

33. What . . . seen.] HAMMER gives this line to Mar.; and JENNENS follows him, thus explaining the change: Mar. begins eagerly to tell the story to Hor., who, having already heard his version, interrupts him by saying that he will now hear Bernardo's. CALDECOTT: Supply 'With' or By relating before 'What.' KEIGHTLEY reads 'With what.' CLARENDON: A comma is usually placed after 'story,' and the construction
HAMLET

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 illume 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!

33. sit we] let’s Q’76. 36. When] Whon F,
yond] you’ F, F,
36, 41. that’s] thats QqF,
36. westward] westward Q, Q,
37. to illume] Steev. é illumine Q, Q,
White, Kily, Dyce ii, Huds. é illumine
Q,

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 σφημα πρὸς τὸ σημανθένον. But we may omit the comma, and take ‘what . . . seen’ as an epexegetic of ‘story.’ [See ABBOTT, § 252.]

33. sit we] ABBOTT, § 361, considers this so-called imperative in the first person plural as the subjunctive, i.e. ‘suppose we sit down?’ ‘what if we sit down?’ Compare ‘Break we our watch up,’ line 168 of this scene.

35. COLERIDGE: In the deep feeling which Ber. has of the solemn nature of what he is about to relate, he makes an effort to master his own imaginative terrors by an elevation of style,—itself a continuation of the effort,—by turning off from the apparition, as from something which would force him too deeply into himself, to the outward objects, the realities of nature, which had accompanied it. This passage seems to contradict the critical law that what is told makes a faint impression compared with what is beheld; for it does indeed convey to the mind more than the eye can see; whilst the interruption of the narrative at the very moment when we are most intensely listening for the sequel, and have our thoughts diverted from the dreaded sight in expectation of the desired, yet almost dreaded, tale,—this gives all the suddenness and surprise of the original appearance.

36. star] CLARKE: Nothing more natural than for a sentinel to watch the course of a particular star while on his lonely midnight watch; and what a radiance of poetry is shed on the passage by the casual allusion!

HUDSON: Of course the north star is meant, which appears to stand still while the other stars in its neighborhood seem to revolve around it.

37. illume] CLARENDON: Not used elsewhere by Sh.

39. beating] STAUNTON: ‘Tolling’ of Q, perhaps imparts additional solemnity to this impressive preparation for the appearance of the spectre.
ACT I, sc. i.] HAMLET

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

41-44. COLERIDGE: Note the judgement displayed in having the two persons present, who, as having seen the Ghost before, are naturally eager in confirming their former opinions,—whilst the spectator is silent, and, after having been twice addressed by his friends, answers with two hasty syllables,—'Most like,'—and a confession of horror. 'O heaven!' words are wasted on those who feel, and to those who do not feel, the exquisite judgment of Sh. in this scene, what can be said? Hume himself could not but have had faith in this Ghost dramatically, let his anti-ghostism have been as strong as Samson against other ghosts less powerfully raised.

42. scholar] DOUCE: Exorcisms were performed in Latin, and therefore only by scholars. REED: Thus Toby in Beau. and Fl.'s Night Walker II, i,—'Let's call the butler up, for he speaks Latin, And that would daunt the devil.' In like manner the honest butler in Addison's Drummer recommends the steward to speak Latin to the ghost in that play. TSCHISCHWITZ: Evil spirits were not exorcised by the sign of the cross alone, but cried out to the exorciser the Latin hexameter Signa te signa, tenere me tangis et angis, a verse which being a palindrome reveals its diabolic origin. MOLTKE: See Much Ado II, i, 264: 'I would to God some scholar would conjure her.'

44. harrows] STEEVES: Compare Milton: 'Amazed I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear.'—Comus, 565. CALDECOTT: It is this fact that the surprise and terror of the speaker should bear some proportion to the degree of his former confidence and incredulity. CLARKE: Horatio's previous levity makes his subsequent awe, and trembling, and paleness seem like the effects of our own awe-stricken imaginations. WEDGWOOD: Harrow! a cry of distress; Old French, hare! harau! Crier haro sur, to make hue and cry after. Bohem. hr / hrr / interjection of excitement (frenzrntis), hurrah! Old High German, haron, to cry out. A harrowing sight is one which leads to the exclamation harrow!

45. It would] CLARENDON: There was, and is, a notion that a ghost cannot speak till it has been spoken to. [See Macb. I, v, 19; Ham. III, iii, 75; V, i, 77, or AB BOTT, § 329. Ed.]

46. usurp'st] MOBERLY: Zeugma: the Ghost invades the night and assumes the form of the king.
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!

**Mar.** It is offended.

**Ber.** See, it stalks away!

**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
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,

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53. **Horatio**] Corson: 'Horatio' should be uttered with an unequal upward wave, expressing the triumph of the speaker in the confirmation of his report.

55. on't] For instances of the use of 'on' in the sense of about, where we should use of, see Abbott, § 181. Moerly thinks that the preposition seems to be really 'on' here, not the on which is a mispronunciation of the word of. See also I, i, 89; IV, v, 194; Macb. I, iii, 84.

56. might] See Abbott, § 312, for other instances of 'might' used in the sense of 'was able' or 'could.'

57. sensible] For instances of adjectives, especially those ending in ful, less, ble, and ive, which have both an active and a passive meaning, see Abbott, § 31; Walker (Crit. i, 179, 183). See also Mach II, i, 36, and note.

57. avouch] See Abbott, § 451, for instances of substantives of similar formation. Clarendon: This substantive does not occur elsewhere in Sh. See also 'cast,' I, i, 73; 'hatch,' 'disclose,' III, i, 166; 'remove,' IV, v, 77; 'supervise,' V, ii, 23. [Also 'repair, V, ii, 206.]

60. **armour**] Was this the very armour that he wore thirty years before, on the day Hamlet was born (see V, i, 135—140)? How old is Horatio?

62. **parle**] Heussi erroneously supposes that this word signifies a physica. combat. Clarendon (Note on Rich. II: I, i, 192): 'Parle' and parley are
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange.

63. smote] smot Q, Q, F, F, F, F, F,
sledded] sleaded Q, Pope +, Jen.
Polack] Mal. pollax Q, Q, Q, Q,

identical, meaning 'conference,' with a view to a peaceful settlement of differences.

63. sledded Polacks] German commentators have found more difficulty in this phrase than the English. TIECK supposes (and so translates) that the king 'dashed his sliding Pole axe on the ice.' 'Sledded,' he adds, 'according to a license frequent in Sh., stands for 'sledding,' which Tieck mistook for 'sliding.' The folly of this interpretation and its errors were exposed by DELIUS. But the spelling of the Qq sleaded, and the lack of a capital P in pollax, together with its Roman letters (proper names in the old copies being usually printed in Italic), still presented inexplicable difficulties. FRIESEN inclined to Tieck, believing it more 'conceivable that the king dashed down on the ice his sleaded battle-axe (whatever that might be) than that he struck an enemy or smote him to the ground, for in this case the king's visor would have been down, and Horatio could not have seen the frown on his face.' Wherefore, he concludes, there is greater likelihood of finding verbal obscurities in Sh.'s text than downright nonsense. ELZE and DELIUS follow the English commentators, and scout the idea of 'poleaxe.' The former follows Pope, on the ground that Polack is generally found in the singular, and refers to the Polish king, just as 'the Dane' is used in line 15 of this scene. TSCHISCHWITZ also follows Pope, because the plural Polacki would signify the whole Polish army, and it would be monstrous to suppose that the whole army could travel in sleighs; the 'sledded Polack' is therefore merely the Polish king, who, and who alone, had come to the conference on a sled. If the word 'poleaxe' be adopted, insuperable difficulties attend the interpretation of 'sledded.' If it mean sledded, it refers to a battle-axe, to which a war-club (Old North German steggia) has been added, and the words 'on the ice' are used instead of the more natural phrase on the ground to indicate that the parle took place on some frozen neutral river. LEO (Notes and Queries, November 19, 1864): 'I always regarded 'sleaded,' or, as the modern editors read, 'sledded,' as nonsense. What a ridiculous position it must have been to see a king, in full armour, sitting down a sleeded man, i. e. a man sitting in a sledge! It would rather not have been a king-like action. And it was, of course, not a remarkable, not a memorable, fact, that in the cold Scandanavian country in winter-time, people were found sitting in a sledge; nobody would have wondered at it,—perhaps more at the contrary. When the king frowned in an angry parle he must have been provoked to it by an irritating behaviour of the adversary, and Horatio, remembering the fact, will also bear in mind the cause of it, and so, I suppose, he used an epithet which points out the provoking manner of the Polack; and, following as much as possible the form 'sleaded,' I should like to propose the word sturdy, or, as it would have been written in Shakespeare's time, sturdie.' MOLKE believes that he has discovered the correct reading on aesthetic as well as philological grounds; Sh. wishes to portray to us the character of the deceased king, which must be full of
Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour, 65
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work I know not;

65. jump] justo Ff+., Jen. Cald. Knt, 
Sing. Dyce i, Kily, Del. ii.
 jump at this dead] at the fame Qv76.
 Anon.*
66. stalk] stauze Qq.

grandeur and dignity. Such rage as Tieck's interpretation implies would be most unseemly; besides, by dashing down his poleaxe, he would disarm himself, which would be silly. The idea, therefore, conveyed by the word 'smite' must be personal to the king; it must be some gesture, not a blow delivered on an enemy. What, therefore, more natural than that he should strike his Poleaxe violently on the ice, just as any honest citizen is wont by way of emphasis to strike his fist on the table? "Sledded" is a sophistication of the printers, and the correct text is his loaded pole-axe, i.e. his poleaxe loaded with lead; or his edged poleaxe, i.e. sharpened; or, for aught to the contrary, his sledded poleaxe. This emendation of Moltke's CLARENDON pronounces an anticlimax; Sh. having mentioned 'Norway' in the first clause would certainly have told us with whom the 'angry parle' was held. Curiously enough, this emendation of Moltke's has been anticipated not by a German, but by an Englishman. In the Athenaeum, 3d April, 1875, C. ELIOT BROWNE gives some notes on Hamlet by the Earl of Rochester, 1761, and on the present passage is the following: 'Sledded agrees with an axe, but not with a man; and signifies loaded with lead. . . . The king was then in an angry parle (which can't signify fighting), and because he could not have his will most furiously struck his loaded or heavy battle-axe into the ice.' JOHNSON: 'Polack' is the name of an inhabitant of Poland. Poleque is French. As in Davison's translation of Passeratius's Epitaph on Henry III of France, published by Camden: 'This little stone a great king's heart doth hold, Who ruled the fickle French and Polacks bold.' MALONE: The corrupted form in the Qq shows that Sh. wrote 'Polacks.' Since, as Dyce adds, the singular is afterwards spelled in this play 'Polacke,' 'Pollacke,' 'Poleak,' 'Polock,' and 'Polake.' STEEVENS preferred the singular, because we cannot well suppose that in a parley the king belaboured many, as it is not likely that provocation was given by more than one, or that on such an occasion he would have condescended to strike a meaner person than a prince. BOSWELL: May not Poleax be put for the person who carried the pole-axe, a mark of rank,—as we should talk at the present day 'of the gold stick in waiting.' 'He sent a great and glorious duke, one of them that held the golden pole-axe, with his retinue,' &c.—Milton's Brief Hist. of Moscovia.

65. jump] MALONE: In the folio we sometimes find a familiar word substituted for the more ancient. STEEVENS: 'Jump' and just were synonymous in Sh.'s time. Johnson refers to jump-names, i.e. names that suit exactly. 'Your appointment was jumpe at three.'—Chapman's May-Day. HALLIWELL: 'Jump' is rather more expressive, implying coincidence of time to the very second. [See V, ii, 362.]

ACT I, SC. I.]

HAMLET

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
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

68. gross and] Om. Q'76.
69. eruption] eruption F5.
70. Good now,] Pray Q'76.

70. Good now] Johnson (Dict.): In good time: a la bonne heure. A gentle exclamation of entreaty. Coleridge: How delightfully natural is the transition to the retrospective narrative! And observe, upon the Ghost's reappearance, how much Horatio's courage is increased by having translated the late individual spectator into general thought and past experience,—and the sympathy of Mar. and Ber. with his patriotic surmisings in daring to strike at the Ghost; whilst in a moment, upon its vanishing, the former solemn awe-stricken feeling returns upon them: see lines 143, 144. Abbott, § 13: 'Gunnor' (good now) is still an appellative in Dorsetshire. Corson: 'Good' is a vocative, and 'now' belongs to 'sit down.'

72. toils] Clarendon: 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.' [See Mark. II, iv, 4; Abbott, § 290, for a list of transitive verbs formed from nouns and adjectives; thus 'pale,' I, v, 90.]


75. impress] Whalley: Judge Barrington (Obs. on the more Ancient Statutes, p. 300) infers from this passage that in the reign of Queen Elizabeth shipwrights as well as seamen were forced to serve. Douce (Lear, IV, vi, 87—Var. 1793) consequently denies Barrington's conclusion, by affirming that press-money was given to soldiers when they were retained in the king's service, and that it merely indicated that they were to hold themselves, at all times, in readiness to serve. The term is taken from the French 'prest,' ready, and is so written in Henry VII's Book of Household Expenses. The word is here used in its ordinary signification, as shown by the Concordance. Lord Campbell (p. 103): Such confidence has there been in Shakespeare's accuracy, that this passage has been quoted both by text-writers and by judges on the bench as an authority upon the legality of the press-gang, and upon the debated question whether shipwrights, as well as common seamen, are liable to be pressed into the service of the royal navy. Tschischwitz, however, will not tolerate the idea of impressment, which he says is an injustice of wholly modern
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,
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,

| 76. _Does_ | _Dos't_ | _Dos't_ | _emulate_ | _emulant_ | _Seymour_. |
| 77. _toward_ | _DYCE_. | _in a state_ | _of preparation_ | _forthcoming_ | _at hand_. | _See V, ii_, 352. | _[See Rom. & Ital. I, v, 120. Florio gives: 'Prefagiare: to perceive a thing that is toward before it come.' Ed.]_ |
| 80. _but_ | _See ABBOTT, § 130, and Macb. V, viii, 40._ |
| 85. _Fortinbras_ | _LATHAM (Athenæum, 27 July, 1872) shows that this is a corrupt French form, equivalent to _Fierumbras_ or _Fierabras_, which is a derivative from _ferri brachium_; by translating _brachium_, side, we have _Ironsid_, or, in Icelandic, _Jarnstækk_, a name actually applied to one of the old _Norse_ Sea-kings. All that the learned critic contends for is that such names are in some small sense historical, _i. e._ that they have their origin in distorted history, rather than in arbitrary fiction._ |
| 83. _emulate_ | _CLARENDON: Emulous. Not elsewhere in Sh._ |
| 84. _the_ | _ABBOTT, § 92: _i. e._ the combat that ends all dispute. Or see Macb. V, ii, 4._ |
| 86. _CLARENDON pronounces this line an Alexandrine; but ABBOTT (_§ 469_) reduces it to a line of five feet by scanning 'this Fortinbras' as one foot._ | _[See Macb. IV, ii, 72.]_ |
| 86. _compact_ | _CLARENDON: Always, whether substantive or adjective, accented by Sh. on the last syllable, except in _1 Hen. VI._ V, iv, 163. For lists of words with accents differing from present use, see ABBOTT, §§ 490, 492. _ELZE_ refers to the compact made between Collere and Horvendile in _The Hystorie of Hamblet_, Appendix, Vol. II, p. 92._ |
| 87. _law and heraldry_ | _CAPELL (i, 122)_: The forms of both the common law and the law of arms having been duly observed. _STEEVENS_ erroneously cites UPTON as giving this phrase _as_ an instance of hendiadys, meaning the heraldic law, which _it_
HAMLET

Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror;
Against the which a moiety competent
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,

Qq, Warb. Cap. Jen. co-mart Qg*.
compact Q76, Heath, Hunter.

93. co-manter Ff. convinart

May be possibly (though I doubt it; Clarendon says it is 'a kind of hendiadys'), but the only example Upton gives from Sh. is from Ant. & Cleop. IV, ii, 44.

Moherly: Law would be wanted to draw up accurately the contract, heraldry to give it a binding force in honour; as the court of chivalry 'has cognizance of contracts touching deeds of arms or of war out of the realm.'


91. return'd] Earl of Rochester (1761, Athenæum, 3 April, 1875): These lands could have no return, that had never been turned or moved from the primitive owner. Read, enur'd.

92. co-manter] Malone, Dyce: Co-mart of the Qq is a joint bargain, a word of Shakespeare's coinage. A mart signifying a great fair or market; he would not have scrupled to have written to mart, in the sense of to make a bargain. Steevens: He has not scrupled so to write in Cym. I, vi, 151. White: Co-mart is a singular phrase, which implies a trading purpose not well suited to a royal combat for a province. Heath, Hunter and Bailey prefer compact. Abbott, § 494: One of these syllables is shurred; see 'funeral,' I, ii, 176.

94. carriage] Johnson: That is, the import of the article formed or drawn up between them. White: In F, an s after 'article' seems manifestly omitted. The meaning is the carrying out of the design of the articles between the two kings.

96. unimproved] Johnson's definition of this word as 'not regulated or guided by knowledge or experience' is denied by Gifford, who says that it means just the contrary. See note on reprove (in Every Man in his Humour, III, ii, p. 88), which
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in't; which is no other—
As it doth well appear unto our state—
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsative, those foresaid lands

98. lawless] lawless Q Qs. lawless
Qs. Landleffe F, Ff, F+
F+
Steev. Cald. Var. Knt, Dyce i,
Del. Mob.
100. it] Om. Q Qs.

has the same sense as improve. This last word NARES defines by 'to reprove or refute; as from improba, Latin.' SINGER (ed. 1) cites Florio: 'Improbare, to improve, to impugn,' hence 'unimproved' means unimpeached, unquestioned. In his ed. 2, Singer adopted Q, 'as the idea excited by young Fortinbras is one of animated by courage at full heat, but at present untried,—the ardour of inexperience.' STAUNTON apprehends that insatiable, ungovernable is meant, as in Chapman, Iliad, Book xi,—the King still cride, Pursue, pursue, And all his unproved hands did blood and dust embrue.' DYCE follows Gifford, and CLARENDON inclines to the definition of Singer (ed. 2), unftutored.

98. Shark'd] STEEVES: Picked up without distinction, as the shark-fish collects his prey. NARES: Collected in a banditti-like manner. The verb to shark is nearly equivalent to the modern verb to swindle.

98. list] HUNTER (ii, 214): Sight of Q, though now accounted a vulgarism, is here the better word.

98. lawless] Tschischwitz: The reading of the Ff is certainly the better; had 'lawless' been meant, the more usual word outlaws would have been used. No young noble warrior like Fortinbras would have made common cause with outlaws, but with the landless the case was different; indeed, he himself belonged to that category.

98. resolutes] For inflected participles and adjectives, see ABBOTT, § 433; and MACH. I, ii, 60, 'Norways' king,'

99. food and diet] Theobald (Nichols, Lit. Hist. ii, 558): Is not 'food and diet' a mere tautology? Read, 'For food; and dieted to some,' &c., i.e. trained up. [This was not repeated in his edition. ED.] MOBERLY: For no pay but their keep. Being landless, they have nothing to lose, and the war would at the worst feed them.

100. stomach] JOHNSON: Constancy, resolution. DYCE: Stubborn resolution or courage. CALDECOTT: The redundancy of 'food and diet' may have been employed for the purpose of fixing in the mind the continuation of the metaphor in the use of the word 'stomach,' here put in an equivocal sense, importing both courage and appetite. The same play on the word is in Two Gent. I, ii, 68.

101. state] DELIUS: This does not in Sh. refer merely to geographical limits, but to the government.

102, 108. But] ABBOTT, § 127: In the sense of except, where we should use than.
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 c'en so.
Well may it sort, that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch, so like the king
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,

107. _romage_ Romadige Q, Rom
Knt.
108-125. Ber. _I think...country-
men._] Om. Ff.
108. _e'en so_ enso Q2Q4Q5 eson fo
112. _mote_ moth Q2Q4Q5, Jen. Cald.
Knt, Del.
113. _palmy_ flourishing Q'76, Rowe.

107. _romage_ Wedgwood (s. v. Rummage): Two words seem confounded.
1. _Rumage_, the proper stowing of merchandise in a ship; from Du. _ruim_, Fr. _rum_, the hold of a ship. Hence to _rummage_, to search among the things stowed
in a given receptacle. 2. But in addition to the foregoing the word is sometimes
used in the sense of racket, disturbance [as here in _Hamlet_]. In this sense it may
be a parallel form with _rumpus_. Caldecott connects it with 'Romelyng, privy

108-125. Knight explains the omission of these lines in the Ff on the ground
that Shakespeare probably suppressed this magnificent description of the omens
which preceded the fall of 'the mightiest Julius' after he had written _Jul. Ces_.
Hunter (ii, 214): I wonder that the commentators should have overlooked so
obvious an origin of this passage as Lucan's description (Pharsalia, lib. i) of the
prodigies which preceded the death of Caesar. We have the tenantless graves,
the sheeted dead seen on the streets, the stars with trains of fire, and the moon's eclipse.
It is of little moment to ask if Lucan had been translated when Sh. wrote _Hamlet_.
The earliest published translation, I believe, is that by Sir Arthur Gorges, 1614.

108. _be_] Abbott, 299: As a rule it will be found that _be_ is used with some
notion of doubt, question, thought, &c.; 1, in questions, as in III, ii, 100; V, i, 94; and 2, after verbs of thinking, as in the present case. Very significant is this
difference in 'I _think_ my wife _be_ honest, and _think_ she is not,' _Oth_. III, iii, 384.

109. _sort_] Johnson: The cause and effect are proportionate and suitable.

112. _mote_] Malone (King _John_, IV, i, 92): The modern spelling of _moth_.
Thus, '—— they are in the aire, like _atomi in sole_, mothes in the sonne.' —Preface
of Lodge's _Incarne Devils_, 1596. Also, ' _Peaunce_ , a little sticke, a _fease-strawe_ ,
a tooth-piche, a _moth_ , a little beame.' —Florio, 1598.

113. _state_] Wilson (Blackwood's _Mag._, Aug. 1849, p. 252): Write henceforth
and for ever ' _State_ ' with a towering capital . . . It is for the Republic and City
what Realm or Kingdom is to us,—at once place and indwelling Power. ' _State_ '—
properly Republic,—here specifically and pointedly means Reigning City. The
Ghosts walked in the City, —not in the Republic . . . Every hackneyer of this
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,

115. tenantless | tenantless Q. Q.  
Warb.  
116. streets.] Line marked as omitted  
Jen. Steev. Var. Sing. i, White, Kty,  
Cam. Huds.  
117—120. Transferred by Tsch. to follow countryman, line 125.  
117, 118. As stars with...Disasters

phrase,—State,—as every man alive hackneys it [by using it in the sense of condition], is a ninefold Murderer! He murders the Phrase; he murders the Speech; he murders Horatio; he murders the Ghost; he murders the Scene; he murders the Play; he murders Rome; he murders Shakespeare; and he murders Me.'

114. mightiest! Abbott, 88: The superlative, like the Latin usage, sometimes signifies very, with little or no idea of excess.

116. Jennens: Perhaps a line has been omitted here, by mistake, somewhat like the following: 'Tremendous prodigies in heav'n appear'd.' Hunter (ii, 2, 15) suggests, 'In the heavens above strange portents did appear.'

117, 118. Malone: When Sh. had told us that the 'graves stood tenantless,' &c., which are wonders confided to the earth, he naturally proceeded to say (in the line now lost) that yet other prodigies appeared in the sky; and the phenomena he exemplified by adding, 'As [i.e. for instance] stars with trains; &c. I suspect that the words 'As stars' are a corruption, and that the lost words, as suggested by the passage in Jult. Cos. II, ii, which describes the prodigies preceding his death, contained a description of 'fiery warriors fighting in the clouds,' or of 'brands burning bright beneath the stars.' What makes me believe that the corruption lies in 'As stars' is the disagreeable recurrence of 'stars' in the next line. Perhaps Sh. wrote: Astrae with trains of fire—and dews of blood Disastrous dim'd the sun! 'Astrae' is an old word for star; see Diana, a collection of poems, printed circa 1580. [See also Florio, 'Stella: a starre, an aster, a planet.' Ed.] Knight rather favors Malone's emendation, and thinks that it gets rid of the difficulty. Caldecott finds no difficulty in conceiving the meaning of the passage as it stands, reading or understanding it thus: 'The graves opened, the dead were seen abroad [spectacles such] as,' &c. Mitford (Gent. Mag., Feb. 1845): This line has merely got out of its place; there is nothing wanting. Transpose it to follow line 121, and read, 'As stars with . . . . blood, Are harbingers preceding,' &c. A. E. B [RAE] (N. & Qu., 24 Jan. 1852): It is only by the occurrence of such difficulties as the present, which, after remaining so long obscure, are at last only resolvable by presupposing in Sh. a depth of knowledge far exceeding that of his triflers, that his wonderful and almost mysterious attainments are beginning to be appreciated. In the present case he must not only have known that the fundamental meaning of aster is a spot of light, but he must also have taken into consideration the power of dis in producing an absolute reversal in the meaning of the word to which it may be prefixed. Thus, service is a benefit, disservice is an injury, while unservice (did
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star,

Such a word exist, would be a negative mean between the two extremes. Similarly, if aster signify a spot of light, a name singularly appropriate to a comet, disaster must, by reversal, be a spot of darkness, and 'disasters in the sun' no other than what we should call spots upon his disk. Read, therefore, 'Asters with trains of fire,' &c. Singer (ed. 2): As it has been conjectured that a line has been here lost, perhaps we might read: 'And as the earth, so portents fill'd the sky, Asters, with trains of fire,' &c. Disaster is used as a verb in Ant. & Cleop. II, vii, 18, and it has therefore been conjectured that we should read Disastering here. Collier thinks that these lines are probably irretrievably corrupt, but that there is no sufficient reason for supposing a line to have been lost, adding, 'We shrewdly suspect that the error lies merely in the word 'Disaster,' which was perhaps misprinted, because it was immediately below "As stars," and thus misled the eye of the old compositor. We do not imagine that Sh. used so affected and unpopular a word as astres or asters.' W. W. Williams proposes: 'Asters with trains of fire and dews of blood, Did overcast the sun,' &c. Staunton awards some plausibility to Malone's emendation, and considers Astres or Asters as an acceptable conjecture, but conceives, with Collier, that the cardinal error lies in 'Disasters,' which conceals some verb importing the obscuration of the sun; for example, 'Asters with trains of fire and dews of blood Distempered the sun,' or 'Discoloured the sun.' Dyce pronounces the passage hopelessly mutilated, and in his 2d ed. terms Leo's alterations 'most wretched,' and also gives a MS. emendation by Boaden, supplying the missing line thus: 'The heavens, too, spoke in silent prodigies; As stars,' &c. White says that a preceding line, or even more than one, has been lost. Clarke: Bearing in mind that Sh. uses 'as' many times with markedly elliptical force, and in passages of very peculiar construction, we do not feel so sure that the present one has suffered from omission. It may be that the sentence is to be understood, 'As there were stars of fire, &c., so there were disasters in the sun,' &c. Fabius Oxoniensis (N. & Qu., 7 Jan. 1865): Read, 'As stars (i.e. while stars) ... or, 'And stars ... Disastrous dimm'd the sun.' Duane (N. & Qu., 3d S. viii, 30 Sept. '65): 'I am convinced Sh. wrote, 'Did usher in the sun.' This makes sense of the whole passage; it is metrical, and it produces a line in analogy with the line 'did speak and gibber. The words did usher might be readily mistaken for 'Disasters,' and the compositor's eye may have caught the word 'stars' in the line above. Keightley (Expositor): Perhaps for 'disasters' we might read distempers: 'distemperatures of the sun,'—1 Hen. IV. V. i. Massey (The Secret Drama of Shakespeare's Sonnets, ed. ii, 1872, Supplement, p. 46) inserts lines 121-125 between lines 116 and 117, and asserts that 'it must be admitted that we recover the perfect sense of the passage by this insertion.' There is no eclipse of either sun or moon mentioned in Jul. Ces., and its mention here, Massey infers, must point to some actual, recent instance. The Astronomer Royal, being applied to, replied by showing that there was an eclipse of the moon on 20 February, 1598, and one of the sun, almost total, on 6 March following. Hence Massey infers that this year is the date of the composition of Hamlet, and that in this passage Sh. pointed, by the eclipse of the moon, to the death or deposition of Queen Elizabeth, who had an attack of 'special sickness at the time.' Moreover, 'disasters in the sun' Massey thinks, might have been 'sun-spots' which Sh.
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
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

121. fierce sense Q, fear'Q2Q3, 123. omen coming] omen'd Coming

'noted,' and so 'pluralized [sic] the phenomenon.' Monckry agrees with Malone in supplying the missing line from the corresponding passage in *Jul. Cæs.,* if a line be really lost. Clarendon: Sh. had probably in his mind the passage in North's *Plutarch, Jul. Cæs.* p. 739 (ed. 1631): 'Certainly, destinie may easier be foreseen then avoided, considering the strange and wonderfull signes that were said to be soene before Ceasars 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 Caesar'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.


121. precurse] Clarendon: Only found here in Sh., though he uses 'precurser' (*Phen. & Tur.* 6), and 'precursor' (*Temp.* I, ii, 201). It includes everything that preceded and foreshadowed the fierce events that followed.

121. fierce] Warburton explains this as terrible; Steevens, as conspicuous, glaring, and cites in proof *Timon,* IV, ii, 30; *Hen. VIII:* I, i, 54; Caldecott, bloody and terrible, as elsewhere it means extreme, excessive, citing *King John,* V, vii, 13, and Jouson's *Sejanus,* V, x (p. 140, ed. Gifford), 'O most tame slavery, and fierce flattery.'

122. harbingers] See *Mach.* I, iv, 45.

123. omen] Theobald: 'Prologue' and 'omen' are synonymous, whereas Sh. means that these phenomena are forerunners of the events presaged by them, and such sense the addition of a single letter gives. Upton says that the 'omen' is the event itself, which happened in consequence of the omen, and cites Virgil, *Aen.* i, 349. Heath expressed the same idea in the phraseology of a grammarian: 'Omen,' by metonymy of the antecedent for the consequent, is here put for the event predicted by the omen. Farmer appositely cited a distich from Heywood's *Life of Merlin:* 'Merlin, well vers'd in many a hidden spell, His countries omen did long since foretell.'

124. demonstrated] Delius: This word is accented on the first syllable also in *Hen.* V: IV, ii, 54.
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,
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!

125. *climatures*] Clarendon: 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. *cross*] Blakeway: Whoever crossed the spot on which a spectre was seen became subject to its malignant influence. Among the reasons for supposing the Earl of Derby (who died 1594) to have been bewitched is the following: 'On Friday there appeared a tall man who twice crossed him swiftly; and when the Earl came to the place where he saw this man, he first fell sick.'—Lodge's *Illustrations of British History*, vol. iii, p. 48.

129, 132, 135. See I, i, 1, and Abbott, § 512.

131. *ease*] Tschirschwitz quotes Simrock (*Mythologie*, p. 488, ed. 2): 'A ghost can be not infrequently laid, especially when a living person accomplishes that for him which he, when alive, should have himself accomplished.'

134. *happily*] Nares and Clarendon consider this as equivalent to *happily*: Tschirschwitz and Hudson, as equivalent to *luckily*. The latter says: 'Which happy or fortunate foreknowledge may avoid!' a participle and adverb used in the sense of a substantive and adjective. The structure of this solemn appeal is almost identical with that of a very different strain in *As You Like It*, II, iv, 33-42.

135. *speak!*] *speak!* — Rowe +.
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,

[The cock crows.]

Speak of it; stay, and speak!—Stop it, Marcellus.
Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?
Hor. Do, if it will not stand.
Ber. 'Tis here!
Hor. 'Tis here!
Mar. 'Tis gone!

[Exit Ghost.]

We do it wrong, being so majestical,

138. you] your Qq.
[The cock crows.] Qq. Om. Ff.

136. uphoarded] STEEVENS: 'If any of them had bound the spirit of gold by any charms in caves, or in iron fetters under the ground, they should, for their own souls quiet (which questionlesse else would whine up and down), if not for the good of their children, release it.'—Decker, Knight's Conjuring.

138. they say] CLARKE: There is great propriety in the use of these words in the mouth of Horatio, the scholar and the unbeliever in ghosts.

138. spirits] For the monosyllabic pronunciation of this word, see WALKER (Crit. i. 193, 205), quoted in Mach. IV, i, 127. Also Abbott, § 463; and I, i, 161.

139. Cock crows] DYCE (Few Notes, &c., p. 134): The cock used to crow when Garrick acted Hamlet, and, perhaps, also when that part was played by some of his successors; but now-a-days managers have done wisely in striking the cock from the list of the Dramatis Personae. MITFORD (Cursory Notes, &c., p. 43): It is said in the life of one of the actors, I think of George Cooke, that on one occasion not fewer than six cocks were collected in order to summon the spirit to his diurnal residence, lest one cock, like one single clock, might not keep time exactly, when the matter was of importance.

139, 141. STEEVENS is unwilling to believe that the speeches 'Stop it, Marcellus,' and 'Do, if it will not stand,' are correctly given to Horatio, who, as a scholar, must have known the folly of attempting to commit any act of violence on a shadow; he therefore proposes to give them to Bernardo, whose first impulse, as an unlettered officer, would be to strike at what offends him. 'The next two speeches, 'Tis here!' 'Tis here!' should be allotted to Mar. and Ber., and the third, 'Tis gone!' to Hor. As the text now stands, Mar. proposes to strike the Ghost with his partisan, and yet, afterwards, is made to desist from the indecorum and impotence of such an attempt.


141, 142. Do . . . gone?] WALKER (Crit. iii, 261): To avoid the broken line: 'Tis gone!' which here seems to me irregular, arrange 'Do' as belonging to line 140, reading 'If 't will not . . . gone!' as one line.
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,
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;
And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad,
The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,


158. *'gainst* ABBOTT, § 142: Used metaphorically to express time. See III, iv, 50: ‘as against the doom,’ i.e. as though expecting doomsday.

158. *season* MOLTKE: This passage, in connection with Francisco's remark, "'Tis bitter cold," I, i, 8, and then with, "But two months dead," I, ii, 138, and lastly with, 'Sleeping within my orchard,' I, v, 59, intimates to us in the clearest manner the time of year in which Sh. wishes us to conceive the opening of this tragedy—namely, in winter, but a little before Advent; for, two months previously, about September, the older Hamlet could have taken his after-dinner nap in the open air. CALDECOTT (in a note on 'the morn,' line 166) says, that the almost momentary appearance of the Ghost, and the short conversations preceding and subsequent to it, could not have filled up the long interval of a winter's night in Denmark, from twelve till morning. Knight asks, How do we know it was a winter's night? Francisco, indeed, says 'tis bitter cold;' but even in the nights of early summer in the north of Europe, during the short interval between twilight and sunrise, 'the air bites shrewdly.' That this was the season intended by Sh. is indicated by Ophelia's flowers. Her panseys, her columbines, and her daisies belong not to winter, and her 'coronet of weeds' were the field flowers of the latter spring hung upon the willow in full foliage, 'That shows its hoar leaves in the glassy stream.' Knight might have added that the reference to 'the dew of yon high eastern hill' is also inappropriate to midwinter.

161. *dare stir* WHITE: A much inferior reading to that of Ff.

162. *planets* NARES: The planets were supposed to have the power of doing sudden mischief by their malignant aspect, which was conceived to strike objects. CLARENDON cites *Tit. And* II, iv, 14, and *Cor. II*, ii, 117 We still have 'moon-
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 eastern hill. 
Break we our watch up; and by my advice, 
Let us impart what we have seen to-night

163. fairy] Faery F, F,;  
takes] takes F, F,; talks F, F,;  
nor] no F, Rowe + , Cap.

164. hallow'd] hollow'd F,  
the] that Q, Jen. Coll. El.

White, Moltke.

165. Om. Coll. (MS).  
167. yon] you' Cap. yond' Coll.  
El. White.

eastern] eastward Q, Warb.

168. advice] advise Q.

struck.' [Thus Florio: Assiderare: to blast or strike with a planet, to be taken.—ED.]  
163. takes] Dyce: To bewitch, to affect with malignant influence, to strike with disease. See Merry Wives, IV, iv, 32. Clarendon: The adjective 'taking,' for infectious, occurs in Lear, II, iv, 160. And 'taking,' as a substantive in the sense of infection, is found in Lear, III, iv, 58.

164. gracious] Caldecott: Partaking of the nature of the epithet with which it is associated, with 'blessedness;' participating in a heavenly quality, of grace in its scriptural sense; not in the sense in which it is used in King John, III, iv, 81. Frequently, in Sh., it does not mean, as has been interpreted, graceful, elegant, winning, pleasing simply, but touched with something holy, instinct with goodness.

165. in part believe] Clarke: This assent of Horatio's to so imaginative a creed is peculiarly appropriate, coming, as it does, immediately upon a supernatural appearance, when his mind is softened to impressions, and is prepared to admit the possibility of spiritual wonders. Morely: A happy expression of the half-sceptical, half-complying spirit of Shakespeare's time, when witchcraft was believed, antipodes doubted.

166, 167. Hunter (ii, 216): It must have been in emulation of these lines that Milton wrote, 'Now morn her rosy steps in th' eastern clime Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearls.'—Par. Lost, v, 1. We have the same characteristics of morning in both. 'Russet, rosy; 'eastern hill,' eastern clime; 'the dew,' orient pearls. Strachey (p. 27): We are brought out of the cold night into the warm sunshine, and we realize, in this lyrical movement, that harmony of our feelings which it was one of the objects of the Chorus to produce in the Greek Tragedy.

167. eastern] Warburton pronounced in favor of eastward. Steevens denied its superiority, and cited, '—Ulysses still An eye directed to the eastern hill.'—Chapman's Odyssey, lib. xiii. Staunton prefers 'eastern' as more in accordance with the poetical phraseology of the period. Thus Spenser charmingly ushers in the morn, '—cheareful Chaunticleere with his note shrill Had warned once, that Phobus' fiery Car In haste was climbing up the Eastern Hill, Full envious 'that Night so long his room did fill.'

Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life, 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. 175

Scene II. A room of state in the Castle.

Flourish. Enter the King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, Voltimand, Cornelius, Lords, and Attendants.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death

170. young] young Q.F.F. for, upon my life,] perhaps Q76.
172, 173. Om. Coll. (MS).
172. shall] do Rowe ii.

Flourish.] Om. Ff.

170. Hamlet] Coleridge (p. 151): Note the unobtrusive and yet fully adequate mode of introducing the main character, 'young Hamlet,' upon whom is transferred all the interest excited for the acts and concerns of the king his father.

171. dumb] Tschischwitz quotes from Simrock (p. 488) that only those persons have any influence over spirits, who are themselves guileless, such as Priests, young scholars, &c. This essential qualification Horatio attributes to Hamlet.

173. loves] Clarendon (Note on Rich. II: IV, i, 315): The plural is frequently used by Sh. and writers of the 16th and 17th centuries when designating an attribute common to many, in cases where it would now be considered a solecism. Thus 'sights' Lear, IV, vi, 35; Rich. III: IV, i, 25; Timon, I, i, 255; Pericles, I, i, 74; so 'loves,' 'consents,' Two Gent. I, iii, 48, 49; 'wills' in Hen. VIII: III, i, 68; see also Ham. I, ii, 14, 250, 253; II, ii, 14; IV, vii, 30; Macb. III, i, 121.

173. duty] Hudson: These last three speeches are admirably conceived. The speakers are in a highly kindled state; when the Ghost vanishes, their terror presently subsides into an inspiration of the finest quality, and their intense excitement, as it passes off, blazes up in a subdued and pious rapture of poetry.

Scene II.] Coleridge: The audience are now relieved by a change of scene to the royal court, in order that Ham. may not have to take up the leavings of exhaustion. In the king's speech, observe the set and pedantically antithetic form of the sentences when touching that which galled the heels of conscience,—the strain of unagnified rhetoric,—and yet in what follows concerning the public weal, a certain appropriate majesty! Indeed was he not a royal brother?
ACT I, SC. ii.]  

HAMLET  

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 of this warlike state,  
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,—  
With one auspicious and one dropping eye,  
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,

2. us befitted] fitted Pope, Theob.  
Han. Warb.  
3. bear] bathe Coll. (MS) El.  
8. sometime] sometimes Ff, Rowe.  

2. that] TSCHICSWITZ: The simpler form 'that' was used instead of the fuller form 'though that,' just as in French after quoique subordinate clauses are introduced by que.  [See also ABBOTT, § 284.]  
2. befitted] STEEVENS: Perhaps Sh. elliptically wrote 'and us befitted,' i.e. 'and that it befitted us.' SEYMOUR (ii, 141): Read, 'The memory's green; and it befit us.' The greenness of the memory is not hypothetic, but real, and the proper mood of the verb could not be mistaken, if, for 'though,' we substitute as.  
4. woe] CLARENDON: Mourning brow. See Love's Lab. Lost, V, ii, 754; 'the mourning brow of progeny.' For similar phrases, see IV, vi, Lear, I, iv, 306, 'brow of youth'—youthful brow; Mer. of Ven. II, viii, 42, 'mind of love'—loving mind; and 1 Hen. IV: IV, iii, 83, 'brow of justice.'  
11. auspicious . . . dropping] STEEVENS: See the same thought in Wint. Tis., V, ii, 80. It is only the ancient proverbial phrase, 'To cry with one eye and laugh with the other.' MALONE says that dropping may mean depressed or cast down; there could be little hesitation in rejecting this interpretation had not WHITE so far adopted it as to substitute in the text drooping in place of 'dropping,' 'considering,' he says, 'the sense required, the distinction made between "drop" and "drop"' in Shakespeare's day as in our own, and remembering how common an error is the reduplication of the wrong letter in both type-setting and chirography.' FRANCKE refers to the Homeric phrase, δακρυνεΐτε γέλασαν, Iliad, vi, 484, and to Odyssey, xix, 471, and Sophocles, Electra, 1920.  
12. mirth . . . dirge] MORERLY: The studied antitheses repeated over and over in this speech give it a very artificial appearance. The king's politic and parliamentary reasons for marrying the queen remind us of the similar motives which an eminent writer supposes to have influenced Henry VIII in his prompt remarriages.  
13. dole] SANDYS (Sh. Illust. by the Dialect of Cornwall, Sh. Soc. Papers, vol. iii, p. 25 A person in grief is said in Cornwall to be bedole.
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
13 Taken to wife; nor have we herein barr’d
15 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
17 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,
Colleaged with this 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,

16. along. For...thanks] Johns. along: (for...thanks.) Pope, Theob.
Warb. Cap. Jen. Coll. along (for all our thanks) Qy. along, for all our thanks, Ff, Rowe
17. follows,...know] Theob. follows,...knowes Qq. follows,...know Ff, Rowe, Pope.
21. Colleaged] Colleaged Qq; Co-leagueu Qq; Co-leagueu Cap.
21. this] the Ff, Knt, Coll. Dyce.
Sta. White, Kly, Del.

14. to wife:] See Macb. IV, iii, 10.
14. barr’d] Caldecott: Excluded, acted without the concurrence of. Clarendon cites Cymb. I, i, 82, where it means ‘thwarted.’
17. that you know.] Walker (Crit. iii, 261): Sh. can never have written anything so harsh and obscure as this. Point, ‘Now follows that you know: young Fortinbras,’ &c. If, indeed, this correction has not been made already, as I think it has. [Theobald made it (Sh. Rest. p. 5), using a comma instead of a colon.]
20. disjoint] For other instances of the omission, in participles, of ed after d or t, see Walker (Crit. ii, 324) and Abbott, § 342, also ‘deject,’ III, i, 155; ‘bloat, III, iv, 182; ‘hoist,’ III, iv, 207; ‘distract,’ IV, v, 2; also Macb. III, vi, 38.
21. Colleaged] From the definition of the word ‘Colleague, blanditius tentare,’ given by Skinner, Theobald suggested colleague, that is, ‘he being flattered, imposed on, cajoled by the dream of his Advantage;’ he, however, did not adopt it in his text, but Hamner did. See Abbott, p. 16, ‘Colleagued’ for Co-leagued.
21. dream] Warburton: He goes to war so unprepared that he has no allies but a dream, with which he is confederated. Clarendon: With this imaginary superiority for his only ally.
22. pester] See Macb. V, ii, 23. Walker (Crit. ii. 351): To pester a place or person, for to crowd, it throng them; to be in a person’s way.
22. message] See Macb. II, iv, 14; V, i, 22. Walker (Vers. 253): Surely ‘message’ in the singular is not grammar. [Walker would print message; the apostrophe indicating the plural.] See also Abbott, § 471.
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 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

25. [Enter Voltimand and Cornelius. Ff. (Voltimand F F F F F). Om. Qq.
26. meeting;] meeting, Qq. meeting
29. bed-rid] bedred Qq.
31. gait] Cap. gate Qq Ff, Rowe +
Jen.
herein ; in] Theob. herein, in
33. subject] subjects Q’76, Rowe +

29. bed-rid] CLARENDON: Earle gives the following doubtful, but ingenious, 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-riden,” a half-sister of “hag-riden.”’ (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 Wint. Tale, IV, iv, 412. MOBERLY: If Earle’s derivation be rejected, and the connection with ride still assumed, we must suppose that from the idea of a ‘ridden’ or trained horse comes the more general one of ‘accustomed to,’ and thence ‘perpetually on,’ the bed. Compare the way in which ἰδὼς is used in Homer and Herodotus simply to mean ‘a place’ (τά Σαπάκιαν ἰδών).

31. gait] NAES: Here used metaphorically, for proceeding in a business.
33. subject] See I, i, 72. That this is used absolutely, see Lear, IV, vi, 107, ‘see how the subject quakes.’

35. For] THORBALD (Sh. Rest, p. 7) shrewdly conjectured ‘our bearers;’ it accords with the regal style, and the same misprint of ‘for’ for ‘our’ occurs in Ff in I, v, 156. ‘we’ll shift for ground’
Of these dilated articles allow.

Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

\[\text{Cor.} \] In that and all things will we show our duty.  

\[\text{Vol.} \]

\[\text{King.} \] We doubt it nothing; heartily farewell.—

[Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.]


dilated \text{Qd.} Q, Glo. \text{related Q}, Sing. i.


38. dilated] CALDECOTT: The tenor of these articles set out at large. CLARENDON: According to Minshew, ‘dilate’ is only another form of ‘dilate,’ meaning ‘to speak at large.’ Compare ‘defused’ and ‘diffused.’ Bacon uses ‘dilate’ in the sense of ‘carry,’ ‘convey.’

38. allow.] MALONE says Sh. should have written allow, and that many writers fall into this error, when a plural noun immediately precedes the verb. STEEVENS asserts that all such defects in Sh. were merely the errors of illiterate transcribers or printers. CALDECOTT boldly maintains that Sh. was fully justified, in cases like the present, by the usage of the best scholars and writers of the time, and gives instances from Queen Elizabeth’s Seneca, and King James’s Reylis and Cautels of Scottis Poesie, from Puttenham’s Arte of English Poesie, and Daniel’s Apologie for Ryme; and, further, that this usage was proper because the ear abhors the cacophony of an accumulation of ss, more especially in poetry, whose province is to please the ear, not offend it. KNIGHT says that the use of the plural verb with the nominative singular, a plural genitive intervening, can scarcely be detected as an error. ‘The truth is, that it is only within the last half century that the construction of our language has attained that uniform precision which is now required...’ It is remarkable that the very commentators, who were always ready to fix the charge of ignorance of the rudiments of grammar upon Sh., have admitted the following passage in a note to 2 Hen. IV by that elegant modern scholar, T. Warton: ‘Beaumont and Fletcher’s play contains many satirical strokes against Heywood’s comedy, the force of which are entirely lost to those who have not seen that comedy.’’ ELZE ingeniously suggests that ‘allow’ may be in the subjunctive, and TSCHIESHWITZ roundly asserts that it is, ‘because it is preceded by the idea of comparison implied by “than,” which in Old English and Anglo-Saxon usually governed the subjunctive.’ ABBOTT gives this as an instance of confusion of agreement by proximity (§ 412). For many instances (which DVCE with truth says might be multiplied without end) of apparent lack of agreement between the nominative and the verb, see ABBOTT, § 332 et seq.; Macb. II, i, 61, and Ham. III, ii, 194; III, ii, 14.

39. duty] WALKER (Crit. i, 277): Perhaps service; at any rate ‘duty’ is wrong.

41. nothing] TSCHIESHWITZ: Here used adverbially and like something, ill
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._ Dread my lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France,
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,

42. _And_] Om. Q'76.  
45. _late_] loose F, F, F.  
47. _native_] motive Bubier conj.*  
49. _is...to_] to...is Warb. Han. Johns.

similar cases, analogous to the Greek μυθέν, e.g. Μυθέν δαυάρων μοῖραν επείδου Τοίσκε βατονδηκίς Ἀσχυλ. Ἀγαμ. [1384, ed. Klausen]. CLARENDON cites Twelfth Night, II, iii, 104; Cor. I, iii, 111.

42-45. _you...thou_] ABBOTT, § 235: The king, as he rises in his profession of affection to Laer., passes from _you_ to _thou_, subsequently returning to _you_. [See _Macb._ V, iii, 37. _Ed._]

42. COLERIDGE (p. 151): Thus with great art Sh. introduces a most important but still subordinate character, first, Laertes, who is yet thus graciously treated in consequence of the assistance given to the election of the late king's brother, instead of his son, by Polonius.

47. _head_] WARBURTON could not conceive what this line means; but after changing 'head' to _blood_ he pronounced the sentiment just and pertinent, and the expression 'extremely fine. For the heart is the laboratory where,' &c. &c. HAMMER adopted the emendation. HEATH (p. 522): There is not more natural affinity and strict connection between the head and heart, though the former contrives the means by which the purposes of the latter are executed. The king considers himself the heart and Polonius the head.

47. _native_] STEEVENS: The head is not formed to be more useful to the heart, the hand is not more at the service of the mouth, than my power is at your father's service. CALDECOTT: The principal parts of the body are not more natural, instrumental, or necessary to each other than is the throne natural to, and a machine acted upon and under the guidance of, your father. DELIUS: 'Native' expresses a connection that is congenital; 'instrumental,' one that is mechanical. CLARENDON refers to IV, vii, 181, and a similar sense of 'native' in _All's Well_, I, 1, 238.

51. _leave and favour_] CALDECOTT: Your kind permission. Two substantives with a copula being here used for an adjective and substantive; an adjective sense is given to a substantive.
HAMLET

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;
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,—

53. coronation] Staunton: As an instance of the minute attention with which the finished play was elaborated from the early sketch, it may be noteworthy that, in Q, the motive of Laertes's visit is said to be his desire to attend the late king's funeral. But it evidently occurred to Sh. that the acknowledgement of such an object was as little consistent with the character of Laertes as it would be palatable to the living monarch, and, accordingly, in the augmented piece the reason given by Laertes for his coming is more courtier-like.


57. Polonius] Walker (Crit. ii, 32): A critic who should suggest that 'Polo

nus' was a corruption of Apollonius would perhaps 'make much laugh,' as Man Friday says; yet I know not that it is more strange than 'Laertes' and fifty other similar names in our old plays.

63. graces] Caldecott: May the exercise of thy fairest virtues fill up thy time, which is wholly at thy command.

64. cousin] Clarendon: This word was used to denote 'uncle' and 'aunt,' 'nephew' and 'niece,' as well as in the modern sense. Compare Twelfth Night, I, iii, 5, where it means 'niece,' and III, iv, 68, where it means 'uncle.'
Ham. [Aside] A little more than kin, and less than kind. 65


65. [Aside] The propriety of this 'aside,' which was first marked by Warburton, and has been adopted by every succeeding editor, is denied by Moltke for the following reasons: There is no other instance in Shakespeare's plays where the hero is first introduced with such a very brief soliloquy; secondly, no one plays upon words when speaking to one's self; thirdly, Sh. invariably strikes the keynote of his drama at the very outset. In this instance, after having in the first scene made us take sides with Hamlet against the King, and after having still further fostered this feeling of sympathy for the one and dislike for the other by the King's hypocritical speech from the throne, it is of the utmost importance that this opposition between the two should be emphasized, and that Hamlet himself should be shown, not only as perfectly aware of it himself, but as equally determined that the King himself should be aware of it. All these objects fail if the speech be spoken aside.

65. kin...kind] Hamlet: Probably a proverbial expression for a relationship so confused and blended that it was hard to define it. Johnson supposes 'kind' to be here the German word for child. That is, 'I am more than cousin and less than son.' This conjecture Steevens properly disposes of by requiring some proof that 'kind' was ever used by any English writer for child. He adds: A jingle of the same sort is found in Mother Bombie, 1594, — the nearer we are in blood, the further we must be from love, the greater the kindred is, the less the kindness must be,' Again, in Gorboduc, 1561, 'In kind a father, but not kindelynesse.' As 'kind,' however, signifies nature, Hamlet may mean that his relationship had become an unnatural one, as it was partly founded on incest. 'Kind' is used for nature in Jul. Ces., Ant. & Cleo., Rich. II, and Tit. And. So, too, we have 'kindness,' i.e. unnatural, in Ham. II, ii, 609. Malone gives substantially the best paraphrase: 'I am a little more than thy kinsman (for I am thy step-son), and am somewhat less than kind to thee (for I hate thee, as being the person who has incestuously married my mother). Steevens says that it was the King who was 'less than kind;' so also does Caldecott, who somewhat darkly interprets (yet Moberly quotes it approvingly): More than a common relation, having a confusedly accumulated title of relationship, you have less than benevolent, or less than even natural, feeling; by a play upon 'kind' in its double use and double sense — its use as an adjective, signifying benevolent; and its sense as a substantive, signifying nature. We have 'unkind' in this sense in Ven. & Ad. 204. 'Surely,' says Knight, 'Hamlet applies these words to himself. The King has called him, "My cousin Hamlet." He says, in a sup pressed tone, "A little more than kin," — a little more than cousin. The King adds, "and my son." Hamlet says, "less than kind;" — I am little of the same nature with you.' Singer follows Steevens and Caldecott in applying these words to the King. By 'less than kind' Hamlet means degenerate and base. "Going out of kind," (says Baret,) which goeth out of kind, which doth, or worketh dishonour to his kindred. Degener: Fortignant." — Alvereie, K. 59. "Fortignier," says Cotgrave, "to degenerate, or grow out of kind, to differ in conditions from his ancesators." That less than kind and out of kind have the same meaning who can doubt? Collier aptly cites the following: 'I would he were not so near to us in kindred, then sure he would be nearer in kindness.' — Rowley, Search for Money, 1609, sig. B. (reprinted for the Percy Society). Elze calls attention to the fact that probably in no
King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?  
Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

other work is the word 'kind' used so frequently and so unambiguously as in The Tragedie of Gerboduc. WHITE and HUDSON follow Steevens, Caldecott, and Singer in referring these words to the King. The former paraphrases: In marrying my mother, you have made yourself something more than my kinsman, and, at the same time, have shown yourself unworthy of our race, our kind. COLERIDGE: This playing on words may be attributed to many causes or motives; as, either to an exuberant activity of mind, as in the higher comedy of Sh. generally; or to an imitation of it as a mere fashion, as if it were said,— 'Is not this better than groaning?'— or to a contemptuous exultation in minds vulgarized and overset by their success, as in the poetical instance of Milton's Devils in the battle; or it is the language of resentment, as is familiar to every one who has witnessed the quarrels of the lower orders, where is invariably a profusion of punning invective, whence, perhaps, nicknames have in a considerable degree sprung up: or it is the language of suppressed passion, and especially of a hardly-smothered personal dislike. The first and last of these combine in Hamlet's case; and I have little doubt that FARMER is right in supposing the equivocation carried on in the expression, 'too much i' the sun,' or son.

67. i' the sun] JOHNSON: A probable allusion to the proverb: 'Out of heaven's blessing into the warm sun.' FARMER suggested that a quibble was here intended between 'sun' and son. CALDECOTT: Adopting this suggestion of Farmer's, the passage must mean, 'I have too much about me of the character of expectancy, at the same time that I am torn prematurely from my sorrows, and thrown into the broad glare of the sun and day; have too much of the son and successor and public standing without possession of my rights, and without a due interval to assuage my grief.' But a closer observer, (continues Caldecott), here says: 'One part of Farmer's suggestion is right, Hamlet means that he had not possession of his rights; but there was no quibble; the allusion is to the proverb referred to by Johnson, which means, 'to be out of house and home,' or, at least, to be in a worse temporal condition than a man was, or should be. Thus in Lear, II, ii, 168, and '— they were brought from the good to the bad, and from Goddes blessingy (as the proverb is) in to a warme some.'—Preface to Grindal's Profitable Doctrine, 1555. And again, 'By such art he thought to have removed him, as we say, out of God's blessing into the warm sun.'—Raleigh's Hist. of the World, 1677. His being deprived of his right, i.e. his succession to the kingdom, Hamlet might therefore call 'being too much i' the sun.' KNIGHT: There is no quibble. His meaning is explained by the old proverb. STAUNTON: Hamlet may mean, 'I am too much in the way; a mote in the royal eye;' but his reply is purposely enigmatical. DYCÉ (Gloss. s.v. heaven's benediction, &c.): The proverbial expression alluded to by Johnson is found in various authors, from Heywood down to Swift; the former has, 'In your running from him to me, yee runne Out of God's blessing into the warme sunne.'—Dialogue on Proverbs, Workes, sig. G 2 ver. 1598; and the latter: 'Lord Sparkish. They say, marriages are made in heaven; but I doubt, when she was married, she had no friend there. Neverout. Well, she's got out of God's blessing into the warm sun.'—Petite Conversation, Dialogue 1, Works, vol. ix, p. 423. Ray gives as its equivalent, Ab equis ad asinos.
Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,

68. nighted] nightly Ff, Rowe, Knth, White, Tsch. nightlike Coll. (MS).

—Proverbs, p. 192, ed. 1768. Hudson inclines to Farmer’s suggestion, and adds: ‘Perhaps there is the further meaning implied, that he finds too much sunshine of jollity in the Court, considering what has lately happened.’ In Much Ado, II, i, 331, Beatrice says of herself, ‘I am sun-burned,’ and this phrase Hunter (i. 250) ingeniously explains, and gives it a signification akin to the present passage. ‘“To be in the sun,” “to be in the warm sun,” “to be sun-burned,”’ were phrases,’ says Hunter, ’not uncommon in the time of Sh., and for a century later, to express the state of being without family connections, destitute of the comforts of domestic life. There must have been some reason for this association of discomfort with what is generally considered comfort, at least among northern nations, and this reason is found in the old English version of the One Hundred and Twenty-first Psalm, in which occurs the passage, “So that the sun shall not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night;” and as this psalm, in the earlier Rituals of the Church, was used in the Churching of Women, it followed that the matron who was surrounded by her husband and children was one who had received the benediction that the sun should not burn her, while the unmarried woman, who had received no such benediction, came to be spoken of by those who allowed themselves to use such jocular expressions as one “still left exposed to the burning of the sun,” or, as Beatrice says, “sun-burned.” When the translation of the Scriptures was revised, in the reign of James I, the word “smite” was substituted in this verse for “burn,” probably on account of these ludicrous associations; and for the same reason, on the last revision of the Liturgy, this psalm was left out of the service altogether. In the first and original use of this phrase, then, it denoted the state of being unmarried; thus Beatrice uses it. It then expanded so as to include the state of those who were without family connections of any kind; thus Hamlet uses it. It expanded still wider and included the state of those who have no home, and thus it is used in Lear, II, ii, 168. And it seems to have expanded wider still, and to have been sometimes used for any species of destitution, or distress, or evil. Hamlet therefore means, ‘I have lost father and mother; you heap upon me the terms ‘cousin’ and ‘son,’ but I find myself forlorn, with none of the comforts remaining which arise out of the charities of kindred.’’ Ingenious as this explanation of Hunter’s is, it applies with more force to the phrase used by Beatrice than to that used by Hamlet; we have no examples given us that ‘to be in the sun’ was ever thus understood, and for it we must take Hunter’s unsupported assertion. Nicholson (N. & Qu. 25 May, 1867) thus paraphrases: Ham. turns off the King’s query with an apparently courtly compliment,—Nay, my lord, I am too much in the sunshine of your favour, where I show but as a shadow (too much am I in that sunshine which I detest); deposited by you as heir and successor to the throne on which by God’s providence I was placed, I am now gone to the world; instead of being in clouds and rain, amid sorrow and tears for my dead father and king, I find myself in the midst of marriage festivities and caroussings. Moberly thinks the proverb may have meant that a person loses all special advantages, and is reduced to light and sunshine, which are the common inheritance of all.

68. nighted] For the general rule that participles formed from an adjective mean ‘made of (the adjective),’ and derived from a noun, mean ‘endowed with, or like (the noun),’ see Abbott, § 294.
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
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,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,

70. vailed] **veiled** F,F,F, veiled F,
F, Rowe+, Jen.
72. common] Theob. common, F,
Rowe, Pope, Han. common,— Dyce,
White, Sta. common Qq.
74. it be.] Q5, it be Q,F,F,FQ5 Q,FQ5, it be;
Ff, Rowe, Pope.
77. my inky] this mourning Q'76.

70. vailed] **JOHNSON**: With cast-down eyes. **STEEVENS**: See Mer. of Ven. I, i, 28.
72. common] **SEYMOUR**: Point thus: ‘Thou know'st—‘tis common—all that live,’ i.e. ‘Thou knowest this truth,—nay, it is known to all men—it is a common proof.’
74. common] **CALDECOTT**: Similar examples of frailty, connected with such an event, are the things or occurrences that, he would have it inferred, were common. **CLARENDON**: We have ‘common’ and ‘particular’ opposed to each other in the very difficult, and probably corrupt, passage of 2 Hen. IV: IV, i, 94; and ‘particular’ opposed to ‘general’ in Tro. & Cress. I, iii, 340. **COLE RIDGE**: Here observe Hamlet's delicacy to his mother, and how the suppression prepares him for the overflow in the next speech, in which his character is more developed by bringing forward his aversion to externals, and which betrays his habit of brooding over the world within him, coupled with a prodigality of beautiful words, which are the half-embodiments of thought, and are more than thought, and have an outness, a reality sui generis, and yet contain their correspondence and shadowy affinity to the images and movements within. Note also Hamlet's silence to the long speech of the King which follows, and his respectful, but general, answer to his mother.
81. haviour] For a list of dropped prefixes, see Abbott, § 460.
82. modes] **KNIGHT**: Mood [of the QqFF] perhaps here signifies something
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
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow; but to persevere

 remarked] denote Q, Q3, Q4. dewote
  indeed] may Pope.
  within] Within F, F, F.
  passeth] passes Q, Q, Cap. Cam.
  Two lines, Ff.
  sweet and] Om. Seymour.

beyond the mere manner of grief,—the manner as exhibited in the outward sadness.
The forms are the ceremonials of grief,—the moods its prevailing sullenness; the
shows its fits of passion. Hunter (ii, 217): Moods and 'modes' form a various
reading well worthy of attention. In Q, in support of moods, the King just before
said to Ham.: 'What mean these sad and melancholy moods?' Dyce: Nothing
can be plainer than that Ham., throughout this speech, is dwelling entirely on the
outward and visible signs of sadness.

82. shows] Dyce (ed. 2): I once felt inclined to adopt shapes, since in the
third line after this we have 'passeth show'; but 'forms' and 'shapes' would be
tautological. [Moreover, the 'show' in line 85 is an intentional and emphatic
repetition of the 'shows' in this line. Ed.]

85. passeth] Corson: The older form ['passeth'] not only suits the tone of
the passage better, but the two s's and the sh in 'passes show' coming together are
very cacophonous. Seymour (ii, 144): Ham. in this scene is impatient, fretful
and sarcastic; every reply is in contradiction of what is said to him. It is not till
he comes to this line that he is actuated by tender sentiment.

87. commendable] Clarendon: The accent is on the first syllable, as in Cor.
IV, vii, 51. On the second in Mer. of Ven. I, i, 111. To avoid the alexandrine,
Abbott, § 490, accents commendable, and scans 'Tis sweet and | commend | able
in | your na | ture, Hamlet.'

87. Hamlet] Tschirschwitz: The names of persons addressed are very
frequently not counted in the number of feet in a verse.

90. lost, lost] Steevens: Your father lost a father, i. e. your grandfather, which
lost grandfather also lost his father. Abbott, § 246: An ellipsis of 'that' (relative)
before the participle, 'That father (who was) lost,' &c.

92. obsequious] Johnson: Referring to obsequies, or funeral ceremonies.
Steevens: See Tit. And. V, iii, 152. Collier (ed. 2): In Mer. Wives, IV, ii, 2,
it means observant; in Meas. for Meas. II, iv, 28, it means dutiful.

92. persever] Gifford (Dyce's Rewarke, &c., p. 204): So this word was
In obstinate condolement 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
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 unpervailing 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
Than that which dearest father bears his son
Do I impart toward you. For your intent

110. immediate] Steevens having said that the crown of Denmark was
elective, Blackstone (in a note which is not given among the other notes by
him in vol. xii of the Sh. Soc.) agrees with him, adding: Though it must be
customary, in elections, to pay some attention to the royal blood, which by degrees
produced hereditary succession. Why, then, do the rest of the commentators so
often treat Claudius as an usurper, who had deprived young Hamlet of his right
by heirship to his father's crown? Hamlet calls him drunkard, murderer, and
villain; one who had carried the election by low and mean practices; had 'Popp'd
in between the election and my hopes;' had 'From a shelf the precious diadem
stole, And put it in his pocket;' but never hints at his being an usurper. His dis-
content arose from his uncle's being preferred before him, not from any legal right
which he pretended to set up to the crown. Some regard was probably had to the
recommendation of the preceding prince in electing the successor. And therefore
young Hamlet had 'the voice of the king himself for his succession in Denmark,' and
he at his own death prophesies that 'the election would light on Fortinbras,
who had his dying voice,' conceiving that by the death of his uncle he himself had
been king for an instant, and had therefore a right to recommend. When, in the
fourth Act, the rabble wished to choose Laertes king, I understand that antiquity
was forgot, and custom violated, by electing a new king in the lifetime of the old
one, and perhaps also by the calling in a stranger to the royal blood. Elze: It is
not exactly consistent with this elective character that the queen should be called
'the imperial jointress of this warlike state.' Marshall (p. 16): Perhaps the com-
parative youth of Ham., and the fact that the kingdom was threatened by the Nor-
wegians, were the reasons which induced the royal councillors to place the sceptre
in the hands of Claudius.

Eminence and distinction.

110-112. with . . . impart] Theobald: The king had declared Hamlet his im-
mediate successor, and with that declaration he imparts as noble a love, &c. Read,
therefore, 'with't no less nobility,' &c. Hanmer adopted this suggestion. Johnson
says 'impart' is impart myself, communicate whatever I can bestow; and Heath
and Capell both approve of this interpretation. Mason (p. 374): 'To impart
toward' a person is not English. Moreover 'impart' is never neuter. Read, there-
fore, 'and still no less nobility of love' instead of 'with no less,' &c.; or else read
'Do I my part toward you' instead of 'do I impart.' Delius suggests that Sh.
probably regarded 'no less nobility of love' as the object of 'impart,' and forgot,
owing to the intermediate clause, that he had written 'with no less.' Badham (Cam-
bridge Essays, 1856, p. 272) believes all difficulties removed by a slight transposition,
thus: 'And with nobility no less of love,' &c. The nobility that he grants him is
that of heir-presumptive. Dyce pronounces this reading of Badham's 'very improper.'
What would he have said had he seen Tschischwitz's reading, which substitutes ren
In going back to school in Wittenberg, 115
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.

_King._ Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply;
Be as ourselves 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,

113. _in Wittenberg] to Wittenberg
Q Q₂, Rowe +, Jen.
114. retrograde] retrogard Q₂Q₃Q₄,
retrograd Q₄, retrogarde F₂F₃.
115. bend] beg Anon. MS.*
118. mother] Brother F₄.

lost] loose Q₄.

for 'with,' that is, _I wis_ (as in _Mer. of Ven._ II, ix, 68, for the old 'y-wiss'),
meaning assuredly? _Keightley_ would read, 'Mine do I impart toward you,' &c.

113. _Wittenberg_] _Malone:_ The university of Wittenberg, as we learn from
Lewkenor's _Discourse on Universitates, 1600,_ was founded in 1502 by Duke Frederick,
the son of Ernestus Elector: 'which since in this latter age is grown famous
by reason of the controversies and disputations there handled by Martin Luther
and his adherents.' _Ritson:_ Sh. may have learned of this university from _The Life of
Jacke Wilton, 1504,_ or _The Hystory of Doctor Faustus, of whom the second report_
is said to be 'written by an English gentleman, _student_ at Wittenberg, an university
of Germany in Saxony.' _Boswell:_ Or from Marlowe's _Doctor Faustus, or a multi-
titude of other publications of that period. _Elze:_ Sh. had to send the _Dane Hamlet_
to some _northern_ university, and probably none other was so well known to him or
to his audience as Wittenberg.

114. retrograde] _Tschischwitz:_ A word borrowed from astrology. When the
planets were retrograde, that is, when they were going away from the earth's orbit,
they were under certain circumstances hostile to human plans.

119. _Abbott,_ § 456, scans this line either by reading, 'I pray thee stay' as one
foot: 'I' being redundant as far as sound goes, and 'pray thee' contracted to
_prithie_; or 'Wittenberg' may receive but one accent, as coming at the end of a
line; as 'Horatio,' in I, i, 43, or 'Ophelia,' V, i, 230. See § 469.

120. _shall_] See I, iv, 35; _Macb._ III, iv, 57; _Abbott,_ § 315.

124. to] _Steevens:_ Near to, close to, next to, my heart. _Delius:_ 'To' is con-
ected, by attraction, with 'smiling.'

125. _drinks_] _Johnson:_ The king's intemperance is very strongly impressed;
everything that happens to him gives him occasion to drink.
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.

[Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet.

Hamlet. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,

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126. **tell** tell it Han.  
127. **rouse** rowse Q. Rowe, F., F. 
128. **speaking** speaking Kny. 

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126. tell] *tell* it Han.  
127. rouse] *rowse* Q. Rowe, F. 
128. speaking] *speaking* Kny. 

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[Flourish.] Om. F.  
Exeunt...] *Exeunt.* Manet

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127. rouse] WEDGWOOD: The radical sense of the word is shown in Platt Deutsch *raus*, *ruse*, noise, racket, disturbance; German *rauschen*, to rustle, roar, to do things with noise and bustle. *Rausch* is a flare-up, a sudden blaze; the same word is metaphorically applied to excitation from drink. Platt Deutsch *runk*, Old Norse *russ*, Dutch *roes*, tipsiness. When transferred to the cognate sense of a full glass or bumper, English *rouse* was not unnaturally supposed to be contracted from *carouse* (German *garau*), with which it has a merely accidental resemblance— *Rouse*, noise, incompete mirth. [See I, iv, 8.]

127. bruit] *See* Mach. V, vii, 22. STAUNTON: This plainly imports not simply a deep draught, but the accompaniment of some outcry, similar, perhaps, to our 'hip, hip, hurrah!'

129. too too] NARES pointed out the intensive effect of this reduplication, giving instances from Holinshed and Spenser, and adding that it is common. HALLIWELL (Sh. Soc. Papers, 1844, i, 39) showed that 'too-too' is a provincial word recognized by Ray, and explained by him as meaning 'very well or good,' and that Watson a few years afterwards says it is 'often used to denote exceeding.' In proof 'that too-too, as used by our early writers, is one word, denoting 'exceedingly,' and that it ought to be so printed,' Halliwell gives from the poets twelve instances, from Skelton down to Hudibras, and refers to over thirty other passages where the phrase is found, extending from Promes and Cassandra to Young's Night Thoughts. [After all, Halliwell did not so print it in his edition.] HUNeker doubts if this reduplication be emphatic. It appears to him to have been in sense neither more nor less than *too*, and he cites many instances from prose writers. Palsgrave, he adds, has beside *to-much, to-little, &c., to much, to great, to little, to small, answering to* *par trop trop peu, par trop trop grant, par trop trop petit.* The pronunciation was *too-too*, as appears by this line of Constable's: 'But I did too-too inestimable way her.' That the phrase was used with intensifying iteration, White thinks is clear from instances like the present, and from the similar iteration of other adverbs and adjectives in the literature of Shakespeare's day. For instance: 'Thy wit dost use still still more harms to finde,'—Sidney's *Arcadia*, ii, p. 225, ed. 1603; 'While he did live far far was all disorder,—Ib. v, p. 430; '——your lesson is Far far too long to leaner it without bocke,'—Astrophel and Stella, St. 56, Ib. p. 537; 'Stop you

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* *
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His 'canon' 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!

132. canon] Q'o3. cannon Qq Fl.
Rwe, Pope, Jen.

Qq. o God! O God! Qo, Qo, O God, God,

self-slaughter] feale slaughtur

Mob. Om. Q'76.

my mouth with still still kissing me,'—Ib. St. 81, Ib. p. 547; 'Even to thy pure
and most most loving breast,'—Sh. Son. 110. In any case the compound epithet
must have originated in the frequent iterative use of the word. Staunton thinks
that the present instance must be regarded as an exception to Halliwell’s rule. Here
the repetition of too is not only strikingly beautiful, rhetorically, but it admirably
expresses that morbid condition of the mind which makes the unhappy prince deem
all the uses of the world but 'weary, stale, flat and unprofitable.' Halliwell notes
that his copy of P reads 'too too,' with the hyphen.

129-159. Coleridge: This tedium vitae is a common oppression on minds cast
in the Hamlet mould, and is caused by disproportionate mental exertion, which
necessitates exhaustion of bodily feeling. Where there is a just coincidence of
external and internal action, pleasure is always the result; but where the former is
deficient, and the mind’s appetency of the ideal is unchecked, realities will seem
cold and unmov ing. In such cases passion combines itself with the indefinite alone.
In this mood of his mind the relation of the appearance of his father’s spirit in
arms is made all at once to Hamlet: it is—Horatio’s speech, in particular—a perfect
model of the true style of dramatic narrative; the purest poetry, and yet in the
most natural language, equally remote from the inkhorn and the plough.

129. solid flesh] Morely: The base affinities of our nature are ever present
to Hamlet’s mind. Here he thinks of the body as hiding from us the freshness,
life, and nobleness of God's creation. If it were to pass away, silently and sponta-
neously, like the mist on a mountain-side, or if, curtain-like, we might tear it down
by an act of violence, it may be that we should see quite another prospect; at any
rate, the vile things now before us would be gone for ever.

130. resolve] Steevens: This means the same as dissolve. Nares cites: 'I
could be content to resolve myself into tears, to rid thee of trouble.'—Lyly’s
Euphues, p. 38. Caldecott: 'To thaw or resolve that which is frozen, regelo.'
Baret’s Alctcarie.

132. canon] Theobald first pointed out that this did not refer to a piece of
artillery, but to a divine decree. Hunter (ii, 218): This is an unhappy word to use
here. I fear the truth is that the noise of the cannon in the King’s speech was still
ringing in the Poet’s ears. Grant White (The Galaxy, Oct. 1869): Here and in
Cym. III, iv, 77-80, there is a particular assertion of the existence of a specific
prohibition of suicide by Divine law. Sh. may have known the Bible, as he knew all
other things in his day knowable, so much better than I do that I may not without
presumption question what he says with regard to it. But I have not been able
to discover any such specific prohibition. Wordsworth (Shakespeare’s Knowledge and
Use of the Bible, p. 149): Unless it be the Sixth Commandment, the ‘canon’ must
be one of natural religion.

132. slaughter] Corson: The ending -er of ‘slaughter’ should be read as an
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!

Pie on't! O 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,

---

internal extra syllable. And every reader would feel the want of the second 'O,' on
which to dwell before uttering 'God' with a strong aspiration.

135. O fie] Elze: In F, the emphatic iteration of exclamations is very frequent,
and is probably due to the pathos of the actors. Corson: 'Ah,' of the Q1, does not
express the feeling of the speaker so well as the 'Oh' of the F.

135. garden] Corson (p. 10): There should be no comma after 'garden,' as the
relative clause is not used simply as an additional characterization of an unweeded
garden, but as an inseparable part of the whole characterization—an important distinc-
tion that should be made in pointing.

137. merely] Completely. See Macb. IV, iii, 152. Hudson: Observe how
Hamlet's brooding melancholy leads him to take a morbid pleasure in making things
worse than they are.

140. Hyperion] Farmer (Essay, &c., p. 37, note, ed. ii) says that this name is
used by Spenser with the same error in quantity. Callecott adds, that not only did
our old poets totally disregard the quantity in this instance, but the moderns also have
made it altogether subservient to their convenience; and quotes Mitford as saying
that, 'Spenser has Iole, Pylades, Caphæus, Rœtæan.' Gascoigne, in his Ultimatum
Vale: 'Kind Erato and wanton Thalia.' Gray, in his Progress of Poetry: 'Hyperion's
march and glittering shafts of War.' Clarendon: Sh. always accents the antepe-
nuit of the name of this god, whom he identifies with the sun, as in Homer's Odyssey,
i, 8. Abbott, § 501: A trimeter couplet, with an extra syllable [satyr] on the first
trimeter. It might almost be regarded as separate lines of three accents.

140. to a satyr] Mätzner (ii, 289): The comparison of one object with another
becomes the expression of the relation thereto in a qualitative or quantitative regard.
The object introduced by to forms the measure for the comparison. Clarendon:
So in Cymb. III, iii, 26, and Ham. I, v, 52; III, i, 52.

140. satyr] Warburton (followed by White) thinks that Pan is here meant,
the brother of Hyperion, or Apollo. Elze says he does not know what authority
Warburton has for this relationship, which, moreover, cannot be referred to here
because of the indefinite article, 'a satyr.' [Elze forgets that Pan, as well as Apollo,
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.—Fraility, thy name is woman!—
A little month! or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow’d my poor father’s body,


142. Heaven...why?] Om. Q'76.

143. remember?] Rowe. remember, Qq. remember; Ff. would] should Qq. used to Q'76.

144. increase] encrease F,F,F,S. Cap.

145. and] Om. Pope.+

was said to be the son of Jupiter; but his objection on the score of the indefinite article is sound. Ed.]

141. beteem] Steevens: This word occurs in Golding’s Ovid, 1587, and from the corresponding Latin word (dignatur, bk. x, line 157) must necessarily mean, to vouchsafe, deign, permit, or suffer; ‘Yet could he not beteeme The shape of anie other bird then egle for to seeme?’ NARES: Spenser uses it in the same sense: ‘So would I (said th’ enchanter), glad and faine Beteeme to you this sword.’—Faerie Queen, II, viii, 19. Also in Mid. N. D. I, i, 131. Collier (ed. i): In this passage, from Mid. N. D., the word is used in a different sense, being the provincial word teen, which is still used for pour out in the north of England. Moberly: Here it is used causatively: ‘He would not allow it to be beseeing.’

147. or ere] Mätzner (iii, 446): A strengthening of the notion of time is given by ever (e'er, ere), (comp. Germ. je), which in this case usually preserves the old form, or. Thus, King John, IV, iii, 20, and V, vi, 44. Clarendon: See Temp. I, i, ii, and line 183 of this scene. Also Macb. IV, iii, 173, or Abbott, § 131.

147. shoes] Ingleby [N. & Qu. 2 Feb. 1856] finds an inappropriateness and an incongruity in Hamlet’s making the antiquity, or wear and tear, of his mother’s shoes the measure of her grief, and accordingly suggests shoes for ‘shoes.’ Compare line 82, where ‘shoes of grief’ is defined by Hunter to be ‘mourning apparel,’ nay, by Hamlet himself, to be ‘the trappings and the suits of woe.’ What, then, are the shoes with which Gertrude followed her husband’s body to the grave but ‘customary suits of solemn black?’ What were her Niobe’s tears but ‘th’ fruitful river in the eye?’ What were these but the ‘forms and shoes of grief?’ Let the text be thus paraphrased, ‘Before my mother’s ‘mourning-weeds’ (2 Hen. VI) were worn out, she doffed them for the wedding-gear. Oh! wicked speed,’ &c.
Like Niobe, all tears;—why she, even she,—
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
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,

149. tear—why] Steev. tears,

Why Rowe +.

150. O God] O Heaven Ff, Rowe +,
month, Qq, Qq, Jen. Ktly. month!
Rowe +. month, Qq, month; The rest.

151. with] with mine Ff, Rowe +,

150. discourse of reason] Johnson (Dict.): Discourse. The act of the understanding, by which it passes from premises to consequences. Gifford (note on Massinger’s Unnatural Combat, Works, vol. i, p. 148, ed. 1813): It is very difficult to determine the precise meaning which our ancestors gave to discourse, or to distinguish the line which separated it from reason. Perhaps it indicated a more rapid deduction of consequences from premises than was supposed to be effected by reason;—but I speak with hesitation. . . . Whatever be the sense, it frequently appears in our old writers, by whom it is usually coupled with reason or judgement, which last would seem to be the more proper word. . . . ’Discourse of reason’ is so poor and perplexed a phrase, that [in Ham. i, ii, 150] I should dismiss it at once for what I believe to be the genuine reading: ‘discourse and reason.’ Boswell: The text may be supported by numerous examples. The very same phrase is used in Tro. & Cress. ii, 116. In the preface to Davys’s Reports: ‘And this idea I have conceived of him, not out of mine own imagination, or weak discourse of reason;’ and Saville’s Tacitus’s Agricola, 1591, p. 242: ‘Agricola, though brought up in the field, upon a naturall wit, and discourse of reason,’ cap. ix. Hamlet himself explains the phrase in IV, iv, 36. Caldecott adds, Oth. IV, ii, 153, ‘discourse of thought.’ Singer (ed. 2): ‘Discourse of reason’ means ratiocination. Brutes have not this reasoning faculty, though they have what is instinct and memory. Hamlet opposes the discursive power of the intellect of men to the instinct of brutes. Dyce (Glos.) cites: ‘There was no discourse of reason strong enough to diuert him from thinking that he was betrayed.’—A Tragi-comicall History of our Times, &c., p. 34, 1627.


154. unrighteous] Badham (p. 282): The Queen’s tears were not unrighteous, but every way due; and though it may be urged that they were hypocritical, we learn nothing of the kind from Sh.; nor is it conceivable that where there was so much that deserved to be called by the worst names, Hamlet should be made to select such a trifle as the mere feigning of sorrow as something most unrighteous. I have little doubt that Sh. wrote, ‘moist and righteous tears.’

155. flushing] Hudson: This refers to the redness of the eyes, caused by what Sh. elsewhere calls ‘eye-offending brine.’ Clarendon: To flush is still used transitively, meaning, to fill with water.
She married. Oh, 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.

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

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I’ll change that name with you;

157. incestuous] incestious Qq.
158. cannot] cannot Ff.
159. break my] QqFf. break, nys Ff. et cet.

Marcellus, and Bernardo.] ..... Barnardo Q’76. Barnard, and Marcel-

lus. Ff.

160. Scene IV. Pope+, Jen.

157. dexterity] Warburton’s idea that this means simply ‘quickness’ also occurred to Walker, who (Crit. ii, 242) says: ‘I cannot help suspecting that Sh. wrote celerity.’ ‘Surely not,’ says Dyce (ed. 2). Clarendon pronounces in favour of celerity, not adroitness, as in 1 Hen. IV: II, iv, 286. Tschischwitz: To say that ‘dexterity’ means celerity, involves an intolerable pleonasm when connected with ‘wicked speed.’ Sh. had clearly in mind the Italian destrezza, which contains the idea of deceit, and consequently of a haste or of an artifice which is morally wrong.
158. cannot] Clarendon: Observe the double negative so frequent in older English writers. The latest instance of it we have noticed in any careful writer is in Congreve’s Love for Love, iv, 4. [See III, ii, 190.]
159. heart] Corson: ‘Break’ is a subjunctive, not an imperative, and ‘heart’ is a subject, not a vocative.
159. tongue] Tschischwitz: Observe well that Hamlet is forced by his piety to maintain this silence in presence of the courtiers under all circumstances, even after the appearance of the Ghost. It is not until his heart really breaks that he breaks this silence also, and gives Horatio permission to proclaim what has happened.
160. well] Collier (ed. 2): The (MS) omits ‘well.’ It spoils the line, and is not mere surplusage, for how was Hamlet thus early to know whether Horatio were ‘well’ or not. [Collier omits it in his text.]
161. forget myself] Seymour (ii, 147): This may mean: ‘Or I have lost the knowledge even of myself.’
163. change that name] Johnson: I’ll be your servant, you shall be my friend. Caldecott: That is, reciprocally use: I’ll put myself on an exact level with you. Halliwell: Hamlet means that he will change the name Horatio has given himself, that of pr or servant, to good friend; or perhaps as Johnson explains it.
And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?—
Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord,—

Ham. I am very glad to see you.—[To Ber.] 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,

Nor shall you do mine 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?

QqFf. Marcellus!—Rowe,+ Jen.
166. lord,—] Rowe. lord. QqFf.
lord—lord! Kty. lord? Cam.
167. you. Good even, sir.] El. you,
(good even for) Q,Q,F, you (good even for) Q,
you: good even for. Ff (even, F4).

[To Ber.] White, Cam. Huds.
Om. the rest.

164. make] JOHNSON: A familiar phrase for, What are you doing? STEEVENS: See As You Like It, I, i, 31. NARES: Very frequently used by Sh. See Ham. II, ii, 246. Tschischwitz: It still corresponds with 'machen,' in our phrase of courteous greeting: 'Was machen Sie?' Keightley (Expositor, p. 286): I suspect that here, and in a following line, and in II, ii, 266, we should read 'makes' with an ellipsis of be. The answers seem to indicate it.

167. even] JOHNSON: There is no need of Hamner's change. Between the first and eighth scene of this act a day must pass; and how much of it is over there is nothing to determine. The King has held a council. It may as well be evening. STEEVENS: The change might be justified by I, i, 174. Tyrwhitt: Good even or den was the usual salutation from noon, the moment that good morrow became improper; from the course of the incidents, precedent and subsequent, the day may here be well supposed to be turned of noon. [See Rom. &c Jul. II, iv, 98.] White (Sh. Scholar, p. 409): This is addressed to Bernardo, whom Hamlet does not recognize.

170. hear] Dyce: The next line proves the reading of FF to be erroneous. Hunter (ii, 219): The reading of the FF is better, even if it had not the effect of obviating the disagreeable recurrence of the sounds 'hear' and 'ear.' Corson also thinks the FF more euphonious.

171. that] For instances of 'that' used for such, see Abbott, § 277; and I, v, 48. 172. truster] For instances of suffixes appended to nouns for the purpose of signifying the agents, see Abbott, § 443; also I, v, 163; III, iv, 206.
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.

_Ham._ Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked-meats Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables. Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

175. _to drink deep_] for to drinke Qq. here to drink Q76.

177. _I pray thee_] I pre thee QoQo Cam. I prythe Fq Pray thee Fq, Rowe. I pry'th'ee Pope+.

178. _see_] Om. Qq.

179. _follow'd_] followed QqFq, Cald.

180. _baked-meats_] funerall-bak'd-meats Ktly.

181. _marriage tables_] marriage tables Ktly.

—_pray thee_ Corson: This reading of Fq suits the required deliberateness of the expression better. There is an earnest entreaty meant.

—_baked-meats_ Collins: It was anciently the general custom to give a cold entertainment to mourners at a funeral. In distant counties this practice is continued among the yeomanry. _See The Tragiique Historie of the Faire Valeria of London, 1598_: 'His corpes was with funerall Pompe conveyed to the church, and there solemnly entered, nothing omitted which necessitie or custom could claim; a sermon, a banquet, and like observations.' Again, in the old romance of _Syr L'egore_, no date: 'A great feast would he holde Upon his quenes mornynge day, That was buryed in an abbay.' _Malone_: See, also, Hayward's _Life and Raigne of King Henrie the Fourth, 1599_, p. 135: 'Then hee [King Richard II] was obscurely interred,—without the charge of a dinner for celebrating the funeral.' _Douce_: This practice was certainly borrowed from the _cena ferialis_ of the Romans, alluded to in Juvenal's _5th Satire_ and in the Laws of the Twelve Tables. It consisted of the offering of a small plate of milk, honey, wine, flowers, &c. to the ghost of the deceased. In the North this feast is called an _arval or arval-iapser_; and the loaves that are sometimes distributed among the poor, _arval-bread._ _John Addis, Jun. (N. & Qu. 9 Feb. '67)_ cites an apposite passage from Massinger: 'The same rosemary that serves for the funeral will serve for the wedding.'—_Old Law_, IV, i.

—_Tschienswitz_: This is one word. _See Chaucer (Cant. Tales, v. 344):_ 'Without bake mete never was his house.' The combination of a funeral and a marriage feast contained nothing repugnant to the ancient Northern mind. At the end of _cap. 14 of Frithiоф's Saga_, it is related that Frithiоф prepared a sumptuous feast, to which came all his followers, and thereupon was held the funeral feast of Hring the King, and likewise the marriage feast of Frithiоф and Ingiborg. Here in Hamlet what was so abhorrent was that the widow should have married so quickly.

—_Clarkendon_: We have 'bakemeats' in _Gen. xi, 17._

—_met_ Tschischwitz: Note how averse Hamlet afterwards is to killing his 'dearest foe,' his uncle, lest he should send him to heaven.

—_dearest_ The notes of Horne Tooke, Singer, Caldecott, Dyce, and Craik on this word are given in full in _Rom. & Jul._ V, iii, 32. Tooke derived its
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.

\[183. \text{Or ever I had} \] \text{Ere I had ever}

Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Dyce i, White.

Ere ever I had Coll. Sing. ii, El. Sta.

Ktly. \text{E're I had Q'76.}

184, 185. \text{My...where] One line,}


184. \text{father,—] father!— Glo. +.}

185. \text{O where] Where Qq, Cap. Jen}

Mal. Steev. Cald. Sing. i.

186, 187. \text{he...He] a...A Qq.}

187. \text{for] from Theo. i.}

in all,] in all: Ff. in all...

Ktly.

188. \text{I shall] I should F, F, F, Rowe.}

two opposite meanings from the single Anglo-Saxon word \text{derian}, to hurt, thence deriving our word \text{dear} = not cheap (when the season \text{dereth} the crops, causing a \text{dearth}); hence what is not cheap is precious, valued; thence comes the secondary meaning of \text{dear} = beloved. In this passage 'dearest' has reverted to its original meaning of \text{hurtful, mischievous}. This plausible derivation, or rather explanation, of the two distinct and contrary meanings of the word has been followed by Richardson in his Dictionary, and by the edd. above named, except Craik, who detected Tooke's error in tracing the word, in both its meanings, to one root, by showing that the word \text{dear} = high-priced, precious, beloved, is the Anglo-Saxon \text{deóre, dúre, dyre}, from the verb \text{deóran or dyran}, to hold dear, to love. Craik thus explains the different senses which the word assumes: the notion properly involved in it of \text{love} having first become generalized into that of a strong affection of any kind, thence passes on into that of such an emotion the very reverse of love, or as Clarendon concisely states it: 'dear' is used of whatever touches us nearly either in love or hate, joy or sorrow. \text{Mätzner} (i, 196) gives a list of two hundred and thirty-five words which had originally different forms (and of course different meanings), but which now are found in only one form; among them (i, 206) is \text{dear}, with the different original forms pointed out by Craik. See 'dear soul,' III ii, 58.

183. \text{Or ever] Corson (p. 10) prefers the text of Ff as better suiting the required deliberateness of the expression. See line 147.}

185. \text{where] For a list of monosyllables frequently pronounced as dissyllables, see Walker, Vers. i36, and Abbott, 4.480.}

185. \text{mind's eye] Jennens: Thus, 'Εμβλέψωμεν τοῖς δύνασι τῆς ψυχῆς.—1 Epistle of St. Clement, cap. 19. Steevens: See R. of L. 1426. Also Chaucer, Man of Laws: Tale [line 454]: 'But if it were with eyen of his mynde.' Malone: See Sonn. 113, 1.}

185. \text{I shall] Steevens: According to Holt, Sir Thomas Samwell proposes: 'Eye shall' as more in the true spirit of Sh. Douce (ii, 204) pronounced the emendation elegant, and adduced 1 Corinth. ii, 9, yet confessed that the ear would fail to perceive the force of it.}
Hamlet

50

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

Ham. Saw? who?

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,

190. Saw? who?] Saw, who? Q3,

El. White. Saw who? Q76, Sing. ii,


192. Season] Defer Q76.

for] but Q76, Theob.

(—Han.).

193. attent] attentwine Q4, F,F4,

Pope+, Sta.

190. who] Collier (ed. 2): Notwithstanding the (MS), it may be doubted whether Sh. did not write 'who.' Clarendon: Sh. very generally uses who for the accusative. Dyce (Remarks, &c., p. 205): The right punctuation is doubtless 'Saw who?' (i.e. whom); nor do I recollect any performer of Ham. who understood the words but as a single question; no pause of astonishment was made between 'Saw' and 'who' by the two Kembles, Kean, and Young,—none is made by Macready and the younger Kean.

192. Season] Johnson: That is, temper it. Clarendon: As in I, iii, 81; II, i, 28; III, ii, 199; and Mer. of Ven. IV, i, 197.


193. attent] Clarendon: This only occurs in one other passage in Sh.: Pericles, III (Gower), 11. Spenser uses it as a substantive: 'And kept her sheepe with diligent attent.'—F. Qu. vi, 9, 37.

193. may] For the various shades of meaning in which can, may, might, are used, see Abbott (38 307–309). See I, iv, 51.

195. God's] White: The conformity of the Ff to the statute 3 Jac. I is so common in this play that hereafter it need not be noticed.

198. vast] Malone: By waist is meant nothing more than middle. So, in Marston's Malecontent, 1604: 'Tis now about the immodest waist of night,' i.e. midnight. Again, in The Puritan, 1607: '— ere the day be spent to the girdle.' See Minshew's Dict. 1617: 'Wast, middle, or girdle-steed.' Collier: 'Vast' is used in the same sense in Tempest, I, ii, 327, where 'vast of night' means the vacancy or void of night, and the phrase here means the silent vacancy of midnight. To
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father, Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe, 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


202. stately by them; thrice] stately.

By them thrice Ff, Rowe.

203. fear-surprised] Hyphen, Ft.

204. his] this QvQj.

205. distill'd] QvF, distill'd QvQvQj.

206. be-still'd F4, be-still'd F5, Knt. be still'd F5Fj, be-still'd Cald bechill'd Coll.ii(MS).

take wast of Qv in the sense of wast, or middle of a person, is to impute mere tautology to Sh., instead of the fine meaning of deserted emptiness and stillness of midnight. White: Perhaps we should read waste. But in either case the sense remains the same,—the dead void; and 'vast' seems to have been used substantively in this sense by Sh., if not by his contemporaries. Clarendon: It here means emptiness; the time when no living thing is seen. We have it also in the sense of an empty space in Wint. Tale, I, i, 33. 'Wast,' i. e. 'waste,' is in origin the same word as 'vast,' and has the same sense. There is, of course, an easy pun on waste and waist, but it is not probable that Sh. meant to make one in this place.

200. at point] See Macb. IV, iii, 135.

201. Appears] Clarke: This speech shows notably Shakespeare's use of the past and present tenses in narration.

204. distill'd] Knight [See Text. Notes]: To still is to fall in drops;—they were dissolved,—separated drop by drop. 'Almost to jelly.' Collier (Notes, &c., p. 433): Neither 'distill'd' nor bestill'd can be satisfactory; but it is apparent that 'bestill'd' of Fj was a misprint for bechill'd. Bernardo and Marcellus were almost chilled to jelly by their apprehensions, 'the cold fit of fear' having come powerfully upon them. Dyce (Notes, &c., p. 135): Is there not something strange in such an expression as 'human bodies chilled almost to jelly by fear?' (I doubt if the verb still (to fall in drops, melt) ever was, or could be, used with the augmentative prefix be.) According to the Qv, they melted, dissolved almost to jelly with, &c. A passage of Claudian (De Sexto Cons. Hon. v, 345), 'liquefactaque fulgere cupris Canvuit, et subitis fluxere vaporibus enses,' is thus rendered by Addison, 'Swords by the lightning's subtle force distill'd.' Singer (ed. 2): So also in Sylvester's Du Bartas (ed. 4, p. 764), 'Melt thee, distill thee, turne to wax or snow.' Collier (ed. 2): Jelly becomes jelly only by being 'bechill'd,' and when it is argued that 'distill'd' may mean melted, it is forgotten that Horatio does not say that his comrades were melted to 'jelly,' for jelly is no longer jelly when melted, but that they were 'bechill'd to jelly'; it is jelly, because it has been 'bechill'd.' Besides, Sh. never uses 'distill'd' (often as it occurs in his plays) as melted, but as extracted; and even in this very tragedy, and in this very Act, he speaks of a 'leperous distilment' as procured by distillation from 'cursed hebenon.' Therefore we feel morally certain that Shakespeare's word here was 'bechill'd.' Bailey (i, 47) dissents from
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,
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?

Collier on physical grounds. 'Solidi cannot be chilled into gelatine.' 'It is the exclusive privilege of liquids (and liquids only of a certain description) to be cooled down into that tremulous substance. Hence the true reading seems to stare us in the face: "whilst they dissolu'd, Almost,″ &c.' 'It may deserve mentioning that when the chilling effects of any passion are chiefly in view, it is the blood which is usually described by Sh. as the seat of the refrigeration.' In view of the fact that Sh. has several times used the word 'thill' to express the effect of terror, Bailey suggests 'a plausible reading,' so he says, for the present passage: 'whilst they both thrill'd.' 'Or,' if the prefix be should be prefixed, we might read 'whilst they behill'd.' HUDSON: 'Distill'd (meaning to fall in drops, to melt) is a very natural and fit expression for the cold sweat caused by intense fear. CORSON: 'Be-
still'd' seems to be used as a strong form of 'still'd,' as the next line shows. I get no meaning out of 'distill'd.'

205. act] JOHNSON: 'Fear' was the cause, the active cause, that 'distill'd' them by the force of operation which we strictly call act in voluntary, and power in involuntary, agents, but popularly call act in both. TSCHISCHWITZ: Here used like the Latin actus, and, like it, is passive, not active. Compare 'fertur magno mons impro
tus actu'—Virgil; so also the Italianatto.

207. dreadful] For adjectives which have both an active and a passive meaning, see ABBOTT, § 3. Thus 'sensible,' I, i, 57 (also passive in Macb. II, i, 36); 'plaus-

209. time] FRANCKE: After this word and is omitted by asyndeton. See also

214. speak] STEEVENS has a long note to prove that this is the emphatic word here, and not 'you.' By what particular person, therefore, an apparition, which exhibits itself only for the purpose of being urged to speak, was addressed, could be
HAMLET

ACT I, SC. ii.

Hor. My lord, I did,
But answer made it none; yet once methought
It lifted up it head and did address

216. *it*] Q_5, Q_3, Q_4, F, F_1 White, Cla. Kity. *his* Q_4, Sta. *its* Q_5, F_1, Q_176, et al.

of no consequence. Be it remembered likewise that the words are not as lately pronounced upon the stage: "Did not you speak to it?"

216. *it head*] Craik (Note on *Jul. Cbris. I, ii, 124*) The word *its* does not occur in the authorized translation of the Bible; it is, however, found in Sh. There is one instance [the only one, according to Rolfe, where it is not spelled *it's*, with an apostrophe] in *Meat. for Meat. I, ii, 4*. But the most remarkable of the plays in this particular is probably Wint. Tale; where in I, ii, 151–158, we have as many as three instances in a single speech of Leontes; again in I, ii, 266, and III, iii. 46. On the other hand, we have the following instances in F, of the use of *it* in possessive sense, where we now use *its*: Wint. Tale, II, iii, 178; III, ii, 101; *King John*, II, i, 160, 161, 162; *Lear*, I, iv, 235 (bils); the passage "nature which contemns it origin," in *Lear*, IV, ii, 32, is not in F; but Q, has *ith* and *Q_4 it*. There is also one passage in our English Bible, *Levit. xxv, 5*, in which the reading of the original edition is "of it own accord." The modern reprints give "*its*." [Rolfe adds: In the Geneva Bible, 1579, we have "it owne accorde," in *Acts. xii, 10*.] Trench (*English Past and Present*) doubts whether Milton has once admitted *its* into *Paradise Lost*, "although, when that was composed, others frequently allowed it." But he does use it occasionally, e.g. "The mind is its own place."—Par. Lost, i, 254; and "—falsehood...returns* Of force to its own likeness."—ib. iv, 813. [Rolfe: See also *Hymn on the Nativity*, 106.] Generally, however, he avoids the word, and easily does so by personifying most of his substantives; it is only when this cannot be done that he reluctantly accepts the services of the little *parvenu* monosyllable. Bacon has frequently *his* in the neuter. Trench notices the fact of the occurrence of *its* in Rowley's *Poems* as decisive against their genuineness. The modern practice is the last of three distinct stages through which the language passed, as to this use of *its*, in the course of less than a century. First, we have *his* serving for both masculine and neuter; secondly, we have *his* restricted to the masculine, and the neuter left with hardly any recognized form; thirdly, we have the defect of the second stage remedied by the frank adoption of the heretofore rejected *its*. And the most curious thing of all in the history of the word *its* is the extent to which, before its recognition as a word admissible in serious composition, even the occasion for its employment was avoided or eluded. This is very remarkable in Sh. The very conception which we express by *its* probably does not occur once in its works for ten times that it is to be found in any modern writer. So that we may say the invention or adoption of this form has changed not only our English style, but even our manner of thinking. The Saxon personal pronoun was, in the nominative singular, *He*, masculine; *She*, feminine; *It*, neuter. *He* we still retain; for *She* we have substituted *She*, apparently a modification of *Seb*, the feminine of the demonstrative; *It* we have converted into *It* (though the aspirate is still often heard in the Scottish dialect). The genitive was *Hire* for the feminine (whence our modern *Her*), and *His* both for the masculine and the neuter. It is to be understood, of course, that *its*, however convenient, is quite an irregular forma-
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.

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.

217. like] Om. Q'76. 218. as it would] As if. 219. even] Just, exactly. 220. shrunk] WARTON. It is a most inimitable circumstance in Sh. to make the Ghost, which has been so long obstinately silent, and of course must be dismissed by the morning, begin or rather prepare to speak, and to be interrupted at the very critical time of the crowing of a cock. Another poet, according to custom, would have suffered his Ghost tamely to vanish without contriving this start, which is like a start of guilt,—to say nothing of the aggravation of the future suspense, occasioned by this preparation to speak and to impart some mysterious secret. Less would have been expected had nothing been promised.

221. As] See MÄTZNER, iii, 493, ββ; and for the old preterite ‘writ’ in the next line, see Ib. i, 368.
Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.

Hold you the watch to-night?

Mar. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

Mar. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

Mar. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face?

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

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

224. Indeed, indeed] Indeede Q1, Pope, Jen. Seymour.


228. face?] face. Q,Q2.

229. beaver] Florio (A World of Words, 1598) gives: Banitra, the chine pce of a caske or head-peece. Bullokar (English Expositor, 1616) defines: Beaver In armour it signifieth that part of the helmet which may bee lifted vp, to take breath more freely. Douce (i, 439) shows that it is frequently used to denote the whole helmet, as in 3 Hen. VI: 1, i, 12, and gives representations of the helmet and its parts; as also Knight at 2 Hen. IV: IV, i, 120. Worcester cites Stephenson as deriving it from Fr. buvoir, because it enabled the wearer to drink. The definitions of Richardson and Wedgwood are not borne out by references to Sh. Hunter (ii, 219): Some say it ought to be ‘he wore his beaver down,’ but Sh. has the authority of one who ought to know something concerning what belongs to knights and chivalry: ‘they their bevers up did rear.’—Faerie Queene, IV, vi, 25.

232. Pale or red] Corson: The meaning is marred without the comma of F, after ‘Pale.’ Hamlet must be supposed to utter ‘Pale’ as a thing of course, pale-ness being he conventional idea attached to a ghost. The word should be uttered...
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?

Mar. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw't.

Ham. His beard was grizzled? no?


236. Very...haute] One line, Cap. Mal.


236. Stay'd it?] Did it stay Seymour.

237. moderate] modern Knt i (a misprint—N. & Qu. 4 Jan. '51).

hundred] hundredth Qq.

with a falling inflection, and then 'or red' added, after a pause, with a certain anxious impatience: Pale, was he? or red; how was it? In other words, he hasn't the two ideas, 'pale' and 'red,' in his mind at once; when he first speaks he has only that of 'Pare,' on which his voice rests. He then adds, somewhat impatiently, 'or red?' A semicolon would mark the division better than a comma.

236. like] CLARENDON: See II, ii, 336. This use of 'like' instead of 'likely' has become provincial. Congreve (Way of the World, IV, iv) puts it into the mouth of the rustic, Sir Wilfull.

239. grizzled] MOBERLY: The meaning seems to be 'grisly'—foul and disordered. Probably Hamlet's meaning in asking the question was to find whether his father showed signs of a violent death, like Gloster, in 2 Hen. VI: III, ii, 175; but he repels the supposition at once, as being unwilling to connect personal violence with the thought of his father.

239. grizzled? no?] AS YOU LIKE IT (Gent. Maga. 1760, vol. ix, 403): 'No' appears to have been given very improperly to Ham. The question is designed to try how far Hor. has observed the Ghost. Ham. therefore proposes the question of a beard of a different colour to that of his father's. To which Hor., giving a negative to the question, describes the beard as it really was. [This ingenious suggestion carries probability almost sufficient to justify its adoption in the text; for two reasons—First. After an affirmative question we instinctively anticipate the answer yes, not 'no;' which would more naturally follow a negative question: His beard was not grizzled?' Secondly. It is eminently characteristic of the precise Horatio (e'en the justest man Ham. had ever found) to draw a nice distinction of the time the Ghost stayed, and he would be equally exact even as to the colour
Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I'll 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 conceale'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still,

240. as] Om. F, F,, Rowe.

and texture of the beard. Ed.] CORSON, however, strongly upholds Fj; he says:
Hamlet is subjecting his friends to a searching examination, and when he asks the
question, 'His Beard was grisly?' he adds, with decision, 'no,' as though he had
called them on this point. 'No' should be read with a strong downward inflection.

241. I'll] CORSON: This is strongly emphatic, and it can be better made so in
'I'll' of the FF than 'I will' of the Qq. It seems, too, that the abbreviated form
suits better Hamlet's off-hand mode of speech with his friends.

242. warrant] For instances of words composed of two short syllables contracted
in pronunciation into monosyllables see Walker, Vers. 65; or Abbott, § 463.

244. gape] STAUNTON: It here, perhaps, signifies yell, howl, roar, &c., rather
than yawn or open, as in Hen. VIII: V, iv, 3. CLARENDON: And so, perhaps, 'a
gaping pig.'—Mer. of Ven. IV, i, 54.

247. tenable] CALDECOTT and KNIGHT (ed. i.) defend the misprint of FF.
Both paraphrase it: 'Impose a threefold obligation of silence;' and in proof that:
this was a favorite scale or measure with Sh., Caldecott adds some examples, which
Mrs Clarke's Concordance will more than treble. WHITE: We might have had
some trouble in correcting the misprint of the FF, if it had not been for the Qq.
BAILEY (i, 51) objects to 'tenable' on three grounds: First, 'Tenable in silence' is
scarcely English; no ordinary combination of circumstances requires it. Second.
It does not express the meaning here intended. Ham. enjoins that the matter be
held in silence, not holdable in silence; the latter is a common condition of all intelli-
gence. Thirdly, 'Tenable' is nowhere to be found in Sh.; 'intenable' occurs once,
and singularly enough in an active sense—incapable of holding, not incapable of
being held. Furthermore, in addition to these three reasons, the point of the line
is lost if the right word, 'treble,' be excluded. Ham. is addressing his three com-
panions, and he lays upon all three a solemn injunction: 'Let it be treble in your
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night
Give it an understanding, but no tongue;
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.

248. whatsoever] what someuer Qq.
Q, what what someuer Qq,
   else shall hap] shall befall Pope+.
250. require] require F,F.F.
    fare] farre Qq, you] ye Ff, Rowe+, Jen. Knt,
Dyce, White, Sta. Huds.
251. eleven] a teuen Qq, Qq.
252. duty] duties Qq, White, Huds.
honour] honor Qq.
253. lover] love Ff, Rowe, Pope,
Han. Knt, Sta.
farewell,] to fare you well. Seym.

silence still,' i.e. Let all three of you continue to preserve silence respecting it. 'Sh. probably wrote, "Let it be in your treble silence still."' Compare Cym. V, v, 388:
'Your three motives to the battle,' i.e. the motives of you three, not your motives three in number. CLARENDON: Regard it as a secret which ought to be kept.
See WALKER, Crit. i, 183; or ABBOTT, § 3.

252. duty] WHITE: That there is a mere omission of the final s appears both by Hamlet's reply, 'Your loves,' and by the usage of Shakespeare's time. I think the reading here of Qq. is of little or no importance, so variable is our old typography as to the final s in such words.

253. loves] STAUNTON: The hurried repetition, 'your loves, your loves,' of Qq. well expresses the perturbation of Hamlet at the moment, and that feverish impatience to be alone and commune with himself which he evinces whenever he is particularly moved. CORSON: Love is better than 'loves' of the Qq., as being opposed to 'duty;' love should be uttered with a slow and deliberate downward wave: Your love, I ask; I don't wish you to act from a sense of duty alone; I ask your love in the matter. Qq. throws light on the true meaning. Hamlet, though always princely, is impatient of certain conventional courtesies. [See note on 'loves,' I, i, 173.]

257. to men's eyes] CORSON: It is questionable as to whether this phrase should be connected with 'rise' or with 'o'erwhelm.' A reader finds it awkward to connect it with 'rise.' The omission of the comma in F, after 'them,' thus con
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.

Ｏφλ. No more but so?

Λαερ. Think it no more;

For nature crescent does not grow alone
In thews and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,

7. Youth of primy, youth and prime
of Q 76.
8. Forward Forward F F F.
sweet, not] the sweet, not Rowe +.

9. The perfume and] The (reading
The... no more, as one line) F, Rowe.
minute,] minute Q, minute ?
F F. minute: Q 76.

7. primy] Nares: Early, belonging to the spring; perhaps, peculiar to this passage.
8. Forward] Caldecott: Early, ripe before due season; and thence having in it the principles of premature decay.

8. To aid the scansion of this line different expedients have been devised (see Text. Notes). MOMMSEN (Perkins-Shakespeare, Berlin, 1854, pp. 360, 496) throws the accent on the second syllable of 'lasting,' as we sometimes find it in words which are now paroxytone; e.g. semblance, marchant, &c. To pronounce it as a trochee, lasting, is against the Shakespearian usage of admitting a trochee only after a pause. But, ELZE asks, Why cannot both the last two feet be trochees: 'sweet not [ lasting'? ABBOTT and CLARENDON prolong 'sweet' into a dissyllable (§ 484, and see Macb. i, ii, 5). MOBERLY finds the solution in 'permanent.' 'The meaning of this word induces a slight pause, and so gives it the time of an additional syllable.' [In other words, the voice of an intelligent reader cures instinctively such defects in metre; if they be defects.]

9. suppliance] Johnson: It is plain that perfume is necessary to exemplify the idea of sweet, not lasting. With the word suppliance I am not satisfied, and yet dare hardly offer what I imagine to be right. I suspect that softness, or some such word, formed from the Italian, was then used for the act of fumigating with sweet scents. MASON: An amusement to fill up a vacant moment. STEEVENS: What was supplied us for a minute. It is found in Chapman's ninth Iliad.

10. No more] No more— Warb. but no more Coll. (MS).

11 crescent] crescent Qq F F F?
12 built] bulks Qq. this] his F, Rowe, Pope. the

10. so?] Corson [who prefers the punctuation of the QqFf]: This speech is certainly meant to express Ophelia's submissiveness to her brother's opinion, not to question the correctness of it.

11-14. For... withal] Tschischwitz transposes these lines to follow line 32, because, as he alleges, they afford not the slightest explanation to 'Think it no more,' and because they have been evidently inserted in the wrong place through some blunder, and are intelligible only when restored to their proper order, as he deems it.

12. thews] Rolfe (Craig's Jut. Cas. I, iii, 81): That is, muscular powers; as in
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:

13. and] Om. Q,r.
15. soil nor] soil nor F,F, soil
nor F,F, Rowe. soil of Warb. soil, or
Heath.
16. will] fear F,F, fear F,F,
17. weigh’d] wayd Q,Qs. wayd

all the three instances in which Sh. uses the word (the third is 2 Hen. IV: III, ii, 276).
It comes from the Saxon theow or theoh, whence also thigh, and must not be con-
founded with the obsolete these = manners, or qualities of mind, which is from the
Saxon theow. This latter theew is common in Spenser, Chaucer, and earlier writers;
the former is found very rarely before Shakespeare’s day. It occurs (as cited by
Nares) in Turbervile’s Ovid’s Epistles, 1567: ‘the thews of Helens passing form.’
In the earlier version of Layamon’s Brut, at the end of the twelfth century (verse
6361): ‘Monnene strengest of maine and of theawe of alle thisseere theode’ (of
men strongest of main, or strength, and of sinew, of all this land). But Sir F.
Madden remarks (III, 471): ‘This is the only instance in the poem of the word
being applied to bodily qualities, nor has any other passage of an earlier date than
the sixteenth century been found in which it is so used.’

Tschischwitz: The s is probably not a sign of the plural, but a derivative affix for th, whence we may infer
an abstract theoboth, denoting growth, in later English theow.

12. this] Corson (p. 12): ‘His’ of F, stands for ‘nature’: as nature’s temple
grows, the service within widens. There is a metaphor implied.

12. temple] See Macb. II, iii, 64; R. of L. 719, and 1172, in proof of Calde-
cott’s remark that this is never but on grave occasions applied to the body.

13. inward service] Caldecott: As the body increases in bulk, the duties
calling forth the offices and energies of the mind increase equally. Moberly:
‘Ἀναπνοῆν τῷ σῶματι συνανέκτου καὶ αὐτὸν.—Herodotus, iii, 134.

14. Grows] Hudson: The passage would seem to imply that Hamlet is not so
old as he is elsewhere represented to be.

15. cautel] Dyce (Glass.): Craft, deceit.
15. cautel] Duce (Glass.): Craft, deceit. ‘Cautelle: A wile, cautell, sleight;
a craftie reach, or fetch, guileful devise or endeour; also, craft, subtilite, trumpeter,
deceit, covenage.’—Cotgrave. Clarendon: Only used elsewhere by Sh. in L. C.
303. Rushton (Sh.’s Testamentary Language, p. 43): Sh. may have written these
lines remembering the following passage from Swinburne’s Treatise on Wills, 1590:
‘There is no cautel under heaven, whereby the libertie of making or revoking his
testament can be utterly taken away,’—p. 61. Again Laertes says, line 20, ‘He may
not carve for himself,’ and according to Swinburn, ‘it is not lawful for legataries
to carve for themselves, taking their legacies at their own pleasure,’ &c.—p. 50.

16. virtue] Johnson: It here seems to comprise both excellence and power, and
may be explained the pure effects. Mason: His virtuous intentions. Staunton:
It here seems to import essential goodness; as we speak of the virtues of herbs, &c.

16. will] Caldecott: The Ff contain a clear misprint by the eye catching and
giving the same word twice.
For he himself is subject to his birth;
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends
The safety and health of this whole state,
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
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.

18. Om. Q. 19. unvalued] inferior Q'76. 20. Carve for] Carve for Q, Q, 5. Be-
stow Q'76. 21. safety] safty Q, Q, saftie Q, sanfty Ff, Rowe, Pope, Theob. Cald.

20. Carve] Clarke (Note on 'Carver,' Rich. II: II, iii, 144). Sh. uses the verb to 'carve' very expressively to signify 'hew recklessly' and to 'select selfishly.'

21. safety] Theobald (Sh. Rest. p. 22) conjectured that 'sanctity' of Ff should be 'sanity,' because the welfare, preservation of the state was in some degree concerned by Hamlet's choice of a wife. Theobald calls attention to the same misprint of one word for the other in II, ii, 208, and Macb. IV, iii, 144. Walker (Crit. iii, 88, also Vers. 159) makes the same conjecture: 'Sanity must surely be the right reading; sanctity, at any rate, is absurd. Frequentius, ut sape fit, pro rarioi; the pulpit having familiarized sanctity to men's minds.' Both Dyce and Abbott, § 454, agree with Walker. The latter says that the present line could not be scanned without prolonging both 'health' and 'whole.' 'Such a double prolongation is extremely improbable, considering the moderate emphasis required. More probably, Theobald's suggestion is right.' Malone: The editor of F, finding the metre defective, in consequence of the article being omitted before 'health,' instead of supplying it, for 'safety' substituted a word of three syllables. Collier: 'Safety' was often of old, as here, pronounced as a trisyllable.

21. this] Corson (p. 12): The of Ff is better than 'this;' 'state' being used abstractly.

26. 27. As ... deed] Caldecott [see Text. Notes]: As he, in that peculiar rank and class that he fills in the state, and the power and means thereto annexed, may enable himself to give his professions effect. Collier: Sect and force may be strained into a meaning, but 'act and place' require no such effort. The latter is the reading of the (MS) also. White: What tolerable sense has either Q, or F, in connection with the context? F, manifestly corrects two errors, but makes one—'force' for place. Sect is class, rank, or, in the slang of society, set. So in Lear, V, iii, 18.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
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 calumnius strokes;
The canker galls the infants of the spring
Too oft before their buttons be disclosed,
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.

29. weigh] way Q.Q.Q._
31. lose] loofe Qf,
32. unmaster'd] unmastered Qf,F,F,
F, unmastered F, Rowe.
33. keep you in] kepe within Ff,
34. their] the Ff, Rowe.

30. credent] CLARENDON: Not used elsewhere by Sh. in this sense. It means 'credible,' in Wint. Tale, I, ii, 142.
32. unmaster'd] JOHNSON: Licentious. Rather, says SEYMOUR, not kept in subjection by the austere virtue of Ophelia.
34. rear] JOHNSON: Do not advance so far as your affection would lead you.
36. chariest] Dyce (Gloss.): Most scrupulous.
40. buttons] Wedgwood: French, bouton, a button, bud, any small projection, from bouter, to push, thrust forwards, as rejeter, a rejected thing, from rejeter, &c. It is remarkable that Chaucer, who in general comes so close to the French, always translates bouton, the rosebud, in the Roman de la Rose, by bothum, and not by button.
42. blastments] CLARENDON: Only here in Sh. Coleridge uses it in the last scene of Zapolya, p. 265: 'Shall shoot his blastments on the land.'
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,
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads

45. _effect] effects._ Pope+

46. _As watchman to] About Q76._

49. _puff'd and reckless] Om. Q76._

50. _primrose] See Macb. II, iii, 17._

43. _best] The not uncommon omission of the article before superlatives is perhaps to be explained, according to _Abbott_, §82, by the double meaning of the superlative, which means not only _the best of the class_, but also _very good._

43. _safety] _Francke_ : See _Macb._ III, v, 32. _Also_ _Velleius Paterculus_, ii, 218: _frequentissimum initium esse calamitatis securitatem._ _Elze_ : See _Tro._ & _Cress._ II, ii, 14: _the wound of peace is surety, Surety secure._

44. _Clarendon_ : 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.

44. _though . . . near] For instances of the omission of the predicate verb, see _Matzner_, ii, 43, though I can find no parallel instances in the conjunctive clauses there noted. _Clarendon_ appositely cites _Cymb._ IV, iv, 23.

45. _Coleridge_ : You will observe in Ophelia's short and general answer to the long speech of Laertes the natural carelessness of innocence, which cannot think such a code of cautions and prudences necessary to its own preservation.

47. _ungracious_ _Clarendon_ : Graceless. _So 1 Hen._ IV: II, iv, 490.

47. _pastors_ _Tschischwitz_ does _not scruple to change_ this to the sing. _pastor,_ parsing the first _'Do'_ as the auxiliary verb to the second, as well as to _'show,'_ while _'Himself'_ remains in grammatical agreement with what has preceded.

47-50. _pastors . . . Himself] See III, ii, 181, for a construction the reverse of this: a plural relative and a singular antecedent. _Abbott_, §415: _'Himself . . . treads'_ is for _'While you tread.'_ The construction is changed by change of thought.

49. _puff'd and reckless] Caldecott_ : Bloated and swollen, the effect of excess; and heedless and indifferent to consequences. _'Ignarus, ineficax, recheiesse'—_ _Ortus Vocab._ 1514.

HAMLET

And recks not his own rede.

_Laert._ 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.)

51. _recks_ Pope. _reakes_ Q4, F2, Cald.

recks F, F2, F4, Rowe. _reeds_ 3r, Seymourd._

_his_ thine Seymour.

rede] Sing. ii. _reed_ Q1, Pope, _reede_ F, F2, Cald. _read_ F3, F4, Rowe, Johns.


54. _stay'd_] _Raid_ Ff. _flayed_ Q2, Q3, _flayed_ F2, _flated_ Q4, Q5, _flated_ F4, _stay'd_ Q4._

_for_ There;_] Theob. _for there_ Rowe, Pope.

_Oating_—] Theob. _blessing_ blessings Jen.

_blessing_ My..._there_ Separate line (reading _my...you_ Jen. Pope.


59. _Look_] See Ff, Rowe+, Cald Knt, Dyce, White, Sta. Del. Huds.

51. _rede_ COLLEIÉE: Cares not for his own counsel or advice. ‘Read’ was used of old both as a substantive and a verb. CLARENDON: It is not used elsewhere in Sh. See Chaucer, Cant. Tales, 1216: ‘Ther was noon other remedy re need.’

51. _fear_ For other instances of its use as ‘fear for,’ see II, iv, 7; IV, v, 118; and SCHMITT, _Sh. Lex._ ABBOTT, 200: So also the preposition is omitted after ‘deprive,’ I, iv, 73.

52. _stay_ MOHERLY: Laertes seems to think that Ophelia’s spirited reply is giving the conversation a needless and inconvenient turn; for that for sisters to lecture brothers is an inversion of the natural order of things.

53. _double_ DELIUS: Laertes had already taken leave of his father.

57. _There;_] In this punctuation all succeeding edd. have followed Theobald, who could see no reference which ‘there,’ as punctuated in the Ff, could have, except it be to the ‘shoulder’ of the sail. CORSON upholds the Ff:—‘there,’ certainly means at the port, where the ship is all ready to sail, and the attendants are waiting for him. See the 83d line.

59. _Warburton_ Sh. had a mind to ornament his scenes with these fine lessons of social life; but his Polonius was too weak to be the author of them, though he was pedant enough to have met with them in his reading, and fop enough to get them by heart, and retail them for his own. CAPELL (i, 124): ‘This observation of Warburton’s’ is not ill-grounded; for the moment he’s at the end of his lesson, _6* E_
Nor any unproportion’d thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,


adoption] a adoption Q2Q3.  

Kty conj.  

62. tried] tride F1F2.  

12d F3F4.  

we are regal’d with a style very different, and flowers of speech is his way.’ CALDECOTT: These golden precepts very ill accord with the character and intellect imputed to Polonius in the rest of the play, where he appears to be what Hamlet calls him, a ‘tedious old fool,’ a ‘wretched rash fool,’ ‘a foolish prating knave.’ KNIGHT adds: ‘It is remarkable that in Q4 the “precepts” are printed with inverted commas, as if they were taken from some known source; or, at any rate, if Polonius had delivered them by an effort of memory alone.’ DYCE (Remarks, &c. p. 207): Not at all ‘remarkable.” In the Q1 (except Q4), a speech of the Queen, IV, v, 17–20, is ‘printed with inverted commas.” [See textual notes on lines 36, 38, 39, of this scene. Ed.] In various other early plays THE GNOMIC PORTIONS are so distinguished [Dyce here cites many examples from early poetry of thus marking maxims; he might have descended to much later times. Warburton, in his edition of Sh., uniformly keeps the custom. Ed.]. HUNTER (ii, 219): Polonius is the dull, proser politician of the time. There is probably much personal satire in the character. It was the practice of those politicians to deliver maxims to their children, to be their guide in life. Thus Lord Burghley left ten admirable precepts of worldly prudence to his son Robert, afterwards Earl of Salisbury, which may be read in the Desiderata Curiosa; and in The Harleian Miscellany is a letter from Sir Henry Sydney to Philip his son, containing divers lessons of prudence delivered in a didactic form. That there was some individual nobleman more particularly pointed at in the character of Polonius I can entertain no doubt, nor that some attentive observer of the men of those times will one day trace the Poet home. Could it be the Lord Chamberlain? Pynne alludes to the practice of bringing noblemen upon the stage, and names particularly the Lord Admiral, the Lord Treasurer, and Count Gondomar, as persons with whom the stage had made free. RUSHTON (Shakespeare’s Euphuism, p. 46): The advice of Euphues to Philatus is probably the origin of these few precepts of Polonius. For line 59, see Euphues:— ‘Be not lavish of thy tongue.’ Lines 64, 65, thus Euphues:— ‘Every one that shaketh thee by the hand, is not joined to thee in heart.’ Lines 66, 67, Euphues:— ‘Be not quarrellous for every light occasion: they never fight without provoking, and once provoked they never cease.’ Line 68, Euphues: ‘It shall be there better to hear what they say, than to speak what thou thinkest.’ [See also II, ii, 86; and FRENCH, in Appendix, p. 239.]

59. character] CLARENDON: Used with the accent either on the first or second syllable. As a substantive, with the latter accent, it is found in Rich. III: III, i, 81; as a verb, in Two Gent. II, vii, 4. [R. of L. 807.] CALDECOTT: The verb has the accent on the first syllable in Son. 122, 2.

60. unproportioned] CLARENDON: Unsuitable, not in harmony with the occasion.


62. The] CORSON: The use of ‘them’ in next verse makes ‘The’ preferable to Those,’ which serves to strengthen the pleonasm.

62. hast] SEYMOUR (ii, 153): ‘Hast’ is not habes, but the auxiliary verb,
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 th' opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;

63. them to [them unto] Q4, El. unto
Seymour.

64. dull] Johnson: Do not make thy palm callous by shaking every man by the hand.

65. comrade] Badiam (Cam. Essays, 1856, p. 282): This is the trashy correction made by later Q4 [sic] for the original reading, courage. Perhaps Shakespeare's word was court-ape. Clarendon: The accent is on the last syllable, as in 1 Hen. IV: 1V, i, 96. In Lear, II, iv, 213, it is on the first. [See Ingleby, note on line 74. Ed.]


68. 'thine ear] thy ear'e Q4, Glo. +, Mob.

the friends whom, and the adoption of them, thou hast tried and proved. Clarendon gives the simplest explanation: 'and whose adoption thou hast tried;' but Dullus explains 'and their adoption tried' as a participial parenthesis: when thou hast put their adoption to the test. TschiSchwitz also (followed by Moerley) pronounces this clause a participle, or nominative, absolute, and cites Mätzner, iii, 85.

63. hoops] Malone: 'Grapple' strongly supports Pope's reading, hooks. See Minshew: 'To hook or grapple, viz. to grapple and to board a ship.' It may be also observed, that hooks are sometimes made of steel, but hoops never. Steevens: We have, however, a 'hoop of gold' in 2 Hen. IV: IV, iv, 43. Pye (Comments, &c. p. 311): I believe hoops are at least as often made of steel as hearts are, or as foreheads are of brass. Singer: 'Hoops' is an evident misprint for hooks. Grappling-hooks is a familiar term, but who ever heard of grappling with 'hoops' of steel? White: It is far from improbable that 'hooks' is right. Clarendon: Pope's reading makes the figure suggested by 'grapple' the very reverse of what Sh. intended; grapping with hooks is the act of an enemy and not of a friend.

64. dull] Johnson: Do not make thy palm callous by shaking every man by the hand. Caldecott: Compare Tro. & Cres. II, iii, 201, 'stale his palm.' Walker (i, 306): Dulls occurs thirteen lines below; may not Sh. have written stale? Clarendon: Compare Cyn. I, vi, 106: 'hands Made hard with hourly falsehood.' [Compare also Ham. V, i, 67.]

65. comrade] Baddian (Cam. Essays, 1856, p. 282): This is the trashy correction made by later Q4 [sic] for the original reading, courage. Perhaps Shakespeare's word was court-ape. Clarendon: The accent is on the last syllable, as in 1 Hen. IV: IV, i, 96. In Lear, II, iv, 215, it is on the first. [See Ingleby, note on line 74. Ed.]


70. costly] TschiSchwitz: The construction is: Costly thy habit buy, as thy pause can. Abbott, 2 276: The first as is sometimes omitted. See II, ii, 201 'old as I am.'

71. fancy] Moerley: Not marked or singular in device, but with a quiet costiveness, suggestive of habitual self-respect.
For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous, chief in that.

74. *Are...that* Rowe, +, Cap. Jen. Rann, Steev. '93, Var. '03, Var. '13, Cald. Sing, i, Harness, Campbell, Hazlitt, Delius, Clarke, Chambers, Dyce ii, Huds. Or of a most select and generous, chief in that Qf. Ar of a most select and generous, chief in that Qf. Are of a most select and generous, chief in that Qf. Are of a most select and generous chief in that Ff, and (reading chief') Knt, Corn. Verp. Coll. i, Glo. +, Mob. Are most select, and generous, chief in that Steev. '73. Are most select, and generous chief, in that Steev. '78, '85. Are of a most select and generous chief, in that Mal. Var. Are most select, and generous chief in that First Am. Ed. '96. Are most select and generous chief in that Dyce i, Hal. Are of a most select and generous choice in that Coll.(MS), Coll. ii, El. Kily. Are most select and generous, chief in that Sing, ii, Chas. Kemble. Are most select and generous in that White. Are of a most select and generous sheaf in that Sta.

74. *Are...that* Steevens: 'Chief' may be used adverbially, a practice common in Sh.: 'chiefly generous.' I would more willingly read, 'Select and generous, are most choice in that.' Ritson (Remarks, &c. p. 193): The nobility of France are select and generous above all other nations, and chiefly in the point of apparel; the richness and elegance of their dress. MALONE: May we suppose that 'chief' of the Ff is a word borrowed from heraldry? They in France approve themselves to be of a most select and generous escutcheon by their dress. Chief, in heraldry, is the upper third part of the shield. See Minshew. This is very harsh; yet I hardly think that the words 'of a' could have been introduced without some authority from the MS. 'Generous' = generous. 'Chief,' however, may have been used as a substantive, for note or estimation. KNIGHT: It is scarcely necessary to go to heraldry for an explanation of the word: we have it in composition, as in mischief, and the now obsolete bonchief. 'Chief,' literally the head, here signifies eminence, superiority. Those of the best rank and station are of a most select and generous superiority in the indication of their dignity by their apparel. COLLIER (ed. i): The meaning perhaps is: 'Are of a most select and generous rank and station, chiefly in that.' Dyce, in his Remarks, &c. p. 206, while approving of Collier's rendering of 'chief in that' ('the words can be used here in no other sense' than chiefly in that), objects to the violent ellipsis which is implied by inserting 'rank and station' after 'select and generous,' and adds: 'During the many hours which I have spent (perhaps wasted) in collating early dramas, I have known four or five editions of a play, though differing from each other materially elsewhere, yet coincide in some one most erroneous reading (which was corrected by a fortunately extant MS): the text of that particular place having been once vitiated, the corruption had been retained in all the subsequent impressions. Such is evidently the case here (where there is unluckily no MS Hamlet to refer to); and the probability seems to be, that the strangely impertinent words, "of a," found their way into the line, while the eye of the transcriber or compositor, glancing away from it for a moment, was arrested by "of the" immediately above.' COLLIER (ed. ii): 'Choice' was formerly not unfrequently spelt choice, and the long / led to the misprinting of choice, first, chief, and afterwards cheff. The (MS) substitutes 'choice,' and afterwards, chief. The whole difficulty is removed, for Polonius says that the French are 'of a most select
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,

75. lender be] lender boy Qq.
76. loan] Loane V.  lane F.,  lose 76. Qq.  love Q.76.

and generous choice' in all matters relating to dress. White [see this line and the next above it in Q., Appendix, p. 47. Ed.]: Here [in Q.] I believe that we have not only the obvious misprint of 'generall' for 'generous,' and the interpolation of 'of a,' which all editors have supposed, but the accidental repetition in the second line of 'chief' in the first,—a kind of misprint which often occurs in the old texts of these plays. The two errors last named were perpetuated (as errors sometimes unaccountably are), although 'chief' in the first line was changed to 'best.' This reading of White's the Cambridge Editors (Preface, viii) approve of as 'probably' what Sh. had 'originally written'; the corruption in Q, and Q, which, they say, is clearly due to an error in the transcription from which both were copied, may have arisen from Shakespeare's having 'given between the lines, or in the margin, "of," "chief," meaning these as alternative readings for "in" and "best" in line 73. The transcriber by mistake inserted them in line 74. Staunton: The slight change of sheaf for 'chiefe' or 'cheiff,' a change for which we alone are answerable, seems to impart a better and more poetic meaning to the passage than any variation yet suggested; and it is supported, if not established, by the following extracts from Ben Jonson: '—Ay, and with assurance, That it is found in noblemen and gentlemen Of the best sheaf;—The Magnetic Lady, III, iv. 'I am so haunted at the court and at my lodging with your refined choice spirits, that it makes me clean of another garb, another sheaf.'—Every Man Out of His Humour, II, i. Ingleby (N. & Qu. 13 Sept. 1856) strongly upholds Staunton's sheaf in the sense of a clique, class, or set in fashionable society. 'And for this meaning we must have recourse to Euphuism. If sheaf be Shakespeare's word, it is not the only instance of Euphuism in Polonius' speech. In line 65, courage of the Qq is Euphuistic for a gallant. It is so used by Scott in The Monastery, and is put into the mouth of that prince of Euphuists, Sir Piercie Shafton. Archers spoke of 'arrows of the first sheaf,' and the Euphuists appropriated the metaphor, and called their friends "gentlemen of the first sheaf." Every archer of this day has his best set (a set = 12 arrows); and every archer of Shakespeare's day had his first sheaf (a sheaf = 24 arrows). Thus: "In my time, it was the usual practice for soldiers to choose their first sheaf of arrows, and cut those shorter which they found too long," &c.—Discourse on Weapons.' Ingleby then cites the passages from Ben Jonson afterwards cited by Staunton, and concludes his note with the expression of his belief that the metaphor in the present case, as well as in Every Man Out of His Humour, was taken, not wholly from archery, but from husbandry. H. C. K. (N. & Qu. 11 Oct. 1856) upholds the Ff, and explains cheff as a measure by which, according to Skinner, cloth and fine linen were sold. Tschischwitz thinks that the uniformity of the Qqff in the reading 'of a' is an insuperable objection to any change or omission in that direction. The only suspicious words in the line are 'in that' at the end of it, because, as he says, we should rather expect them to be written 'therein.' 'In that' he believes to be the beginning of another line, of which the conclusion is lost, but which expressed in substance 'In that they clothe themselves simply,' Accordingly, in his text the line is: In that their show denies extravagance. Mo-
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
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.

_Pol._ What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

_Oph._ So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

BERLY follows Malone in interpreting 'chief' as the upper part of an heraldic shield.

KEIGHTLEY: A word even more appropriate than Steevens's 'choice' would have been taste. J. Beale (N. & Qu. 4 Sept. 1875) suggested chiefs.

77. _husbandry_] MALONE: Thrift, economical prudence. [See _Macb._ II, i, 4.]

79. _night_] WARBURTON, on the ground that the image presented in this simile should be one of cause and effect, substituted _light_ for 'night.' It is needless to add that his reasoning has convinced no one up to this present. ED.

81. _season_] JOHNSON: It is more than _infuse_, as Warburton interprets it; it is so to infix it that it may never wear out. CALDECOTT: Give a relish to, quicken, it; or it may be, keep it alive in your memory; as things preserved, and by spicery kept from a state of dissolution, are said to be _seasoned_. SINGER: 'To season ....... to temper wiselie, to make more pleasant and acceptable.—Baret, _Alvearie_. Elze: It means rather to ripen. MOBERLY: Make these thoughts familiar to you. HUDSON: Used, apparently, in the sense of _intrain_; the idea being that of so _steeping_ the counsel into his mind that it will not fade out.

83. _tend_] JOHNSON: Your servants are waiting for you.

86. _key_] CALDECOTT: Thence it shall not be dismissed till you think it needless to retain it.

89. _So_] In conditional sentences, according to MÄTZNER, iii, 458, _so_ is used instead of _if_ chiefly where the condition is of a restrictive nature, and expresses a reservation, like (but not always) the Lat. _modo, dum, dummodo._
HAMLET

ACT I, sc. iii.

Pol. Marry, well bethought;
'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.

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;

94. 'tis] it is F, Rowe. it is, F
95. you? give...truth.] Q?76. you
give...truth, Q, Q, you give...truth. Q
96. you, give...truth? F, Rowe.
by Sta.
101. pooh!] Coll. puh, Qq. puh.

ABBOTT, § 457, where it is said that the seems to have been regarded as capable of more emphasis than with us.

92. private] CALDECOTT: Spent his time in private visits to you. DELIUS: The time which he had at his own disposal.

94. put] CALDECOTT: Suggested to, impressed on. CLARENDON: See Twelfth N. V, i, 70; Macb. IV, iii, 239; Meas. for Meas. IV, ii, 120. [Ham. V, ii, 370.]

101. green] NAINES: Inexperienced, unskilful, still found in green-horn, thus also 'greenly,' in IV, v, 79.

102. unsifted] WARBURTON: Untried, untempted.

106. tenders] MOBERLY: In the Dutch war of 1674, Pepys tells us that many English seamen fought on the enemy's side, and were heard during an action to cry, 'Dollars now; no tickets,' the latter being the only pay they had received in their own service. This seems to explain the opposition intended here between 'tenders' and 'true pay.'

107. tender yourself] MALONE: Regard with affection. CALDECOTT: This was anciently used as much in the sense of regard or respect, as it was in that of offer. 'And because eche like thing tendreth his like.'—Preface to Drant's Horace, 1566.
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

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, springs to catch woodcocks. I do know, When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul

*108, 109. not...thus* In parenthesis QQ, Theob.

108. not...phrase In parenthesis Q4, Pope.


109. *Running* This emendation, which is Collier's conj., afterwards corroborated by his (MS), Dyce said he had long been convinced of. White calls it 'almost obvious,' and Clarendon adopts it as more in accordance with the figure in the preceding line. Pope's emendation Johnson supported, believing that wronging had reference not to the phrase, but to Ophelia, the 'it' being the redundant 'it' common enough in poetry, as in Pope's, 'To sinner it or saint it.' Theobald (Sh. Rest. p. 25) conjectured ranging, i.e. you, behaving yourself with so much carelessness and liberty, will bring me into contempt, &c. Heath referred wronging to the 'poor phrase,' for 'whoever cracks the wind of anything may surely be said with propriety to wrong or abuse it.' Warburton preferred wringing, i.e. not farther to crack the wind of the phrase by twisting or contorting it. Caldecott paraphrases the 'it' by: 'ranging so far, becoming so wildly execrative, and running into so many senses of the word tender.' Badham (Cam. Essays, 1856, p. 285): Perhaps some readers will think with me that wrong is a corruption of worrying. The same description of persons will probably read in line 115 'extinct in birth,' instead of 'extinct in both.' Keightley: 'To wrong it thus' is most probably correct. We might read,—supposing the allusion to be to a horse,—To run, as in, You run this humour out of breath, Com. of Err. I, i. Corson: The Ff are probably right; Polonius has reference to his varying application of the word 'tender.'

115. woodcocks Nares: Proverbial for a simpleton; probably from the ease with which woodcocks suffer themselves to be caught in springs or snares. The phrase here means 'arts to entrap simplicity.' Clarendon: Compare Gosson, Apologie for the Schoole of Abuse, p. 72 (ed. Arber): 'When Comedie comes vpon the Stage, Cupidte sets vpp a Springe for Woodcockes, which are entangled ere they describe the line, and caught before they mistruste the snare.' Harting (p. 229): The woodcock for some unaccountable reason was supposed to have no brains, and the name of this bird became a synonym for a fool.

116. prodigal] For instances of the free use of adjectives as adverbs, see Abbott, i.
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

blazes] basin blazes Nicholson
(N. & Qu. 15 Dec. 1868).
daughter] oh my daughter daughter Ff, Rowe.
Pope + gentle daughter Cap.

117. MALONE and WHITE believe that some epithet to 'blazes' has been omitted. COLERIDGE (p. 153): A spondee has, I doubt not, dropped out of the text. Either insert Go to after 'vows,' or read, 'these blazes, daughter, mark you.' Sh. never introduces a catalectic line without intending an equivalent to the foot omitted in the pauses, or the dwelling emphasis, or the diffused retardation. I do not, however, deny that a good actor might by employing the last-mentioned means, namely, the retardation or solemn knowing drawl, supply the missing spondee with good effect. But I do not believe that in this or any other of the foregoing speeches of Polonius, Sh. meant to bring out the senility or weakness of that personage's mind. In the great ever-recurring dangers and duties of life, where to distinguish the fit objects for the application of the maxims collected by the experience of a long life requires no fineness of tact; as in the admonitions to his son and daughter, Pol. is uniformly made respectable. But if an actor were even capable of catching these shades in the character, the pit and the gallery would be malcontent at their exhibition. It is to Hamlet that Pol. is, and is meant to be, contemptible, because in inwardness and uncontrollable activity of movement, Hamlet's mind is the logical contrary to that of Pol., and besides Ham. dislikes the man as false to his true allegiance in the matter of the succession to the crown. WALKER (Vers. p. 206) gives ten or twelve instances from Sh. and other dramatists, among them the present passage, in proof of his assertion that 'daughter' is sometimes a trisyllable. 'It is observable,' he adds, 'that in almost all these instances there is a pause—in at least half of them a full stop—after daughter. What was the original form of the word? Compare ðiwyrd. In Chaucer, as far as I am acquainted with him, it is uniformly a disyllable.' In a foot-note LETTSOM asks: 'Quere, when did the guttural become mute in this word? When pronounced, it would have facilitated a trisyllabic pronunciation.' MOBERLY adopts one of Coleridge's suggestions, and thinks that the strong irony on the word 'vows,' which is spoken with a laugh of contempt, makes it occupy the time of three syllables.

118. both] See BAdHAM in note on line 109

119. a-making] WHITE: There is no purer or more logically correct English than the idiom a-making, a-doing, a-building, &c. Ben Jonson says in his Grammar, ii, cap. 3: 'Before the participle present a and an have the force of a gerund,—

"There is some great tempest a-brewing against us."' For instances of the prefix a before adjectives and participles used as nouns, see ABBOTT, § 24 (2); also I, v, 19; Macb. V, v, 49.

120. CORSON upholds the Ff. 'It may be that "For this" = For[th] this, the th of Forth being absorbed. The verse of the Ff scans better than that of the Qt; in the latter "fire" must be made disyllabic, and "From" a heavy syllable. It will
Be somewhat scanter 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,  

121. somewhat] something Qq, Cap.  
128. that dye] Q'76, Han. that die  
Warb. Johns.  
129. mere] Om. Seymour.  
implorators] implorators Qq, Q'76, Qq, Qq,  
improvers Pope+, Cap.  
bonds QqFi, Rowe, Pope i+, Jen. Steev.  

be observed, too, that this speech is characterized by the double endings, as Bathurst  
sty1es them, and the Fi verse is more in keeping with them.'  

122. entreatments] Johnson: It means here company, conversation, French  
entretien. Clarke: The entreaties you receive for granting an interview. Clar-  
endon: 'Parley' in the next line seems to point to the sense of preliminary nego-  
tiations, and so solicitations.  

126. in few] For adjectives used as nouns, even in the singular, see Abbott, § 5.  
See also 'the general,' II, ii, 416.  

127. brokers] Malone: This meant, in old English, a bawd or a procusess.  
[See Cotgrave: Magniquonnier, To play the Broker, also to play the bawd. Ed.]  

128. dye] Caldecott, Knight, White, Corson, follow the Fi. The first thus  
paraphrases: 'Of the cast, or character, that character of purity, which their garb.  
or assumed expression of passion, bespeaks.' Knight adduces, Temp. II, i, 155,  
eye of green,' to show that an eye was used to express a slight tint. Dyce asks  
if our early writers ever use 'eye' by itself to denote colour? White cites, as an  
instance in the affirmative, from the old translations of the Bible: 'And the eye  
of man was as the eye of bdelium.'—Numbers xi, 7; later translations substitut-  
ing 'colour' for 'eye.' Staunton thinks 'eye' may possibly be right. Moberly:  
Not of the real stamp which their verse seems to show.  

130. bawds] Theobald: What idea can we form of a 'breathing bond,' or of  
its being sanctified or pious. As amorous vows have just been called 'brokers,' and  
'implorers of unholy suits,' the plain and natural sense suggests an easy emendation:  
bawds. And this correction is strengthened by the concluding phrase, 'the better  
to beguile.' Mason (p. 376): Pol. has called Hamlet's vows 'brokers' but two  
lines before, a word synonymous to bawds, and the very title that Sh. gives to Pan
The better to beguile. This is for all:
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment’s leisure,

131. beguile] beguile Q₂Q₃, Q₃Ff, Rowe, Coll. i, Dyce i, Sta. Glo.
133. slander] squander Coll. ii (MS). +, Ktly, Mob. moments Q₄Q₅ mo-
moment’s] Pope. moment Q₄ m-
mements’ Coll. ii (MS).

dar; ‘implorators of unholy suits’ is an exact description of a bawd. All such
of them as are crafty in their trade put on the appearance of sanctity, and are ‘not
of that dye that their investments shew.’ COLLIER’s (MS) also substitutes ‘bawds.’
SINGER pronounces bonds nonsense. WHITE says that the ‘context does not leave a
question as to the propriety of Theobald’s emendation,—“bawds” having probably
been spelled bawds.’ On the other hand, the advocates of the FF are as follows:
WARBURTON, after sneering at Theobald, paraphrases: Do not believe Hamlet’s
amorous vows made to you; which pretend religion in them (the better to beguile),
like those sanctified and pious vows (or bonds) made to heaven. HEATH pronounces
the sense of bonds unexceptionable, and interprets thus: Vows, uttered in the
semblance of sanctified and pious engagements, such as have marriage for their object.
MALONE follows HEATH, and affirms that by bonds were meant the bonds of love.
SEYMOUR (ii, 155): ‘His vows are implorators breathing like bonds (i.e. similar
bonds, or sanctified vows) to those which are breathed by implorators of unholy suits.’
CALDECOTT: Like the protestations of solemn contracts entered into with all the
formalities and ceremonies of religion. (DYCE (ed. i) pronounces this note of Cal-
decott’s ‘quite as silly as Malone’s.’) STAUTON: ‘At one time we were strenu-
ously in favour of Theobald’s alteration; we are now persuaded the FF are right.’
CLARKE: We cannot help believing bonds to be right, because SH. uses the word
elsewhere to signify ‘pledged vows,’ ‘pledged assurances of faith and troth;’ see
Mer. of Ven. II, vi, 6; Tro. & Cress. V, ii, 156. KEIGHTLEY (Expositor, p. 287):
The whole passage is merely a poetic periphrasis of seduction under promise of
marriage; and had the word been sounding, not ‘breathing,’ there would probably
have been no mistake. CORSON: Bonds makes good sense. The general term,
bonds, suggested, no doubt, by ‘brokers,’ is used for the more special term, ‘vows.’
‘Breathing’ refers back to ‘they, standing for ‘vows,’ bonds, involving the idea of
vows, should not receive the stress, in reading, which should be given to ‘pious.’
MOBERLY: Like law papers headed with religious formulae. So policies of
insurance begin, even at the present day, with the words, ‘In the name of God, Amen.’
Shakespeare’s bankrupt family had sad experience of such documents.

133. slander] JOHNSON: I would not have you so disgrace your most idle
moments, &c. MOBERLY: The meaning is, ‘Do not misuse any moment of leisure,’
as, conversely, you have ‘misused our sex,’ means ‘you have slandered it.’—As You
Like it, IV, ii, 205.

133. moment’s] DYCE (Remarks, p. 209): It is absolutely necessary to print
‘moment’s.’ Would Shakespeare have employed such a ridiculous inversion when
leisure moment’ suited the metre as well? ABBOTT, §§ 22, 430, however, adopts
moment-leisure,’ and gives it as one of many instances of non-compounds where
he first noun may be treated as a genitive used adjectively. See II, ii, 464; III, i,
156. CLARKE: In the reading of the FF, ‘moment’ must be taken as an adjec-
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.

135. come] and so come Seymour. so now, come Coll. ii (MS). ways Q, Q3, Q4, F; waiies Q5, way F, F2, F4, Rowe +.  


The platform.] Steev. The Platform before the Palace. Rowe. and] Om. Ff. 1. shrewdly] shrewdly Q, shrewdly F.  

F, F2, it is very cold.] it is very cold? F, F4.  

F, Knt 1. it is very cold? F, F4.  

tive. This is very common when the first substantive is the name of a place, as in 'Lethe wharf,' I, i, 33.  

135. ways] For instances of the genitive of nouns used adverbially, see Matzner, i, 389 (a).

SCENE IV.] Coleridge: The unimportant conversation with which this scene opens is a proof of Shakespeare's minute knowledge of human nature. It is a well-established fact, that, on the brink of any serious enterprise, or event of moment, men almost invariably endeavor to elude the pressure of their own thoughts by turning aside to trivial objects and familiar circumstances; thus the dialogue on the platform begins with remarks on the coldness of the air, and inquiries obliquely connected, indeed, with the expected hour of the visitation, but thrown out in a seeming vacuity of topics, as to the striking of the clock, and so forth. The same desire to escape from the impending thought is carried on in Hamlet's account of, and moralising on, the Danish custom of wassailing; he runs off from the particular to the universal, and in his repugnance to personal and individual concerns, escapes, as it were, from himself in generalisations, and smothers the impatience and uneasy feelings of the moment in abstract reasoning. Besides this, another purpose is answered;—for by thus entangling the attention of the audience in the nice distinctions and parenthetical sentences of this speech of Hamlet's, Sh. takes them completely by surprise on the appearance of the Ghost, which comes upon them in all the suddenness of its visionary character. Indeed, no modern writer would have dared, like Sh., to have preceded this last visitation by two distinct appearances,—or could have contrived that the third should rise upon the former two in impressiveness and solemnity of interest. But in addition to all the other excellences of Hamlet's speech concerning the wassail-music,—so finely revealing the predominant idealism, the ratiocinative meditableness of his character,—it has the advantage of giving nature and probability to the impassioned continuity of the speech instantly directed to the Ghost. The momentum had been given to his mental activity; the full current of the thoughts and words had set in, and the very forgetfulness, in the fervor
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.

[\textit{A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within}]

2.\ an hour] Om. F, F,\q; 3.\ho\er F,\cap.

Indeed \ Fi,\q. 1 Q\q, Rowe+.

5. \ it then\] then \ Fi, \q, Rowe, Kn\t, \q, Gyce, Glo. Mob.

6. \ went\ to\] won\t \ Heussi.

\begin{itemize}
\item A flourish of trumpets and 2. pieces goes of. \q (off Q\q). . . . . . Trumpets and Guns. \q\q. \q. Fi. Noise of war-like Musick within. Rowe+.
\end{itemize}

of his argumentation, of the purpose for which he was there, aided in preventing the appearance from benumbing the mind. Consequently, it acted as a new impulse, — a sudden stroke which increased the velocity of the body already in motion, whilst it altered the direction. The co-presence of Hor., Mar., and Ber. is most judiciously contrived; for it renders the courage of Ham., and his impetuous eloquence, perfectly intelligible. The knowledge,—the unthought-of consciousness,—the sensation,—of human auditors,—of flesh and blood sympathists,—acts as a support and a stimulation \textit{a tergo}, while the front of the mind, the whole consciousness of the speaker, is filled, yea, absorbed, by the apparition. Add, too, that the apparition itself has by its previous appearances been brought nearer to a thing of this world. This accrescence of objectivity in a Ghost, that yet retains all its ghostly attributes and fearful subjectivity, is truly wonderful.

1. it is] Dyce (\textit{Remarks, &c. p. 209}): The reading of \Fi\, would greatly favour the opinion of those critics who contend that the madness of Ham. was real, not assumed; no man in his sound senses, just after remarking that the air bites shrewdly, would inquire if it were very cold. White: The reading of the \Fi\, is not entirely unworthy of consideration, because Shakespeare's purpose might well have been to suggest that state of the atmosphere between midnight and sunrise when the air bites shrewdly, although it is not very cold. Horatio's reply is not that it is cold, but that the air has this quality. However, that the \q\q are right is shown in the first scene.


3. Indeed. season] Seymour (ii, 156): This line is overloaded. 'I heard it not' is implied in 'indeed.' Read: Indeed? why then it does draw near the hour!

6. want] Abbott, \textit{\S} 5: This is a corruption from \textit{wonted}, from the verb 'wonye, Early English, \textit{wanian}, Anglo-Saxon, 'to dwell.'

6. ordnance] Collier (ed. 2): Perhaps [in explanation of the \q\q] the theatre had only two pieces belonging to it. Ben Jonson, in his '\textit{Execution against Vulcan},'
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;

7. What...my lord?] Om. in Steevens's reprint of Q,
8. wassaq] wolle Q, Q.s.
9. wassail] Dyce. wassell Qs. wassel
Huds. Huds. 9. swaggering staggering Kty conj.
sup-spring reels] up-spring reels
8. rouse] rouse Cap.
Qs. up-spring reels: F, F.s. upspring
9. wassail] Dyce. wassell Qs. wassel
reels F.s F.s. Rowe. upstart reels Pope,
Han. Han.

speaking of the burning of the Globe Theatre in 1613, tells us that the calamity was
caused by the discharge of ‘two poor chambers.’

8. wake] Dyce (Gloss.): To hold a late revel. So, in poets of a much earlier date,
we find the words watch and watching employed as equivalent to ‘debauch at night.’

A ‘rouse’ was a large glass (‘not past a pint,’ as Iago says) in which a health was
given, the drinking of which by the rest of the company formed a carouse.
Barbary Rich is exceedingly angry with the inventor of the custom, which, however,
with a laudable zeal for the honour of his country, he attributes to an Englishman,
who, it seems, ‘had his brains beat out with a pottlepot’ for his ingenuity. There
could be no rouse or carouse unless the glasses were emptied. In process of time
both these words were used in a laxer sense. They are used in their primal and
appropriate significations in ‘I've ta'en, since supper, A rouse or two too much,’ &c.—
Knight of Malta. This proves Johnson and Steevens are wrong: a rouse has here
a fixed and determinate sense. As we should now say, ‘a bumper or two too much.’
[See I, ii, 127.]

9. up-spring] Four explanations have been proposed. First: Pope (followed
by Hanmer) referred it to the King, and changed it into upstart: Johnson retained ‘up-spring,’ but adopted in a paraphrase Pope’s emendation, ‘a blustering
upstart.’ Nares adds the definition: ‘one insolent from sudden elevation.’ Singer
also prefers this interpretation. Second: Steevens started the correct explanation
when he showed by the following passage from Chapman’s Alphonsus, that the
‘up-spring’ was a German dance: ‘We Germans have no changes in our dances.
An Almain and an upspring, that is all.’ Elze confirmed it when, in his edition of
Chapman’s Alphonsus [p. 144], he showed that this ‘upspring’ was the ‘Hupfauf,’
the last and consequently the wildest dance at the old German merry-making.
See Ayer’s Drama, ed. by Keller, iv, 2840 and 2846: ‘Ey, jist geht erst der hupfauff
an. Ey, Herr, jist kummt erst der hupfauff.’ No epithet could therefore be more
appropriate to this drunken dance than Shakespeare’s ‘swaggering.’ I need hardly
add that “up-spring” is an almost literal translation of the German name. Staunton,
while assuming that ‘up-spring’ refers to a dance, understands ‘reels’ as a plural
noun, qualified by ‘up-spring.’ [I have always supposed it to be a verb, in the
same construction as ‘keeps.’ Ed.] Third: Steevens, in his note on ‘rouse,’ having
quoted from Decker’s Gull’s Hornbook: ‘Teach me, thou sovereign skinner, how
to take the German’s upsy freeze, the Danish rousa,’ &c., Caldecott inferred that
the ‘up-spring’ dance might be like the ‘upsy freeze,’ both connected with the music
and riot of a German debauch. Badham (Cambridge Essays, 1856, p. 283) went
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
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

10. drains] dreines F,F², takes Q'76.  Seymour.
12. Is it] it is F₂.  native] a native Han. ii.
13. is't:] is't; of an antique date;  15. born] borne QfF, F².

a step farther, and would substitute for 'up-spring' in the present line, _upsy freeze._

'Not that I know,' he adds, 'what _upsy freeze_ is, or whence it is derived,' but from
Steevens's citation 'it is evident that it was a species of drinking.'  'Up-spring,' he
says, 'cannot be a dance (as if the descendants of the Berserker would interpolate
their serious drinking with such a frivolous thing as a dance), nor can it mean
upstart—_i.e._ Hamlet's uncle (a likely epithet to be uttered before two persons, and
that when he has not yet seen the Ghost, and has no other feeling towards his uncle
but one of vague aversion!).'  Fourth: _Keightley (Expositor, p. 288)_ says that
it is 'used collectively for the risers from the table, a mode of expression not yet
obsolete.'

11. _kettle-drum_] _Douce_ (ii, 205): Thus Cleaveland in his _Fuscara, or the Bee Errant:_ 'Tuning his draughts with drowsie hums As Danes carowse by kettle-

12. _triumph_] _Caldecott:_ This may be the victory consequent upon the accept-
ance of the challenge to this 'heavy-headed revel,' or it may be only its pageant and
scenic display.  _Delius:_ It is here the bitterest irony.

12. _custom_] _Caldecott:_ The royal custom in Denmark near the date of this
play may be seen in Howell's _Letters:_ 'The King [Christian IV., who reigned
from 1588 to 1649] feasted my Lord once, and it lasted from eleven of the clock
till towards evening; during which time the King began thirty-five healths. ...'

The King was taken away at last in his chair.'  _Caldecott_ cites several other
authorities to the same effect.)  _Hunter_ (ii, 221): The English, in the Tudor
reigns, appear to have been a remarkably sober people, and the introduction of the
vice of drunkenness is attributed by contemporary writers to the connection with the
Netherlands.

14, 15. _native . . . manner born_] _Rushton (Sh. Illust. by Old Authors, i, 47):_ In the
manumission by Henry VIII of two villeins the following words are used:

'We think it pious and meritorious with God to manumit Henry Knight, a taylor,
and John Herle, a husbandman, our natives, as being born within the manor of Stoke
Clymmsyland.'—_Barr. Stats._ 276.  Hamlet, therefore, may speak of Denmark, or
Elsinore as the manor, himself as _natius_, to the manor born, and the 'heavy-headed
revel' as a custom incident to the manor.  'Manor' is here used, probably, in a
double sense, as in _Love's Lab._ I, i, 208, where it is contrasted with _manner._  It is of
little importance whether the word be spelt _manner_ or _manor_, the mention of one
would suggest the other, which is _idem sonans_, but different in meaning.
HAMLET

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

17-36. This...fault.] In the margin, Pope ('perhaps as being thought too verbose'), Han.
17-38. This...scandal.] Om. Fl, Rowe, Pope, Han.
17. revel] reveale Q, Qs, reveelle Q4, reuell Qs.
17, 18. revel east and west Makes Qq.

16. Dyce (Remarks, p. 210): I once heard an eminent poet maintain that this line, though it has passed into a sort of proverbial expression, is essentially nonsense: 'how,' said he, 'can a custom be honoured in the breach?' Compare the following line of a play attributed to Jonson, Fletcher, and Middleton: 'He keeps his promise best that breaks with hell.'—The Widow, III, ii. Mitford (Gent. Maga, Feb. 1845): The meaning is: 'It is a custom that will more honour those that break it than those who observe it;' 'honoured' is put for honourable, and transferred to the subject. Hunter (ii, 221): We may regard Sh. as again making an effort, like that in Oth. II, iii, 79 (and efforts by a genius such as his are not lost), to free his countrymen from so baneful a vice.

17. east and west] Johnson: That is, 'makes us traduced east and west of other nations.' [Not as Warburton says, 'this revel from morn till night.]

17-38. As these lines are not in Q, Malone supposes that they were omitted out of deference to Anne of Denmark, the queen of James I. Knight, on the other hand, ingeniously conjectures that they were added in Qs in order to qualify the harsh description of royal riot in lines 8-12. A trait of Shakespeare's character may be herein indicated: he would not suppress the lines offensive to royalty, because the description given in them was true; he only made it less severe by adding a tolerant exposition of the mode in which one ill quality destroys the lustre of many good ones. After the queen's death the passage was omitted in the Fl. Elze believes that they were erased by Sh., but restored by the printer of Qs in order to justify his title-page, wherein it was stated that the play was 'enlarged to as much again as it was,' and is inclined to believe them spurious.

18. of] For other instances of 'of' used for by, see III, ii, 154; IV, ii, 12; Macb. III, vi, 27, or Abbott, § 170.

19. clepe] From the Anglo-Saxon, cleopian, to call. See Macb. III, i, 93.

19. drunkards] Steevens: And well our Englishmen might; for in 1604 the following mention is made of a Dane in London, in Looke to it: For Ite Stabhe ye [by Samuel Rowlands, p. 21, ed. Hunterian Club]: 'You that will drinke Reynaldo vnto death: The Dane, that would carouse out of his Boote.'

19. swinish] Hunter (ii, 221): This seems to allude to some parody on the style of the kings of Denmark, which bore allusion to this habit. Clarendon: Could Sh. have had in his mind any pun upon 'Sweyn,' which was a common name of the kings of Denmark?
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes
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,—

Han. Cap. White, Del.
men.] men; Cap. complexion] complexion Q2Q3.

20. addition] Caldecott: Disparage us by using as characteristic of us, terms
that impute swinish properties, that fix a swinish ‘addition’ or title to our names.
[See Macb. I, iii, 106. Ed.]

21. at height] Caldecott: To the utmost. [An instance of the absorption of
the definite article; ‘at’ height, i.e. at the height. Thus also ‘with blood,’ I, v, 65.
See Allen’s note, Rom. &* Jul. p. 429. Abbott, § 90, considers the as simply
omitted. Ed.]

22. pith . . . attribute] Johnson: The best and most valuable part of the praise
that would otherwise be attributed to us.

24. mole] Heath: A blemish of any kind, exactly corresponding to ‘stamp
of one defect,’ in line 31. Malone: Compare: For marks described in man’s nativity
are nature’s faults, not their own infamy.’—R. of L. 538. Theobald (Sh. Rest.
p. 33) suggested mould, i.e. ‘when nature is unequally and viciously moulded, when
any complexion is too predominant.’ But he did not repeat it in his edition. Silbergeschlag (Morgenblatt No. 47, 1860, p. 1109) addsuce this passage as one of the
proofs that King James is designated under the character of Hamlet, and that the
‘vicious mole of nature’ referred to James’s aversion to the sight of a drawn dagger,
which was supposed to be derived from the shock his mother experienced, before his
birth, at seeing Rizzio assassinated.

25. As] Walker (Crit. i, 127): As is here used, I think, not in the sense of for instance,
but in that of namely, to wit; it expresses an enumeration of particulars,
not a selection from them by way of example. This is a frequent—perhaps, indeed,
the one exclusive—signification of as when employed in this construction; as in 3
Hen. VI: V, vii, 7. ‘Two Cliffsords, as the father and son.’ This is the true con-
struction of as in a number of passages, where it has been, or is likely to be, mis-
taken for the modern usage.


27. complexion] Singer: This formerly meant the constitutions or affections of
the body. Clarendon: In the old medical language there were four complexions
or temperaments; the sanguine, melancholy, choleric, and phlegmatic.

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  
To his own scandal.

32. star] starre Q. scar Theob. Pope ii +.  
33. Their] Theob. Pope ii. His Q, Pope i.  
36, 37. the dram of eale...of a doubt]  
Q, Q, Bos. Dyce i, Sta. White, Hal.  
the dram of eale...of a doubt QQ,  
the dram of Base...of worth out, Theob. +,  
Cap. Steev. '73, '78, '85, Rann.  
the dram of base...oft corrupt Anon. conj.  
ap. Rann. the dram of base...often dout,  
Steev.'93, Var.'03, Var.'13, Verp. Huds.  
i, Clarke. the drame [i.e. dream] of  
ease. The noble substance of a doubt,—  
dothe all Becket. the dram of alc...over  
dough or oft a-dough Jackson. the dram

30. that these men] Caldecott: 'It happens,' or something to that effect, must  
be supplied before these words.

32. nature...star] Clarendon: A defect which is either natural or accidental.  
Ritson: Star signifies a scar of that appearance,—it is a term of farriery.  
Theobald (Sh. Rest. p. 34): Is fortune presumed to give a 'star,' where she means  
disgrace? I should much rather suppose it an ensign of her favour, than designed to  
set a mark of Infamy. Read scar; and so the sense of the whole passage hangs  
together.

33. Their] Clarendon: After all, Sh. may have inadvertently written his.

34. undergo] Johnson: As large as can be accumulated upon man.


36-38. dram...scandal] Theobald: The Tenour of this Speech is, that let men  
have never so many, or so eminent, Virtues, if they have one Defect which accom-  
panies them, that single Blemish shall throw a Stain upon their whole Character,  
and not only so, but shall deface the very Essence of all their Goodness, to its own  
Scandal; so that their Virtues themselves will become their Reproach. I have ven-  
tured to conjecture: 'The dram of base Doth all the noble substance of worth out  
To his own scandal.' The dram of base, i.e. the least alloy of baseness or vice.  
Sh. frequently uses the adjective of quality instead of the substantive of the thing.  
Elsewhere speaking of worth, Sh. delights to consider it as a Quality that adds  
Weight to a person. See All's Well, III, iv, 31, and 'From whose so many weights  
of baseness cannot A dram of worth be drawn.'—Cym. III, v, 88. Heath: I
should rather suspect Sh. might have written 'The dram of base Doth all the noble substance oft eat out,' &c. But granting a little farther departure from the printed text, I should think it still more probable that the true reading is: 'Doth all the noble substance soil with doubt.' That is: A dram of base alloy stains all the noble substance of his virtues with the suspicion that they are mere tinsel appearances only, and not of the true sterling standard. Capell (Notes, &c. i, 126), after citing Heath with approval, adds, 'But it should seem, from the comment that the same author makes upon his second amendment, that the line stands in need of a substantive, following of' to perfect the sense of it. And this, in truth, is the light in which the editor has viewed the corruption all along; that some word was slipt out of the copy, and 'out' changed to 'a doubt' by the printer's ingenuity: the vacancy cannot be filled better than by the word in possession; and the line may be cur'd of it's baldness by no very great licence, the change of 'all' into eat; after which, the comment that has been given above [Heath's] is both a just and a perfect one.' [Which means that Capell would have read the line 'Doth eat the noble substance of worth out.' In Capell's list of Various Readings of Hamlet he cites the reading of Q, thus: of eale 4°. a. (f. ill.). This, I presume, indicates, what the Cam. Edd. ascribe to him, the conjecture of ill for 'eale.' Hereby Capell anticipated Jennens, who merely states that he ventures to read: 'The dram of ill Doth all the noble substance of good out, To his own scandal.'] In the Var. of 1773, Steevens says: 'Mr HOLT reads, The dram of base Doth all the noble substance oft adopt, &c. I would read Doth all the noble substance (i.e. the sum of good qualities) oft do out.' 'To do a thing out is to efface, or obliterate anything in drawing.' Perhaps we should say, 'To its own scandal.' [Vide infra, Steevens, 1793.] Davies (Dramatic Misc. 1784, iii, 10): The very trifling alteration of adding a letter to one word, and the changing two letters for one in another, will restore to us the original reading, 'The dram of base Doth all the noble substance oft work out,' &c. When I read this proposed emendation to the reverend and learned Mr Robertson, he not only concurred with me, but assured me he had himself made the same amendment. The apostle James hath a sentiment very similar to the present passage; 'For, whatsoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.' [In the Var. 1785, S[tephen] W[eston] proposes the same emendation. Ed.] Mason (1785): I offer as an amendment (which is at least as near the old text as any yet proposed, and which is supported by line 35), 'Doth all the noble substance of 't corrupt.' Malone (1790): 'The dram of base Doth all the noble substance of worth dount, To,' &c. To dount signified in Shakespeare's time, and yet signifies in Devonshire and other western counties, to do out, to efface, to extinguish. Thus they say, 'dout the candle, dout the fire,' &c., just as don signifies do on [or doff, do off — Steevens]. 'Dout' having been written by the transcriber doubt, and the word 'worth' having been inadverently omitted, probably the line, in the copy for the press, stood: Doth all the noble substance of doubt. The editor or printer of the Qq, finding the line too short, inserted the indefinite article, without attending to the context. Theobald's insertion of worth is fully justified by his citation from Cymbeline. [Malone, in Var. 1785, proposed 'By his own scandal;' but did not repeat it in his own edition. Ed.] Steevens [1793: Vide supra, Steevens, 1773]: I now think we should read: 'The dram of base Doth all the noble substance often dount,' &c., for surely it is needless to say — 'the ns.'e substance of worth dount,' because the idea of worth is comprehended
in the epithet noble. N. B. This improvement I owed, about four years ago, to the late Rev. Henry Homer. Rann (1794): 'Doth all, &c. oft corrupt: oft work out: eat out: by it's own scandal.' Martinus Scriblerus (Explanation and Emendations of Some Passages in the Text of Shakespeare, Edinburgh, 1814): I suppose there was a shifting of types from the upper to the lower line, and read thus: 'The dram of doubt Doth all the noble substance oft anneal To,' &c. That is, the dram of doubtful or base metal doth often, in the operation of annealing, cause the whole substance to become durably as base as itself. Whether this emendation will be made out by a comparison with the processes used in the arts, I know not, as everything connected with chemical science, or any branch of philosophy, appeareth to me too insignificant to bestow upon it one moment's attention. Zachary Jackson says that he has endeavored to give the passage some sense, but cannot speak with that perfect confidence which he does in reference to 'most of my restorations.' Boswell (1821): A clear meaning is afforded by Holt's emendation, if we take 'substance' as a nominative: 'The noble substance doth oft bring disgrace upon itself by adopting the dram of base.' If this interpretation be rejected, I would prefer to suppose that doubt means to bring into doubt or suspicion, as to fear means to create fear; to pale is to make pale. Yet I prefer Holt's change. Caldecott merely enumerates, with approval, the various changes which preceding edd. have made, and which he adopts. [See Text. Notes.] Singer (ed. i): 'The dram of bale Doth all the noble substance often Doubt To,' &c. I see no reason why doubt should be substituted for 'doubt.' Boswell's interpretation of 'doubt' is just. I have ventured to read bale (i.e. evil) as nearer to the reading of the first edition. Stearns (Sh. Treat. p. 373) adopted this reading of Singer's, and explains it as a reference to the commerce in drugs, in which a great deal of adulteration is practiced; for the word bale we have now only the word alley. Collier: It is easy to see how 'ill' might be misprinted eale, and 'often dout' of a doubt; the compositor having taken the passage by his ear only: indeed, a stronger proof of the kind could hardly be pointed out. Delius: 'The dram of bale Doth all the noble substance off and out To,' &c. In the old edd. 'off' is constantly used for of, just as doubt for dout. In MS and out, run into one word, would be readily mistaken for a doubt, especially if an abbreviation were used instead of and. The sense is: The dram of evil doth off [i.e. puts off] and doth out [i.e. puts out] all the noble substance, &c. A. E. B[are] (N. & O. Qu. 21 Feb. 1852): Eafe and eale so nearly resemble each other, and the subsequent transition to bafe is so extremely obvious, and so consistent with the sense, that there can hardly be any plausible ground for the rejection of base in favour of ill. Moreover, base is the natural antagonist of 'noble' in the next line. Now, in what way does 'the dram (i.e. an indefinitely small quantity, as gram is used now-a-days) of base' affect 'all the noble substance'? Sh. says it renders it doubtful or suspicious. 'Doubt' in this place is not a verb, but a noun substantive. The chief hindrance now to a perfect meaning consists in the restriction of 'doth' to a mere expletive. Let this restriction be removed, by conferring upon 'doth' the value of an effective verb, and the difficulty disappears: thus, 'the base doth doubt to the noble,' i.e. imparts doubt to it, or renders it doubtful. We say a man's good actions do him credit; why not also, his bad ones do him doubt? There remains 'of a' to be amended. I suggest offer; it is almost identical (in sound at least) with the original, and it materially assists in giving a much clearer applica-
The dram of eale, &c.

The meaning of the passage becomes 'The base doth the noble offer doubt to his own scandal,' that is, causes the noble to excite suspicion, to the injury of its own character. H. F. (N. & Qu. 6 March, 1852): Read 'dram of base...often dull To his,' &c., merely a substitution of letters. Periicurus Bibliophilus (N. & Qu. 17 Aug. 1852): As the least deviation from the old copies, I prefer 'The dram of base Doth, all the noble substance o'er, a doubt, To his own scandal,' i.e. doth cast a doubt over all the noble substance, bring into suspect all the noble qualities by the leaven of one dram of baseness. Singer (ed. ii): Most probably Sh. wrote: Doth all the noble substance oft doubt.' Using the word doubt for doubt in its active sense of to bring into doubt or suspicion. We have numerous old words of similar form, and in Latin dubito is written addubito by Cicero and others. It is evident that doubt could not have been the word, for the meaning is 'The dram of base renders all the noble substance doubtful or suspicious,' not that it extinguishes it altogether. I read base as suggested by Q, from its more direct opposition to noble. [Singer's text follows Q, except that base is substituted for 'eale.']

Dyce (ed. i): 'Often' [in Steevens's reading] is very questionable, because, in all probability, 'of' in the Qq is a mistake for 'of,' &dima; secondly, as Lettsom observes to me, the words 'To his own scandal' are fatal to the reading 'doubt,' for if that alteration be right they are superfluous. A verb, he adds, 'I should think must lurk under the corruption 'a doubt' or 'doubt,' with the signification of turn, pervert, corrupt, or the like. Shakespeare's meaning evidently is that a little leaven leavens the whole lump—that one vice will ruin an otherwise perfect character.' Mason's conjecture was unknown to the Rev. J. Mitford when he wrote to me as follows: 'I would read 'Doth all the noble substance oft corrupt.' In the Devonshire dialect, to 'eale' is to reproach; it may be asked, then, Did Sh. (who occasionally has provincialisms) write here 'the dram of eale' in the sense of 'the dram of reproach'? for my own part, I hardly think so. White: I leave this grossly-corrupted passage unchanged, because none of the attempts to restore it seem to me to be even worth recording, and I am unable to better them. But it has occurred to me that perhaps the corruption lurks in a part of the passage hitherto unsuspected, and that 'Doth' is either a misprint of 'Hath,' or has the sense of 'accomplishes.'

F. A. Leo (N. & Qu. 27 Dec. 1862): 'Eale,' in its real form, must have contained a sense opposite to 'noble,' and for that purpose I find no better word than vile. 'A doubt' I understand as a misprint for a draught; for Ham. had just spoken about drinking, and had just used the word 'draughts.' After that I should like to change the word 'Doth' into turns. Nichols [Notes on Sh. i, 25]: Eale is the old-fashioned mode of spelling ail=ailment, pronounced ale. 'Doth' is not the auxiliary verb, but the verb itself, the 3rd pers. sing, pres. tense of to do, which here means: to make anything what it is not, as, to do him dead—so in Johnson. 'Doubt' is the means whereby that change is effected, of and by formerly being used indifferently as a sign of the ablative. Hence the text of Q3 means that the dram of eale will, by a doubt (i.e. by the doubt that it will create as to a man's sincerity) do (i.e. convert) all this noble substance to his own scandal, laying him open to the charge of hypocrisy. [Nichols repeated this note substantially in The Athenæum, 13 Aug. 1866. Ed.] Ingleby (ap. Staunton): 'Of a doubt' is a mis-
print for *derogate*. First, they have the same number of letters. Secondly, they have the *e*, *a*, *d*, and *t* in common. Thirdly, *derogate* is the only verb that at the same time completes the sense and preserves the metre. STAUNTON: Ingleby's suggestion is ingenious, but may not the construction have been this: 'The dram of base (or *ill*, or *bale*, or *lead*, or whatsoever word the compositor tortured into *eale,* or *ease*) doth (i.e. *doeth, worketh*) all the noble substance of a pound to its own vileness?' We by no means pretend that *pound* was the actual word misrendered 'doubt;' it is inserted merely because it occurs in opposition to 'dram' in a line of Quarles's _Emblems_, b. ii, E 7,—'Where ev'ry dram of gold contains a pound of dross,—'and because it is extremely probable some such antithesis was intended here. So in Spenser's _Faerie Queene_, b. i, c. iii, s. 30:—'A dram of sweete is worth a pound of sowre.' SWYNFEN JERVIS (Proposed Emendations, &c. 1860, p. 23): Read, The dram of evil Doth all the noble substance oft outdo, To, &c. Compare Cor. II, i, 150; 'So heavenly love shal outdo hellish hate.'—Par. Lost.; 'Wherein the graver had a strife With nature, to outdo the life.'—JONSON. In CHAMBER'S Household Sh. is the following note: 'We have adopted "oft subdue" [for "of a doubt"], suggested by Mr Swynfen Jervis, and thus supported:—Son. iii, 6; and All's Well, V, iii, 217.' BAILEY (ii, 2): For 'eale' read *evil*; for 'of a doubt' read oft weigh down. 'Weigh, in some of the old copies of Hamlet, is spell away.' Compare Rich. III: V, iii, 153; Timon V, i, 154. CORSON (Jottings, &c. p. 13, 1874): All the difficulty of the passage is removed, I think, by understanding 'noble,' not as an adjective, as all the commentators have understood it, qualifying 'substance,' but as a noun opposed to 'eale,' and the object of 'substance,' a verb of which 'doth' is its auxiliary. Thus: 'the dram of eale doth all the noble, substance of' (i.e. 'with,' a sense common in the English of the time) 'a doubt (which works) 'to his own scandal.' 'Substance' is used in the sense of 'imbue with a certain essence; 'his' is a neuter genitive, standing for 'noble,' and = its.' The dram of ill *transsubstantiates* the noble, *essences* it to its own scandal. (In regard to the uses of 'of' and 'to,' see ABBOTT, § 171, 186.) The use of 'substance,' in the sense of 'essence,' was, of course, sufficiently common, and had been for more than two centuries, to justify the interpretation given. In _Macb. I, v, 48_, we have 'sightless substances' = 'invisible essences,' 'sightless' being used objectively. 'Being of one substance with the Father.'—Book of Common Prayer.CHAUCER, in The Prologue of the Nonne Preaste Tale (l. 1489 of Tyrwhitt's edition; l. 16289 of Wright's), uses the word to express the *essential* character or nature of a man. The Host objects to the Monk's Tale, as being too dull for the occasion; and, that the fault may not be thought to lie in himself, says, 'And well I wot the substance is in me, If eny thing schal wel reported be.' That is, I am so *substantiated*, so constituted, so tempered, such is my *cast* of spirit, that I can appreciate and enjoy, as well as the next man, a good story well told. Whether 'substance' can be found, in this sense, as a verb, matters not. The free functional application of words which characterized the Elizabethan English, allowed, as every English scholar knows, of the use of any noun, adjective, or neuter verb, as an active verb. This interpretation I communicated in the main to _N. & Qu._ [4 Oct. 1862]; but I did not then recognize an important element in it, that the pronoun 'his' is a neuter genitive, standing for 'noble' used as a noun. ARROWSMITH (Shakespeare's Editors, &c. 1865, p. 6) thus quote: the passage: 'The dram of base Doth all the noble substance *often*
[36. 'The dram of eale,' &c.]

draw To,' &c. HALLIWELL: This passage appears to be hopelessly corrupt, no emendation yet proposed being in the least degree satisfactory, nor have I any plausible suggestion of my own to offer. Dyce (ed. ii): The dram of evil Doth all the noble substance oft debase To &c. For this reading, now inserted in the text, I alone am answerable. CLARKE: That doubt and 'dout' were often printed the one for the other, and that the two words afforded scope for quibbling play upon them, is seen by the opening jest in A C. Merry Taly's, 1567: 'I never harde tell of more doutes but twayn, that is to say, dout the candell and dout the fyre.' H. D. (Athenaenum, 18 Aug. 1866): Hamlet so emphatically insists that one little drop always corrupts the whole mass that he would not wind up by saying it often does so. Read, therefore, 'The dram of ill Doth...overdout.' ELZE (Athenaenum, 11 Aug. 1866) thinks a very near approach to the text, together with an unobjectionable sense, may be had by reading 'the dram of evil...often daub To' &c. J. D. M. (Athenaenum, 24 Nov. 1866): The sentence is simply incomplete. I would put a dash after 'scandal.' It completed, it might read 'To his own scandal taint.' KEIGHTLEY (Expositor, 288): I read evil for 'eale,' and for of a doubt' out o' doubt, or perhaps, 'out of a doubt.' The sentence, we may see, is not complete, and it should also be recollected that the language of the whole speech is involved, as if the speaker were thinking of something else, and merely talking against time. CARTWRIGHT (New Readings in Sh., &c. 1866, p. 37): For 'eale' read leaven, for of a doubt, of a dough. PROW- EIT (N. & Qu. 25 Sept. 1869): Is it not possible that there was such a word as 'eale,' and that it was identical with the 'esil' in V, i, 264, meaning vinegar? In that case Sh. may perhaps have written 'Doth all the noble substance over-clout.' In the next scene, the posseting of the blood by poison is described like 'eager droppings into milk.' Thus Sh. here means that the small quantity of vinegar or other acid matter over-clouts, or curdles over, the whole of the substance to which it is added, so as to impart its own scandalous character to that substance. He has just used the word 'oreleavens.' Clout, to clot or curdle, is a well-known provincial expression. The unfamiliar word, clout, was mistaken by the eye for dout, and over, by the ear for of a.' THE WRITER OF THE ARTICLE ON SHAKESPEARIAN GLOS- SARIES IN THE EDINBURGH REVIEW (N. & Qu. 23 Oct. 1869): Evil is used by Elizabethan writers, and by Sh. himself, as a monosyllable, and it might, then, by a mistake of the ear, easily have been written as pronounced: eale. Again, the verb dout is used not only in its literal sense of do out, but in the secondary meaning of obscure, eclipse, prevent the manifestation of, as by Laertes in IV, vii, 192. This secondary sense very much does away with the force of Lettsom's objection to dout. Read, then, 'The dram of eil Doth all the noble substance often dout To' &c. W. M. ROSSETTI (N. & Qu. 30 Oct. 1869): Maplett, in his Green Forest, 1567, says: 'The eel being killed and addressed in wine, whoseover chaunceth to drinke of that wine so used shall ever afterward lothe wine.' May not wine thus treated have been technically termed eel (eale)? Read, then: The dram of eel Doth,' &c., i.e. the dram of eel-dressing (vitiated wine) doth often doubt (bring into suspicion and disrepute) the noble substance (of pure wine) to the scandal of the said substance. On further reflection (N. & Qu. 4 Dec. 1869), a simpler meaning for 'the dram of eale' may be assigned, viz. 'An extremely small weight, or quantity, even the sixteenth part of an ounce, of the eel-fish,' taking dram in its quantitative sense. J. WETHERILL (Athenaenum, 20 Nov. 1869) suggests 'The dram of eil Doth all the
[36. 'The dram of eale,' &c.]

noble substance oft traduced To his own scandal,' because Bacon, in his Ninth Essay, says that 'as infection spreadeth upon that which is sound and tainteth it, so this evil eye traduceth even the best actions thereof, and turneth them into an ill odour.' Rushton (Shakespeare's Euphuism, p. 93, 1871) says: 'Dram of eale' may be a misprint, or abbreviation, of dram of hellebore, or 'ele-bore,' which old authors speak of as being very poisonous; Gosson, Schoole of Abuse, 1579, says: 'One dramme of Eleborus ransacks every vein.' Daniel (Notes, &c. 1870, p. 73) says: 'the bran of meal' Doth all the noble substance of it doubt: So this one scandal....' If the four mysterious letters, e a l e, may be formed by the addition of an m into the word meale (the old spelling of meal), the change of the preceding word, 'dram,' to bran is obvious, and we have a sentence singularly in accordance with the argument of Hamlet's speech, which he illustrates by the homely simile of bran doubting or discrediting all the noble substance of the meal. If the bran of meal be accepted, the change of 'of a' to of it hardly needs apology. In So, the S being next the T in the printer's case, the error would be easily accounted for. His and this are so frequently confounded in the old copies, that no one would hesitate to correct where the sense of a passage required the change. The corruption of one into 'own' probably arose from the similarity in sound of the two words. The simile of bran and meal seems to have been a favorite one with Elizabethan writers. Sh. uses it twice elsewhere, in Cym. IV, ii, 27; Cor. III, i, 322. Hudson (1870) says: 'The dram of vile Doth all the noble substance oft abate To,' &c. I prefer vile as more likely to have been misprinted 'eale,' and I have ventured to change 'of' into oit, and 'a doubt' into abate, which was often used by old writers in the sense of cast down or depress. Perhaps attaint would give a slightly more congruous sense. Miles (Review of Hamlet, p. 16, 1870) says: 'The dram of ill Doth all the noble substance throw in doubt' seems to be the meaning of the line. Robert Roaster (Sunday Dispatch, Phila. 12 Jan. 1873): For 'often dout' read oft endow, the final t of 'dout' was inserted by the printer, misled by the occurrence of the letter at the beginning of the next line. Endow was often used in Shakespeare's time for endue, which is rendered by Bailey 'to supply,' 'to qualify.' The meaning then is: The dram of base doth often qualify all the noble substance To its own scandal. Moberly: The passage must surely be read: 'The dram of ill Doth all the noble substance ever doute To,' &c. Hudson's forthcoming edition will read, 'The dram of leaven Doth all the noble substance of 'em sour To,' &c., a reading suggested by a passage in Bacon's Henry the Seventh: 'And as a little leaven of new distaste doth commonly sour the whole lump of former merites, the King's wit,' &c. F. J. Furnivall suggests oft adote in place of 'of a doubt,' because adote meant both to grow silly and to drive silly. For the latter sense, see Gower's Confessio Amantis, III, ii, as quoted in Mätzner's Wörterbuch, 'The most wise ben otherwhile of love adoted,' i. e. made fous, besotted. John Davies (N. & Qu. 11 Mar. 1876) repeats Dyce's remark, that 'eale,' with the meaning of reproach, is still used in the western counties.'

Strachey (p. 44): Hamlet's generalizations are really drawn from the excessive brooding over his own character and circumstances, and only afterwards applied to the men and things about him. It is plainly he himself who is the original of this his description of the man in whom either nature or circumstances have unduly developed some one tendency of the character, to the injury of the proper and rational balance and harmony of the whole; and who, in consequence of this one
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,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,

Enter Ghost.] After line 38, Dyce, Sta. Clark, Huds ii. ...armed as before. 38. it] where it Q'76. 42. intents] events Ff, Rowe. advent Coll. (MS). Warb.

defect, for which he is not responsible, and should rather be pitied than blamed, is looked on with disparagement by the world, however excellent all his other qualities may be.

39. In DAVIES'S Dram. Misc. (iii, 29) an account is given from Cibber of Betterton's acting in this scene; Betterton was taught by Sir William Davenant, who had seen Taylor, one of the original performers of Hamlet [see V, ii, 274]: 'He opened the scene with a pause of mute amazement; then, rising slowly to a solemn, trembling voice, he made the Ghost equally terrible to the spectator and himself; and, in the descriptive part of the natural emotions which the ghastly vision gave him, the boldness of his exhortation was still governed by decency; manly, but not braving; his voice never rising to that seeming outrage or wild defiance of what he naturally revered.' Booth said: 'When I acted the Ghost with Betterton, instead of my awing him, he terrified me. But divinity hung round that man.' On the other hand, Macklin, after the first line, spoke the rest of the address calmly but respectfully, and with a firm tone of voice, as from one who had subdued his timidity and apprehension. Booth, says Davies, has never been surpassed in his acting of the Ghost; his slow, solemn, and undertone of voice, his noiseless tread, as if he had been composed of air, created a powerful impression. HUNTER (ii, 222): 'The idea of surprise predominates over the idea of apprehension. He did not mean that he needed protection in the presence of so gracious a figure, and the exclamation must be understood to escape him almost involuntarily. A pretty long pause should ensue after it is spoken, to allow him to recollect himself.' A stage direction [Pause] is added after this line by COLLIER (ed. ii), with the note: This minute stage direction, showing the particular manner of the old actor of the character of Hamlet, ought to be preserved, and is from the (MS). It seems natural that the performer should 'pause' to recover breath after this exclamation, and before he tremulously proceeds to question the Ghost. We believe that the modern practice on our stage has been uniform in this respect,—possibly from the oldest tradition. [See LICHENBERG'S account of Garrick, in the Appendix. Ed.]

40. health] CLARENDON: A healed or saved spirit.

42. intents] NICHOLS (i, 27) advocates 'events' of Ff, in the sense of 'coming forth.' 'The Ghost had already appeared twice,—this was the third time of his coming forth.' CORSON: The reading of the Ff is better than that of the Qq. Events is equivalent to issues. The meaning is, not that Hamlet attributes any intents to the Ghost, but that the Ghost's appearance is to him prognostic of certain issues or events; 'thy' is the personal, and not the possessive, adjective pronoun; in other words, it is used objectively.
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 canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,

45. Father; Royal Dane, O] Anon.
father, royal Dane, & Qq. Father,
Royal Dane: O Ff et cet.
O] Oh, oh Ff, Rowe, Cald.
47. canoniz'd ] canonized Glo. +, Mob.
47. canoniz'd...death] bones heart'd
in canonized earth Han.
48. cerements] cerments Ff, Cer-
ments F F3 F4, Rowe +, Cap.

43. questionable] Theobald: That is, to be conversed with, inviting question,
as in Mach. I, iii, 43. Caldecott: 'So doubtful, that I will at least 'make inquiry
to obtain a solution.'

45. Royal Dane] Pye (p. 312): The change of punctuation proposed in
the following anonymous observation, published in the St. James's Chronicle, 15 Oct.
1761, is so convincing that I shall without hesitation adopt it: '[To put a colon
after "Dane"] seems to be a strange climax (if not an anti-climax). But a slight
alteration in the pointing will remove all objections, preserve the beauty of the
climax, and perhaps give an additional force to the whole passage. Thus, "I'll call
thee Hamlet, King, Father,—Royal Dane, O answer me." The climax naturally
and beautifully ends with the endearing appellation of "Father." He then addresses
the Ghost by the general appellation, "Royal Dane, O answer me."' This seems
the criticism of no mean critic. [Mr Edwin Booth has informed me that his father
always spoke the line thus, and that he himself has always so spoken it. I believe
Mr Irving has also adopted it. To me it is unquestionably the true reading, and I
have not hesitated to punctuate the text accordingly. Ed.]

47. canoniz'd] Warburton: Bones over which the rites of sepulture have been
performed, or which were buried according to the canon. Blake way: The accent
is on the second syllable. [See Walker, Vers. 197; Abbott, § 491.]

47-50. Johnson has a long note on these lines, called forth by Warburton's
superfluous change of 'hearsed in earth,' and sums up the whole sentence in:
'Why dost thou appear, whom we know to be dead?' Heath (p. 531): By the ex-
pression hearsed in death is meant, shut up and secured with all those precautions
which are usually practised in preparing dead bodies for sepulture, such as the wind-
ing-sheet, shroud, coffin, &c. So that death is here used, by a metonymy of the
antecedent for the consequent, for the rites of death, such as are generally esteemed
due, and practised with regard to dead bodies.

48. cerements] Clarendon: Q 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. [Does it not rather show that 'ceren-
omies' was pronounced as a trisyllable; 'cermonies?' and is it not an additional
proof of what Staunton and Walker affirm in reference to the monosyllabic pro-
nunciation of cere in ceremony, ceremonious, ceremonialis? See Mach. III, iv, 36.
Ed.] See Cotgrave: 'Cerat: A Plaister made of Waxe, Gummies, &c., and cer-
taine oyles wee also, call it, a Cerot or Seaecloth.'
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,
Revisits thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature


49. **in-urn'd**] DYCE: In my Few Notes, &c., p. 137, I remarked: 'Perhaps the reading of the Qq is preferable, because in-urn'd implies that the body had been reduced to ashes,'—a remark which I now wish to recall. Compare Cor. V, vi, 145.

146. CLARENDON: 'Urn' is used for 'grave' in Hen. V: I, ii, 228.

52. **complete**] Accented on the first syllable. See WALKER, Vers. 292; Crit. ii, 21: ABBOTT, § 492. DOUCE: It is accented on the second syllable in King John, II, 1, 433, 434.

52. **steel**] STEEVENS: Probably Sh. introduced the Ghost in armour for the sake of greater solemnity; though it was really the custom of the Danish kings to be buried in that manner. Vide Olaus Wormius, cap. vii: '... postquam... rex collum sibi... extruxisset, cui post obitum regio diademate exornatum, armis indutum, inferendum esset cadaver.'

53. Revisits] WALKER (Crit. ii, 128): Quare, in cases where *st* would produce extreme harshness, and where at the same time the old copies have *s*, whether we ought not to write the latter? [The text which I have adopted is my answer. ED.]

53. **glimpses**] HUNTER (ii, 223): The scene is thus made more picturesque by introducing the moon sending forth her beams on the platform, either through interstices of dark clouds, or, what is more probable, through the openings among the battlements.

54. **we**] THEOBALD, CALDECOTT, and CLARENDON say that in strict grammar *us* should be here used; but WALKER (Crit. i, 58) evidently, as LETTSOM notes, connects 'we fools' with 'That,' and so does MOBERLY in his excellent paraphrase: 'What may it mean that we with our blind nature (are made) so horribly to shake our composure of spirit with thoughts beyond the reach of our souls?' adding: 'This random connexion of the clause suits well with the headlong impetuosity of the speech.' On the same grammatical grounds TSCHISCHWITZ reads, 'So horribly do shake.' ABBOTT, § 216, thus explains 'and we': After a conjunction and before an infinitive we often find *I, thou, &c.,* where in Latin we should have *me,* 'te,' &c. The conjunction seems to be regarded as introducing a new sentence, instead of connecting one clause with another. Hence the pronoun is put in the nominative, and a verb is, perhaps, to be supplied from the context. So, too, we have 'we' for *us* in III, ii, 231, since it stands quasi-independently at some distance from the governing word, 'touches.'

54. **fools**] WARBURTON: Intimating that we are only kept (as formerly fools in a great family) to make sport for nature, who lies hid only to mock and laugh at us for our vain searches into her mysteries. MASON (p. 378): A paraphrase of the
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 impartation did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
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?

55. *horridly*] *horribly* Theob+.
56. *the reaches*] *thee; reaches* Ff.
58. *beckens*] *beckins* Q1Q2, beckens FFF.
60. *courteous*] *curteous* Q1Q2Q4Ff.

61. *waves*] *wafts* Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt.

to a more] off to a Johns.

more removed] remote Q76.

63. I will] will I Ff, Rowe, Knt, Coll. Dyce i, White, Sta.


57. *wherefore*] See *Walker, Vers. III*, for instances where the accent in this word is shifted at pleasure from one syllable to another; see *Rom. & Jul. II*, ii, 113. Also *Abbott, § 75*, for the use of *why*.

61. *waves*] Dyce: Although the Ff here and in line 78 have *wafts,* but *waves* in line 68, yet undoubtedly Sh. in these three places used the *same form of the word*; and as the Qq in all three places have *waives,* they surely are to be followed. **Clarendon**: Either word means *beckon,* and both are used by Sh. So we have a double form of *'graff'* and *'graft'*. 61. *removed*] **Cambridge Editors**: Steevens says, *'F, reads remote.'* We have not been able to find this reading in any copy of that edition which we have consulted. Sir Frederic Madden has kindly collated for us the four copies in the British Museum, all of which have *'removed.'* This is also the reading of Capell’s copy, of Malone’s, and of two others to which we have had access, and it is the reading in Mr Booth’s reprint. [It is also the reading in my copy of *F*, Ed.]

64. *should*] See *Abbott, § 328*, for instances of *should* denoting a statement not made by the speaker, like *sollen* in German. **Clarendon** refers to *Mach. I*, iii, 45, as a parallel instance, but Abbott, § 323, seems to interpret the use of *should* in that line more correctly, and is so cited in the Var. ed.
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
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason

73. deprive] Johnson: In this place it signifies simply to take away. So also Dyce interprets it in 'deprives our own sight.'—Beau. & Fl. _The Maid in the Mill_, IV, iii, 8. Walker (Crit. iii, 261): That is, depose reason from her throne in your mind. 'Deprive' is here synonymous with depose. Lettsom (Foot-note to the foregoing): I have observed two examples of this use of the word in _R. of L._ 1186 and 1752. Again, 'And join together to deprive my breath.'—Woman _Killed with Kindness_, Dodsley vii, p. 261; 'What son, what comfort that she (Fortune) can deprive?—Marston, _Antonio & Mellida_, Part i, III, i. Abbott, § 200: 'Deprive,' meaning to 'take away a thing from a person,' like 'rid,' can dispense with 'of' before the impersonal object. This explains the present passage: 'which might take away your controlling principle of reason.' Compare also the tendency (§ 290) to convert neuter verbs into active verbs. See also I, iii, 51.

73. _sovereignty of reason_ Warburton: The same as sovereign or supreme reason. Thus, 'At once to betray the sovereignty of reason in my soul.'—King Charles, _Ikun Basilike_. CaPELL (i, 126): Deprive you of the command of your reason, of that sovereignty which you now exercise over it. Steevens: The phrase does not signify, to deprive your princely mind of rational powers, but to take away from you the command of reason, by which man is governed. Gifford (Jonson's _New Inn_, p. 352, ed. 1816): 'Sovereignty' here is merely a title of respect, and the whole phrase means neither more nor less than to deprive your lordship, or your honour, or your highness, of reason. [Aliquando _dormitat_, &c. As Hunter says, Hamlet was no sovereign. Ed.] Caldecott: Dispossess the sovereignty of your reason. So that he throws his image forcibly before his reader, Sh. leaves it to him to arrange his pronouns and articles, and grammatically thread his meaning. Compare 'nobility of love,' I, ii, 110. For instances where pronominal and other adjectives are placed before a whole compound noun instead of, as they strictly should be, before the second of the two nouns, see Abbott, § 423. So 'your cause of distemper,' iii, ii, 321; 'His means of death,' i.e. 'the means of his death.'—IV, v, 207. 'My better part of man.'—_Macb._ V, viii, 18.
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.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands! 80

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;

[Breaking from them.]

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.

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,

Another part... Cap. (substantially.) A more remote part... Theob. Enter... Re-enter... Pope +.


89. Have after] CLARENDON: Like 'have with you.' See Rich. III: 1II, 11, 92. In Foxe's narrative, Latimer said to Ridley on their way to the stake, 'I have after, as fast as I can follow.'

91. it] CLARENDON: That is, the issue.
91. Nay] CLARENDON: That is, let us not leave it to Heaven, but do something ourselves.

Stage Direction] Owing to the length of time that elapses before the companions of Ham, rejoin him, DELIUS thinks it unlikely that the dialogue with the Ghost took place on the same Platform where Ham broke loose from his friends. Tschischwitz changes the scene to 'A Wilderness,' because 'Ham must have followed the Ghost a long distance, since he refuses to go farther. His question also, "Whither wilt thou lead me?" shows that, despite his courage, horror is beginning to creep over him; and at the close of the scene the Ghost speaks from under the ground.' The earliest change in this stage direction that I can find is in SCHROEDER's adaptation of the play for the Hamburg theatre, in 1781. Here the scene is laid in 'A Graveyard with the Church in the background.'
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,
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:
But this eternal blazon must not be

13. that I am] being Seymour.
18. knotted] knotty Ff, Rowe, Pope,
19. an end] on end Pope +, Jen. Mal.

18. fretful] fretfull Ff, Fv, farestfull
   Qq, Jen. Tsch.
20. porpentine] porcupine Q'76, Rowe
   Sing. El. Sta. Clarke, Hal.

To fast might be considered as one of the punishments inflicted on the wicked. Dyce
(ed. i.): If the old text be wrong, and certainly the passages in Chaucer, &c., as
given above, do not fully establish it, Steevens’s conj. of waste in is perhaps the
most probable alteration yet proposed. [This remark about Steevens’s conj. is
omitted in Dyce (ed. ii), and citations from Chaucer, &c. alone are given.] White:
These fires were those of Purgatory, in which the Ghost was confined for the day
only, and so were not lasting in any sense. ‘Fast’ may be used here in its radical
sense of religious observance, and without any allusion to abstinence from food, or
there may be a reference to the old notion contained in the extract from Chaucer.
Tschischwitz: Lasting cannot be right, because the Ghost was in Purgatory, nor
is to fast in any better, since the old king wanders about outside his ‘prison-house,’
and could, if he chose, satisfy his hunger. Clearly, the true opposite to ‘walk’
is what I have adopted in my text, ‘confined fast.’ [See Theobald supra. Ed.]

14. burnt and purged] Farmer: Thus Gawain Douglas, in his translation of
Æn. vi, 740, says that it is a nefedful thing to suffer pain and torment, . . . some
in the wyndis, sum under the watter, and in the fire uthir sum.
Till the mony vices
Contrakkit in the corpis be done away And purgit.’

17, 18. Make . . . start . . . to] For the omission and insertion of ‘to’ in the
same sentence, see Abbott, § 350, and I, v, 178.

19. an end] For instances of nouns, adjectives, and participles with the prefix a,
see Abbott, § 24, where it is shown that a represents some preposition, as ‘in,’ ‘on,’
‘of,’ &c., contracted by rapidity of pronunciation, and takes an n before a vowel for
euphony. See also § 182, and of this play, I, iii, 119; II, ii, 466; III, i, 165; III,
iv, 122; and Macb. V, v, 49. Eastwood and Wright (Bible Word-Book, p. 2):
This prefix a- or an- is generally said to be a corruption of the Anglo-Saxon particle
on-, but more probably the two are essentially identical, and only different dialectical
forms of the same. In many instances the two forms remain side by side, as in aboard
and on-board, aground and on ground.

21. eternal] Walker (Crit. i, 62) proposes infernal, and cites it among instances
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list! If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

Ham. O God!

Ghost. Revenge his soul 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,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed

22. List, list] list Hamlet Ff (Hamlet Ff), Rowe, Cald. Knt, White, Del.
23. love—] Rowe. love. QqFf.
26. murder?] Murder? Ff. Murder. Qq. murder! Qq,* Sing. ii, Dyce,
29. Haste me] Qq. Haft me QQ, Qq.
32. shouldst] shouldst QQ, Qq.

of 'an inaccurate use of words in Sh., some of them owing to his imperfect scholarship (imperfect, I say, for he was not an ignorant man, even on this point), and others common to him with his contemporaries.'

21. blazon] Caldecott: 'Such promulgation of the mysteries of eternity must not be made to beings of a day.' Wedgwood: 1. To blow abroad, to spread news, to publish. 2. To portray armorial bearings in their proper colours. Moberly: 'A blaze' is a white mark upon a horse; whence to blaze trees is to notch them with an axe, so as to mark the way back. To 'blazon,' therefore, means properly to mark out; hence 'to reveal.'

24. O God!] Seymour (ii, 159) considers this as an unnecessary interpolation of some actors; so also the Ghost's repetition of 'Murder' in line 27.

27. For this line Tschischwitz substitutes the two corresponding lines of Q.

30. meditation] Warburton: This word is consecrated by the mysticks to signify that flight of mind which aspires to the enjoyment of the supreme Good. So that the two most rapid things in nature are here employed: the ardency of divine and human passion in an enthusiast and a lover. Johnson: This is so ingenious that I hope it is just. Caldecott: That is, 'as the course and process of thought generally.' We have 'I'll make him fly swifter than meditation,' in the Prologue to Wily Beguiled. It was not improbably, therefore, a common saying.

31. sweep] Theobald (Sh. Rest. p. 50) conjectured scoop, not only from the fitness of the word, but from its use in Mach. IV, iii, 219. He did not repeat the conj. in his edition.

32. shouldst] For instances of 'should' where we now use would, see Abbott, 322 or Mach. III, vi, 19.
That roots itself in case 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

33. roots] roots Qq. roots Ff, Rowe,  
i, Sta. Del. Clarke.  
Lethe] Lethe's Q'76, Rowe +,  
Jen.  
35. 'Tis] Q'76. 'Tis Qq. It's Ff,  
Rowe.  
my] mine Ff, Bos. Cald. Kn.,  
Coll. Sing. Dyce i, White, Sta. Ktly,  
Del. Huds.,  
35. orchard] garden Q'76.  
36. so] Om. Pope.  
38. know, thou] knowe thou QqF,Fv.  
F, know thou, Q'76.  
39. life] heart Q'76.

32. fat weed] Tschischwitz: If Sh. had any particular plant in mind, it must have been the asphodel, with its numerous bulbs, thick sown over the meadows of the lower regions. Lucian (περὶ πέτρων, 5) thus introduces this plant in connection with the Lethean draft: περιαυλητής δὲ τὴν λίμνην ἐκ τὸ εἶσον, λεμίων ὑποδέχεται μέγας, τὸ ὄφειδος κατάφυος, και πολὺς μνήμος πολέμιοι.

32, 34. shouldst...Wouldst] ANON. (Misc. Obs. 1752, p. 17): As the passage stands, we must read it with a note of interrogation, and even then it is scarce passable. Transpose the ‘shouldst’ and the ‘Wouldst’: ‘And duller wouldst thou be’, &c. This is pertinent and natural, and we find the Ghost speaks a little more to the purpose.

33. roots] Capell (i, 127): The moderns have sunk a great beauty by not following the Ff; for in ‘roots’ is an idea of action that diminishes the comparison’s beauty, which consists in inaction. Steevens (quoted by Dyce in his ed. i) paraphrases Capell, and adds: This dull root pluck’d from Lethe flood. — The Humorous Lieutenant, IV, iii, Beau. & Fl. vol. vi, ed. Dyce. Caldecott: We have the phrase [‘rot’] again in Ant. & Cleo. I, iv, 47: ‘To rot itself with motion.’ Knight: Whiter, in his Etymological Dict., speaking of this passage, in connection with the theory of ease belonging to the idea of being earthed—fixed, resting—says, ‘It is curious that Sh. uses ease as connected with a term which most strongly expresses the idea of being fixed in a certain spot, or earth.’ White: The Q4 are confirmed by the passage from Ant. & Cleo. If in the one case the flag rods itself with motion, it seems clear that in the other it must root itself with ease. The opposition of ‘roots’ to ‘stir’ in the next line also supports this reading. Staunton: It is difficult to determine which expression deserves the preference.

33. Lethe] For instances of the conversion of one part of speech into another, especially in the case of rivers, see Abbott, 22. [See ‘moment’s leisure,’ I, iii, 133.] For the omission of the article before the names of rivers, see Koch, ii, 169; Mätzner, iii, 158.

37. process] Clarendon: This has here, perhaps, the sense of an official narrative, coming nearly to the meaning of the French process verbal. By a proclamation, dated 18 Aug. 1553, it was forbidden, without licence, ‘to prynte any bookes, matter, ballet, ryme, interlude, processe, or tretys.’—The English Drama and Stage (Roxburghe Library), p. 17.
Now wears his crown.

*Ham.*** O my prophetic soul!*

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
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,

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**40, 41. O my...uncle?** Walker (Vers. 290), Sing. ii, Dyce, White, Glo. +, Mob. One line, QqFF, et cet.

**41. My? mine FF, Rowe, Knt, Sing.** ii, Dyce i, White, Sta. Kty, Del.

**uncle?** QqFF, Rowe +, Cap.


**Ay...adulterate** Incestuous, adulterate Seymour.

**43. witchcraft** witchcraft QqFF, Pope. *wits* QqFF, Rowe, Cald.

**with** hath F, F, F, and F, Rowe.

**43. gifts,**—] gifts, QqFF, gufts, F,

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**40. prophetic**] HUDSON: Hamlet has divined the truth before. MOBERLY: My very soul abhorred the murderer, even when I knew not the crime.

**42. Ay?** WALKER (Crit. iii, 262) thinks this ‘Ay’ should be duplicated, and the first should end line 41. See also Art. lxix, vol. ii.

**42. adulterate**] CLARENDON: Like ‘emulate,’ I, i, 83, for emulous. See Lover’s Tract. 175.

**48. that**] See ABBOTT, § 277, for other instances of ‘that’ used for ‘such.

52. **To**] CLARENDON: Compared to. See I, ii, 140; III, i, 52.

52. **those of mine**] CLARENDON: An inaccurate construction, like one found in Bacon, *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**] For instances of the noun absolute (‘virtue’ has here no verb), see ABBOTT, § 417
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garlic.
But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,

55. lust,] but Qq.
56. 57. Will...garbage.] One line, Ff, Rowe.
56. sate] sort Qq, Tsch. feat F,F,F.
56. 57. bed, And] bed, Then sink to misery, and Seymour.
57. prey] pray Q,Q,Q,F,F,
  on] in F,F.
58. scent] sent Q,Q,Q,F,F,
  morning] mornings Ff, Rowe.

58. morning air] morning-air Kty.
59. within my orchard] in my Gar
den Q76.

Knt.

56. sate] Tschischwitz: The reading of Qq makes excellent sense, even without changing 'in' to from. 'Even in a celestial bed lust will separate, detach itself, &c.' Not only 'link'd,' but also 'prey,' shows sort to be the emphatic word. It is small wonder if German commentators prefer 'sate' to sort, but Englishmen, before whose vision the enormous breadth of their own almost square beds must have instantly arisen, ought to have conceived the right idea of separation in bed. Moreover, 'sate itself' cannot be connected with 'prey on garlic' on physiological grounds.

60. custom] Instances are given in the Var. '21 to show that an 'after-dinner sleep' (Meas. for Meas. III, i, 33) was in general customary.
60. in] Clarendon: A somewhat similar use of the preposition of, in the Qq, occurs in Love's Lab. I, i, 43. For the use of of, see Abbott, § 176.
61. secure] Walker (Vers. 292): Accent on the first syllable, as in Oth. IV, i, 72, and as 'complete' in Ham. I, iv, 52. Staunton (Note on Lear, IV, i, 20): Careless, unguarded. Thus, in Sir T. More's Life of Edward V: 'When this lord was most afraid, he was most secure; and when he was secure, danger was over his head.' Again, Judges, viii, 11: 'And Gideon... smote the host: for the host was secure.'
62. hebenon] Grey (ii, 287): This stands, by metathesis, for henebon, that is, henbane, of which the most common kind (Hyoscyamus niger) is certainly narcotic, and perhaps if taken in a considerable quantity might prove poisonous. Pliny (Nat. Hist. lib. xcv, cap. 4) states that the oil made from the seeds of this plant, instilled into the ears, will injure the understanding. Steevens: So, in Drayton, Barons Wars, p. 51: 'The pois'ning henbane and the mandrake drad.' Again, in the
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

63. my] Qq, Jen. Glo. +, Mob. mine  
Rowe.

64. leperous] leprous Q, Q4, Q4, leaper-
ous F, F: leprous F: leprous Q4, Q4.

Philosopher's Fourth Satire of Mars, by Anton, 1616: 'The poison'd henbane, whose
cold juice doth kill.' The word is written differently in Marlowe's Jew of Malia
(Works, p. 164, ed. Dyce): '— the blood of Hydra, Lerna's bane, The juice of
hebon, and Cocyus' breath.' DOUCE: In the English edition by Batman on Bar
tholomæus de Proprietatibus Rebus, the article for the wood ebony is entitled, 'Of
Ebeno, cap. 52.' It is not surprising that the dropping into the ears should occur,
because Sh. was perfectly well acquainted with the supposed properties of the hen-
bane, as recorded in Holland's translation of Pliny, and elsewhere, and might apply
this mode of use to any other poison. CALDECOTT: The medical professors of
Shakespeare's day believed that poison might be introduced into the system through
the ears; the eminent surgeon, Ambrose Paré, Shakespeare's contemporary, was
suspected of having, when he dressed the ear of Francis II, infused poison into it.
Dr Sherwen informs us that in Gower's Confessio Amantis the couch of the god of
sleep was made 'Of Hebenus, that sleepe tree.' SINGER: The French word
hebenin, applied to anything made from ebony, comes indeed very close to the
hebon of Sh. ELZE: If the citation from Marlowe be correct, it might be better
to read the line: 'With juice of cursed hebon in a phial.' Or perhaps should we
not conjecture that hemlock was intended here? BEISLEY (Sh.'s Garden, p. 4):
'Hebenon' might have been originally written enoron, one of the names at that time
of Solanum maniacum, called also deadly nightshade, a more powerful poison than
henbane. TSCHISCHWITZ: The hebona of the Qq can be only a mistaken substitu-
tion of the Spanish and Italian, ebano; French, êbène; Latin, ebenus and hebenus.
Probably the -on of 'hebenon' was caused by the following 'in,' so that we may
suppose that originally the word here was heben, the only correct etymological form,
although it was sometimes incorrectly written hebon. MOBERLY: Not surely ebony
(Diospyros), the fruit of which is often edible; but henbane, or Hyoscyamus, which
is a strong narcotic poison. It does not indeed produce any leprous symptoms; but
the belief of its doing so would, on the theory of signatures, be founded on the
clammy appearance of the plant.

65. with blood] An instance of the absorption of the definite article; see I,
iv, 21.

66. courses] HUDSON: Sh. here implies as much as was then known touching
the circulation of the blood.

68. vigour] STAUNTON: This may be right; but rigueur seems more suitable to
the context, and more accordant with the supposed effects of narcotics formerly.

68. posset] CLARENDON: The only instance in Sh. of its use as a verb.
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood; so did it mine;
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, unaneated;

69. **eager**] **Aygre Ff. aigre Knr.**

71. **bark'd**] **barck't Qq: barkt QQ.**

72. **lazar-like**] **Lazerlike Qq.**

75. **of queen**] and **Queene Ff (Queen F, F4) Rowe, Knr, Del.**

76. **blossoms**] **blosom White; Dyce, and Kty conj.**

77. **Unhousel'd**] Theob. **Vnhuzled**

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69. **eager**] CLARENDON: Cotgrave gives: 'Aigre: Eage, sharpe, tart, biting, sower.' EARL OF ROCHESTER (1761, cited by C. E. BROWNE, *Atheneum*, 3 April, 1875): The word *eager* is a substantive, and not an adjective: it being a general English name for acids of all kinds. Had the original words been 'eager droppings into milk,' alluding to the making of silliibus, the thought would have been inverted; for the milk does not curdle, but is curdled by the acid it is milked upon. Read, therefore, 'like *eager*, dropping into milk.'

71. **instant**] HUDSON: Used in the Latin sense of *instans*, urgent, importunate, itching.

75. **dispatch'd**] WARBURTON: In the sense of *bereft*. DYCE (Few Notes, &c., p. 139): *Despoil'd* of Coll. (MS) conveys merely the idea of deprivation, while 'dispatch'd' expresses the *suddenness of the bereavement*. CLARENDON: Sh. would scarcely have used this word 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 Lear, IV, v, 12.

77. **Unhousel'd**] POPE: That is, without the sacrament being taken. THEOBALD: From the old Saxon word for the sacrament: *husel*. Spenser calls the sacramental fire the *housling fire*.

77. **disappointed**] THEOBALD: Read *unappointed*, *i. e. no reconciliation to Heaven, no appointment of penance by the Church*. As in Measures for Measures, III, i, 60. JOHNSON: 'Disappointed' is the same as *unappointed*, and may be properly explained *unprepared*; a man well furnished with things necessary for any enterprise is said to be well *appointed*. BOUCHER (Gloss. of Archaic and Provincial Words, s. v. *Anyeal*) [cited by B. J. S. N. & Qu. 1 Jan. 1853]: A clear and consistent meaning consonant with Shakespeare's manner will be given to the passage if, instead of 'disappointed,' we substitute *unassoiled*, *i. e. without absolu*
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head;
Oh, horrible! oh, horrible! most horrible!

80. Oh...ok] Fl. O...d Q3.

tion. It must be allowed that no instance can be given of the word unassailed, but
neither does any other instance occur to me of 'unhouseled' except here. Hunter
(ii, 224): Perhaps unassailed may have been the word, which is equivalent to un-
absolved.

77. unaneled] Pope: No knell rung. Theobald: According to Skinner,
Aeneid is unctus, so that 'unaneled' must signify unanointed, not having the ext-
reme unction. Jennens: It can hardly be doubted that Sh. wrote here unaneled'd.
To anoint was a phrase in common use, meaning to anoint. See James, v, 14, in the
Rhemish Test. 1582, and the notes on the passage, which prove that anoint and
anoint were words indifferently used at that time. Tyrwhitt: 'So when he was
howseled and eeled, and had all that a christian man ought to have.'—Morte
anelynge, and confirmation, he sayed, be no sacraments of the church.'—Sir Thomas
More's Works, p. 345. Caldecott: In the advertisement to his notes, Stephen
Weston quotes Sophocles, Antigone, 1071: ἄφωνον, ἀκτερσον, ἄφωνον νέκνεν, and
adds, ἄφωνον, disappointed or unprovided, unportioned, unprepared with sacrifices
for the infernal gods; ἄφωνον, unhouseled, without the sacrament or holy rites;
ἀκτερσον, unaneled, without the holy oil or the honours of burial.

80. Johnson: It was ingeniously hinted to me by a very learned lady ['probably
Mrs Montagu'—Cam. Edd.] that this line seems to belong to Hamlet, in whose
mouth it is a proper and natural exclamation; and who, according to the practice of
the stage, may be supposed to interrupt so long a speech. Knight: It was always
spoken by Garrick, in his character of Hamlet, as belonging to the Prince, according
to stage tradition. Collier (ed. ii): The (MS), who was usually very attentive to
such matters, made no change. White, Staunton, and Dyce think it probable
that this line should be given to Hamlet, but do not venture to change the text of
all the old copies. Knightley says, 'beyond question' it belongs to Hamlet.
Clarke thinks that it 'markedly belongs to the Ghost, if it were only on account
of their triple iteration, which is so completely consistent with the previous threefold
"List, list, oh, list!" and the subsequent solemn repetition of "Swear!"'

80. Oh] Corson: A distinction should be made between the emotional interjec-
tion, 'Oh,' and the 'O,' vocative. It can be seen, I think, that the distinction was
intended in the Ff, although it is not invariable. But in a modernized text consist-
ency requires that the distinction should be made, as it is one that is observed in
modern orthography. It is a distinction, too, not merely fictitious, as might be sup-
posed, but based on good ground. 'There is a difference between "O sir!" "O
King!" and "Oh! sir," "Oh! Lord," both in sense and pronunciation. As to the
sense, the O prefixed merely imparts to the title a vocative effect; while the Oh
conveys some particular sentiment. And as to the sound, the O is enclitic; that is
to say, it has no accent of its own, but is pronounced with the word to which it is
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;  

84. howsoever] hówovere Qq.  
85. Tain'] Tain't QQ Q.  
86. aught] ought QqFf, Rowe, Pope, Cap.  
89. matin] matine QqFf. morning Q'76.  

attached, as if it were its unaccented first syllable. The term Enclitic signifies "re- 
clining on," and so the interjection O in "O Lord" reclines on the support afforded 
to it by the accentual elevation of the word "Lord." So that "O Lord" is pro-
nounced like such a dissyllable as alike, alike, away; in which words the metrical 
stroke could never fall on the first syllable. Oh! on the contrary, is one of the 
fullest of monosyllables, and it would be hard to place it in a verse except with the 
stress upon it. Thus, in Wordsworth: "But she is in her grave,—and oh, The dif-
fERENCE to me!"—Earle's Philology of the English Tongue, 2d ed. pp. 191, 192.

83. luxury] Dyce (Gloss.): Lasciviousness, its only sense in Sh.  
89. matin] Elze: Drake in his Sh. and his Times, ii, 414, prints matins in his 
citation of this passage. The rare occurrence elsewhere of 'matin' is sufficient to 
arouse suspicion, and one is tempted to change it to matins here. Clarendon: We 
can find no other instance of its use in the present sense.

90. his] Halliwell: Strictly speaking, 'his' should be her, the female only giving the light.

that is no longer seen when the light of morning approaches. Compare Per. II, iii,  
42. Dyce (Gloss.): The former explanation is, I apprehend, the true one. Com-
pare Nash: '— the ostrich, the most burning-sighted bird of all others, insonmuch 
as the female of them hatcheth not hir egs by covering them, but by the effectual 
rais of hir eies;' &c.—The Unfortunate Traveller, &c., 1594, sig. II 4. See 
Abbott, 8 442, for the use of un- and in-; and Macb. IV, iii, 123.

90. fire] Douce (ii, 224): It was the popular belief that ghosts could not endure 
the light, and consequently disappeared at the dawn of day. This superstition is 
derived from our northern ancestors, who held that the sun and everything that con-
tained light or fire had the property of expelling demons and spirits of all kinds. 
With them it seems to have originated in the stories that are related in the Edda 
concerning the battles of Thor against the giants and evil demons, wherein he made 
use of his dreadful mallet of iron . . . Many of the transparent precious stones 
were supposed to have the power of expelling evil spirits, and the flint and other 
stones found in the tombs of the northern nations, and from which fire might be ex
Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me. [Exit.

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! what else?
And shall I couple hell? Oh, 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,
tracted, were imagined to be efficacious in confining the manes of the dead to their proper habitations. They were called Thor's hammers.


93. Hold, hold, my] hold, hold my Q, Q, hold, my Q, hold my Q, FF. 95. stifly] swiftly Qq, strongly Q'76. 96. while] whiles Qq. 100. saws] saws Qq, saws Qq, reg. 

92. Coleridge: I remember nothing equal to this burst unless it be the first speech of Prometheus, in the Greek drama, after the exit of Vulcan and the two Afrites. But Sh. alone could have produced the vow of Ham. to make his memory a blank of all maxims and generalized truths, that 'observation had copied there,'—followed immediately by the speaker noting down the generalized fact, line 108. 93. Oh, fie! Capell omitted these words, 'as impertinent in the highest degree.' Steevens suspected that they were an interpolation, because they hurt the measure, and were of an almost ludicrous turn. Mitford, also (Gen. Maga. 1845, p. 583), believed that they should be removed, and Dyce (ed. ii) pronounced their omission as probably right. Boswell defended them because they occur again in II, ii, 564. 97. globe] Clarendon: Here Hamlet puts his hand upon his head. 98. table] Clarendon: That is, tablet. Compare All's Well, I, i, 106. 99. fond] That is, foolish. See Rom. & Jul. III, iii, 52. 99. records] Walker, Vers. 133, shows by examples that the accent in the verb is variable, but in the noun it is on the last syllable. In recorder it is on the first. See also Abbott, § 490.

100. saws] Dyce (Gloss.): Sayings, maxims. 100. pressures] Dyce (Gloss.): Impressions,—as of a seal; see III, ii, 23.—
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;
It is: ‘Adieu, adieu! remember me.’
I have sworn’t.

Hor. [within] My lord, my lord!
Mar. [within]
Hor. [within]
Ham. So be it!

108. smile] MOBERLY: As the king had recently done, when he called Hamlet his son.

110. word] STEEVENS: An allusion to the watch-word, given every day in military service. QUINCY (MS Corrections in F, p. 31): Word is substituted for ‘word,’ referring probably to the solemn duty which Ham. had just undertaken.

114. So be it] CAPELL (i, 128) upholds the distribution of speeches according to
HAMLET

ACT I, SC. V.

Hor. [within] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!
Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?


116. bird] and Qq. boy Pope.

115. HAMLET, line 112. QqFf, Jen. After lord / line 113. Ff, Rowe+, Cam.

the Qq, 'for the best reasons possible,' as he says, because 'Illo, ho,' 'is too light for Hor., who is a man of education and gravity; and there is something highly solemn and proper in making Ham. say the amen to a benediction pronounc'd on himself. Having done it, he assumes in an instant the levity that was proper to cover him, and answers to the call of Mar. in his own falconer's language.' CORSON, on the other hand, advocates the distribution of the Ff: 'Mar. seconds Horatio's prayer with his "So be it;" Hor. then, as Hamlet's bosom friend, uses the falconer's call, which would have been too familiar on the part of Mar., and Ham., in his excitement, responds in the same language.' TSCHISCHWITZ believes that this refers to Hamlet's decision to assume an antic disposition, which is immediately put in practice in his hawking answers. [If the exclamation be Hamlet's, which is doubtful, is it necessary to suppose that it is a response to Marcellus's benediction? May it not refer to the conclusion of Hamlet's writing in his tables? ED.]

115. COLE RIDGE: This part of the scene after Hamlet's interview with the Ghost has been charged with an improbable eccentricity. But the truth is, after the mind has been stretched beyond its usual pitch and tone, it must either sink into exhaustion and inanity, or seek relief by change. It is thus well known that persons conversant with deeds of cruelty contrive to escape from conscience by connecting something of the ludicrous with them, and by inventing grotesque terms and a certain technical phraseology to disguise the horror of their practices. Indeed, paradoxical as it may appear, the terrible, by a law of the human mind, always touches on the verge of the ludicrous. Both arise from a perception of something out of the common order of things—something, in fact, out of its place; and if from this we can abstract danger, the uncommonness will alone remain, and the sense of the ridiculous be excited. The close alliance of these opposites—they are not contraries—appears from the circumstance, that laughter is equally the expression of extreme anguish, and horror, as of joy; as there are tears of sorrow and tears of joy, so there is a laugh of terror and a laugh of merriment. These complex causes will naturally have produced in Ham. the disposition to escape from his own feelings of the overwhelming and supernatural by a wild transition to the ludicrous—a sort of cunning bravado, bordering on the flights of delirium. For you may, perhaps, observe Hamlet's wildness is but half false; he plays that subtle trick of pretending to act only when he is very near really being what he acts.

116. ho] CLARENDON: See Latham's Falconry, p. 47 (ed. 1615), 'Crying with a loud voice, Howe, howe, howe.'

116. come, bird, come] HANMER: This is the call which falconers use to their hawk in the air, when they would have him come down to them.
HAMLET

[ACT 1, SC. V.]

Hor. What news, my lord? 117
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. Ay, by heaven, my lord.
Mar. 117. Hor. What news, my lord?] Om. Q. Q3.
118. Ham.] Horn. Q. Q5.

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 125
To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are i' the right;

123. Denmark] SEYMOUR (ii, 162): Hamlet begins these words in the ardour of sincerity and confidence; but, suddenly alarmed at the magnitude of the disclosure he is going to make, not only to Horatio, but to another besides, he breaks off hastily: 'There's ne'er a villain in all Denmark' that can match (perhaps he would have said) my uncle in villainy; and then recollecting the danger of such a declaration, he pauses for a moment and then abruptly concludes: 'but he's an arrant knave.' MOBERLY: Hamlet turns his words off into a strange and baffling jest, as a kind of refuge from the horror which would else overmaster him, with a feeling, at the same time, that this will be the best way to defeat enquiry.
125. needs...come] For instances of the omission of to before the infinitive, see ABBOTT, § 349.
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,
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,

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127. *circumstance* Dyce (Gloss.): Detail. Clarke: Circumlocution. See III, i, 1; *Mer. of Ven.* I, i, 154.

132. *go pray* Clarendon: Compare the phrases, 'go seek,' II, i, 101; 'go sleep,' Temp. II, i, 190; 'go kindle,' Two Gent. II, vi, 19; 'go watch,' Merry Wives, I, iv, 7; 'come view,' *Mer. of Ven.* II, vi, 43.

136. *Saint Patrick* Warburton: At this time all the whole northern world had their learning from Ireland; to which place it had retired, and there flourished under the auspices of this saint. But it was, I suppose, only said at random. Caldecott: As Sh. gave the living manners, customs, and habits of thinking of his own country to those of all ages and countries that he introduced upon the stage, he would little hesitate to make any stranger invoke the name of a saint familiar and popular in his own. Tschirschwitz: If Sh. had wished to be historically correct, he would have made a Dane swear by St. Ansgarius. But since the subject concerned an inexcipiit crime, he naturally thought of St. Patrick, who kept a Purgatory of his own. See The Honest Whore [pt. 2, I, i, p. 330, Dodsley ed. 1825, where the text reads, 'St. Patrick, you know, keeps Purgatory,' and not as the learned German quotes: 'keeps his Purgatory.' Ed.] Moberly: Saint Patrick, the patron saint of all blunders and confusion.

136. *Horatio* Corson: The 'my lord' (of the Ff) in Hamlet's speech is a report to the 'my lord' in Horatio's speech, and has an effect which is lost in the Q₃ ext.
And much offence too. Touching this vision here, 137
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,
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.
_Ham._ Nay, but swear't.
_Hor._ In faith, 145

My lord, not I.

_Mar._ Nor I, my lord, in faith.
_Ham._ Upon my sword.
_Mar._ We have sworn, my lord, already.

137. _offence_] DELIUS: Hamlet purposely misunderstands his friends' words, in order to evade their enquiries. At first he pretends that his words have given offence, whereas his friends have merely found them vague; and when they reply that there is no offence, he takes 'offence' in a wider sense as a 'crime,' and refers it to the crime of his uncle that had just been divulged to him.

137. _too_] CAPELL (i, 128): The most emphaticall word in this sentence is 'too.' CORSON: There should be only a comma after this word. Hamlet reters to the wrong which, he has just learned, had been done his father: 'Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, my Lord, And much offence too, touching this Vision here.'

138. _honest_] HUDSON: Hamlet means that it is a real Ghost, just what it appears to be, and not 'the Devil' in 'a pleasing shape,' as Horatio had apprehended it to be.

141. _soldiers_] WALKER (Vers. 175): Pronounced _dissolute._

147. _sword_] UPTON (p. 61, n.): He swears them on his sword, very soldier-like, and agreeable to the ancient custom of his country. Jordanes in his _Gothic History_
HAMLET

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.
Ghost. [Beneath] Swear.

148. Indeed...indeed.] In deed...in deed Sta.


mentions this custom. Ammianus Marcellinus relates the same ceremony among the Huns. Johnson: Garrick produced me a passage, I think, in Brantôme, from which it appeared that it was common to swear upon the cross which the old swords always had upon the hilt. Douce (ii, 229): In consequence of this practice, the name of Jesus was sometimes inscribed on the handle or some other part. Nares: The singular mixture of religious and military fanaticism which arose from the Crusades gave rise to the extraordinary custom of taking a solemn oath upon a sword. In a plain, unenriched sword, the separation between the blade and the hilt was usually a straight transverse bar, which, suggesting the idea of a cross, added to the devotion which every true knight felt for his favorite weapon, and evidently led to this practice; of which the instances are too numerous to be collected.

The sword or the blade were often mentioned in this ceremony without reference to the cross. It is ludicrously referred to in 1 Hen. IV: II, iv, 371. Dyce (Gloss.): The custom of swearing by a sword prevailed even among the barbarous worshippers of Odin: 'The Scythians commonly substituted a sword as the most proper symbol to represent the supreme god. It was by planting a spear in the middle of a field that they usually marked out the place set apart for prayers and sacrifices; and when they had relaxed from their primitive strictness, so far as to build temples and set up idols in them, they yet preserved some traces of the ancient custom by putting a sword in the hands of Odin's statues. The respect they had for their arms made them also swear by instruments so valuable and so useful, as being the most sacred things they knew. Accordingly, in an ancient Icelandic poem, a Scandinavian, to assure himself of a person's good faith, requires him to swear, "by the shoulder of a horse, and the edge of a sword."' This oath was usual more especially on the eve of some great engagement; the soldiers engaged themselves by an oath of this kind not to flee, though their enemies should be never so superior in number.'—Mallet's Northern Antiquities, &c., transl. by Percy, vol. i, p. 216, ed. 1770. [For many instances of oaths taken upon swords, see Farmer, Steevens and Caldecott. Ed.]

Knight: We have little doubt that Sh. was aware of the peculiar custom of the Gothic nations, and did not make Hamlet propose the oath merely as a practice of chivalry.

147. already] Hudson: The oath they have already sworn is 'in faith.' But this has not enough of ritual solemnity in it to satisfy Hamlet.
148. Indeed] Staunton: The meaning of Hamlet unquestionably is, Not in words only, but in act, in form; upon the cross of my sword, pledge yourselves.
149. Coleridge: These subterranean speeches of the Ghost are hardly defensible; but I would call your attention to the characteristic difference between the Ghost, as a superstition connected with the most mysterious truths of revealed religion,—and Shakespeare's consequent reverence in his treatment of it,—and the foul earthy witcheries and wild language in Macbeth.
Ham. Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny?—

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. Hie et ubique? then we'll shift our ground.—

150, 151. *Ah, ha, . . . cellarage.*] Prose, Ff, Rowe.


so f] Q76. fo, Qq. fo. Ff.

151. on: you hear] one you here F4, cellarage] Selttidge Qq. seltt-


Rowe, Pope, Theob. Han.

152. the oath] my oath F3 F4, Rowe.


feene. F4 F4. feene Qq Qq. feene, Qq Qq.

seen, Rowe et cet.


156. Hic] Hie Qq.

et] est Rowe ii.

ubique?] vbique, Qq.

our] for FF, Rowe. Om. Seymour, reading then...gentlemen, as one line.

150. *true-penny*] Steevens: This word, as well as some of Hamlet's former exclamations, we find in The Malcontent, 1604. Collier: This word is also found in Nash's Almond for a Parrot. It is (as I learn from some Sheffield authorities) a mining term, and signifies a particular indication in the soil of the direction in which ore is to be found. Hence Hamlet may with propriety address the Ghost under ground by that name. Forby (Vocab. of East Anglia): Hearty old fellow; staunch and trusty; true to his purpose or pledge. Halliwell suspects that it was sometimes applied to a sexton, therefore very appropriate here. Upton (p. 9, note): 'The Vice,' in our old Moralities, was used to make fun with the Devil, and he had several trite expressions, as, 'I'll be with you in a trice,' 'Ah, ha, boy, are you there?' &c. And it was great entertainment to the audience, to see their old enemy belaboured in effigy. Now, Ham. is resolved to break the subject of the discourse to none but Hor.; to others he intends to appear as a sort of madman, he therefore now addresses the Ghost as The Vice does the Devil, at the same time he wishes the sentinels to imagine that this was a shape the Devil had put on; and in II, ii, 575, he is somewhat of this opinion himself. This manner of speech was what the audience were well acquainted with; and it takes off in some measure from the horror of the scene.

153. *seen.*] Walker (Crit. iii, 263): The inversion [by putting only a comma after 'seen'] is anti-Shakespearian. Corson: Horatio asks Hamlet to propose the oath, which he does, namely: 'Never to speak of this that you have seen,' and then, having done so, he tells them to swear by his sword, which is additional.

156. Hic et ubique] Tschischwitz: The repetition of the oath, the shifting of the ground, and the Latin phrase are taken from the ceremonies of conjurors. Stieberschlag (Morgenblatt, No. 47, 1860, p. 1113): It is highly probable the conclu-
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword,
Never to speak of this that you have heard;
Swear by my sword.

_ghost_ [Beneath] Swear.

Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work it the earth so fast?
A worthy pioneer!—Once more remove, good friends.

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

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.


158, 159. sword...heard,] F; Walker, Corson. sword...heard : F,F,F., sword. heard, Rowe. sword...heard, Cald. et cet.

159, 160. Never...sword ] These lines are transposed in Qq, Jen. Steev, Var. and Sing. In Cap. also, but lines 157-160 end: hands...my sword...heard. Cap. is followed by Ktly.

159. this that] this which Rowe ii+. heard] heard to-night Seymour.


section of this scene is a remnant, word for word, of the earlier tragedy by Shakespeare's predecessor; and this little snatch of Latinity upholds this view. The dramatic predecessors of Shakespeare were very fond of interlarding their pieces with such little snatches of Latin, and Shakespeare yielded to the practice only in his very earliest plays, not in his later ones. Therefore, from the use of these little phrases alone we might infer that Shakespeare retained all of these concluding lines from the earlier drama, perhaps from no other reason than that the scene had become a popular favorite.

158. upon my sword,] Walker (Crit. iii, 263) was the first to advocate this punctuation of F; and Corson says: 'The true meaning is indicated by the comma after "sword." The "swear by my sword" is but a repetition of the same idea.' Walker adds: 'The Ghost's "Swear by his sword"—if this reading be correct—is, as it were, an echo of Hamlet's words.' In the textual notes the punctuation of those editors alone is given who have followed the arrangement of the Ff.

163. pioneer] Nares: A pioneer; an attendant on an army, whose office is to dig, level, remove obstructions, form trenches, and do all works executed with warlike tools, as spades, &c. Dyce (Gloss.): They are generally soldiers who, on account of misconduct, had been degraded to the office. [For the spelling, see Walker, Vers. 217; Crit. i, 263; Abbott, § 492. Also I, ii, 172; III, iv, 206. Ed.]

165. welcome] Warburton: Receive it to yourself; take it under your own roof; as much as to say: Keep it secret. Alluding to the laws of hospitality. Mason: Hamlet means merely to request that they would seem not to know it,—to be unacquainted with it. Caldecott: Receive it courteously and compliantly. Claren Don: Receive without doubt or question.
HAMLET

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
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,'


168, 169. come; Here] Om. Seymour. 169. Here] Swear Pope ii, Bailey. swear here Ktly, reading But...mercy, as one line.

170. How...on] In parenthesis, Pope i. 170-172. How...note] In parenthesis, Qq.

170. soe'er] so ere Ff. so mere Qq. 171-172. As...on] In parenthesis, Ff, Pope +.

171. meet] fit So quoted by Theob. (Sh. Rest. p. 59).

172. antic] CLARENDON: Disguised, as in Rom. & Jus. I, v, 54. MOBERLY: A counterfeit madness such as Hamlet afterwards uses. The word 'antic' means first 'old-fashioned;' then 'quaint,' 'capricious,' and the like. In much the same way 'modern' means 'ordinary.'

173. such] CORSON: 'Such times seeing ' is harsh. The Ff text is better. ABBOTT, § 470, in scanning this line contracts 'seeing' rather than 'never.'


174. head-shake] CORSON: According to the Ff, 'shake' is a verb, having 'shall' as its auxiliary — with arms encumbered thus, or thus (suiting the action to the wrdrs), head shake.'

175. of ] For instances of 'of' following verbal nouns, see ABBOTT, § 178.

176. your] Walker (Crit. ii, 7; iii, 264) prefers onr. WHITE: This reading of the Qq is the poorer, but commoner. CLARENDON: For this colloquial and familiar use, see III, ii, 3; III, ii, 117; IV, iii, 21-24; Ant. & Cleo. II, vii, 29. CORSON: Hamlet and Horatio had been fellow-students at the University; this may explain the use of 'our.' Or it would be better, perhaps, to understand Hamlet as using it in the general sense of human philosophy, which is limited in its scope. Why he should say 'your,' does not appear. [It is used ethically. See 'me,' II, ii, 414. Ed.]

177. time] time Ff, Rowe +, Cap. 174-178. With...out] In parenthesis, Cap.

178. this head-shake] Theob. this head shake Qq, Pope. thus, head shake Ff, Rowe. head thus shake Fq76, Jen. thus head shake Cald. Knt.

179. Or] Nor Mal. (Var.'85) conj. (withdrawn).


181. Well, well,] well, Ff, Rowe +, Cald. Knt.

182. and if...or if Q76. an...those; An if Seymour.
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.


_Ham._ Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!—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 friendship 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,

---

177. _there_ Fl, Rowe+, Jen. Cald. Knt.
178. _giving_ giving Warb.
179. _out, to note_ Mal. conj. (Var. '85). Steev. _out, to note_ [See line 170] Qq. _out to note_ Ff, Rowe, Pope

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177. _There be_] _DYCE_: Hamlet means, 'There be persons, who, if they were at liberty to speak.'
178. _giving out_] _CLARENDO_: Profession. _See Meas. for Meas._ I, iv, 54.
179. _out to note_] _CALDECOTT_: The grammar here is defective, and its construction _embarrassed_: [Swear] here as before, never,—that you never shall,—by pronouncing some doubtful phrase or the like, [do aught] to mark or denote, &c _CLARENDO_: The 'to' is superfluous in the construction, which follows 'never shall.' _Compare_ Cor. V, iii, 123; and _Merry Wives_, IV, iv, 57.
180. _most_] _See Macb._ V, iv, 12, and _ABBOTT_, 2, 17, for instances of _more_ and _most_ used for _great_ and _greatest_.
183. _perturbed_] _CLARKE_: There is an effect of pathos in these few murmured soothing words, coming as a climax and close to the scene.
185. _Hamlet_] _CLARKE_: It is noteworthy that Hamlet frequently speaks of himself in the third person; which is characteristic of the philosophic man,—reflective, thoughtful, given to moralize and speak in the abstract.
186. _friend/hip_] _CLARENDO_: Friendliness. Not found elsewhere in Sh.
HAMLET

[ACT II, SC. I.

That ever I was born to set it right!—
Nay, come, let’s go together.

[Exeunt.

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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 inquiry
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,

---

190. right] Seymour (ii, 164): Ham. does not lament that the disjointed time
is to be set right by him, but that he, . . . whose duty it of necessity becomes to set
the time right, should have been born.

3. shall] For instances of ‘shall’ for will, see III, ii, 317; Macb. III, iv, 57,
and Abbott, § 315.


4. inquiry] Clarendon adopts the Qq reading, and justifies it on the thoroughly
Shakespearian usage of various parts of speech as nouns, such as ‘avouch,’ I, i, 57; ‘disclose,’ III, i, 166. For many other examples, see Abbott, § 451.

7. Danskers] Capell (i, 128): Danske, for Denmark, occurs often in Albion’ England
And how, and who; what means, and where they keep; What company, at what expense; and finding By this encompassment and drift of question 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 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.

9. at] Om. F, Rowe i. and Cald. 3.
11, 12. nearer Than] Cap. nearer Then QqF, nearer Than F, near Then F, near Then Q76. near, Then F, Rowe. near; Then Pope+. nearer; Then Jen. Ktly.
12. particular...touch] particular... touch. Qf QQ.
12. touch] vouch Seymour.

8. keep] Dyce (Gloss.]: To live, to dwell.
11. more nearer] For instances of double comparatives, see Abbott, § 11.
14. And Ff.
17. him; but,] you] Cap. him, but you QqF. him—but you Rowe+.
18. if'f] y'ft Qf. if it Q76.

8. keep] Dyce (Gloss.]: To live, to dwell.
11. more nearer] For instances of double comparatives, see Abbott, § 11.
14. And Ff.
17. him; but,] you] Cap. him, but you QqF. him—but you Rowe+.
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8. keep] Dyce (Gloss.]: To live, to dwell.
11. more nearer] For instances of double comparatives, see Abbott, § 11.
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17. him; but,] you] Cap. him, but you QqF. him—but you Rowe+.
18. if'f] y'ft Qf. if it Q76.

8. keep] Dyce (Gloss.]: To live, to dwell.
11. more nearer] For instances of double comparatives, see Abbott, § 11.
14. And Ff.
17. him; but,] you] Cap. him, but you QqF. him—but you Rowe+.
18. if'f] y'ft Qf. if it Q76.
Rey. As gaming, my lord.
Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling, Drabbing; you may go so far.
Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.
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;
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?

24. lord.] lord—Rowe+, Jen.
25, 26. Ay...far.] Cap. The first line ends at swearing, in QqFf, Rowe+, Jen.
Dyce ii, Huds. At drabbing; Ktly.
28. no] Om. Qq.

25. fencing] This is bracketed by Warburton as ‘an interpolation.’ Johnson: A too diligent frequentation of the fencing-school, a resort of violent and lawless young men. Malone: I suppose it means piquing himself on his skill in the use of the sword, and consequently quarrelling and brawling. ‘The cunning of Fencers [is now] applied to quarrelling.’—Gosson, _Schoole of Abuse_, 1579, p. 46, ed. Arber.
29. another] Theobald (Sh. Restored, p. 61), on the ground that there could be no second scandal without a first (and Polonius implies that ‘Drabbing’ is no scandal), conjectured an utter for ‘another.’ And this emendation was adopted by Han. Warb. Johns. and Elze. But Theobald, in his edition, withdrew it, because Sh. uses ‘other’ in the same way elsewhere; as in _Rich. II_: I, i, 33, and _Macb_. IV, iii, 90. Malone: That is, a very different and more scandalous falling: habitual incontinency. Moberly: A deeper kind of scandal; much as ἀλλος ὀλίγης in the Odyssey, ‘an out-of-the-way or foreign traveller.’
31. breathe] Dyce (Gloss.): To utter, to speak; see also line 44.
31. quaintly] Dyce (Gloss.): Ingeniously, cleverly, artfully.
34. unreclaimed] Clarendon: Cotgrave has ‘Adomestiquer: To tame, reclaim, make gentle.’ A term of falconry.
34. savageness...assault] Dyce (Gloss.): A wildness in untamed blood, to which all young men are liable.
Rey.

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,
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

36, 37. Ay, ...that.] Arranged as in Cap. One line, QqFf, Rowe+; Jen. Huds.
36. lord] good lord Cap.
37. warrant] wit Qq, Pope+; Jen. El.
38. sullies] sullies Q2Q3; Pope. sullies FfF.
39. I' the] I' th' Ff, Rowe; Jen. with Qq.
40. you] you Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. Jen.
41. converse,] converse; Ff, Rowe, Pope.
42. him] he Q'76, Pope ii, Theob.

View. Ay, my lord,

36.

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,

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

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40. I' the] I' th' Ff, Rowe; Jen. with Qq.
41. you] you Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. Jen.
42. converse,] converse; Ff, Rowe, Pope.
43. him] he Q'76, Pope ii, Theob.

Warb. Johns.

42. you would'] you'ld Johns.
43. seen in'] scene. In F,F, seen

Rowe, Johns.

44. breathe] Rowe ii. breathe QqFf.

Rowe i, Theob. i, Cap. speak Pope, Han.


consequence] of consequence Q.

46. or so] In parenthesis, Qq, Jen.

or so, or] Sir, or Han. or sire,

or Warb. forsooth, or Johns. conj. or so
forth, Steev. (Var.'78) conj. (withdrawn).

gentleman,'] Gentleman. Ff.

47. or] and Ff, Rowe, Cald. Kn.

addition] addition QqQ3.
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?

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

Pol. At 'closes in the consequence,' ay, marry;
He closes with you 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 he gaming, there o'ertook in's rouse,
There falling out at tennis,' or perchance,
'I saw him enter such a house of sale,'
Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.
See you now;

49-51. And then...leave?] Prose first by Mal. Three lines, ending say?... something...leave? Qq. Three lines, ending this?...say?...leave? Ff. Ending was I...say...leave? Cap. Ending this;...say?...something...leave? Jen. Ending he does...say?...leave? Knt. Ending he does...I was...leave? Coll. El. Dyce, White, Kilty, Del. Ending he does...mass...leave? Sta.

49. does he this—he does] does he this?
He does: Ff (do's F F F 9). does a this, a does, Q Q Q. does a this, a does: Q Q Q.  
50. By the mass] Om. Ff, Rowe+, Cap. Knt.

something[nothing F F F 9], Rowe.

52, 53. At...gentleman.] Prose, Glo.

54. Pol.] Reynol. F F, Pelson. F.  
56. t'other] tother F F, 'tother F F, th' other Qq.  
57. Or then, or then.] Or then, Pope+.  

or such] and such Ff, Rowe+, Knt.  
58. he] Ff, a Qq, a Glo.+, Mob.  
gaming, there] gaming there, Qq.  
o'ertook] or tooke Qq.  

59. There] Their F F.  
60. such] such or such Q Q Q.  
sale] sale F F, fail F F.  
61, 62. Videlizet...now] Cap. One line, QqFf, Rowe+, Jen. Mal.  
61. Videlizet] Videlizet Q Q Q Q Q.  
so forth] so forsooth Warb.

50. mass] COLLIER: Omitted in the Ff, because it is an oath. The Ff are far from consistent in this particular.


52, 53. friend...gentleman] ELZE: For this unmistakable interpolation we are probably indebted to some actor who wished to repeat the laughable gestures which accompanied it.

58. o'ertook] CLARENDON: That is, by intoxication. One of the many euphemisms for 'drunk.'
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.


66. assays] Nares: Metaphorically, art and contrivance, subtleties; e.g. 'Which, by sile drifts, and windlaces aloof, They brought about.'—Mirror for Magistrates, p. 336. Windlasses is used by Fairfax, for sudden turns; whether he meant this word or another, is not quite clear: perhaps, rather, windlings:—'The beauties faire of shepherd's daughters bold, With wanton windlaiies runne, turne, play, and passe.'—Tasso, xiv, 34. Hunter (ii, 226): Windlases is used in a sense now forgotten. We find it in Golding's Ovid, the seventh book, the book in which Sh. was so well read: '—like a wily fox he runs not forth directly out, Nor makes a windlasse over all the champion fields about,' &c. It is also used by Bishop Hacket. Edinburgh Review (Shakespearian Glossaries, July, 1869): In Shakespeare's day, windlace, literally, a winding, was used to express taking a circuitous course, fetching a compass, making an indirect advance, or, more colloquially, beating about the bush instead of going directly to a place or object; and in this sense it exactly harmonizes with the other phrase used by Polonius to express the same thing,—'assays of bias,—attempts in which, instead of going straight to the object, we seek to reach it by a curved or winding course, the bias gradually bringing the ball round to the Jack. Thus, in Golding's Ovid: 'The winged God... Continued not directly forth, but gan me down to stoupe, And fetched a windlasse round about.' Clarendon: Also Lilly's Euphues and his England (ed. Arber), p. 270: 'I now fetching a windlesse, that I myght better haue a shooe, was preuented with ready game.'
Rey. Good my lord!
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. Oh, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

70. Good my lord?] Dyce. Good my Lord. QqFf, Coll. White. Good my Lord— Rowe+. But, my good lord,—
Cap. conj. (Notes, i, 19).
71. in] éen Han. Warb.
74. [Exit Reynaldo.] Exit Rey. Qq (after lord). Exit Ff (after lord).

Scene ii.] Pope+, Jen.

in keeping with the loquacity of Polonius, we are justified, nevertheless, in expecting a reply from the departing servant. I have therefore given the words 'God be wi' you' (which, by the contraction of with into wi,' express a certain condescension) to Polonius, and 'fare you well' to Reynaldo.

70. Good my lord] Dyce: Reynaldo has previously said 'Very good, my lord,' and he afterwards says, 'Well, my lord,' but the present speech is not therefore to be pointed 'Good, my lord.' Compare ii, 521.

71. in yourself] Johnson: Perhaps this means, in your own person, not by spies. Capell (i, 129): 'In yourself' is put for—observe of yourself, or with your own eyes; for he had been lesson'd before to pick up his 'inclination' from others.
C. (in Var. 1821): The temptations you feel, suspect in him. Caldecott: It seems no more than 'of or by yourself,' and as if the word 'in' had been altogether omitted. He was at first to discover Laertes's inclination by enquiry from others; but now to find them out by personal observation. Tschischwitz: I find it hard to persuade myself that 'in' is anything more than a misprint, which arose from the last syllable of the preceding word. A change of 'in' into then could be easily made except for the uniformity of the old copies. Clarendon: Possibly it means, Conform your own conduct to his inclinations.

73. music] Clarke: Let him go on, to what tune he pleases; let him conduct himself in any style and at any rate he chooses. Hudson: Eye him sharply, but do it styly, and let him fiddle his secrets all out. Vischer (Sh. Jahrbuch, ii, p. 149): Here we have the key to the whole scene. His son may gamble, drink, swear, quarrel, drab, enter houses of sale, videlicet, brothels, only—let him ply his music: true cavalier-breeding!

74. matter] Moberly: There is a wonderfully fine contrast between the prolix tyness of Polonius's attempt to find out what had better be unknown, and the scene of distracting and passionate misery which shows how Hamlet's soul has been shattered by an unsought-for revelation.

75. affrighted] Eckhardt (Vorlesungen über Hamlet. Aarau, 1853, p. 96):
Pol. With what, 'tis 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;
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
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,

82. piteous] pitioun Q. pitioun F, F4,
pititous F2, F3.

84. horrors, he] horrors: he F, Rowe,

Jen. horrors; thus he Pope+. horrors
there, he Anon.*

85, 86. My lord...it.] One line, Ff, Rowe.


Rowe.

91. As he] As a Q.

Long] Long time Pope+, Cap.

Ktly.

92. mine] my F, F4, Rowe, Pope i.

Han. his Pope ii.

So. Ungarter'd] NARES: It was the regular amorous etiquette, in the reign of
Elizabeth, for a man professing himself deeply in love to assume a certain negligence
in dress. His garters, in particular, were not to be tied up. See As You Like It,
III, ii, 398.

So. down-gyved] THEOBALD interprets his reading, down-gyred, as 'rolled
down to the ankle,' and derives gyred from γυράω, to bend, to round. HEATH gives
the true definition of 'down-gyved': fallen down to the ankle, after the fashion of
gyres, or fetters.

82. purport] WALKER (ii, 264): Pronounce 'purport', not 'pítéous.'

82, 83. so...As] See ABBOTT, § 275; and II, ii, 177; or Macb. I, ii, 43.

84. Keightley completed the rhythm of this line by the insertion of in after
'comes.' ABBOTT, § 478, makes the second syllable of 'horrors' a foot by itself on
the principle that 'er [or or] final seems to have been sometimes pronounced with a
kind of "burr," which produced the effect of an additional syllable.' A process
which neither my tongue nor my imagination can compass. Why not let Ophelia's
strong emotion shudderingly fill up the gap?

90. perusal] CLARENDON: Examination. See Rom. & Jul. V, iii, 74; RicK.
II: III, iii, 53; Tro. & Cre. IV, v, 232. [Also, Ham. IV, vii, 137.]


91. stay'd] ABBOTT, § 507: As ed is pronounced after i and u, so it might be
after y in 'stay'd,' but the effect would be painful. The pause after 'it' must supply
the extra syllable.

92. shaking] TSCHISCHWITZ: A verbal substantive; is made is understood.
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.

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,—

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
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94. piteous] pittious QoFf. hideous Ff, Rowe.
95. Az] That Ff, Rowe; +, Cald. Knt.
96. that done,] Then Pope ;+
me] Om. F, F, F.
97. shoulder] shoulders Q, Q, Ff, Rowe.
99. o'door] Theob. adores Q, Q, Q.
a doores Q, of doores Q, adores Ff, Ff.
adoors F, F, Rowe.
99. help] helpe Ff, F, helps Q, Q, Q, Q.
helpes Q.
103. fordoes] forgues Q, Q, Q,
Warb.
105. passion] paffions Q.
106. sorry,—] Cap. forrie, QqFf.
sorry; Rowe. sorry, Glo. +, Mob.

95. bulk] Boswell: This is not, I think, all the body, but the breast. Pettorata, in Florio, is explained, 'a shock against the breast or bulk.' [Dyce (Gloss.) also cites this definition of Pettorata from Florio, but neither the word nor definition is in my copy of Florio, 1598. Malone cites R. of Lucrece, 467, 'her heart Beating her bulk;' and Rich. III: I, iv, 40, 'my panting bulk,' but defines 'bulk' by all the body.' Ed.] Singer: 'The Bulke or breast of a man.'—Baret's Alvearie. Dyce (Gloss.) 'The Bulk of the bodie. Trone, buste.'—Cotgrave. Clarendon also cites Cotgrave: 'Buste, the whole bulke or bodie of a man, from his face to his middle.' [Minsheu gives: 'Pechuguera, the whole bulke of the breast.' Ed.]

100. Miles (Review of Hamlet, p. 28): We are not permitted to see Hamlet in this ecstasy of love, but what a picture! How he must have loved her, that love should bring him to such a pass!—his knees knocking each other!—knees that had firmly followed a beckoning ghost! There is more than the love of forty thousand brothers in that hard grasp of the wrist,—in that long gaze at arm's length,—in the force that might, but will not, draw her nearer! And never a word from this king of words! His first great silence,—the second is death!

102. ecstasy] Alienation of mind, madness. See III, i, 160; III, iv, 74; 138, 139; Macb. III, ii, 22; IV, iii, 170.
103. fordoes] Steevens: To destroy. Nares: For has here its negative power. Clarendon: Like the German ser, it is also sometimes intensive, as in 'forgive,' 'forwornest,' 'forspent.' [It is so used in the past participle of this very verb in Mid. N.Y. D. V, i, 381, 'with weary task fordone.'—Ed.]
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.

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;

110. access] CLARENDON: Accented on the second syllable in Macb. I, v, 42.

111. heed] THEOBALD preferred speed of the Ff, in the sense either of success, fortune (frequent in Sh.), or of celerity.

112. quoted] M. MASON: Invariably used by Sh. in the sense of to observe.

M. MALONE: ‘Quoter, To quote, or marke in the margent, to note by the way.’—Cotgrave.

D. DYCE (Gloss.): To note, to mark,—formerly pronounced, and often written, cot. See Rom. & Jul. I, iv, 31.

113. wreck] C. COLLIER (ed. 2): This is one of the places where the old spelling of wreck, wrack (observed by some modern editors, as if we ought to return to the loose and uncertain orthography of our ancestors), produces confusion. It is not quite clear whether Pol. means wrack, in the sense of cast away, or rack, in the sense of tortured; we have taken it in the former, as the most probable. UPTON (p. 209): Read: ‘rack thee,’ i.e. vex and grieve thee.


115. cast] J. JOHNSON: This is not the remark of a weak man. The vice of age 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. This is always the fault of a little mind, made artful by long commerce with the world. M. MOBERLY: To forecast more than we ought for our own interests. CLARENDON: To ‘contrive,’ ‘design,’ ‘plan.’ Compare Spenser’s Fairy Queen, i, 5, 12: ‘Of all attonce he cast avengd to be.’ Cotgrave translates Fr. minuter, ‘to devise, cast, or lay the first project of a designe.’
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide than hate to utter love.

Come.

[Exeunt. 120]

SCENE II.  A room in the castle.

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

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!

118. which] 6 F, F1.
119. than hate] hate, than Han. than haste Anon.*

Rowe.

Flourish. Om. Ff, Rowe+.
Rosencrantz.] Mal. Rosencrofts.
Qq. Rosencranz, Ff. Rosincrofts, F,f1,F3.
Pope. Rosincrofts, Ff, Roseneraus, Rowe.

118, 119. Warburton: That is, this must be made known to the King, for (being kept secret) the hiding of Hamlet's love might occasion more mischief to us from him and the Queen, than the uttering or revealing of it will occasion hate and resentment from Hamlet. The poet's obscure expression seems to have been caused by his affectation of concluding the scene with a couplet. Heath: The concealment of it may be attended with consequences productive of greater calamity than the displeasure can possibly be with which the disclosing it may be received. Caldecott: At the close of an act, or when the scene is shifted, and there is a pause in the action of the drama, it was the usage of our dramatists, down to the middle of the last century, not simply to divert attention from the main object, as here, by the introduction of a couplet or rhymes, but to make the subject of such couplet foreign altogether to the interests of the drama, an unconnected flourish, and that, not unfrequently, a labored and florid simile. Such a custom in Sh., so far from being what Warburton calls it, was the very opposite of 'affectation;' not to have done it occasionally would have been an affectation of singularity. Clarendon: In the couplets 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, i, 38. Compare also, V, i, 231–234. Tschirschwitz cannot persuade himself that the author of the Sonnets and of Venus & Adonis could have composed lines so faulty in logic and style as these, and he therefore thinks that even sticklers for the authorized text will pardon him for changing line 119 into 'More grief to him, than hate to us their love.' He also marks 'Ophelia exit' after line 117.

1. Rosencrantz] Thornbury (N. & Qu. 5 Aug. 1871): A Danish nobleman
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 I 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 th' understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both,
That, being of so young days brought up with him

2. Moreover...much] Besides that we Q76.
4. have you] you have Q76, Theob.
Warb. Johns.
5. I call] call Qq, Glo.+, Mob.

of this name attended the Danish ambassador into England on the ascension of James I. [Steevens says it was an ambassador. Ed.]

2. Moreover that] Moberly: Over and above that we longed to see you. On the other hand, 'more above,' in line 125, means 'moreover.' Clarendon: Besides that. Hudson: I do not recollect another instance of these words thus used.

5. transformation] On the pronunciation of the final ion as a dissyllable, see Walker, Vern. 230; Abbott, § 479, and V, ii, 217.

6. Sith] Moberly: The oldest meaning of this difficult word may be seen from the Fairy Queen (iii, 10, 33), 'he humbly thanked him a thousand sith,' literally, 'a thousand steps' (Mätzner, i, p. 309 [? 410]). Hence, apparently, 'sithen the fathers died,' in Wickliffe's Bible, means 'from the time when;' the preposition being omitted, as in many English phrases even now. Then came the absolutes 'sith, sithence, since,' as in line 12 below. Lastly, the adverb becomes a causative conjunction; on the principle that 'propter hoc' may be practically, though loosely, expressed by 'post hoc.' That is, 'Sin thou are righteous judge' means 'following on the fact that thou art a righteous judge.' Clarendon: 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, an illative, while sithence and since, whether as prepositions or as adverbs, remained mere narrative words confined to the signification of time after.' Sh., it is clear, did not observe this distinction, whether we take the quartos or the folios to represent his exact text. [See IV, iv, 45.]

10. dream of] Caldecott: Deem of, that is, the just estimate of himself I cannot judge of, or comprehend. White: Sh. not improbably wrote as it stands in the Ff. Clarendon: The of is superfluous, as in Rich. III: I, iii, 6.

II. of so young] Abbott, § 167: 'Of,' applied to time, in cases like the present, means from. So still 'of late.' Compare 'Of long time he had bewitched them.'

—Actz, viii, 11. [See also Mätzner, ii, 221.—Ed.]
And sith so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,
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
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,

12. sith] Qq, Jen. Glo. +, Mob. fuese
17. Whether...thus.] Om. Ff. If...
Ff, Rowe et cet.
neighbour'd] nonored Q, Qa,
neighbored Qa, neighboured Qa,
havour] havior Qa, hasior Qa,
hau r Q, (hauer Ashbee's facs.),
Vavour Warb. haviour Jen. El. Glo. +,
Mob.
13. vouchsafe] vou safe Q, Qa, Qa,
16. occasion] occasions Q, Qa, Qa,

12. humour] CORSON: There is more force in this word than in haviour. It
must be taken in its earlier sense of 'temper of mind,' 'disposition.'
17. Whether] To be pronounced as a monosyllable. See WALKER, Vers. 103;
and ABBOTT, § 466; Macb. I, iii, 111; Ham. III, ii, 193.
22. gentry] WARBURTON: Complaisance. SINGER: 'Gentlemanniness, or gen-
trie, kindelinesse, naturall goodnesse. Generositas.'—Baret's Alvearie. See V,
i, 109.
24. supply and profit] CALDECOTT: In aid and furtherance. HUDSON: The
feeding and realizing.
25. hope] JOHNSON: That the hope which your arrival has made may be com-
pleted by the desired effect.
27. Of] ABBOTT, § 174: 'Of' here means over; as in line 283 it means on, and
in III, ii, 59, about.
HAMLET

Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

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

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

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty as I hold my soul,

32. To be commanded.] Om. Q, Q₂, Pope+.
36. Two lines, Ff.  

29. to] into Ktly.  
  But we] We Ff, Cald. Knt, Dyce i, Del.  
  service] services Ff, Cald. Knt, Del.  
  To be commanded.] Om. Q, Q₂, Pope+.

37. these] the Ff, Rowe, Knt.
39. Ay,] Cap. I Qq; Om. Ff, Rowe+; Cald. Knt, Sta. Amen, Ktly.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz...]

Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some Attendants.  

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord.

Are joyfully return'd.

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

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty as I hold my soul,

29. But] DELIUS: This 'but' is redundant; there is no opposition here to what Rosencrantz has said. It is needless to retain it for the sake of rhythm, because the time of an extra syllable is made up by the pause between the speeches.

30. bent] JOHNSON (Much Ado, IV, i, 188): 'Bent' is used by Sh. for the utmost degree of any passion or mental quality. The expression is derived from archery; the bow has its bent when it is drawn as far as it can be. [See Ham. III, ii, 367.]

38 Heavens] CLARENDON: Compare Ant. & Cleo. I, ii, 64.

42 still] See I, i, 122.
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. Oh, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

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.

45. and] one Ff, Cald. Knt, Coll.
47. sure] be sure F, F, F, Rowe, Calde.
48. it hath] I have F, Rowe, +, Knt.
49. it has Q, Q, Q, Q.
50. that; that] Cap. that, that QqFf, Rowe, Pope, Han. Johns, Knt. I 
do F, F, F, F, F, F.
51. fruit] fruite Q, Q, frute Q.
52. fruit] fruitie Q, Q, Q, frute Q.
55. main] Caldecott: The chief point. See Tro. & Cres. II, iii, 273. 'These
flaws, Are to the main as inconsiderable,' &c.—Par. Reg. iv, 454. 
Staunton: An ellipsis,—in being understood:—'no other but in the main.' 
Clarendon: 'Main' is used without a substantive following in 2 Hen. VI: I, i, 208.
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.

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

To give the assay of arms against your majesty.

Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,

Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee

58. Scene iv. Pope+; Jen.

58. my] Om. Ff, Rowe.


63, 75. Polack] Pollacke Qq. Polack

Ff, Polak Ff, 3 Ff

73. three] threecore Qq, Theob. Johns.

Jen. Tsch.

58. Welcome] Walker (ii, 254, Omissions in Consequence of Absorption): He is addressing the ambassadors for the first time after their return from Norway. I think the occasion absolutely demands, 'Welcome home,' &c. And [thus it is] in line 55.

60. desires] Delius: The kind wishes for the health of the Norwegian king.

61. first] Caldecott: Audience, or opening of our business. Clarendon: At the first expression of the ambassadors' request.

64. truly] Clarendon: This adverb belongs in sense to 'was,' not to 'found.' See Mid. N. D. i, i, 126.

65. It] Delius: This, as well as 'look'd into,' refers to 'levies, but the singular is used through attraction to the nearer noun: 'preparation.'

67. borne in hand] Deceived, deluded. See Macb. III, i, 80. Dyce (Gloss.): Amused with false pretences.

67. sends] For ellipse of nominative, see Abbott, § 399; and III, i, 8.

71. assay of arms] Proof, trial. See 'assay of art,' Macb. IV, iii, 143.

73. three thousand] Theobald preferred the Qq because the larger sum seems a much more suitable gift from a king to his own nephew than so poor aittance as three thousand crowns. Heath adduces in favor of the Ff the greater
And his commission to employ those soldiers,  
So levied as before, against the Polack;  
With an entreaty, herein further shown,  
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,  
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;

76. shown] none Q1  
78. this] his Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt.  
80. therein] herein Q’76.  
81. consider’d] considered Q1.  
82. Answer, and think upon] And

commercial value of money in those earlier ages, and thinks it probable that in the poor kingdom of Norway, in Hamlet's time, the king's whole revenue might scarce amount to so large a sum.  
HUNTER (ii, 228): The reading of Q1 is one proof, amongst others, either that the editors of Ff did not disdain the assistance of Q1, imperfect as it is, or that Q1 has preserved readings which the editors of Ff had other reasons for knowing to be genuine.

73 fee] RITSON: The king gave his nephew a feud, or fee (in land), of that yearly value.

75 safety and allowance] CLARENDON: Terms securing the safety of the country and regulating the passage of the troops through it.

80 It likes] ABBOTT (§ 297): An abundance of impersonal verbs is a mark of an early stage in a language, denoting that a speaker has not yet arrived so far in development as to trace his own actions and feelings to his own agency. There are many more impersonal verbs in Early English than in Elizabethan, and many more in Elizabethan than in modern English. See 'Well be (it) with you,' II, ii, 362, III. iv, 173; V, ii, 63. MÄTZNER (iii, 174) gives the same phrase: 'It likes us well,' from King John, II, i, 533, with the following explanation: 'The dative in Germanic verbs passes completely into the accusative where the consciousness of the language abandons the substitute for the dative by the periphrasis with to.' ['Lounds! I was never so bethumped with words since first I called my brother's father, dad.'—Ed.]

81 consider'd] CALDECOTT: When we have more time for considering. For instances of an indefinite and apparently not passive use of passive participles, see ABBOTT, § 374.

82 Answer] ANON. (Misc. Obs. 1752, p. 19): The king is here made to say that he would give an answer to an affair before he had considered it. Read: 'And think upon and answer to, this business.' [See HANMER, in Textual Notes.]

84 well-took] The reading of FfF4 suggested to THEOBALD (Sh. Rest. p. 191)
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

well-luck’d as passing a sort of compliment on the address, skill, and good-fortune of Cor. and Volt. But he did not repeat the conjecture in his edition.

84. feast] JOHNSON: The king’s intemperance is never suffered to be forgotten.

86. JOHNSON: Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident in his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his character is accidental, the rest is natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it is become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in the particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight. While he depends upon his memory, and can draw from his repositories of knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful counsel; but as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, the old man is subject to sudden dereliction of his faculties; he loses the order of his ideas, and entangles himself in his own thoughts, till he recovers the leading principle, and falls again into his former train. This idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom will solve all the phenomena of the character of Polonius. CALDECOTT: Nothing can be more easily conceivable or intelligible than the ‘idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom’; but does this apply to Polonius? To be extinguished, talent or faculty must first have existence. Now we have nothing that directly goes to establish the fact of his having at any time a clear and commanding intellect. Almost everything has, on the contrary, an opposite bearing; for the very quality relied upon by Dr Johnson appears to us to be that which most strongly indicates imbecility of mind, viz. having the memory stored with sage rules and maxims, fit for every turn and occasion, without the faculty of making effective use of them upon any. In Polonius’s general conduct, unmixed folly or dotage is visible at every turn. MEERLY: In estimating this character we should do well to remember that the use of language like that of Polonius would not in Shakespeare’s euphuistic days argue the complete folly that it would at the present time. [See also I, iii, 59. Ed.]

86. expostulate] CALDECOTT: To show by discussion, to put the pros and cons, to answer demands upon the question. ‘Pausanias had now opportunity to visit her and to expostulate the favorable deceit, whereby she had caused his jealousie.’—Stanley’s Aurore, 1659, p. 44. HUNTER (ii, 228): ‘Expostulate ’is of rare occurrence. It occurs in A Brief Relation of the Shipwreck of Henry May, 1593, incorporated in Captain Smith’s book on Virginia: ‘How these isles came by the name of the Bermudas,...I will not expostulate, nor trouble your patience with these uncertain antiquities,’ p. 172. It means, to inquire, and when it is an inquiry from a superior in a state of displeasure, we get at once to what is the present significance of the world. Thus, in the manuscript book of Anecdotes collected by Sir
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,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishishes,
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
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.

Nicholas L'Estrange, there is one, No. 77, in which the master of the house, hearing a noise and disturbance, 'comes and expostulates the cause.' CLARENDON: So in Tico Gent. III, i, 251. Sh. also uses the word in its modern and legitimate sense.

90. wit] JOHNSON (Note on line 382): 'Wit' was not in Shakespeare's time taken either for imagination or acuteness, or both together, but for understanding, for the faculty by which we apprehend and judge. Those who wrote of the human mind distinguished its primary powers into wit and will. STAUNTON: Wisdom. CLARENDON: Knowledge. So Mer. of Ven. II, i, 18.


93. Mad call I it] MOBERLY: 'It is of no use to explain how.' This shrewd remark is one of many that Polonius draws from his repositories of knowledge, and from that former wisdom on which dotage is rapidly encroaching.

96. art] DELIUS: The Queen uses 'art' in reference to Polonius's stilted style; the latter uses it as opposed to truth and nature.

100. and now] For ellipses of there, see ABBEY, § 404.
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,'—

105. Perpend.] Separate line, Q.
Han. Ending line 104 in Ff, Rowe+.
Jen. Sta. consider. Q'76.
105, 106. Perpend...mine] One line, Ktly.
106. while] whilβ F, F, F, whilβ F, Rowe+, Kt, Dyce, White, Del.
Huds.

104, 105. Thus...Perpend] Maginn (p. 240): The metre would be right, and the technical arrangement of the style more in character, if we read: 'Thus it remains: remainder thus perpend.'

105. Perpend] Clarendon: Like 'gather and surmise,' this is used in accordance with Polonius's pedantic style. See As You Like It, III, ii, 69.

109. Alfred Roffe (N. & Qu. 5 Oct. 1861) gives a list of no less than nine metrical and musical adaptations of this letter of Hamlet's. One of them, in date about 1800, 'Composed for and dedicated to Miss Abrams by Michael Kelly,' is as follows: 'Doubt (O most beautified), that the stars are fire, Doubt (my soul's idol), that the sun doth move, Doubt that eternal Truth may prove a liar, But, sweet Ophelia, never doubt I love. My mind no skill in these fond numbers owns, Yet these declare I love thee best, most best, And though no Muses reckon up my groans, These lines may shelter in thy snowy breast.'

109. beautified] Theobald objected to this word, because of its two meanings, viz. artificial and natural beauty; the first would be manifestly inappropriate here, and the second Sh. has used in Two Gent. IV, i, 55, and would not, therefore, here call it a 'vile phrase.' He therefore substituted beatified, which is less of an anticlimax than 'beautified,' after 'Celestial and soul's idol,' and which, moreover, would be the more likely to excite the Roman Catholic Polonius to anger, since it is almost peculiarly applied to the Virgin Mary. Capell (i, 130) prefers beatified, because of its concordance with 'celestial' and 'idol,' and because the passage demands it, which is certainly verse. Accordingly, he reads lines 109 to 112, inclusive, as verse, dividing at 'idol' (which, metri gratia, he reads 'fair idol'), 'Ophelia,' 'beautified' (which he reads 'that beatify'd'), 'these.' Johnson: 'Beautified' seems to be a vile phrase for the ambiguity of its meaning. Steevens: Nash dedicates his Christ's Tears over Jerusalem, 1594, 'To the most beautified lady, the lady Elizabeth Carey.' Nares: A common word in those times, particularly in the addresses of letters. The examples wherein a person is said to be 'beautified' with various endowments seem hardly apposite. Caldecott: That is, accomplished. '—metrical speak... by Art beautified and adorned, and brought far from the primitive rudeness.'—Puttenham's Arts of English Poesie, 1589 [p. 39, ed. Arber]. Dyce (Gloss.) By 'beautified' (which, however 'vile a phrase,' is common enough in our early writers) I believe Hamlet meant beautiful, and not accomplished
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.

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.'

110. vile] vile vF, F, F, F5, F, F.
111. phrase; but] phrase, but Qq.

112. [Reads.] Dyce. Om. QqFf. excellent white] excellent-white
Walker, Dyce ii, Del.

&c.] Om. F, Rowe +, Knt.

115. [Reads.] Reading. Rowe. Let
ter. Qq. Om. Ff.

115, 123. In Italics, Ft.

115, 118. In Italics, Qq.

111. Thus] Corson: It would seem that the first 'these' in the Ff is right, the second being a mere repetition for emphasis; so that all that is wanting in the F is a colon after 'heare.' 'These in her excellent white bosom, these:' The expression is evidently directive or optative, and given as an introduction to 'Doubt thou, the Stars are,' etc. There is a studied oddness in the letter, as is shown by the subscription. Malone: I have never met with 'these' both at the beginning and the end of the superscription of letters.

112. In] Abbott, § 159: 'In,' like the kindred preposition on (Chaucer uses 'in a hill' for 'on a hill'), was used with verbs of motion as well as rest. We still say 'he fell in love,' etc. See V, ii, 70. See STORFFRICH, Appendix, Vol. II.

112. bosom] STEEVENS (Two Gent. III. i, 250): Women anciently had a pocket in the fore part of their stays, in which they not only carried love-letters and love-tokens, but even their money and materials for needle-work.

118. doubt] CLARKE: In the first three lines 'doubt' is used in the sense of have a misgiving, have a half-belief, and in the fourth line, in the sense of disbelieve.

120. reckon] DELIUS: To number metrically, or scan.

123. to him] CALDECOTT: That is, belongs to, obeys his impulse; so long as he is a 'sensible, warm motion,' Meas. for Meas. III. i, 120. CLARENDON: Hamlet's letter is written in the affected language of euphism. Compare GYM. V, v, 333.

124. Hamlet] CAMBRIDGE EDITORS: In Q4 and Q3 this word is by mistake printed not at the end of the letter, but opposite to the first line of Polonius's speech. [A proof that Q4 was printed from Q3 or Q3. In these, the line: 'Thine evermore
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?

*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,

---

124. shown] shewn Qq. shew'd Ff, 125. think.] Cap. thinke Qq, Johns. Rowe, Knt, Dyce i, Sta. Del. 126. by] ABBOTT, § 145: From meaning near, 'by' here seems to mean with. See II, ii, 186.

125. more above] JOHNSON: Moreover, besides.

125. solicitings] CALDECOTT perceives a difficulty in the grammar or construction in the reading both of Ff and Qq. It is strange that he failed to see that 'hath' in this line is in the same construction as 'hath' in the preceding line.

126. by] ABBOTT, § 145: From meaning near, 'by' here seems to mean with. See II, ii, 186.

133. perceived] MOBERLY: There is much humor in the old man's inveterate folly for omniscience. He absurdly imagines that he had discerned for himself all the steps of Hamlet's love and madness; while of the former he had been unaware till warned by some friends; and the latter did not exist at all.

135. play'd] KEIGHTLEY: Perhaps ply'd, as pretending to be occupied.

135-137. WARBURTON: If either I had conveyed intelligence between them and been the confident of their amours; or had connived at it, only observed them in secret, without acquainting my daughter with my discovery; or, lastly, been negligent in observing the intrigue, and overlooked it; what would you have thought of me? MALONE: The first line may mean, if I had locked up this secret in my own breast, as closely as it were confined in a desk or table-book. MOBERLY paraphrases this same line: If I had just minutted the matter down in my own mind.

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,
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,
above thy sphere Q'76.
136. a \textit{winking]} a working Q.q.
138. \textit{my young mistress] In parenthesis, F.}
139. \textit{thus this Q.Q., did bespeak] charg'd Q'76.}
140. \textit{prince, out] prince:—out Steev.}
142. \textit{his] her Q.Q.}
143. \textit{she look...And he] see too...}
144. \textit{For,] he Warb.}
145. \textit{repulsed, a] repuls'd. A F.}
146. \textit{Fell into}] Fell to Pope+.

138. round] STEEVENS: Roundly, without reserve, as in III, i, 183; III, iv, 5.
139. \textit{bespeak]} CALDECOTT: As here used, it cannot be more correctly interpreted than by the reverse of its literal meaning, \textit{i.e. without} circuity. In this sense, and senses nearly allied to it, this word is used with great latitude. \textit{Dyce (Gloss.)} gives eight different uses of \textit{round}. CLARENDON: The adjective is here used for the adverb, as in Bacon's \textit{Essay}, vi: 'A shew of fearfulness, which in any businesse doth spoil the feathers, of round flying up to the mark.' See \textit{Abbott}, § 60.
140. \textit{star]} BOSWELL: 'Out of thy star' is 'placed above thee by fortune.' We have 'fortune's star,' I, iv, 32. COLLIER: 'Star' is probably to be taken as \textit{destiny}.
141. prescripts] SINGER: In \textit{Twelfth Night}, II, v, 156, we have 'in my stars I am above thee.' WHITE: \textit{Sphere} is at once a plausible reading and a gloss. STAUNTON: Lord Hamlet is a prince beyond the influence of the star which governs your fortunes.
142. fruits] BAILEY (ii, 6): Substitute \textit{for} for \textit{fri}, and you have 'out of thy soar.' It is not to be concealed that Sh. does not elsewhere employ \textit{soar} as a noun.
144. \textit{fruits]} JOHNSON: She took the \textit{fruits} of advice when she obeyed advice; the advice was then made \textit{fruitful}.
146-150. WARBURTON: The ridicule of this character is here admirably sustained.
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness, and by this declension
Into the madness wherein now he raves
And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think 'tis this?
Queen. It may be, very likely.
Pol. Hath there been such a time, I 'ld 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?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together

Here in the lobby.

Queen: So he does, indeed.

155. [Pointing...] Theob. Pope ii. ending sometimes...here...lobby. Ff, Rowe.

Omitted QqFf, Cap. Del.

this, if...otherwise,] this; if...

otherwife, F, this, if...otherwife, F,F, F4 Rowe, Pope.


159, 160. You...lobby.] Three lines, F2,F,4 Rowe, Cal'd. Knt.

156, 157. will...were] For instances of the irregular sequence of tenses, see Abbott, § 371, and 'did see...Would have made,' II, ii, 490-495; also, 'I know...my joys were,' IV, iii, 66-67.

158. centre] Tschischwitz: Despite the reading of Q, I nevertheless believe that by 'centre' is meant the middle of the palm of the hand, a point important in palmistry. Clarendon: Sh., like Bacon, held to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy. See Tro. & Cres. I, iii, 85. Compare Tit. And. IV, iii, 12.

159. four] Malone: I formerly was inclined to adopt Tyrwhitt's proposed emendation of for [anticipated by Hanmer], but have now no doubt that the text is right. The expressions, 'four hours together,' 'two hours together,' &c., appear to have been common. So in Lear, I, ii, 170; Wint. T. V, ii, 148. Again in Webster's Duchess of Malfi [ed. Dyce i, 260]: 'She will muse four hours together.' COLLIER (ed. 2): It is not likely that Polonius would specify precisely how long Hamlet walked in the lobby, and the (MS) reads for. WHITE: The obvious reading for has occurred to many critical readers; and to modern taste this would seem an improvement. But similar phrases are of common occurrence in old books. STANTON: 'Four' here, as in Cor, I, vi, 84, and elsewhere, appears a mere colloquialism, to signify some, or a limited number, as forty is frequently used to express a great number. CLARENDON: So in Puttenham's Arte of English Poesie (p. 307, ed. Arber): 'laughing and gibing with their familiars foure hours by the clocke.' ELZE (Shakespeare-Jahrbuch, Bd. xi.) has collected many instances from Elizabethan writers of the use of four and forty, and forty thousand to express an indefinite number, and probably, with his unwearied industry, he could find forty more. He also shows that this usage is not confined to England, but is common in German. Hamlet says he loved Ophelia more than 'forty thousand brothers,' V, i, 257.

160. does] KNIGHT: The F, means has done.
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;
I’ll board him presently.—

[Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.

Enter Hamlet, reading.

Oh, give me leave;

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

162. Bc] Let Quincy (MS), Anon.
(Misc. Obs.).

Arras Q76.

162, 163. arras then; Mark] arras
then, Marke QqFf (Mark F.), arras;
then Mark Sta. arras then To mark
Kty.

166. But] And Ff, Rowe, Pope, Cald.

Knt.


But...wretch] One line, Ff.

168. you, both] you both Qq. you

both, Anon.*

169. board] bord Qq Qq, bord F;
F, F, F, F, Cald, Knt.

Exeunt...] Ff, Rowe +, Jen.

White, Glo.+, Mob. After away; line
168, Q1. After leave; Cap. et cet. (Exit...
QqFf).

Enter...] Dyce, Coll. ii, Sta.

Glo.+, Mob. Del. Huds. After try it,
line 166, QqFf, et cet. (reading) reading on a Booke. Ff.

169, 170. Oh,...Hamlet] One line, Ff,

Rowe +, Jen. Cam.

161. loose] Tschirschwitz: Polonius had forbidden his daughter to have any
intercourse with Hamlet.

162. arras] Nares: The tapestry hangings of rooms, so called from the town of
Arras, where the principal manufactory of such stuffs was. There was often a very
large space between the arras and the walls.

167. wretch] Dyce (Gloss.): A term of endearment.

169. board] Reed: Accost, address him, as in Twelfth Night, 1, iii, 60.


169. Oh, give me leave] Cambridge Editors: Capell supposed these words to
be addressed, not to Hamlet, but to the King and Queen, whose Exeunt he placed
after these words. His arrangement has been followed by all subsequent editors,
till we ventured, in the Globe edition [anticipated by Grant White. Ed.] to recur to
the old order. These words are more naturally addressed to Hamlet than to the
King and Queen, with whom Polonius had been previously conversing. Dyce
transferred the entrance of Hamlet to follow the Exeunt of the King and Queen,
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.


172. Excellent] Excellent, excellent Ff, Rowe, Cald. Dyce i, Sta. White.

177. lord?] lord. Qq. lord! Dyce, Sta. Glo.+, Mob.

178. Ay, sir...thousando] Two lines, the first ending goes, Qq, Jen.

178. man] Om. F°°, Rowe, Pope, Han.

179. you are... Dyce i, Sta. Huds.

180. you...fishmonger] One line, Cap. Rowe, Cald. Knt.

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line 169. As in Q, he is made to enter earlier, it is possible that he was in sight of the audience, though so intent on his book as not to observe the presence of others.

173. fishmonger] Whiter (p. 152, foot-note) cites a passage from Jonson's Masque at Christmas (vol. vii, p. 277, ed. Gifford), where Venus, who is represented as a deaf tire-woman, says that she was 'a fishmonger's daughter.' 'Probably, it was supposed,' adds Whiter, 'that the daughters of these tradesmen, who dealt in so nourishing a species of food, were blessed with extraordinary powers of conception.' Hence he infers some such allusion by Hamlet. Gifford, in his note on this passage in Jonson, says: 'This alludes to the prolific nature of fish. The jest, which, such as it is, is not unfrequent in our old dramatists, needs no further illustration.' Malone: Perhaps a joke was here intended. 'Fishmonger' was a cant term for a wencher. In Barnabe Rich's Irish Hubbub: 'Senex fornicator, an old fishmonger.' Coleridge: That is, you are sent to fish out this secret. This is Hamlet's own meaning. G. M. Zornlin (Sh. Soc. Papers, vol. iii, p. 157) supposes this word to have been used in a figurative sense, perhaps somewhat as we should now apply the word ferret, or as a dealer in baits, and that it contains an intimation that Hamlet was aware of Polonius's being engaged in some underhand policy, 'and that he knew Ophelia was to play her part in it is evident from the caution which follows respecting her, which the old man loses sight of in his joy at hearing his daughter alluded to.' Mohrly: Probably the meaning may be: 'You deal in wares that will not bear the sun;' that is, that Polonius has a daughter, and that all women are as faithless and unchaste as his mother, so that the least trial overthrows them. Tieck (Kritische Schriften, iii, 262): 'When this word is spoken the sense may be made so obvious that one can hardly miss it: 'I would you were so honest a man—but—you are a fleshmonger.' You are a pandar, not so honest a man as a fishmonger. Hamlet casts in the teeth of Polonius that he made opportunities for him and his daughter, and the following speech: 'For if the sun, &c. is only a continuation of the expression of Hamlet's contempt for both father and daughter. Friesen (Briefe über Hamlet, 1864, p. 287) supposes that this rather refers to Polonius's share in providing opportunities for Claudius and the Queen, during the old king's...
HAMLET

[ACT II, SC. ii.]

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, 180 being a good kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter?


181. good kissing carrion] QqFf, Have...daughter?] Separate line. Rowe, Pope, Theob. Cald. Knl, Coll. Ff, Rowe+, Jen.


 lifetime. DOERING (Shakespeare's Hamlet, Sc. 1865, p. 51) refers it to Polonius’s aid in promoting the marriage of Claudius and the Queen. See, also, GERTH’s extraordinary proverb in his note on this passage in Appendix, Vol. II.

180. sun] TSCHEISCHWITZ (Sh. Forsch. i, 63) finds a parallel to this thought in Giordano Bruno (vol. ii, 246), where the philosophy is taught that, ‘sol et homo generant hominem.’ INGLEBY (Sh. Hermeneutics, p. 159) gives, as a curious illustration of Hamlet’s simile, a passage from St Augustine, De fide et symbolo, § 10: Debent igitur intueri qui hoc putant, solis suis radios, quem certe non sanquam creaturam Dei laudant sed tumquam Deum adorant, per cloacarum foetores et quaecumque horribilia usquequeaque diffundi et in his operari secludum naturalum svam, nec tamen inde aliqua contaminatione sordescere, cum visibilis lux visibilibus sordibus sit natura conjunction.

181. good kissing carrion] WARBURTON: This strange passage, when set right, will be seen to contain as great and sublime a reflection as any the poet puts into his hero’s mouth throughout the whole play. We will first give the true reading, which is this: For if the Sun breed maggots in a dead dog, Being a God, kissing carrion—. As to the sense, we may observe that the illative particle [for] shows the speaker to be reasoning from something he had said before; what that was we learn in these words, to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one picked out of ten thousand. Having said this, the chain of ideas led him to reflect upon the argument which libertines bring against Providence from the circumstance of abounding evil. In the next speech, therefore, he endeavors to answer that objection, and vindicate Providence, even on a supposition of the fact, that almost all men were wicked. His argument in the two lines in question is to this purpose: But why need we wonder at this abounding of evil? For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, which, though a God, yet shedding its heat and influence upon carrion—. Here he stops short, lest talking too consequentially the hearer should suspect his madness to be feigned, and so turns him off from the subject by enquiring of his daughter. But the inference which he intended to make was a very noble one, and to this purpose. If this (says he) be the case that the effect follows the thing operated upon [carrion], and not the thing operating [a God], why need we wonder that the supreme cause of all things diffusing its blessings on mankind, who is, as it were, a dead carrion, dead in original sin, man, instead of a proper return of duty, should breed only corruption and vices? This is the argument at length, and is as noble a one in behalf of Providence as could come from the schools of divinity. But this wonderful man had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors say, but with what they think. The sentiment, too, is altogether in character, for Hamlet is perpetually moralizing, and his circumstances make this reflection very natural. The same thought, something diversified, as on a different occasion, Sh. uses again in
[181. 'good kissing carrion."

_Meas. for Meas._ II, ii, 163-168, which will serve to confirm these observations. And the same kind of expression is in _Cymb._ III, iv, 164, 'Common-kissing Titan.' _Johnson:_ This is a noble emendation, which almost sets the critic on a level with the author. _Malone:_ Hamlet has just remarked that honesty is very rare in the world. To this Polonius assents. The prince then adds, that since there is so little virtue in the world, since corruption abounds everywhere, and maggots are _bred_ by the sun, even in a dead dog, Polonius ought to take care to prevent his daughter from walking in the sun, lest she should prove a _breeder_ of sinners; for, though _conception_ in general be a blessing, yet as Ophelia (whom Hamlet supposes to be as _frazil_ as the rest of the world) might chance to _conceive_, it might be a calamity. The maggots _breeding_ in a dead dog seem to have been mentioned merely to introduce the word _conception_, on which word, as Steevens has observed, Sh. has played in _King Lear_; and probably a similar quibble was intended here. The word, however, may have been used in its ordinary sense, for _pregnancy_, without any double meaning. The slight connection between this and the preceding passage and Hamlet's abrupt question, 'Have you a daughter?' were manifestly intended more strongly to impress Polonius with the belief of the prince's madness. Perhaps this passage ought rather to be regulated thus: 'being a _god-kissing carrion_,' _i.e._ a carrion that kisses the sun. The participle _being_ naturally refers to the last antecedent, dog. Had Sh. intended that it should be referred to _sun_, he would probably have written, ' _he_ being a god,' &c. We have many similar compound epithets in these plays. Thus, in _Lear_, II, i, 9, Curan speaks of ' _ear-kissing arguments._' Again, more oppositely, in the play before us, III, iv, 59, ' _heaven-kissing._' Again, in _R._ of _L._ 1370, ' _cloud-kissing._' However, the instance quoted from _Cymb._ by Warburton seems in favor of the regulation that has been hitherto made; for here we find the poet considered the sun as kissing the carrion, not the carrion as kissing the sun. So, also, in _1 Hen._ IV: II, iv, 113, 'Didst thou never see _Titan_ kiss a dish of butter?' The following lines, also, in the historical play of _King Edward III_, 1596, which Sh. had certainly seen, are, it must be acknowledged, adverse to the regulation I have suggested: 'The freshest _summer's_ _dog_ cloth soonest _taint_ The loathed _carrion_, that it seems to _kiss_.'_ _Whiter_, whose opinions deserve respect, fails to make a clear explanation of the text of _QqF_, which he upholds. He says (p. 149) that Sh. considers the ' _blessed breeding sun_ ' as the _Good_ principle in the fecundity of the earth, and that in the present passage the train of thought in Hamlet's mind is somewhat thus: 'There is so little honesty left in the world, the world has become so degenerate, that even what is bad becomes worse by contact with what is good. The Sun itself, though a _Good_, and in general the source of what is excellent, becomes the origin of _corruption_; we find this _Good_, by contact with carrion, breeding maggots. Why, therefore, may not Ophelia herself become _tainted_, and become a _breeder of sinners_? Let her not walk in the _sun_,—keep her removed from all possibility of contamination,—even from communication with those natures which in general appear possessed of _good_ and _virtuous_ principles. Dread the consequences of exposing her to the temptation of the world. _Coleridge:_ These purposely obscure lines, I rather think, refer to some thought in Hamlet's mind, contrasting the lovely daughter with such a tedious old fool, her father, as he, Hamlet, represents Polonius to himself: ' _Why_, fool as he is, he is some degrees in rank above a dead dog's carcass; and if
the sun, being a god that kisses carrion, can raise life out of a dead dog, why may not good fortune, that favors fools, have raised a lovely girl out of this dead-alive old fool?' The subsequent passage, line 384, is confirmatory of my view of these lines. CALDECOTT: As it would be too forced a sense to say that Sh. calls the sun *a good kissing carrion,* we have nothing better to offer than that this passage may mean that the dead dog is good for the sun, the breeder of maggots, to kiss for the purpose of causing putrefaction, and so conceiving or generating anything carrion-like, anything apt quickly to contract taint in the sunshine; good at catching or drawing the rays or kisses of *common kissing Titan.* MITFORD (Gent. Maga, 1845): Read *carrion-kissing god,* formed like *heaven-kissing, cloud-kissing,* &c. KNIGHT: The carrion is good at kissing, ready to return the kiss of the sun,—*common kissing Titan,*—and in the bitterness of his satire Hamlet associates the idea with the daughter of Polonius. COLLIER: *'Good' could hardly have been a misprint for God,* as in the latter case it would most likely have been written with a capital letter. DELIUS (ed. i): Hamlet calls the dog, in which the sun breeds maggots, a good, kissing carrion, alluding to the confiding, fawning manner of the dog towards his master. If the sun breed maggots in the dead dog, which, when alive, was so trusting, what, says Hamlet in his bitterness and to annoy Polonius,—what could not the sun breed in the delicate Ophelia? who, therefore, ought not to expose herself to it. [This is omitted in the ed. of 1871. Ed.] DUCÉ: I give Warburton's emendation, which, if overpraised by Johnson, at least has the merit of conveying something like a meaning. That not even a tolerable sense can be tortured out of the original reading we have proof positive in the various explications of it by its advocates. COLLIER (ed. 2): The (MS) evidently gave up the passage as inexplicable, and put his pen through the lines 180—185. MAGINN (p. 246): Hamlet, in his affectation of craziness, proceeds to hint that the consequences of exposing a young lady to the temptations of persons in high rank, or of warm blood, may be dangerous, and couples the *outre* assertion that the sun can breed maggots with a reference to Polonius's daughter. Let her not put herself in the peculiar danger to which I allude, and to which her father's performing the part of a fishmonger [*i.e. a purveyor of loose fish*] may lead. The sun is a good-kissing carrion,— *carnage*—it is a word which occurs elsewhere in Sh. Quickly, in the *Merry Wives,* is called a carrion, &c.—a baggage fond of kissing. In *Hen. IV,* Prince Hal compares the sun to a fair hot wrench in flame-colored taffeta; and if the sun can breed maggots in a dead dog, who knows what may happen elsewhere? WHITE: The correction, which is almost of the obvious sort, was made by Warburton, who improved the occasion in a small sermon. This speech of Hamlet's has an intimate connection in thought and in expression with his next; the thought being one which his madness, real or affected, may excuse, but upon which it is not pleasant to dwell, much less to expatiate. STAUNTON: We adopt the now almost universally accepted correction of Warburton. At the same time we dissent, *toto coelo,* from the reasoning by which he and other commentators have sought to connect the sentence in which it occurs with what Hamlet had previously said. The circumstance of the prince coming in reading, that he evinces the utmost intolerance of the old courtier's interruptions, and rejoices in his departure, serve, in our opinion, to show that Sh. intended the actor should manifest his wish to be alone, after the lines 177, 178, in the most unmistakable manner, by walking away and appearing to resume his study; that then,
finding Polonius still watching him, he should turn sharply round with the abrupt question, ‘Have you a daughter?’ It is this view of the stage business which prompted us to print the passage above [line 180. For... carriion] as something read, or affected to be read, by Hamlet,—an innovation—if it be one (for we are ignorant whether it has been suggested previously)—that will the more readily be pardoned, since the passage, as usually exhibited, has hitherto defied solution. Heussi: ‘Kissing’ is used in a passive sense; a contrast is drawn between carrion and bad men. The former is praised, because the dead dog is a carrion that fulfils all requirement of carrion, whereas men are inferior to that which they should be. Tschischwitz: The meaning is clear. If the sun, a good being, condescends so far as to kiss, &c. [He therefore transposes the words in the text, ‘being a good,’ and reads a good being. Ed.] Hudson: God is probably right. A great deal of ink has been spent in trying to explain the passage; but the true explanation is, that it is not meant to be understood. Hamlet is merely bantering and tantalizing the old man. Moerley: Warburton’s explanation is excellent. Clarendon: There can be little doubt of the truth of Warburton’s emendation. Corson: The defect in this passage is due to one thing, and one thing only, and that is, to the understanding of ‘kissing’ as the present active participle, and not as the verbal noun. In the following passages the present active participle is used: ‘Life’s but a walking shadow,’ Mach. V, v, 24; ‘Look, here comes a walking fire,’ Lear, III, iv, 110; ‘the dancing banners of the French,’ King John, II, i, 368; ‘my dancing soul doth celebrate this feast,’ Rich. II: I, iii, 91; ‘laboring art can never ransom nature;’ All’s Well, II, ii, 116; ‘more busy than the laboring spider,’ 2 Hen. VI: III, i, 339; ‘And let the laboring bark climb hills of seas,’ Oth. ii, i, 184; ‘thy parting soul,’ I Hen. VI: II, v, 115; ‘parting guest,’ Tro. & Cress. III, iii, 116; ‘a falling fabric,’ Cor. III, i, 247; ‘this breathing world,’ Rich. III: I, i, 21; ‘O blessed breeding sun,’ Tim. of Ath. IV, iii, 1. But in the following passages the same words are verbal nouns used adjectively: ‘a palmer’s walking-staff,’ Rich. II: III, iii, 151; ‘you and I are past our dancing days,’ Rom. & Jul. I, v, 291; ‘you ought not walk upon a laboring day,’ Jul. Cas. I, i, 4; ‘Give him that parting kiss,’ Cymb. I, iii, 34; ‘what store of parting tears were shed?’ Rich. II: I, iv, 5; ‘the falling sickness,’ Jul. Cas. I, ii, 252; ‘scarce a breathing while,’ Rich. III: I, iii, 60; ‘it is the breathing time of day with me,’ Ham. V, ii, 165. And now we are all ready for ‘kissing.’ In the following passages it is the participle: ‘A kissing traitor,’ Love’s L. L. V, ii, 592; Cymb. III, iv, 164; ‘O, how ripe in show Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow,’ Mid. N. D. III, ii, 140. ‘Kissing,’ in the last passage, might be taken for the verbal noun, meaning, for kissing, or, to be kissed; but it must here be understood as the participle. Demetrius speaks of the lips of Helena as two ripe cherries that kiss, or lightly touch each other. But to say of a pair of beautiful lips, that they are good kissing lips, would convey quite a different meaning,—a meaning, however, which nobody would mistake; ‘kissing,’ in such expression, is the verbal noun used adjectively, and equivalent to ‘for kissing.’ And so the word is used in the present passage in Hamlet. That is, a dead dog being, not a carrion good at kissing (which would be the sense of the word as a present active participle), but a carrion good for kissing, or, to be kissed, by the sun, that thus breeds a plentiful crop of maggots therein, the agency of ‘breed’ being implied in ‘kissing.’ In reading this speech, the emphasis should be upon ‘kissing,’ and not upon ‘carrion,’ the idea of which
HAMLET

Pol. I have, my lord.

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

Pol. How say you by that? [Aside] Still harping on my daughter; yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger; he is far gone, far gone; and truly in my youth


186-190. How...lord] Verse, ending daughter...fishmonger...youth...love...again...lord. Pope+, Jen.

last word is anticipated in 'dead dog;' in other words, 'kissing carrion' should be read as a compound noun, which, in fact, it is, the stress of sound falling on the member of the compound which bears the burden of the meaning. The two words might, indeed, be hyphenated, like 'Kissing-comfits,' in Merry Wives, V, v, 19. The life-awakening power of the sun is expressed in the following passages, which commentators have not quoted, I believe, in illustration of the passage in Hamlet: 'By the fire That quickens Nilus’ slime,' Ant. & Cleo. I, iii, 69; 'Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of the sun: so is your crocodile,' II, vii, 26. [This note is so exhaustive and so conclusive that, although the interpretation which it offers has been anticipated by Caldecott, I have nevertheless given it almost at full length. Ed.]

183. sun] PETRI (Archiv f. n. Sprachen, vol. vi, 1849, p. 94): This phrase must not be taken too literally; it means merely in solem et pulverem prodire, i.e. mingle with the world, without any special reference to the sun-god.

183. conception] STEEVENS: There is a quibble here, similar to that in Lear, I, i, 12, between 'conception,' understanding, and 'conceive,' to be pregnant. MOBERLY: Understanding is a blessing; but if you leave your daughter unrestrained, she will understand what you would not like. CORSON: He says what he does to make the old-man uneasy, meaning that though conception is a blessing in the legitimate way, it wouldn't be as his daughter might conceive,—out of wedlock.

186. by that] For instances of 'by,' meaning 'about,' 'concerning,' see ABBOTT, § 145.

186-190. Still...again] MAGINN (p. 244): Is not this dialogue in blank verse? This speech of Polonius's certainly is. [Maginn then divides the lines at 'on,' 'first,' 'is,' reading the next two lines, 'Far gone, far gone; and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love.']
I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

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 you yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

190, 192. lord?  Lord. Qq.
193. who?  who. Qq. whom? F, F,
F, Rowe +, Coll. White.
194. that you read] you mean F, F,
you mean F, F, Cald. you read Rowe.
195. rogue] slave F, Rowe +, Cald.
Knt, Dyce +, Del.
197. and plum-tree] & plum-tree Q,
Q, Q, or Plum-Tree Ff, Rowe, Knt.
White.
198. lack] lacke Qq. locke F, F, F.

190. extremity] MOBERLY: It may have been so; but one rather suspects that Polonius's love-reminiscences are like those of Touchstone in As You Like It, II, iv.

192. matter] CLARENDON: See line 95. Hamlet purposely misunderstands the word to mean 'cause of dispute,' as in Twelfth Night, III, iv, 172.

193. who] For instances of neglect in the inflection of who, see Macb. III, iv, 42; and ABBOTT, § 274.

195. satirical rogue] WARBURTON: He refers to Juvenal, Sat. x, 185. FARMER: There was a translation of this satire by Sir John Beaumont, elder brother of the famous Francis; but I cannot tell whether it was printed in Shakespeare's time.

CLARENDON: It is at least as probable, without attributing to Sh. any unusual amount of originality, that he invented this speech for himself.

201. for yourself ] MOBERLY: The natural reason would have been, 'For some time I shall be as old as you are now' (and, therefore, I take such sayings as propositively personal). But Hamlet turns it to the opposite. CORSON: It is not likely that Sh. meant that Hamlet should talk nonsense here, but rather that he should express himself in a way to puzzle the old man. It would seem that 'old' is used, not as opposed to 'young,' but as denoting age in general. So that the expression really means, 'you yourself, sir, should be young as I am, if!' &c.

201. should] CLARENDON: For would, as in III, ii, 291. See ABBOTT, § 322.
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 is out o’ 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.

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.

205. [Aside] First marked by Johns.
206. 207. [Aside] Three lines, ending madness...wanke...lorn? Ff. Two lines, the first ending in’t ROWE, Jen.
208. there is] there’s ROWE, Mal.
213. 214. Indeed...you.] Prose, Qq.
215. Eleven irregular lines, ending ayre,... are?...happinesse...on,...not...of...him,... meeting...daughter...humbly...you. Ff.
216. Nine, Rowe +, Jen.
219. of the] oth? Ff (o’ th? F,) of the

205. grave] CORSON; Hamlet’s replies to those persons whom he dislikes or despises, the King, Polonius, and the courtiers, are characterized by their literalness.
206. pregnant] STEEVES: Ready, dexterous, apt. NARES: Ingenious, full of art or intelligence. CALDECOTT: Big with meaning. ‘Quick and pregnant capacities.’—Puttenham’s Arte of Poesie, p. 154.
213. withal] For instances of the emphatic form of with at the end of a sentence, see ABBOTT, § 196.

213. except my life] COLERIDGE: This repetition strikes me as most admirable. COLLIER (ed. 2): Perhaps these repetitions sometimes originated merely with the actors. STAUNTON: To us it is evident that here, as in other places, the iteration, —a well-known symptom of intellectual derangement,—is purposely adopted by Hamlet to encourage the belief of his insanity. He never indulges in this cuckoo-note unless with those whom he distrusts. 'CLARKE: Not only is this iteration a part of Hamlet’s feigned insanity, but it is profoundly pathetic, as conveying that im-

[ACT II, SC. II.]

HAMLET

52

52
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.


Guil. My honoured lord!

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern?—Ah, Rosencrantz? Good lads, how do ye 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?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

pression of utter life-weariness which besets Hamlet throughout. MILES (p. 31): This triple wail arrests our sympathy just as it is about to side with Polonius, by reminding us of the insignificance of the pain Hamlet inflicts when weighed against the torture he endures.

216. MAGINN: Would it not be better, 'Thou tedious old fool'!—it is plain that Hamlet is thinking only of the troublesome old man who has been pestering him.

217. there he is] MILES (p. 31): The Premier's advance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to cover his own retreat is exceedingly humorous. This speech is accented just as if he had said, 'You go to seek the devil; there he is!' [Exit.

222. ye] CORSON: There seems to be a certain playfulness in 'ye,' which is not in you of Qq.

223. indifferent] CAPELL (i, 131): Middling. STAUNTON: Medium, average. 
Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of Fortune? Oh, most true; she is a strumpet. 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.

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.

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.


233. \textit{that} ] Om. Qq.

234. \textit{but} ] sure Q'76.


244, 245. \textit{Why...so;} ] Two lines of verse, the first ending nothing, Walker (Crit. i, 19).

251. \textit{bad} ] had Mal.

229. \textit{favours} ] White: Considering the context, there can be no doubt that the \textit{s} of the Qq is a mere superfluity. 'Favour' has here two senses, one of which is \textit{person, figure}, to express which it was used in the singular, never in the plural.


251. \textit{bad} ] Nowhere, I believe, is there any allusion to Malone's reading: \textit{had}. There is none in his First, or Second Appendix, nor in the Variorum of 1821. It even
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 say, I cannot reason.

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?

escaped the almost unerring scrutiny of the Cam. Edd., who recorded it, it is true, but as the conjecture of an anonymous critic. It is probably a typographical error, —a happy one, it must be confessed; much can be said in its favor. Ed.

253. shadow of a dream] Johnson: Sh. has accidentally inverted the expression of Pindar, that the state of humanity is ἅναγ ἄνα, the dream of a shadow. [Ἐνθέμευσον· τί δὲ τις; τί δ' ὅπ' τις· ἅναγ ἄνα ἄνθρωπος.—Pythia, viii, 135 (ed. Schneidevin). But, as Collier says, Sh. applies it only to the 'ambitious.' Ed.]

257. beggars bodies] Coleridge: I do not understand this; and Sh. seems to have intended the meaning to be not more than snatched at.—'By my say, I cannot reason.' Caldecott: At this rate, and if it be true that lofty aims are no more than air, our beggars only have the nature of substance; and our monarchs and those who are blazoned so far abroad as to be thought materially to fill so much space, are, in fact, shadows, and in imagination only gigantic. Hudson: Hamlet loses himself in the riddles he is making. The meaning, however, seems to be: our beggars can at least dream of being kings and heroes; and if the substance of such ambitious men is but a dream, and if a dream is but a shadow, then our kings and heroes are but the shadows of our beggars. Bucknill (p. 76): If ambition is but a shadow, something beyond ambition must be the substance from which it is thrown. If ambition, represented by a king, is a shadow, the antitype of ambition, represented by a beggar, must be the opposite of the shadow, that is, the substance. Morely: If ambition is the shadow of pomp, and pomp the shadow of a man, then the only true substantial men are beggars, who are stript of all pomp and of all ambition.

258. outstretched] Delius: Hamlet is thinking of the strutting stage heroes.

259. say] Clarendon: A corruption probably of the French foi, which in its earlier forms was feid, feit, fey, fê. Or it may be an abbreviation of 'faith.' Compare Rom. & Jul. i. 5, 124.

263. attended] Delius: My retinue, my service, is detestable. Hudson: Probably referring to the 'bad dreams' already spoken of.
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.

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

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266. beaten] CALDECOTT: The plain track, the open and unceremonious course.

266. Beggar] ELZE: Hamlet likes to represent himself as a very poor, insignificant, and uninfluential person.

267. thanks] TSCHISCHWITZ: My thanks, which are insincere, are worth no more than your false protestations of friendship; nevertheless, in thanking you, I give you too much, since you deserve to be treated as rogues. MOBERLY: You have had to buy my 'beggarly thanks' too dear by taking so much trouble as to come here.

268. a halfpenny] WALKER (Crit. ii, 259): Until it can be shown that 'dear a halfpenny' is English, I should certainly prefer 'dear at a halfpenny.' CLARENDOX: There is no need of change. Compare Chaucer, Cant. Tales, 8875: 'dere y-nough a Jane' (i.e. a coin of Genoa); and 12723, 'deere y-nough a leeke.' Also, 'too late a week,' As You Like It, II, iii, 74.

272. but] STAUNTON: That is, only to the purpose. CLARKE: It here signifies 'only let it be;' while it includes the effect of 'except,' and therefore conveys the covert sarcasm felt by Hamlet.

274. modesties] DELIUS: A jocose style of address, like 'your majesties.' ELZE: It is simply the plural of the abstract noun, in accordance with a usage common to Sh. and all English writers. See 'I am doubtful of your modesties.'—Tam. of Sh., Ind., i. 94. [See I, i, 173.]

278. consonancy] CLARENDOX: See line 11 of this scene.
youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by
what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be
280
even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no.

Ros. [Aside to Guil.] 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.

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279. ever-preserved] ever preferred

Q76.

280. could] can Qq,

charge] change Qq.

you withal] youth withal White.

281. no.] QqFf. Rowe, Han. Jen.

Kily, Cam. Del. Hud. no? Pope, et
cet.

279.280. by...withal] Tschischwitz: The addition of ‘withal’ ought to have
revealed to modern editors the error of the old text; no explanation is offered by
them of the use of two prepositions for one object. It is evident that, after using
‘by’ three times, the climax is reached only by using it as a substantive in the last
clause; the sense therefore is: ‘with what more dear “by” a better proposer could
charge you.’ [Thus the pure English of William Shakespeare is amended by Benno
Tschischwitz! Ed.]

280. proposer] Caldecott: An advocate of more address in shaping his aims,
who could make a stronger appeal.

282. What say you?] Delius: Perhaps this question is addressed to Hamlet,
in order to gain time and evade, if possible, a direct answer. Furthermore, I doubt
if Sh. intended Hamlet’s reply to be spoken as an Aside. Nowhere does Hamlet
take much pains to conceal the distrust with which he regards these false friends,
and he does not hesitate here to let them see that he has an eye on them.

283. an eye of you] Steevens: A glimpse of your meaning: Caldecott:
An eye upon or after you; a sharp lookout. [‘Of’ is used for on. See II, ii,
27. Ed.]

286. prevent] Caldecott: That is, be beforehand with your discovery, and the
plume and gloss of your secret pledge be in no feather shed or tarnished. Claren-
don: That is, anticipate, and so stop. Hudson: Hamlet’s fine sense of honor is
well shown in this. He will not tempt them to any breach of confidence; by telling
them the reason, he will forestall and prevent their disclosure of it.

286. Strachey (p. 53): This speech, like all others of the same kind throughout
the rest of the play, is in prose. That the inferior interlocutors in the dialogue
speak in prose also is, of course, sufficiently explained by the natural tendency of
every man to carry on a conversation in the tone which the chief speaker gives it.
But why Hamlet himself speaks prose is explained by comparing his prose with his
verse speeches. We then find that he always returns to verse as the language of
his practical life, whether in relation to feeling or to action; whereas, while he
speaks prose, he is uttering the thoughts of the bystander and looker-on, contemplat-
vent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen 287
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,

287. discovery, and... queen moult] Cap. (Corrected in Errata).
288. discovery of... Queen: moult Ff. discovery of... queen. Moult Knt.
288. feather. I] Pope. feather: I Q,Q-»
Q76, Rowe. feather, I QqFf.
289. exercises] exercise Ff, Rowe, +,
Knt i.

ing, or aiming at contemplating, the world, with the cold passionless eye of the intellect. I say aiming at contemplating, for Hamlet is too young and ardent, and his griefs are too fresh, for his skepticism to become the real habit of his soul; and, accordingly, we see a bitter self-consciousness working up through it at every moment. Still, in as far as it is the looking on of a spectator, and not the participation of an actor, it is passionless, at least in form,—the reading out of a book, rather than the utterance of living speech.

287. discovery] Abbott, 5439: This is often used for uncovering, i.e. unfold, whether literally or metaphorically. Here 'render your dis-closure needless by anticipation.'

289. lost] Warburton: This is artfully imagined to hide the true cause of his disorder from the penetration of these spies.

289. exercises] Tieck (Krit. Schriften, iii, 280): We must not take too literally what Hamlet says here, else it contradicts what he says to Horatio, V, ii, 198, that he had been in continual practice since Laertes went into France.

291. promontory] Moerly: Thrust out into the dread ocean of the unknown, and as barren as the waves themselves.

292. brave o'erhanging] Walker (Crit. i, 38) thinks these words should be hyphenated. The Folio's omission of 'firmament' probably originated in the similar commencements firmament, fretted.

293. firmament] Knight: Using 'o'erhanging' as a substantive, and omitting 'firmament,' the sentence is, perhaps, less eloquent, but more coherent. The air is the canopy; the o'erhanging: the majestical roof. Here there are three distinct references to the common belief of the three regions of air. Ben Jonson, in his description of the scenery of the Masque of Hymen, has this passage: 'A cortine of painted clouds... opening, revealed the three regions of air; in the highest of which sat Juno,... her feet reaching to the lowest... where was a rainbow, and within it airy spirits, their habits... resembling the several colours caused in that part of the air by reflection. The midst was all of dark and condensed clouds,' &c. The 'canopy,' we believe, is the lowest region of 'colors caused by reflection,' the 'o'erhanging,' the midst of 'dark and condensed clouds:' the 'majestical roof fretted,' &c., the highest, where Juno sat. The air, in its three regions, appears to Hamlet no other thing 'than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors.' If this interpretation be
it appears no other thing to me than a soul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man! 295 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 300 neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

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


correct, the word 'firmament,' which is applied to the heavens generally, was rejected by Sh. as conveying an image unsuited to that idea of a part which is conveyed by the substantive, 'or hanging.'

293. fretted] MALONE: See Son. xxi. CLARENDON: From A. S. fratum, to adorn. Compare Cymb. II, iv, 88. 'Fret' is an architectural term, which Sh. 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.

295. man] WALKER (Crit. i, 91) gives this, amongst others, as an instance of the interpolation of a in F. DYCE (ed. 2): The Qq have: 'What piece of worke is a man,'—the 'a' having been shuffled out of its place. In the Ff, instead of the proper transposition, a second 'a' was inserted: 'What a piece of worke is a man.' The Quarto of 1637 has, 'What a piece a worke is man.' [See line 386.]

297. express] CLARENDON: Exact, fitted to its purpose, as the seal fits the stamp. In Hebrews, i, 3, 'express image' is the rendering of χαρακτήρ.

299. paragon] CLARENDON: Colgrave renders the French word by 'A paragon, or peerless one; the perfection, or flower of; the most complete, most absolute, most excellent piece, in any kind whatsoever.' See Two Gent. II, iv, 146.

300. quintessence] CLARENDON: 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.
Ham. Why did you laugh, then, when I said 'man delights not me'?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what 305 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 310

303. you] see Qq. quoted Jen. conj. 307. hither] hether Qq.
then] Om. Ff, Rowe+. are they] are the Qq.Qq.'
306. lenten] Steevens: Sparing, like the entertainments given in Lent. 310. of me] on me Qq.
Collier: Such entertainment as players met with in Lent, when they were often not allowed to perform. This explanation Dyce (Gloss.) pronounces erroneous. Halliwell: Our ancestors seem to have used this adjective constantly in a sense of deterioration. Cotgrave defines 'Amouroux de caresme: A Lenten lover; a bashfull, modest, or maidenly woor; one thats afraid to touch his mistresse.'

307. coted] Steevens: Overtook. In The Return from Parnassus, 1606: 'marry we presently coted and outstrip them.' 'In the laws of coursing,' says Tollet, 'a cote is when a greyhound goes endways by the side of his fellow, and gives the hare a turn.' Nares: To pass by, to pass the side of another. It was a common sporting term. 'Each man... notes Which dog first turns the hare, which first the other coats.'—Drayton, Polyolb. xxiii, p. III5. Caldecott cites from Golding’s translation of Ovid, Met. B, x: ‘With that Hippomenes coted her’ (where the original has ‘praterit’). Dyce (Gloss.): Compare what Rosencrantz afterwards says of these players, III, i, 17: ‘certain players. We o'er-raft (overtook, overpassed) on the way.’ Anonymous (New Shakespearean Interpretations. Edin. Rev. Oct. 1872): Cote, in the language of venery, is applied to a brace of greyhounds slipped together at the stag or hare, and means that one of the dogs outstrips the other and reaches the game first. Thus we find in Turberville: ‘In coursing at a Deer, if one Greyhound go endways by [that is beyond] another, it is accoumpted a Cote.’ Again, ‘In coursing at the Hare, it is not materiall which dog kylleth her (which hunters call bearing of an Hare), but he that giveth most Cotes, or most turns, winneth the wager. A Cote is when a Greyhound goeth endways by his fellow and giveth the Hare a turn (which is called setting a Hare about), but if he coast and so come by his fellow, that is no Cote. Likewise, if one Greyhound do go by another, and then be not able to reach the Hare himselfe and turne her, this is but stripping, and no Cote.’ To cote is thus not simply to overtake, but to overpass, to outstrip, this being the distinctive meaning of the term. Going beyond is the essential point, the term being usually applied under circumstances where overtaking is impossible,—to dogs who start together and run abreast until the cote takes place. So Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, having coted the players in their way, reach the palace first, and have been for some time in conversation with Hamlet before the strolling company arrives.
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,


311. sigh[ing] Q, Qr. 312. humorous] Caldecott: The fretful or capricious man shall vent the whole of his spleen undisturbed. Staunton: Not the funny man, or jester,—he was termed ‘the clown,’—but the actor who personated the fantastic characters, known in Shakespeare’s time as ‘humourists,’ and who, for the most part, were represented as capricious and quarrelsome. Delius: Such characters as Faulconbridge, Jacques, and Mercutio. The ‘clown’ is next referred to.

313. tickle o’ the sere] Capell (Gloss. s.v. sere): Tickled, or delighted with the dry jokes of the character spoken of. Steevens: That is, those who are asthmatical, and to whom laughter is most uneasy. This is the case (I am told) with those whose lungs are tickled by the sere or sereum. Malone: The word ‘sere’ I am unable to explain, and suspect it to be corrupt. Perhaps we should read: ‘tickled o’ the scene,’ i.e. by the scene. Douce: The same expression occurs in Howards Defensative against the poynson of supposed prophecies, 1620: ‘Discovering the moods and humors of the vulgar sort to be so loose and tickle of the seare,’ &c., fol. 31. Every one has felt that dry tickling in the throat and lungs which excites coughing. Hamlet’s meaning may be, ‘the clown shall convert even their coughing into laughter.’ White: The whole speech is ironical, and here, as in his famous directions to the players, Hamlet is severest upon the Clown, who, he says, will have to be content with such semblance of laughter as comes from those who are tickled not by his jokes, but by a dry cough,—‘o’ the sere.’ Staunton: Correctly, perhaps, ‘tickle o’ the sere.’ It appears to signify those easily moved to the expression of mirth. Halliwell: Light of the seare is equivalent to light-heeled, loose in character. Tickled of the seare, wanton, immodest. In the present passage it means those whose lungs are wanton, or excited to laughter by coarse ribaldry. See the following (cited by Steevens): ‘She that ... will abyde wyshperyne in the eare, Thynke ye her tayle is not lyght of the seare.’—Commune Secretary and Jalousye, n.d. [ed. Hindley, vol. i, p. 41]. Nicholson (N. & Qu. 22 July, 1871): The seare, or, as it is now spelt, sear (or seare) of a gun-lock is the bar or balance-lever interposed between the trigger on the one side, and the tumbler and other mechanism on the other, and is so called from its acting the part of a seare, or talon, in gripping that mechanism and preventing its action. It is, in fact, a nail or stop-catch. When the trigger is made to act on one end of it, the other end releases the tumbler, the mainspring acts, and the hammer, flint, or match falls. Hence Lombard (1596), as quoted in Halliwell’s Archaic Dict, says, ‘Even as a pistole that is ready charged and bent will fly off by-and-by, if a man do but touch the seare.’ Now if the lock be so made of purpose, or be worn, or be faulty in construction, this sear, or grip, may be so tickle or ticklish in its adjustment that a slight touch or even jar may displace it, and then, of course, the gun goes off. Hence ‘light,’ or ‘tickle of the sear’ (equivalent to, like a hair-trigger), applied metaphorically, means that which can be started into action at a mere touch, or on the slightest provocation, or on what ought to be no provocation at all. Clarendon: The real meaning is just the re-
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.

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.

verse of ‘those to whom laughter is most uneasy.’ 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 Warses, 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 forefinger. It is clear that Hamlet did not anticipate much from the wit of the clown, or from the players generally.

314. lady] Johnson: The lady shall have no obstruction, unless from the lameness of the verse. Henderson: The lady shall mar the measure of the verse rather than not express herself freely or fully. Seymour: If the lady, through affection of delicacy, should suppress anything, her omission will be detected in the lameness of the metre.


318. travel] Malone: A technical word, for which we have substituted stroll.

320. inhibition] ‘What “inhibition”? asks Theobald [Nichols, Lit. Hist. ii, 562]. ‘If Rosencrantz meant to answer Hamlet’s question closely, methinks it should be iteration.’ This is not repeated in Theobald’s ed. Johnson: Hamlet inquires not about an ‘inhibition,’ but an ‘innovation;’ the answer probably was: ‘I think their innovation,’ that is, their new practice of strolling, ‘comes by means of the late inhibition.’ Steevens: Any change in the order of the words is quite unnecessary. Rosencrantz means that 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. Several companies of actors in the time of Sh. were silenced on account of this licentious practice. Malone: Sh. could not mean to charge his friends, the old tragedians, with the new custom of introducing personal abuse, but rather must have meant, that the old tragedians were inhibited from performing in the city and obliged to travel on account of the misconduct of the younger company. And he could not have directed his satire at those young men who played occasionally at his own theatre. Jonson’s Cynthia’s Revels and Poetaster were performed there by the Children of Queen Elizabeth’s chapel in 1600 and 1601; and Eastward Hoe by the Children of the Revels in 1604 or 1605. I have no doubt, therefore, that the present dialogue was pointed at the choir boys of St Paul’s, who in 1601 acted two of Marston’s plays: Antonio and Mellida, and
Antonio's Revenge. Many of Lyly's plays were represented by them about the same time; and, in 1607, Chapman's _Bussy d'Ambois_ was performed by them with great applause. It was probably in this and some other noisy tragedies of the same kind that they 'cried out on the top of question, and were most tyrannically clapped for it.' The licentiousness of the stage is noticed in a letter from Mr Samuel Calvert to Mr Winwood, 28 March, 1605, which might lead us to infer that the words found only in the Folio were added at that time: 'The plays do not forbear to present upon the stage the whole course of this present time, not sparing the king, state, or religion, in so great absurdity and with such liberty that any would be afraid to hear them.'—Memorials, ii, 54. Or the words in the Folio might have been added in 1612, in which year Heywood's _Apologie for Actors_ was published, containing the following passage, which leads us to infer that the little _epases_ were the persons guilty of the _late innovation_, or practice of introducing personal abuse on the stage: 'Now to speake of some abuse lately crept into the quality, as an imuneighing against the State, the Court, the Law, the City, and their gouernments, 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 themselves, committing their bitternesse, and liberall inuictuies against all estates, to the mountes of Children, supposing their iuniority to be a priuledge 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 iuditial Censurers, before whom such complaints shall at any time hereafter come, wil not (I hope) impute these abuses to any transgression in vs, who have euer been carefull and prudent to shun the like.'—Caldecott thinks that they were obliged to travel because of the license granted to a new description of actors, who had met with the most extravagant applause and success. Collier says, that this passage probably refers to the limiting of public theatrical performances to the two theatres, the Globe on the Bankside, and the Fortune in Golden Lane, in 1600 and 1601. The players, by a 'late innovation,' were 'inhibited,' or forbidden, to act in, or near 'the city,' and therefore travelled,' or strolled, into the country. See Collier's _Hist. of Engl. Dram. Poetry and the Stage_, i, 311.

Clarendon doubts the validity of Steevens's explanation of the 'inhibition,' and thinks that the 'late innovation' does not clearly refer to the introduction of personal abuse on the stage, and adds the following conclusive note: 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 Cavaliere Pasquile of England_, published in 1589. In this year, also, proposals were made to appoint two commissioners to act.
Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? are they so followed?
Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

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, Shore ditch, are charged with satirising 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 Sh. 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' Sh. 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 Q2, 1603, but that the sentence containing both is first introduced in Q4, 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 Sh. 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's *Further Account of the Early English Stage* (Var. 21, 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. The quotation cited by Malone from Heywood shows, indeed, that the Children indulged in personalities, but not that any 'inhibition' was the consequence. Besides, it refers to a subsequent date. *Fleay (Sh. Manual, p. 41):* This is not necessarily to be applied to the first order of the Privy Council for the restraint of the immoderate use of playhouses (made 22 June, 1600), for this order proved ineffectual; but rather to their second order, made 31 Dec., 1601. *The Fortune* and *The Globe* were allowed to remain open; the others were closed, owing to the personal allusions indulged in by some of the companies. [See note III, ii, 267. Ed.]
Ham. How comes it? do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavours keeps in the wonted pace; but there is, sir, an aerie of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question and are most tyrannically clapped


327. aerie] STEEVENS: This refers to the young singing men of the chapel royal, or St Paul's, of the former of whom perhaps the earliest mention occurs in an anonymous Puritanical pamphlet, 1569, entitled The Children of the Chapel Stript and Whipt: 'Plaies will neuer be supprest, while her maiesties unfledged minions flaunt it in silkes and sattens. They had as well be at their popish seruice in the deuils garments,' &c. Again, ibid: 'Euen in her maiesties chapel do these pretty upstart youthes profane the Lordes day by the lasciuious writhing of their tender limbs, and gorgeous decking of their apparell, in feigning bawdie fables gathered from the idolatrous heathen poets,' &c. Concerning the performances and success of the latter in attracting the best company, I also find the following passage in Jack Drum's Entertainment, or Pasquil and Katherine, 1601:

'I saw the children of Powles last night;
And truth they pleas'd me pretty, pretty well,
The apes, in time, will do it handsomely.
— I like the audience that frequenteth there
With much applause: a man shall not be choak'd
With the stench of garlick, nor be pasted
To the balmy jacket of a beer-brewer.
— Tis a good gentle audience,' &c.

It is said in Richard Flecknoe's Short Discourse of the English Stage, 1664, that 'both the children of the chappell and St Paul's, acted playes, the one in White-Frier's, the other behinde the Convocation-house in Paul's; till people growing more precise, and playes more licentious, the theatre of Paul's was quite supprest, and that of the children of the chappell converted to the use of the children of the revels.' WEDGWOOD: An eagle's nest. From French aire, an airie, or nest of haukes.— Cotgrave.

327. eyases] DYCE (Gloss.): Young hawks, just taken from the nest. 'Niais: A nestling, a young bird taken out of a nest; hence a youngling, novice,' &c.— Cotgrave. CAPELL: These children were so called from their eagerness, and their flying at game above them.

328. top of question] JOHNSON: They ask a common question in the highest note of the voice. STEEVENS: Question here signifies conversation, dialogue. The meaning therefore is: Children that perpetually recite in the highest notes of voice that can be uttered. M. MASON: When we ask a question, we generally end the sentence with a high note. These children, therefore, declaim, through the whole of their parts, in the high note commonly used at the end of a question, and are applauded for it. ELZE: 'Question,' as Steevens has said, means frequently in Sh conversation, dialogue. The 'top of the question' therefore means the top of con
for't; these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages—so they call them—that many wearing rapiers 330 are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither.

329. berattle] be-rattle F F 4 , be ratle F 5 , be-ratted F 4 .

version; namely, that point where the dialogue is most lively, where question and answer follow each other stroke on stroke, and the speakers are the most excited. These 'little eyases,' therefore, continually cry out as though they were at the very height of conversation. STAUPTON: The phrase, derived perhaps from the defiant crowing of a cock upon his midden, really meant, we believe, like—'Stood challenger on mount of all the age,' to crow over or challenge all comers to a contention. In line 424, Hamlet uses the phrase, 'cried in the top,' where it evidently means crowsed over. Again, in Armin's Nest of Ninny, the author, alluding to fencers or players at single stick, talks of 'making them expert till they cry it up in the top of question.' [p. 55, Sh. Soc. vol. x.] WHITE: To 'cry in the top' seems rather to mean to assume superiority;—as afterwards Hamlet, speaking of people who set him down about the play from which he quotes, says their judgments 'cried in the top' of his.

I can conjecture no specific origin of the phrase. It might well have been formed on the mere general force of the words which compose it. WELLESLEY (Stray Notes, &c., 1865, p. 33): 'Question' is not conversation, dialogue, but the old word, still in use in other languages, for the rack. The pulleys were strained, and the witnesses hoisted to the utmost height, till the desired confession was elicited; and so the phrase, 'top of question,' came to be metaphorically applied; as, for instance, to the highest stretch of the voice or the utmost force of an argument. The top of the bent [111, ii, 367] was a phrase of the same kind, borrowed from those bows which were not bent by hand, but by a rack. 'These bows...were bent only by a man's immediate strength, without the help of any bender or rack that are used with others.'—Wilkins' Mathematical Magick.

DYCE (Glos.): Recite at the very highest pitch of the voice. Wellesley's explanation is wrong. Tschischwitz: I am convinced that this phrase in the MS was: that cry on the top, out of question; that is, they cry at the highest pitch of the voice, where it is wholly inappropriate. [And even so is the text amended. Ed.] CLARKE: That is, pipe out their parts at the top of their shrill infantine voices. CLARENDON: Probably, to speak in a high key, dominating conversation. For 'question' in this sense, see Mer. of Ven. IV, i, 70.

328. tyrannically] CALDECOTT: That is, receive outrageous, extravagant applause. CLARENDON: The tyrant's part in the old plays was a noisy one. See Mid. N. D. I, ii, 31. Compare Beau. and Fl., The Knight of the Burning Pestle. V, i, 'And thou hastad but seen little Ned of Aldgate, drum Ned, how he made it roar again, and laid on like a tyrant.'

329. fashion] THEOBALD (Sh. Rest. 67): The emendation of faction we owe to Mr Hughes; it implies that those children were not only in fashion, but had a faction made by the town in their favor. [Has a copy of the edition by 'the accurate Mr Hughes' ever been found? See Vol. II, p. 35. Ed.]

330. stages] THEOBALD (Sh. Rest. 67) conjectured stagers, that is, professed actors, to whom a degree of cowardice might be imputed, which Sh. would never have imputed to gentlemen spectators. HEATH thought highly of this emendation although Theobald did not adopt it in his text.

331. goose-quills] CALDECOTT: Lampoons. ELZE: This refers to 'the writers;
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,

in line 336. MOBERLY: These young hawks make such a noise on the common stage, that true dramatists, whose wit is as strong and keen as a rapier, are afraid to encounter these chits, who fight, as it were, with a goose-quill.

333. escoted] DYCE (Gloss.): Paid. 'Escot, A shot. ... Escoter, Every one to pay his shot, &c.—Cotgrave. TSCHISCHWITZ: It is very doubtful whether Sh. used so uncommon a word as 'escoted' when the common one, maintains, was ready to his use. 'I therefore believe that the true word is escorded.' THEOBALD (Sh. Rest. p. 68) calls attention to what he calls the 'self-contradiction' here, in making Hamlet show a knowledge of their singing after 'he had professed himself a stranger' to them.

333. quality] JOHNSON: Will they follow the profession of players no longer than they can keep the voices of boys? So also in line 412. MALONE: So in Gossen's Schoole of Abuse (p. 39, ed. Arber), 1579: 'I speake not this, as though euery one [of our players] that professeth the qualitie so abused him selfe.' GIFFORD (Massinger's Roman Actor, Works ii, 339): 'Quality,' though used in a general sense for any occupation, calling, or condition of life, yet seems more peculiarly appropriated, by our old writers, to that of a player. See also The Picture, vol. iii, p. 141. CLARENDON: So in Two Gent. IV, i. 58, 'in our quality,' i.e. in our profession of brigands.

335 common players] STAUNTON: As we now term them, 'strolling players.' 'I prefix an epithite of common, to distinguish the base and artlesse appendants of our City companies, which often times start away into rusticall wanderers, and then (like Proteus) start backe again into the City number.'—J. Stephens, Essays and Characters, 1615, p. 301.

338. to-do] HUDSON: This is the same as ado. CORSON: 'In place of this to-do, the King's English accepted a composition, part French, part English, and hence the substantive ado.'—Earle's Philology of the Engl. Tongue, ed. 2, p. 420.

338. both sides] TSCHISCHWITZ finds this speech obscure, because it seems as though it were a reply to what Hamlet has just said, whereas, so he says, it merely resumes the connection of thought which was broken by Hamlet's questions about the children. He therefore thinks that logic demands the insertion of Hamlet's speech, lines 332—337, after 'clapped for 't.'
and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy; there was for a while no money bid for argument, unless 340 the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

_Ham._ Is't possible?

_Guil._ Oh, 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. 345

_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

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346. _very strange; for_ ] *very strange for* Q 76 . _very strange for_ Q 3 . _strange for_ F 4 . Pope + , Cald. Knt, Dyce i, Sta. White, Del. _strange for_ F 2 . _strange for_ F 4 . Rowe, _my_] _mine_ Ff, Rowe + , Knt,

_Dyce i, Sta. Glo. Mob._


349. *'Sblood* ] _'slood_ Qq. Om. Ff, Rowe + , Knt.

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339. _tarre_ ] NARES: To set on, and encourage in an attack, particularly in reference to dogs. WEDGWOOD: The origin seems to be an imitation of the sound of a dog snarling, used for the purpose of setting the animal on to fight.

340. _argument_ ] DELIUS: That is, the plot of the drama, which must be selected and treated in reference to the taste of the public, if the stage-directors are to bid money for it; the public in the meanwhile only caring to see those dramas wherein the dialogue (the 'question') is well seasoned with warfare, 'cuffs.'


345. _Hercules_ ] WARBURTON: They not only carry away the world, but the world-bearer too; alluding to the story of Hercules relieving Atlas. STEEVENS: The allusion may be to the Globe theatre, the sign of which was Hercules carrying the Globe. MALONE: I suppose Sh. meant that the boys drew greater audiences than the elder players of the Globe theatre. COLLIER (ed. 2): In Q, there are sufficient traces of this part of the scene to enable us to be certain that it was acted when the play was originally produced; it was omitted, therefore, for some unexplained reason in 1604, and restored entire in 1623.

346. _strange_ ] JOHNSON: I do not wonder that the new players have so suddenly risen to reputation; my uncle supplies another example of the facility with which honor is conferred upon new claimants.

347. _mows_ ] NARES: A distortion of the face, made in ridicule. See Cymb. i, vi, 41, and Psalm xxy, 15, old ed. [now erroneously changed to 'mouths.'—Clarendon]. CLARENDON: In Mid. N. D. III, ii, 238, we have 'mouchers.' In fact, in the phrase 'to make mouchers,' 'mouths' is a corruption of 'mows,' the original word. See also IV, iv, 50.

349. _in little_ ] STEEVENS: In miniature.

349. *'Sblood* ] CLARENDON: God's blood; one of the many forms of oath by
in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. 350

[Flourish of trumpets within.

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come; 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

Qq. Flourish for the Players. Ff.
351. There...players.] Shall we call the players? Q'76.
Del. hands Q, Q,
come] Ff, Rowe, Cap. Knt, Dyce,
Sta. White, Huds. come then Qq et cet.
353. appurtenance] appurtenance 24
354. comply] complement Han.
354. comply] complement St. Knt.
355. lest my] let me Q, Q, let my Q, Q.
356. outwards] Qq, Cam. Cla. out ward Ff, Rowe et cet.

the elements of the Eucharist. See II, ii, 505, and 'God's bread,' Rom. & Jul. III, v, 175.

353. appurtenance] CLARENDON: Proper accompaniment.
354. comply with] STEEVES: This is again apparently used in the sense of to compliment in V, ii, 178. CALDECOTT: That is, compliantly assume this dress and fashion of behaviour. SINGER: Hamlet has received his old school-fellows with somewhat of the coldness of suspicion hitherto, but he now remembers that this is not courteous. He, therefore, roues himself to give them a proper reception: 'Come, then, the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony; let me EMBRACE you in this fashion, lest,' &c. That to comply with was to embrace will appear from the following passages in Herrick: '—witty Ovid, by Whom faire Corinna sits; and both comply With Yvorie wrists, his Laureat Head,' &c.—[Hesperides, p. 279, ed. 1846]; also, 'And then a Rug of carded wooll, Which,... seem'd to comply, Cloudlike the daintie Deitie.'—[ib. p. 224.] WHITE: In my judgement 'comply with' (not 'comply alone) has here, and in V, ii, 178, merely the sense of 'compliment.' STAUNTON: Let me fraternize or conjoin with you in the customary mode; not 'Let me compliment.' To comply literally means to enfold. CLARENDON: Use ceremony with you in this fashion. [An interpretation which applies equally well to V, ii, 178.]

354. this garb] CORSON: The reading of the Ff makes the better sense, where 'the' is used generally.

355. extent] CALDECOTT: The degree of courtesy dealt out. COLLIER (ed. 2): Is there not room to doubt here whether 'extent' has not been misprinted for ostent, a word Sh. not unfrequently uses in the sense of external show? We have no authority for the change, but the word 'extent' is not very intelligible here, though it may be reconciled to a meaning. CLARENDON: Condescension; the behaviour of a superior to an inferior when he makes the first advances. See 'extend' in All.'
than yours. You are welcome; but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

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.

358. aunt-mother] Daniel (p. 75): Read mother-aunt. Hamlet’s mother had become his aunt, just as his uncle had become his father.

360. north-north-west] Francke: Perhaps the meaning is: Great, powerful tempests in the moral world, apparitions from the mysterious Hereafter, can make me mad, can crush my reason; but such people as you are, who come around me with sweet phrases and mock friendship, I have yet wit enough to elude.

361. handsaw] Warburton: Hamner’s alteration serves to show us the origin of the proverb which was a common one in Shakespeare’s day. Capell (i, 133): The speaker’s meaning is that opportunity did not serve for his purpose; when it did, it would be seen he had his right senses. Nares: Handsaw, hernshaw, or hernshaw is a heron or hern. ‘As when a cast of falcons make their flight, At an hernshaw, that lyes aloft on wing.’—Spenser, Faerie Queene, VI, vii, 9. ‘To know a hawk from a hernshaw,’ was certainly the original form of the proverb. But the corruption had taken place before the time of Sh. It is handsaw in Ray’s Proverbs, p. 196, ed. 1768. White: I suspect that in Shakespeare’s time the corrupted phrase had, to general acceptation, lost its original meaning, and that the comparison was supposed to be between the tool called a hawk and a handsaw. There was, and I believe there still is, a hooked cutting tool called a hawk. Halliwell: No evidence in support of the supposition that ‘handsaw’ is a corruption of hernshaw has been produced; the phrase always occurs in this form. It is not necessary to believe that the supposition is correct, the wildest incongruities being often found in proverbial phrases of this description. It is suggested by C. W. H. in the Athenæum (30 December, 1865), that Sh. might have become acquainted, through North’s Plutarch, with the significations attached by the Egyptians to the hawk and heron respectively,—the former was the emblem of the North wind, and the latter of the South wind. ‘Hamlet, though feigning madness, yet claims sufficient sanity to distinguish a hawk from a hernshaw when the wind is southerly; that is, in the time of the migration of the latter to the north, when the former is not to be seen.’ J. A. G. (N. & Qu. 6 July, 1867) suggests anser, ‘the generic name for our domestic waterfowl.’ J. A. Picton (N. & Qu. 30 Nov. 1872) suggests that ‘hawk’ may refer, not only to the bill-hook, mentioned by White, but also to a plasterer’s instrument so named. Clarendon: In Suffolk and Norfolk ‘hernsew is pronounced ‘harnsa,’ from which to ‘handsaw’ is but a single step. For the following explanation 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 hawkking. 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
HAMLET

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.

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;
t'was 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,—

363. too;—at] F, F, F, to, at Q, Q, F, to, are Q, Q, too, to, at Q, F, Q, F, Row.
364. you see there is] as you see is Q, Q, Q, F, F.
365. swaddling] swathing F, Rowe i, Cald. Knt. Coll. El. Dyce i, Sta. White,
Del. swathing Rowe ii+.
Huds.

367. he's] he is Q, Cap.
368. prophesy he] prophecy, he Q, Q, prophecy that he Q, Prophecy that he Q.
Sing.
369. players;] players, Q, Q, Q, F, Q, Han. Qq.

Players. Ff, Rowe+, Jen.
369. it.—You] Johns. it: You Q, Q, 76.
370. to on] Pope, Cald.
372. morning;] Cap. morning, Q, Q, Q.,
373. morning] Q, F, F, Rowe+, Cald. Sta.
376. Two] lines, Ff, Rowe+.
377. Roscius] Rofius Qq, F, F.
378. was] Om. Ff, Cald.
379. Rome,—] Rome F, F.
Rome.

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 heron.
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
hawkimg, whereas "southerly" includes a wider range of wind for a good view.'
[I have heard the emendation suggested of handschuh, the German for glove, but
cannot remember that I have ever seen it in print. Heath's explanation says the
question at rest, if 'handsaw' be a corruption of hersew. Ed.]

366. Happily] Abbott, § 42: This word, which now means 'by good hap,' was
sometimes used for 'haply,' i. e., 'by hap,' just as 'success' was sometimes 'good,' at
other times, 'ill.'

369, 370. You...indeed] Hudson: This is spoken in order to blind Polonius
as to what they have been talking about.
Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

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 indivisible, or poem unlimited; Seneca cannot be too

376. my] mine Fl, Rowe+, Knt, Dyce, Sta. pastoral] Pastoral Comical, Historically Pastoral; Q, Q, Q, Pastorical-Comicall-Historically-Pastoral Fl, Rowe.


379, 380. pastoral-comical, historical-

381. indivisible] DELIUS: This refers to dramas that carefully observed the Unity of Place; ‘poem unlimited’ refers to those that disregarded such restrictions. Tschischwitz: In the license granted in 1603 to the Globe Company, permission is given ‘freely to use and exercise the Arte and facultie of playing Comedies, Tragedies, Histories, Enterludes, Moralls, Pastoralls, Stage plaiies & such other like.’ To this last description, ‘stage plaiies,’ I suppose the ‘poem unlimited’ belonged, which, I presume, was an extemporisped piece.

381. Seneca...Plautus] STEEVENS: The tragedies of Seneca were translated into English by Thomas Newton and others, and published first separate, at different times, and afterwards all together in 1581. One comedy of Plautus, viz. the Mēnečnω was likewise translated and published in 1595. Prefixed to a map of Cam
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!

382, 383. light. For...liberty, these] Theob. light for...liberty: these Q]. Pope. light for...liberty: these Q'76. 382. writ] wit Q'76, Rowe, Pope, Theob. Han. Warb. 382, 383. the liberty] liberty Q'95.

bridge, in the Second Part of Bravunii Civitates, &c., is an account of the University, by Gulielmus Soonus, 1575. In this curious memoir we have the following passage: 'Januarius, Februarius, et Martium menses, ut noctis tardix fallant in spectaculis populo exhibendis ponunt tanta elegantia, tanta actionis dignitate, ea vocis et vultus moderatione, ea magnificentia, ut si Plautus, aut Terentius, aut Seneca revisivseret mirarentur suas ipsi fabulas, majoremque quam cum inspectante popul. Rom. agerentur, voluptatem credo caperent. [See III, ii, 93.]

382. writ...liberty] CAPELL (i, 133): This means, pieces written in rule, and pieces out of rule. MALONE: 'Writ' is used for writing by Shakespeare's contemporaries. Thus, in The Apology of Pierce Penniless, by Nashe, 1593: 'For the lowe circumstance of his poverty before his death, and sending that miserable writte to his wife,' &c. Again, in Bishop Earle's Character of a mere dull Physician, 1638: 'Then follows a writ to his druggor in a strange tongue,' &c. CALDECOTT: 'For the observance of the rules of the drama, while they take such liberties as are allowable, they are the only men.' COLLIER: The meaning probably is, that the players were good, whether at written productions or at extemporal plays, where liberty was allowed to the performers to invent the dialogue, in imitation of the Italian commedie al improviso. See Hist. of Engl. Dram. Poetry, iii, 393. WALKER (Crit. iii, 265): Read wit. 'Writ' for composition is not English. It is as if we should say, the laws of poem for the laws of poetry, or talk of so and so being contrary to the genius of ode, meaning the genius of lyrical composition. The passages quoted by the Var. commentors are utterly irrelevant. The same erratum occurs, Jul. Cas. III, ii, 225: 'For I haue neither writ or words, nor worth.' CLARENDON: Probably the author did not intend that we should find a distinct meaning in Polonius's words. CORSON: The Qq and Ff connect in construction, 'for the law of writ and the liberty,' with Seneca and Plautus, and not with 'these are the only men,' which evidently refers to the actors he's talking about. 'Liberty' should be construed with 'law,' the law and the liberty of writ [writing]. And 'law' and 'liberty' seem to refer, respectively, to 'heavy' and 'light.' This respective construction is frequent in Sh. See Macb. I, iii, 60, 61; Ham. III, i, 151; Wint. Tale, III, ii, 160-162; Ant. & Cleo. III, ii, 15-18; IV, xv, 25, 26; Com. of Err. II, ii, 112-117; Temp. I, ii, 335, 336; Mid. N. D. III, i, 98-101.

384. Jephthah] STEEVENS communicated to Dr PERCY the old song from which Hamlet quotes, and it appeared in the second edition of Percy's Reliques in 1757. There are two entries of this ballad on the Registers of the Stationers' Company: in 1567 -69, 'Alexandre Lacye' was licensed to print 'a ballet intituled the songe of JEPHAS 15 *
Pol. What treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why, that, which he loved passing well.

Pol. [Aside] Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not 't 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.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

Ham. Why, 'As by lot, God wot,' and then, you know,


387. Why, 'One'] Cap. Why one Qq Ff, Rowe, Pope.


392. you] thou Jen. 396–398. Why...wot,'] Mal. (subs.) Prose, QqFf, Jen. by...wot, as a quotation, Pope+, Cap. 398, 399. know, 'If] know it Qq.

Dowgher at his death.' [Arber's Transcript, i, 355. 'His death' is a clerical error for 'her death.' Collier, in vol. xiii, p. 169, Sh. Soc. Publications, seems to doubt if this be the same ballad as that quoted by Hamlet. ED.] The second entry is 'Jefia Judge of Israel,' p. 93, vol. iii, Dec. 14, 1624. Halliwell gives a facsimile of 'A proper new ballad, intituled, Jepha Judge of Israel,' of which the first stanza runs as follows:

'I read that many yeare agoe,

When Jepha Judge of Israel,

Had one fair Daughter and no more,

whom he loved so passing well.

And as by lot God wot,

It came to passe most like it was,

Great warres there should be,

and who should be the chiefe, but he, but he.'

Copies of this ballad differ slightly from each other, says Halliwell. Malone refers to Latin tragedies on this subject by Christopherson, 1546, and by Buchanan, 1554, and thinks it had probably been introduced on the English stage. Collier shows from Henslowe's Diary (pp. 220, 221, 222, and 223) that, in 1602, Dekker and Chettle were paid for a tragedy they were writing on the story of Jephthah, and that the subject, therefore, was popularly known by means of ballads and the stage.


394. Nay ... not] Zornlin (Sh. Soc. Papers, vol. iii, p. 157): It follows not that you are like Jephthah, ir loving your daughter,—but in your shameful sacrifice of her.
‘It came to pass, as most like it was,’—

the first row of the pious chanson will show you more;

for look, where my abridgements come.—

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome all. I am glad to see

... as a quotation, Pope.

pious chanson | Qq, Jen. Pons

Chanson in 1 welcome.

pious chanson | Cald. Pans Chanfon F2 F3

F1 Rubrick Q76, Rowe+. Pont-chan-

sons Han. Cap.


It came to pass | MOBERLY: ‘As he had a daughter, of course he got into a scrape,’ is the inference suggested.

pious chanson | POPE explained the reading of F1 as the name of ‘old ballads sung on bridges.’ STEEVENS defines ‘pious chansons’ as ballads containing some scriptural history, sung about the streets, and the ‘first row’ is the first column of the roughly printed sheet. NARES thinks the reading of the Ff apparently nonsense. Shakespeare intended, perhaps, to mix French and English, but both seem to have been corrupted by the players and printers. SINGER (ed. 1) really decides the question by an appeal to Q+, where the corresponding phrase is ‘the first verse of the godly Ballet’ [line 1016]. But HUNTER (New Illust. ii, 232) opened the question again by advocating the reading of the Ff, on the score of its being the latest intention of the poet, and the proper one. ‘In fact, in France, the trivial ballad, such as that referred to, is called in ordinary discourse a pons chanson, or a chanson du Pont Neuf. “Vaudevilles, ou Chanson du Pont Neuf, les chansons communes qui se chantent parmi le peuple avec une grande facilité, et sans art: Trivialis cantitena.”—Dictionnaire de Trevoux, s.v. Chanson.’ In reply to HUNTER, KNIGHT [Ap. Dyce] pertinently asks: ‘A popular ballad is called even in modern dictionaries a chanson du Pont Neuf,—but where is the authority for Pons Chanson?’ [According to LITTRÉ, the secondary meaning of Pont-Neuf is: ‘Chanson populaire sur un air très-commun, e.g. Il sait tous les ponts-neufs qui courent les rues.’ (In this sense it is not printed with capital letters.) But nowhere does he give such a phrase as pons chansons nor chanson, used absolutely when meaning the specific chansons du pont-neuf. ED.]

my | HUNTER (New Illust. ii, 233): ‘My’ does not necessarily refer back to the speaker, but may be used ethically. CORSON: It is so used in the Ff reading; in that of the Qq it is used objectively.

abridgements | JOHNSON: He calls the players afterwards [line 507] the brief chronicles of the time; but I think he now means: those who will shorten my talk. STEEVENS (Note on Mid. N. D. V, i, 39): By abridgement Sh. may mean a dramatic performance, which crowds the events of years into a few hours. DYCE (Gloss.): In this place it is applied to the players, as being, I presume, the persons who represent an abridgement. CLARENDON: Hamlet uses the word in a double sense. The players by entering abridge his talk.
ye 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 mis-

403. ye] Dyce ii. Huds. you Han.
thee QqFf et cet.
misprint.

Qq et cet.
valesanct] valanct QqQ, va-
lanced' QqQ3 valiant Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Sta.

404. valanced] MALONE: That is, fringed with a beard. The valance is
the fringes or drapery hanging round the tester of a bed. CALDECOTT: That is, be-

come manly and fierce, as in As You Like It, II, vii, 150, 'bearded like the pard.'
STAUNTON: Compare the advice of Iago to Roderigo;— 'Follow thou the wars; defeat thy
favour with an usurped beard,' i.e. assume a martial aspect; and also the context
in Hamlet's speech, 'comest thou to beard me in Denmark?' where the point is lost
without the fierceness implied by 'valiant.' CLARENDON: 'Valiant' is probably a mere
misprint. WEDGWOOD: Supposed to be from the stuff having been made at Valencia
or Valence.

406. ladyship] CLARENDON: In Shakespeare's time, and till after the restoration
of Charles II, female parts were played by boys. (Compare Two Gent. IV, iv, 165.)
Probably the first woman who ever appeared on the English stage played Desdem-
ona, on Saturday, 6 December, 1666. [Who that actress was has not been ascer-
tained; a Mrs Hughes acted this part, in this company, in 1663, and to her may
belong the honour; although the received tradition is that it is due to Mrs Saun-
derson, afterwards Mrs Betterton. The gross absurdity of entrusting to boys, and even
to men, the rôles of women is well hit off in the doggerel 'Prologue, to introduce the
first woman that came to act on the stage:'

Our women are defective, and so sized.
You'd think they were some of the guard disguised:
For, to speak truth, men act, that are between
Forty and fifty, wenches of fifteen;
With bone so large, and nerve so incompliant,
When you call Desdemona, enter Giant.'

The apology was once made to Charles II for unpunctuality in beginning a play,
that 'the queen was not shaved.' See Var. of 1821, vol. iii, p. 129. Ed.]

407. chopine] THELWALL (Grey's Notes, &c., ii, 291) thinks this is the Scotch
word for a quart measure. Vide JAMIESON, s. v. Chapin. REED: Tom Coryat, in
his Crudities, 1611, p. 262, calls them chapineys, and gives the following account
of them: 'There is one thing used of the Venetian women, and some others dwell-
ing in the cities and towneis subject to the signiory of Venice, that is not to be
observed (I thinke) amongst any other women in Christendome: which is common
HAMLET

God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring.—Masters, you are all welcome.

in Venice, that no woman whatsoever goeth without it, either in her house or abroad, a thing made of wood and covered with leather of sundry colors, some with white, some redde, some yellow. It is called a chapiney, which they wear under their shoes. Many of them are curiously painted; some also of them I have seen fairely gilt: so uncomely a thing (in my opinion) that it is pitty this foolish custom is not cleansed banished and exterminated out of the citie. There are many of these chapinies of a great height, even half a yard high, which maketh many of their women that are very short, seeme much taller than the tallest women we have in England. Also I have heard it observed among them, that by how much the nobler a woman is, by so much the higher are her chapinies. All their gentlewomen and most of their wives and widowes that are of any wealth, are assisted and supported eyther by men or women, when they walke abroad, to the end they may not fall. They are borne up most commonly by the left arme, otherwise they might quickly take a fall. MALONE: Minshuw defines 'Chapin de muger, a womans shoes, such as they use in Spaine, mules, or high corke shoes.' There is no synonymous word in the Italian. BOSWELL said that chopine is in Veneron's Dictionary, but DVCE (Gloss.) says that none of the Italian Dictionaries in his possession contain the word. [It is not in Baretti. SINGER says that it is recorded under the title of zaccole, which, however, means simply a sandal, or patten.]

Douce: In Raymond's Voyage through Italy, 1648, we find: 'This place [Venice] is much frequented by the walking may poles, I mean the women. They wear their coats halfe too long for their bodies, being mounted on their chippens, (which are as high as a man's leg), they walke between two handmaids, majestickly deliberating of every step they take. This fashion was invented and appropriated to the noble Venitian wives, to bee constant to distinguish them from the courtesans, who goe covered in a vaile of white taffety.' The choppine, or some kind of high shoe, was occasionally used in England. Bulwer, in his Artificial Changeling [1653], complains of this fashion as a monstrous affection, and says that his countrywomen therein imitated the Venetian and Persian ladies. In Sandys's travels, 1615, there is a figure of a Turkish lady with chopines; it is not improbable that the Venetians borrowed them from the Greek Islands. SINGER: Perhaps Hamlet may have some allusion to the boy having grown so as to fill the place of a tragedy heroine, and so assumed the cothurnus: which Puttemham described as 'high corked shoes, or pantofles, which now they call in Spain and Italy Shoppini.' [Singer misunderstood the passage in Puttemham (see Arber's Rep. p. 49), which is as follows: 'the actors [of the parts of great Princes] ware vpon their legges buskies of leather called Cohurni, and other solemne habits, and for a speciall preheminence did walke vpon those high corked shoes or pantofles, which,' &c. At a Jewish wedding in Jerusalem at which I was present, in 1856, the young bride, aged twelve, wore chopines at least ten inches high. Ed.]

409. ring] JOHNSON: Cracked too much for use. DOUCE: There was a ring on the coin, within which the sovereign's head was placed; if the crack extended from the edge beyond this ring, the coin was rendered unfit for currency. [To the same effect, also, GIFFORD, note on Jonson's The Magnetic Lady, Works, vol. vi, p. 76.] Such pieces were hoarded by the usurers of the time and lent out as lawful money. TUS, Roger Fenton, in his Treatise of Usury, 1611, p. 23: A poore man desireth a
HAMLET

[ACT II, sc. 11.

We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see; we'll have a speech straight; come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

First Play. 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;

410. e'en to't] Rowe. ento't Qq. éne
to't Ff.

French] friendly Qq. Pope,
falconers] Faukners Qq. Fauk-
ners Q Qq. Faulkners Ff, Rowe+

413. 446. &c. First Play.] 1 Play.

Ff. Player. Qq.


El. Caviarie F, Cautyre F F F, a
caviary Q 76. Caviar Rowe+. caviar Calde. Knt i.

goldsmith to lend him such a summe, but he is not able to pay him interest. If such as I can spare (saith the goldsmith) will pleasure you, you shall have it for three or foure moneths. Now, hee hath a number of light, clipt, crackt pieces (for such he useth to take in change with consideration for their defects;) this summe of money is repaid by the poore man at the time appointed in good and lawfull money. This is usurie.' And again, 'It is a common custome of his [the usurer's] to buy up crackt angels at nine shillings the piece. Now sir, if a gentleman (on good assurance) request him of mony, Good sir, (saith hee, with a counterfeit sigh) I would be glad to please your worship, but my good mony is abroad, and that I have, I dare not put in your hands. The gentleman thinking this conscience, where it is subtily, and being beside that in some necessity, ventures on the crackt angels, some of which cannot fle, for soldering, and paies double interest to the miser under the cloak of honesty.'—Lodge's Wit's Miserie, 1596. CALDECOTT: Another sense is also meant: a voice broken in consequence of licentious indulgence.

410. French] CAPELL (i, 133): The French are remarkably irregular in all feats of sporting even at this day. STEEVENS: Tollet mentions that Sir Thomas Browne (Miscellany Tracts, p. 116) says that 'the French seem to have been the first and noblest falconers in the western part of Europe,' and afterwards (p. 118), adds CLARENDON, he (Sir Thomas Browne) 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 here, 'fly at any thing we see,' may not therefore, have been intended to express contempt.'

414. me] An ethical dative, like 'inquire me first what Danskers,' &c., II, i, 6; also compare Rom. & jul. III, i, 6: 'he claps me his sword.' SCHMIDT (Lex. s. v. 'I') says of this dative, that although superfluous as to the general sense, it imparts a lively color to the expression. MÄTZNER (ii, 211), with keener analysis, defines it as a personal pronoun of the first or second person, used, in familiar or jocose style, to denote the subjective interest which the speaker or the person addressed feels in some allusion to a circumstance which objectively is regarded as accomplished independently of that interest. See also V, i, 157.

416. caviare] REED: Giles Fletcher, in his Russe Commonwealth, 1591, says, in
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 420

417. received] conceived Coll. (MS). judgements] judgement Ff, Rowe +, Cald. Sta. 420. were no sallets] was no Sallets

Russia they have 'divers kinds of fish: the Bellouga and Bellougina, . . . the Ostrina and Sturgeon . . . . Of the roes of these four kinds they make very great store of Caviary.' Ritson (Remarks, &c., p. 199): Hamlet means that the play, like the pickled sturgeon, was a delicacy for which the multitude has no relish. Douce (Illust. &c., ii, 236): This word has been frequently mispronounced career on the stage; but the following line from Sir J. Harrington's 33d Epigram, book iii, leaves no uncertainty in the matter: 'And cavârê, but it little boots . . . .' Caviar was formerly a considerable article of commerce between England and Russia. Nares: In Shakespeare's time it was a new and fashionable delicacy, not obtained nor relished by the vulgar, and therefore used by him to signify anything above their comprehension.

416. the general] Malone: Lord Clarendon (Book v, p. 530) uses this word to signify 'the people' in the same manner it is used here. Caldecott: In Galateo of Manners, p. 29, 1576, we have the moste used in the same sense.

418. cried in the top] Warburton: That is, whose judgement I had the highest opinion of. Johnson: I think it means only, that were higher than mine. Heath: Whose judgement, in such matters, was in much higher vogue than mine. Steevens: Perhaps it means only: whose judgement was more clamorously delivered than mine. We still say of a bawling actor, that he speaks on the top of his voice. Henley: To over-top is a hunting term applied to a dog when he gives more tongue than the rest of the cry. To this, I believe, Hamlet refers, and he afterwards mentions a cry of players. Caldecott: Proclaimed not merely in addition to my voice and censure, but with a tone of authority that mine could not sound. Clarendon: Henley's explanation of the metaphor is probably right. But it is the superior authority or value of the judgements, not the greater loudness with which they were delivered, that is indicated here.

419 modesty] Warburton: Simplicity. Dyce (Glos.): Moderation. Tschirschwitz: In rhetorical phraseology, 'modesty' is εὐραξία. Cic. De Off. lib. I, xi, 142, ed. Orelli: 'Sed illa est εὐραξία, in qua intelligitur ordinis conservatio. Itaque, tandem nos modestiam apellemus, sed definitur a Stoicis, ut modestia sit scientia rerum earum qua agerentur aut dicentur, loco suo collocandarum.' Thus, also, 'modesty of nature' [III, ii, 18] means that symmetrical harmony by which the acts of everyday life are made to fit the situation, that 'temperance and smoothness in the very torrent, tempest, and the whirlwind of passion' to which 'modesty' can be applied, as in Pliny, vi, 20, 71: modestia quedam aquarum. Did Sh. really not understand Latin?

420. sallets] Heath: This is spoken in approbation, not in disparagement, of the play. The sense is: it wanted the high seasoning of loose ribaldry and luscious
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's tale to Dido; and thereabout of it es-


double meanings. **Gifford** defends Pope's reading, on the strength of a line in one of Jonson's Epigrams (Works, vol. viii. p. 177): 'I have no salt, no bawdry he doth mean,' and pronounces 'sallets' as akin to nonsense. **Singer:** 'Salt' was probably intended. 'Salt, a pleasant and merrie word, that maketh folks to laugh, and sometimes pricke.'—Baret. **Dyce:** In spite of Gifford's note, I think the alteration to salt a hasty one—'sallets,' i. e. salt (ribald) words and allusions (see Richardson's Dictionary for the etymology of salad or sallet). **Collier** (ed. 2): The (MS) has 'salt,' perhaps wrongly, though sallets or salads seems not easily understood. The allusion may have been particular and temporary. **Clarendon:** Pope was probably not aware that fragrant and piquant herbs were mixed with the salad.

422. **indict...affection**] **Steevens:** That is, **convict** the author of being a fantastical, affected writer. In Love's Lab. V, i, 4, 'witty without affection,' i. e. affectation. Malvolio is called 'an affectioned ass' in Twelfth Night, II, iii, 160. **Caldecott:** From the use of the Latin, it seems that the English word was first introduced. 'Thy manner of wryntye is dark with over moche curysyte. Stylus tuis affectionem obscurat nimirico.'—Horman's Vulgaria, 1530.

424. **handsome than fine**] **Delius:** 'Handsome' denotes genuine, natural beauty—'fine,' artistic, labored beauty. **Clarke:** In this passage [from line 420] Sh. is, in his own subtle vein of quiet humor, satirising the folly of give-and-takes criticism.

425. **thereabout**] **Clarendon:** A substantive, like 'whereabout,' in Macb. II, i, 58.

425. **Theobald** (Sh. Rest. p. 72): I should suspect this play referred to by Hamlet to be Shakespeare's from one reason only; and that is, from its subject. There is scarce a play throughout all his works, in which it was possible to introduce the mention of them, where he has not by simile, allusion, or otherwise, hinted at the Trojan affairs; so fond was he of that story. **Pope** (ed. 2): This whole speech of Hamlet is purely ironical; he seems to commend this play to expose the bombast of it. Who was its author is not come to my knowledge. **Warburton:** I think that Hamlet spoke with commendation to upbraid the false taste of the audience of that time, which would not suffer them to do justice to the simplicity and the sublime of this production. And I reason, first, from the character Hamlet gives of the
[425. Æneas's tale to Dido.]

play from whence the passage is taken. Secondly, from the passage itself. And, thirdly, from the effect it had on the audience. First, they who suppose the passage was given in order to be ridiculed must needs suppose that what Hamlet says in lines 418-426 was purely ironical, and the strangest irony ever was written. 'It pleased not the multitude.' This we must conclude to be true, however ironical the rest be. Now the reason given of the designed ridicule is the supposed bombast. Whereas bombast, we know, at that time took with the multitude. But Hamlet tells why it displeased them: that there was no salt in the lines, nor affected style. Now it could not be, if this play displeased on account of the bombast, that they whom it displeased should give this reason for their dislike. All these inconsistencies disappear if we take Hamlet as speaking his genuine sentiments, as thus: The play, I remember, pleased not the multitude, and the reason was its being written on the rules of the ancient drama; to which they were entire strangers. But in my opinion and in that of others of better judgement than mine, it was an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, i.e. where the three unities were well preserved. Set down with as much modesty as cunning, i.e. where not only the art of composition, but the simplicity of nature, was carefully attended to. But these qualities, which gained my esteem, lost the public's. For I remember, one said, There was no salt in the lines to make the matter savoury, i.e. there was not, according to the mode of that time, a fool or clown, to joke, quibble, and talk freely. Nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection, i.e. nor none of those passionate, pathetic love-scenes, so essential to modern tragedy. But he called it an honest method, i.e. he owned, however tasteless this method of writing, on the ancient plan, was to our times, yet it was chaste and pure; the distinguishing character of the Greek drama. I need only make one observation on all this; that, thus interpreted, it is the justest picture of a good tragedy, wrote on the ancient rules. 2. A second proof that this speech was given to be admired is from the intrinsic merit of the speech itself, which contains the description of a circumstance very happily imagined, namely: Ilium and Priam's falling together, with the effect it had on the destroyer. Now this circumstance, illustrated with the fine similitude of the storm, is so highly worked up as to have well deserved a place in Virgil's second book of the Æneid, even though the work had been carried on to that perfection which the Roman poet had conceived. 3. The third proof is, from the effects which followed on the recital. Hamlet, his best character, approves it; the player is deeply affected in repeating it; and only the foolish Polonius tired with it. The player changes color, and the tears start from his eyes. But our author was too good a judge of nature to make bombast and unnatural sentiment produce such an effect. But if any one will still say that Sh. intended to represent a player unnaturally and fantasticaly affected, we must appeal to Hamlet, that is, to Sh. himself in this matter; who, on the reflection he makes upon the player's emotion, in order to excite his own revenge, gives not the least hint that the player was unnaturally or injudiciously moved. On the contrary, his fine description of the actor's emotion shows he thought just otherwise. And indeed had Hamlet esteemed this emotion anything unnatural, it had been a very improper circumstance to spur him to his purpose. That which supports the common opinion concerning this passage is the turgid expression in some parts of it, which, they think, could never be given by the poet to be commended. We shall, therefore, in the next place examine the lines most obnoxious to censure, and see how much,
[425. Æneas's tale to Dido.] allowing the charge, this will make for the induction of their conclusion. [See lines 451 and 473.] Now whether these be bombast or not is not the question; but whether Sh. esteemed them so. That he did not so esteem them appears from his having used the very same thoughts in the same expressions in his best plays, and given them to his principal characters, where he aims at the sublime; as in the following passages: Troilus (Tro. & Cre. V, iii, 40-42) far outstrains the execution of Pyrrhus's sword in the character he gives of Hector's. Cleopatra (Ant. & Cleo. IV, xv, 44) rails at fortune in the same manner. But another use may be made of these quotations; a discovery of this recited play, which, letting us into a circumstance of our author's life (as a writer) hitherto unknown, was the reason I have been so large upon this question. I think, then, it appears from what has been said that the play in dispute was Shakespeare's own, and that this was the occasion of writing it. He was desirous, as soon as he had found his strength, of restoring the chasteness and regularity of the ancient stage, and therefore composed this tragedy on the model of the Greek drama, as may be seen by throwing so much action into relation. But his attempt proved fruitless, and the raw, unnatural taste, then prevalent, forced him back again into his old Gothic manner. For which he took this revenge upon his audience. CAFELL: Among the very few plays of that time that have not been seen by the editor is one that bears the title, 'Dido, queen of Carthage,' in which one might be apt to expect the speech in question; the cast of Thomas Nash's production is widely different. MALONE: I formerly thought that these lines were extracted from some old play, of which it appeared to me probable that Marlowe was the author; but whatever Shakespeare's view in producing them may have been, I am now decidedly of opinion they were written by himself, not in any former unsuccessful piece, but expressly for the play of Hamlet. It is observable that what Warburton calls 'the fine similitude of the storm,' is likewise found in our poet's Venus & Adonis. STEEVENS: The praise which Hamlet bestows on this piece is certainly dissembled, and agrees very well with the character of madness, which, before witnesses, he thought it necessary to support. The speeches before us have so little merit that nothing but an affectation of singularity could have influenced Warburton to undertake their defence. The poet, perhaps, meant to exhibit a just resemblance of some of the plays of his own age, in which the faults were too general and too glaring to permit a few splendid passages to atone for them. The player knew his trade, and spoke the lines in an affecting manner, because Hamlet had declared them to be pathetic, or might be in reality a little moved by them. The mind of the prince, it must be confessed, was fitted for the reception of gloomy ideas, and his tears were ready at a slight solicitation. It is by no means proved that Sh. has employed the same thoughts clothed in the same expressions in his best plays. If he bids the false huswife Fortune break her wheel, he does not desire her to break all its spokes; nay, even its periphery, and make use of the wave afterwards for such an immeasurable cast. Though if what Warburton has said should be found in any instance to be exactly true, what can we infer from thence but that Sh. was sometimes wrong in spite of conviction, and in the hurry of writing committed those very faults which his judgement could detect in others? Warburton is inconsistent in his assertions concerning the literature of Sh. In a note on Tro. & Cre. he affirms that Shakespeare's want of learning kept him from being acquainted with Homer; and yet in this instance would suppose him capable of producing a
[425. Æneas's tale to Dido.]  
complete tragedy written on the ancient rules; and that the speech before us had  
sufficient merit to entitle it to a place in the second book of Virgil's Æneid.  
Steevens afterwards discovered a copy of this play of Dido, queen of Carthage,  
referred to by Capell, and asserted that it did not furnish Sh. with more than a  
general hint for his description of the death of Priam, &c., unless a correspondence be  
perceived to Shakespeare's line 451 in 'And with the wind thereof the king fell  
down,' and to line 458 in 'So leaning on his sword he stood stone still.' The  
extracts which Steevens gives will be found in Fleay's note, further on; of them  
Steevens says that surely the greater part is more ridiculous than even Shakespeare's  
happiest vein of burlesque and parody could have made it. Ritson believes that the  
admiratio of the play expressed by Hamlet was genuine, and that this is probably  
an extract from one of Shakespeare's early productions. He then adds: The verses  
recited are far superior to those of any coeval writer; the parallel passage in Mar-  
lowe and Nash's Dido will not bear the comparison. Possibly, indeed, it might  
have been his first attempt, before the divinity that lodg'd within him had instructed  
him to despise the tumid and unnatural style so much and so unjustly admired in his  
precursors or contemporaries, and which he afterwards so happily ridiculed in 'the  
swaggervine of Ancient Pistol.' Seymour (ii, 172) agrees with Ritson, and  
Py (p. 314) agrees with Seymour. Coleridge: This admirable substitution of the  
epic for the dramatic diction of Shakespeare's own dialogue, and authorized  
too, by the actual style of the tragedies before his time (Pears & Ferrers, Tit.  
And., &c.), is well worthy of notice. The fancy that a burlesque was intended  
sinks below criticism; the lines, as epic narrative, are superb. In the thoughts, and  
even in the separate parts of the diction, this description is highly poetical; in truth,  
taken by itself, that is its fault that it is too poetical!—the language of lyric  
vehemence and epic pomp, and not of the drama. But if Sh. had made the diction  
truly dramatic, where would have been the contrast between Hamlet and the play in  
Hamlet? Schlegel (Lect. on Dram. Lit. ii, 197): This extract must not be judged  
of by itself, but in connection with the place where it is introduced. To distinguish  
it as dramatic poetry in the play itself, it was necessary that it should rise above its  
dignified poetry in the same proportion that the theatrical elevation does above  
simple nature. Hence Sh. has composed the play in Hamlet altogether in senten-  
tious rhymes full of antitheses. But this solemn and measured tone did not suit a  
speech in which violent emotion ought to prevail, and the poet had no other expedi-  
tent than the one of which he made choice: overcharging the pathos. The lan-

guage of the speech in question is falsely emphatical; but yet this fault is so mixed  
up with true grandeur that a player, practised in calling forth in himself artificially  
the imitated emotions, may certainly be carried away with it. Besides, it will hardly  
be believed that Sh. knew so little of his art as not to be aware that a tragedy in which  
Æneas had to make a lengthened epic relation of a transaction that happened so long  
before as the destruction of Troy could neither be dramatic nor theatrical.  
Caldecott: These warm commendations of Hamlet cannot be other than the real  
 sentiment of Sh. From whatever quarter the fragment came, it affords a decisive  
proof of Shakespeare's taste in this department of the drama. He may here have  
chosen to give his conception of the true and just swell of tragedy. Hunter (ii,  
234): Is it possible that Sh., who knew so well what belongs to poetry and the  
dramatic art, can have approved of a wearisome speech like this, its bombast phrases,
[425. Ἐνεάς’s tale to Dido.]
its empty declamation, and with at least two anti-climaxes as palpable as can anywhere be found? There is but one redeeming clause [lines 461-465]. But even this, as the reader cannot but perceive, sinks as it proceeds, and becomes commonplace and inharmonious. His objection to the phrase, ‘mobbed queen,’ might of itself prove that the poet, if he seemed in anything which he said to commend, spoke ironically, for a more unhappy expression could scarcely have occurred. Probably it was the play of Dido that he meant to ridicule. Strachey (p. 55), speaking of the extracts from Dido, Queen of Carthage, given by Steevens, says: ‘Though there is not a line, hardly a thought of them, the same as the passage which the player recites, and which is of course Shakespeare’s own, still the style is so like, that the audience would probably have been reminded of Marlowe’s play, and so have experienced the sensation of hearing real men quoting a real play; nay, if they retained only a general recollection of the original, might have supposed that the quotation was actually from Marlowe’s tragedy.’ Elze: From all that we know of Shakespeare’s treatment of his own works, it seems in the highest degree improbable, not only that he should have introduced here his own composition, but that he should have praised it also. Rightly to understand this passage, it is essential that we should lose sight of the person of the poet, and separate his opinion from the praise of Hamlet. It is clear that in this speech the keynote of that school of learned poets is struck that was hostile to Shakespeare’s naturalistic style. . . .
By making Hamlet so enthusiastic in his admiration of a drama that was moulded on the learned, pathetic, and classic model, Sh. evidently wished to give us an insight into his hero’s studious and pre-eminently ideal character. A side-thrust is at the same time unmistakably given to Shakespeare’s opponents; in effect he thus appeals to them: ‘Behold, it is such folk as my Hamlet that admire you; such folk is it that you educate with your poetry.’ Delius: This drama, if there really were such a one, and if it had not been composed for the nonce to suit Hamlet’s purpose, could have been written by no one but Sh. himself, and the praise of ‘modesty’ and ‘cunning’ must have been meant in seriousness. Fleay (On the Extract from an Old Play in Hamlet. Macmillan’s Maga. Dec. 1874, p. 135): Marlowe’s play was finished by Nash, after Marlowe’s death in 1593, and published in 1594. It is for the most part written in Marlowe’s style, with some minor interpolations by Nash. In Act II, sc. i, which is far the weakest in the play, and does least to advance the plot, there are several peculiarities. 1. Priam is used for the name of the king of Troy eight times, Priam three times only. Elsewhere in the play the form of Priam is used exclusively. 2. The name Alexander is given to Helen’s lover; in other parts of this play, and in Marlowe’s other works, he is called Paris. 3. At the end of Ἐνεάς’s tale there is a stage-direction [Exeunt omnes], although Ascanius remains on the stage and talks to Venus and Cupid, who then come in. This double ending to a scene implies double authorship, or one author working at two distinct times. It is a common phenomenon; in Sh., for instance, we find it in Tro. & Cres. and in Macb. 4. The whole of the scene is inferior in workmanship, in characterization, in theatrical requirements, in poetical power. All the Ἐνεάς’s tale part could be cut out and not missed. This scene, then, for the above reasons, is unlike Marlowe’s work in the rest of the play; it is equally unlike the other plays of his writing. We may confidently assign the greater part of it to Nash, if not the whole. But it was in 1594 that Sh. revised the Her VI, in which Marlowe had written a great part,
and we might naturally expect to have the revision of this play also committed to him. He was on indifferent terms with Nash at this time. What could be more likely than that he should write a scene, or a portion of one, to show how much better he would have done the editing of the play? He chooses, naturally enough, that scene in which Nash has shown the greatest weakness, and writes as nearly in the Marlowe rhythm as he can. . . . [Page 136.] I hold, then, that the object which Sh. had in view in introducing this speech into Hamlet was to expose the weakness of his opponent Nash as a playwright, and to utilize a piece of work which he had lying idle by him. When he wrote Hamlet he seems to have been just entering that cynical state which has been noted by Hallam as a characteristic of his third period. . . . In considering this point it must not be forgotten that this speech is contained in the earliest form of the published Hamlet, so that it was an integral part of the play in its first state. This is important so far that when the revised Hamlet was produced, Nash was certainly no longer alive, and Sh. was not the man to exult over a dead enemy. . . . [Page 137.] We will now compare some parts of the tale of Aeneas as told by Sh. and by Nash, with a view to show that they are rival productions. Nash describes Pyrrhus thus:

'At last came Pyrrhus, fell, and full of ire,
His harness dropping blood, and on his spear
The mangled head of Priam's youngest son.
And after him his band of myrmidons
With balls of wildfire in their murderous paws,
Which made the funeral flame which burnt fair Troy.'

Shakespeare's is more expanded. Compare lines 430–442. Nash gives this narrative of Priam's death:

'And at Jove's altar finding Priamus,
About whose withered neck hung Hecuba
Folding his hand in hers, and jointly both
Beating their breasts and falling on the ground;
He with his falchion's point raised up at once,
And with Megaera's eyes stared in their face,
Threatening a thousand deaths at every glance.

* * *

Not moved at all, but smiling at his tears,
The butcher while his hands were yet held up
Treading upon his breast, struck off his hands.
At which the frantic queen leapt on his face,
And in her eyelids hanging by the nails
A little while prolonged her husband's life.
At last the soldiers pulled her by the heels,
And swung her howling in the empty air,
Which sent an echo to the wounded king,
Whereat he lifted up his bed-rid limbs
And would have grappled with Achilles' son,
Forgetting both his strength and want of hands;
Which he disdaining whisked his sword about,
And with the wind thereof the king fell down;
Then from the navel to the throat at once
He ripped old Priam.'

Compare Sh., lines 446–452. That these passages were written in direct rivalry is manifest; the superior power and excellence of the Sh. portions is equally manifest; and when we remember that the splendid simile of the storm and the description of
pecially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line; let me see, let me see;

'The rugged Pyrrhus, like th' Hyrcanian beast,'—
'tis 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
'Now is he total gules; horridly trick'd
'With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
'Baked and impasted with the parching streets,

426. where] when Q3.
427-429. see;...Pyrrhus] Cap. Prose, Q4Ff, Rowe+, Jen.
429. 'tis not so] Cap. his not fo Q4Q3, tis not Q2Q3. It is not so Ff, Rowe+.
431. his] he F3F4.
432. he] his F3F4.

432. th' ominous] th' oomyous Q2Q3,
'th' oomyous] th' ominous Q2Q3.

Hecuba are also in the Sh. speech, it is impossible to imagine that he meant these lines for mere bombast. I do not quote the Hecuba part, as there is nothing corresponding to it in Nash, and it is in every one's hands. The finest bit in Nash is the picture of Pyrrhus:

'So leaning on his sword he stood stone still,
Viewing the fire wherewith rich Ilion burnt,'

and this Sh. has capped with lines 458-466. There is a moral certainty that these passages are competitors for popular favor. On all grounds alike, then, I hold that this scene was written by Sh. in 1594, as a supplement to Marlowe's unfinished play, in competition with Nash, and that it was introduced by him into the first draught of Hamlet in 1601 or thereabouts.

435. gules] STEEVENS: This signifies red in the barbarous jargon of heraldry. Also in Timon, IV, iii, 59. WEDGWOOD: From the red color of the mouth. Gocele, the mouth, throat, gullet. GLOSSARY of Terms Used in British Heraldry: Perhaps from the Persian ghul, a rose; if so, it was probably introduced by the Crusaders.

435. trick'd] MALONE: That is, 'painted, smeared.' CLARENDON: In heraldry a 'trick' is a description in drawing, opposed to 'blazon,' a description in words. DELIU: 'Trick,' like the following participles, 'bak'd' and 'impasted,' belongs to gules,' not to 'he.'

437 impasted] CALDECOTT: See Rich. II: III, ii, 154. All terms and phrases
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
'To their lords' murder; roasted in wrath and fire,
'And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
'With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
'Old grandsire Priam seeks.'

So, proceed you.

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

First Play. '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
'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
'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 his armour, forged for proof eterne,

457. reverend' reverent Qq.
458. painted] Om. F F', Rowe.
459. And, like' Like Qq. And lik'd
F F'.
neutral] Neutrall QqF F'.
459, 460. And...nothing.] One line, Ff.
462. rack] racks Q'76. wrack Theob.
conj. (withdrawn).
463. winds] wind Q'76.
465. region; so] Theob. ii. region.
So Ff, Rowe, Pope, Theob. i. region,
re Qq, Glo. +, Mob.
466. Aroused] Coll. A rowed Qq

456. declining] CALDECOTT: This use of the word, which is frequent in Sh., I have not observed in any contemporary. See also I, v, 50. [Elsewhere Caldecott adduces this as an argument in favor of the belief that this extract is Shakespeare's own composition. See his note on line 437.]

458. painted] MALONE: Sh. was probably here thinking of the tremendous personages often represented in old tapestry, whose uplifted swords stick in the air, and do nothing. DELIUS: The simile is amplified in Mach. V, viii, 25-27.

459. neutral] CLARENDEON: Not standing 'between his will and matter.' But indifferent to both. So 'neutral' is opposed to 'loyal,' in Mach. II, iii, 106.

460. For single lines of two or three accents interspersed amid ordinary verses, see ABBOTT (§ § 511, 512); so, too, II, ii, 540, 557, 563; III, iii, 78; and Mach. I, ii, 20.

462. rack] Dyce (Gloss.): A mass of vapoury clouds. So Bacon's Sylva Sylvarum, § 115, p. 32, ed. 1658. 'The winds in the upper region, which move the clouds above (which we call the rack).'

464. hush] For other instances of the conversion of one part of speech into another, see ABBOTT, § 22.

465. region] CLARENDEON: 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 Sh. the word is used to denote the air generally.
'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 follies from her wheel,
'And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven
'As low as to the fiends!'
HAMLET

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

Ham. 'The mobled queen?'

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

said, by the clown, and accompanied by dancing and playing upon the pipe and tabor. Singer: Giga, in Italian, was a fiddle or crowd. Hence jig (first written giege, though pronounced with g soft, after the Italian) was a ballad or ditty sung to a fiddle. Dyce (Note on Prologue to Fair Maid of the Inn): More persons than one were sometimes employed in a jig; and there is reason to believe that the performance was of considerable length, lasting even, on some occasions, for an hour. Clarendon: See Cotgrave, 'Farce: f. A (fond and dissolve) Play, Comedie, or Enterlude; also, the Iyg at the end of an Enterlude, wherein some pretie knauerie is acted.' See Chappell (Popular Music of the Olden Time, p. 495), where the tune is given of The King's jig, which is supposed to have been one of the tunes to which Charles II danced. Collier says that some of Tarleton's jigs, both music and words, survive in MS.

480. mobled] Warburton: That is veiled. Sandys [Travels, i, 69, ed. 1637—Clarendon], speaking of the Turkish women, says: 'their heads and faces are so mabled in fine linen that nothing is to be seen of them but their eyes.' Upton (p. 299): This designedly affected expression seems to be formed from Virg. Æn. ii, 40: Magna comitante caterva, i.e. mob-led Queen. Farmer: 'The moon does mobble up herself.'—Shirley's Gentleman of Venice. Holt White: It is nothing but a deprivation of muffled. 'Mobled nine days in my considering cap.'—Ogilby's Fables. Malone: A few lines lower we are told that she had 'a clout' upon her head. To mob (in the North pronounced mob), says Ray, in his Dict. of North Country Words, is 'to dress carelessly. Mobs are slatterns.' Coleridge: A mob-cap is still a word in common use for a morning-cap, which conceals the whole head of hair, and passes under the chin. It is nearly the same as the night-cap, that is, it is an imitation of it, so as to answer the purpose ('I am not drest for company'), and yet reconciling it with neatness and perfect purity. Delius: The real meaning which Shb. attached to it here is still doubtful; that an unusual word was intended is plain, both from Hamlet's objection to it and Polonius's approval of it. G. H. of S. (N. & Qu. 23 July, 1864) suggests maddled, a word in use in Yorkshire, meaning not absolutely mad, but bewildered almost to madness.

482. good] Warburton: Sh. has judiciously chosen Polonius to represent the false taste of that audience which has condemned the play here reciting. When the actor comes to the finest and most pathetic part of the speech, Polonius cries out, 'This is too long.' And yet this man of modern taste, who stood all this time perfectly unmoved with the forcible imagery of the relator, no sooner hears, amongst many
First Play. 'Run barefoot up and down, threatening
the flames
'With bisson rheum; a clout about that head
'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,—
'Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven
'And passion in the gods.'

483. Threatening the flames] One line, Ff.
484. bisson rheum] F,f, Rowe, Cald. Knt.
486. al] all-o'er-teemed
487. alarm] alarum Qq, alarum Ff,
Rowe, Knt.

good things, one quaint and fantastical word, put in, I suppose, purposely for this end, than he professes his approbation of the propriety and dignity of it. MOBERLY: Polonius praises the epithet to make up for his blunder in objecting to the length.

484. bisson] WEDGWOD: Blind, properly near-sighted. Dutch, 'bij stien proprius videre,'—Kilian. CLARENDON: In Cor. II, i, 70, it means 'blind.' Here it is rather, 'blinding.' 'Beesen' is given by Brogden, in Provincial Words, as still current in Lincolnshire. [See also notes on its derivation by F. J. V. and JOHN ADDIS, in N. & Q. 15 March, 1873; and 19 April, 1873. Ed.]

485. milch] STEEVENS: Drayton has 'exhaling the milch dew.'—Polyolbion, xiii, 171. DOUCE: 'Milche-hearted,' in Hulset's Abecedarium, 1552, is rendered lemosus; and in Bibliotheca Eliotae, 1545, we find 'lemosi, they that wepe lyghtly.' STAUNTON: Moist.

495. passion] SINGER: Would have moved them to sympathy or compassion.
ELZE: According to Mommsen (Perkins-Sh. p. 367), passionate had even in Shakespeare's days an antiquated sound, and for this reason it would appear more appropriate here.
Hamlet

Pol. Look, whether he has not turned his colour and 497 has tears in's eyes.—Pray you, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest soon.
—Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? 500 Do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time; after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

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

Ham. God's bodykins, man, much better! Use every 505 man after his desert, and who should '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. 510

[Exit Polonius with all the Players but the First.


498. has tears] has not tears Han. in'z] in his White. in his Ktly. Pr'ythee Qq. Pr'ythee or Pr'ythee et cet. the rest] Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Dyce, White, Glo. Huds. the rest of this Qq et cet.

501. you hear] ye hear Ff, Rowe, White. ye hear Ff, Rowe, White.


503. live] lived Ff, Rowe+, Cald. Knt, Del.

504, 506. desert] defart Ff, Ff.


505. much] Om. Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Dyce, White.


510. hear] here Qq.


498. no more] Caldecott: Then, when he exhibits the perfection of his art, shows that he enters into and feels his character,—then to urge that the actor should cease to exercise it, seems again to be in the character of a 'great baby in swaddling clouts.'

501. abstracts] Clarendon: Always used by Sh. as a substantive.

503, 504. you were better have] Clarendon: It were better that you had. See King John, IV, iii, 94; Oth. V, ii, 161. Originally, doubtless, the pronouns were dative, but from their position before the verb they slipped into nominatives, as 'Thou.'
—Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play The Murder 511 of Gonzago?

First Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll ha'nt to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which 515 I would set down and insert in't, could you not?

First Play. 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. 520

Ros. Good my lord.

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' ye! [Exeunt Rosencrants and Guildenstern.]—Now I am alone.

Oh what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

511, 514, 518. [Aside to Player. Sta.
514. ha'nt] hate Q.Q. ha'nt Q.Q.  
Jen. have it Q 1703, Steev. Var. Cald.
Coll. Sing. El. Ktly, Del. have't Q'76,  
Knt, Sta. Huds.
514, 515. for a need] for need Qq.
515. dozen] dof'en F.Fs. dof'en lines  
Qq, Cap.

or sixteen] Om. Q'76.
516. in't,] Qq, Coll. Dyce, Sta. Glo. +.  
in't? Ff et cet.

you] ye Ff, Rowe +, White.
519. [Exit First Player.] Dyce. Exit  
Player. Reed (1803). Om. Qq Ff.


Dyce, Sta. Ktly.

520. till] tell Q.Q.  
[Exeunt Players. Coll. (Mb).

[Exeunt. Q.Q. Ff. Exit Q.Q.  
Manet Hamlet. Ff, Rowe +, Jen.

God be wi' ye] god b' w' ye Ff  
God buy 'ye F,F,F. God buy to you  
Qq. God b' w' ye Rowe +, Jen. Dyce.
White, Huds. (good Rowe). God be wi' you Cap. Mal. Steev. Cald. Knt,  
Sta. Ktly. Good bye to you Bos. Good  
bye you Coll.

[Exeunt...] Sta. Glo. +, Dyce ii.  
Del. Huds. After line 521, Cap.  
I am] am I Q'76.  

515. dozen or sixteen lines] See III, ii, 178.

519. mock] Clarke: Hamlet, like the true gentleman that he is, feels that he has been betrayed into treating the old courtier with something of impatience and discourtesy; therefore he bids the actor, whom he knows to be naturally and professionally disposed to waggery, not forget himself to Polonius on the strength of the example just given.

522. alone] Clarke: The eagerness shown by Hamlet to be left in peace by himself appears to be a main evidence of his merely acting a part and assuming madness; he longs to get rid of the presence of persons before whom he has resolved to wear a show of insanity. Alone, he is collected, coherent, full of introspection. That he is neither dispassionate nor cool appears to be the result of his unhappy source of thought, not the result of derangement; he is morally afflicted, not mentally affected.

523. peasant slave] It is shown by Furnivall in N. & Qu. 12 April and 3
Is it not monstrous that this player here, 525
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, Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears

May, 1873, that it was possible for Sh. to have seen in the flesh some of the bondmen or 'peasant slaves' of England.

527. wann'd] Steevens upheld wann'd, because the effort to shed tears and the unusual exertion in a passionate speech would warm and flush the face; no actor can grow pale at will, and even if he could there is nothing in the fragment to make him. Malone effectually silenced all this by referring to Polonius's speech, line 497. Clarendon: We have had an instance of a verb formed from an adjective in 'pale,' I, v, 90, where it is transitive.

529. function] Caldecott: That is, each power and faculty,—the whole energies of soul and body. 'Nature within me seems In all her functions weary of herself.'—Sani. Agon. 596, i.e. using the term that imparts 'performance or the doing of a thing' for 'the power or faculty by which the thing is done.' Clarendon: The whole action of the body. See Mach. I, iii, 140.

530. conceit] Clarendon: Conception, idea (of the character he was personating). [See also III, iv, 114; IV, v, 43.]

534. cue] Wedgwood: The last words of the preceding speech, prefixed to the speech of an actor in order to let him know when he is to come on the stage. From the letter Q, by which it was marked. 'Q, a note of entrance for actors, because it is the first letter of quando, when, showing when to enter and speak.'—C. Butler, Eng. Gram, 1634, in N. & Qu. 5 Aug. 1865. Minshew explains it somewhat differently: 'A qu, a term used among stage-players, a Lat. qualis, i.e. at what manner of word the actors are to begin to speak, one after another hath done his speech. The French term is replique.'
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,  
Upon whose property and most dear life  
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?

537. appal] appall Rowe. appale Q.  
Q, appeale Q., apale Fl.  
539, 540. The... Yet I.] As in Johns.  
One line, QqFf, Rowe, Theob. Warb.  
540, 542. Yet...say] Yet I say Pope,  
543. Yet...say] Yet I say Pope,  
footnote.)
539. faculties] faculty Fl, Rowe+,  
Cald.  
eyes and ears] ears and eyes  
545-549. coward?...this?] Commas throughout in Qq.

537. free] CALDECOTT: Free from offence, guiltless. [See 'free souls,' III, ii, 231.]
541. peak] SINGER: To mope, to act foolishly and with irresolution.
542. John-a-dreams] STEEVENS: That is, John of dreams, which means only  
John the dreamer; a nickname for any ignorant, silly fellow. Thus the puppet  
thrown at during Lent was called Jack-a-lent, and the ignis-fatuus, Jack-a-lanthorn.  
John-a-droynes, however, if not a corruption of this nickname, seems to have been  
some well-known character, as I have met with more than one allusion to him.  
So, in Have with you to Saffron Walden, by Nash, 1596: 'The description of that  
poor John-a-droyne his man, whom he had hired,' &c. 'John-a-Droyne is like-  
wise a foolish character in Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra, 1578. COLLIERS: It  
is rather a nickname for a sleepy, apathetic fellow. The only mention yet met with  
of John-a-dreams is in Armin's Nest of Ninnies, 1606 (see Sh. Soc. vol. x, p. 49):  
'His name is John, indeede, saies the cinnick; but neither John a nods, nor John a  
dreames, yet either as you take it.' John-a-droyne was, in all probability, a different  
person.

542. unregnant] JOHNSON: Not quickened with a new desire of vengeance;  
ot not teeming with revenge. CLARENDON: Having no living thoughts within relating  
to my cause. In Meas. for Meas. I, i, 12, 'pregnant in' is used for 'filled with  
knowledge of.'

544. property] CLARENDON: This appears here to be used in the sense of 'own  
person.' Compare 'proper life,' in V, ii, 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. [I suppose it refers to his crown, his wife, everything,  
in short, which he might be said to be possessed of, except his life. 'Property' is  
used in its ordinary modern sense in Merry Wives, III, iv, 10. ED.]

545. defeat] WARBURTON: Destruction. STEEVENS: This word is very licen-
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
I should have fatted all the region kites

549, 550. this? Ha!] this, ha? Dyce,
Sta. White, Kty, Huds. Om. Pope +.
551. 'Swounds...it?] Why L...it: F, F',
552. But] Abbott (§ 122): 'It cannot be (that I am otherwise than a coward),'
i. e. 'it cannot be that I am courageous; on the contrary (but adversative), I am pigeon-liver’d.'
553. oppression] Collier (ed. 2): It is transgression in the (MS), but 'oppression' is no doubt the proper reading. Hamlet is alluding to his own lack of gall, and to 'oppression' being bitter to himself. The old annotator seems to have thought that the hero was referring to transgression on the part of others, which he lacked gall to make bitter to them. Dyce: Hamlet means he lacks gall to make him feel the bitterness of oppression. Singer (Shakespeare's Text Vindicated, p. 264) proposes aggression, a conjecture which the Cam. Edd. mark as 'withdrawn.' I gladly accept the fact on their testimony.
554. region] See line 465.
With this slave’s offal; bloody, bawdy 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, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!

555. offal; bloody,] offal: bloody, Q.76. offall, bloody, Qq. Offall, bloody:
a Ff (bloody: F, Fq).
556. Remorseless...villain!] Om. Jen. (a misprint?)

This] I sure, this Ff, Rowe.
559. a dear father murder’d] Johns. a deere murdered Q, Qq, Jen. Cald. a
deer father murdered Q, Qq. a dear father murdered Pope+. the Deere

murdered F, Fq, the dear murthered
F, Fq, Rowe, Cald. Knt, White, Hal.
562-565. And fall...play] Cap. Three lines, ending foh...heard,...play, Qq
Three lines, ending Drab...Braine...
Play, Ff, Rowe+. Four lines, ending
Drab,...foh!...heard,...play, Johns. Jen.
El.
562, 563. drab, A scullion] drabb; a stallyon Q, Qq, drabbe; a stallion
Q, drabb; stallion Q, drab—A
stallion Pope, Jen. drab—A stallion
Theob. Han.

And...scullion] One line, Ktly.

554, 555. I...offal] Sievers (Archiv f. n. Sprachen, vol. vi, 1849, p. 12) main-
tains that here Hamlet’s plan is revealed, which is, not revenge, not murder, but to
bring Claudius to judgement and legal execution as a criminal, upon whose gibbetted
carcass the region kites can fatten.

556. kindless] Johnson: Unnatural. Singer: We have ‘kindly’ for natural,
i.e. accordance with kind, elsewhere. Hudson: Observe how Hamlet checks him-
self in this strain of objurgation, and then, in mere shame of what he has done,
turns to ranting at himself for having ranted.

559. father] Jennens: There seems to be no necessity for this word here; or
rather it is tautology. Boswell: The dear murthered for the dear person murthered
is very far from being a harsh ellipsis. Knight pronounces the text of the Ff ‘a
beautiful reading,’ and White declares it ‘a fine form of speech, which needs no
support, and which we have had before in this play: I, iii, 67;’ adding that the text
of Q, is ‘inferior in both thought and rhythm.’ Halliwell: The ‘dear departed’
is still a common phrase, and the ellipsis in the Ff was, I suspect, in consonance
with the phraseology of Shakespeare’s time.

561. Must] Tschischwitz finds a profound meaning in this use of ‘must,’ where
he would expect do to be used. It indicates the necessity, so he affirms, that was
laid on Hamlet to act just as he does.

563. scullion] Theobald was persuaded that Sh. wrote cullion, i.e. a stupid,
heartless, white-livered fellow; as in Lear, II, ii, 36; 2 Hen. VI: I, iii, 43.
HAMLET

[ACT II, SC. ii.]

Fie upon't! foh! About, my brain! Hum, I have heard
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
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;

my Braine. Ff (Brain. F'F'), Rowe.  About
my brains; Q. About my braues; Q. About my brains, Q,Qo,
about my brain— Pope i. about my
brain!— Pope ii, Coll. i. About, my

Knt, Coll. i, Dyce, Sta. White, Det.
Ktly, Glo. Huds.  564. I have] I've Pope +, Dyce ii,
Warb.  567. struck so to] Brooke so to Q[\text{F}]
\text{F}', struck unto Rowe ii.

570. I'll have these players] I'll ob-
serve his looks, Pope i (a misprint).

564. About] JOHNSON: Wits, to your work! Brain, go about the present busi-
ness. STEEVENS, after citing 'My brain about again!' for thou hast found New
projects now to work on,' from Heywood, Second Part of The Iron Age, 1632,
strangely enough agrees with MONK MASON in thinking it to be a sea-phrase, mean-
ing, 'be my thoughts shifted into a contrary direction.' HUNTER (ii, 235): It should
be 'About 't, my brains!' that is, set about composing the lines which the players
were to add to The Murder of Gonzago.

564. brain] CAMBRIDGE EDITORS: Capell quotes 'braues' as the reading of Q\text{q}.
His own copy has 'braines.' That in the British Museum reads 'braues.' [As does
also Ashbee's Facsimile. ED.]

564. Hum] HUNTER (ii, 235): This is evidently intended to be the first con-
ception of the design to try the conscience of the King with the play. This in-
terjection of consideration, deliberation, shows it. Yet Hamlet had already settled
with the players that they should speak some verses interpolated in The Murder of
Gonzago. This inconsistency is not justified by alleging Hamlet's inconsistency of
character. In fact, the interjection ought not to be there, as it makes prospective what
is evidently retrospective.

565. play] STEEVENS: A number of these stories are collected together by Hey-
wood in his Apology for Actors. [See Sh. Soc. vol. vii, p. 57.] TODD gives one
from A Warning for Faire Women, 1599; and CLARENDON refers to Massinger's
Roman Actor, II, i [vol. ii, p. 351, ed. Gifford, 1805], for a similar example there
cited.

567. presently] CLARENDON: Immediately, as in line 169.


1, i, 104.
I'll tent him to the quick; if he but blench, 
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen 
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 
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. 

HAMLET

[Exit]

573. tent] Dyce (Gloss.): To search with a tent, which was a roll of lint for searching or cleansing a wound or sore.

573. blench] Steevens: Shrink, or start. Hunter (ii, 235): Flinch. The meaning is shown in Wase's translation of the Cynegeticon of Gratius, 1654: 'if one set up a piece of white paper, it will make the deer blench, and balk that way,' p. 77. Halliwell: Sh. seems to use 'blench' in the sense of to wink, to glance. 'And thus thinkende I stonde still Without blenchinge of mine eie.'—Gower, ed. 1554, f. 128.

575. devil] Coleridge: See Sir Thomas Browne:—'I believe ... that these apparitions and ghosts of departed persons are not the wandering souls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and suggesting us unto mischief, blood, and villainy, instilling and stealing into our hearts, that the blessed spirits are not at rest in their graves, but wander solicitous of the affairs of the world.'—Relig. Med. pt. i, sec. 37.

579. Abuses] Dyce (Gloss.): Deceives, imposes upon.

579, 580. I'll ... this] Marshall (A Study of Hamlet, p. 153) states that ik ving, before speaking this sentence, takes out the tablets wherein he had recorded his uncle's guilt, and by a significant gesture indicates that 'this' refers to them.

580. relative] Johnson: Nearly related, closely connected. Clarendon: To the purpose. The word is not known to exist elsewhere in this sense.
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?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.


Om. QqFf. 2. confusion] confesion Rowe ii. confession Pope (in margin).


Rofincrance, Guildenfarten, and Lords. F3 F3F3 (Guildenfarte, F4). Rosencerus...


2. Grating] CLARENDON: Compare Ant. & Cleop. I, i, 18. Elsewhere in Sh. the verb is used intransitively.

3. forward] CALDECOTT: Disposed, inclinable.

4. keeps] For instances of the omission of the nominative, see ABBOTT, § 399, and II, ii, 67; IV, i, 10.

5. crafty madness] DELIUS: Like 'mad in craft,' III, iv, 185.

6. disposition] MOBERLY: But with apparent unwillingness all the time. This scene, as well as II, ii, shows that Guild. has more discernment than Ros.
HAMLET

ACT III, SC. I.

Ros. Niggard of question, but of our demands

Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him


14, 15. Did... pastime?] One line, Q1

Most free of... to our... Niggard. Han. El.

Heussi. Most free of... of our... Niggard

14. assay] invite Q'76.

13. Niggard] Warburton: This is given as the description of the conversation of a man whom the speaker found not forward to be sounded; and who kept aloof when they would bring him to confession: but such a description can never pass but at cross purposes. Shakespeare certainly wrote it just the other way [see Textual Notes]. That this is the true reading, we need but to turn back to the preceding scene, for Hamlet's conduct, to be satisfied. Mason: Warburton forgets that by question, Shakespeare does not usually mean interrogatory, but discourse; yet in whichever sense the word be taken, this account given by Ros. agrees but ill with the scene between him and Ham. as actually represented. Malone: Slow to begin conversation, but free enough in his answers to our demands. Guild. has just said that Ham. kept aloof when they wished to bring him to confess the cause of his distraction: Ros. therefore here must mean, that up to that point, till they touch'd on that, he was free enough in his answers. Hunter (ii, 236): According to Warburton's reading, the account is that which the lords must have rendered of their interview with Hamlet, if they meant to report it truly. Warburton's emendation has not had justice done to it by other commentators, but we find it confirmed by Q. Staunton: Unless question is admitted to mean argument, Warburton's emendation yields a truer description of Hamlet's bearing towards his schoolfellows than that afforded by the old text. Tschischwitz finds an insuperable objection to Warburton's emendation because it would represent Hamlet as not gentlemanlike in asking many questions and niggard in replying. It is manifest that Rosencrantz here merely gives utterance to a rule of good manners. Clarke: If it be borne in mind that Sh. employs of very variously, and that he occasionally uses the word question to signify inquisition, cross-examining, it appears to be evident that here niggard of question elliptically expresses sparing of speech when we cross-examined him; and if it be remembered how peculiarly Sh. sometimes employs the possessive case, we think it will be perceived that here of our demands is employed to express of demands respecting ourselves. Thus, then, we take the whole speech to mean—He was sparing of speech when we questioned him: but of demands respecting ourselves he was very free in return: which interpretation completely tallies with the circumstances as they really occurred. Clarendon: Ros. and Guild. were completely baffled, and Ham. had the talk almost to himself. Perhaps they did not intend to give a correct account of the interview.

13. of our demands] Collier (ed. 2): Of is altered to to in the (MS), but needlessly, because of has here the force of on. Clarendon: Of may be written either by attraction from the previous of, or it may be used for on, as in Marlowe's Jew of Malta, IV, iv: Of that condition I will drink it up. [See Abbott, § 173, which may perhaps apply to this use of of. Ed.]

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
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 the 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
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 beauty be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wilderness; so shall I hope, your virtue
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Ophelia. 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;

31. Affront Ophelia.] Separate line, John. Begins line 32, QfFf, Rowe+,

Ophelia.] Ophelia, and join con-
verse with her. Seymour.
32. lawful espials] Om. Qq, Pope,
Ktyl.
33. Will] We'e le Qf.
unseen] and unseeen Q76.
34. frankly] frankly Q, Qf, Qf.
franckely Q, 
frankely F, F. Om. Q76.
35. the affliction] Q76. th' affliction
QfFf, Rowe+, Jen. Coll. El. White,
Dycie II, Huds.
36. no] no, F. no. F.F.F. F.
38. for your] for my Q, Qq, Pope+,
Cap. El.
39, 40. beauty...virtue] Walker. bea-
ties...virtues QfF et cet.
40. shall] Om. Pope, Han.
[Exit Queen.] Theob. Om. QqF.
43, 44. here...ourselves] here, whilst
we (If so your majesty shall please) re-
tire conceal'd Q76.
43. here.] heere, Q, Qf, heere: Q, Qf.
please you] please ye Ff, Rowe+.
44. [To Ophelia.] John. 

32. lawful espials] Steevens: Spies. Caldecott: Spies justifiably inquisi-
tive. Singer: 'An espall in warre, a scoutwatch, a beholder, a viewer.'—Baret
Elze: These words are superfluous, injurious to the metre, and imply a justification
unworthy of a king.
39, 40. beauty...virtue] Walker (Crit. i, 252): Surely Sh. wrote beauty
[·tie], and perhaps also virtue. [The 'it' in Ophelia's reply seems to support
Walker's emendation so strongly that I have not hesitated to adopt his reading. Of
course 'it' may be differently construed. Ed.]
43. Gracious] Elze: Compare 'High and mighty,' IV, vii, 43, and the Dedica-
tion to Venus and Adonis. Clarendon: Of 'gracious,' thus used without a sub-
stantive, we can find no other example.
44. bestow] Dycie (Gloss.) : To stow, to lodge, to place. See IV, iii, 12.
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. Oh, 'tis too true!

[Aside] How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!

The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
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;

46. *loneliness* [lowlines Q₂Q₃]: *lowliness* Q₄Q₅. 

47. *visage* [Bayle, (ii, 341)] Can anything be more preposterous than to talk of sugering over the devil with a visage? What Sh. meant to say is clear enough: we too often disguise the devil himself with devout looks and pious acts. To express this, read: 'with devotion's visard... we do figure o'er,' &c.

48. *action* [Singer]: This indicates that it was a book of prayers, which agrees with Hamlet's 'Nymph, in thy orisons.'

52. *to* [See I, ii, 140.]

53. *painted* [Caldecott]: Falsely colored. [Clarendon]: Fictitious, disguised. Compare *King John*, III, i, 105.

56. *Johnson*: Of this celebrated soliloquy, which bursting from a man distracted with contrariety of desires, and overwhelmed with the magnitude of his own purposes, is connected rather in the speaker's mind than on his tongue, I shall en-
[56. To be, or not to be.]

Hamlet, knowing himself injured in the most enormous and atrocious degree, and seeing no means of redress but such as must expose him to the extremity of hazard, meditates on his situation in this manner: Before I can form any rational scheme of action under this pressure of distress, it is necessary to decide whether, after our present state, we are to be, or not to be. That is the question, which, as it shall be answered, will determine whether 'tis nobler, and more suitable to the dignity of reason, to suffer the outrages of fortune patiently, or to take arms against them, and by opposing end them, though perhaps with the loss of life. If to die were to sleep, no more, and by a sleep to end the miseries of our nature, such a sleep were devoutly to be wished; but if to sleep in death be to dream, to retain our powers of sensibility, we must pause to consider in that sleep of death what dreams may come. This consideration makes calamity so long endured; for who would bear the vexations of life, which might be ended by a bare bodkin, but that he is afraid of something in unknown futurity? This fear it is that gives efficacy to conscience, which, by turning the mind upon this regard, chills the ardor of resolution, checks the vigor of enterprise, and makes the current of desire stagnate in inactivity. We may suppose that he would have applied these general observations to his own case, but that he discovered Ophelia. Malone: Dr Johnson's explication of the first five lines of this passage is surely wrong. Hamlet is not deliberating whether after our present state we are to exist or not, but whether he should continue to live, or put an end to his life; as is pointed out by the second and the three following lines, which are manifestly a paraphrase on the first: 'Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer, &c., or to take arms.' The question concerning our existence in a future state is not considered till the tenth line: 'To sleep! perchance to dream!' &c. See R. of L. 1154. Coleridge: This speech is of absolutely universal interest,—and yet to which of all Shakespeare's characters could it appropriately have been given but to Hamlet? For Jaques it would have been too deep, and for Iago too habitual a communion with the heart; which in every man belongs, or ought to belong, to all mankind. Lamb (Works, vol. iii, p. 88. London, 1870): How far the very custom of hearing anything spouted, withers and blows upon a fine passage, may be seen in those speeches from Hen. V., &c., which are current in the mouths of schoolboys, from their being to be found in Enfield's Speaker, and such kind of books. I confess myself utterly unable to appreciate that celebrated soliloquy in Hamlet, beginning, 'To be, or not to be,' or to tell whether it be good, bad, or indifferent; it has been so handled and pawed about by declamatory boys and men, and torn so inhumanly from its living place and principle of continuity in the play, till it has become to me a perfect dead member. Caldecott, criticising Dr Johnson, says that the train of thought is obvious enough; it is only the grammatical thread that technically may call for some unwinding. He denies that any doubt is here raised by Hamlet as to a future state of existence,—Hamlet is questioning solely what the condition of such existence is to be. A desire to be out of the world is one of the most strongly-marked features of Hamlet's character. It is the first wish he utters when along: I, ii 129. But he is then restrained from anything beyond a wish for suicide by religious scruples. The inclination now returns upon him more forcibly (having more cause for such an impulse), and the prohibition of Heaven does not enter into consideration. It is here only, what he shall change his life for. This is the lan-
guage and subject of a man's mind who is nearer death, than he who only wishes
that it were lawful to kill himself.' Hunter (ii, 236): This soliloquy is placed in
Q, at the beginning of what is now Act II. It stands there most appropriately. We
have seen, at the close of Act I, the state of Hamlet's mind immediately on having
received the dread information and the solemn command of the Ghost; we are next
presented with what was the state of his mind after a few days' reflection. He
enters solus, in a meditative mood, and the subjects of his meditations are among
the most awful which can engage mortal thoughts. This is to show his natural mind.
Then follows the dialogue with Ophelia, which is intended to show us his artificial
mind,—that idle, wandering folly which he assumed, the better to accomplish his
object. I can conceive nothing more dramatically proper than this. It prepares for
all the succeeding action in which the natural and the artificial Hamlet are so wildly
combined. Why there was a change in the arrangement, or by whom it was made,
I can no more explain than I can account for many other things connected with the
publication of these dramas. But that the play is greatly injured by the change I
feel a confident conviction; for not only is this soliloquy wanting in the place most
appropriate to it, but it is now found in a place not suitable to it. Such meditations
as these are not such as were likely to arise in the mind of one who had just con-
cieved a design by which he hoped to settle a doubt of a very serious kind, and
who must have been full of curiosity about the issue of his plot. If this speech
is to indicate deliberation concerning suicide, or is even allied to suicide, such
deliberation is surely out of place when curiosity was awake, and his mind deeply in-
tent on something that he must do. To be sure, the hypothesis of Inconsistency will
explain all; but then it will explain anything. Another very material effect is pro-
bred by the change in the point at which this solus speech is introduced. The line,
'But look where sadly the poor wretch comes reading;' immediately precedes his
entry, when, supposing himself to be unobserved, he gives utterance to the musings
of his mind. See also Q. It is thus manifest that the poet's intention was that
these should be meditations of Hamlet on something which he found written in a
book which he holds in his hand, a book which spoke of the evils of life, of death,
their cure, of futurity, of the question of being or not being when we have shuffled off
this mortal coil, and that what he says arises out of the argument in the book before
him, and is not to be regarded as thoughts springing up in his own mind. [See note,
line 60.] 'To be, or not to be: ay, there's the point,' as it is in the Quarto, is equiva-
 lent to, 'You, the author, are discussing the question of what shall be hereafter; you
have a great and mighty subject in hand.' And the words as we now have them,
'To be, or not to be,—that is the question,' are much the same, if we regard, as we
may, 'question' as equivalent to theme, argument, or subject. [There is also an
analysis of this soliloquy to be found in Goldsmith's Works (vol. iii, p. 316, Lon-
don, 1854), which attempts to prove that it is 'a heap of absurdities, whether we
consider the situation, the sentiment, the argumentation, or the poetry.' This essay
and five others have been included in Goldsmith's works on the strength of their
having appeared in The British Magazine during the years 1761, 1762, and 1763;
but no one, I think, can read them, certainly the one in question, without agreeing
with the editor of the edition, Peter Cunningham, 'that they are not by Goldsmith.'
The needless attempt, however, has been made gravely to refute this essay in Hack-
ett's Notes and Comments on Shakespeare, New York, 1863, pp. 13-59. For Ger-
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,

58. slings] sling Campbell, slings Obs. 1752.
arrow] harrow Anon. (Misc.

man criticisms on this soliloquy, see Ziegler, Tieck, Rohrbach, Rümelin (foot-
note), in the Appendix, Vol. II.]

58. slings] Walker (Crit. ii, 16): Stings is undoubtedly the true reading. [See
Gérth's extraordinary interpretation of this word in Appendix, Vol. II.]

59. sea] Pope: Perhaps siege, which continues the metaphor of 'slings,' 'arrows,'
'taking arms,' and represents the being encompassed on all sides with troubles
Thieobald: Or one might emend nearer the traces of the text: 'th' assay of troubles' [Singer has no doubt that this was the word], or 'a way of troubles,' i.e.
the attempts, attacks, &c. But perhaps any change is unnecessary, considering
Shakespeare's freedom in combining metaphors, and that a 'sea' is used to signify
a vast quantity, multitude, or confluence of anything. The prophet Jeremiah, in
chap. li, 42, calls a prodigious army, a sea. Æschylus is frequent in the use of this
metaphor: Septem contra Thebas [lines 64 and 114, ed. Dindorf]. Besides, a 'sea
of troubles' among the Greeks grew into proverbial usage: κατω βαλασαα. So that
the phrase means the troubles of human life, which flow in upon us, and encompass
us round, like a sea. Hanmer: Assailing would preserve the propriety of the
metaphor. Johnson: Sh. breaks his metaphors often, and in this desultory speech
there was less need of preserving them. Caldecott: This mode of speaking is
proverbial, and has been so in all ages and in all languages; neither can any meta-
phor be conceived more apt than that of the sea, to convey the idea of an over-
whelming mass. With the closest analogy we say, a flood of transport, a torrent of
abuse, a peck of troubles. Sh. uses it everywhere and in every form; and the in-
tegrity of his metaphor is that which he least thinks of. Garrick (Oration in
Honor of Shakespeare's Jubilee): Shakespeare's terms rather than his sentences are
metaphorical; he calls an endless multitude a sea, by a happy allusion to the per-
petual succession of wave on wave; and he immediately expresses opposition by
'taking up arms,' which, being fit in itself, he was not solicitous to accommodate to
his first image. This is the language in which a figurative and rapid conception
will always be expressed. A. E. B[rae] (N. & Qu. vol. vi, 23 Oct. 1852): To
take arms against a sea neither presents an intelligible idea in itself, nor assists in
carrying on the general allusion to offensive and defensive warfare. 'Slings' and
'arrows' are figurative of armed aggression, against which to have recourse to arms
in opposition is a natural sequence of idea; but if these arms are to be directed
against a sea of troubles, the sequence is broken, and the whole allusion becomes
obscure and uncertain. But the whole image is that of a posse of evils thronging to
assail us in this life,—a mortal coil, as it is afterwards called, in opposition to the
immortal coil after death of ills we know not of,—this attack we may put an end to,
or 'shuffle off,' by taking arms against it, scilicet, 'a bare bodkin.' Thus the very
necessity of the context plainly exacts some word expressive of tumultuous attack;
and such a word we obtain, bearing precisely that meaning, by the slight alteration
of 'a sea' into assay. It is singular that lexicographers, amongst the several definitions they have ascribed to it, should have failed to include that one peculiar meaning,—charge or onset,—which renders it so appropriate. See II, ii, 71. But by Spenser the word is most frequently used, and its meaning most plainly indicated. See Faerie Queene, V, ii; V, xi. As to the probability of substitution, an equally close approximation exists between assay and 'a sea' as between aster and 'as stars;' nor is it at all certain that even in sound the vowels a and e were so distinctive in those days as in our own. The probability is still greater if it were spelt, as was often the case, with one s. Assay has all the meaning of Pope's conjecture, with the added sense, peculiar to itself, of throthing or simultaneous onset. Thus, too, in III, iii, 69, 'make assay' receives great force and beauty if interpreted, 'throng to the rescue.' [Although A. E. B. was anticipated by Theobald, yet his defence is so vigorous that I have not scrupled to insert it; it is doubtful whether his definition will apply to II, i, 65. Ed.] BAILEY (i, 28) maintains that Sh. never could have written anything so inconsequent as lines 59 and 60: 'Hamlet proposes to himself the question whether he shall or shall not continue to live; but in proceeding to amplify it he performs the operation which is called changing a child at nurse, i. e. he substitutes a totally different question,—namely, whether he shall continue to bear his woes patiently, or shall fight against them and put them down? It is as if my neighbor Lepidus, whilst deliberating whether he should remain in his present house or quit it, were to say: 'To remain or to quit? That is the question; whether it is better for me to continue to endure rattling windows, &c., or to call in the carpenter, and so put an end to these annoyances.'—vol. ii, p. 305. Accordingly, Bailey believes that logic is vindicated, and the true text restored, by reading 'to take arms against the sea of troubles, And by a poniard, or by deposing, end them.' Or the line 'intrinsically, or considered by itself, might be restored by reading, 'to take arms against a host of troubles;' although the principal fault of the passage would remain unaffected.'—p. 306. STAUNTON: As Sh. has already furnished us with 'a sea of joys,' 'a sea of glory,' 'a sea of conscience,' 'a sea of wax,' 'a sea of care,' any emendation is very questionable. HALLIWELL cites: 'Whatsoever it be (which hardly at the length can be depainted) that after a sea of troubles we enjoy in this life,' &.—The Passenger of Benvenuto, 1612. KEIGHTLEY (who inclines to Pope's conj.) says that this is almost a solitary instance of the figurative use of 'sea' by Sh. HACKETT (p. 51): The 'sea' here is the heart,—the fountain of existence, and it is compared in its agitated condition to a 'sea of troubles.' 'The analogy between the sea, with its ebb and flow, through rivers, channels, and creeks, and the heart, by whose impulse the blood courses through the veins and arteries, must be obvious to every one upon reflection.' Sh. frequently compares the heart to a 'sea.' INGLEBY (Sh. Hermeneutics, p. 88): One consideration of the highest importance has been entirely ignored. When Ham. talked of ending his sea of troubles, or, as he afterwards describes it, shuffling off his mortal coil, he had a covert consciousness, a conscience, in fact, which stayed the hand he would have raised against his own life; viz. that this so-called ending and shuffling off was a mere delusion, just as much so as repelling the advancing waves of the sea with shield and spear. Is not the metaphor then sound and whole? If there be an incongruity in the notion of taking arms, offensively or defensively, against the sea, is there not just as great an incongruity in using a bare bandkin against
And by opposing end them? To die,—to sleep,—
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.

60. them?] Pope. them, QQ9. them: QQQ9 Ff. them. Rowe, Han. Cap.
60, 61. die, to sleep,—No] Pope. die to sleepe No Qq. dye, to sleepe No F,F,
dye, to sleep No F,F, F. Rowe. die; to sleep; No Cap. die: to sleep; No Glo. +.

the soul,—the immortal part which (as Raleigh has it) 'no stab can kill'? [In proof that the metaphor in question is consistent, and has all the external evidences of authenticity, Ingleby cites a passage from Ritson's Memorials of the Celts (p. 118), which is itself a translation of one in Ælian, to the effect that the Celts in the wantonness of their bravery 'oppose the overwhelming sea,' and 'taking arms rush upon the waves,' 'in like manner as if they were able to terrify or wound them.]

60. end them] SEBASTIAN EVANS (Footnote in Ingleby's Sh. Hermeneutics, p. 92) would omit the pronoun after 'end,' understanding by that word die.

60. sleep] THEOBALD: This seems to be sneered at by Beau. & Fl. in their Scornful Lady [II, i, Works, vol. iii, p. 25, ed. Dyce]. DOUCE (ii, 238): There is a good deal on this subject in Cardanus's Comortes, 1576, a book which Sh. had certainly read. In fol. 30 it is said: 'In the holy scripture, death is not accompted other than sleepe, and to dye is sayde to sleepe.' HUNTER (ii, 243): This seems to be the book which Sh. placed in the hands of Hamlet, and the following passages seem to approach so near to the thought of this soliloquy that we cannot doubt that they were in Shakespeare's mind when he put this speech into the mouth of Hamlet:

'How much were it better to follow the counsel of Agathius, who right well commended death, saying, that it did not only remove sickness and all other grief, but also, when all other discommodities of life did happen to man often, it never would come more than once. Seeing, therefore, with such ease men die, what should we account of death to be resembled to anything better than sleep? Moste assured it is that such sleeps are most sweet as be most sound, for those are the best where in like unto dead men we dream nothing. The broken sleeps, the slumber, and dreams full of visions, are commonly in them that have weak and sickly bodies.'—Book ii.

CLARENDON: These resemblances to Cardan are not very striking.

61. more] KNIGHT: Surely the doubt [indicated by Capell's '?'] whether death and sleep are identical comes too early; the reasoning proceeds to assume that they are the same. In line 65 comes the doubt—'perchance to dream.' The 'no more' is nothing more.

61. to say we] BAILEY (i. 42) thinks that 'to say' here breaks the train of thought, and has nothing to do where it is placed. 'By simply expunging "say we" every one will be sensible how greatly the passage is improved, and that the introduction of saying is a sheer impertinence which could not have proceeded from the clear head of our great dramatist.' But for metre's sake a foot must be supplied, which will be appropriate in sound, form, and sense—this foot Bailey thinks is to be found in straightway.
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,

64. wish'd. To] wist to Qq. die, to sleep; To sleep: Glo.+
64, 65. To...sleep.] Cap. die to sleepe,
           To sleepe, QqFl. die,—to sleep; To sleep!
Knt, Dyce. die, to sleep;—To sleep,
Sta. die,—to sleep,—To sleep; Ktly. shuffled] shuffled'd F,F,

65. rub] CLARENDON: A term of bowls, meaning a collision hindering the bowl in its course.

66. what dreams] HUNTER (ii, 239): Sh. seems to have been deeply impressed with a feeling of the misery of uneasy dreams; we see it in Clarence, and more awfully in Richard; we have also in his plays the effect of pleasant dreams. [The accent in reading should be laid on 'what.' It is the kind of dreams from which Hamlet here recoils, not from the mere fact of dreaming; the horror at that supposition is expressed in line 65. Ed.]

67. coil] WARBURTON: Turmoil, bustle. HEATH: The incurrence of this mortal body. STEEVENS: Compare A Dolfull Discours of Two Strangers, &c., published by Churchyard, among his Chippes, 1575: 'Yea, shaking off this sinfull soyle Me thincke in cloudes I see,' &c. M. MASON (p. 383) agrees with Heath in referring this to the body, this 'covering of flesh,' and is persuaded that we should read 'mortal spoile,' which is the same word as the slough which the snake casts every year. In sense it means the same as 'the case of flesh,' in Bonduca [IV, iv, p. 82, Beau. & Fl. Works, ed. Dyce]; and again, 'a separation Betwixt this spirit and the case of flesh.'—The Elder Brother [IV, iii, p. 262, Beau. & Fl. Works, ed. Dyce]; but the most complete parallel is 'this muddy vesture of decay,'—Mer. of Ven. V, i, 64. CALDECOTT: It is here used in each of its senses: turmoil, or bustle, and that which entwines or wraps round. Snakes generally lie like the coils of ropes; and, it is conceived, that an allusion is here had to the struggle which that animal is obliged to make in casting his slough. HUNTER (ii, 240): He was thinking of the coil of a rope. With this expression 'shuffled off' better coheres. SINGER: It is remarkable that under garbuglio, which corresponds in Italian to our 'coil,' Florio has 'a pecke of troubles,' of which Shakespeare's 'sea of troubles' may be only an aggrandised idea. ELZE: With what reason can turmoil or noise be termed mortal? And how can we shuffle off a mortal noise? We are convinced that under 'coil' is concealed an error which we can remedy by an almost imperceptible change, if instead of 'coil' we read vail. Vail means a covering, an integument, and our body is the mortal covering or integument which we must shuffle off in order to enter on the life beyond. In Botany vail is the envelope, the chalypter of mosses, which enfolds the fructifying organs and which is burst by them, and it is not impossible that it was used generally for the envelope of buds. We do not venture to assert that Sh. knew this meaning of the word, but we know with what keen looks he must have examined nature. Beyond a doubt, clay would be better, but it would harmonise less with the received text. Elze (Shakespeare-Jahrbuch, vol. ii, p. 362) advocates the substitution of soil for 'coil,' which word he found in the Dolfull Discours, quoted
Must give us pause; there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the wholes and scorns of time,
The oppressor’s wrong, the proud man’s contumely, 71
The pangs of disprized 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,

71. proud] proude Q. poore F, F, Rowe, Cald.
poore F,F, Rowe, Cald.
75. When he] When Q.Q. When
as Q’76.
quietus] quietas Q.Q. Q.
76. who would fardels] who’d these
fardels Walker, White, Huds.
Qardels] these Fardles F, Cald.
Knt, Kty, Del.

71. proud] CALDECOTT: The contumely the proud man offers is more in accordance with the train of thought than that which the poor man suffers. [In the enumeration of these ills, is it not evident that Sh. is speaking in his own person? As JOHNSON says, these are not the evils that would particularly strike a prince. Ed.]
72. disprized] GREY (ii, 295): For mis-prized. WHITE: This is a misprint, or, more probably, a sophistication. [A love that is disprized falls more frequently to the lot of man, and is perhaps more hopeless in its misery, than a love that is despised. As CORSON says, ‘perhaps a disprized or undervalued love, a love that is only partially appreciated and responded to, would be apt to suffer more pangs than a despised love.’ After all, this passage is merely one of the numberless puzzles in the text of Sh.; scarcely is the ink dry which has marked out a certain reading before reason and probability seem to shift to the side of the rejected reading; and to avoid unending vacillation an editor must fall back on the safe and sound rule: durior lectio preferenda est; which applies here. Ed.]
75. quietus] STEEVENS: This is the technical term for the acquittance which every sheriff [or accountant] receives on settling his accounts at the Exchequer. Compare Webster, Duchess of Malfi [i, i, vol. i, p. 198, Works, ed. Dyce]: ‘And ’cause you shall not come to me in debt, Being now my steward, here upon your lips I sign your quietus est!’ HUNTER (ii, 241): ‘The law’s delay’ suggested this reference to the Exchequer. Elsewhere Sh. uses other Exchequer terms. In Sonnet 126, 12, we find quietus and four other words which may be considered Exchequer terms within the compass of two lines.
76. bare] MALONE: This does not perhaps mean ‘by so little an instrument as a dagger,’ but ‘by an unsheathed dagger.’ CLARENDON: Sh. may have had the former meaning in mind. [Assuredly. Ed.]
76. bodkin] THEOBALD (Sh. Rest. p. 85): I know that this is generally interpreted to mean any, the least weapon that can be. ’Tis true, this exaggerates the thought in that particular; but I can scarce suppose that the little implement is here meant with which women separate and twist over their hair. I rather believe that the word here signifies, according to the old usage of it, a dagger. Thus Chaucer: ‘[Julius] in the capitoil anoon him hente This false Brutus, and his other foone, And stike! him wi’: boydekyns anoon.’—The Monkes Tale [line 714, ed. Morris].
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,


Steevens: A small dagger. Thus, '— Out with your bodkin, Your pocket-dagger your stiletto.'—Beau. & Fl., Custom of the Country [II, iii, Works, p. 424, ed. Dyce]. Again, in Sapho and Phao, 1591: '— a desperate fray between two, made at all weapons, from the brown bill to the bodkin.' Hunter (ii, 241): Reginald Scot (Discovery of Witchcraft, fol. 1665, p. 198, first printed in the time of Elizabeth) plainly distinguishes a dagger from a bodkin.

76. fardels] Nares: A burden. 'Thus, in Acts, xxii, 15: 'after these days we trussed up our fardels and went vp to Jerusalem.'—Version of 1581. Ed.] Collier (ed. 1): 'These fardels' is clearly wrong on every account. Hunter (ii, 242): 'These fardels' refer to the evils just specified, and the text should so read. Walker (Crit. iii, 266): The Ff reading is 'perhaps right.' Contract 'who would' to who'd. Lettsom (footnote to foregoing): This contraction is not necessary for the metre, see Walker (Vers. p. 101): '— an extra syllable is not admissible in the body of the line, except when it comes immediately after a pause, namely, a short extra syllable after the fourth or sixth syllable of the line.' White: The reading of the Qq loses, with the pronoun 'these,' the essential thought: that the crosses which Hamlet has just enumerated are the fardels. Corson also upholds the Ff.

77. grunt] Johnson: This can scarcely be borne by modern ears. (Note on 'hugger-mugger,' IV, v, 8o.) If phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost. Steevens: In Stanyhurst's Virgil, 1582, 'supremum congenuit' is given '— for sighing it grunts.' Again, in Turberville's Ovid, '— round about I heard Of dying men the grunts.'—Epist. xiv, Hypermnestra to Lynceus. To the ears of our ancestors it probably conveyed no unpleasing sound: thus Chaucer, 'But never gront he at no strook but oon.'—The Monks Tale, line 718, ed. Morris. Compare Ful. Cas. IV, i, 22. Knight: The players in their squeamishness always give us groan; and if they had not the terror of the blank verse before them, they would certainly inflict perspire upon us. Staunton: See Armin's Nest of Ninnies [p. 26, ed. Sh. Soc.]: '— how the fat fooles of this age will gronte and sweat under this massie burden,' &c.

79. The] Keightley (Exp. 292): I read 'In the.' If any one refuses his assent to this very slight addition to the text, and which for the first time gives it sense, I must leave him to his own devices.

79. bourn] Nares: A limit, a boundary.

80. returns] The apparent oversight contained in the assertion that no traveller returns from that bourn, when Hamlet had himself seen and talked with such a traveller, Theobald endeavors to explain away by showing that the Ghost comes only f-xx Purgatory, not from the last and eternal residence of souls in bliss o-
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 sickled o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment

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raw_text:

misery. Farmer: This has been cavilled at by Lord Orrery and others, but without reason. The idea of a traveller in Shakespeare's time was of a person who gave an account of his adventures. Steevens: Compare, 'Qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum, Illuc unde negant redire quenquam.'—Catullus. Douce: No translation of Catullus into English is known to have been made. Both writers may have casually adopted the same sentiment. Malone (anticipated, however, by Gentleman, in the Dramatic Censor, i, 23, 1770) asserts that Sh. meant that from the unknown regions of the dead no traveller returns with all his corporeal powers, such as he who goes on a voyage of discovery brings back. The Ghost being 'inulnerable as the air,' was consequently incorporeal. Schlegel (Lectures, &c, ii, 196, footnote): Sh. wished purposely to show that Ham. could not fix himself in any conviction of any kind whatever. Roffe (p. 31): According to that philosophy which the Spiritualist believes to have been Shakespeare's, Ham. was perfectly correct in using this phraseology. Surely there is no skepticism in Ham., nor inadvertency in Sh.: a departed spirit appears to the spiritual eyes of the man, and not to his natural eyes; consequently does not, and cannot, overpass 'the bourn' which separates the spiritual and causal world from the natural and effect world. Coleridge silences the question for ever: 'If it be necessary to remove the apparent contradiction,—if it be not rather a great beauty,—surely it were easy to say that no traveller returns to this world, as to his home or abiding-place.' Hartley Coleridge (Essays and marginalia, i, 170): I will not say that an apparition might not confirm the faith of an Hereafter, where it pre-existed, but where that faith was not, or was neutralised by an inward misery, implicated with the very sense of being, its effect would be but momentary or occasional,—a source of perplexity, not of conviction,—throwing doubt at once on the conclusions of the understanding and the testimony of the senses, and fading itself into the twilight of uncertainty, making existence the mere shadow of a shade.

84. native hue] Hunter (ii, 242): This was no doubt red. Clarendon: Natural colour. Compare Love's Lab. IV, iii, 263.
85. thought] Hunter: 'Thought' is melancholy, whose hue was pale, Mid. N. D. I, i, 15. Clarendon: Care, anxiety. See IV, v, 182. 'An alderman of London was put in trouble, and dyed with thought, and anguish.'—Bacon, Henry VII, p. 230. [Compare 'Take no thought for the morrow.'—Matt. vi. 34.]
86. pith] Ritson: I prefer 'pitch,' with an allusion to pitching or throwing the bar—a manly exercise, usual in country villages. Staunton: We suppose 'pitch'
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.

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;

87.    currents] currants F,F,F,
     away] away FI, Rowe, Cap. Cald. Knt.
    Horizons F,F,F,
90.    you; well, well, well.] you well. QqQ,
91.    remember’d.] remembered? Q’76.
92.    you; well, well, well.] you well. QqQ,

well,— Pope. you, well;—Theob. Warb. you; well, indifferent well. Seymour.

94.    long?] Om. Q’76. much Pope, Han.
95.    you now.] F,F,F,F, Cap. you now QqF,
    Rowe, Pope, Sing. Ktly. you, now Theob. et cet.

No, not I ] No, no FF, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Sta.  No Pope+.
95.    96.  No...aught.] Cap. One line,
    QqFF, Rowe+, Jen. Knt, Sta.
95.    I; I ] I; You do mistake; I Seymour.

refers to the pitch or summit of the falcon’s flight, and ‘great pitch and moment’ means ‘great eminence and import.’ [Staunton followed the FI, although he said he preferred the Qq. Ed.] CAMBRIDGE EDD: In this doubtful passage we have retained the text of Qq, although the player’s Quartos of 1676, 1683, 1695, and 1703 have, contrary to their custom, followed the FF, which may possibly indicate that ‘pith’ was the reading according to the stage tradition. CLARENDON: For ‘pitch,’ see Twelfth Night, I, i, 12; Rich. II: I, i, 109. ‘Pitch’ seems more appropriately joined to ‘moment’ than ‘pith.’ We have had ‘pith and marrow’ already, I, iv, 22. Whether we read ‘pitch’ or ‘pith,’ there is an equally sudden change of metaphor in ‘current.’ See line 59.

87.    awry] Corson: ‘Turn awry’ expresses more of an entire change of current, which is Hamlet’s idea, than does ‘turn awry.’

88.    Soft you now] Caldecott: A gentler pace! have done with this lofty march. CLARENDON: Hush, be quiet. Compare Much Ado, V, i, 207.

89.    Nymph] Halliwell: It has been doubted if the title of ‘Nymph,’ applied to any other than a water-deity, were in use in Shakespeare’s time. It occurs, however, applied to the heroine, in Lodge’s romance of Rosalynde, 1590.

89.    orisons] Johnson: This is a touch of nature. H. Cælæt, at the sight of Ophelia, does not immediately recollect that he is to personate madness, but makes her an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation excites in his thoughts.
I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, I 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
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

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97. I know] Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.
Cald. Knt, Coll.White, Huds. you know
Qq et cet.
99. the things] these things Qq, Jen.
   rich; their perfume lost.] Qq3, Qs

92. well] MOBERLY: ‘Well’ becomes twice over a dissyllable by ironical modulation.

96. aught] DOWDEN (p. 139): As things were, Ham. quickly learned, and the knowledge embittered him, that Oph. could neither receive great gifts of soul, nor in return render equivalent gifts. There is an exchange of little tokens between the lovers, but of the large exchange of soul there is none, and Ham. in his bitter mood can truthfully exclaim: ‘I never gave you aught.’

97. I know] CORSON: Ophelia’s meaning is, The remembrances you gave me may have been trifles to you, such trifles as left no impression on your mind of your having given them; but I know right well you did, as they were most dear to me at the time. ‘I’ should be read with a strong upward circumflex.

99. lost] DANIEL (p. 75): The Ff give a very good reading, or qy. reft. In the next line read, ‘Take them again.’

102. There, my lord] MARSHALL (p. 28): At this point, just as Oph. is going to force back on Ham. the sweet remembrances of his love, the fussy old Polonius, who has been fidgeting behind the arras, anxious to see the result of his most notable device, pops his head out, and in so doing drops his chamberlain’s staff. Ham. hears the noise, and instantly suspects the truth, that he is being made the object of an artfully devised scheme to entrap him into some confession of his secret.

103. Richardson (Essays, &c., fifth ed., 1797, p. 102) Hamlet’s air and manner here should not be perfectly grave and serious. Nor is there anything in this dialogue to justify the tragic tone with which it is frequently spoken. Let Ham. be represented as delivering himself in a light, airy, unconcerned, and thoughtless manner, and the rudeness, so much complained of, will disappear. COLERIDGE: Here it is evident that the penetrating Ham. perceives, from the strange and forced manner of Oph., that the sweet girl was not acting a part of her own, but was a decoy; and his after-speeches are not so much directed to her as to the listeners and spies. Such a discovery in a mood so anxious and irritable accounts for a certain harshness in him;—and yet a wild upworking of love, sporting with opposites in a wilful self-tormenting strain of irony, is perceptible throughout. ‘I did love you once;’—‘I lov’d you not;’—and particularly in his enumeration of the faults of the
sex from which Oph. is so free, that the mere freedom therefrom constitutes her character. Note Shakespeare's charm of composing the female character by the absence of characters, that is, marks and out-jottings. Lamb (iii, 95, ed. 1870): All the Hamlets that I have ever seen, rant and rave at Oph. as if she had committed some great crime, and the audience are highly pleased, because the words of the part are satirical, and they are enforced by the strongest expression of satirical indignation of which the face and voice are capable. But then, whether Ham. is likely to have put on such brutal appearances to a lady whom he loved so dearly, is never thought on. The truth is, that in all such deep affections as had subsisted between Ham. and Oph. there is a stock of supererogatory love (if I may venture to use the expression), which in any great grief of heart, especially where that which preys upon the mind cannot be communicated, confers a kind of indulgence upon the grieved party to express itself, even to its heart's dearest object, in the language of a temporary alienation; but it is not alienation, it is purely a distraction, and so it always makes itself to be felt by that object; it is not anger, but grief assuming the appearance of anger,—love awkwardly counterfeiting hate, as sweet countenances when they try to frown; but such sternness and fierce disgust as Ham. is made to show is no counterfeit, but the real face of absolute aversion,—of irreconcilable alienation. It may be said he puts on the madman; but then he should only so far put on this counterfeit lunacy as his own real distraction will give him leave; that is, incompletely, imperfectly; not in that confirmed, practised way, like a master of his art, or, as Dame Quickly would say, 'like one of those harlotry players.' Hazlitt (p. 110): Hamlet's conduct to Oph. is quite natural in his circumstances. It is that of assumed severity only. It is the effect of disappointed hope, of bitter regrets, of affection suspended, not obliterated, by the distraction of the scene around him! Amidst the natural and preternatural horrors of his situation, he might be excited in delicacy from carrying on a regular courtship. When his 'father's spirit was in arms,' it was not the time for the son to make love in. He could neither marry Oph., nor wound her mind by explaining the cause of his alienation, which he durst hardly trust himself to think of. It would have taken him years to come to a direct explanation on the point. In the harassed state of his mind he could not have done otherwise than he did. His conduct does not contradict what he says of his love for her when he sees her grave. Vischer (Krit. Gänge, p. 102) conjectures that Ham. suspects that the Queen is eavesdropping, and that what he says here is aimed at her.


105. honest] Staunton: That 'honest' in this dialogue is equivalent to *chaste* or *virtuous*, it would be superfluous to mention, but that some critics, in their strictures on the conduct of Hamlet in the present scene, appear to have forgotten it. The beginning recalls to mind some passages in Shirley's, *The Royal Master*, IV, i: *'King. Are you honest? Theo. Honest! King. I could have used the name of chaste Or virgin; but they carry the same sense.'*—[Works, vol. iv, p. 156, ed. Dyce.] Clarendon: See *Winter's Tale* II, i, 68 and 76.
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?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd 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.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery; why wouldst thou be a nun?

107. your honesty] you Qq, Pope, Mal. Steev.
109. commerce] comeurfe Q,F,Qs, commerce Q,F,F,Fs, converse Anon.\* 110. your Fl.
113. into] in Qs, to Q’s. Pope.
114. sometime] sometimes F,F,Fs, Rowe, Pope.

110. with] your Fl.
115. I loved you not.] I did love you once. Rowe ii; Pope, in the margin.
120. Nunry Qq.

107, 108. honesty . . . beauty] Johnson: The true reading seems to be: ‘you should admit your honesty to no discourse with your beauty.’ This is the sense evidently required. Caldecott: ‘If you really possess these qualities, chastity and beauty, and mean to support the character of both, your honesty should be so chary of your beauty as not to suffer a thing so fragile to entertain discourse, or to be parleyed with.’ The lady, ‘tis true, interprets the words otherwise, giving them the turn that best suited her purpose. Singer: ‘Honesty may be corrupted by flattering discourse addressed to beauty.’ Ham. remarks respecting women generally. Clarendon: Hamlet says that honesty or virtue, personified as the guardian of beauty, should allow none, not even himself, to discourse with the latter.

116 and 120. Mrs Jameson (i, 275): Those who ever heard Mrs Siddons read Hamlet cannot forget the world of meaning, of love, of sorrow, of despair, conveyed in these two simple phrases. Here and in lines 155, 156, are the only allusions to herself and her own feelings in the course of the play; and these, uttered almost without consciousness on her own part, contain the revelation of a life of love, and disclose the secret burthen of a heart bursting with its own unuttered grief.

118. it] Delius This refers to ‘old stock.’
HAMLET

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 mybeck 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 heaven and earth? We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

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.

124. borne] born F,F,F,
126. in, imagination to] in imagination, to Ff, Rowe.

125. beck] Steevens: That is, always ready to come about me. CALDECOTT: With more vitioust dispositions, like evil genii at my elbow, and ready at a nod to start into act, than can be distinctly conceived. COLLIER (ed. 2): The (MS) has back; one word may have been easily mistaken for the other. WALKER (Crit. iii. 266) makes the same emendation, and LETTISON, in a footnote, adds, 'not meaning, I suppose, that Hamlet is loaded with offences; that would require "on my back!" but that he is the leader and disposer of a whole host of offences.'

126. in] WARBURTON: A word is dropped out; read 'in name.' This was the progress. The offences are first conceived and named, then projected to be put in act, then executed. HEATH: I see no business the naming hath to do in this progress. JOHNSON: 'To put a thing into thought,' is to 'think on it.'

130. father] GRANT WHITE (The Case of Hamlet the Younger, The Galaxy, April, 1870, p. 540): There is no warrant for the opinion that Ham, had discovered that the King and Pol. were overhearing him, which indeed is suggested only as a support to the indefensible assumption that Ham, being good at heart, his conduct must have been always thoroughly estimable and consistent; whereas there are no graver offences nor grosser errors than those into which men fall for lack of resolution. MARSHALL (A Study of Hamlet, p. 28): Ham., before condemning Oph. as an accomplice in the contemptible trick of spying on him, wishes to put her to the plain proof; he therefore turns round and holds out his hand towards her; she, forgetting her part, and thinking, poor girl, that he is going to take her to his breast and forgive her, flies across to him; he checks her with his outstretched hand, and, holding her, looks straight into her eyes, as only one who loves her has a right to look into a maiden's eyes, and solemnly asks her the question: 'Where is your father?' She falters out her first lie. Then indignation takes the place of sorrow with Ham.
Oph. [Aside] Oh, 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.

Oph. [Aside] O heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another; you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignor-

134. 141. [Aside] Ed.
135. plague [plage] Qr.
140. too] to Qr.
pratlings Cald. Knt i. face] pace Fq et cet.

139. monsters] DELIUS: Compare Oth. IV, i, 63.
142. paintings] COLLIER: As BARRON FIELD observes to me: 'Hamlet does not mean that he had heard that Ophelia painted, but that women were in the habit of painting themselves. Throughout the scene he speaks generally.' STEEVENS: See Drayton's Mooncalf [Works, p. 173, b. ed. 1748], where these destructive aids to beauty are satirised. DOUCE (ii, 241): Compare Isaiah, iii, 16. In defence of the Ff, it has not been noticed that 'lisp' seems to refer to pratlings, as 'jig' and 'amble' do to pace. COLLIER (ed. 2): The (MS) sustains the Qq.
144. nickname] WEDGWOOD: Ekename or nekename, agnomen. — Prompt. Parv. Ekename, from eke, in addition, besides; nickname, as a name given in derision, from Fr. faire la nique, to jeer, or Ger. necken, to tease. But the great variety of forms looks more like a series of corruptions of a common original, which being no longer understood has been accidentally modified or twisted in order to stilt the meaning. Such an original may perhaps be found in Lap. like namni, Fin. liika nimmi, Esthon. liig nimmi, a by-name, surname, the first element of which in the three languages signifies an excess of, beside.
145. ignorance] JOHNSON: You mistake by wanton affectation, and pretend to mistake by ignorance. WHITE: I do not quite apprehend the meaning of this passage; but it seems to imply that the women affected a pretty, innocent ignorance
ance. Go to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. 146
I say, we will have no more marriages; those that are mar-
ried already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as
they are. To a nunnery, go.

[Exit.

Oph. Oh, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown! 150
The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,

146. Go to] goe to Q, Q, Q. Go too
F, Goe F. Go F, F, F, Rowe, Pope, Han.
of it Sing. ii, Ithy.
147. no more marriages] no mo mar-
riage Qq.
148. live] Om. F, F, F.
149. [Exit.] Exit Hamlet. Ff.
150. o'erthrown] athrown Qq.

as a mask for their wantonness. MOBERLY: Use ambiguous words, as if you did
not know their meaning.

148. one] MALONE: His step-father. COLERIDGE: Observe this dallying with
the inward purpose, characteristic of one who had not brought his mind to the steady
acting point. He would fain sting the uncle's mind;—but to stab his body!—
Ophelia's soliloquy is the perfection of love—so exquisitely unselfish.

149. go.] CALDECOTT: 'After having gone to the extremity of the stage, from a
pang of parting tenderness, Mr Kean came back to press his lips to Ophelia's hand.
It had an electrical effect on the house.'

151. scholar's, soldier's] In support of the QqFf, FARMER refers to R. of L.
615, 616, as a proof that Sh. has elsewhere disregarded the exact collocation of
words, and also refers to Quintilian for a similar oversight. All edd. who notice
this line justify the reading of Q, even while following the QqFf in their text. ROHR-
BACH, in his clever book, in which, with the utmost gravity, he turns all that Ham.
does or says into ridicule, asserts (p. 136) that the text of QqFf is correct, and con-
veys Shakespeare's true meaning: 'Are not Hamlet's bravado and his two conversa-
tions with Oph. more in the style of a soldier, bred in the camps of Elizabeth's
time, than of a scholar? And is not his sword that of a student—namely, a rapier,
with which he is matched against Laertes? Is not his fighting a mere pastime of
the fencing school? And when he really fights in earnest, is it not the sword of a
scholar that he uses—namely, his tongue? Sh. wears a serious face, but don't trust
him; he's laughing in his sleeve.'

152. fair state] DELIUS: The state is 'fair,' because Hamlet adorns it as the
'rose.' CLARENDON: For a similar prolepsis see Mach. I, vi, 3; III, iv, 76; Rich.
II: II, iii, 94.

153. form] JOHNSON: The model by whom all endeavored to form themselves.
CALDECOTT: The cast in which is shaped the only perfect form. HUDSON: Com
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; Oh, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

155. And I] Have I F, F.  I am F, F.
        Rowe +.
156. music] musicit Q, Q, Q.
        voce,] Han. voce; Q. voce:
or voce: F, Rowe +.  voce: Jen.
157. that noble] what noble Q, Q.
158. jangled out of tunes,] F, Rowe +, Cors. jangled out of time, Q, Q.
jangld', out of time Cap. et cet.

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; Oh, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Tschischwitz: 'Mould of form' would be a dishagreeable pleonasm, were not 'form' to be understood as equivalent to ceremony, external rites.

156. music-vows] For instances of noun-compounds see Abbott, § 430; also,
§ 22: Music is not commonly used by us as a prefix, unless the suffix is habitually connected with 'music'; thus, 'music-book,' 'music-master,' &c., but not 'music' for musical, as here. Clarendon: Another mixed metaphor.
158. tune] See Macb. IV, iii, 235, and notes. Corson: The phrase, 'out of tune,' is certainly an adverbial element to 'jangled,' and not an adjective element to 'sweet bells.' The two ideas attached to 'bells' are: 1. 'jangled out of tune;' 2. 'harsh,' which expresses to what extent 'jangled out of tune.'
159. feature] Caldecott: 'The feature and fashion, or the proportion and figure of the whole bodie. Conformatio quedam et figura totius oris et corporis.'—Baret's Avarerie. Dyce (Gloss.): Form, person in general.
159. blown] Capell (i, 136): Youth in its bloom. Clarendon: The metaphor from a flower, as in 152, is resumed here.
160. ecstasy] See II, i, 102.
161. see] Elze: It is evident that after these words Oph. goes to find her father, in order to tell him the result of the interview which had just taken place. Not finding him, she returns, and is greeted with 'How now, Ophelia?' line 178, but is immediately sent away again by her father. 'That Oph. should be present during the King's speech addressed to his confidential counsellor is more than improbable. I have therefore inserted the appropriate stage-directions in the text.' Tschischwitz: After these words Oph. remains lost in painful thoughts until she is addressed by her father. Miles (p. 45): Oph. is most deject and wretched, but without even a suspicion of being badly treated. Nor is she badly treated. The resentment of neglected love may inflame his dazzling satire, but
HAMLET

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 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,

Re-enter... ] Cap. Enter... QqFf. 162. SCENE III. Pope+. Jen. Love! F. Love, F, QQ. Love:
QQ, Q76 et cet. 163. Nor] For Q76. 164. There's something] Something's
under the circumstance, 'Get thee to a nunnery' was the best and only advice he could give her. A nunnery was her best and only refuge from the impending storm. Destruction for himself and all else around him; but for her the cloister's timely shelter. There is no telling when the fierce wrath may seize him; when he may shake down the pillars of that guilty palace. But not, if he can help it, on her fair head shall the ruin fall! Since the grave is opening for him, let the convent open for her. Not his, but never another's! O wonderful poet! Could she not guess, had she not some shadowy perception of the jealous, selfish, masculine love, which, despite their fell divorce, would wall her from the world, and mark her with the seal of God, to save her from the violation of man?

162. affections] White: This has no relation to love or preference, but refers to the manner in which Hamlet's mind is affected, which affection, or affecting, does not, as the King says, tend towards love.

163, 164. Nor... not] See I, ii, 158; and III, ii, 4.


166. disclose] Steevens: '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.'—R. Holme's Academy of Armory and Blazon, b. ii, ch. xi, p. 238. So in The Booke of Huntynge, Hawkyng, Fishyng: First they ben eges, and after they ben disclosed haukes; and commonly goshaukes, ben disclosed as sone as the choughes. 'To exclude is the technical term at present. See V, i, 275. [See I, i, 57; II, i, 4.]

167. for to] White, in his Essay on the Authorship of Henry VI (vol. vii, p. 434), says that this idiom is not to be found in any of Shakespeare's authentic works. Rives (Harness Prize Essay, p. 19) notes 'but a single authentic instance': viz. Wint. Tale, I, ii, 427. Abbott, § 152, refers to the present passage, and to All's Well, V, iii, 181. Schmidt (Lexicon) furnishes the following in addition: Pass. Pilgrim, 342; Tit. And. IV, iii, 51; IV, ii, 44; Pericles, IV, ii, 71; Ham. I, ii, 175 (Qs). In N. & Qu., 19 Dec. 1874, Rule adds: Tam. of the Sh. III, n, 249; and Ham. V, i, 91.
HAMLET

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? 175

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;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
to show his griefs; 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. 185

[Exeunt.

sometime-settled Daniel.*
174, 175. Whereon...on't?] Three lines, ending beating...himself...on't? Qq.
174. brains] brains Qq,F,F, brain
Coll. (MS). brain's White.
176. do I] I doe Q,76. I do Steev.
Bos. Cald.
177. his grief] it Q,F,F, reading But
...of it as one line, this griefe F
188. unwatch'd] vnmatcht Qq.

169. set it down] Elze thinks that the King has it 'set down' in his Tables.
169. shall] CLARENDON: The verb of motion is frequently omitted after an auxiliary. See II, ii, 477.
173. something-settled] ABBOTT, § 68: 'Something' may possibly be used here adverbially, like somewhat (though somehow would make better sense). [See WALKER, Crit. i, 164.]
174. puts] For apparent cases of the inflection in 's' where the verb has for its real nominative, not the noun, but the noun clause, see ABBOTT, § 337. Here it is 'The beating of his brains on this,' &c. MOBERLY: 'Brains' is singular.
185. griefs] CORSON: In the sense of grievances. See III, ii, 323.
185. find] CLARENDON: 'If she does not discover his secret.' In AlF's Wel.
Scene II. A hall in the castle.

Enter Hamlet and two or three of the 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. Oh, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious

1. pronounced pronoun'd Qq,Ff. 2. trippingly on' smoothly from Q'76. 3. your players] our Players Qq, Rowe+, Cap. Jen. Steev. Var. Sing.
Ktly.

II, ii, 216, 'found' is used in the sense of 'found out,' with a pun upon its usual meaning.

Stage-direction] Collier: The (MS) adds 'unready' after 'Players;' that is to say, not yet 'tired for the parts they were to fill in the play within a play.

1. Coleridge: This dialogue of Ham. with the Players is one of the happiest instances of Shakespeare's power of diversifying the scene while he is carrying on the plot. Sievers (Hamlet, Leipzig, 1851, note 13, p. 263) maintains that this advice of Ham. to the Player does not apply to acting in general, but only to the acting of the Court-play, and most particularly to the acting of his dozen or sixteen lines, which Sievers conceives to be lines 243-248, 'Thoughts black, hands apt,' &c.

3. your] Here used ethically; see I, v, 167; also Abbott, § 221.

8. hear] White: I am not sure that the Ff are wrong. See is the verb most commonly applied to the observation of dramatic performances of all kinds. Copper: This is more addressed to the eye than to the ear. His robustiousness and his periwig-patedness are seen alone, as are also the distortions through which he endeavors to exhibit the passion; it is only what he says that is addressed to the ear. [The 'ears of the groundlings' are not 'split' by what they see. Ed.]

8. robustious] For parallel old forms, such as prolixious, stupendious, superbious, and even splendidious, see Walker (Crit. iii, 18).
tious 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 could have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod; pray you avoid it.


10. split] splet Qq.

12. could] Ff, Rowe+, Knt, Dyce l, Sta. would Qq et cet.

13. out-herods] Hyphen, Om. Qq

9. periwig-pated] Steevens: In the time of Sh. players most generally seem to have worn periwigs; wigs were not in common use till the reign of Charles II. In Every Woman in her Humour, 1609: '— as none wear hoods but monks and ladies; and feathers but fore-horses, &c. — none periwigs but players and pictures.'

Moberly: 'Periwig' is simply an anglicised pronunciation of perruque.

10. groundlings] Steevens: In its primitive signification it means a fish, which always keeps at the bottom of the water. In our early play-houses the pit had neither floor nor benches. Hence the term 'groundlings' for those who frequented it. Jonson mentions them with equal contempt: '— the understanding gentlemen of the ground here ask'd my judgement.'—[Bartholomew Fair, Induct. p. 366, Works, ed. Gifford]. There are other derisive allusions to them on the same page and on the next. Ed.] Again: '— give me the penny, I care not for the gentleman, I; let me have good ground.'—The Case is Altered, I, i [p. 327, Works, ed. Gifford].

Nares: From this last extract we see that the price paid by these gentry was then only a penny. See also, in the same play, II, iv [p. 361]. Also: 'Besides, sir, all our galleries and ground-stands are furnished, and the groundlings within the yard grow infinitely unruly.'—Lady Alimony, I, i.

11. inexplicable] Johnson: That is, shows without words to explain them. Steevens: Rather, shows which are too confusedly conducted to explain themselves. There is one of these in Heywood's The Four Prentices, 1615, as may be seen from the following: 'Enter Tancred, with Bella Franca richly attired, she somewhat affecting him, though she makes no show of it.' [I, i, p. 442, ed. Dodsley, 1735.] Surely this may be called an inexplicable dumb show.

13. Termagant] Steevens: The name (says Percy) given in the old romances to the god of the Saracens; in which he is constantly linked with Mahound or Mohammed. Thus, in the legend of Guy of Warwick, the Soudan swears: 'So help me Mahound of might, And Termagant, my God so bright.' Ritson: 'Grennyng upon her lyke Termagaunte in a play.'—Bale's Acts of English Votaries, Reliques, i, 77. Nares: This imaginary personage was introduced into our old plays and moralities, and represented as of a most violent character, so that a ranting actor might always appear to advantage in it. Sh. uses it as an adjective in 1 Hen. IV: V, iv, 114. It is the Trivianti of the Italians, or Tergannt of the French Romancers. Both Singer and Wedgwood cite Florio, 1611: 'Termigisto, a great boaster, quarreler, killer, tamer or ruler of the universe; the child of the earthquake and of the thunder, the brother of death.' Clarendon: Spenser spells it 'Tumagant.' In Sir Beues of Hamtoun, line 659, it is spelled 'Terungaunt.' It occurs as 'Terma-
First Play. I warrant your honour.

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'ertop 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

14, 33. First Play.] 1. P. Cap. Player. or Play. Q4F.
17. o'ertop] ore-steppe Q2 Q2 Q2 Q2; ore-step Q5; ore-stop Fi. Rowe. ore-top Long MS.*
18. overdone] ore-doone Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4; ore-done Q5, Q5.
19. at the first] at first Q5.
20. her own feature] her feature Q4.

gaunt' in Chaucer, Cant. Tales, 15221. MOBERLY: If the common form, Termagant, be accurate, it is not impossible that the name may be founded on the word Ramazan; the name of the solemnity being imagined to be that of a god worshipped at it, and the letter t being simply the beginning of the beginning of the r vibration, as it is of the I vibration in such Welsh words as Llangollen.

13. Herod] STEEVENS: The character of Herod in the ancient mysteries was always a violent one. Thus, in The Chester Plays [p. 153, ed. Sh. Soc.], Herod says of himself: 'For I am king of all mankinde, I byde, I beate, I lose, I bynde, I maister the moone, take this in mynde, That I am moste of mighte. I am the greateste above degree, That is, that was, that ever shalbe,' &c. Chaucer, speaking of the parish-clerk, Absolon, says: 'He playeth Herodes vp on a scaffold hye.'—The Milleres Tale—3384, Hengwrt MS. DOUCE gives a long extract from an ancient Pageant, performed at Coventry by the Shearmen and Taylors, in 1534, but the composition of which is of a much earlier date. To illustrate the present passage, and to give an idea of the boundless rant of the bragart tyrant, it is sufficient to cite such lines as these: [I am] the myghtyest conquerowe that euer walkid on ground, 'All the whole world from the north to the sowthe, I ma them dystroie with won worde of my mouthe.' And of his enemies, 'with a twynke of myn iie not won be left aluye.' At one place the stage-direction gives unlimited freedom to the actor to tear a passion to tatters, and to make all split: 'Here Erode ragis in thys pagond, and in the strete also.'—See Magnus Herodes, in The Towneley Mysteries, p. 140, ed. Surtees Soc.; The Slaughter of the Innocents, in The Coventry Mysteries, p. 183, ed. Sh. Soc.; King Herod, Ibid. p. 291; The Slaughter of the Innocents, in The Chester Plays, p. 172, ed. Sh. Soc.

19. from] For instances of 'from,' meaning apart from, away from, without a verb of motion, see Abbott, § 158; also Macb. III, iv, 36.

21. scorn] BAILEY (ii, 9): Why should 'scorn' be antithetic to 'virtue'? It may be on the side of goodness as well as opposed to it. Wherefore read sin, which, spelt sinne as in the old copies of Hamlet, was 'easily pervertible' into scorne.

22. very age] JOHNSON: The 'age' of the 'time' can hardly pass. May we
pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy of, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allow-

23. tardy] tardy Q₄.
Mason, Walker. Q₄QFF et cet.
23, 24. though it make] though it makes Q₄, Cap.
25. the censure] in the censure Long.

not read, the face and body, or did Sh. write, the page? The page suits well with the form' and 'pressure,' but ill with 'body.' Steevens: The text means to represent the manners of the time suitable to the period that is treated of, according as it may be ancient or modern. M. Mason: Read, 'every age and body of the time,' and then the sense will be: 'show virtue her own likeness, and every stage of life, every profession or body of men, its form and resemblance.' Malone: Perhaps Sh. did not mean to connect these words. It is the end of playing, says Hamlet, to show the age in which we live, and the body of the time, its form and pressure; to delineate exactly the manners of the age, and the particular humor of the day.

Keightley (Exe. 252): We might feel inclined to read world for 'time,' but no change is required. Bailey (ii, 8): Read visage, which is so near 'very age' in the ductus literarum. Compare 'visage of the times,' 2 Hen. IV. ii, iii, 3.

Silberschlag (Morgenblatt, No. 47, 1866, p. 1114): This is essentially the same definition of the drama which Cervantes in Don Quixote puts into the mouth of the Priest: 'Comedy,' he says, 'according to the opinion of Cicero, should be a mirror of human life, a model of manners, a representation of truth.' Both Sh. and Cervantes clearly drew their definitions from Cicero; Cervantes says so expressly, while Sh. intimates in the phrase, 'both at the first and now,' that he gave an ancient definition of the drama, but he does not mention Cicero's name, because it was not his style, in the works of his riper years, to display his knowledge, or to support his opinions, by the citation of authorities. His use of 'hic et ubique,' in I, v, 156, affords a proof [noted ad loc.] that the end of that scene was written many years earlier than the rest of the drama.

23. pressure] Johnson: Resemblance, as in a print. Bailey (ii, 9): We may obtain something better than Dr Johnson's interpretation by substituting posture for 'pressure;' then we shall really have two distinct things: the shape and the attitude.

Clarendon: See I, v, 100. So 'impressire' in As You Like It, III, v, 23.

23. come] Clarendon: For a similar use of this participle without 'being' or 'having,' compare R. of L. 1784.

23. tardy of] Mason (p. 387, anticipating Walker, Crit. iii, 266): That is, come short of. Caldecott: Without spirit or animation; heavily, sleepingly done. Abbott, § 165; 'Off' is perhaps simply of, i.e. 'fallen short of.' Compare ἐπετρέπω. Otherwise, 'come off' is a passive participle.

25. censure] Clarendon: Judgement, as in I, iii, 69.

25. the which one] Caldecott: The judgement of which one class or description of persons ('one of whom' had been more familiar language). Delius and Clarendon understand it as meaning the 'judicious man singly.' Tscheschowitz agrees with Caldecott.
ANCE o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. Oh, 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 them, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

26. o'erweigh] o're-weigh Qq. o're-weigh F, o're-weigh F, F, F, F, F, Rowe, Pope, Han.
27. praise] praise Q, Q, Q, Q, praise Q.
28. neither...nor man,] Bracketed as a 'foolish interpolation,' by Warb.

26. theatre] MALONE: Compare Jonson's Poetaster, 1601, '—if I prove the pleasure but of one, If he judicious be, he shall be alone A theatre unto me.'
26. there be] For instances of the more common use of be with the plural than the singular, see ABBOTT, § 300.
28. profanely] JOHNSON: This seems to relate, not to the praise which he has mentioned, but to the censure he is about to utter. Any gross or indelicate language was called profane. MASON: This refers to the praise given to the players; Ham. considering it as a kind of profanation to praise persons highly who were so undeserving of it. The construction is 'highly, not to say profanely.' CALDECOTT: Hamlet says that he does not mean to speak profanely by saying that there could be any such thing as a journeyman Creator. [The profanity consists in alluding to Christians. ED.]
30. nor man] COLLIER (ed. 2): FARRER's conj. receives some countenance from Q, The (MS) amends to 'nor man.' WHITE: The reading of the Qq is even more absurd than that of the Ff,—as if Christians and pagans were not men! The distinction, Christian, Turk, and Pagan, was not uncommon. See Howell, in Richardson's Dict. s. v. 'pagan.' CLARENDON: This means, nor ever man.
31. journeymen] MALONE: The notion of Nature keeping a shop and employing journeymen to form mankind was common in Shakespeare's time. See Lyly's Woman in the Moon, 1597: 'They draw the curtains from before Nature's shop, where stands an image clad and some unclad.'
31. had made them] THEOBALD (Sh. Restor'd, p. 173): According to the Qq and Ff, Hamlet is supposed to reason that because he had seen some very preposterous players, he should think, therefore, that Nature's journeymen had made all mankind, for so men in this place without some or those prefixed must imply. Might not Sh. more probably have written them? [Theobald gives two instances: Love's Lab. Lost, III, i, 25, and Com. of Err. II, ii, 81, where 'them' and the men have been confounded. But as he does not allude to this emendation in his subsequent edition, it is to be presumed that he withdrew it. It is to me, however, so clearly the correct reading that I do not hesitate to follow it, although all other editors except two have adhered to the text of the Qq Ff, which is 'had made men.' RANN adopts Theobald's emendation, and HUDSON adopts Farmer's conj., 'had made the men' CLARENDON suggests 'em. ED.'
First Play. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

Ham. Oh, 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 villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.—

[Exeunt Players.]

34. sir] Ff, Rowe, Knt, Sing, ii, Dyce, Stev. Ktly, Glo.+, Mob. Om, Qq et cet. 38. too] to Qq.
36. clowns] Steevens: Stowe informs us (p. 697, ed. 1615) that among the twelve players who were sworn the queen's servants in 1583, 'were two rare men, viz. Thomas Wilson, for a quick delicate refined extemporall witte; and Richard Tarleton, for a wondrous plentiful, pleasant extemporall witt,' &c. Again, in Tarleton's Newes from Purgatory: '——I abstained myself from all playes, as wanting that merrye Roscius of playlers that famosd all comedies so with his pleasant and extemporall invention.' This cause for complaint, however, against low comedians is still more ancient; for in The Contention Betwyxe Churchyard and Camell, &c., 1560, I find the following passage: 'But Vices in stage playes, When theyr matter is gone, They laugh out the reste To thelookers on,' &c. Malone: The clown very often addressed the audience in the middle of the play, and entered into a contest of raillery and sarcasm with such of the audience as chose to engage with him. Hunter (ii, 246): There is a remarkable addition at this place in Q, which is not without marks of the hand of Sh. The phrases there found continued to be the stock-wit of the clowns who appeared on the stage of the mountebanks, and who seem silently to have withdrawn themselves about the close of the last century. Collier (ed. 2): The passage in Q, which is mere prose, although chopped up into apparent verse, is curious, because it seems levelled at William Kemp, who about this date deserted the company of players to which Sh. had always belonged. Perhaps, after Kemp rejoined the King's Players (before 1605), the passage was omitted or subduced. We are to bear in mind that Hamlet was probably not composed until the winter of 1601, or the spring of 1602, and it was about this date, that Kemp went over from the Lord Chamberlain's to Lord Nottingham's Players, and of course did his best to promote the success of a competing association. It would, therefore, not be surprising if, besides laying down a general axiom as to the abuse introduced by the performers of the parts of clowns, Sh. had designed a particular allusion to Kemp. White: The passage in Q, was probably an extemporary addition to the text by the actor, and had but a passing application. Halliwell is inclined to think that this addition in Q should be retained in the text.
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. Will you two help to hasten them? [Exit Polonius.]

Ros. Guil. We will, my lord. [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 c'er my conversation coped withal.

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?


37. of them] Clarendon: For this partitive use of the preposition, see Leviticus, iv, 16.

43. And] Abbott, § 97: 'And' is frequently found in answers in the sense of 'you are right,' or 'yes, and,' the 'yes' being implied

48. sweet] A common style of address in Elizabethan times. See V, ii, 90.


51. lord] Corson: The context shows that no interruption, indicated by a dash, is intended. Hor. must be supposed to say 'O my dear lord' in a way expressive of a feeling of being flattered by what Hamlet has just said, uttering 'O' and 'Lord' with a downward circumflex.
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
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards

55. tongue lick] tongue, like Fl.
absurd] obsolete Q.Q.
57. fawning] fawning; Q.Q. fawning, Q. fawning; F. fawning. faining? F., F.
feigning? F., Rowe. faining; Cald. hear? Q. hear, Q.F.F.
58. dear] dear Johns. conj.
58. her] my Fl. Kent.
59. distinguish, her election] distinguish her election, Q. (election Q.Q.),
60. Hath] 'Shath Q.Q. Shath Q.
Q. Shath Q76, Jen. She hath Mal.
Steev. Var.
62. fortune's] fortune F.F.F.

55. candied] Dyce (Gloss.): Sugared, flattering, glozing. Clarendon: Sh. has
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. Tschischwitz construes 'crook' as a neuter
imperative.

55. absurd] Clarendon: In all other passages Sh. accents this word on the
second syllable.

56. pregnant] Johnson: Quick, ready, prompt. Nares: Artful, designing,
full of deceit, the ruling sense of this word is being full, or productive of some-
thing. Caldecott: 'Pregnant' is bowed, swelled out, presenting themselves, as
the form of pregnant animals. Keightley: I see not what 'pregnant' can mean
here. It might be better to read plant, or some such word. Clarendon: Lear,
IV, vi, 227, and Twelfth Night, III, i, 100, support the interpretation, 'ready to
bow at the owner's bidding.' In this sense it is opposed to 'stubborn.' See III,
iii, 70. ['Pregnant,' because untold thrift is born from a cunning use of the
knee. Ed.]

57. fawning] Stratmann: Faining of the Folio is not a misprint, but another
form of fanning, just as good, if not better. See Dict. of Old English, s.v.
'fainen.'


59. Ritson prefers the Qq, and says that 'distinguish her election' is no more
than 'make her election; distinguish of men is exceeding harsh, to say the best of
it. Tschischwitz, however, points out 'distinguish of colours,' 2 Hen. VI: II, i,
130. Corson: 'Distinguish her election' is decidedly Shakespearean, and may be
what Sh. wrote. The use of a cognate accusative is a marked feature of Shake-
peare's diction. [See II, ii, 27. Ed.]

60-66. for . . . please.] Doering (p. 62): In these lines Ham. delineates, trait
by trait, a character the very opposite of his own. Here is to be found the best
motto for the tragedy.
HAMLET

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

63. Hath] Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.
Sta. Has Cald. Knt, Coll. ii. Hoř
Qq et cet.
(Notes, i, pt. ii, p. 24)
68. of heart] of hearts Q'76.
71. scene] Scene F, Scène F,.
72. thee, of] Ff, Rowe +, Cap. Coll.
El. Del. thee of Qq et cet.

63. Hath] Corson: Hast of the Qq is a solecism. Though the subject-nomina-
tive 'thou' is second person, the predicate-nomina-tive 'man' is third person, and
being the antecedent of the relative 'that,' determines the person of the verb to
which 'that' is the nominative or subject.

64. blood and judgement] Johnson: According to the doctrine of the four
humors, desire and confidence were seated in the blood, and judgement in the phlegm,
and the due mixture of the humors made a perfect character. Caldecott: Passions
and reason. [See IV, iv, 58.]

66. please] For other instances of 'please' in the subjunctive, see Walker,
Crit. i, 207.

68. core] Douce (ii, 245): From this speech Anthony Scoloker, in Daiphantus,
or The Passions of Love, 1604, has stolen the following line: 'Oh, I would were
her in my heart's-heart-gore;' whereupon Clarendon asks, should not 'goe' be core?

69. Something, &c.] Clarke: The genuine manliness of this little sentence,
where Ham, checks himself when conscious that he has been carried away by fervor
of affectionate friendship into stronger protestation than mayhap becomes the truth
and simplicity of sentiment between man and man, is precisely one of Shakespeare's
exquisite touches of innate propriety in questions of feeling. Let any one, who
doubts for a moment whether Sh. intended that Ham. should merely feign
madness, read carefully over the present speech, marking its sobriety of expression even amid
all its ardor, its singleness and purity of sentiment amid its most forcible utterance,
and then decide whether it could be possible that he should mean Hamlet's wits to
be touched. That his heart is shaken to its core, that he is even afflicted with mel-
ancholia and hypochondria, we admit; but that his intellects are in the very slightest
degree disordered, we cannot for one instant believe.

72. thee,] Corson: This comma after 'thee' serves to show that the phrase,
'of my father's death,' is connected with 'circumstance,' and not with 'told,' and
in neat pointing, should not be omitted.
I prithee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
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;

73. a-foot] on foot] Q'76.
74. very] Om. F,F,F.
thy] my Ff, Knt, Coll. i, Cors.
mine Ff et cet.

his occult] Rowe ii +, Cap.
76. unkennel] discover Q'76.

74. very comment] CALDECOTT: The most intense direction of every faculty.
74. thy soul] KNIGHT: Hamlet having told Hor. the 'circumstances' of his father's death, and imparted his suspicions of his uncle, entreats his friend to observe his uncle 'with the very comment of my soul,'—Hamlet's soul. To ask Hor. to observe him with the comment of his own soul (Horatio's) is a mere feeble explosive. COLLIER in his first edition also advocated the reading of the Ff, but followed the Qq and the (MS) in his second. DYCE (Remarks, &c., p. 214) criticises the upholsters of the text of the Ff in this passage, and says that Knight's text of this tragedy is 'beyond all doubt the worst that has appeared in modern times.' Dyce thinks that the important word 'very,' as Caldecott has interpreted it above, demands 'thy.' CORSON maintains just the opposite; he prefers 'my,' as more expressive. Hamlet's meaning is, I would have thee so enter into my feelings, so identify thyself with me, that when thou seest that act a-foot, even with the very comment of my soul, thou wilt observe my uncle. 'My' also gives force to 'Even with the very,' which has less force in the other reading. Dyce furthermore points out why Ham. wished Hor. to watch his uncle so closely, when he tells him that 'after we will both our judgements join In censure of his seeming.'
75. occult] CLARENDON: The word seems to occur here only.
76. one speech] HUNTER (ii, 247): The speech which Hamlet himself had prepared for the players.
77. damned] DOUCE (ii, 245): The ghost of a person sentenced for his wickedness to damnation, and which in this instance has deceived us. Thus Spenser, Fairy Queen, b. i, canto 2, st. 32. TSCHISCHWITZ: This is the third time that this theological reflection occurs to the Prince. See I, iv, 40; II, ii, 575.
79. Vulcan's] DELIUS: The connection of thought between Vulcan's realm and the Christian Hell whence the 'damned ghost' issues, is very common among Shakespeare's contemporaries.
79. stithy] THEOBALD substituted Smithy, on the ground that 'stithy' meant an anvil, and 'an anvil is far from being the dirtiest thing in a smith's shop.' But CALDECOTT says that stithy, stith, and stith were the same, and used indifferently to express either the iron to work upon, or the forge, or the workshop; though in later times stith has been confined to the sense of anvil, and 'stithy' to that of shop.
ACT III, SC. ii.]

HAMLET 235

For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgements join
In censure of his seeming.

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. Flourish. Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosen-
crantz, Guildenstern, and other Lords attendant, with the Guard carrying
 torches.

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

80. face,] Face: F, face? F.
81. judgements'] judgement F.
82. In] To F; Rowe, Pope, Han. Knt.
83. } a Qq.
84. detecting] detected Qq. detection Q'76.

They are] They're Pope+, Dyce

Clarendon addsuces the following rendering by Coverdale of Job, xli, 24: 'His hert is as harde as a stone, and as fast as the stythe that the hammer man smythem vpon.'

82. censure] Caldecott: In making our estimate of the appearance he shall put on.

83. steal] Caldecott: Contrive so to carry it off as that the slightest conscious feeling he shows should escape unobserved.

84. theft] Clarendon: Pay for the thing stolen. Compare Rom. &c Jul. I, i, 231. For 'theft' in the sense of the thing stolen, see Exodus, xxii, 4. [See of-fence,' III, iii, 56.]

85. idle] Delius: This signifies the aimless going hither and thither which marks an idiot. On the entrance of the Court, Hamlet intends to resume the rôle which he had before assumed. See Lear, I, iii, 16; 'Idle old man.' Staunton: Sh. employs 'idle' in the sense of mad several times; among others see Q, [line 930; in Appendix], and also [lines 1535-1537]. Clarendon: 'Idle' is still used in Suffolk in the sense of foolish, lightheaded, crazy. Compare III, iv, 11. Moberly: I must appear to have nothing to do with the matter.

87. fares] Hunter (ii, 248): We have here the two senses of the word 'fare,' which, like est, means both is and eats. The King inquires in the first sense, Hamlet answers in the second.
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 90 words are not mine.

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

88. Excellent...say?] Prose, Ff.
Eight lines, Qq, ending yfaith,...ayre,...
fo....Hamlet,...mine. ...Lord. ...say.
88. chameleon's] Camelions QqFf.
91. [pass to their Seats. Cap.
92. mine now. My lord.] Johns.
mine now my lord. Qq. mine. Now my

Knt i. mine, now, my Lord. Rowe.
mine now, my lord. Pope i, Han. Cap.
Jen.

[To Polonius] Rowe.
93. i' the] in the Q76, Mal. Steev.

88. chameleon's] CLARENDON: See Sir Thomas Browne's Vulgar Errors, iii, 21, for a grave discussion of the popular belief that this animal feeds on air
89. promise-crammed] MOBERLY: The King had promised him that he should be next to himself; but Hamlet ought to have been first in the realm.
90. nothing] MOBERLY: This answer is not founded on any act of mine.
91. mine] CALDECOTT: They grow not out of mine; have no relation to anything said by me.

92. mine now] JOHNSON: A man's words, says the proverb, are his own no longer than he keeps them unspoken. CALDECOTT: They are now anybody's.
MOBERLY: I am mad, and therefore not answerable for what I said a minute ago.

93. university] COLERIDGE: To have kept Hamlet's love for Ophelia before the audience in any direct form, would have made a breach in the unity of interest;—but yet to the thoughtful reader it is suggested by his spite to poor Polonius, whom he can not let rest. FARMER infers that the common players were occasionally admitted to perform in the universities on the strength of an application for that purpose in Vice Chancellor Hatcher's Letters to Lord Burghley, 1580. But CALDECOTT thinks this extract merely shows that applications of this sort were occasionally made; not that they were accepted; on the contrary, the governors were always disposed to find reasons for rejecting them. Wherefore, in the absence of direct evidence, Caldecott thinks that the probability of stage plays having been performed in the universities by professed actors is strongly negatived. That he was mistaken will be seen from the reference to Q by Clarendon. MALONE: The practice of acting Latin plays in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge is very ancient, and continued to near the middle of the last century. They were performed occasionally for the entertainment of princes and other great personages; and regularly at Christmas, at which time a Lord of Misrule was appointed at Oxford, to regulate the exhibitions, and a similar officer with the title of Imperator at Cambridge. The most celebrated actors at Cambridge were the students of St John's and King's colleges; at Oxford those of Christ-Church. In the hall of that college a Latin comedy called Marcus Geminus, and the Latin tragedy of Prague, were performed before Queen Elizabeth in the year 1566; and in 1564, the Latin tragedy of Dido was played before Her Majesty, when she visited the university of Cambridge. CLARENDON: In 1564,
Pol. That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Caesar; 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?

on Sunday evening, Aug. 6, 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 Q, it is said, 'As it hath beene diverse times acted by his Highnesse seruants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where.'

Delius recognises in this word that affected style of speech in which Hamlet purposely addressed Polonius. Corson: The Ff reading has a touch of the contemptuous imparted to it by the initial word 'And.' 'What, I pray, or for sooth, did you enact?'

Malone: A Latin play on the subject of Caesar's death was performed in Oxford in 1582; and several years before a Latin play on the same subject, by Jacques Grevin, was acted in the college of Beauvais, at Paris. I suspect that there was likewise an English play on the story of Caesar before the time of Sh.

Clarendon: It is now known that a piece called Caesar's Fall was played in 1602 by Antony Munday, Drayton, Webster, Middleton, and others, and it is probable that the Julius Caesar of Sh. may have appeared as early as 1601.

Malone: The erroneous notion that Julius Caesar was killed in the Capitol is as old as Chaucer. [See note on 'bodkin,' III, i, 76.] Clarendon: The mistake is repeated in Julius Caesar. Caesar was assassinated in the Curia Pompeii, near the theatre of Pompey in the Campus Martius.

Steevens: Sir John Harrington in his Metamorphosis of Ajax, 1596, has the same quibble. Lamb (iii, 94, ed. 1870): Among the distinguishing features of that wonderful character [Hamlet], one of the most interesting (yet painful) is that soreness of mind which makes him treat the intrusions of Pol. with harshness. . . . These tokens of an unhinged mind . . . are parts of his character, which to reconcile with an admiration of him, the most patient consideration of his situation is no more than necessary; they are what we forgive afterwards, and explain by the whole of his character, but at the time they are harsh and unpleasant. Yet such is the actor's necessity of giving strong blows to the audience, that I have never seen a player in this character who did not exaggerate and strain to the utmost these ambiguous features,—these temporary deformities in the character. They make him express a vulgar scorn at Pol., which utterly degrades his gentility, and which no explanation can render palatable; they make him show contempt, and curl up the
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. [Aside to the King] Oh, ho! do you mark that?

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[Lyıng down at Ophelia's feet.

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker. What should a

101. stay] wait Q?76.
102. dear] deere Q.Q., deare Q.Q.
103. metal] Johns. mettle Q4Ff.
104. [Aside to the King] Cap. Oh, ho! O, oh, Q.Q. that? Q.Q.

nose at Ophelia's father,—contempt in its very grossest and most hateful form; but they get applause by it; it is natural, people say; that is, the words are scornful, and the actor expresses scorn, and that they can judge of; but why so much scorn, and of that sort, they never think of asking.


DELIUS: Equivalent to consent, permission.

105. lap] STEEVERS: To lie at the feet of a mistress, during any dramatic representation, seems to have been a common act of gallantry. Thus: 'Ushers her to her couch, lies at her feet At solemn masques,' &c.—Beau. & Fl., The Queen of Corinth. And in Gascoigne's Greene Knight's Farewell to Fancia: 'To lie along in ladies lappes.' DOLCE: We are not to conclude that this custom prevailed at the public theatres. The instances which have occurred seem to be confined to entertainments at the houses of the nobility and gentry.
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.

Ham. So long? Nay, then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago,

119. within's] QqFF, Rowe, Cap. Jen. 121, 122. for...sables] QqFF. for...
Dyce, White, Del. Cam. Cla. Huds. 121, 122. for...sable] Warb. 'fore
within these Pope et cet. 122. have] leave Lloyd.* leave him
120. twice] Om. Han. quie Ingleby. Anon.* have ne'er Anon.*
121. devil] deule Q, Q2,

117. your only] White: We should now say only your. [See Mach, III, iv, 98; III, vi, 2; or Abbott, § 420.]
119. within's] White, and Dyce: For 'within these two hours.' Delius (ed. 2): It is rather 'within this two hours.'
122. sables] Warburtont: These words are an ironical apology for his mother's cheerful looks: two months was long enough in conscience to make any dead husband forgotten. The true reading is: — 'fore I'll have a suit of sables, i.e. before. As much as to say — Let the devil wear black for me, I'll have none. Johnson: I cannot see why Hamlet, when he laid aside his dress of mourning, in a country where it was bitter cold, and the air nipping and eager, should not have a suit of sables. I suppose it is well enough known that the fur of sables is not black. Capell (Notes, &c., i, 136): It is scarce worth remarking, being a fact of such notoriety, that 'sables,' the furs so called, are the finery of most northern nations; so that Hamlet's saying amounts to a declaration, that he would leave off his black, since his father was so long dead. Heath (p. 538): The sense seems to be: If this be the case, let the devil wear plain black; I'll get me a suit of sables, which, from their colour, will have the appearance indeed of mourning, but at the same time will indulge my appetite for finery and ornament to the utmost. Farmer: There is an equivogue here. In Massinger's Old Law, we have: 'A cunning grief That's only faced with sables for a show, But gaudy-hearted.' Malone: By the Statute of Apparel, 24 Henry VIII, c. 13 (article furres), it is ordained that none under the degree of an earl may use sables. Bishop says, in his Blossoms, 1577, speaking of the extravagance of those times, that a thousand ducates were sometimes given for 'a face of sables.' Caldecott thinks that by the 'devil' Hamlet would have it understood that he meant his uncle. Wightwick (The Critic, 1854, p. 317; cited in N. & Qu., 18 July, 1857) maintains that the contrast here is of color, not of material. 'Let the devil wear black; I'll wear a color of all others most oppugnant to sorrow.' And having found in Peacham some 'directions for painting or coloring of cuts and pictures,' wherein the definitions are given of certain colors, among them 'Sabell colour, i.e. flame-colour,' he infers that Ham. here says, 'I'll have a suit of sabell,' i.e. of flame color. 'A misspelling,' he adds, 'has produced all the previous confusion about this passage, and we may reasonably conclude that a different pronunciation distinguished the sabell meaning black, and sabell meaning flame color.' Delius: 'Sables' indicated that the period of mourning was over. Dyce: Another correspondent in The Critic, 1854, p. 373, observes that 'sabell,' or 'sabelle,' is prop
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 think- ing on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is, 'For, O! for, O! the hobby-horse is forgot.'

124. memory] Memory F_r.
124, 125. he...he] Fl. a...a Qq.
125. hab...horse] Fl. a...a Qq.
125. hobby-horse...hobby-horse] F_r, ber Lady Qq (Ladie F_q). berlady Hoby-horse...Hoby-horse F_r, F_s.
126, 127. hobby-horse] F_r, ber Lady Qq (Ladie F_q). berlady Hoby-horse...Hoby-horse F_r, F_s.

126. hobby-horse] WARBURTON: Amongst the country May-games there was a hobby-horse, which, when the puritanical humor of those times opposed and discredited these games, was brought by the poets and ballad-makers as an instance of the ridiculous zeal of the sectaries; from these ballads Ham. quotes a line or two. NARES: A small horse; also a personage belonging to the ancient morris-dance, when complete, and made, as Mr Bayes's troops are on the stage, by the figure of a horse fastened round the waist of a man, his own legs going through the body of the horse, and enabling him to walk, but concealed by a long foot-cloth; while false legs appeared where those of the man should be, at the sides of the horse. Latterly the hobby-horse was frequently omitted, which appears to have occasioned a popular ballad, in which was the line now quoted by Ham. It is also quoted in Love's Lab. III, i, 30. DYCÉ adds to this note of Nares's: Many readers will probably recollect the spirited description of the Hobby-horse in Scott's Monastery; but, since Mr Bayes's troops have been long banished from the stage, it may be necessary to mention here that they are part of the dramatis persona in the Duke of Buckingham's once-celebrated satirical play called The Rehearsal. COLLIER: A ballad seems to have been written on the omission of the Hobby-horse in May-games. 'The
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 woos the Queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.

Exeunt.


127. Hautboys...love.] Steev., from the Ff, substantially. The Trumpets founds (found Q, Qq). Dumb show follows. Enter a King and a Queene, the Queene embracing him, and he her, he takes her vp, and declines his head vpon her necke, he lyes him downe vpon a bancke of flowers, she, seeing him asleep, leaves him: anon come in (anon comes Q, Qq) an other man, takes off his crowne, kisses it, pours poyson in the sleepers eares, and leaves him: the Queene returns, finds the King dead, makes passionate action, the poysoner with some three or foure come in (comes in Q, Qq) againe, seeme to condole with her, the dead body is carried away, the poysoner woos the Queene with gifts, flixe seemes harsh awhile, but in the end accepts loue, Qq, and substantially Cap. Jen.

a King and a Queen] a Duke and Dutchess, with regal coronets, Theob.+

[and a] and Ff, Rowe, Pope, Coll. and he her] Om. Ff, Rowe, Knt,

Coll. El. White, Kty, Huds.

She kneels...unto him] Om. Pope, Han.


[Exeunt.] Exits. Ff, Rowe.

hobby-horse is forgot,' and 'the hobby-horse is quite forgot,' are phrases constantly occurring in old writers to denote some omission.

127. The dumb-show] Pye: This appears to contain every circumstance of the murder of Hamlet's father. Now there is no apparent reason why the Usurper should not be as much affected by this mute representation of his crimes as he is afterwards when the same action is accompanied by words. The subsequent conversation between Hamlet and Ophelia precludes the possibility of its having been a kind of direction to the players only. Caldecott: Since the usage of the time warranted, and, as it would seem, even demanded this dumb-show, how could it have been omitted? Hamlet, intent on 'catching the conscience of the king,' would naturally wish that his 'mouse-trap' should be doubly set; and could never be supposed willing to relinquish any one of those engines, the use of which custom had authorized. The King, in fact, takes alarm at the thought that the subject is to be afterward brought forward in plain terms in the play, and expresses his apprehension of 'offence in that argument,' of which he was already in possession; and at this, indeed, he 'blenches.' Knight: Mute exhibitions, during the time of Sh., and before and after, were often introduced to exhibit such circumstances as the limits of a play would not admit to be represented. We presume, however, that Sh. had here some stage authority for making the dumb-show represent the same action that is
Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is micking mallecho; it means mis-chief.

129. *Marry, this* [It Q's.]

*tis Q, it*

-ing Mallico, Q, Jen. El. *Micking Mal-

cho, Ff, Rowe +, Sing. *munching Mal-

cho, Cap.

Footnotes:

indicated in the dialogue. His dramatic object is [pointed out by Caldecott]. Hunter (ii, 249): To represent the story of a play in dumb-show when the play itself is going to be performed appears a most extraordinary mode of procedure, and nothing like it has been traced in the usages of the English theatre, or, I believe, in the theatres of the more polished nations of Europe. What approach nearest to it, and may by some be mistaken for it, are the Dumb Shows in Sackville's *Corboduc* and Gascoign's *Jocasta*. But whoever considers these shows attentively will perceive that they are something essentially different from the exhibition of the very action which is immediately to follow with the accompanying dialogue. They are, in fact, but so many moralizations, resembling the choruses of the Greek drama, the moral lessons being read in action, rather than in words. I do not recollect any other English play with a dumb-show even of this kind; and Ophelia's questions, 'What means this, my lord?' and 'Will he tell us what this show means?' prove that shows such as these made no part of the common dramatic entertainments of England. [Gascoign's instructions respecting the dumb-shows in *Jocasta* are here given, to show how utterly unlike they are to this in *Hamlet*.] No one has hitherto hit upon the true origin of the show in *Hamlet*. It seems that such strange and unsuitable anticipations were according to the common practice of the Danish theatre. I first became acquainted with this fact, which appears to explain what without it appears to carry absurdity as far as it will go, when reading an unpublished diary of the seventeenth century, the writer of which relates that about the close of the year 1688 there landed at Hull about six thousand Danish soldiers, who were dispersed in the neighboring towns. Some of them were quartered at the little town of Hatfield, near Doncaster, near to which the writer of the diary lived, who, having given some general account of their habits, proceeds thus:—'Many of them while they stayed here acted a play in their language, and they got a vast deal of money thereby. The design of it was Herod's Tyranny, the Birth of Christ, and the Coming of the Wise Men. They built a stage in our large court-house, and acted the same thereon. I observed that all the postures were shown first, namely, the king on his throne, his servants standing about him; and then, the scenes being drawn, another posture came, the barbarous soldiers murdering the infants, and so on; and when they had run through all so, they then began to act both together. All which time they had plenty of all sorts of music of themselves, for [one] soldier played on one sort, and one another. I heard some of them say that some of these players belonged to the King of Denmark's play-house, that was set a fire and burnt when most of the nobles were beholding a play several years ago.' The writer of this diary was Abraham de la Pryme. Halliwell: I cannot say that I am satisfied with the explanation [given by Caldecott and Knight], although it is certainly ingenious. If the King had seen the dumb-show, he must have known that there was offence in it. Is it allowable to
**Oph.** Belike this show imports the argument of the play? 131

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>131. Belike] Be like F,</th>
<th>132. this fellow] these fellows Ff,</th>
<th>133. counsel] Om. Qq.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Play] Ff, Rowe +. play. Qq</td>
<td>Rowe.</td>
<td>After play, line 132, Qq. After play, line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>et cæt.</td>
<td></td>
<td>132, 133. the...all.] One line, Qq.</td>
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</tbody>
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direct that the King and Queen should be whispering confidentially to each other during the dumb-show, and so escape a sight of it?

129. miching mallecho] Hanmer defines the first word as 'secret, covered, lying hid,' and the second as 'a wicked act, a piece of iniquity.' Span. mallecho. Warburton maintains that the phrase means: 'Lying in wait for the prisoner.' And that it should therefore read: 'miching Malhechor,' and so introduces it in his text. Henley very properly points out that malhechor no more means a poisoner than the perpetrator of any other crime. Grey (ii, 296): Why may not Sh. have wrote miching Malbecco, from Spenser’s description of him, Fairy Queens, iii, cantos 9, 10? Farmer (cited by Stevens): Were not these obscure words originally: 'This is mimicking Malbecco,' a private gloss by a friend on the margin of the MS Hamlet, and thence ignorantly received into the text? Heath: To mich is a word still in common use in the western part of this island, and signifies, to lurk, to do mischief, under a fair external appearance. Capell (Notes, i, 136): This is said of the person of the Poisoner in the Dumb Show, a representative of the King, who was a man of mean figure (see III, iv, 64), and is therefore compared by the speaker to the character called Iniquity, in the ancient moralities, whose figure (it is like) was the same, an ill-looking, munching animal. Malone: In Norfolk michers signify pilferers. The signification of miching in the present passage may be ascertained by a passage in Decker’s Wonderful Yearce, 1603: 'Those that could shift for a time,—went most bitterly miching and muffled, up and downe, with rue and wormwood stuff into their eyes and nostrills.' See also Florio, Acciopinare: 'To miche, to shrug or sneake in some corner.' Caldecott: 'Mychyn or stelyn Pryeuely,' Prompt. Paro. Knight: The shuiking crime pointed out in the Dumb Show is, in one sense of Hamlet’s wild phrase, miching malthecho; his own secret purpose from which mischief will ensue, is miching mallecho, in another sense;—in either case ‘it means mischief.’ Magini (Fraser’s Maga. Dec. 1839): In the Qq we find the traces of the true reading: mucho malhecho, much mischief. Dyce (Gloss.): ‘Malhecho. . . . An evil action, an indecent and indecorous behaviour; malefaction.’—Connelly’s Span. and Engi. Dict., Madrid. Compare: ‘Tho. Be humble, Thou man of mallecho, or thou diest.’—Shirley’s Gentleman of Venice; Works, vol. v, p. 52. Maginn’s alteration is doubtless wrong. Keightley did not think so; he adopted it. Clarendon: Minshew (The Guide into Tongue) gives, ‘To Miche, or secretly to hide himself out of the way, as Truants doe from schoole.’ Mackay (Athenaum, 16 Oct. 1875) says that it is to the wooing of the Queen by the Poisoner that Ham. refers as meaning mischief, not to the murder; in the latter the mischief is past, in the former it is to come. This is the clue which reveals the
Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him; be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught; I'll mark the play.

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.

P. King. 'Full thirty times hath Phæbus' cart gone round

Queene. Qq. Enter King and his Queene. F, F, F, 


145. cart] car Rowe, Pope, Han.


Hamlet. 135. he] Pope. a Qq, they Ff, Rowe. tell] telle F, fiore Q'78.

135. you'll] you will Qq, Coll. El. White.

137. mark] make F, F, F, F, F.


142. posy] Cap. posie Q, F, F, Rowe+,


145. cart] car Rowe, Pope, Han.


meaning of the Gaelic into which Ham. in his indignation bursts. 'Miching malecho' is miannach mailscheadh, the Gaelic for desirous of procrastination. [ 'Miching'] is still in common use in New England, and pronounced (as it is spelled in Webster) meaching or meeching. It is usually applied to the expression of the face: 'he has a hang-dog, meaching look.' Ed.]

136. means] STEEVENS: The conversation of Hamlet with Ophelia is probably such as was peculiar to the young and fashionable of the age of Sh., which was, by no means, an age of delicacy.

142. posy] CALDECOTT: See Mer. of Ven. V, i, 147-150. KNIGHT: This is certainly the same as poesy; but was formerly, as now, understood to mean a short sentence or motto. HALLIWELL: These posies were necessarily brief, e.g. 'I cannot show, the love I O;' 'God above, increase our love;' 'God's blessing be, with thee and me;' 'Let love abide, till death divide.' These are from rings of the Shakespearian period. CLARENDON: See Fairholt's Costume in England, p. 568.

145. COLERIDGE: The style of the interlude here is distinguished from the real dialogue by rhyme, as in the first interview with the Players, by epic verse.

145. cart] CLARENDON: An archaism purposely affected to suit the fustian of the speech. Chaucer. Cant. Tales, 2043, has, 'The statue of Mars upon a carte stood.'
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been,
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. 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,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;

Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been,
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So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;

146. orbed] orb'd the Qq.
147. borrow'd] Cap. borrowed Qq
F, Rowe +, White, Cam. Clu.
148. times twelve thirties] time, twelve thirties F, F', Rowe. twelve times thirty Q'.
150. in folding them in Q'.
151. P. Queen.] Steev. '78. Quee.

146. wash] Delius: Land overflowed by the sea at high water. Tschischwitz:
In the Netherlands it is called Watt, the alluvium of the coast. CLARENDON: Obvi-
ously, it means the sea itself.

150. commutual] CLARENDON: An intensive, like 'commixture' and 'corrival,'
originally signified 'face, countenance, from Fr. chôre (compare Mer. of Ven. III, ii,
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, ii, 194.

155. distrust] Delius: That is, I am distrustful on your account. Compare
'there me not,' I, iii, 51.

156. Johnson: [After the line in the Qq] a line seems to have been lost, which
should have rhymed with 'love.' STEEVENS: Perhaps a triplet was designed, and
then instead of 'love' we should read lust. MALONE: Perhaps the words omitted
might have been of this import, 'Either none they feel, or an excess approve.
Knight: There can be no doubt that the line from the Qq should be struck out, it
being superseded by line 157. CAMBRIDGE EDITORS: As the line in the Qq occurs
at the top of the page, the omission [conjectured by Johnson, Jennens, and others] is
more likely to have been caused by a line having dropped out at the foot of the
previous page. The Quarto probably gives us the author's first thought, incomplete,
as well as the lines he finally adopted, as they stand in the Folio. The thought will
hardly bear to be expanded over four lines. Tschischwitz retains the line from
the Qq, and in order to do so 'without hesitation' supplies the missing phrase thus:
'Either none at all or one man all above; And women's fear,' &c.
‘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.

P. 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,
‘Honour’d, beloved; and haply one as kind
‘For husband shalt thou—

P. Queen. ‘Oh, confound the rest!


157. holds quantity] CAPELL (i, 137): That is, bear proportion the one to the other. CALDECOTT: Compare Mid. N. D. I, i, 232. CLARENDON: For the construction compare V. & A. 988. In mathematical language ‘fear’ would be said to vary directly as ‘love.’ [For instances of the inflection in ‘s’ with two singular nouns, see ABBOTT, § 336; Mach. I, iii, 147; III, ii, 37; V, v, 20. Also ABBOTT, § 388, for a paraphrase of this passage.] 158. CAPELL (i, 137): They either feel none of these passions or feel them both in extremity. HUNTER (ii, 251): Punctuate ‘—hold quantity In neither:—aught or in extremity.’ That is, nothing, or in excess. INGLEBY (Birmingham Gazette, 25 July, 1867) proposed as a possible emendation: ‘In either naught, or in extremity,’ i.e. there is no mean in the fear or the love of a woman. 161. littlest] See WALKER (Crit. i, 271) for instances of this word; gooder and goodest; badder and baddest. ‘But littlest is not [here] a mere synonym of least. DELIUS: This is not found elsewhere in Sh. 164. operant] STEEVENS: Active. See its use with ‘poison,’ Timon, IV, iii, 25. 164. to do] For instances of the infinitive used as a noun, see ABBOTT, § 355; also, ‘to feed,’ III, iv, 66. 164. leave] CLARENDON: Leave off, cease. See I, ii, 155. [Also II, i, 51; III, iv, 66.]
'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!
'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.

P. 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,

171. [Aside] Cap. Om. QqFF, Rowe
Wormwood, wormwood? That's
wormwood. Qq (in the margin), Cap.
Jen. Steev. Var.; and Seymour, completing
the line with To her, Mark, Horatio.

172. The} Qq, Sta. Bapt. The FF
173. Thrift} Thrift Ff
174. husband dead } lord that's dead
Q, Sta.

170. wed] Tschirschwitz construes this as an imperative.
174. kill ... dead] Elze: This tautology occurs not infrequently. See Tit. And.
III, i, 92. Tschirschwitz: Originally the phrase was not tautological, because the
Anglo-Saxon evilian meant to torture. Its figurative meaning required the addition of
the adjective.

176, 177. speak ... break] Clarendon: Observe the rhyme.
178-203. Sievers (Hamlet, p. 142, Leipzig, 1851) was, I believe, the first to point
out the dozen or sixteen lines which Ham. had promised to insert in the play; and he
supposed them to be lines 243-248, but Mr and Mrs Cowden Clarke, in their ed.,
believe that they are to be found in the present passage; because: the diction is different
from the remainder of the dialogue, and is signally like Hamlet's own argumentative
mode, 'This world is not for aye,' the thoughts upon the fluctuations of 'love' and
'fortune,' and the final reflection upon the contrary current of 'our wills and fates,'
with the overthrow of our 'devices,' and the ultimate diversity between our intentions
and their 'ends,' are as if proceeding from the Prince himself. His motive in
writing these additional lines for insertion, and getting the player to deliver them,
we take to be a desire that they shall serve to divert attention from the special pas-
sages directed at the King, and to make these latter seem less pointed. We have
fancied that this is Shakespeare's intention, because of the emphatic variation in
the style just here. Observe how very different are the mythological allusions to
'Phoebus,' 'Neptune,' &c., and the stiff inversions of 'about the world have times
twelve thirty's been,' 'discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must,' &c.; and, moreover,
observe how exactly the couplet commencing the Player-King's speech, 'I do be-
lieve,' &c., and the couplet concluding it, 'So think thou wilt,' &c., would con-
join were the intervening lines omitted. To the same effect Tschirschwitz, who
finds in lines 194-199 an allusion to Ros. and Guild; see II, ii, 346-349. A
[178-203. the dozen or sixteen lines.]
discussion as to whether or not these were Hamlet's dozen or sixteen lines was
started by a note from Furnivall in The Academy, 3 Jan. 1874, to the effect that
both Seeley and himself, independently and without any knowledge of Clarke's
note on the subject, had hit upon these lines as those written by Ham. The
discussion is carried on in the pages of The New Sh. Soc. Trans. 1 Series, pt. ii. p.
465, and as it there takes up some thirty or more pages, a mere digest of it can be
given here. Malleson contends that these are not the lines written by Ham. 1.
They do not apply to the King's character or position, but rather to Ham. himself.
2. There is nothing in them of the torrent, tempest, and whirlwind of passion that
Ham. was so anxious should not be torn to tatters. And, lastly, there was one
scene which Ham. tells Hor. is to be the test, during which he is to watch the King
with every faculty of his being, while Ham. will do the same during one speech.
Beyond doubt the scene is where poison is poured into the Player-King's ear, and
here, likewise, at the crisis of the plot is to be found the speech, viz. 'Thoughts black,
hands apt, drugs fit,' &c., and this is Hamlet's addition to the play. Had the King not
blenched, we should have had probably the rest of the dozen lines, which might have
contained a hint of the Poisoner's next aim, the seduction to a sudden second marriage
of the seeming-virtuous Queen. It was the success of this alteration or addition that
Ham. declared would get him a fellowship in a cry of players, and this success was due
to the 'talk of the poisoning,' and this 'talk of the poisoning' is found only in this
speech of Lucianus. Seeley, on the other hand, believed that the dozen or sixteen
lines were some of those which make up the long speech beginning 'I do believe
you think what now you speak.' To avoid conjecture as much as possible, we must
consider two characteristics which the inserted speech must necessarily have: 1. It
must consist of some dozen or sixteen lines. 2. Being an insertion, it must be such
a speech as can be removed without affecting the action of the play. Now, these
two characteristics belong to this speech of the Player-King, and to it alone. It is
exceptionally long, and the whole of it could not be spared, but it is quite easy to
spare about a dozen or sixteen lines from the middle of it, and such a retrenchment
would bring the speech to about the average length of the other speeches. There
is no reason why Ham. should make his lines 'charge the King with murder, or to
drive the moral of the play home to the King's conscience.'* The play might be
trusted to do that; no speech could make the application plainer. It is impossible
for the speech beginning 'Thoughts black,' &c., to be the inserted speech, because
it satisfies none of the conditions. It is not a dozen or sixteen lines, but only six;
it is not an inserted speech, but belongs essentially to the action. It is also
impossible to suppose exactly that it was broken off by the King's rising, for the six lines
in question form only one sentence, and must therefore belong entirely to the play
itself in its original form, unless the murder were to be done in dumb show, which
nobody supposes. His uncle's guilt is by no means the absorbing topic of Hamlet's
thoughts; it is an annoying subject that weighs upon his mind without interesting it,
and his only desire is to postpone and keep at arm's length everything connected
with it, and with his duty to punish it. His real feeling for his uncle is only con-
tempt, as for a vulgar knave, whom there is no satisfaction in thinking about,—and
it would be source of wonder if he should think about him enough to take the

* Seeley quotes this from Malleson, but it is not to be found in his published argument. Ed.
trouble to write a dozen or sixteen lines to make clear what was already as clear as the day. But the subject that really does fill Hamlet's mind, to the exclusion of what ought to engage his attention more, is his mother, and she it is with whom these inserted lines deal. From what we know of Hamlet's feelings she would be, a priori, the subject of his inserted speech. Furthermore, if the speech were about the murder, it would be of no help in the progress of the play, nothing would be revealed to us by it. Whereas, if the speech dealt with the mother, it would be a broad hint to us not to trust Hamlet's professions, and that the experiment of the play, with all its parade of ingenuity and of vengeance to follow, is a mere blind by which Ham. hides both from himself and Hor. that he does not intend to act at all, but will go on for ever brooding over the frailty of his mother and of all womankind. To this Malleson rejoins: Ham. never says he has written a passage of so many lines, but that he intended to write some uncertain number, a dozen or sixteen. When he sat down with the play before him, he may have written twenty or twenty-six, and indeed, if the Player-King's speech be accepted as partly Hamlet's, all of it might be claimed for him except the first two and the last two lines, which, omitting the intervening twenty-six, go fairly together. There is no reason why the inserted lines must be such as can be removed without affecting the play; may not Ham. have substituted his lines for those which he struck out? If lines 178-203 were made, as Seeley contends, to catch the conscience of the Queen, there appears to be in them when closely analyzed nothing with any special reference to her, and accordingly she is perfectly unmoved by them; her response, when appealed to by Hamlet as to how she likes the play, betokens perfect self-possession. Afterwards, to be sure, she is thrown into 'most great affliction of spirit,' but it is entirely on her husband's account,—as far as she was concerned, this speech was pointless. Grant that the plot of the play, by itself, sufficiently emphasized the King's guilt, there is nothing unnatural in Hamlet's wishing to make assurance doubly sure. In Seeley's final remarks he admitted that Hamlet's instructions to the Player suggest a speech that is in some sense passionate, but that in reality Ham. takes the occasion of a particular speech to give a general lecture on elocution, or on the general way in which a passion should be expressed. And these lines, which may appear tame to us, may have borne a much more intense feeling to Ham. The insertion is introduced to tell us something about Ham. that we should not otherwise have known. Its object was not to catch the conscience of the Queen, but to give us an additional insight into the dreamy, unpractical character of Ham. He had been from the first brooding over his mother's conduct, and the play offers him an opportunity to relieve his feelings; the lines may not produce much effect upon her,—he knows how unimpressionable she is,—but his object will be gained if he only writes them. Furnivall sums up: Technically, Seeley's position is very strong, but 'on the merits' he breaks down,—he has a capital case at Law, but none in Equity. I cannot resist Malleson's argument, that Hamlet's inserted speech is the one speech in which he tells Hor. the King's guilt is to unkennel itself. But I hold very strongly that Lucianus's speech is not the speech, and that, in fact, the speech is not in the printed play. Either the King's conscience was more quickly stung than Ham. anticipated, and so the written speech was never needed; or (as Mr Matthew has suggested) Sh. contented himself with showing us, or letting us assume, that Ham. altered the play, and put his 'dozen or sixteen lines' into action instead of
[178-203. the dozen or sixteen lines.]

words; if he had not modified the play, what credit could he have claimed for himself as a play-writer or adapter. The inconsistency of Shakespeare's having made Ham. first talk so much about inserting a speech, and then leaving it out after all, is what one might fairly expect in the recast Hamlet after its other startling inconsistencies, e.g. Hamlet's age and Ophelia's suicide. What can it matter whether an actual speech of a dozen or sixteen lines, though often announced, be really in the play or not? Simpson calls attention to the fact that just as the historical drama takes for granted those events which are made known by previous allusions, so the sub-play generally omits all those details which have been previously described or alluded to. Thus in Mid. N. D. we have both the play as presented before Theseus and a rehearsal of it. The lines rehearsed are different from any in the actual play.

Looking at the practice of the time and at the previous likelihoods of the case, I see no reason whatever for expecting to find that Sh. would have put into the sub-play the dozen lines that he makes Ham. promise.' Bathurst (p. 70) says that he sees 'no symptoms of the lines which Ham. was to insert.' Gervinus (2te Band, p. 102, 2te Auflage) believes that Sh. meant the passage from line 177 to 187 to apply to Ham. 'Indeed, Gonzago acted the part of Hamlet's father. Ham. as well as his mother must have a taste of "wormwood."' My friend Dr Ingleby has kindly sent me extracts from a Paper on this subject, which is announced for reading to the New Shakspeare Society, 9 February, 1877. In these extracts Dr Ingleby dissents from all that has been assumed heretofore on this subject in that Society's Transactions, and maintains his own view, very briefly thus: The court-play is but a part of Hamlet; that Ham. writes no speech at all, whether of six, twelve, or sixteen lines, nor recites such a speech; Sh. simply wrote the entire play, not writing any additions in personâ Hamletâ, still less writing an addition to a play which he had previously written in the character of the author of an Italian morality. To trace into its issues every suggestion in the play, so that the event should justify the hint, is 'to consider too curiously.' A drama is a work of art, a contrivance for imposing upon the spectator, causing him to take no account of actual time, place, and circumstance, making him almost forget that he is in a play-house. In real life a Hamlet might compose and insert a few lines to add point and force to an ordeal, like that of the court-play, to which the fictitious Hamlet subjects the supposed criminal; and if we had the play before us, we might detect the insertion by means of our various tests of metre, phraseology, &c. If we failed to discover the added lines, the fault is ours; the lines would be there. Now to suppose that Sh. in composing Hamlet followed out the exact course that a real living prince would have followed, is to impute to him a lack of the simplest art of the playwright, and a neglect of the artifices which the drama places at his command. Whereas, Shakespeare's procedure was probably this: In the course of enlarging the first sketch of his Hamlet he conceived the design of making it a vehicle for the highest possible instruction in the art of elocution. The play-scene was already devised, and he had, therefore, to introduce the Players as arriving at Elsinore. Here was the chance he wanted. He would make Ham. instruct the Player, and through him all players, how to act. But how was this to be brought about? Ham. could hardly be supposed to know by heart the roles of a strolling player. Wherefore, Sh. makes Ham. speak as if he had already recited to the Player a speech of his own composition, and hereupon give his instructions. Thus, having found or made the occasion, Sh. had
to prepare the audience for the supposed recitation, and this was done by representing Ham. at a former interview imparting to the old Player his intention of writing 'a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines' (i.e. a speech of several lines) for insertion in The Murder of Gonzago. But all the while Shakespeare's object (kept wholly out of view) was to prepare the audience for his own lesson (voce Hamleti) on elocution. It is a rule of dramatic art that, a dramatic expedient not essential to the plot, introduced for a collateral object, is to be left out of consideration as soon as that object is attained. As soon, therefore, as Ham. has given the old Player his lesson, the dramatic need of the 'dozen or sixteen lines' is satisfied, and we have no further concern with them. The suggestion, however, served (1) to prepare the way for Hamlet's advice; (2) to suggest the possibility, vague to the last degree, that Ham. had the old play touched and tinkered to suit his purpose more completely. The phrase, 'some dozen or sixteen,' does not mean what it says; it is even more indefinite than 'ten or a dozen,' or 'a dozen or fourteen,' which Mrs Quickly uses in Hen. V: II, i; the prefix 'some' adds vagueness to what was vague already. These lines, by the very nature of the case, can never have been in Hamlet. [It is to task the credulity of an audience too severely to represent the possibility of Hamlet's finding an old play exactly fitted to Claudius's crime, not only in the plot, but in all the accessories, even to a single speech which should tent the criminal to the very quick. In order, therefore, to give an air of probability to what every one would feel to be thus highly improbable, Sh. represents Ham. as adapting an old play to his present needs by inserting in it some pointed lines. Not that such lines were actually inserted, but, mindful of this proposal of Hamlet's, the spectator is prepared to listen to a play which is to unkind the King's occulted guilt in a certain speech; the verisimilitude of all the circumstances is thus maintained. No matter how direct or pointed the allusion to the King's guilt may be, we accept it all, secure under Shakespeare's promise that the play shall be made to hit Claudius fatally. And we hear the fulfilment of this promise in Hamlet's cry of exultation over the success of his attempt at play-writing. The discussion, therefore, that has arisen over these 'dozen or sixteen lines' is a tribute to Shakespeare's consummate art. Ingleby, I think, is right in maintaining that Sh. did not first write The Murder of Gonzago, and then insert in it certain lines, as though written by Hamlet. And Sievers, the Clarkes, Malleson, and others are also right, I think, in believing that certain lines of the court-play are especially applicable to Claudius, and which we may imagine are those that Ham. told the Player he would give him. It is the very impression which, I think, Sh. wished to convey. Ed.]

179. validity] Caldecott: The conception and origin of our resolutions are violent and passionate; but their progress and close of little vigor or efficiency.

180. sticks] Tschirschwitz advocates his text, which reads: 'Like fruit unripe, which now sticks on the tree,' on the ground 'that 'Which,' referring to 'Purpose,' in connection with "sticks on the tree," is nonsense.' And, furthermore, that 'sticks' is an archaic plural equivalent to stickes, sticketh.
'But fall unshaken when they mellow be. 181
'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.
'The violence of either grief or joy
'Their own enactures with themselves destroy;
'Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
'Grief joys, joy griefes, 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.

186. either] cyther, Q,O'. either, Q'.
187. enactures] Q'76, Johns. enactures Q'. enactors F,F,. enactors F,F,. Rowe+.}
188. lament] relent Jen. (misprint?)
189. joyes] joyes F,F,. joy Qq.

181. fall] CALDECOTT: This verb, like 'sticks,' is to be referred to 'purpose';
but in Shakespeare's mind it was connected with 'unripe fruit,' and 'they,' its relative.
ELZE: See the reversed construction, I, iii, 47, 50: 'pastors . . . libertine, Himself.' ABBOTT, §415: The subject, which is singular, is here confused with
and lost in that to which it is compared, which is plural.

183. debt] JOHNSON: The performance of a resolution, in which only the res-

olver is interested, is a debt only to himself, which he may therefore remit at
pleasure.

185. enactures] JOHNSON: What grief or joy enact or determine in their
violence is revoked in their abatement. CLARENDON: Enactments, resolutions. Per-
haps it may have the further meaning of carrying purposes into execution. ABBOTT,
§ 194: 'With themselves' seems to mean by or of themselves.

188. MOBERLY: The very temper that is most cast down with grief is also most
capable of joy, and passes from one to the other with slenderest cause.

190. nor 'tis not] For instances of double negatives, see I, ii, 158; and ABBOTT,
§ 406.

191. loves] MOBERLY: The love which others feel for us.

193. or else] CLARENDON: A reduplication. Like 'or ere;' 'an if.' See Genesis,
xliii, 16.
The great man down, you mark his favourites flies;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies;
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.

P. 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!

dye Q'76.

194. favourites flies] F1, favourite QfF.
F3 F4, et cet. 196. hitherto] hetherto Q, Q5, hither to F2.
197. friend,] F2, Frend: F1, friend?
F3 F2 F4. 199. seasons him] sees in him Anon.*
204. So think] Think still Q'76, Theob. Warb.
will na] will not Jen.
205. die thy thoughts] thy thoughts

194. favourites flies] Abbott, § 333: The reading, favourite, completely misses the intention to describe the crowd of favorites scattering in flight from the fallen patron. [See this paragraph in Abbott for instances of the third person plural in s.]
Corson (p. 27): The plural, 'favourites,' is, in fact, demanded.

197. not needs] Clarendon: For this construction, see Temp. II, i, 121; Much Ado, IV, i, 175.

199. seasons] Caldecott: Throws in an ingredient, which constitutes, &c. This word is used with great latitude in several parts of this play. Delius: This signified formerly every kind of modification in its widest sense. Dyce (Glos.): Confirms, establishes. Clarendon: Ripens, brings to maturity in his true character.

201. contrary] For words in which the accent is nearer the end than with us, see Abbott, § 490.

209. anchor's] Johnson: May my whole liberty and enjoyment be to live on hermit's fare in prison. 'Anchor' is for anchorite. Steevens: This abbreviation is very ancient. In the Romance of Robert the Devil, printed by Wynkyn de Worde: 'We haue robbed and killed nonnes, holy aunkers, preestes,' &c. Again:
'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!

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

[Sleeps.

P. Queen. 'Sleep rock thy brain;
'And never come mischance between us twain?'

[Exit.

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady protests too much, methinks.

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

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

213. once...wife] once I be a widdow,
  ever I be a wife Qq (he Q), Jen. once
  I be a widdow, ever I be wife Qq; once
  I widow be, and then a wife Q'76.
214. Ham. Is...now?] Dyce. Ham.
  If...now. Qq (in the margin) (he Q'76)
  Ff, Ham. If...now— Pope +, Jen. Coll.
  White, Del. Ham. [to Oph.] Is...
  Sing. El. Kity, Huds.
  if now] her now Coll. (MS). El.
215. 'Tis...awhile;] Two lines, Ff.

215. here] heare Qq,Fs,
217. [Sleeps.] Pope. (After brain),
  Ff, Rowe. Om. Qq. lays him down.
  Cap.
218. between] betwixt Qq,Fs, Cap.
  [Exit.] Exeunt. Qq. Exit
219. this] the F,F,Fs, Rowe.
220. protests] Ff, Rowe+, Cap. Kn.,
  doth protest Qq et cet.
  too much] to much F.

'the foxe will be an anker,' &c. Also, in The Vision of Pier Ploshman, l. 55:
'As acres and heremites That holden hem in hire selles.' I believe we should
read,—' anchor's chair.' Compare Hall, Sat. ii, bk. IV, p. 18, ed. 1602:—'Sit
seven yeres pining in an anchor's cheyre.' DELIUS: Logically, 'scope' cannot
refer to 'anchor's cheer,' but to 'prison.' CLARENDON: 'Anchor' is applied both to
men and women.

210. opposite] CLARENDON: An opponent; here it denotes any obstacle to joy.
  For the literal sense, see V, ii, 62, and Twelfth Night, III, iv, 293.
210. blanks] CLARENDON: Blanches, makes pale, as with fear.
214. DELIUS: It is just as likely that Ham. addressed this to his mother as to
  Oph.
220. protests] CORSON: The familiar 'protests' is better here than 'doth pro-
  test.'
222. argument] See notes on line 127, where various attempts are made to ex-
  plain what HUNTER calls 'the oversight' in this question of the King's.
Ham. No, no; they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world.

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:—

225. 't the world] Om. Q76. Qq, Cap. et cet. 227. how f] how Q8. 231. that have] shall have Q4, Q9, us not] not us Q76.
228, &c. Gonzago] Gonzaga Johns. 232. wince] Steev. winch Qq, QqFf, Rowe+, Cap. Jen. unwrung] unwrong Q4, Q9, un-
229. wife] wife's Theob. +. wives' Kty. 230. o'] Ff, Rowe+, Dyce, Glo. of rung Ff, Johns.

224. offence] DELIUS: Here again, as before in I, v, 137, this word is used in a double sense. The King means a moral 'offence,' and Hamlet means a physical 'offence,' or crime.


227. Tropically] CALDECOTT: Figuratively, by a trope or turn we give things. HUNTER (ii, 282): Tropically of Q, is an unmeaning word, except that we may see a faint shade of meaning in the play being a figurative representation of an actual deed, and this, combined with the opportunity of playing on the word trap, is the true galled that we meet with this word thus oddly introduced.

228. image] See Macb. II, iii, 74.

228. Vienna] COLLIER: The Guiana of Q1, perhaps arose from the shorthand-writer having misheard the name.

229. duke's] HUNTER (ii, 252): Q, explains why everywhere else he is a king. The character was a duke throughout, as the play was originally written, and when king was to be substituted for duke, this passage remained by some accident uncorrected. WALKER (Crit. ii, 281) shows by many instances that king, duke, and count were confounded in sense, and that to the poet they were one and the same, all involving alike the idea of sovereign power; and thus might easily be confounded with each other in the memory.

229. Baptista] JOHNSON: In Italian, I think, the name always of a man. RITSON: I believe it is never used singly, but compounded with Gian (for Giovanni), and meaning, of course, John the Baptist. HUNTER (ii, 252): I have seen a few instances in which the name was borne by women in England. Sh. was not solicitous about it. It had a feminine termination; that was enough.

231. we] See I, iv, 54.

231. free] See II, ii, 537.

232. wince] STEEVENS: A proverb. Thus, in Damon and Pythias, 1582: 'I know the gall'd horse will soonest wince.' CLARENDON: See Lyly's Euphues, p. 119 (ed. Arber): 'For well I know none will winch except she be gawilded.' See Mother Bombie, I, iii.
Enter Lucianus.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are a good chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if

I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you must take your husbands.—Begin, mur-

232. Enter Lucianus.] After king, line 233, Qq. Enter Nephew with a Vial. Cap.


234. a good'] Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Dyce i, Del. as good as a Qq et cet.

235. my] mine Qq.

239. better] two fe Q'76, Rowe, Pope, Han.

240. So... husbands.] Pope. So you mistake your husbands Qq, Theob. Warb.


240, 242. Begin... revengej Two lines, the first ending begin, F, Rowe +.

240, 241. murderer] Murder F.

Rowe.

234. chorus] DELIUS: We find a chorus explaining the action of the play in Winter's Tale, Rom. & Jul., and Hen. V.

235. interpret] STEEVENS: An interpreter formerly sat on the stage at all motions or puppet-shows, and interpreted to the audience. See Two Gent. II, i, 101; Timon, I, i, 34. Again, in Greene's Groatsworth of Wit, 1621: 'It was I that . . . for seven years' space was absolute interpreter of the puppets.'

236. puppets dallying] SEYMOUR (ii, 179): If I could observe the agitations of your bosom. NARES: Synonymous with the babies in the eyes.

237. keen] HUNTER (ii, 252): There is no appropriateness in this as a reply to what Hamlet had said, and it is, in fact, an observation on something said by him that is now transposed to another part of the play. This we learn from Qq, where the remarks of Ham. to Oph. on the cheerful appearance of his mother occur in this part of the dialogue. It is in reference to these satirical remarks about his mother that Ophelia says, 'You are keen,' or as it reads in Qq.

239. worse] CALDECOTT: More keen and less decorous.

240. must take] THEOBLARD (Sh. Rest. p. 90): Hamlet certainly alludes to the church-service of matrimony, where the husband and wife promise alternately to take each other for 'better for worse.' [Theobald changed his mind when he came to print his edition; for there he follows the QqFf, and paraphrases: 'So you take Husbands, and find yourselves mistaken in them.'] The majority of notes on this passage are in favor of the reading of the QqFf. Those edd. who have followed the reading of Q, have been apparently so firmly fixed in their belief in the excellence of that text in this passage, that they have not thought it worth while to vindicate it. Ed.] FARMER: I believe mistake to be right; the word is sometimes used in this ludicrous manner: 'Your true trick, rascal' (says Ursula, in Bartholomew Fair),
derer. Pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: 241
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,

241. _Pox._] Om. _Q7_, Pope+. Cap.


the _Q7_Ff, Rowe+. _Come._ The Johns.
_Come,_ _The_ Cap. As two half lines, end-
ing _raven...revenge_ Steev. _Bos._ Cald.
_Knt._ In quotation-marks, White, Glo.

243. Two lines. _Ff._

244. _Confederate_] _Confederat_ _Q7_Q7.*

245. _Confederat_ _Q7_._ _Confederate_ _Q7_.

246. _ban_] _Bone_F4, Rowe, Pope, Han.

241. _Pox._] _Dyce._ Need I observe that, in Shakespeare's time, this imprecation undoubtedly referred to the small-pox?

242. _revenge_] _Collier._ This perhaps was a quotation from some other play in Hamlet's memory. _Dyce_ (Remarks, &c., p. 215): Ham. seems to mean: 'Begin without more delay; for the raven, prescient of the deed, is already croaking, and, as it were, calling out for the revenge which will ensue.' _Simpson_ (The Academy, 19 Dec. '74): Ham. rolls into one two lines of an old familiar play: _The True Tragedie of Richard the Third_ (p. 61, Sh. Soc. Reprint). The king is describing the terrors of his conscience: 'Methinks their ghosts comes gaping for revenge Whom I have slain in reaching for a crown;' and of the two lines that follow, Hamlet's speech is a satirical condensation: 'The screeching raven sits croaking for revenge Whole herds of beasts comes bellowing for revenge.'

244. _confederate_] _Tschischwitz_ [following _Q7_]: 'Confederate is clearly the wrong reading, since it merely expresses what is already implied in 'time agreeing.'

245. _midnight_] _Steevens._ See _Macb._ IV, i, 25.
Thy natural magic and dire property, 247
On wholesome life usurp immediately.'

[Hamlet. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago; the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian; you shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises!
Ham. What, frightened with false fire!
Queen. How fares my lord?
Pol. Give o'er the play!
King. Give me some light.—Away!
All. Lights, lights, lights!

[Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.

Ham. Why, let the strucken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep;
So runs the world away.

249. for his] A Q3.
250. name's] names Qq F,F,4.
254. what...fire] Om. Qq, Pope.

Steev. Var. Sing. Cam.
[Exeunt...] Exeunt. Manet Ham-let & Horatio. Ff (Manet F,)

stroken] strooken Q,Qo, Cap.
stricken Han. Coll. El.
White, Glo.+, Mob.


[Corson: This may be a case of absorption; the -en of the participle being present in 'in.'

259-262. Dyce: In all probability a quotation from some ballad.
259. weep] Steevens: See As You Like It, II, i, 33.
262. So] Corson: The more general and indefinite 'So' seems preferable here to the formal 'Thus.'
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, 265

264. turn Turk] Mal. raz'd Qq. raz'd
266. *sir*] Jen. Qq. Ff, Rowe i. *ray'd* Rowe ii. *rayed*


263. feathers] MALONE: It appears from Decker's *Gul's Hornbooke* that feathers were much worn on the stage in Shakespeare's time.
264. turn Turk] STEEVENS: See *Much Ado*, III, iv, 57; and, in Greene's *The Quoque*, 1614: 'This it is to turn Turk, from an absolute and most compleat gentleman, to a most absurd, ridiculous, and fond lover.' It means no more than to change condition fantastically. CALDECOTT: To undergo a total and ruinous change.
265. Provincial] WARTON: Hamlet means the roses of *Provençale*, a beautiful species; therefore read *Provincial* (CAPELL, MALONE, and STEEVENS adopted this reading) or *Provençal*. DOUCE: Change is unnecessary. There is no evidence that *Provençal* was ever remarkable for its roses; whereas, *Provens*, about forty miles from Paris, was formerly very celebrated for the growth of this flower, which, according to tradition, was imported into that country from Syria by a Count de Brie. JOHNSON: When shoe-strings were worn they were covered, where they met in the middle, by a ribbon gathered in the form of a rose. CLARENDON: Cotgrave gives both localities: 'Rose de Provence. The Provinsce Rose, the double Damask 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.' FAIRHOLT (*Costume in England*, p. 233) quotes from Friar Bacon's *Prophecy*, 1604: 'When roses in the gardens 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. TSCHESCHWITZ wildly proposes and adopts 'provisional' for the following reason: 'The passing strangeness of the assumption that actors procured fresh (?) roses from the town of *Prians* occurred neither to Douce nor to the critics who follow him. It is probable that nothing more than parti-colored paper was used as a substitute.' Hence, 'Since "Provincial" yields no meaning, it is clear that Sh. here wrote *provisional* (like the *Italian provisionale*), that is, a pair of makeshift-roses.'
265. razed] THEOBALD: I once suspected that we ought to read 'raised shoes.' It was the known custom of the tragedians of old, that they might nearer resemble the heroes they personated, to make themselves as tall in stature as they possibly could. But perhaps it may have been 'rayed shoes,' that is, *striped*, *spangled*. STEEVENS: 'Razed shoes' may mean *slashed* shoes, *i. e.* with cuts or openings in them. Sh. might have written 'raised shoes,' *i. e.* shoes with high heels. Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1595, has a chapter on corked shoes, 'which,' he says, 'beare them up two inches or more from the ground, &c., some of red, blakke, &c., razed, carued, cut, and stitched,' &c. To *raise* and to *race* alike signify to *streak*. See Markham's *Country Farm*: '—baking them all (i. e. wafer cakes) together be-
Hor. Half a share.

**tween two irons, having within them many raced and checkered draughts after the manner of small squares.**' Hunter (ii, 254) cites from Peacham, *The Truth of Our Times*, 1638, to show that gallants sometimes paid thirty pounds for a pair of shoe-ties, called roses. Collier (ed. 2): The (MS) reads *rais'd*, which is possibly right. Burbage, being short, may have worn *rais'd shoes,* but still it seems unlikely that he would thus be made to advert to his own deficiency. Staunton: If *raised* be right, it must mean *slashed or opened shoes.* Clarendon: In Randle Holme’s *Academy of Armory*, bk. iii, ch. i, p. 14, we find: *Pinked or raised Shoos, have the over leathers grain part cut into Roses, or other devices.*

265. cry] Wareburton: ‘Allusion to a pack of hounds,’ which, says Steevens, was formerly called a *cry.* Here it means a troop or company. See Cor. IV, vi, 168, and III, iii, 120. Clarendon: Compare Cotgrave: ‘Meute: i. A kennell, or cri of hounds.’

267. share] Malone: The actors in Shakespeare’s time had not annual salaries as at present. The whole receipts of each theatre were divided into shares, of which the proprietors of the theatre, or *house-keepers,* as they were called, had some: and each actor had one or more shares, or part of a share, according to his merit. See *Vor.,* 1821, iii, [p. 171]. Also Collier’s *Annals of the Stage,* iii, p. 429.] Clarendon: In Henslowe’s Diary (p. 5) is a memorandum of £15 being lent to Francis Henslowe for a share with the Queen’s players, and [p. 8, three years afterwards, in 1596] £9 for a half share with another company. [In Halliwell’s very valuable *Illustrations of the Life of Shakespeare,* 1874, pp. 86–91, certain petitions and answers are reprinted, that were filed in 1635, in the Lord Chamberlain’s office, and although in date they are after Shakespeare’s day, they nevertheless throw great light on the early financial management of the Globe and Blackfriars theatres, and of the value of the shares in them. The substance of one of these petitions, which shows us what the *house-keepers* were, and that they and the actors were not always in accord, is as follows: ‘Robert Benefield, Eyllardt Swanston, and Thomas Polland doe further humbly represent unto your Lordship. That the housekeepers beeing but six in number, vizt., Mr. Cutbert Burbadge, Mrs. Condall, Mr. Shankes, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Lowen and Mr. Robinson (in the right of his wife), have amongst them the full moeyt of all the galleries and boxes in both houses, and of the tireing-house dore at the Globe. That the actors have the other moeyt, with the outer dores; but in regard the actors are halfe as many more, vizt., nine in number, their shares fall shorter and are a great deale lesse then the housekeepers; and yet, notwithstanding out of those lesser shares the sayd: actors defray all charges of the house whatsoever, vizt., wages to hired men and boyes, musicke, lightes, &c., amounting to 900 or 1000 li. per annum or thereabouts, beeing 3 li. a day one day with another; besides the extraordinary charge which the sayd actors are wholly at for apparell and poetes, &c. Whereas the sayd housekeepers out of all their gaine have not till Lady Day last payd above 65 li. per annum rent for both houses, towares which they rayse betweene 20 and 30 li. per annum from the tap houses and a tenement and a garden belonging to the premises, &c., and are at noe other charges whatsoever, excepting the ordinary reparations of the houses. Soe that upon a medium made of the gayne of the housekeepers and those of the actors one day with another throughout the yeere, the petitioners will make it apparent that when some of the hou
[267. 'share.']

keepers share 12s. a day at the Globe, the actors share not above 3s. And then what those gaine that are both actors and houskeepers, and have their shares in both, your Lordship will easily judge, and thereby finde the modesty of the petitioner's suite, who desire onely to buy for their money one part a piece from such three of the sayd houskeepers as are fittest to spare them, both in respect of desert and otherwise, viztz., Mr. Shankes, one part of his three, &c. Mr John Shankes not unnaturally remonstrated, and it is from his answer that we learn the value of a 'share,' not only of a 'houskeeper,' but in a 'cry of players;' he states that 'he did buy [of William Hemings] one part hee had in the Blackfriers for about six yeere then to come at the yeerly rent of 6 l. 5 s., and another part hee then had in the Globe for about two yeeres to come, and payd him for the same two partes in ready moneys 156 l.'

... about eleven months since, the sayd William Hemings, offering to sell unto your suppliant the remaining partes hee then had, viz., one in the Blackfriers, wherein hee had then about five yeeres to come, and two in the Globe, wherein hee had then but one yeere to come, your suppliant likewise bought the same, and payd for them in ready moneys more 350 l., all which moneys so disburse by your suppliant amount to 506 l., &c. Shankes, who had been one of Shakespeare's fellow-actors, makes an appeal ad misericordiam as 'being an old man in this quality,'[see Ham. II, ii, 333 and 417], and then states that 'Mr. Swanston one of them who is most violent in this busines,' 'hath further had and receaved this last yeere above 34 l. for the profitt of a third parte of one parte in the Blackfriers which hee bought for 20 l.' Nor did 'Cutbert Burbadge and Winifred his brothers wife, and William his sonne' submit any more quietly than John Shankes to be 'trampled upon,' as they term it, and their answer is a Shakespearian discovery so recent and so interesting not only in its familiar allusion to Shakespeare as a 'deserving man,' but also in its reference to the Children of the Queen's Chapel, that the following extract will not be deemed too long nor out of place: 'The father of us, Cutbert and Richard Burbadge, was the first builder of playhouses and was himselfe in his younger yeeres a player. The Theater hee built [the first ever built in England, in 1576. Ed.] with many hundred pounds taken up at interest. The players that lived in those first times had onely the profitts arising from the dores, but now the players receave all the commings in at the dores to themselves and halfe the galleries from the houskeepers. Hee built this house upon leased ground, by which means the landlord and hee had a great suite in law, and, by his death, the like troubles fell on us, his sonnes; wee then bethought us of altering from thence, and at like expence built the Globe, with more summes of money taken up at interest, which lay heavy on us many yeeres; and to ourselves wee joined those deserving men, Shakspere, Hemings, Condall, Philips and others, partners in the profittes of that they call the House, but making the leases for twenty-one yeere hath beene the destruction of ourselves and others for they dyesing at the expiration of three or foure yeeres of their lease, the subsequent yeeres became dissolved to strangers... Thus, Right Honorable, as concerning the Globe, where wee ourselves are but lessees. Now for the Blackfriers, that is our inheritance, our father purchased it at extreme rates, and made it into a playhouse with great charge and troubled; which after was leased out to one Evans that first sett up the boyes commonly called the Queenes Majesties Children of the Chappell. In process of time, the boyes growing up to bee men, which were Underwood, Field, Ostler, and were taken to strengthen the Kings service; and the
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.

268. A whole one, I.] Ay, a whole
one. Han. A whole one, oy. Mal. conj.
Knt i, Sing. White, Ktly, Huds.
270, 271. This...himself.] One line,
Ff.
272. very, very] very-very Sta.
pajock] F, F', Rowe, Dyce, Sn.
White, Glo.+, Del. Mob. pairock Qq.

more to strengthen the service, the boyes dayly wearing out, it was considered that
house would be as fit for ourselves, and see purchased the lease remaining from
Evans with our money, and placed men players, which were Hemings, Condall, Shakspeare, &c. Ed.]

268. I] MALONE: It should be, I think,—'A whole one;—ey,'—[Most improperly—Dyce, Gloss.]. STEEVENS: It means no more than, 'I think myself entitled
to a whole one.' CALDECOTT: 'A whole one, say I.' STAUNTON: Malone's
emendation will strike many as the more likely reading, WHITE thinks it strange
that modern editions should retain 'I' of QqFf. STRATMAN agrees with Malone.
269-271. Dyce: Another quotation, surely; 'pajock,' of course, excepted.
271. Jove] HUDSON: The meaning is, that Denmark was robbed of a king who
had the majesty of Jove.
272. pajock] POPE: This alludes to the fable of the birds choosing a king; in-
stead of the eagle, a peacock. THEOBALD (Sh. Restored, p. 94) proposed: First,
meacock, a 'cravenly' bird, and metaphorically a dastardly effeminate fellow; Second,
paddock, a toad; Third, putock, a ravenous kite, a devourer of the state and people.
Of these three Theobald repeated only the second in his edition, with the note: 'I
think Ham. is setting his father's and uncle's characters in contrast to each other;
and means to say, that by his father's death the state was stripped of a godlike mon-
arch, and that now in his stead reigned the most despicable poisonous animal that
could be; a mere paddock or toad. This word I take to be of Hamlet's own sub-
stituting. The verses repeated, seem to be from some old ballad; in which, rhyme
being necessary, I doubt not but the last verse ran thus: A very, very—asso.
FARMER: A peacock seems proverbial for a fool. Thus, Gaskoine, in his Weeks: 'A thieve, a coward, and a peacocke foole.' MALONE: Sh. means that the King
struts about with a false pomp, to which he has no right. See Florio, 1598: 'Pawon-
نجاح. To let vp and down fondly gazing vpon himselfe, as a peacocke doth.' MARTINUS SCRIBERUS (Explanations, &c., Edinburgh, 1814): The original word
soundeth to me like a foreign word introduced into our language. Following out this
hint, if thou wilt look, reader, into any Italian Dictionary, thou wilt see that the
word baiocco means a piece of money, of about three farthings value, and there was
a silver coin of that value in Queen Elizabeth's time, which seemed to figure in
Shakespeare's imagination as something abundantly ridiculous. See King John, I.
i, 143. When Hamlet, therefore, calls the King a *pajock*, he merely means to use one of the most contemptuous expressions which occurred to him in the moment; so that I would not alter the text. **Dyce**: 'Pajock' is certainly equivalent to peacock. I have often heard the lower classes in the north of Scotland call the peacock—the 'peajock;' and their almost invariable name for the turkey-cock is 'bubbly-jock.' **Halliwell** quotes Dyce, and adds: there can be little doubt but that the word in the text is a similarly corrupted form. **Elze**: If *paddock* be inadmissible, *bawcock* may be suggested. See **Hen. V.**: IV, i, 44; and **Twelfth Night**, III, iv, 125. **Eden Warwick** ([N. & Qu., 7 Dec. '61], finding from Bunsen's *Egypt's Place*, &c. that the word *Patai*ki, the name of the ancient Phoenician gods, still survives at the present day in Rome, applied to a coin with a hideous, worn-out impression, which is called a 'Pataco,' suggested that 'pajocke' is a misprint for *patokie*. **Leo** ([N. & Qu., Jan. 21, '65]): 'Hamlet means ass, and does not intend to weaken what he means by supplying it by such an innocent word as "peacock," "paddock," &c. He says, "A very, very . . .," and then he says *nothing more*, but *heme* in a rather characteristic way; and so gives to the hearer the opportunity to supply by rhyming what he has left unsaid. And so I suppose the word in question did not belong to the verse, but was a stage-direction, which I should like to understand as—'hiccup.'"  

"A very, very . . . [hicups]." [Can this be surpassed? **Ed.**] **Latham** ([N. & Qu., 12 Aug. '71) suggests *Polack*. In *Hamlet* Danicisms may be expected, and this word, besides its primary, national meaning, had, owing to the ill feeling between the Poles and the Danes, a secondary meaning equivalent to blackguard or Philistine. **T. McGrath** ([N. & Qu., 23 Sept. '71) suggests *paj-ock*, i.e. *paj*, equivalent to *patch*, a contemptuous fellow, and -ock, diminutive. Hence *'pajock* or *patchock*, a paltry clown; and cites Spenser, *A View of the present State of Ireland*, p. 636, Globe ed. :—  

'Some in Leinster . . . are degenerate, and grown to be as very patchockes as the wild Irish.' **Keightley** (*Expositor*, 293): I agree with Theobald, as the King is afterwards called a 'paddock,' and there is probably an allusion to the poisoning. **Tschischwitz**: The word is Polish, *pajuk, pajok*, and means a servant, a doorkeeper, like *hajduk*. I have not been able to discover at what period *Haiducks* were introduced into European courts, but it is quite possible that it took place towards the close of the sixteenth century. **Anonymous** (*New Shakespearean Interpretations*, Edin. Rev. Oct. 1872): All agree that the various spellings in the QqFf indicate one word: *peacock*; in discussing this passage critics have forgotten the character that the peacock held in the natural history, as well as in the popular belief, of the time. The most popular manual of natural history in Shakespeare's day gives the following account:  

'And the peacock is a bird that loveth not his young, for the male seeketh out the female, and seeketh out her eggs for to break them, that he may so occupy him the more in his lecherie. And the female dreadeth that, and hideth busily her eggs, lest the peacock might soon find them. And Aristotle sayth that the peacock hath an unsteadfast and evil shapen head, as it were the head of a serpent, and with a crest. And he hath a simple pace, and a small necke, and heareth, and a blew breast, and a tale ful of beway, and ho hath the foulest feet and rivelled . . . and he hath an horrible voice. And as one sayeth, he hath a voice of a feend, the head of a serpent, and the pace of a theefe. And Plinius sayth that the peacock hath envie to man's profit, and swalloweth his owne durt: for it is full medicinable, but it is seldom found.' This last is a curiously dark touch of malevolence. **Ham. could
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?
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?

275. pound] pounds F, Rowe +.

281. like] likes Q?76.
282. perdy] Perdie F, Q, Cald.
Re-enter... ] Dyce. Enter... Q.
Enter... (after line 278) Ff, Rowe +,
284. vouchsafe] vouf safe Q3.
286. sir,—] sir — Rowe. sir. QqFf.
287. him ?] him. F, F, F.

not have selected the name of bird or beast that expressed with greater emphasis the hateful union of corrupted passion and evil life that now usurped the throne and bed of Denmark. John Davies (N. & Qu., 11 March, '76): This is probably the Low German (Friesic) pojek, or pajek, a boy. In Sweden the modern form is pojke, but the provincial and older form is pajke = pajek. In the north of England it is shortened into pack, and in Denmark into forg. In all these countries it is a term of reproach. A northern peasant woman in England will call her child a dirty or a naughty pack, especially when some offence against cleanliness has been committed. It is often pronounced broadly, paack, not unlike paioche. In the present passage it is equivalent to a mere dirty boy, probably with some reference to his sensual habits. [I think Dyce's testimony is conclusive. Ed.]

279. recorders] See notes on line 329
282. belike] Johnson: Ham. was going on to draw the consequence, when the courtiers entered.
282. perdy] Steevens: The corruption of par Dieu. Collier: This couplet is probably a quotation. Tschischwitz: The word that Ham. adds in this line is not 'perdy,' but probably 'likes'; perhaps brooks is the word intimated.
Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered
Ham. With drink, sir?
Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to
signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his pur-
gation 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.

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.

288. distempered.]
Rowe +, Jen.
290. rather] Om. Qq, Pope +, Cap.
Huds.
291. should ] would Seymour.
more richer ] more rich F F F F .
Rowe +. rither Q76.
292. his doctor] this doctor F 4 the
Sing. Kily, Cam. Cla.
for, for ] for for F 4 , for F 4 F 4 F 4 .
Rowe, Pope, Han.

288. marvellous ] See II, i, 3.
288. distempered ] CALDECOTT: Discomposed, overtaken. 'Spinache extin-
guish choler, and is good for the breast and loonges, that be distempered with heat.'
—Newton's Approved Medicines, 1580. CLARENDON: It was used both of mental
and bodily disorder, and Ham. pretends to understand it in the latter sense. See
Temp. IV, i, 145; 2 Hen. IV: III, i, 41.
289. drink] JOHNSON: Ham. takes particular care that his uncle's love of drink
shall not be forgotten.
291. should ] See II, ii, 201.
291. more richer ] See II, i, 11.
292. purgation] CLARENDON: A play upon the legal and medical senses of the
word.
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?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

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


306. wit's] wit's QqF. F.F.

307. answer] answer. QqQ, Qq. answers Fi, Rowe, Pope, Han. Kn.

308. as you] you. Fi, Rowe, Pope, Kn.

309. say,—] say— Rowe. say. QqFf.

310. struck] stroke Qq. stroke F, F._

312. so] thus QqF.


313. mother's admiration] Mother admiration F, Mother-admiration F._ Rowe, Pope.

314. Impart.] Om. Fi, Rowe, Kn.

315. closet] See II, i, 77.

317. shall] See II, i, 3.


320. So] Coleridge: I never heard an actor give this word its proper emphasis, Shakespeare's meaning is—'loved you? Hum!—so I do still,' &c. 'There has been no change in my opinion—I think as ill of you as I did.' Else Hamlet tells an ignoble falsehood, and a useless one, as the last speech to Guildenstern,—' Why, look you now,' &c.—proves. Strachey (p. 68): I should rather say, that the last
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?

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

Re-enter Players with recorders.

Oh, the recorders! let me see one.—To withdraw with you;—

322. surely...upon] freely...of Ff, Rowe+, Cald. Knt, Del. surely...of Pope+, White, Huds.
327. proverb] Malone: The remainder of this old proverb is preserved in Whetstone's 'Promos and Cassandra,' 1578: 'Whilst grass doth growe, oft sterves the seely steede.' Again, in 'The Paradise of Daintie Devises,' 1578: 'To whom of old this proverb well it serves, While grass doth growe, the silly horse he starves.' Ham. means to intimate that whilst he is waiting for the succession to the throne of Denmark, he may himself be taken off by death.

329. recorders] Dyce: The change from the plural of the Qq to the singular of the Ff I have not the slightest doubt we must attribute to the 'company,' who were obliged to be economical both of persons and properties. A single recorder,
why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you 330
would drive me into a toil?

indeed, suffices for the mere business of this scene; but the alteration is quite at
variance with what precedes in line 280.

329. recorders] CHAFFELL (Popular Music of the 'Olden Time,' p. 246, and
note): Old English musical instruments were commonly made of three or four
different sizes, so that a player might take any of the four parts that were required
to fill up the harmony. So Violins, Recorders, Flutes, Shawms, &c., have
been described by some writers in a manner which (to those unacquainted with
this peculiarity) has appeared irreconcilable with other accounts. Sh. (in Hamlet)
speaks of the Recorder as a little pipe, and says, in Mid. N. D., 'he hath played
on his prologue like a child on a recorder;' but in an engraving of the instru-
ment* it reaches from the lip to the knee of the performer; and among those
left by Henry VIII were Recorders of box, oak, and ivory, great and small, two
base Recorders of walnut, and one great base Recorder. Recorders and (English)
Flutes are to outward appearance the same, although Lord Bacon in his Natural
History, cent. iii, sec. 221, says the Recorder hath a less bore, and a greater above
and below. The number of holes for the fingers is the same, and the scale, the
compass, and the manner of playing, the same. Salter describes the recorder, from
which the instrument derives its name, as situate in the upper part of it, i.e. between
the hole below the mouth and the highest hole for the finger. He says, 'Of the
kinds of music, vocal has always had the preference in esteem, and in consequence
the Recorder, as approaching nearest to the sweet delightfulness of the voice, ought
to have first place in opinion, as we see by the universal use of it confirmed.'
Ward, the military instrument-maker, informs me that he has seen 'old English
flutes' with a hole bored through the side, in the upper part of the instrument, cov-
ered with a thin piece of skin, like gold-beater's skin. I suppose this would give
somewhat the effect of the quill or reed in the Hautboy, and that these were Rec-
dorders. Recorders were used for teaching birds to pipe.

329. To withdraw with you] CAPELL (Notes, i, 138): That is, to have done
with you, draw towards an end with you; and he singles out Guil., as of a darker
and more treacherous temper than the other. [Capell marks the phrase as an
Aside.] M. MASON: These words were probably spoken to the Players, whom Ham.
wished to get rid of. Read, therefore, 'So, withdraw you;' or 'So with-
draw, will you?' STEEVENS: Here Malone added the stage-direction: [Taking
Gildensern aside.] But the foregoing obscure words may refer to some gesture
which Guil. had used, and which at first was interpreted by Ham. into a signal for
him to attend the speaker into another room. 'To withdraw with you?' (says he).
'Is that your meaning?' But finding his friends continue to move mysteriously
about him, he adds, with some resentment; a question more easily intelligible.
CALDECOTT: The two royal emissaries at first only request that the Prince would
'vouchsafe them a word;' and they then acquaint him with the King's rage, and the
Queen's command to visit her. They then, by a waving of the hand, or some such
signal, as the exclamation of Ham. denotes, intimate that he should remove to a

* See 'The Gentle Companion for the Recorder,' by Humphrey Salter, 1683.
Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

more retired quarter. Although aware that the above, their only proper business, could not require any private communication, he at first, in gentle expostulation, reproaches them; but presently recollecting their insidious aims, and feeling at the same time, as an indignity, the freedom taken in thus beckoning him to withdraw, he in a moment assumes a different tone; and, with the most galling sneer and interrogatory, heaps upon them the utmost contempt and contumely. Singer: It means no more than 'to draw back with you,' to leave that scent or trail. It is a hunting term, like that which follows. Staunton: It is simply a direction addressed to the Players who bring in the recorders, and the true reading: 'So,—taking a recorder withdraw with you.' What subsequently transpires between Ham. and his schoolfellows could hardly have taken place in presence of the Players, and the disputed words may have been intended to mark the departure of the latter. Cambridge Editors: If the reading and punctuation given in our text be right, the words seem to be addressed to Guil. Claremond: For this use of the infinitive, compare III, iv, 216; and King John, I, i, 256. Moberly: Just step aside for a moment. Tschischwitz: Perhaps we should read, 'Go, withdraw with you.'

330. wind] Singer: This phrase is borrowed from hunting, and means to get the animal pursued to run with the wind, that it may not scent the toil or its pursuers. 'Observe how the wind is, that you may set the net so as the hare and wind may come together; if the wind be sideways it may do well enough, but never if it blow over the net into the hare's face, for he will scent both it and you at a distance.'—Gentleman's Recreation. Moberly: As if you were stalking a deer.

333. unmannerly] Warburton: If my duty to the king makes me press you a little, my love to you makes me still more importunate. If that makes me bold, this makes me even unmannerly. Heath (p. 540): If you think me too bold in what I have said by the command of your mother, to offer anything on the single motive of my love to your person would be unmannerly. Tyrwhitt: Read—my love is not unmannerly. My conception of the passage is, that, in consequence of Hamlet's moving to take the recorder, Guil. also shifts his ground, in order to place himself beneath the prince in his new position. This, Ham. ludicrously calls 'going about to recover the wind,' &c., and Guil. may answer properly enough, and like a courtier: if my duty to the king makes me too bold in pressing you, upon a disagreeable subject, my love to you will make me not unmannerly, in showing you all possible marks of respect and attention. Caldecott: If my sense of duty have led me too far, it is affection and regard for you that makes the carriage of that duty border on disrespect. See 'Forgive me this my virtue,' III, iv, 152. Singer: Ham. may say with propriety, 'I do not well understand that.' Keightley: 'I read, "If my duty be too bold, my love [is] too unmannerly..."' Claremond: Probably Sh. intended Guildenstern's words to express an unmeaning compliment. As Ham. did not well understand them, commentators may be excused from attempting to explain them.
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.

341. *Tis* It is Q, Jen. Coll. El. 342. and thumb] and thumbe F, F.
White, Del. Cam. 343. and the thumb Q, Qs, Cap. and the
ventages] Ventages Ff, Rowe, thumb Q, Qs.
342. fingers] finger Ff, Rowe, Coll. i, Cald. Knl, White.

336. Guil.] Dr. B. Nicholson: Hitherto Ros. and Guil. have so uniformly worked in common that the artistic management of the scene, as well as the fuller force thereby gained, demands that Hamlet's request be addressed first to one and then to the other. Nor, though Guil. may or may not be the leader of the two, is Ros. silent; in fact, in the previous dialogue, Ros. is the one who is set before us as trying to get the wind of Ham. In this reply, therefore, let 'Guil.' be changed to Ros. [Probably these same reasons influenced the following emendation of Staunton, line 339. Ed.]

339. you] Staunton: Should not this be addressed, and the reply which follows be assigned, to Rosencrantz? See the dialogue in Q.
341. govern] Caldecott: One would almost suppose this word to be here technical, from the use made of it on this subject in Mid. N. D. V, i, 123.
342. thumb] Steevens attempts to justify the misprint of Q, Qs by supposing that the umber was 'the ancient name for that piece of movable brass at the end of a flute which is either raised or depressed by the finger.' In support, he adduces instances of the use of the words umber, and umbriewe, which, however, mean the visor of a helmet. Tollet supports the reading on practical grounds: if a recorder had a brass key like the German flute, we are to follow Q, Qs; for then the thumb could not govern the ventages; if, however, it had not a brass key, then the reading of the Ff must stand. Nares, in refutation, says that the brass key is more modern than the time of Sh.
343. eloquent] Corson: I feel a certain seriousness—that's hardly the word—about 'eloquent,' not in keeping; whereas, in the use of excellent there seems to be implied the idea that the music that can be got out of the little instrument is superior to what one would suspect. The word 'excellent' should be pronounced with a downward circumflex on 'ex.' imparting a patronizing tone.
344. stops] Malone: The sounds formed by stopping the holes. See line 17 of Induction to 2 Hen. IV. Singer: Rather the mode of stopping those ventages to produce notes.
Guill. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

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, you cannot play upon me.—

Re-enter Polonius.

God bless you, sir!

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

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

345. utterance] strance Q Qs
346. harmony] harmony F
348. make] would make Johns.
350, 351. the top of] Om. Qq, Jen.
352. speak] Om. Ff, Rowe, Knt i.
353. 'Sblood] 'sblood Q Qs, 'sblood Q, Q
355. yonder] that Ff, Rowe.
356. you] your F;
360. of] like Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Sta.

352. speak] KNIGHT (ed. i): Sh. certainly meant to say [in F,], yet cannot you make this music, this excellent voice. Guill. could have made the pipe speak, but he could not command it to any utterance of harmony. Even in the Qq it should be printed 'yet cannot you make it.' Speak! 'Sblood,' &c. [This last conj. is withdrawn in ed. ii, and instead is the sentence: 'We now prefer to consider the Folio erroneous.'] Dyce: When 'Sblood' was struck out [of Ff], to be replaced by Why, the preceding word, 'speak,' was at the same time accidentally struck out.

'Speak' answers to 'discourse,' line 243.—Remarks, &c., p. 217.

355. fret] DOUCE (ii, 250): Here is a play on words and a double meaning. Ham. says, 'though you can vex me, you cannot impose on me; though you can stop the instrument, you cannot play on it.' Dyce (Gloss.): Frets are stops of instruments of the lute or guitar kind, 'small lengths of wire on which the fingers press the strings in playing the Guitar.'—Busby's Dict. of Musical Terms, ed. iii.

355. you] CORSON: The use of yet [as in Q,] as the correlative of 'though,' adds to the formalness, and takes away from the plain decisiveness, of the speech.
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. Then will I come to my mother by and by.—

[Aside] They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so.

Ham. 'By and by' is easily said.—Leave me, friends. [Exit Polonius.

[Exeunt all but Hamlet.

360, 361. camel...camel] weasel...weasel Cap.

361. By the mass] By 'th masse Qq.


362. a weasel...a weasel] an Ouzle...an Ouzle Pope. a camel Cap.

363. backed] back'd Ff. backt Q_Q.

364. whale] whale Qq.

366. will I] I will Qq. Jen. Glo. +.

366–370. Then...said] Four lines, ending by and by...by and by...friends. ...said. (transposing Leave me friends, as a separate line, to follow by and by, line 368; and continuing I will say so to Ham.) Qq. Pope (Prose, Pope).


363. backed...weasel] THEOBALD preferred ouzle to 'weasel,' because, first, a 'weasel' is not black (to read 'back'd' only avoids the absurdity of giving a false color to the 'weasel'); secondly, by reading 'ouzle,' there is humor in comparing the same cloud to a Beast, a Bird, and a Fish. HEATH: The resemblance of a cloud to an animal is generally concluded from its shape, not its color. 'Weasel,' then, is the true reading, and Polonius, in his eagerness to humor a madman, unluckily pitches upon the very portion of a weasel in which it most differs from a camel. STEEVENS: Tollet observes that we might read, 'tis beck'd like a weasel,' i.e. weasel-snouted. So, in Hollinshead's Description of England, p. 172: 'if he be weasel-beaked.' Quarles uses this term of reproach in his Virgin Widow: 'Go you weasel-snouted, addle-pated,' &c. 'Tollet adds, that Milton in his Lycidas calls a promontory beaked, i.e. prominent like the beak of a bird or a ship.

366. Then] CALDECOTT: Then will I assent to your request, as yours is assentation to everything I say.

366. by and by] CLARENDON: Immediately. Compare Matthew, xiii, 21, where 'by and by' is the translation of εἴπῃ.

367. bent] JOHNSON: 'Bent' is used by Sh. for the utmost degree of any passion or mental quality. The expression is derived from archery; the bow has its bent when it is drawn as far as it can be. [See WELLESLEY, II, ii, 328; also II, ii, 30.]
'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;
Let me be cruel, not unnatural;
I will speak daggers to her, but use none;

374. bitter business] Warburton: This expression is almost burlesque. The
Quarto is much nearer Shakespeare's words, who wrote 'better day,' which gives the
sentiment great force and dignity. 'The horror of the season fits me for a deed
which the pure and sacred day would quake to look on.' This is said with great
classical propriety. According to ancient superstition, night was prophane and exe-
crible, and day pure and holy. Heath: Warburton objects that the phrase is
almost burlesque. It is so; but it is so only from the abuse of the word 'bitter,'
which is crept into our language from amongst the vulgar, long since the days of
Sh., and which can have no weight in the present case. If alteration be necessary,
I should suppose Sh. wrote 'the bitterst day.' Steevens: Though at present this
is a vulgar phrase, yet it might not have been such in Shakespeare's time. Dyce, in
his Few Notes, &c., p. 141, not knowing that he had been anticipated by Warburton,
proposed 'better day.' And although in both of his eds. he preferred the reading
of the Ff, he would not allow that 'better' was indefensible, but cites in his ed. if
the following note by Mitford: 'The word is better. The 'better day' is opposed
to the 'witching time of night.' It is the lepóv ἱματιον of Homer, Il. θ. 66.'—Gent.
Mag. Feb. 1845, p. 125. 'I may add, too,' continues Dyce, 'that John Kemble,—
whose performance of the Prince of Denmark is among the most vivid recollections
of my youth,—invariably [said 'better day.']' See Hamlet, revised by J. P. Kemble,
1814, p. 51.' Cartwright (New Readings, &c., p. 37): Read, 'And do such
business as the light of day.'

375. Coleridge: The utmost at which Ham. arrives, is a disposition, a mood, to
do something;—but what to do is left undecided, while every word he utters tends
to betray his disguise. Yet observe how perfectly equal to any call of the moment
is Ham., let it only not be for the future.

John, V, ii, 152.

379. use none] Hunter (ii, 254): To be sure not; and strange it is that the
Poet should have thought it necessary to put such a remark into the mouth of Ham.
That the thought should arise detracts from our admiration of his character, as much

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;

as it precludes approbation or silent admission of the moral taste discovered in this play by its author. It is, besides, dramatically improper; for, in the first place, his mother had done nothing to deserve it; it is not even insinuated against her that she was acquainted with the manner of her former husband's death. Her offence was marrying again too soon, and, in addition to this, that her second husband was brother to the first. In the next place, such a deed would not only delay the execution of the high behest of the Ghost, which is the main purpose of the drama, but would in all probability have entirely frustrated it; and Ham. cannot be supposed not to have foreseen that such would be the result. Ham. a matricide would have become instantly an object of universal odium. In fact, the truth cannot and ought not to be concealed that, popular as this play is, not in England only, but all the world over, there are parts in it which seem quite at variance with the ordinary modes of thinking of its author.

381. shent] STEEVENS: To shend, is to reprove harshly, to treat with rough language. HENDERSON: 'Shent' means more than reproof. Ham. surely means 'however my mother may be hurt, wounded, or punished.'

382. seals] WARBURTON: Put them in execution. KNIGHT: To make my sayings deeds.

382. consent] CORSON (p. 28): 'Consent' is not an imperative, but a subjunctive, and 'soul' a nominative, not a vocative. See Abbott, §§ 364, 365.

3. commission] MOSELEY: Ros. and Guil. are therefore privy to the traitorous scheme for killing Ham. in England.

4. along] For instances of the omission of the verb of motion after 'along,' see Abbott, § 30, where it is stated that "Let's along" is still a common Americanism. [See I, i, 26.] To the instances given by Abbott, add Wint. Tale, V, ii, 121; Jull. Cas. III, i, 119; Ham. III, iv, 197, given by CLARENDON.
ACT III, SC. iii]

HAMLET

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.

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

5. estate may] estate, may F.F.F.
dangerous Ff et cet.
brows Anon.*
ourselves provide] provide our selves Pope+.
9. To keep...live] One line, Rowe, Pope, Han.
9. many many] many F3,3,F4, Rowe,

Pope, Han.
11. Two lines, the first ending single, Ff.
13. noyance] QqFf, Rowe+, Dyce, White, Glo+. Del. 'noyance Han. et
cet.
14. upon] on Pope+. weal] weale Qq. spirit Ff, Rowe,
Cald. Knt. depends and rests] QqFf, Rowe+, Cald. Cam. Cla. depend and rest Han.
et cet.

6. near us] WHITE: Considering the expression of personal fear in the first
line of the King's speech, the Qq may contain the true reading, of which that of the
Ff is a corruption.

7. lunacies] THEOBALD: This unnecessary Alexandrine we owe to the players.
Sh. wrote lunes, i.e. madness, frenzy. See Wint. Tale, II, ii, 30; Merry Wives,
IV, ii, 22. JOHNSON: I take brows of the Qq to be, properly read, frows, which,
I think, is a provincial word for perverse humours, which being not understood was
changed to 'lunacies.' But of this I am not confident. STEEVENS suggested that
perhaps Sh. designed a metaphor from horned cattle, whose powers of being danger-
ous increase with the growth of their brows! HENLEY improved on this, and main-
tained that the image under which the King apprehends danger from Ham. is that of
a bull! 'which, in his frenzy, might not only gore, but push him from his throne.'

ELZE: It is not improbable that Sh. wrote either frowns or brains.

9. many many] COLLIER (ed. ii): The (MS) has 'very many,' thus setting right
a manifest misprint of the Ff. [ Adopted in the text by Collier (ed. ii) and Elze.]

STAUNTON: This expression, signifying numberless, should certainly be hyphened,
like too-too, few-few, most-most, &c. CLARENDON: Compare 'little little,' Hen. V:
IV, ii, 33.

13. noyance] CLARENDON: Harm. Here used in a stronger sense than our
modern annoyance. Spenser, however, Fairy Queen, I, i, 23, has it, with the weaker
meaning, applied to the 'feeble stinges' of 'gnattes.'

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,  
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.]

15. many. The] many : the Q.  
many, the QFf.  
cease] cease Q. Q. Pope.  
17. it is] It is Ff. or it is Qq. It's  
Pope+.  
18. summit] Rowe. somnet QQFf.  
19. huge] hough QQFf. huge Q.  
20. mortised] morte'd Q. mortis'd  
Ff, Rowe+, Jen.  
adjoin'd] adjoin'd Ff.  
22. ruin] Ruine Ff. ruaine Qq.  
Never] Ne'er Pope+, Walker,  
Dyce ii, Huds.

15. cease] CALDECOTT: The demise. Throughout Sh. a strong sense is attached to this verb 'cease.' HUDSON: 'Cease' and 'Dies' are tautological in word, not in sense. The death of Majesty comes not alone. BAILEY (ii, 10): 'Cease' as a noun is not found elsewhere; here it means death, so that the speaker is made to assert that death dies not alone, and that it is a massy wheel as well as like a gulf; whereas Sh. evidently meant to predicate these things of majesty itself. Read, therefore, 'Deceasing majesty,' &c. CLARENDON: Here used for the king dying, as 'life' in line 11 is used for the living man.  
18. mount] MOBERLY: At the top of the bank, at the edge of a mine.  
21. annexment] CLARENDON: This is not found elsewhere.  
26. We] ELZE: This speech is given erroneously to both Ros. and Guil. The former is on all occasions the spokesman, while the latter appears to be more a subordinate attendant,—the only time that he ventures on an independent speech is III, ii, 284, et seq., and then he begs express permission to speak. See III, ii, 46 [Qq], and IV, iii, 16, where Ros. treats him like a messenger.
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, 
'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.

Oh, 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;

27. warrant [wart Q']
33. the speech, of vantage] Theob. 
37. primal] Om. Q'76.
38. can I not] I cannot Q'76, Rowe + 
40. alas! I cannot Han. that can I not Seymour.

29. warrant] warnt Q'37*
33. the speech, of vantage] Theob. 
37. primal] Om. Q'76.
38. can I not] I cannot Q'76, Rowe +
39. not...will;] not...will, Qq.

27. Polonius] Coleridge: Polonius's volunteer obtrusion of himself into this business, while it is appropriate to his character, still itching after former importance, removes all likelihood that Ham. should suspect his presence, and prevents us from making his death injure Ham. in our opinion.

30. as you said] Moberly: This was Polonius's own suggestion, which, courtier-like, he ascribes to the King.

32. them] Clarendon: That is, mothers.

33. of vantage] Warburton: By some opportunity of secret observation. Abbott, § 165: 'Of' here retains its original meaning of 'from'; hence the words are equivalent to 'from the vantage-ground of concealment,'

38. murder] Theobald: Was a brother's murder the eldest curse? Surely, it was rather the crime that was the cause of this eldest curse. I have ventured at two supplemental syllables, as innocent in themselves, as necessary to the purposes for which they are introduced: 'That of a brother's murder.' Heath (p. 541): The defect in the measure is sufficiently accounted for by the break which divides the verse: 'A brother's murder' is in apposition, not to the curse, but to the offence.

39. as will] Theobald: An ingenious gentleman started, at a heat, this very probable emendation: 'as 'twill.' Will signifying barely the determination of mind.
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,
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? Where to 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;
My fault is past. But oh, 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.

43. neglect. What? neglect? what? Q,
Q; neglect? what? Fl. neglect? what?
Q, Q.
50. pardon’d] pardon Q3.
51. fault is] faults is Q, Q, Q.
52. ‘Forgive...murder?’ As quota-
tion, Glo. +, Dyce ii. Italics, Han. Hud.
52. murder?] Cald. Glo. +, Dyce ii.
Hud. murther Q, Q, 76. murther, Q, Q,
Murther: Q, Q, F, F, F, F. Mother: F,
Knt, Coll.
54. effects] affects Q, Q.

to do a thing, the sense will be this: ‘Though the pleasure I take in this act be as strong as the determination of my mind to perform it, yet my stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,’ &c. [Hanmer, Johnson, Heath, Keightley, adopted this conj. Ed.]
WARBURTON: ‘As will’ is rank nonsense. Read, ‘as th’ ill,’ i. e. though my inclination makes me as restless and uneasy as my crime does. The line following proves it. BOSWELL: The distinction between ‘inclination’ and ‘will’ is philosophically correct. I may will to do a thing because my understanding points it out to me as right, although I am not inclined to it. See Locke, On the Human Understanding, b. 2, ch. 21, sec. 30.

47. confront] CLARENDON: To oppose directly, and so to break down, the sin.
49. forestalled] CALDECOTT: Prevented from falling. MOBERLY: What is the very meaning of prayer, except that we pray first not to be led into temptation, and then to be delivered from evil?

51. what form] HUNTER (ii, 256): This speech is in many respects admirable.
But it wants an issue. We are left at last uncertain in what mould the prayer will be cast, when at the close of it he ‘retires and prays.’ It was not so when the play was originally written. His meditations there issue in a resolve. [See Reprint of Hamlet, 1603, line 1423, in Appendix.]

55. ambition] DELIUS: The realization of ambition; like ‘offence’ in the next line.
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;
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

56. *pardon'd* [pardon'd *Q*] *Q* *Q* 57. *gilded* [gilded *Q*] *Q* *Q* 58. *offence* [offence *Q*] *Q* 59. *prize* [prize *Q*] *Q* 60. *shove* [shove *Q*] *Q* 61. *purse* [purse *Q*] *Q* 62. *and* [and *Q*] *Q* 63. *world* [world *Q*] *Q*

56. *offence* [Warburton: Sh. here repeated a word which he employed two lines above, 'th' effects,' i.e. of his murder. Johnson: He that does not amend what can be amended retains his offence. The King kept the crown from the right heir.] 64. *prize* [Johnson: He that does not amend what can be amended retains his offence. The King kept the crown from the right heir.]

57. *currents* [Walker, Dyce]

58. *gilded* [Walker, Dyce]

59. *purse* [Dyce, Huds.]

60. *shove* [Dyce, Huds.]

61. *prize* [Collier (ed. 2): There cannot be a doubt of the propriety of an emendation [purse of the (MS) of an error, which perhaps arose from the use of short-hand in transcribing the words; purse and 'prize' being spelt with the same letters. Dyce (Strictures, &c., p. 189): The 'prize' is equivalent to 'the thing acquired by wicked means,' i.e. the crown.]

62. *we... evidence* [Wordsworth (Shakespeare's Knowledge of the Bible, p. 301): It is not a little remarkable that Sh. should have seized upon this point. He is supported by Bishop Pearson (obit. 1686), that great divine, who says: 'This conscience is not so much a judge as a witness bound over to give testimony, for or against us, at some judgement after this life.'

63. *ourselves compelled* [Tschischwitz: For another instance of the omission]
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, 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; 

66. if] aught Han. 
can not] cannot QqFf, Rowe+, 
Jen. can but Warb, 
69. angels] Angles Q, Qs, 
70. steel] steele Q, Qs. 
72. Om. Seymour, 
[Retires... ] Theob. (subs.). The King kneels. Rowe+ ...remains in Ac- 

E of the substantive verb, see II, ii, 230. CLARENDON instances I, ii, 90; and Rich. 

64. evidence] DELIUS: Contrary to the rule that a witness may not criminate 
himself. 

66. can not] WARBURTON: This nonsense even exceeds the last. Sh. wrote, 
‘when one can but repent; '] i.e. what can repentance do without restitution? JOHN- 
4. What can repentance do for a man that cannot be penitent, for a man who has 
only part of penitence, distress of conscience, without the other part, resolution 
of amendment? WALKER (Vers. 159): Write cannot, with the accent on the last 
syllable. 

69. engaged] CLARENDON: Hampered, entangled. 

69. essay] See BRAE'S forcible explanation of this word, III, i, 59, p. 208. 

72. well] COLERIDGE: This speech well marks the difference between crime and 
guilt of habit. The conscience here is still admitted to audience. Nay, even as an 
 audible soliloquy, it is far less improbable than is supposed by such as have watched 
men only in the beaten road of their feelings. But the final, ‘All may be well!’ is 
remarkable; the degree of merit attributed by the self-flattering soul to its own 
struggle, though baffled, and to the indefinite half-promise, half-command, to perse- 
vere in religious duties. The solution is in the divine medium of the Chris- 

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.

Oh, this is hire and salary, not revenge.

74. do'\(\)t] do'\(\)t [drawing] Cap.  
so he goes] so a goes Qq.  
75. revenged.] Glo. +. revenge\(d\), Q.  
Q, Q. revenged, Q.\(,\) reveng\(d\) : F, F,  
F, Dyce, Sta. Huds. reveng\(d\) : F\(,\)  
reveng\(d\)? Q\(7,\) et cet.  
76. A villain kills] He kill d Q\(7,\)  
77. sole\(,\) fools F, F, F, fool F\(,\)  
do... send] send him Q\(7,\)  
78. To heaven.] Separate line, Qq.  
Begins line 79, Ff, Rowe +, Jen. Ends  
line 77, Sta. Ktly.  
hire and salary] hire and Sallery  
Ff. base and silly Qq. a reward Q\(7,\)  
reward Q\(0,\)  
salary, not] silly.—not Q\(4,\) Q.  

Ham. came in at the back, the King was kneeling in front of the stage, and did not  
retire and kneel, as stated in modern eds.

73. Hamner (Some Remarks, &c., 1736, p. 41): This speech of Hamlet's has  
always given me great offence. There is something so very bloody in it, so  
inhuman, so unworthy of a hero, that I wish our poet had omitted it. Coleridge: Dr  
Johnson's mistaking [see note, line 95] of the marks of reluctance and procrastination  
for impetuous, horror-striking fiendishness!—of such importance is it to understand  
the germ of a character. But the interval taken by Hamlet's speech is truly awful!  
Hazlitt (p. 107): This refinement of malice here expressed by Ham. is in truth  
only an excuse for his own want of resolution. Hunter (ii, 255): In the whole  
range of the drama there is, perhaps, nothing more offensive than this scene.  
Ham. is made to do on an idea which is positively shocking. Besides, as an excuse  
for not then executing the command, under the spell of which he lived, it is poor  
and trivial. Moerbe: Ham. had before said (I, ii, 182): 'Would I had met my  
dearest foe in heaven,' &c. This notion of killing soul and body must therefore be  
the natural impulse of his mind. It seems simpler to admit this view of Hamlet's  
speech here than to consider it, as Coleridge does, to be at least half an excuse for  
ot doing now the act of vengeance from which his soul shrinks, though an unbending  
law has imposed it on him. Horn (ii, 56): Now comes the moment for revenge,  
but only for revenge, not for righteous punishment, which must be preceded by a  
full, perhaps also by a public, conviction.

75. would] For instances of 'would' requires to, see Mach. I, v, 19; I, vii, 34;  
and Abbott, § 329.

77. sole] Wardour: The Ff lead us to the true reading, which is 'fauln son,'  
i.e. disinherited. This was an aggravation of the injury; that he had not only  
murdered the father, but ruined the son. Heath: If any alteration be needed the  
Ff would rather direct us to substitute 'fool son.' Capell (vol. i, Various Readings, p.  
26) also conjectures 'fool.' Johnson: 'I his only son, who am bound to punish his  
murderer.' Caldecott: 'Foul (most probably a misprint) may be offending, de-  
generate. Collier (ed. 2): A blunder, of course, from the long s having been mis-  
taken, and from the misspelling of 'sole,' foole.
He took my father grossly, full of bread,
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;  

80. [Act III, Sc. iii.]

81. With all] With all, Qq. 

82. audit] Warburton: From these lines, and some others, it appears that Sh. had drawn the first sketch of this play without his Ghost; and, when he added that machinery, he forgot to strike out these lines. For the Ghost had told him very circumstantially how his audit stood; and he was now satisfied with the reality of the vision. Ritson: As it appears from the Ghost's own relation that he was in purgatory, Hamlet's doubt could only be how long he was to continue there.

83. our . . . thought] Both Caldecott and Delius connect 'our' with 'circumstance,' the former paraphrasing: 'the measure or estimate of what may have reached us,' the latter, 'according to human relations and thoughts.' Clarendon, on the other hand, connects 'our' with 'thoughts,' and paraphrases: 'the circumstance and course of our thought,' adding, 'We have a similar use of the possessive pronoun, I, iv, 73; III, ii, 321.' In Two Gent. I, i, 36, and Tro. & Cress. III, iii, 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] For instances of the infinitive indefinitely used, see Abbott, §§ 356, 357, and Mach. IV, ii, 69. Clarendon: In taking him.

88. hent] Theobald (Nichols's Illust. ii, 572): We must either restore bent or hint. [Not repeated in his ed.] Warburton (Nichols's Illust. ii, 648): The true word is plainly hent, command. [Not repeated in his ed.] As these conjectures are found in the private correspondence between Warburton and Theobald, Capell
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
At gaming, 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, wheroeto it goes. My mother stays.—

89. drunk asleep] Ff, Rowe, Cald.
Glo.+] drunk-asleep Johns. drunk,
asleep Qq et cet.
90. incestuous] incestuous Qq.
pleasure] pleasures Q'76, Cap.
91. gaming, swearing] game a swearing
92. Q.Q., game, a swearing QQ.
93. heels may] heele mas QQs.

cannot be accused of plagiarism for having adopted hint in his text. JOHNSON: To
'hent' is used by Sh. for to seize, to catch, to lay hold on. 'Hent' is therefore hold,
or seizure. 'Lay hold on him, sword, at a more horrid time.' CALDECOTT: 'Have
a more fierce, rash, or headlong grasp or purpose.' HYNTYN or hentyn, rapio,
aripio.'—Prompt. Parv. WHITE: 'A more horrid having, taking, opportunity.
STAUNTON: 'Feel or be conscious of a more terrible purpose.' DYCE (Gloss.): A
hold, an opportunity to be seized. CLARENDON: Equivalent to grip. Hamlet, as
he leaves hold of his sword, bids it wait for a more terrible occasion to be grasped
again. MOBERLY: A more fell grasp on the villain. JOHN DAVIES (N. & O. Qu.,
11 March, 1876): More probably here used in a sense common in some of the
western counties, meaning the course or passage of the ploughshare up the furrow.
This is the W. hynt, O. W. hent (Zeuss, 100, 101), a way, a course; compare Lat.
semi-irs, Gothic sinths. Hamlet's words would convey to the mind of a West-coun-
tryman a very forcible image; the sword, in its shearing through the flesh, being
compared to the passage of a ploughshare through the earth.

94, 95. JOHNSON: This speech, in which Ham., represented as a virtuous char-
acter, is not content with taking blood for blood, but contrives damnation for the
man that he would punish, is too horrible to be read or to be uttered. M. MASON:
Yet some moral may be extracted from it, as all his subsequent calamities were
owing to this savage refinement of revenge. [STEVENS cites from Webster's
White Devil, 1612; The Honest Lawyer, 1616; the third of Beau. & Fl.'s Four
Plays in One, to show that the same fiend-like disposition is displayed by the
various characters there portrayed. MALONE, to the same end, cites Machin's The
Dumb Knight, 1633. As this does not illustrate Sh., but his successors, I have not
repeated the half page from the Var. 1821. Ed.] REED: I think it not improbable,
that when Sh. put this horrid sentiment into the mouth of Ham., he might
have recollected the following story: 'One of these monsters meeting his enemy
unarmed, threatened to kill him, if he denied not God, his power, and essential
properties, viz. his mercy, suffrance, &c., the which when the other, desiring life,
pronounced with great horror, kneeling upon his knees; the brave cried out, nowe
will I kill thy body and soul, and at that instant thrust him through with his rapier.'
—Brief Discourse of the Spanish State, with a Dialogue annexed intitled Philoba-
silis, 4to, 1590, p. 24. CALDECOTT: Sh. had a full justification in the practice of the
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

The King rises, and comes forward. Theob. +. Om. Qqff.

SCENE IV.] Cap. SCENE II. Rowe.

The Queen's closet.] Steev. The Queen's Apartment. Rowe +.

age in which he lived. The true question is not whether this practice were founded in religion, but whether or not Sh. gave a faithful picture of human nature in a barbarous age. With our ruder Northern ancestors, revenge, in general, was handed down in families as a duty, and the more refined and exquisite, the more honorable it was; and this character or feature of it is to be found in every book that in those times applies to the subject. And it was a subject brought upon the stage by subsequent tragedians as late as the middle of the seventeenth century. Sh. has here in some sort laid a ground for the introduction of it by making the King himself proclaim (IV, vii, 129): 'Revenge should have no bounds;' and he makes even the philosophizing and moralizing Squire of Kent, in his beloved retirement from the turmoils of the world, exclaim on killing Cade, 2 Hen. VI: And as I thrust thy body in with my sword, So wish I, I might thrust thy soul to hell.' Wordsworth (Shakespeare's Knowledge of the Bible, p. 208) finds for Ham. the same palliation as does Caldecott.

96. physic] DELIUS: Hamlet calls his temporary forbearance a physic which does not impart life to his foe, but prolongs his illness.

96. HUDSON: Hamlet here flies off to an ideal revenge, in order to quiet his filial feelings without violating his conscience; effecting a compromise between them, by adjourning a purpose which, as a man, he dare not execute, nor, as a son, abandon. He afterwards asks Horatio:— Is't not a perfect conscience, to quit him with this arm? which confirms the view here taken, as it shows that even then his mind was not at rest on that score.

97, 98. COLERIDGE: Oh what a lesson concerning the essential difference between wishing and willing, and the folly of all motive-mongering, while the individual self remains!
HAMLET

Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en 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.
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.

4. silence me e'en] silence me even
Qq. silence me e'en F., silence me e'n F,F., silence me even Han. Sing. El.
Coll. ii (MS), Glo.+, Dyce ii, Huds. sconce me e'en Warb. silence me in Long MS.* here conceal myself Q.76.
5. with him] Om. Qq, Cap.
Ham...mother?] Om. Qq, Pope, Han. Cap. Steev. Var.
6. Queen.] Qu., Que. or Queen. Ff.
Ger. Qq (and throughout the scene, except line 51, where it is Quee).

6, 7. I'll...coming.] Han. I'll...not.
One line, QqFf, Rowe +, Cap. Jen. Mal.
Del. Prose, Cam. Cla.
6. warrant] wait Q,Qs, waite Q, Qs.
Withdraw] you withdraw Han.
7. [Polonius hides...] Rowe (subs.).
Om. QqFf.
Enter Hamlet.] After round. line
5, in Qq. Enter Hamlet, abruptly. Cap.
Knt, Del. i.

4. silence] HANMER: 'Sconce is the same as insconce, i.e. to cover or secure.
The same word is used upon a like occasion in Merry Wives, III, iii, 96. JOHNSON: The advocates of 'sconce forget that the contrivance of Pol. to overhear the conference was no more told to the Queen than to Ham. 'I'll silence,' &c., is 'I'll use no more words.' HUNTER (ii, 256): When Q, was altered, the text stood: 'I'll ensconce me here;' in printing en fell out, and was replaced wrongly; sconce, which remained, was then altered to 'silence.' DELIUS: As elsewhere, Polonius here thinks that he cannot be silent without letting it be known that he could and should say much more. DYCE: 'Silence' may be right; but Hamlet's alteration cannot be called an improbable one, in view of the corresponding words of Q. WHITE: Hammer's change is very plausible. STAUNTON: Perhaps Hamner is right. CAMBRIDGE EDITORS: We have adopted Hamner's correction because of the corresponding passage in Q.

5. Ham.] DYCE (ed. ii): I certainly am not disposed to find fault with those editors who have omitted this speech.

12. wicked] DYCE: Idle of the Ff was evidently caught by the transcriber or compositor from the preceding line. Such faulty repetitions are extremely frequent in the Folio throughout this play. See 'my lord,' I, v, 136; 'and if there,' I, v,
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
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?

Help, help, ho!


Ham. [Drawing] How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead!

[Makes a pass through the arras.

16. And—would...to l—you] Pope (subs.). And would it were not so, you Qq, But would you were not so. You Ff, Rowe, Cald. Kn., Del. But, 'would, you were not so l—You Theob. Warb.


[Makes...arras.] Cap. (subs.) Om. QqFf.

177: 'nevis,' II, ii, 52; 'your Honesty,' III, i, 110; 'had spoke,' III, ii, 3; 'my choice,' III, ii, 58; 'my functions,' III, ii, 164; 'this same skull, sir,' V, ii, 170; 'on sir,' V, ii, 267. WHITE: The Ff may be right, the intended emphasis of Hamlet's reply being in that case, 'you question with an idle tongue,' KNIGHT (ed. ii): The antithesis is in 'answer' and 'question,' and not in 'idle' and 'wicked.' Besides, 'wicked' was too strong an epithet for Ham. to apply to his mother,—inconsistent with that filial respect which he never wholly abandoned.

13, 14. Why...me?] WALKER (Crit. ii, 187?): Perhaps all this belongs to the Queen.

DYCE (ed. ii): I do not think so.

14. rood] DYCE (Gloss.) The cross, the crucifix. It would appear that, at least in earlier times, the rood signified not merely the cross, but the image of Christ on the cross.

24. rat] COLLIER: In Shirley's Trattor, 1635, Depazzi says of a secreted listener,
ACT III, SC. IV.

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

Queen. Oh me, what hast thou done? 25

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

Queen. Oh, 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 brazed it so,

That it is proof and bulwark against sense.


what hast] hast F


30. kill] kill'd F; kill'd F F f F f F f Rowe. [Lifts...discovers...] Glo. + . Lifts ends at see... Dyce, Sta. White (after line 26), Del. Huds. Lifts up the Arras, and draws forth Polonius. (after line 26), Cap. et cet. Om. QqFf, Rowe + .


Dyce ii.


33. [Drops the arras. White.

37. brazed] bras'd Qq, bras'd Glo. + .


El. Cam. Cla. sense] thy sense Q'03.

' I smell a rat behind the hangings.'—Works, vol. ii, p. 129, ed. Dyce. [Gifford asks, in a footnote: 'But how did this sneer at Sh. escape the wrath of Messrs Steevens and Malone?' Ed.] ELZE: According to Grimm, Correspondance Littéraire Secrète, Jan. 11, 1776, 'Chevalier Rutilge' defends this exclamation from Voltaire's sneer on the ground that 'a rat' was not only symbolic, but also that it often meant a spy. Compare the phrase, 'smell a rat,' 30. kill a king?] See Appendix, The Hystorie of Hamblet, p. 94 and p. 100, in reference to the Queen's innocence; also Q 4 , line 1532.

38. proof and bulwark] CLARENDON: 'Proof,' used here adjectively, is originally a substantive, as in Macb. I, ii, 54, and elsewhere, and thus suggests 'bulwark,' which would scarcely have been used for an adjective had it stood alone.

38. sense] CALDECOTT: Feeling.
Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths; oh, such a deed

As from the body of contraction plucks

42. *hypocrite* Q,Qq. *hypo-*
43. *crit Q.*
44. *sets* makes Ff, Rowe, Theob.

42. rose] It is only by keeping steadfastly in mind the many benefits which we have received at the hands of the early commentators that we can listen with any patience to their dispute about the meaning of this phrase. Warburton thinks it refers to an actual flower worn on the side of the face. Steevens accepts the flower but denies the 'side of the face,' because the text reads 'forehead;' it cannot mean a blush, 'because the forehead is no proper place for a blush to be displayed in.' It must be a rose on the forehead, and in proof a figure, in a painted glass window representing a Morrice-Dance, is cited that bears a flower on the forehead! (I hope here be truths!) It makes very little matter that this flower turns out to be a Deptford Pink; the flower is there, and the rose in Hamlet follows as of course. Malone is rather overpowered by this display of learning, but ventures to suggest that rose might 'only mean the roseate hue.' And then, as if frightened at his own boldness, hastens to add that 'the forehead certainly appears to us an odd place for the hue of innocence to dwell on;' and yet Sh. has represented a smile there, as in Tro. & Cres. II, ii, 205, and moreover, 'that part of the forehead which is situated between the eyebrows seems to have been considered by our poet as the seat of innocence and modesty,' as in IV, v, 119. Boswell closes the discussion forever by saying that 'rose' is put generally for the ornament, the grace, of an innocent love.' Caldecott refers to the proverb frequent in Sh., and found in The London Prodigal, 1605: 'As true as the skin between any man's brows.' And, lastly, Singer refers to Ophelia's description of Ham, as 'the rose of the fair state.'


46. contraction] Warburton: For 'marriage contract.' Caldecott: Annihilates the very principle of contracts. White: There seems to be no better explanation than Warburton's. But I suspect that there is corruption. Tschischwitz: Probably a misprint for contraction, formed by analogy with the Ital. contrattazioni. [This conjectural emendation (which Stratmann terms judicious, and compares with affection of the Ff for 'affection' of the Qq in II, ii, 422) Tschischwitz inserts in the text, and instructs us to read 'body of' as a trochee. Ed.] Hudson: 'Contraction' here means the marriage contract; of which Hamlet holds religion to be the life and soul, insomuch that without this it is but as a lifeless body,
The very soul, and sweet religion makes 47
A rhapsody of words; heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.

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

48. rhapsody] rapfodie Q, Q_, rapfodie Qf. Q, Q, Q, F.
Q, F, Q_ does Q, Q, Q, Q does Q, Q.
48, 49. glow; Yea,] glow, Yea Ff.
glow Oe Q, Q, Q, Q in QQ, Q Q, Q.
O'er Pope, Warb. Jen.
49. solidity] solidir Y.
50. tristful] triftfull F, F, F, heated

and must soon become a nuisance. Rather superstitious, perhaps; but it should be considered that this play was written nearly three hundred years ago, when marriage was more a 'despotism' than it is now. CLARENDON: The word has probably never been used, before or since, in the same sense.

48. rhapsody] CLARENDON: 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-mangies of many kindes of stuffe, or, as the Grecians call them, Rapsodies.'

49. solidity...mass] KNIGHT: The earth.

50. as against] WARBURTON reads 'and as 'gainst,' which he says makes 'a fine sense' in comparison with the 'sad stuff' of the original. [See I, i, 158.]

50. doom] That is, doomsday. See Macb. II, iii, 74. MOBERLY: Heaven blushes at you, and the solid mass of earth is sick to think of it, as if it were waiting for the day of judgement. MALONE asks: Had not Sh. St Luke's (xxi, 25, 26) description of the last day in his thoughts? WORDSWORTH (Shakespeare's Knowledge of the Bible, p. 305) replies: 'No doubt he had; but why not also the parallel descriptions of Matthew and of Mark? Yes, and still more, of Peter, 2 Ep. iii, 7-11; and John, Rev. xx, 11. The truth is, I fear, that whatever else our poet's critics have been strong in, they have, for the most part, not been strong in knowledge of the Scriptures; and that the book which they should have looked to first and most for help in the illustration of his works is the book which has been generally looked to last and least.'

51. Is thought-sick] TSCHISCHWITZ omits the hyphen, and affirms 'Is' to be the 'historical Present', that is, 'Is thought [to be] sick.'

52. and...index] WARBURTON [following the distribution of speeches in Q3]: To the Queen's question, 'what act?' Ham. replies: 'That roars so loud it thunders to the Indies.' He had before said, Heav'n was shocked at it; he now tells her it resounded all the world over. This gives us a very good sense where all sense was wanting. EDWARDS (Canons, &c., p. 156, 7th ed.): Sh. uses 'index' for title, or prologue. The Index used formerly to be placed at the beginning of a book, not at the end, as now. Thus, also, in Rich. III: II, i, 149; and Oth. II, i, 263.
Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this, the counterfeit presentment of two brothers.

MALONE: Bullokar's Expositor defines an 'Index' by 'A Table in a booke.' The table was almost always prefixed to books. Indexes, in the modern sense, were very uncommon. DYCE (Glos.): Index, a prelude, anything preparatory to another. TSCHISCHWITZ: The explanations of 'in the index' are very lame. Instead of 'in,' we should manifestly read is, and the sense is, 'What act, that roars so loud and thunders, is my accuser?' 'index' being understood in its ancient judicial sense.

53. picture] Davies (Dram. Misc., Dublin, 1784, vol. iii, p. 63): It has been the constant practice of the stage, since the Restoration, for Ham. to produce from his pocket two pictures in little of his father and uncle, not much bigger than large coins or medallions. Instead of movable scenery, which was first introduced from France by Betterton in 1662, Shakespeare's stage made use of tapestry. Two full-length portraits in the tapestry of the Queen's closet might be of service in this scene. STEEVENS: It is evident from the words, 'A station,' &c., that these pictures, which are introduced as miniatures on the stage, were meant for whole lengths, being part of the furniture of the Queen's closet. Ham., who in a former scene had censured those who gave 'forty, fifty ducats apiece' for his uncle's 'picture in little,' would hardly have condescended to carry such a thing in his pocket. MALONE: The introduction of miniatures in this place appears to be a modern innovation. A print prefixed to Rowe's edition of Hamlet, 1709, proves this. There the two royal portraits are exhibited as half-lengths, hanging in the Queen's closet; and either thus, or as whole-lengths, they were probably exhibited from the time of the original performance to the death of Betterton. To half-lengths, however, the same objection lies as to miniatures. STEEVENS: We may also learn that from this print the trick of kicking the chair down on the appearance of the Ghost was adopted by modern Hamlets from the practice of their predecessors. CALDECOTT objects to miniatures, because the audience could not then be permitted to judge of what they hear, nor make any estimate of the comparative excellence of the features, nor could the 'station' and the 'combination and the form' be adequately represented in so confined a space. Completely to do away with the objection that it is not probable that Ham. should have about him his uncle's picture, a Bath actor once suggested the snatching of it from his mother's neck. HUNTER (ii, 256): Perhaps Holman's way was the best. The picture of the then King hung up in the lady's closet, but the miniature of the king who was dead was produced by Ham. from his bosom. [FITZGERALD (Life of Garrick, ii, 65) suggests that the pictures be seen with the mind's eye only; a suggestion adopted by IRVING and SALVINI. FECHTER follows the suggestion of the Bath actor mentioned by Caldecott, and tears the miniature from his mother's neck and casts it away. ROSSI not only tears it from his mother's neck, but dashes it to the ground and stamps on the fragments. EDWIN BOOTH makes use of two miniatures, taking one from his own neck, and the other from his mother's.—A. I. FISH.]

54. counterfeit presentment] CALDECOTT: The picture, or mimic representation. See Mer. of Ven. III, ii, 116. CLARENDON: 'Counterfeit,' of course, is here used as an adjective. It is given by Cotgrave as an equivalent to the French pour trait.
HAMLET

ACT III, SC. IV.

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

55. war] Om. F, F, F, 
this] his Q,Q,F, Rowe, Cald. Knt. 
and] or F, Rowe+, Knt. 
56. and a] and Q,F, 
57. mil-dewed] mildewed Q,F,Q.
58. ear] ear Q,F, deare F. 
a heaven-kissing'] a heane, a kis- 
ing Q. 
60. and a] and Q,F, 
64. mildew'd] mil-dewed Q,F,Q. 
65. brother] breath Fl. 
66. batten] batten Q,F, Q.

55. this] For instances of the confusion in F, of his and this, see Walker, Crit. ii, 219.
59. Malone: It is not improbable that Sh. caught this image from Phaer's Æneid, book iv [line 246,—Clarendon]:—

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 arrive.'

Clarendon: 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.

64. ear] Observe, in Textual Notes, the gradual corruption of 'ear' into 'Deer', the compositors were misled by that which they corrupted. Ed.
66. fair] Clarendon: This epithet 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 II, i, 51; III, ii, 164; III, iv, 34.
67. batten] Wedgwood: To thrive, to feed, to become fat. Dutch bat, bet, better, more. Steevens: Thus, Marlowe's Jew of Malta [p. 297, ed. Dyce, 1850]: '—a mess of porridge? that will preserve life, make her round and plump, and batten more than you are aware.' Also, Claudius Tiberius Nero, 1607: '—and for milke I batten was with blood.' Caldecott: Thus, Milton's Lycidas, l. 29: 'Battening
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
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,

69. in the] of the Q'76.
   it's] its F.
71. step] stoop Coll. ii (MS), El.

our flocks with the fresh dews of night.' Dyce (Gloss.): 'To batten (grow fat),
pingueusco.'—Coles's Lat. and Eng. Dict. Clarendon: Cotgrave gives 'to battle'
as equivalent to 'Prendre chair,' s.v. 'Chair.' The word 'battels' is no doubt
derived from the same root. It occurs transitively in the above quotation from
Marlowe and Milton, and intransitively in Jonson's Foxt, i, i: 'With these thoughts
so battens.'

69. hey-day] Steevens: Thus, in Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, 1633:
——must The hey-day of your luxury be fed Up to a surfeit.' Caldecott: High
day is Johnson's explanation. It must mean the meridian glow. See 'such high-
day wit.'—Mer. of Ven. II, ix, 98. Wedgwood: German Heyda / Heyda / excla-
minations of high spirits, active enjoyment. Hence, hey-day, the vigor and high
spirits of youth, where the spelling is probably modified under an erroneous
impression that there is something in the meaning of the word which indicates a
certain period of life. Clarendon: The meaning is obvious, but the derivation
uncertain.

71. step] Collier (ed. 2): Stoop is from the (MS) with evident fitness, in refer-
ence to the disadvantageous comparison Ham. is drawing. Elze pronounces this a
brilliant emendation.

71. Sense] Warburton: From what philosophy our editors learnt this, I cannot
tell. Since motion depends so little upon sense, that the greatest part of motion in
the universe is amongst bodies devoid of sense. We should read: 'Else, could you
not have notion;' i.e. intellect, reason, &c. This alludes to the famous peripatetic
principle of Nil fit in intellectu, quod non fuerit in sensu. Capeall (i, 140): 'Sense'
is reason; since she moved and performed other actions that belonged to humanity,
the presumption was she had the reason belonging to it. Steevens: Whichsoever
of the readings be the true one, the poet was not indebted to this boasted philoso-
phy [referred to by Warburton] for his choice. Malone: 'Sense' has been already
used for sensation in line 38, above. Staunton: The meaning is: 'Sense (i.e.
the sensibility to appreciate the distinction between external objects) you must have,
or you would no longer feel the impulse of desire.' This signification of 'motion'
might be illustrated by numerous examples from our early writers, but the accom-
panying out of Sh. will suffice: Meas. for Meas. I, iv, 59; Oth. I, iii, 95; Ibid. I, iii,
334. Clarendon: 'Motion' is emotion, as in Meas. for Meas. cited above.
Moberly inclines to Staunton's explanation.

73. apoplex'd] Clarendon: We have 'apoplex,' for 'apoplexy,' in Ben Jonson,
For. I, i, p. 188, ed. Gifford: 'How does his apoplexy?' And in Beau. & Fl.
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
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

Philaster, II, ii: 'She's as cold of her favour as an apoplex.' The word is not found in Sh.; for the reading 'apoplex' in 2 Hen. IV: IV, iv, 130, is a conjectural emendation made by Pope for the metre's sake.

73. err] CLARENDON: 'Would not err so,' the sense being completed by what follows.

74. quantity] CLARENDON: 'Portion.' Some disparagement is implied in the word, as in III, ii, 38; V, i, 258; King John, V, iv, 23.

77. hoodman-blind] SINGER: 'The Hoodwinke play, or hoodmanblinde, in some places called the blindmanbuf.'—Baret's Alverie. COLLIER (ed. 2): An explanation of the game, if wanted, may be found in Strutt's Sports and Pastimes.

CLARENDON: See All's Well, IV, iii, 136. Cotgrave gives: 'Clignemusset. The childish play called Hodman blind, Harrie-racket, or, are you all hid.'

81. mope] STEEVENS: Could not exhibit such marks of stupidity. See Temp. V, i, 239.

82. hell] WARBURTON: Hanmer's change is nonsense. WHITE: Hanmer's change is very specious.

83. mutine] STEEVENS: Mutineers are called 'mutines' in V, ii, 6. MALONE. To 'mutine' anciently signified to rise in mutiny. Thus, in Knolles's History of the Turks, 1603: 'The Janissaries—became wonderfully discontented and began to mutine in diverse parts of the citie.' CLARENDON: See Jonson's Sceanus, III, i: 'Had but thy legions there rebell'd or mutined.' The verb does not occur again in Sh. Cotgrave gives: 'Mutiner: to mutine,' and 'Mutinateur: a mutiner.' This form, mutiner, occurs in Cor. I, i, 254, but in Temp. III, ii, 41, F, has 'mutineere.' [See also WALKER, Vers. 222.]
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 panders 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
As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,

88. ardour] Pope. ardure QqFf, my Q3.
Rowe. 88. And'] As Ff, Rowe. 89. eyes into my very] very eyes into cestous QqFf, Rowe, +, Cap. Jen.

85. her own fire] DELIUS: This refers to 'flaming youth.'
88. panders] THEOBALD: Suffers Reason to be the Bawd to Appetite. MALONE: See Ven. & Ad. 792.
90. grained] MARSH (Lectures on the English Language, New York, 1859, p. 67, et seq.): Granum, in Latin, signifies a seed or kernel, and it was early applied to all small objects resembling seeds, and finally to all minute particles. Hence it was applied to the round, seed-like form of the dried body, or rather ovarium, of an insect of the genus coccus, which furnished a variety of red dyes. Granum becomes grana in Spanish, graine in French, and grain in English, meaning a dye produced by the coccus insect, often called in commerce kermes. The color obtained from kermes or grain was peculiarly durable. When, then, a merchant recommended his purple stuffs as being dyed in grain, he originally meant that they were dyed with kermes, and would wear well; and this phrase was afterwards applied to other colors, as a mode of expressing the quality of durability. See Com. of Err. III, ii, 108; and Twelfth Night, I, v, 256. In both these examples [as also in the present instance from Hamlet] it is the sense of permanence (a well-known quality of the purple produced by the grain or kermes) that is expressed. It is familiarly known that if wool be dyed before spinning, the color is usually more permanent than when the spun yarn or manufactured cloth is first dipped in the tincture. When the original sense of grain grew less familiar, and it was used chiefly as expressive of fastness of color, the name of the effect was transferred to an ordinary known cause, and dyed in grain, originally meaning dyed with kermes, then dyed with fast color, came at last to signify dyed in the wool or other raw material. CLARENDON: Cotgrave has 'Graine: . . . graine wherewith cloth is dyed in graine; Scarlet dye, Scarlet in graine.'
91. leave] STEEVENS: 'To part with, give up.' See Two Gent. IV, iv, 79; Mer. of Ven. V, i, 172.
92. enseamed] THEOBALD: Seam is properly the fat or grease of a hog. It is used in Tro. & Cres. II, iii, 195. STEEVENS: Beau. & Fl. use enseamed in the same sense. See [Triumph of Death, p. 535, vol. ii, ed. Dyce]: 'His lechery inseamed
Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love

Over the nasty sty,—

Queen. 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;

94. sty,—] sty;— Theob. $tie. Qf.


95. ninth] Cam.

97. that is not] that's not the Q70.

98. that is not] Ed. conj.


100. tithe] tythe Ff. kyth Q7.

upon him.' In The Book of Hawking, bl. 1., n. d., we are told that 'ensayme of a hauke is the grece.' In Randle Holme's Academy of Armony and Blazon, B. II, ch. ii, p. 238, we are told that 'Enseame is the purging of a hawk from her glut and grease.' From the next page in the same work we learn that the glut is 'a slimy substance in the belly of the hawk.' Henley: In the West of England the inside fat of a goose, when dissolved by heat, is called its seam. White: The phrase is so gross that, were it not for Hamlet's mood, we might willingly believe that inconstant of Q4Q9 is the true text. [Cotgrave gives: 'Gramose, a dish made of slices of cold meat fried with Hogs seame.' There is also a note on this passage in the valuable essay: New Shakespearean Interpretations, Edin. Rev. Oct. 1872, p. 355, but the foregoing explanations are ample for so unsavory a subject. Ed.]


97. tithe] Stratmann: Kyth of the Q7 is evidently the true reading.

98. vice] Theobald was the first who noted that this means 'that buffoon character which used to play the Fool in old Plays.' In the Variorum notes to 2 Hen. IV: III, ii, 343, various fanciful etymologies of the word are given. Douce (i, 468) closes the discussion by showing that the character in the old moral-plays, known as the 'Vice,' was doubtless so named from the vicious qualities attributed to him, and from the mischievous nature of his general conduct. Collier (Hist. of Eng. Dram. Poetry, ii, 264, et seq.) gives the best account of this curious personage in a passage quoted by Dyce (Gloss.): As the Devil now and then appeared without the Vice, so the Vice sometimes appeared without the Devil. Malone tells us that 'the principal employment of the Vice was to belabor the Devil;' but, although he was frequently so engaged, he had higher duties. He figured now and then in the religious plays of a later date, and, in The Life and Repentance of Mary Magdalen, 1567, he performed the part of her lover, before her conversion, under the name of Infidelity; in King Darius, 1565, he also acted a prominent part, by his own impulses to mischief, under the name of Iniquity, without any prompting from the representative of the principle of evil. Such was the general style of the Vice, and as Iniquity he is spoken of by Sh. (Rich. III: III, i, 82) and Ben Jonson (Staple of News, second Intermean). The Vice and Iniquity seem, however, some-
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,

99. the rule,] a rogue Rann conj.
101. pocket?] pocket, a—Seymour.

Queen. No more!] Om. Q. Qo.

Pope.

No] Oh! no Han.

102. of... patches] Separate line, Steev.

Cald. Kn.t.

patches—] patches, Qq. patches.

times to have been distinct persons, and he was not unfrequently called by the name of particular vices; thus, in Lusty Juventus, the Vice performs the part of Hypocrisy: in Common Conditions he is called Conditions; in Like will to Like, he is named Nichol New-fangle; in The Trial of Treason his part is that of Inclination; in All for Money he is called Sin; in Tom Tyler and his Wife, Desire; and in Appius and Virginius, Haphazard. . . . Though Douce is unquestionably correct when he states that the Vice ‘was generally dressed in a fool’s habit’ [hence the expression in Hamlet, ‘A king of shreds and patches.’—Dyce], he did not by any means constantly wear the parti-colored habiliments of a fool; he was sometimes required to act a gallant, and now and then to assume the disguise of virtues it suited his purpose to personate. In The Trial of Treasure, 1567, he was not only provided, as was customary, with his wooden dagger, but, in order to render him more ridiculous, with a pair of spectacles (no doubt of a preposterous size). . . . The Vice, like the Fool, was sometimes furnished with a dagger of lath, and it was not unusual that it should be gilt. . . . Tattle [in Jonson’s Staple of News] observes that ‘there is never a fiend to carry him [the Vice] away,’ and in the first Intermean of the same play Mirth leads us to suppose that it was a very common termination of the adventures of the Vice for him to be carried off to hell on the back of the Devil; ‘he would carry away the Vice on his back, quick to hell, in every play where he came.’ In The Longer thou livest the more Fool thou art, and in Like will to Like, the Vice is disposed of nearly in this summary manner: in the first, Confusion carries him to the Devil, and in the last, Lucifer bears him off to the infernal regions on his shoulders. In King Darius the Vice runs to hell of his own accord, to escape from Constancy, Equity, and Charity. According to Bishop Harsnet (in a passage cited by Malone,—Shakespeare, by Boswell, iii, 27), the Vice was in the habit of riding and beating the Devil, at other times than when he was carried against his will to punishment.

99. cutpurse] CLARENDON: Purses were usually worn outside attached to the girdle.

102. Enter Ghost] COLLIER (ed. 2): The stage direction of Qs shows that at
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?

Oh, say!

Ghost. Do not forget. This visitation

Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.

104. your] you Ff. you, Rowe, Cald.
105. Om. Seymour.
   he's] hee's Qq. hes Ff.
   mad] mad— Theob. Warb.

that date, in this scene, the spirit was not apparelled as when it had before appeared on the platform. This is important, because it completely explains Hamlet's exclamation in line 135. In the (MS) it is unmarried. If, therefore, the Ghost did not wear a 'nightgown,' he was unmarried at the time of the old annotator. Elze: 'Who,' asks Goethe (Nachgelassene Werke, vol. v, p. 61), in reference to the stage-direction in Q, 'does not feel a momentary pang on comprehending this? to whom is it not repulsive? And yet when we grasp it, and reflect upon it, we find that it is the right way.' The Ghost is not here introduced, as in Act I, in warlike guise, but in his every-day clothing. . . . We must not be too precise in the matter of this nightgown,—it refers to the ordinary clothes of the old king. Keightley (Exp. p. 294): As the Ghost makes but one short speech, if it could be so managed, it would be more psychologic and effective for him to remain invisible, except to Ham. mentally, and his voice only be heard by the audience. Clarendon: Nightgown here is the same as dressing-gown.

103. me . . . me] MARSHALL (p. 51): The use of the singular number may be accidental, or it may intimate that Ham. felt this visitation to be addressed to him alone. On the former occasion he used the plural.

104. would your] Dyce: The composer of the Folio has here omitted by mistake the take r. STRATMANN agrees with Dyce. CORSON: Making 'figure' the vocative [as in Rowe's text] is the better reading. 'Figure' doesn't make, logically, a very good subject to 'would.'

107. time and passion] JOHNSTON: That, having suffered time to slip and passion to cool, lets go, &c. CLARENDO: Or rather the indulgence of mere passion has diverted him from the execution of his purpose. COLLIER (ed. 2): The (MS) has fume for 'time.' We do not adopt fume, because, though it may have been the word used by some actor when the old annotator saw the play, we doubt if it were the word of Sh., who probably used 'laps'd in time' to indicate Hamlet's indecision, which had allowed the proper period for revenge to escape. ELZE applauds and adopts fume.

108. important] CLARENDO: Urgent, requiring immediate attention. Compare Mu' k Ado II, i, 74; Tvo. & Cres. V, i, 89.
But look, amazement on thy mother sits;
Oh, step between her and her fighting soul;
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 incorporeal 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,
Starts up and stands an end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

113. fighting] fighting Q, Q., Q,
117. you do] you doe Q, you F.,
118. the incorporeal] th' incorporeal
120. starts] stands] Start...stands Q,
121. beheaded] beaded Q, Q., Q., Q., Q., Om. Q', 76.


121. hair...Start] Clarendon [reading ‘hair...Start’]: ‘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.

121. excrements] Pope: The hairs are excrementitious, that is, without life or sensation. Malone: See Macb. V, v, 11-13. Whalley: Not only the hair of animals having neither life nor sensation was called an excrement, but the feathers of birds had the same appellation. Thus, in Izaak Walton’s Compleat Angler, P. I, c. i, p. 9, ed. 1766: ‘I will not undertake to mention the several kinds of fowl by which this is done, and his curious palate pleased by day; and which, with their very excrements, afford him a soft lodging at night.’ Nares: Everything that appears to vegetate or grow upon the human body; as the hair, the beard, the nails. Dyck (Gloss.): ‘And albeit hayre were of it selfe the most abiect excrement that were, yet should Poppaes hayre be reputed honourable. I am not ignorant that hayre is noted by many as an excrement, a fleeting commodity, . . . An excrement it is, I deny not,’ &c.—Chapman’s Justification of a strange action of Nero, &c. 1629, sig. B.2. Clarendon: 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.’

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!

127. upon] on Pope+. 132. it] is there Q,Q. 129. effects] Malone: Used for actions, deeds effected. Singer: We should certainly read affects, i.e. dispositions, affections of the mind, as in Oth. I, iii, 264. It is remarkable that we have the same error in Meas. for Meas. III, i, 24. The 'piteous action' of the Ghost could not alter things already effected, but might move Ham. to a less stern mood of mind. Stratmann pronounces this conj. of Singer's very plausible. Hudson: I can find no meaning in 'effects' that will run smooth with the context. Clarendon: The accomplishment of my stern purposes.

130. true colour] Caldecott: Change the nature of my fell purposes, ends, or what I mean to effect. And make those purposes lose their proper character. The expression somewhat resembles that of the Queen, line 91, 'leave their tinct.'

131. nothing there?] Seymour (ii, 188): Upon this question of Hamlet's we see on the stage the Queen turning anxiously and slowly her looks about the room as if she expected to find the object referred to; whereas, she entertain no such apprehension, but is solely occupied in anxiety at her son's distraction. The actresses make the Queen as mad as Ham., and are generally applauded for their mistake.

134. steals] Miscellaneous Obs. on Hamlet (p. 44): Surely Sh. wrote stalks. He uses the same word twice before in this play, describing the gait of the apparition. [Thus also Quincy (MS).]

135. See notes on stage-direction, line 102. Steevens, not having the aid afforded by Q., endeavored to get rid of the discrepancy between the 'armor' of the earlier scenes and the 'habit' here by punctuating the line thus: 'My father—in his habit—as he lived!' Mason (p. 390): A man's armor, who is used to wear it, may be called his habit, as well as any other kind of clothing. 'As he lived' means 'as if he were alive—as if he lived.' [It is probable, as Clarendon suggests, that 'the Ghost appears in the ordinary dress of the king.']

135 as] As if. See I, ii, 217.
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
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering union to your soul,
That not your trespass but my madness speaks;
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infests unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past, avoid what is to come,

136. even] ev'n Pope. 142. utter'd] uttered Qq. uttered Fl,
137. brain] White: The six lines following this in Q., in which there is a de-
139-155. Clarke: Let any one who is inclined to be swayed by the special
pleading and question-begging of those who maintain that Ham. is really mad, read
carefully over this speech, with its sad earnestness, its solemn adjuration, its sober
remonstrance, and ask himself whether Sh. could by possibility have intended his
hero to be otherwise than most sane and sound of mind.
144. for love] For the omission of the definite article compare V, ii, 51, 'writ
up in form,' and see Abbott § 59.
150. what is to come] Seymour (ii, 189): What is to come cannot be avoided;
perhaps, read 'what else will come,' i. i. without repentance.
And do not spread the compost o'er the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue,
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, courb 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 mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.

151. weeds] Johnson: Do not, by any new indulgence, heighten your former offences.

152-155. Forgive . . . good.] Staunton: Although the modern edd. uniformly print this as if Ham. addressed it to the Queen, nothing can be more evident than that it is an imploration to his own virtue. [Staunton therefore marks it as an 'Aside,' with a comma after 'Forgive me this.'] Clarke: Surely the context shows that Ham. asks his mother to pardon the candor of his virtuous reproof, emphasizing it by line 153. Daniel (p. 75) also suggested a comma between 'this' and 'my.' [I agree with Clarendon, that Staunton's 'Aside' has great probability. Ed.]

153. fatness . . . pursy] Delius: The same connection of ideas between these words is repeated in V, ii, 274. Clarendon: Cotgrave gives 'Poulisf . . . Pursie, short-winded, breathing with difficulty.'

155. courb] Steevens: Bend and truckle. From French courber. So, in the Vision of Piers Ploughman, l. 617 (ed. T. Wright): 'Thanne I courbed on my knees, And cried hire of grace.' Clarendon adds line 880 also. Walker (Crit. iii, 267): It would be better, for distinctness' sake, to write, with F, courb; as Cary does, Purg. x. l. 104. Daniel (p. 75) to the same effect.

156. thou] Note the use of the more affectionate 'thou.'

156. twain] Seymour (ii, 190): The Queen means by this that her heart is divided between compunction at her misconduct and a sense of her duty.

157, 158. Moerly: The manly compassion of a pure heart to the weak and fallen could not express itself with more happy persuasiveness than in this reply, which takes the unhappy Queen's mere wail of sorrow and transmutes it to a soul-strengthening resolve.

157. worser] For instances of double comparatives, see II, i, 11; III, ii, 291 V, ii, 121.

158. live] Stratmann: Leve, of the Qq, seems to be the true reading
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,

161-165. That...put on.] Om. Fl. 161, 162. _eat, Of habits devill._] Q76, 161i, Dyd. Glo. +, Clarke. _eate Of habits devill,_ Qq. _eat Of habit's devill,_ Rowe, Steev. Var. Sing. i. _eat, Of habit's devill,_ Pope. _eat Of habits evil,_ Theob.


161, 162. _eat . . . devill_ THEOBALD: 'Habits devil' arose from the supposed necessity of contrasting _devill_ and _angel._ 'Habits evil!' I owe to the sagacity of Dr Thirlby. That is, custom, which, by inuring us to ill habits, makes us lose the apprehension of their being really ill, as easily will reconcile us to the practice of good actions. Theobald, in his correspondence with Warburton (Nichols's _Illust. of Lit._ ii, 574), says: 'I would read and point "doth eat Of habit's evil," &c., i. e. of the evil of habit.' [Herein he is followed by SINGER (ed. 2) and WHITE. ED.] JOHNSON: I think Thirlby's conjecture wrong; _angel_ and _devill_ are evidently opposed. MALONE: I incline to think with Dr Thirlby. STEEVENS: I would read: _Or habit's devil._ The poet first styles _custom a monster,_ and may aggravate and amplify his description by adding, that it is the 'demon who presides over habit.'—That monster custom, or habit's devil, is yet an angel in this particular. BOSWELL: 'Habit's devil' means a devil in his usual habits. BECKET (i, 60) and MITFORD (Gent. _Mag._ 1845) both conjectured 'If habit's devil;' the latter paraphrases: 'If that monster, custom, which in general is the devil of habit, leading to evil, yet in this thing acts the good part of angel,' &c. CALDECOTT: 'That monster, custom, who devours all sense, all just and correct feeling, (being also) the evil genius of (our) propensities or habits, is, nevertheless, in this particular a good angel.' It has been suggested that if a comma were placed after 'habits' the sense would be—'A monster or devil, who makes mankind insensible to the quality of actions which are habitual.' KNIGHT: The edd. who have made 'habits' the genitive case cannot explain their own reading. As we print the passage it means: custom, who destroys all nicety of feeling,—sense,—sensibility,—who is the devil that governs our habits,—is yet an angel in this, &c. COLLIER (ed. 1): Our punctuation means, 'that monster, custom, who is a devil, devouring all sense of habit, is still an angel in this,' &c. SINGER (ed. ii): The old copy indicates clearly the misprint, for the word is here _devill,_ while just below and elsewhere it is uniformly _divell_ when the evil spirit is meant. DELIUS (ed. i): The opposition between 'angel' and 'devill' shows that the latter as well as the former refers to 'monster, custom,' 'devill,' therefore, must be in apposition, separated, it is true, from the subject by the subordinate clause. COLLIER (ed. ii): We now adopt Thirlby's emendation, although it is very possible that an opposition between 'devill' and 'angel' was intended. Still, the passage is decidedly corrupt. WHITE: The text of the Qq is clearly wrong. 'Angel' is opposed to 'monster' in the line above. The old text also nullifies the force of the important word 'likewise,' two lines below. STAUNTON: The trifling change we have taken the liberty to make, while doing little violence to the original, may be thought, it is hoped, to give at least as good a meaning as any other which has been proposed. KEIGHTLEY: The verb 'eate' here could never have come from the poet's pen; for it makes pure nonsense. I read _create_ with the greatest confidence, of which the first two letters must have
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
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 master the devil, or throw him out

105. on. Refrain to-night] Johns.
  on to refraine night Qq, on: refrain
to night Q'76, Rowe. on: Refrain to-
night Pope et cet.

Refrain to-night} Closes 1.160, Ff.
167–170. the next more...potency.]    Om. Ff.

168. almost can] can almost Rowe.+
169. And...the] Jen. Steev. (1783),

been effaced in the poet's MS. We have an exact parallel in smell, 'all,' in Timon,
1, ii, 132. 'Sense' seems here to signify kind, manner, way. [Keightley's text
reads: 'That monster, custom, who all sense doth create Of habits, devil is angel
yet in this,' &c., which is to me unintelligible. ED.] CLARENDON: 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 I. 164. MOBERLY:
This noble passage contains Shakespeare's philosophy of custom (1604),
in which, happier than some professed moralists, he sees that the function of habit
is to work upward towards a formed resolution.

164. livery] MOBERLY: Just as a new dress or uniform becomes familiar to us by
habit, so custom enables us readily to execute the outward and practical part of the
good and fair actions which we inwardly desire to do.

169. master] MALONE: For the insertion of the word curb I am answerable.
The printer or corrector of a late Quarto, finding the line nonsense, omitted the word
either, and substituted master in its place. The modern editors have accepted the
substituted word, and yet retain either; by which the metre is destroyed. The word
omitted in the first copy was undoubtedly a monosyllable. STEEVES: This very
rational conjecture may be countenanced by the same expression in Mer. of Ven. IV,
i, 277. SINGER (ed. i) [reading 'either quell,' followed by MOBERLY]: The occurrence
of curb in so opposite a sense just before is against Malone's emendation.
STAUNTON: 'Master,' which, as it affords sense, though destructive to the metre, we
retain, not, however, without acknowledging a preference for Malone's emendation.
WALKER, Vers. 75: Read 'either master th' devil,' &c. Moreover, 'curb' occurs
fourteen lines before.—CRIT. i, 398. BAILEY (ii, 12): Ham. means to say that cus-
tom can either bring the devil into our natures, or throw him out. I therefore pro-
pose: 'And either house the devil,' which forms an appropriate counterpart to
[169. ‘either master the devil.’]

‘throw him out.’ Forsyth proposed the same word in his Notes, &c., 102, and also in N. & Qu., 1 Dec. ’66. Elze (Athenaeum, 11 Aug. ’66) proposes, ‘And either usher the devil,’ and thinks that the similarity of sound in the two consecutive words, ‘either usher,’ may have caused the compositor of Q₁ to omit the latter. H. D. (Athenaeum, 18 Aug. ’66): Why not read, ‘To master the devil, and throw him out.’ Bolton Corney (N. & Qu., 8 Dec. ’66): Read ‘And either aid the,’ &c. J. Wetherell (N. & Qu., 22 Dec. ’66) believes that sound and sense are satisfied by ‘And hie there the devil,’ a speedy summons is hereby contrasted with a dismissal implied in ‘throw him out.’ Cartwright (New Readings, &c., p. 37): Read ‘And either lay the,’ &c. Nicholson (N. & Qu., 19 Dec. 1868): I propose, ‘And either throne,’ &c. Its alliteration explains its omission, and why ‘cast out,’ the wording of every version, was changed into ‘throw out.’ It restores to the line its musical tone. It gives the exact sense required. Persistence in well-doing, whether by doing good or by leaving evil undone, exercises the Tempter with wondrous potency; but persistence in evil so destroys rebelling conscience, that the prince of this world unresistingly ascends our vacant throne, and makes of us willing and unrespective servants for his work. Lastly, it gives not only the exact sense, but the full sense, required by the context, whether above or below it. Clarendon: It seems more probable that something is omitted which is contrasted with ‘throw out,’ and this may have been ‘lay’ or ‘lodge.’ The latter was the technical word used in Harsnet’s Declaration, c. 12. Moerly [reading ‘either quell’]: Either quell him once for all, or baffle his attacks whenever they arise. Ingleby (Sh. Hermeneutics, p. 125) records two emendations suggested to him by friends: Sylvester proposes, ‘either mask the devil,’ of which Q₁ is the corruption. Compare III, i, 47-49. And C. J. Munro ‘half-seriously’ suggests: ‘And entertain the devil.’ ‘It is not easy to discover,’ says Ingleby, ‘why [the words suggested by Malone, Singer, and the rest] should find more favor than a score of others just as good.’ Curb suggests rein, rule, thrall, bind, chain, &c.; quell, lay, and couch suggest charm, worst, quench, foil, bulk, cross, thwart, daunt, shame, cow, tame, &c.; while aid suggests fire, rouse, stir, serve, feed, &c. Besides which, there are many dissyllables that befit the sense and measure, as abate, abase, &c. And why not read ‘over-master,’ which occurs in a former scene? Thus we see what a wealth of suggestion has been ignored! We venture to call attention to the evident requirements of the passage: ‘The stamp of nature’ is not new to us in this connection, nor in this play; we have had it twice in the second ghost-scene, viz. ‘the vicious mole of nature,’ and ‘the stamp of one defect.’ Now Hamlet would say, ‘Use almost can change, or convert, this stamp of nature;’ so that an antithesis is not only not required, but is impertinent. Use, he would say, can either subdue habit’s devil’ by following out his own prescription of gradual weaning from evil, or (if the worst come to the worst, and revolution be necessary) cast him out; and either of these can such use, or change of habit, effect ‘with wondrous potency.’ The keynote of the whole passage is ‘Reformation, by gradually subduing evil habits;’ and so far from Hamlet’s advice, ‘assume a virtue if you have it not,’ being a recommendation of hypocrisy, it is given solely with the view of facilitating inward amendment, and is therefore honest and sincere. The missing word, then, must at least import the subduing of the devil of habit. In the First Quarto we have the expression, ‘And win [i.e. wean] yourself by little as you may’ from the sin to which you
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,
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:

172. [Pointing...] Om. QqFf.
173. heaven hath] the heavens have
174. him...me] him with me, and me
179. This Qq.
180. One...lady.] Om. Ff, Rowe+. Hark, one...lady. Cap. But one...lady.

[the Queen] have habituated yourself. Now, that weaning by little and little, or
gradually weaning the will and affections from the customary sin, 'recurring and
suggesting still,' is just what the missing word, were it recovered, would assuredly
be found to express or imply. Lay and shame are equally acceptable in sense, and
both afford a perfect rhythm. Perhaps shame is the finer reading of the two. At
the same time it must be owned that Hamlet's prescription is calculated to do little
for the sinner; at best, we fear, to 'skin and film the rancorous place.' We can
hardly say that conjecture has yet determined the best reading here, though it cannot
be said that sufficient indications are wanting for its guidance. Unfortunately, it is
in the very nature of the case that some doubt should continue to vex this passage,
after conjecture has done its work.

172. of you] Seymour (ii, 190): The desire to be blest will show contrition, and
constitute a state of grace; consequently, it will render you fit to bestow a blessing
upon me.

174. MALONE: To punish me by making me the instrument of this man's death,
and to punish this man by my hand. MOBERLY: To give me this penal task, which
will be the worse done for my having to do it.

175. their] For instances of Shakespeare's use of Heaven as a plural, see Walker
Crit. ii, 110.

178, 179. I...behind] Delius: These two lines, of which the first explains
Hamlet's sudden change of bearing towards his mother and his cruel speeches after
it, should be spoken as an Aside.

180. word] For instances of monosyllables containing a vowel followed by 't,'
whi...h, according to Abbott, are prolonged in scansion, see Abbott, § 485.
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
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,

182. the bloat] Warb. the blost Q3.
the blust Ff, Rowe. not the Q'76. the
fond Pope, Theob. Han.
again to bed ] to bed again Q'76.
186. to ravel ] to ravell F_f,F_3,
rouell Q3.
188. mad ] made F_1.

182. bloat] BLACKSTONE: This again hints at his intemperance. He had already drunk himself into a dropsy. [See I, ii, 20.]


184. reechy] DYCE (Gloss.): 'Reechy is greasy, sweaty. . . . Lancham [in his Letter, &c.], speaking of "three pretty puzels" in a morris-dance, says they were "as bright as a breast of bacon," that is, bacon hung in the chimney; and hence reechy, which in its primitive signification is smoky, came to imply greasy.'—RITSON. CLARENDON: 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.'

186. ravel] DYCE (Gloss.): To unravel, unweave,—to unfold, to disclose.

189. a] CALDECOTT: Strictly speaking, 'no more than;' but, in the familiar language of banter, importing 'who being as much as, having some pretence at least, or title, to the rank and state of,' &c. MOBERLY: Unless more can be said of a woman than that she is a queen, fair, sober, wise, of course it is natural for her to take the scum of the earth into her inmost confidence.


190. gib] STEEVENS: A common name for a cat. See Chaucer's Romance of the Rose, 6208: — Gibbe oure cat, That awaytetth mice and ratters to kyllen.' NARES: A male cat. An expression exactly analogous to that of a Jack-ass, the one being formerly called Gib, or Gilbert, as commonly as the other Jack. Tom-cat is now the usual term, and for a similar reason. Tibert is said to be the old French for Gilbert, an old name of the cat in Reinke Fuchs. In Sherwood's English
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
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,

191. concernings] concernings Q;
concernings Qf,

195. conclusions, in the basket] conclusions in the basket Qq. Conclusions in the Basket, Ff, conclusions ; in the basket Pope.

198. breathe] breath Qf,Ff, Cap.

French Dictionarie, appended to Cotgrave, we have 'A gibbe (or old male cat).
Macou.' [A misprint for Matou; which Nares silently corrects, but which is unnoticed by Dyce and Clarendon. Ed.] Coles has 'Gib, a contraction for Gilbert;' and 'a Gib-cat, catus, felis mas.' Keightley: I read 'gib-cat,' as 'gib' never occurs alone. We surely would not say a tom for a tom-cat, a jack for a jackass, a jack-daw, &c. Clarendon: Gynmalkin was the female cat. The toad, bat, and cat were supposed to be familiars of witches, and acquainted with their mistresses secrets.

194. famous ape] Warner: Sir John Suckling, in one of his letters, may possibly allude to the same story: 'It is the story of the jackanapes and the partridges; thou starest after a beauty till it be lost to thee, and then let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too.' Clarendon: No one has yet found the fable here alluded to.


198. breathe] Caldecott: 'Most distantly glance at.' See II, i, 44. Moberly: The Queen keeps her word, and is rewarded by the atoning punishment which befalls her in this world. Rue is herb of grace to her, as poor Ophelia says.

200. England] Malone: Sh. does not inform us how Ham. came to know that he was to be sent to England. Ros. and Guil. were made acquainted with the King's intentions for the first time in the very last scene; and they do not appear to have had any communication with the Prince since that time. Add to this, that in a subsequent scene, when the King, after the death of Pol., informs Ham. he was to go to England, he expresses great surprise, as if he had not heard anything of it before.—This last, however, may, perhaps, be accounted for as contributing to his design of passing for a madman. Stearns (Sh. Treasury, &c., p. 366): We may infer that Ham. had managed to place Hor. in some office or employment about the
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, 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; oh, '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.

201. on] Om. Han.
202-210. Om. Ff, Rowe.
206. the sport] true sport Anon.*
Q'76, Pope et cet.
207. petar] petard Johns.
and't] Theob. an't Qq, Pope.
meet,] Q'76. meete, Q', Q'.
210. shall] will Q'76.

court where he could get at state secrets. MILES (p. 52): Ham., on his way to his mother's closet, must have overheard the interview between the King and Ros. and Guil. For scarcely in any other way could he have foreknown this royal determination to send him away.

202. There's letters] See IV, v, 5; Macb. II, iii, 137; and Abbott, § 333.

203. fang'd] JOHNSON: 'Adders with their fangs, or poisonous teeth, undrawn. SEYMOUR (i, 191): It means, rather, with their poisonous teeth extracted; CALDECOTT inclines to this interpretation.

204. They] CLARENDON: The nominative is repeated for clearness, after an intervening parenthesis. See 'he,' II, i, 84.

206. engineer] For list of nouns with the suffix -er, signifying the agent, see WALKER (Vers. 217), or Abbott, § 443. For words with accent nearer the beginning than with us, see Abbott, § 492. See 'truster,' I, ii, 172; 'pioneer,' I, v, 163.

207. hoist] Dyce (Gloss.): For hoisted or hoisted (not as Caldecott explains it: 'i. e. mount. Hoist is used as a verb neuter'). CLARENDON: If it is the participle of the verb hoist, it is the common abbreviated form for the participles of verbs ending in a verbal. [See I, ii, 20.]

209. at] Abbott, § 143: 'At' is used like near with a verb of motion, where we should use up to. MOBERLY: Like Virgil's 'It caelo clamor.'

210. line] MALONE: Still alluding to a countermine.

211. packing] CLARENDON: 'Contriving,' 'plottings.' There is, of course, a play upon the other sense of the word: 'to be off quickly.' [DELIUS's interpretation of one of its meanings: 'sich belasten,' to load one's self, referring to Hamlet's lugging off Pol., is, I think, a little too fine spun. ED.]

212. guts] STEEVENS gives several examples (one from Lyly, 'who made the
ACT III, SC. IV.

HAMLET

Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.—

Come, sir, to draw towards an end with you.—

213. good night. Indeed] good night indeed, Q\(\text{q}\).

215. in life] in's life Q\(76\).

foolish] most foolish Q\(\text{q}\), Jen.

first attempt to polish our language') to show that anciently this word was not so
offensive to delicacy as at present. Caldecott, while conceding this, nevertheless
thinks that 'there is a coarseness and want of feeling in this part of the conduct, if
not in the language, of Hamlet,—an excuse for which we seek in vain at this time
in the peculiarity or necessities of his situation;' and he can account for it only by
supposing that it must have been in compliance with the rude taste of the age.

Halliwell: This is one of those words which the silly caprice of fashion has in-
vested with an imaginary coarseness. I have seen a letter, written about a century
ago, in which a lady of rank, addressing a gentleman, speaks of her guts with the
same nonchalance with which we should now write stomach. Staunton: It was
commonly used where we should employ entrails, and in this place really signifies
no more than lack-brain or shallow-pate.

212. Staunton: A consideration of the exigencies of the theatre in Shakespeare's
time, which not only obliged an actor to play two or more parts in the same drama,
but to perform such servile offices as are now done by attendants of the stage, shows
that this line is a mere interpolation to afford the player an excuse for removing the
body. We append a few examples where the same expedient is adopted for the
same purpose. Among them the notable instance of Sir John Falstaff carrying off the
body of Harry Percy on his back,—an exploit as clumsy and unseemly as Ham-
let's 'tugging out' Pol., and, like that, perpetrated on the modern stage only from
sheer ignorance of the circumstances which originated such a practice: Rom. & Jul.
III, i, 201; Rich. II: V, v, 118, 119; 1 Hen. IV: V, iv, 160; 1 Hen. VI: I, iv,
110; Ibid. II, v, 120, 121; Ibid. IV, vii, 91, 92; 2 Hen. VI: IV, i, 145; Ibid. IV,
x, 86, 87; Ibid. V, ii, 61-65; 3 Hen. VI: II, v, 113; Ibid. II, v, 121, 122; Ibid.
V, vi, 92, 93; Rich. III: I, iv, 287, 288; Lear, IV, vi, 280-282; Tro. & Cæs. V,
viii, 21, 22; Jul. Cæs. III, ii, 261; Ibid. V, v, 78, 79; Ant. & Cleo. IV, ix, 31, 32;
Ibid. IV, xiv, 138. These instances from Sh. alone, and they could easily be multi-
plied, will suffice to bring into view one of the inconveniences to which the elder
dramatists were subject through the paucity of actors; and at the same time, by ex-
hibiting the mode in which they endeavored to obviate the difficulty, may afford a
key to many passages and incidents that before appeared anomalous.

215. foolish prating] Walker (Crit. i, 25): Write foolish-prating; unless, in-
deed, 'foolish' is opposed to 'grave,' and 'prating' to 'secret'.

215. a . . . knave] Moberly: These are almost exactly the words used by the
porter at Holyrood, when Rizzio's body was placed on a chest near his lodge
(Froude, viii, 254).

216. to draw] Clarendon: For the construction compare III, ii, 329. Steevens:
Sh. has been unfortunate in his management of the story of this play, the most
striking circumstances of which arise so early in its formation as not to leave him
Good night, mother.

[Exeunt severally; Hamlet dragging in Polonius.

217. [Exeunt... ] Steev. after Cap. Polonius. Ff, Rowe+. (tugging out, Exit. Qq. Exit Hamlet tugging in Han.)

room for a conclusion suitable to the importance of its beginning. After this last interview with the Ghost the character of Ham. has lost all its consequence.

217. Good night, mother] HUNTER (ii, 257): This scene has always been admired as one of the masterpieces of this great dramatic writer; and there are in it undoubtedly fine opportunities for the display of an actor's powers,—striking situations, and also fine poetry. But the question arises, To what purpose all this excitement and bustle? The scene appears to have been written for its own sake, not helping forward the story. Except that Pol. is accidentally killed in the course of it, the parties are left precisely where they were, Ham. having only in this forcible manner signified to his mother the displeasure which he felt at her conduct. But as the play was originally written this scene had a purpose. Ham. reveals to his mother his knowledge of his uncle's guilt, and his purpose of revenge; and she engages to conceal and to assist. From this time the Queen keeps up appearances with her husband, but is secretly a friend to Ham.; and there is an entire scene, afterwards withdrawn, between her and Hor., in which Hor. communicates to her confidentially the return of Ham. from England, when the dialogue ends with her saying: [see Appendix, p. 77, lines 1779-1781.] This removes all ambiguity respecting the part which the poet intended the Queen should take; according to the present regulation, her precise situation is not clearly exhibited.
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, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend

Act iv. Scene i.] Q76.

A room.] A Royal apartment.

Rowe. The same. Cap.

Enter...] Enter King, and Queene, with Rosencraus and Gyltensterne. Qq (Enter Q, Q). Enter King. Ff.

1. There's...heaves] Two lines, Ff. matter] matters Ff, Rowe.

sighs; these...heaves] Pope+, Jen.

Mal. Coll. El. White. fighes. These... heaves Ff. fighes, these...heaves, Qq, Sta.

Ktly, Huds. sighs, or sighs; these... heaves; Rowe et cet.

4, &c. Queen.] Ger. or Gert. in Qq.

Bestow...while.] Om. Ff, Rowe,

Pope, Han. Knt.

4. a little while] Om. Seymour.


to-night /] Han. to night? QqFf.

6. Gertrude] Gertrard Q, Q. Ger-

trad Q. Gertrard Q.


7. sea] Seas Ff, Rowe+, Knt.

Act iv.] JOHNSON: This modern division into Acts is here not very happy, for the pause is made at a time when there is more continuity of action than in almost any other of the scenes. CALDECOTT suggests, and ELZE agrees with him, that Act IV should begin with the present IV, iv. The latter suggests that probably, as indicated by the Qq, the Queen goes to seek out the King as soon as Ham. has left her, and having met him in the gallery, enters with him and his courtiers, one of the King's apartments.

1. heaves] WALKER (Crit. iii, 268) prefers the punctuation of the Qq, and understands 'which' before 'You.' CORSON: The King uses 'profound' equivocally, as it may mean deep literally, and deep in significance, and upon the latter meaning 'translate' bears.

7. Mad] CLARKE: The Queen both follows her son's injunction of keeping up the belief in his madness, and, with maternal ingenuity, makes it the excuse for his
Which is the mightier: in his lawless fit,  
Behind the arras hearing something stir,  
Whips out his rapier, cries 'a rat, a rat!'  
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,  
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;  

8. mightier:] mightier; Rowe. mightier, Q, Q, F, F, F, mightier Q, F, Q,  
   fit.] fit (F), Rowe.  
10. Whips out... cries] Qq (Whips out  
   Q, O, cry's, Q, cry's), Cap. Jen. Steev.  
   Sing. Glo., +, Dyce ii, Mob. Whips his  
   rapier out, cries Cald. i. He whips his  
   rapier out, cries Kly. He whips his  
   Rapier out, and cries Ff et cet.  
   'a rat, a rat!'] a rat! Pope +.  
11. this] his Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.  

Knt, Coll. White, Huds.  
13. been] beene Qq. bin F, bine F,  
   been] beene Q, F, F, bin Q,  
16. answer'd] answered Ff, Dyce i,  
   Sta.  
18. kept... haunt] restrained Q'76.  
   haunt] harm Johns. conj.  
22. let] let's F, F, F, lets F, Rowe,  
   Pope.  

rash deed. This affords a clue to Hamlet's original motive in putting 'an antic disposition on' and feigning insanity; he foresaw that it might be useful to obviate suspicion of his having a steadily-pursued object in view, and to account for whatever hostile attempt he should make.  

10. Whips] CLARENDON: He, which should govern the verb, is omitted. Compare III, i, 8.  
11. brainish] CALDECOTT: Brain-sick mood, or conceit. CLARENDON: It does not occur again in Sh.  
17. to us] DYCE, in a note on IV, v, 89, reads 'on us.'  
18. short] CLARENDON: Kept, as it were, tethered, under control; opposed to loose,' IV, iii, 2.  
18. haunt] STEEVENS: Out of company. As in Rom. & Jul. III, i, 45; As You Like It, II, i, 15.
O'er whom his very madness, like fine 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
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; so, haply, slander,
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. Oh, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay.

Scene II. Another room in the castle.

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Safely stowed.

Ros. 

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

Enter Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern.

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

40-44. so...air.] Om. Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.
Scene ii.] Pope.

Another...] Cap. (subs.).

Enter Hamlet.] Enter Hamlet, Rosencraus, and others. Qq.
2. Ros. Guil. [Within] ...Hamlet]
3. But soft,] but softly QqQq Om. Ff, Rowe +, Knt, Dyce, Glo. Huds. Mob. After stowed., line 1, Cap. on] Om. Q'76.
4. Enter...] Om. Qq.

40. slander] Theobald (S4. Rest. p. 108) suggested Happily, slander or rumour, as being at least very near, in substance, the words that had dropped out of this line. He changed them in his ed. to 'For, haply, slander.' Capell (Notes, i, 141) says: 'For makes not so good connection as so;' and the majority of editors since his day have adopted this modification. The Cambridge Editors (Note xxiii): Malice, or Envy, in the sense in which it is often used by Sh., would suit this passage as well as 'slander.' Tschischwitz reads by this, suspicion, and understands it as referring to what the King 'means to do,' viz. send Hamlet to England. He also suggests that the lines following it down to 'woundless air' may have been an Aside. Stratemann: I think Tschischwitz's reading the most suitable, but it might, perhaps, be improved by the substitution of so that for by this.

41. diameter] Moberly: That is, 'slander can pass in direct line from hence to the antipodes without going round by the semi-circumference of the earth.'

42. blank] Steevens: The white mark at which shot or arrows were aimed.
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 doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed; when he needs what you have gleaned, it

6.  Compounded]  Compound QsQs<

Jen.  'tis kin) it is kin QsQs< it is a kin

Q'76.

12.  sponge,] spunge,—Cap.  spunge!—


6.  Compounded]  JENNEVS retains the reading of QsQs< and interprets it as an imperative, otherwise Ham. tells an untruth, for he had not buried the body.

12.  to]  For the indefinite use of the infinitive, see III, iii. 85, and Abbott, §356.


12.  sponge,]  CORSON defends the comma, maintaining, and rightly, that the sentence is not exclamatory.  'In modern English we should say 'in being demanded by a sponge, what,'" et c.

17.  nuts]  Farmer conjectured, 'like an ape, an apple.'  To this MALONE objected, on the ground that Sh. then would have written 'as an ape,' &c., not 'like an ape.'  But WALKER (Crit. ii, 116) suspected Farmer to be right, having found in Hugh Holland a construction precisely similar: 'Where, like in Jove's [braines], Minerva keeps a coile.'

19.  needs]  SEVMOUR (ii, 193) finds an equivoc here between to need and to knead.
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—

27. a thing—] a thing. Q[. J.en. nothing. Han.

22. sponge...dry again] Caldecott: 'When princes...have used courtiers as sponges to drinke what juice they can from the poore people, they take pleasure afterwards to wring them out into their owne cisternes.'—R.C.'s Henr. Steph. Apology for Herodotus, 1608. Vespasian, when reproached for bestowing high office upon persons most rapacious, answered, ' that he served his turne with such officers as with sponges, which, when they had drunke their fill, were the fittest to be pressed.'—Barne, Rich's Faultes, faults and nothing but faults, 1606; also Suetonius, Vespas. c. 16.

22. ear] Steevens: A proverb since Shakespeare's time.

26-27. The...body] Johnson: This answer I do not comprehend. Perhaps it should be,—The body is not with the King, for the King is not with the body. Jennens: The body, being in the palace, might be said to be with the King; though the King, not being in the same room with the body, was not with the body. Steevens: Perhaps this,—The body is in the King's house (i. e. the present King's), yet the King (i. e. he who should have been king) is not with the body. Intimating that the usurper is here, the true King in a better place. Or it may mean—the guilt of the murder lies with the King, but the King is not where the body lies. Douce: The body, i. e. the external appearance or person of the monarch, is with his uncle; but that the real and lawful king is not in that body. Caldecott: The King is not yet cut off from life and sovereignty: his carcase remains to the King; but the King is not with the body or carcase that you seek; the King is not with Polonius. But Hamlet's answers are necessarily enigmatical. A more natural meaning is suggested: The image raised, the impression made upon the King's fears by the fate of Polonius, makes his body or carcase present to the fancy of the King, who knew and has said that 'it had been so with him had he been there;' but the King is not with the body, i. e. is not lying with Polonius. Others interpret, plainly enough, if admissibly: The body is with the King, i. e. intombed, or in the other world with the late, the real king; but the King, i. e. he who now wears the crown, the usurper, is not with the body. Singer: It may mean: The King is a body without a kingly soul, a thing—of nothing. Elze agrees with Eschenburg's explanation: The corpse is here with the King, but the King is not with it, i. e. he is as yet no corpse. Hudson: The meaning of this intended riddle, to the best of my guessing, is: The King's body is with the King, but not the King's soul: he's a King without kinglyness. Moberly: Apparently a sententious maxim from some political book. 'The body politic is joined to the King, yet the King is not to be considered part of the body politic, but a thing apart.' [The present editor agrees with Clarendon, that Ham. is talking nonsense designedly.]
Guil. 'A thing,' my lord?
Ham. Of nothing; bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after.

[Exit.]

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

28. 'A thing'] Nothing Han.
    lord?] Lord. Qq.
29. Of nothing:] Of nothing, Qq.
or nothing Han.
30. Hide...after.] Om. Qq.

Enter King, attended.] Cap. Enter

29. Of nothing] Johnson: Should it not be read: Or nothing? When the courtiers remark that Ham. has contempuously called the King a thing, Ham. defends himself by observing that the King must be a thing or nothing. Farmer and Steevens cite instances of the use of this not uncommon phrase, and Whalley cites Psalm cxlv, 4: 'Man is like a thing of nought.' — Prayer Book Version. — Authorized Version. Nares quotes Beau. & Fl. Humorous Lieutenant, IV, vi: 'And though a thing of nothing, thy thing ever.' — p. 517, ed. Dyce.

29. Hide...after] Hanmer: There is a play among children thus called. Singer: Most probably what is now called 'whoop' or 'hide and seek.' White: The exclamation is merely one of Hamlet's signs of feigned madness. Moberly: Ham. sheathes his sword (a Toledo or an English fox')—point of fox,' &c., probably from the name of a celebrated maker like Andrea di Ferrara), and, as if he were playing hide and seek, cries 'now the fox is hid: let all go after him.'

9. 10. diseases...relieved] Rushton (Shakespeare's Euphuism, p. 11): 'But I feare me wher so strange a sickness is to be recured of so vnskilfull a Phisition, that either thou wilt be to bold to practise, or my body too weake to purge. But seeing a desperate disease is to be committed to a desperate Doctor, I wil follow thy counsel, and become thy cure.' — [Euphuus, p. 67, ed. Arber.]
By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all.—

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?
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
HAMLET

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.

King. Where is Polonius?
Ham. In heaven; send thither to see; if your messen-
ger 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. [To some Attendants] Go seek him there.
Ham. He will stay till ye come. [Exeunt Attendants.

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
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,

24. service, two] service to F.
25. but] Om. Pope, Han.
26-28. King...worm.] Om. Ff, Rowe.
26. Alas, alas!] Alas, alas. Q, Qq. QqFf.
27. may fish] may eat fish. Jen.
28. and] Om. Q, Qq, Theob. Warb.

Johns. Cald.
32. Where is] Where's Cald.
35. indeed, if] if indeed Qq.
37. [To some...] Cap. Om. QqFf.
38. He] A Qq.
39. deed, for thine deed of thine, for thine Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Del. i.
41. send] feud Q.
42. With fiery quickness;] Om. Qq.
43. at help] fits fair Q'76. at helm

Johns. conj.

31. progress] STEEVENS: Royal journeys of state were always styled 'progresses,' and were familiar enough to the subjects of Elizabeth and James I.
33. messenger] DELIUS: Heaven is inaccessible to the King, thither he must send a messenger.
40. tender] To have regard for, as in I, iii, 107. DELIUS says 'dearly' is to be understood: 'as dearly tender as we grieve.'
42. fiery] CALDECOTT: As rapid as the progress of flames.
43. at help] For instances of Shakespeare's use of 'at' instead of 'a,' the con-
traction of the Anglosaxon on (still existing in alive, afoot, asleep, &c.), see ABBOTT,
§ 143. In 'at foot,' line 53, 'at' is not, says Abbott, on, but near, as in 'at his
heels.' See 'at he moon,' III, iv, 209. 'The at of price generally requires an
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.

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,


adjecitve or article, as well as a noun, after it, except in "at all." We have, however [in line 57 of this scene], "at aught," i.e. at a while.'

44. is bent] Corson: 'At bent' is the more forcible, expressing, as it does, the suspended readiness indicated by what precedes, 'the bark is ready,' 'the wind at help,' 'th' associates tend.'

47. cherub] Caldecott: This beauteous and sudden intimation of heavenly insight and interference, against the insidious purpose of the King's show of regard for Hamlet's welfare, flashes upon us with a surprise and interest rarely to be found or equalled, and worthy of this great master of the drama. Collier: 'Him' [of the FF] seems to have no reference, unless Ham. be mentally advertling to his father. Moberly: The cherubs are angels of love; they therefore, of course, know of such true affection as the King's for Ham.

58. As] For instances of 'as' used parenthetically, equal to for so, see Abbott. § 110; IV, vii, 159; V, ii, 323.
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,—thou mayst not coldly set
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters conjuring 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.

Cap. Kily. rate Anon. * see Coll. (MS).

58. thereof] CALDECOTT: May make thee a very intelligible suggestion to that effect.
60. free] CLARENDON: Awe still felt, though no longer enforced by the presence of Danish armies.
61. set] M. MASON: One of the common acceptations of the verb 'set' is to value or estimate; as we say, to set at nought. MALONE thinks that it is an elliptical expression for 'set by'. SINGER denies the ellipsis, and quotes, without giving the authority, 'To sette or tell the pryce; estimare.' [Barett's Alvearie has: 'To set, or tell the price. Indicare,' which makes nothing against Malone; because 'To set' is not used absolutely, but the full phrase is 'to set the price.' ED.] CLARENDON says that '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.
63. conjuring] THEOBALD (Sh. Rest. 109): If the 'letters,' importing the tenour of the process, were to that effect, they were certainly congruing; but of no great use, when the sovereign process imported the same thing. Now a process might import a command, and letters conjuring a compliance with it be sent, and be of great efficacy, where the execution of the command was to be doubted of. Moreover, Ham. when he changed the substance of the commission would be likely to retain the form, and we find him using 'earnest conjurations.' As to the accent, Sh. generally accented the first syllable. CLARENDON thinks 'conjuring' probably a misprint, although it yields a fair sense.
65. hectic] CLARENDON: Used as a substantive in Cotgrave: 'Hectique: Sickle of an Hectick, or continuall Fesuer.' Only here, either as substantive or adjective, in Sh.
67. haps ... begun] JOHNSON: This being the end of a scene, should, according to Shakespeare's custom, be rhymed. Perhaps he wrote, 'Howe'er my hopers, my joys are not begun.' [Collier's (MS) has hoper.] If 'haps' be retained, the meaning will be: 'till I know 'tis done, I shall be miserable,' whatever befal me. WALKER (Crit. iii, 268): Begun, certainly; rhyme is demanded here. As to the rest, enixu. LEETSON (Footnote to Walker): Q, gives at least sense and English. [See lines 1612, 1613.] TSCHISCHWITZ, having found that gin is used for begin, suggests, reads, and defends 'my joys will ne'er be gin.'
SCENE IV. A plain in Denmark.

Enter Fortinbras, a Captain and Soldiers, marching.

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king; Tell him that by his license Fortinbras Claims 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.

Cap. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go softly on. [Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.

Enter Hamlet, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and others.

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir.

6. eye] Steevens: Compare Ant. & Cleo. II, ii, 212. The phrase seems to have been a formula for the royal presence. See The Establishment of the Household of Prince Henry, 1610: ‘Also the gentleman-usher shall be careful to see and informe all such as doe service in the Prince's eye, that they perform their dutyes,' &c. Again, in The Regulations for the Government of the Queen's Household, 1627: ‘— all such as doe service in the Queen's eye.' [See IV, vii, 45.]

7. let] DELIUS construes ‘let' like ‘express,' 'We shall’ being understood; and he has a comma after ‘eye,' as has also KEIGHTLEY.

8. softly] STAINTON: That is, slowly. CLARENDON: Compare Bacon, Essay, vi, p. 19: 'Like the going softly by one that cannot well see.' COLLIER: These words are probably addressed to his troops.

8-66. Enter, &c.] KNIGHT: This scene, in which a clue is so beautifully fur-
Ham. How purposed, sir, I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,

Or for some frontier?

Cap. 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;

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.

Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

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11. purposed] pro\posed Q.Q., pro\posed Q.Q., propo\sed Q'76, Rowe. pro\posed Cald. Knt.

12. Against] Sir, against Cap., reading lines 11-13 as two lines, ending against...sir?

14. nephew] nephews Glo. (misprint?)

to] of Q'76, Rowe+. Jen.


speaking Anon.*

---

nished to the indecision of Ham., was perhaps omitted in the Ff on account of the extreme length of the play, and as not helping on the action. COLLIER: So important is it as a key to Hamlet's character, that its omission convinces us that the abbreviation of the play as we find it in F, was the work of the players and not of Sh. LLOYD (Crit. Essay, Singer's 2d ed. p. 345): Beautiful as the soliloquy in this scene is, I am disposed to think that the excision of it may have been deliberate,—as unnecessary, prolonging the action, and, it may be, exhibiting the weakness of Ham. too crudely; it shows him making the most definite of his resolutions to revenge precisely as he turns his back upon the last opportunity by quitting the country. The passage, however, with some others, is too fine to be suppressed, though I am inclined to think the poet sacrificed them, and worthy and properly they may take their place in brackets.

15. main] CLARENDON: The chief power. See II, ii, 56.

20. five] THEOBALD, in his correspondence with Warburton (Nichols's Lit. Hist. ii, 575), suggested five ducats fine, but did not adopt nor even allude to the suggestion in his edition, DYCE (ed. ii) says that Mr John Jones proposed the same reading, taking 'fine' either as a market denomination, or in the sense of 'rent.'

24. garrison'd] See 'I'll ... him,' Macb. III, vi, 49. WALKER (Vers. 273): Pronounce garr'son'd. Scan 'Yes, 'tis | alrea | dy garri | son'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.

Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [Exit.

Ros. Will ye go, my lord? [Exeunt...]

Ham. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

[Exeunt all except 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


twenty thousand] 20,000 Q'76.

many thousand] Han.

30. be wi' you] Cap. buy you Q.

b' wi' ye Q'76, Rowe +, Jen. b' wi' you

Dyce, White.


31. I'll] He Q(Qu) (He Q). I will Cap.

(ending the line straight). I will Steev.


31. straight] Om. Pope, Han,

Go] Go on Ktly.

[Exeunt...] Dyce. Exe. Manet

Ham. Rowe. Om. Qq.

35. feed?] Q'76. feede, Qq.

36. such] suh Q.

25, 26. Two...straw] As You Like It (Gent. Mag. lx, 403): These lines are certainly given to Ham. very wrongfully, as they undoubtedly belong to the Capt. Ham. appears entirely ignorant of the object of the Norwegian army. The Capt. speaks with contempt of the little patch of ground, which for five ducats he would not farm, to recover which so many souls were to be sacrificed and so much money expended. After this, Ham. begins very properly, "This is an imposthume," &c. Tschischwitz goes still farther, and gives the whole speech down to "dies," to the Capt., on the ground that this speech does not accord with what Ham. says afterwards, where honor is the cause that impels him to the struggle, not an "imposthume of much wealth and peace."


34. market] JOHNSON: That for which he sells his time. SEYMOUR (ii, 195): This means his prime of life, the time at which he ought to exert his faculties to the best advantage and profit. CLARENDON: Possibly, the business in which he employs his time.

36. discourse] See I, ii, 150. JOHNSON: Such latitude of comprehension, such power of reviewing the past and anticipating the future.

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,

39. fust] Wedgwood: To grow mouldy. From French fuste, a cask, fustes, fusty, tasting or smelling of the cask.
40. scruple] See Abbott, § 168. Clarendon: Scruple which consists in thinking or results from thinking.
44. know...live] know. Why yet live I Q'37 (MS), Ingleby's copy.*
53. 54. Rightly...to stir] ’Tis not to

43. 44. know...live] know. Why yet live I Q'37 (MS), Ingleby's copy.*

50. mouths] See II, ii, 6; and Abbott, § 132.
53-56. Rightly...stake] Johnson: This sentiment is partly just and partly romantic. 'Rightly...argument' is exactly philosophical. 'But...stake' is the idea of a modern hero. But then, says he, honor is an argument, or subject of debate, sufficiently great, and when honor is at stake, we must find cause of quarrel in a straw.

54. Is not to stir] [Does the ‘not’ belong to the copula or to the predicate? I think it belongs to the copula, and that there should be a comma after it: ‘Is not, to stir,’ &c. To stir without great argument, upon every trifling occasion, is not an attribute of greatness; it is rather the attribute of smallness, of a mere love of fighting; but it is the attribute of greatness to stir instantly and at a trifle when honor is touched. The mere fact that For. is astir, and Ham. is still, does not prove the former to be the greater man, or make him an example to the latter. But because, for the merest fantasy that his honor was touched, he was going to his grave
HAMLET

[ACT IV, SC. V.

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? Oh, 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.

Enter... Pope. Enter Horatio, Ger-
ttrand, and a Gentleman. Qq. Enter
Queene and Horatio. Ff, Johns. Steev.
Var. Cald. Sing. Knit, Dyce, Del. White,
Clarke. Enter Queen, Horatio, and At-
tendants. Rowe. Enter Queen, and a
Gentleman. Han. Enter Queen, attend-
ed; Horatio, and a Gentleman. Cap.

as to a bed, herein lies the contrast and example to Ham. Moreover, when 'not'
is joined to the copula, and a comma placed after it, the force of 'But' is felt, thus:
True greatness is not (predicate), but it is this. Include the 'not' in the predicate,
and 'But' becomes inconsequent: True greatness is (predicate), but it is this. Ca-
pell perceived this, and added a second not as a compromise, embracing both read-
ings: 'Is not, not to stir,' &c. DELIUS does not actually add the second not, but
he says it is understood, or rather that the 'not' belongs to both copula and predicate.
This discussion may seem trifling enough, but we must remember that: Rightly to
punctuate is not, to put a stop without great argument, but greatly to find quarrel in
a comma when Shakespeare's at the stake. Ed.]

58. blood] CLARENDON: 'Blood,' which is stirred by passion, is here, as fre-
cquently, antihelical to reason and reflection. See III, ii, 64.

61. fame] CALDECOTT: That is, point of honor. DELIUS: 'Of fame' belongs
to 'fantasy' as well as to 'trick' = an illusion and a whim that promise fame.

64. continent] STEEVES: That which comprehends or encloses. REED: 'and
if there be no fullness, then is the continent greater than the content.'—Bacon, Adv.
of Learning [p. 6, ed. Wright].

Scene V. MILES (p. 62): With this pomp and circumstance of Fortinbras and
HAMLET

Gent. She is importunate, indeed distract;


2, 3. She...pityed.] As in Cap. Two lines, the first ending importunat, Qq, Rowe +, Jen. Prose in Ff. 2. distract;...pityed.] dissipated, and deserves pity. Q75.

his army,—with this flash of a better fortune for Denmark athwart the deepening drama, the Act should end. Ending here, the interval consumed by the voyage to England, the return of Laer. from Paris, and the expedition of For. to Poland and back, is thrown between the Acts,—its natural place. This proposed extension of the Third Act would make this greatest of tragedies the most symmetrical too; while the Fourth Act, relieved of a confusion which is now mistaken for an anticlimax, would be devoted with a single purpose to its two superb contrasts: the revenge of Laer. with the revenge of Ham., and the utter madness of Oph. with the semi-counterfeit lunacy of her lover. A gain almost as great for the closet as for the stage. Marshall (p. 77): The interval which elapses between this scene and the preceding is at least a month, and probably more. [Page 193.]—This may be seen by an examination of the remaining scenes. No break can occur at the end of this scene; the conversation between the King and Laer. in sc. vii is evidently part of that which ends this scene; the time occupied by sc. vi is merely sufficient for the King to explain to Laer. the circumstances of Polonius's death. We find from sc. vi that Ham. has returned, having been taken by the pirates on his second day out; how long he was detained by them does not appear; it must have been for some time, since between Acts IV and V there cannot elapse much more than two days, and at the end of Act V we find ambassadors announcing the death of Ros. and Gull., and For. returned from Poland, so that it is evident that the break implied by a new Act ought to occur at the end of IV, iv. Moreover, if Ophelia's madness were introduced at the beginning of a new Act, it would be more effective, and the interval which is supposed to have occurred would give color to the causes which produced it. [See notes on Act IV, p. 311.]

Enter...Gentleman] Collier: The omission in the Ff of the Gentleman was, no doubt, to avoid the employment of another actor. Dyce: There is certainly room for suspecting that the omission of the 'Gentleman' is to be attributed to the players. But be that as it may, there can be no doubt that if a modern editor adheres to F, in this omission, he ought to restore to Hor. (what comes very awkwardly from the Queen) lines 14, 15; and that, whether he chooses to retain or omit the 'Gentleman,' he ought to make the Queen's speech begin with line 16. White: I see no reason for deviating from F. Lines 14, 15 are much more appropriate in the Queen's mouth, as a reflection by which she is led to change her determination with regard to Oph., than as a direct warning to a queen from a subject. Clarke: We think there is something exquisitely appropriate in making Hamlet's beloved friend Hor. the one who watches over and tenderly thinks for Oph. during the Prince's absence, and brings her to his mother alone. Feeling thus, we believe it to have been Shakespeare's reconsidered intention. Clarendon: Lines 11-13, so cautiously obscure, seem better suited to an ordinary courtier than to Hor. 2. distract] See I, ii, 20.
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;
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

9. aim] aymne F, F₂, yawme Qq
yawm Jen. gape El. (Athenaeum, ii Aug.'66).
10. botch] both F, F₂, Rowe.
11. as her] as Q, Q₂, at her F, F₂.
14-16. Hor...in.] Blackstone, Coll.
Sta. Kily, Glo., &c. Given to Queen
in F, Rowe, Steev.'85, Mal. Steev.'93.

Bos. Cald. Knit, Sing. White. Given to
Jen. Steev.'73, El. Lines 14, 15 are
continued to the preceding speaker by
14, 15, given to the Queen as an 'aside,'
and stage-direction [To Hor.] before
line 16, by White. Lines end with...

conjectures...in. in F.

3. will] See Abbott, § 319.
6. enviously] Nares; Angrily, spitefully. Singer: 'Enviously' and spitefully
are treated as synonymous by old writers.
6. doubt] Caldecott: Without distinct or certain aim.
9. collection] Mason: To endeavor to collect some meaning from it.
9. aim] Collier: The Qq may possibly be right, though not very likely to be so.
12. thought] Staunton: 'Thought' is possibly a misprint, caught from the line
above, for meant, or seen, or a word of like import. Clarendon: 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.'
13. unhappily] Warburton: Though her meaning cannot be certainly col-
lected, yet there is enough to put a mischievous interpretation to it. Steevens:
That this word once signified mischiefous is seen in Holland's Pliny's Nat. Hist. b.
xix, ch. vii; ' — the shrewd and unhapine soules which lie upon the lands, and
eat up the seed new sowne.'
14. she were] Walker (Crit. ii, 202): Thou wert (sometimes written in the
old poets Th' wert), you were, I was, &c., occur frequently in places where it is clear
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.

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

Exit Hor. Johns. et cet.
16, 17. in. To in To F F F.

they must have been pronounced as one syllable, in whatever manner the contraction was effected. [See also Abbott, § 461.]

17–20. To... spilt] Collier: It deserves notice that these lines are marked with inverted commas in the Qq, not for the purpose of showing that the passage was a quotation, but apparently to enforce it as a maxim. It was not a very unusual practice. [See I, iii, 59, Knight's and Dyce's notes. Ed.]

18. amiss] Misfortune, disaster. For instances of its use as a substantive, see Nares, Steevens, and Concordance to Shakespeare's Poems.

19. jealousy] Clarendon: Suspicion. Guilt is so full of suspicion that it unskillfully betrays itself in fearing to be betrayed.

20. Ophelia] Hunter (ii, 258): Perhaps the 'lute' of Q4 was banished when line 21 was added, which must be said running wildly up to the Queen, when the lute would have been an incumbrance. Sir Joshua Reynolds: There is no part of this play in its representation on the stage, more pathetic than this scene; which, I suppose, proceeds from the utter insensibility of Oph. to her own misfortunes. A great sensibility, or none at all, seems to produce the same effect. In the latter the audience supply what she wants, and with the former they sympathize. Coleridge: Ophelia singing. Q4 note the conjunction here of these two thoughts that had never subsisted in disjunction, the love of Hamlet and her filial love, with the guileless floating on the surface of her pure imagination of the cautions so lately expressed, and the fears so delicately avowed, by her father and brother, concerning the dangers to which her honor lay exposed. This play of association is instanced in lines 67, 68.

23. [Sings] Knight: The music still sung in the character of Oph. is supposed
From another one?

By his cockle-hat and staff

And his sandal shoon.

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

26. And his] and by his Q'76, Johns. 26. sandal] Sendall Qq.

to be the same or nearly so that was used in Shakespeare's time, and thence transmitted to us by tradition. When Drury-lane Theatre was burnt in 1812, the copy of these songs shared the fate of the whole musical library. CHAFFELL (Popular Music of the Olden Times,' vol. i, p. 236): The late W. Linley (an accomplished amateur, and brother of the highly-gifted Mrs Sheridan) collected and published 'the wild and pathetic melodies of Oph., as he remembered them to have been exquisitely sung by Mrs Forster, when she was Miss Field, and belonged to Drury-lane Theatre; and he says 'the impression remained too strong on his mind to make him doubt the correctness of the airs, agreeably to her delivery of them.' Dr Arnold also noted them down from the singing of Mrs Jordan. Mr Ayrton has followed that version in Knight's Shakespeare. The notes of the air to this first song of Ophelia's are the same in both; but in the former it is in three-quarter time, in the latter in common time. The melody is printed in common time in The Beggar's Opera (1728), to 'You'll think, e'er many days ensue,' and in The Generous Freemason, 1731. The following is the tune; but in singing Ophelia's fragments, each line should begin on the first of the bar, and not with the note before it. In the ballad-operas it has the burden, Twang, lang, dido dee, at the end, with two additional bars of music:

Moderate time, and smoothly.

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And how should I your true-love know From many another one? Oh, by his cockle hat and staff, And by his sandal shoon. Twang, lang, dido dee.
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25. cockle-hat] WARBURTON: The description of a pilgrim. While this kind of devotion was in favor, love intrigues were carried on under this mask. Hence the old ballads and novels made pilgrimages the subjects of their plots. The cockleshell hat was one of the essential badges of this vocation; for the chief places of devotion being beyond sea or on the coasts, the pilgrims were accustomed to put cockle-shells upon their hats, to denote the intention or performance of their devotion.

26. shoon] DELIUS: This form of the plural was archaic in Shakespeare's time.

ELZE: It also occurs in 2 Hen. VI: IV, ii, 195.

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

O, ho!

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.

---

28. Say you?] Say you, Qq.  ...  ...  ...  29. [Sings] Song. Qq. Om. Ff.  ...  ...  ...  ...  30. He is...He is] He's...he is Pope, Theob. Johns. He's...he's Han. Warb.
33. [Sings] Cap. Om. Qfff, his] the Warb. Enter King.] After stone, line 32,
   34. [Sings] Collier's.

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29–32, 34–38. The continuation of the same song, and to the same tune.
31. grass-green] Elze adopts green grass of Collier’s (MS) and Percy’s Reliques.
37. bewept] KEIGHTLEY: We might read unwept, as in Rich. III: II, ii, 65; or as I have done unbewept, as the initial un is at times omitted.
37. did go] CALDECOTT: His ‘shroud,’ or corpse, ‘did not go bewept with true-love showers,’ for his was no love-case; his death had the tragical character of fierce outrage, and this was the primary and deepest impression on her lost mind; she felt that something more than the ceremonial forms, insisted on by Laer., was wanting. COLLIER: The Qff read ‘did not go,’ which Pope considered an error, and it probably was so. Dyce: That any one should fail at once to perceive that the original reading, ‘did not go,’ is utterly irreconcilable with the preceding, ‘Larded
HAMLET

[ACT IV, SC. V.

King. How do you, pretty lady?

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. [Aside] 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,

39. you] ye Ff, Rowe+.
40. God 'ild'] Cap. good dild Qq.
God dild Ff, Rowe, Pope, Theob.
41. but know] but we know Johns.
42. God...table ] Om. Q'76.
43. [Aside.] Ed.
44. Pray you, let's] Pray you lets

with sweet flowers'! And that any one should have the folly to suppose that the ballad now sung by Oph. must apply in minute particulars to her father! Enough for her that it is a ditty about death and burial; no matter that its hero is a youthful lover,—he was cut off by a sudden fate, and so far resembled Fol. Keightley: Though the printers often omitted the negative (as once already in this play), they rarely added it. We have, however, an instance in Much Ado, III, ii, 28, and it might be better to suppose the same to be the case here.


41. daughter] Douce: This is a common story among the vulgar in Gloucestershire, and is thus related: 'Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were baking, and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough into the oven to bake for him, but was reprimanded by her daughter, who, insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately afterwards began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon the baker's daughter cried out, "Heugh, heugh, heugh," which owl-like noise probably induced our Saviour for her wickedness to transform her into that bird.' This story is often related to children, in order to deter them from such illiberal behavior to poor people. Caldecott: The plumage of the melancholy bird, and the color of the baker, in correspondence with her father's 'white shroud,' and probably her own habit, may have suggested, to a bewildered mind, this singular allusion. Elze: As little did the baker's daughter expect to be turned into an owl as it occurred to my father and myself to anticipate the kind of death we should die. Doering (p. 79): Oph. feels that she has acted towards Ham. in an equally heartless manner.

43. conceit] Imagination. See III, iv, 114. Moberly: The King seems to catch only the word 'daughter,' and so misunderstands.

46. Strachey (p. 85): If we bear in mind the notorious fact that, in the dread-
ful visitation of mental derangement, delicate and refined women will use language so coarse that it is difficult to guess where they can ever have even heard such words, and certain that wherever heard they would have always lain, unknown of, and innocuous, in the mind, unless the hot-bed of mental fever had quickened them for the first time into life;—if we remember this fact, and couple it with the consideration that the infant ears of the motherless Ophelia might have heard the talk and the songs of such a nurse as that of Juliet, we shall find nothing improbable, nor even unseemly, in the poor girl's songs—not only nothing to disturb our faith in the unsullied purity of her maiden mind, but nothing to cloud the bright beauty of that purity with even the slightest passing breath. [Mrs Jameson was, I think, the first to suggest that Oph. may have been sung to sleep in infancy by snatches of old ballads such as these, and Mrs Cowden Clarke has carried out the idea in her story of The Rose of Elsinore, where Botilda, the nurse, is scolded for singing this song to her infant charge.] Hudson (Shakespeare: His Life, Art, &c., Boston, 1872, ii, 281): The immodesty of some of these songs is surpassingly touching; it tells us, as nothing else could, that Oph. is utterly unconscious of what she is saying.

46. [Sings] Chappell (Popular Music of the 'Olden Time,' vol. i, p. 227): This song is found in several of the ballad-operas, such as The Cobbler's Opera (1729), The Quaker's Opera (1728), &c. In Pills to purge Melancholy (1707), ii, 44 it is printed to a song in Heywood's Rape of Lucrece, beginning, 'Arise, arise, my juggy, my puppy.' Other versions will be found under the name of 'Who list to lead a soldier's life?' and 'Lord Thomas and Fair Ellinor.'

46. Saint Valentine's day] Halliwell: This song alludes to the custom of the first girl seen by a man on the morning of this day being considered his Valentine or true-love. The custom continued until the last century, and is graphically alluded to by Gay. The custom of the different sexes choosing themselves mates on St Valentine's day, 14th February, the names being selected either by lots or methods of divination, is of great antiquity in England. The name so drawn was the Valentine of the drawer. Douce traces the custom to the Lupercalia of Rome, during which
HAMLET

[ACT IV. SC. V.]

Then up he rose, and donn’d his clothes,
And d upp’d the chamber door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, la, without an oath, I’ll make an end on’t:

[Sings] By Gis, and by Saint Charity,
Alack, and fie for shame!
Young men will do’t, if they come to’t;
By Cock, they are to blame.

50-53. Four lines, Johns. Two, Qq F, Rowe+. Six in Cap.
50. donn’d] donn’d Qq. d’on’d Cap.
51. dupp’d] d upt QqFf, Rowe+.
52. the maid, that out] the maid, let
52. in F, a maid, that out F,F,F, Rowe;
53. Pope. a maid, but out Han.
55. Indeed, la?] Johns. Indeed la?
56. [Sings] Cap. Om. QqF.
56-59. Four lines, QqFf. Six, Cap.
59. to blame] too blame QqQ, F,F,F.

a similar custom prevailed. There is nothing in the life of the Saint himself which can authorize such a practice, and his day was merely selected as most fit in point of time whereon to engraft a Christian festival. It was also believed that on this day birds chose their mates. Pepys gives some quaint notices of ‘Valentines’ in his Diary under date 14th and 16th Feb., 1666, and 14th and 18th Feb., 1667.

51. dupp’d] WEDGWOOD: To do up, as doff and don, to do off and do on.
52, 53. Let...more] Douce found a French ballad of 1598, of which the conclusion runs thus: ‘Elle y entra pucelle, Grossette elle en sorta,’
56-63. A continuation of the same song.
56. Gis] JOHNSON: Rather, ‘By Gis,’ i.e. By St Cecily. RIDLEY: There is not the least mention of any saint whose name corresponds with this, either in the Roman Calendar, the service in Usam Sarum, or in the Benedictinian of Bishop Athelwold. I believe the word to be only a corrupted abbreviation of Jesus, the letters J. H. S. being anciently all that was set down to denote that sacred name, on altars, the covers of books, &c. RITSON: Though Gis may be, and I believe is, only a contraction of Jesus, there is certainly a Saint Gislen, with whose name it corresponds. DUCCE: Ridley’s conjecture is the true one; but the corruption is not in the way he has stated. The letters I H S would not be pronounced Gis, even by those who understood them as a Greek contraction.
56. Saint Charity] STEEVENS: This is a known saint among the Roman Catholics. Spenser mentions her, Eclog. V, 255.
59. Cock] Dyce (Gloss.): A corruption, or euphemism, for God. This irreverent alteration of the sacred name was formerly very common; it occurs at least
Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed.

He answers:
So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
And thou hadst not come to my bed.

King.  How long hath she been thus?

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.

Oh, this' 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. Quoth she, before] Before, quoth she, Cap.
60, 61. Two lines, Ff, Rowe +.  One, Qq.
62. He answers :] (He answers.) Qq.
Om. Ff, Rowe +, Knt, El. Dyce, Sta.
So...sun,] Two lines, Cap.
would] should QQ, ha' done Ff, a done Qq.
63. And] Qq Ff, Rowe +, Jen. An Han. et cet.
64. been thus] bin this F, been this Cald. Knt.
66. should] would Qq, Cap. Coll. El.
White.
69,70. Good...good...good...good...good...good...good...God Q QQ, God...God...God QQ, God...God QQ, night, sweet...night.] Theob. as in Ff (subs.). night. Sweet...night. Qq, reading Sweet...night, as a separate line.
69. sweet ladies] Sweet Laides Qq.
70. [Exit.] Om. Qq.
71. Two lines, Ff.
72. Oh, this] This Pope +.
72, 73. As prose, Qq, Jen. As verse, ending the lines with springs...behavior, and reading O Gertrude, Gertrude, as a separate line, Steev. Bos. Cald. Coll. Sing. El. White, Del. Kily.
74. come, they] come, they F, spies] spies Q QQ.

a dozen times in Heywood's Edward the Fourth, where, in one passage, the Herald says, 'Sweare...so help you God,' and King Lewis replies, 'So helpe me Cock.'

72. this] For instances of the contraction of this is into a monosyllable; this (where this line is given as an example), see Walker, Vers. 80; Abbott, § 461.

73. Stratmann: I suppose Sh. first wrote and now behold, for which he then substituted 'O Gertrude, Gertrude,'

74. spies] M. H. (Gent. Maga. vol. ix, p. 307): Read files, as more correspondent to battalions.
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,
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,

75. battalions] Rowe. battalions Qq.
Battalies F,F., BattellS*F,F* battal'as
Dyce, Sta. Huds.
78. their] Om. Qq.
79. and we have] We've Pope+.
but greenly,] Om. Q'76. Transferred to next line by Cap.
80. In hugger-mugger] Obscurely
82. the which we are] which we are

77. muddied ... unwholesome] Delius: These refer primarily to the blood,
and then, with which Sh. here connects them, to the mood of the people. Dyce
(ed. ii) reads muddied, as he does also in All's Well, V, ii, 4.
80. hugger-mugger] Steevens: Sh. probably took the expression from North's
Plutarch, p. 999, ed. 1631 [p. 121, ed. Skeat]: 'Antonius thinking good . . . . that
his bodie should be honorably buried, and not in hugger-mugger.' Malone: Its
meaning is seen in Florio's Dict. : Dinascoso, secretly, hiddenly, in hugger-mugger.
[See Wheatley's Dict. of Reduplicated Words.]
85. wonder] Clarendon: The mysterious death of Pol. filled his son with doubt
and amazement.
85. in clouds] Theobald (Nichols's Lit. Hist. ii, 575): Thirlby has conjectured
inclo'd, i.e. private, close in his apartment, and cites IV, vii, 130, in confirmation.
But change is needless; the text means: 'to be reserved and mysterious in his con-
duct.' Caldecott: At lofty distance and seclusion. Tschischwitz suggests
'keeps in his wonder, wraps himself in clouds.'
88. Wherein] Johnson: Wherein (that is, in which pestilent speeches) necessi-
ty, or the obligation of an accuser to support his charge, will nothing stick, &c.
HAMLET

[ACT IV, SC. V.]

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;

89. person] persons Ff, Rowe+, Cap.
Cald. Knt, Coll. Del. i, El. 90
91. murdering-piece] Hyphen, Q, Q, piece, places] Peace, places, F, 91
Rowe, Pope.
92. Queen. Alack, this?] Om. Qq, Pope, Han.
Sing. El. White, Ktly; all but Jen. reading Attend! as a separate line.

89. person] Dyce: The King is certainly speaking of himself only. Compare his reference to himself in other passages on the same subject, IV, i, 13, 15, 17. Also IV, v, 118, 145.

91. murdering-piece] Steevens: 'A case shot is any kind of small bullets, nails, old iron, or the like, to put into the case, to shoot out of the ordinances or murderers; these will doe much mischief.'—Smith's Sea Grammar, 1627. Thus, in Bea. & Fl. The Double Marriage, IV, ii, 6: 'A father's curses... like a murdering-piece, aim not at one, But all that stand within the dangerous level.' Singer: A murdering-piece, or murderer, was a small piece of artillery; in Fr. meurtrières, which took its name from the loopholes and embrasures in towers and fortifications, that were so called. 'Meurtrière, c'est un petit canonnier comme celles des tours et murailles, ainsi appelé, parce qu'ils tirant par icelle a descue, ceux ausquels on tire sont facilement meurtri.'—Nicot. 'Vesiere meurtrière, a port-hole for a murdering Piece in the forecastle of a ship.'—Cotgrave. Dyce (Gloss.): 'Murdering-pieces, if we may trust Coles, were not always 'small,' for he gives 'A murdering-piece, Tormentum murale,' and afterwards 'Tormentum murale, a great gun.'—Lat. and Eng. Dict.

93. Switzers] Reed: In many of our old plays the guards attendant on kings are called 'Switzers,' and that without any regard to the country where the scene lies. Malone: 'Law, logickle and the Switzers, may be hired to fight for any body.' Nash, Christ's Teares over Jerusalem, 1594.
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!’

96. impetuous] impetuous Q₂Q₃, Cald. Knt. impetuosus F₁, F₂
99–101. And...word,] In parenthesis, Anon. (Gent. Mag. 1796, ix, 403).
101. Han. transposes this line to follow 102.

95. overpeering] Petri (Archiv f. n. Sprachen, vol. vi, p. 93) suggests overpier ing, i. e. over the piers, ‘which is more picturesque, and in accordance with nature.’
96. list] Malone: Boundary, i. e. shore. [For ‘of his list,’ see I, v, 175; Abbott, § 178.]
98. lord] Collier (ed. 2): The (MS) would warrant us in changing ‘lord’ to king; perhaps the meaning of the rabble was the same, but afterwards they are represented as exclaiming ‘Laertes shall be king.’ Perhaps it ought to be king in both places.
100. custom] Moserly: As if the government were to be settled by random plebiscites at the good pleasure of the rabble.
101. word] Warburton: Certainly Sh. wrote word, i. e. the security that nature and law place about the person of a king. Johnson: I think the fault can be mended at less expense by reading weal, i. e. of every government. Tyrwhitt: I should rather be reading work. Capell, who adopted Tyrwhitt’s conj., says (Notes, i, 143): Work is work of such sort as the people were about to proceed to. Heath (p. 544): By ‘word’ is here meant a declaration or proposal, referring to ‘the rabble call him lord.’ Tollet believed the sense to be ‘the ratifiers and props of every word he utters.’ Caldecott: ‘Word’ is term, and means appellation or title; as ‘lord’ and ‘king;’ in its more extended sense it must import ‘every human establishment.’ Elze (Athenaum, 11 Aug. ‘66): Read worth. As far as worth is concerned, Laer. would indeed be a proper person to be elected king. But the king is not chosen for his worthiness; antiquity and custom claim a share also; they are ‘the ratifiers and props of every worth.’ Tschischwitz: I hold won’t to be the true
Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds,
't Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!'

_Queen._ How cheerfully on the false trail they cry! 105

Oh, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!  [Noise within.

_King._ The doors are broke.

_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.  110

_Laer._ I thank you.  Keep the door.—O thou vile king,
Give me my father!

_Queen._ Calmly, good Laertes.

_Laer._ That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me
bastard;
Cries cuckold to my father; brands the harlot

103. tongues] shouts Han.  
     applaud'] applaud'd Qq.
104. Laertes king?'] Om. Q'76. 
106. [Noise within.] A noise within.
     Qq, opposite to line 105.
107. Enter...following.] Cap. Enter 
     Laertes with others. Qq, after line 106. 
     Enter Laertes. (after line 106), Ff, Rowe, 
     Pope, Han. Enter Laertes, with a Party 
     at the Door. (after line 106), Theob.+, 
     Jen. Enter...People following. White.
108. this king? Sirs.] the King, Sirs?

_Ff. the king? Sirs! Rowe+, Jen.

     QqFf, Rowe+. People. White.
110. [They retire... Mal. after Cap.
     Exeunt. Theob. Om. QqFf.
111, 112. O thou...father!] One line, 
     Ff, Rowe+, Jen.
111. vide] vilde F,F+. vild F. 
113. That...bastard:] Two lines, Ff.
     that's calm] that's calme Q. 
     that's calme Q,Q,Q, that calmes F,F. 
     F3 that calmes F,F, Rowe, Cald.

_reading [and he so prints it. Ed.]_ See Blackstone's note on I, ii, 109. _Cole
RIDGE_: Fearful and self-suspicious as I always feel when I seem to see an error
of judgement in Sh., yet I can not reconcile the cool reflection in these lines with
the anonymity, or the alarm, of this Gentleman or Messenger.

187, 'counter' is defined: 'When a hound hunteth backwards, the same way that
the chase is come.'

113. calm] Corson: F, reads better. Laer. is under the wildest excitement,
with not a calm drop of blood in his veins, and when the Queen entreats, 'Calmly,
good Laertes,' be or become calm, he replies, 'That drop of blood that calms,' that
is, that grows calm, or will calm, 'proclaims me bastard,' 'calms' and 'proclaims'
are both future in force.
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brows
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?
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,
Whv thou art thus incensed.—Let him go, Gertrude.—

115. unsmirched brows] White, Kty, Dyce ii. unsmirched brow Q2, unsmirched brow F1, F5, F6, Rowe. unsmirched brow Q3, F2, F4, F6, Pope. unsmirched brow Theob. +. and unsmirched brow Johns. unsmirched brow F3, Cap. et cet.

118. person] Delius: It is to be inferred that the Queen throws herself between her husband and the enraged Laer. Clarendon: She clings round the latter to prevent him from striking. [See Dr Johnson's stage-direction, Textual Notes, line 112.]

119-121. There's . . . will] Coleridge: Proof, as indeed all else is, that Sh never intended us to see the King with Hamlet's eyes; though, I suspect, the man agers have long done so.

119. divinity] Boswell: In Chettle's Englandes Mourning Garment is the fol lowing anecdote of Queen Elizabeth: While her Majesty was on the river near Greenwich, a shot was fired by accident, which struck the royal barge, and hurt a waterman near her. 'The French ambassador being amazed, and all crying Treason, Treason! yet she, with an undaunted spirit, came to the open place of the barge, and bad them never feare, for if the shot were made at her, they durst not shoot againe: such majestie had her presence, and such boldnesse her heart, that she des- spised all feare, and was, as all princes are or should be, so full of divine fullness, that gulltie mortalitie durst not beholde her but with dazed eyes.'

119. hedge] Caldecott: See Job, i, 10; and iii, 23.

120, 121. That . . . will] Staunton: This is passed by the critics without comment; but we shrewdly suspect it has undergone some depravation at the hands of transcribers or compositors.
ACT IV, SC. V.]

HAMLET

Speak, man.

Laer. Where's 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!

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,

Glo.+, Huds. Mob. worlds Qq. world's Pope et cet.

Where's F., Where is Qq et cet. Dead] Dead, Laertes Cap.


125. Close Qq.


127. blackest] black Pope, Han.

128. 129. grace, to...pit! grace, to...
pit. F. grace, to...pit Qq.

130. worlds] Clarendon: This world and the next. See Macb. III, ii, 16, where it means the terrestrial and the celestial worlds.

131. Good...certainty One line, Qq.

132. Good...loser?] Will you in revenge of your Dear fathers death de-

133.stroy both friend and foe? Q'76.

135. Good...loser?] Will you in revenge of your Dear fathers death de-

136.stroy both friend and foe? Q'76.

126. Theobald gives this note of Warburton's, which, not being in Warburton's own edition, was probably a MS communication: Laertes is a good character. But being in rebellion, Sh. avoids any appearance of sanctioning such conduct by putting into his mouth absurd and blasphemous sentiments, which excite nothing but horror at his actions. The jealousy of the two reigns in which Sh. wrote would not dispense with less exactness. Coleridge: Mercy on Warburton's notion of goodness! Please refer to the seventh scene of this Act. Yet I acknowledge that Sh. evidently wishes, as much as possible, to spare the character of Laer.—to break the extreme turpitude of his consent to become an agent and accomplice of the King's treachery; and to this end he re-introduces Oph. at the close of this scene to afford a probable stimulus of passion in her brother.

128. grace] Caldecott: A religious feeling, a disposition to yield obedience to the divine laws.

130. worlds] Clarendon: This world and the next. See Macb. III, ii, 16, where it means the terrestrial and the celestial worlds.

133. world] Clarendon: The reading of the Qq is perhaps right. The extravagant hyperbole 'all the world' which Laer. would thus use in reference to his
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,
Winner and loser?

Lacr. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Lacr. 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
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 sense shall be paid by 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

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147. _pierce_] Peare Qq. 
150. _eye_ Q76. *pear
151. _Burn out_] Burn on Pope i.
153. _Till_] Tell Q, Qq.

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147. _pierce_] White: _Peare_ of Qq is an absurd reading, which represents day as appearing level to the eye, instead of piercing level, i.e. directly, point blank to the eye. STRATMANN: _Peare_ is a misprint for _pearce_, just as _feare_ for _fearce_, in I, i. 121.

148. _Danes._ [Within] STRATMANN: I rather suspect _noise_ of the Qq is a misprint for _noise_, i.e. voice.

148. Let . . . in] THEOBALD (Sh. Rest. p. 112) notes the error of the Qq in giving this speech to Laertes; who could not know that it was his sister that caused the noise; and who would not command the guards to let in his sister, and then ask what the noise meant.

149. _Re-enter_] COLLIER: Ophelia has been on the stage before in this scene, this is therefore only her _re-entrée_. [It is noteworthy that Rowe is the only authority for the fantastic straws and flowers with which Oph. on the modern stage is decked. From Q, it is to be inferred that she merely has _her hair down_. Ed.]

157. _fine_] THEOBALD: In the passion of love, nature becomes more exquisite of sensation, is more delicate and refined; and where it is so, as people in love generally send what they have of most valuable after their lovers, so poor Ophelia has
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 on his grave rains many a tear._

Fare you well, my dove!

_Laer._ Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

_Oph._ You must sing, Down a-down, and you call him

Pope. 166, 167. _You...a-down-a_] In Italics

Warburton: The cause of Ophelia's madness was grief, occasioned by the violence of her natural affection for her murdered father; her brother, therefore, with great force of expression, says: 'Nature is _fat'n_ in love, and where 'tis _fat'n._' [Thus Warburton's text.] To distinguish the passion of _natural affection_ from the passion of love between the two sexes, _i.e._ Nature, or _natural affection is fat'n_ in love. **Johnson:** These lines might have been omitted in the Folio without great loss, for they are obscure and affected; but, I think, they require no emendation. _Love_ (says Laertes) is the passion by which _nature is most_ exalted and _refined_; and as substances, _refined_ and _subtilised_, easily obey any impulse, or follow any attraction, some part of nature, so purified and _refined_, flies off after the attracting object, after the thing it loves. **Clarendon:** '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. **Collier** (ed. 2): Lines 157-159 are struck through with a pen in the (MS), probably because they were not understood.

160. [Sings] I can find! no music to this in **Chappell's Popular Music of the 'Olden Time**

161. nonny] _Nares:_ Such unmeaning burdens are common to ballads _in most languages._ It appears from Floric's _Dict._ that the word had not always a decorous
a-down-a. Oh, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false 167 steward, that stole his master's daughter.

Lær. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray 170

167. wheel becomes i] wheele becomes rate line, Ff, Rowe.
168. wheel becomes it Qq, Ff, wheele become it Ff, Rowe.
169. nothing's] nothing Ff, Ff, nothing 170, 171. pray you] Pray, Ff, Rowe +, is much Q,76.

170. That's...remember] [Sings] Pray, love, remember: Sta.

meaning. Steevens: I am informed that among the common people of Norfolk to nonny signifies to trite, or play with.

165. move] Walker (Crit. ii, 261): 'Move me thus;' at least I am all but sure that this is the true reading.

166, 167. Down...a-down-a] Malone: Florio gives: Filibustachina, the burden of a countryside song, as we say hay doune a doune doune. Dyce: Whether these words are rightly given I cannot determine. (On the modern stage they are sung by Oph.) Cambridge Editors (Note xxviii): The late Mr John Taylor, in a copy of the Var. 1813 now in the Library of Trin. Coll., Cambridge, has made the following note: 'Oph. gives the song without the Burthen first, and then she instructs them, "You must sing a-down a-down, and you (speaking to another) call him a-down-a.'"

167. wheel] Warburton: We should read weal. She is now rambling on the ballad of the steward and his lord's daughter; and in these words speaks of the state he assumed. Heath: Possibly by 'wheel' is here meant the burden of the ballad. Dyce (Gloss.) says that most critics seem now to agree with Steevens [sic] in thus referring it to the burden or refrain; but Clarendon asserts that no satisfactory example has been found of the word in this sense. Steevens cites a very opposite illustration 'from memory, from a book of which' he could not recollect the exact title or date; unfortunately when Steevens does not adduce line, page, and title, his illustrations are to be received with caution; his wit was too ready at a pinch, and the simple reference to a 'black-letter quarto in my possession' was convenient, much like Sir Walter Scott's 'Old Play.' The illustration in question (which has been repeated by several edd. since his day) is as follows: 'The song was accounted a good one, though it was not moche graced by the wheele, which in no wise accorded with the subject-matter thereof.' A conclusive quotation, if——. Steevens adds that 'Rota' is the ancient musical term in Latin for the burden of a song. Johnson suggests: 'perhaps the lady stolen by the steward was reduced to spin!' Malone divests this suggestion of its tragic element by supposing that the wheel is here used in its ordinary sense, and that these words refer to the occupation of the girl who is supposed to sing the song alluded to by Oph. Staunton says it was, perhaps, the practice on the old stage for Oph. to play the 'wheel,' i.e. the refrain, upon her lute before these words. [If 'wheel' ever meant refrain, the meaning apparently had become obsolete when Ff was printed. Ed.]

168. steward] Collier: No such ballad is known. Moberly. By the false steward stealing his master's daughter she may mean that the rollicking chorus, instead of aiding the sense, steals away all its pathos and dirge-like character.
you, love, remember; and there is pansies, that's for 171 thoughts.


Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines; there's 175


169. matter] See II, ii, 95; and Lær, IV, vi, 178.

170. rosemary] See Rom. &ndash; Jul. IV, v, 79, and notes. Hunter (ii, 259): The mind of Oph. is thrown off its poise by the shock which she had received; she thinks of marriage: with that comes the idea of rosemary, the sweet-scented rosemary, and she addresses him who should have been the bridegroom, Ham, himself, as her 'love.' She then feels her disappointment. Ham. is not there, and she turns to another flower wrought up in her wild attire, pansies, as more fitting her condition,—a flower connected with melancholy, then often called thought, and taking its name from it. 'There's a daisy; I would give you some violets, but,' &c. When the mind is unsettled, it is usual for some idea to recur which has been introduced at a critical period of the person's life. Now, when Lær. was warning Oph. against encouraging the attentions of Ham., he urged her to consider his trifling but as 'A violet in the youth of primy nature.' These words had remained imprinted on her mind, associated with the idea of Ham. and the idea of her brother, and they now recur to her memory when she again converses with her brother on the same unhappy subject. The violets withered when her father died. When Ham. had slain Pol. there was a final obstacle interposed to their union. Staunton: There is method in poor Ophelia's distribution. She presents to each the herb popularly appropriate to his age or disposition. To Lær., whom in her distraction she probably confounds with her lover, she gives 'rosemary' as an emblem of his faithful remembrance; and 'pansies' to denote love's 'thoughts' or troubles. Delius: Probably these flowers existed only in Ophelia's fantasy, and there was no distribution of real flowers to the persons present.

171. pansies] Johnson: 'For thoughts, because of its name, pensées.' In N. & Qu., 22 Oct. 1864, Fabius Oxoniensis gives a number of the names by which this flower is known among rustics and old writers; see also Beisly (Sh. Garden, p. 156).

173. document] Edinburgh Review (Shakespearean Glossaries, July, 1869): This word is here used in its earlier and etymological sense of instruction, lesson, teaching. This early signification is well illustrated in the Fairy Queen [i, 10, 19—Clarendon], 'her sacred booke . . . . She unto him disclosed every whit, And heavenly documents thereout did preach.' The word was habitually used in this sense in Shakespeare's day, but has now wholly lost its primitive signification, and is restricted to its secondary sense of written precepts, instructions, and evidences. Clarendon: Cotgrave gives 'Document: m. A document, precept; instruction, admonition; experiment, example.'

175. fennel] Malone: Oph. gives her fennel and columbines to the King. In A Handfull of Pleasant Delites, 1584, the former is thus mentioned: 'Fennel is for datterers,' &c. See also Florio: Dare finocchio, to give fennell . . . . to flatter, to
rue for you; and here's some for me; we may call it herb 176 of grace o' Sundays; oh, you must wear your rue with a


177. o'] Theob. a QfF, Rowe, Pope.

dissolve. NAKES: This was generally considered an inflammatory herb, and was certainly emblematic of flattery. [Several instances are given.] STAUNTON: For the King she has 'fennel,' signifying 'flattery' and 'lust;' and 'columbines,' which marked ingratitude. DYCE (Gloss.): We may certainly suppose that she offers the King 'flattery,' though we do not agree with Staunton in supposing that here fennel signifies 'lust' also. BEISLY (p. 157) cites Holland's Pliny [p. 77, ed. 1635]: 'Fennel hath a singular property to munnifie our sight, and take away the filme or web that overcasteth and dimmeth our eyes.' This property is noticed by most of our early writers on plants, and it is in reference to this quality that Oph. presents it to the King to clear his sight, just as the rosemary was given to Laer. to aid his memory.

175. columbines] STEEVENS: In All Fools, by Chapman, 1605: 'a columbine? No; that thankless flower fits not my garden,'—II, i. Gerard and other herbalists impute few, if any, virtues to them; and they may therefore be styled thankless, because they appear to make no grateful return for their creation. [TREPHEN] W[ESTON]: Columbine was an emblem of cuckoldom on account of the horns of its nectaris, which are remarkable in this plant. HOLT WHITE: It was also emblematic of forsaken lovers: 'The columbine in tawny often taken Is then ascribed to such as are forsaken.'—Browne's Britannia's Pastoralis, b. i, song ii, 1613. DYCE (Gloss.): But here Oph. is not assigning the columbine to herself, and, except herself, there is no 'love-lorn' person present.

176, 177. rue . . . Sundays] WARBURTON: The reason why 'rue' was called 'herb of grace' is because that herb was a principal ingredient in the potion which the Romish priests used to force the possessed to swallow when they exorcised them. These exorcisms being performed generally on a Sunday, in church before the whole congregation, is the reason why she says we call it 'herb of grace' o' Sundays.' [DYCE says Warburton was only repeating what he had read in the works of a great divine,—Jeremy Taylor; see TODD post.] STEEVENS: I believe there is a quibble meant in this passage; 'rue' anciently signifying the same as ruth, i. e. sorrow. Oph. gives the Queen some, and keeps a proportion of it for herself. There is the same kind of play with the same word in Rich. II: III, iv, 104. 'Herb of grace' is one of the titles which Tucca gives to William Rufus, in Decker's Satiremasti. I suppose the first syllable of the surname Rufus introduced the quibble. HENLEY: The following passage from Greene's Quip for an Upstart Courtier will furnish the best reason for calling rue herb of grace o' Sundays: '—some of them smil'd and said, Rue was called Herbegrace, which, though they scorned in their youth, they might weare in their age, and that it was never too late to say Miserere.' MALONE: 'Herb of grace' was not the Sunday name, but the every-day name of 'rue.' In the common dictionaries of Shakespeare's time it is called 'herb of grace.' See Fyrstio s. v. ruita, and Cotgrave s. v. rue. There is no ground, therefore, for sup-
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,—

178. daisy] Dayde F; Doše Qq
180. he made] a made Qq. a' made F₃₋₄
Cam.

posing with Warburton that 'rue' was called 'herb of grace' from its being used in exorcisms performed in churches on Sundays. Oph. only means, I think, that the Queen may with peculiar propriety on Sundays, when she solicits pardon for that crime which she has so much occasion to rue and repent of, call her 'rue' 'herb of grace.' After having given the Queen 'rue,' to remind her of the sorrow and contrition she ought to feel for her incestuous marriage, Oph. tells her she may wear it with a difference, to distinguish it from that worn by Oph. herself; because her tears flowed from the loss of a father, those of the Queen ought to flow for her guilt. Todd (ap. Caldecott) cites Jeremy Taylor's A Dissuasive from Popery, Part I, ch. ii, sect. ix: 'They [the Romish exorcists] are to try the devil by holy water, incense, sulphur, rue; which from thence, as we suppose, came to be called herb of grace.'

Caldecott cites a passage from Edward Alleyn's letters [Var. 1821, vol. xxi, p. 396, and Sh. Soc. vol. ix, p. 26], which seems to imply that 'herb of grace' and 'rue' were different plants: 'Every evening' [Alleyn is telling his wife, whom he calls 'good sweete mouse,' to take precautions against the plague raging that year, 1593, in London] 'throwe water before your dore and in your bake sid, and have in your windowes good store of reue and herb of grace.' That this 'herb of grace' was wormwood Malone shows by referring to the reply from Alleyn's parents to this letter: 'for your good counsell . . . . we all thank you, which wasse for keping of our howsse cleane . . . . and strange our windowes with wormwode and rewe,' —Sh. Soc. vol. ix, p. 30.

178. difference] Steevens: This seems to refer to the rules of heraldry, where the younger brothers of a family bear the same arms with a difference, or mark of distinction. So, in Holinshed's Reign of King Richard II, p. 443: '—because he was the youngest of the Spencers, he bare a border gules for a difference.' There may, however, be somewhat more implied here than is expressed. You, madam (says Oph. to the Queen), may call your rue by its Sunday name, herb of grace, and so wear it with a difference to distinguish it from mine, which can never be anything but merely rue, i.e. sorrow. Caldecott: Between the ruth and wretchedness of guilt, and the ruth and sorrows of misfortune, it would be no difficult matter to distinguish. Skeat (N. & Qu., 25 Dec. 1869): There is no difficulty here if we do not force the words into some heraldic phrase. It merely means this: I offer you rue, which has two meanings; it is sometimes called herb of grace, and in that sense I take some for myself; but with a slight difference of spelling it means ruth, and in that respect it will do for you. This explanation is not mine,—it is Shakespeare's own; see Rich. II: III, iv, 105, 106. [A discussion on the meaning of this phrase is also to be found in Edin. Rev. July, 1869; N. & Qu. 25 Sept. 1869; 23 Oct. 1869, and 8 Jan. 1870.]

178. daisy] Henley: Greene, in his Quip for an Uplifted Courtier, has explained the significance of this flower: '—Next them grew the dissembling daisie, to warne such light of love wench(es not to trust every faire promise that such amorous bache-
[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 he not come again?

182. Thought] Thoughts Q'76. 184, 185. he...he'] a...a Qq. a'...a'
affliction] afflictions Qq.

Clarendon: It does not appear to whom she gives it; probably either to the King or Queen.

179. violets] Malone: In A Handifull of Pleasant Delites, above quoted, the violet is thus characterized: 'Violet is for faithfulnesse, Which in me shall abide.'

181. [Sings] Chappell (Popular Music of the 'Olden Time,' vol. i, p. 233): This song is contained in Anthony Holborne's Cittharn Schoole, 1597; in Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book; in William Ballet's Lute Book; and in many other manuscripts and printed books. There are two copies in William Ballet's Lute Book, and the second is entitled 'Robin Hood is to the greenwood gone;' it is, therefore, probably the tune of a ballad of Robin Hood, now lost. In Fletcher's Two Noble Kinsmen, II, i, the jailer's daughter, being mad, says, 'I can sing twenty more. . . . I can sing The Broom and Bonny Robin.' In Robinson's Schoole of Musicke (1603), and in one of Dowland's Lute Manuscripts (D. d., 2. 11, Cambridge), it is entitled 'Robin is to the greenwood gone;' in Addit. MSS. 17,786 (Brit. Mus.), 'My Robin,' &c.

Slowly, and ad libitum.

My Robin is to the greenwood gone.


182. passion] Suffering. See Macb. III. iv, 57.

184. [Sings] Chappell (Popular Music of the 'Olden Time,' vol. i, p. 237). This fragment, sung by Ophelia, was also noted down by W. Linley. It appears to
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead,
Go to thy death-bed,
He never will come again.
His head was 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!

be a portion of the tune entitled 'The Merry Milkmaids;' in The Dancing Master, 1650, and The Milkmaids' Dumps, in several ballads.

Very slowly, and ad libitum.

And will he not come again? And will he not come again? No,

no, he is dead, Go to thy death-bed, He never will come again.
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,
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,

194. of] Om. Q, Qf. on Johns. 194, 195. And...God?] And peace be with his soul and with all Lovers souls Q76.
I pray God] Om. Qq, Pope+.

God be wi' you] Cap. Separate line, QqFf. 196. commune with] common with F,.
God buy you Q, Qf. God buy ye F, F,. God bu' ye F, God bu' ye F, Rowe+. 197. deny] deny Q,.
line Qf.

[Exit.] Exeunt Ophelia. F, 198. collateral] collateral Q, Qf, Q, Collaterall Q, Colaterall F, Collaterall F,.
Jen. Dyce. & w' wi' you White, Huds. 200. collateral] collateral Q, Qf, Q, Collaterall Q, Colaterall F, Collaterall F,.
be wi' ye Glo. 201. kingdom] kyn dome Qf.

Om. Qq. Exit dancing distractedly. Coll. (MS).

fessio Amanitis, 1554, speaking first of the funeral of Chaucer, and then of Gower, says: '—— he lieth buried in the monasterie of Seynt Peter's at Westminster, &c. On whose souls and all christen, Jesu have merce.' MOBERLY: So, with this most touching prayer, Oph. goes to meet her death. It displays admirably her simple and loving spirit, and seems to be a protest beforehand against the hard-hearted law which hinders her having the full Christian burial-rites.

194 of] For instances of 'of' used for on, see ABBOTT, § 175 and § 181.

195. Jennens: 'Do you see this?' is spoken to the King; and 'O God!' is only an exclamation expressing the anguish of Laertes's mind on the sight of his sister's frenzy. [So in Jennens's text. Ed.]

196. commune] STEEVENS: To common of F, is to 'commune,' which, pronounced as anciently spelt, is still in frequent provincial use. So, in The Last Voyage of Captaine Froshier, by Dionysse Settle, bl. l., 1577: 'Our Generall, repayed with the ship boat to common or sign with them.' Again, in Holinshed's account of Jack Cade's insurrection: '—— to whom were sent from the king the archbishop, &c., to common with him of his griefs and requests.' BOSWELL: Surely the word common in F, means, I must be allowed to participate in your grief, to feel in common with you. [GRANT WHITE, in his excellent Sh. Scholar, p. 421, was beguilu by the 'homely strength' of the F, text into approval of Boswell's interpretation of it, much to DYC'E S 'surprise,' who pronounced it 'most erroneous;' the two words, common and 'commune,' are mere variations in spelling of the same word; they were both accented alike, on the first syllable,—as Grant White afterwards remarked in his edition. And HUDDON says Milton so accents 'commune,' and so also ever Wordsworth. Ed.]

108. CLARENDON: That is, 'of your wisest friends, whom you will.'
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 burial,
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 it in question.

_King._

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

[Exeunt.

Scene VI. Another room in the castle.

_Enter Horatio and a Servant._

_Hor._ What are they that would speak with me?

204. _patience_] _paignce_ F,
207. _burial_] _F,F_4, _Rowe, Cap. Cald._
_Knt, Simg. Dyce, Sta. White, Kily, Del._
_Huds. _buriall_ F,F_4, _funerall_ Qq et _cet._
208. _trophy_] _trophe_ Q,Q_5, _tropheae_ Q_76.
_Q,Q_5, _trophe sword, trophce sword_ Q_76.
_Q,Q_5, _trophe sword, Pope, Han. _trophe sword, Cap._
209. _rite] _right_ Qq.
210. _heaven to earth] _earth to heaven_ Q_76.

201. _touch'd_] _Clarendon: Implicated in the guilt of Polonius's murder._
207. _means_] _Abbott, § 423: That is, the means of his death. See I, iv, 73; III, ii, 321._
208. _hatchment] _Sir J. Hawkins (Var. 1821): This practice is uniformly kept up, to this day. Not only the sword, but the helmet, gauntlet, spurs, and tabard (i.e. a coat whereon the armorial ensigns were anciently depicted, from whence the term coat of armor), are hung over the grave of every knight._
209. _ostentation] _Caldecott: 'Ostentation,' or _ostent_, seems to have been a term which fashion had in some sort appropriated to funeral pomp or the show of heavy and deep depression._
211. _That_] _For instances of the omission of _so_ before _that'_ see IV, vii, 148; and _Abbott, § 283._
212. _axe_] _Warburton suggests and reads _tax_, i.e. penalty, punishment._
Serv. Sailors, 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.

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; 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

2. Serv.] Gent. or Gen. Q3.
Sailors F,F,F. Sea-faring


3. [Exit...] Han. Om. QqFf.

5. greeted, if?] greeted. If Qq.
Sailors.] Saylor. Ff (Sailor F4).


God...him] Save you Sir Q76.


an't] and Qq. and 't F,F,F,F.

9. came] came Qq.


10. Hor. [Reads] Reads the Letter.

12. Hor. [Reads] Reads the Letter.

16. in] Ff, Rowe, Cap. Knt, Dyce i, Sta. Del. and in Qq et cet.

10. let to know] Clarendon: Caused to know, informed. Compare the phrase 'do to wit.'


14. pirate] Coleridge: This is almost the only play of Sh. in which mere accidents, independent of all will, form an essential part of the plot;—but here how judiciously in keeping with the character of the over-meditative Ham., ever at last determined by accident or by a fit of passion.


19, 20. what they did] Miles (p. 70) maintains that this capture was not accidental, but was pre-arranged by Ham., who hints at it when he says to the King (IV, iii, 47), 'I see a cherub that sees them,' but alludes to it most positively and specifically at
did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have 20
the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much
haste as thou would'st 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.

20. good] Om. Qq.
22. haste] hast F,F, speed Qq.
23. thine] your F, Rowe, Cald. thy

24. bore of the] bord of the Q1. Om.
28. He that...thine] So that...thine

the close of the interview with his mother: 'O 'tis most sweet When in one line
two crafts directly meet.'—If the word crafts had its present maritime significance
in Shakespeare's time, the pun alone is conclusive of a pre-arranged capture. How
arranged is neither here nor there; but opportunities of chartering a free cruiser
could not have been wanting to a prince of Denmark, and, what is more significant,
the fleet of Fortinbras was then in port at Elsinor. There is an understanding, just
ever so vaguely glanced at, between the two young princes. But the following lines
admit of but one interpretation: "Let it work; For 'tis the sport to have the en-
gineer 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!" One would think
it required a miraculous allowance of critical obtuseness to ignore a counterplot so
strikingly pre-announced.... To make assurance doubly sure, comes the letter to
Hor., "In the grapple I boarded them; on the instant they got clear of our ship;
so I alone became their prisoner. They dealt with me like thieves of mercy; but
they knew what they did." Can circumstantial proof go farther? Could any
twelve men of sense, on such a record, acquit Ham. of being an accessory before, as
well as after the fact? [See Snider, Appendix, Vol. II, p. 183.]

21. as] Clarendon: We must either take 'as' = as though, or supply withal
after 'death.'

23. will make] For instances of the omission of the relative, see Abbott, § 244,
and Macb. V, vii, 7.

24. bore] Johnson: The calibre of a gun, or the capacity of the barrel. 'The
matter would carry heavier words.' Tschischwitz cannot persuade himself that
'bore' is not a verbal substantive from 'to bear,' and means 'capacity for bearing.'

28. Clarke: This simple yet strong conclusion to his sedate but most earnest
letter to his bosom-friend might, we think, fully serve to denote Hamlet's per-
fekt sanity. Madmen do not write in a style thus condensed and pertinent; if
they are warm they are violent, if they are fervent they are excited; but here is
warmth of friendship with staid expression, fervour of feeling with sobriety of
assurance.
Come, I will make you way for these your letters;  
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 acquaintance 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. Oh, for two special reasons,  
Which may to you perhaps seem much unsinew'd,  
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother

[Exeunt.]
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,
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,

13. be it] be't Pope, Jen. Dyce ii,
Huds.

14. She's so conjunctive] She is so
conclude Qq. She is so precious Q'76.

18. general gender] people Q'76.


21. gyves] Giues QqF, 
that] Om. Pope, Han.

13. be . . . which] Abbott, § 273: There is, perhaps, a confusion between 'be it either,' and 'be it whichever of the two.' Perhaps, however, 'either' may be taken in its original sense of 'one of the two,' so that 'either which' is 'which-one-so-ever of the two.'


20. Would, Clarendon: The Qq make 'convert' indicative instead of Infinitive. But 'Would convert' seems required by the context.

20. spring] Johnson: This simile is neither very seasonable in the deep interest of this conversation, nor very accurately applied. If the spring had changed base metals to gold, the thought had been more proper. Reed: The allusion is to the qualities of the dropping-well at Knaresborough, in Yorkshire. Camden (1590, p. 564) thus mentions it: 'Sub quo fons est in quem ex impendentibusrupibusaque
guttatindistillant,unde Dropping Well vacant, in quem quicquid ligni immittitur,
lapidoe cortice brevi obduci et lapidescere observatum est.' Clarendon: Lily has: 'Would I had sipped of that ryuer in Caria, which turneth those that drinke of it to stones.'—Euphues, p. 63, ed. Arber.

21. gyves] Theobald (Nichols's Lit. Hist. ii, 576): I own I do not understand this. I have conjectured gybes, i.e. even gybes, mocks, fleering, &c., would in him be construed graces. [This was not repeated in Theobald's ed., but it is adopted by Tschirschwitz. Ed.] Elze: Perhaps we should read crimes. Clarke: That is, turn all my attempts to restrain him into so many injuries perpetrated against his innocence and good qualities. Daniel (p. 76): Read gyres, i.e. his 'wild and whirling' actions, his mad eccentricities. Clarendon: Compare, 'And made their bends adornings.'—Ant. & Cleo. II, ii, 213. Elze (Shakespeare-Jahrbuch, xi, 205, and also The Athenaeum, 20 Feb. 1869): The corruption appears to be here not in
HAMLET

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

22. timber’d] tymbred Q.Qq, tym-
bered Q, timbered Q, timbred Fl.
loud a wind] loved Arm’d Q.Qq,
loved armes Q.Qq, loved arms Q’76.

not] not gone Ktly.
had] have Qq.

‘gyves,’ but in ‘graces.’ How can corporeal ‘gyves’ be converted into incorporeal, abstract ‘graces’? That is more than even the well at Knaresborough could do. An abstract noun in this connection ruins the whole metaphor, and is illogical. If we substitute some abstract noun for ‘gyves,’ while restoring logical propriety, we deprive the simile of all significant clearness, force, and depth, and to introduce the wonder-working spring in order to compare together two abstract qualities would be pointless, and assuredly not in accordance with Shakespeare’s genius and style. Read, therefore: graves. Graves, now spelled greatres, is found also in 2 Hen. IV: IV, iv, 50, where, as here, something mean becomes ennobled. For the spelling, compare ‘threaves,’ instead of theres, (Chapman’s Iliad, xi, 477), and ‘stale,’ instead of steale or stele (Ib. iv, 173). STRATMANN praises this emendation of Elze’s as judicious.

22. JENNESS finds the reading of the Fl so unnatural and impossible that he adopts that of Q.Qq, reading so loved, arm’d, and paraphrases, ‘Too slightly timbered for one so loved and armed with the affections and veneration of the people.’ The armes of Q, are put for the person armed, and the love applied to them which is meant for him. In both these readings we have the idea of a suit of armor reverberating an arrow back to its bow, which is not only possible, but just. STEEVENS: The reading of the Fl, however, is supported by Ascham’s Toxophilus: ‘Weake bowes, and lyghte shaftes can not stande in a rough wynde.’ [p. 151, ed. Arber.]

25, 26. have ... driven] ABBOTT, § 425: Here note that though the first line could be re-transposed, and Laer could naturally say, ‘I have lost a father,’ on the other hand he could not say, ‘I have driven a sister,’ without completely changing the sense. ‘Have’ is here used in its original sense, and is equivalent to ‘I find.’ When ‘have’ is thus used without any notion of action, it is separated from the participle passive. See I, ii, 215; III, iii, 38.

27. praises] JOHNSON: If I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more.

28. on mount] CALDECOTT: On the highest ground, in the fullest presence of the age, to give a general challenge in support of her excellence. [I think Caldecott failed to see that ‘of all the age’ qualifies ‘challenger.’ Her worth challenged
HAMLET

For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

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 ourselves;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine—

Enter a Messenger, with letters.

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

29. perfections. But] perfections———


my] Om. Pope, Han.

30. Break...think] Two lines, Ff.

32. beard ] berd Q. beards Q.76.

with danger] of danger Cap.

conj. (Notes, i. p. 29).

33. pastime] pastime F.

shortly shall] shall soon Pope.+

34. ourself] your selfe F. your self

F. F., Rowe, Pope.

35. imagine—] imagine. Qq.

Enter...] Enter a Messenger. Ff.

...a Gentleman. Cap. After news? line


36. How...Hamlet] Om. Qq, Pope, Han.


37. This to your] These to your Qq, Pope+, Cap. Jen.

38. Hamlet?] Hamlet, Qq.

all the age to deny her perfection. Ed.] COLLIER (ed. 2): The (MS) reads sole challenger. MOBERLY: The allusion seems to be the coronation ceremony of the Emperor of Germany [Austria?] as King of Hungary; when on the Mount of De-

dance, at Presburg, he unsheathes the ancient sword of state, and shaking it towards North, South, East, and West, challenges the four corners of the world to dispute his rights.

30. sleeps] See I, i. 173. DYCE quotes from Phaer’s Virgil, Aeneid, ii : ‘The
towne . . . in sleepes [the original somne] and drinking drownd,’ and refers to
2 Hen. IV: IV, v, 69, where he also reads ‘sleeps.’

32. with] For instances of ‘with’ equivalent to by, see Macb. III, i, 62; IV, ii, 32; and ABBOTT, § 193.

34. I . . . ourself] SEYMOUR (ii, 196), losing sight of the distinction here im-
plied between the feelings of a man and those of a king, says that in the beginning of this speech the King seems to have forgotten the pompous dignity of his plural
distinction.
Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.—

I 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?

Lær. Know you the hand?

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

And in a postscript here, he says 'alone!'

Can you advise me?

Lær. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come;

41. Of...them.] Om. Ff, Rowe+
Cald. Knt.

[Reads] Om. F.† read F. F.
41. 42. Laertes...us.] One line, Qq,
Jen. Knt.

42. us.] us, all— (reading Laertes...
all— as one line) Pope+

[Exit...] Om. Qq.
43. [Reads] Cap. (after mighty,) Om. QqFf.
44. shall I] I shall Jen.
45, 46. first...thereunto,] (first...par-
don) thereunto Q'76.
45. asking your] asking you QqF,
Rowe, Pope.

45, 46. pardon thereunto,] pardon,

there-unto Q, Q, Q, Q, pardon, there-unto Q.

46. occasion] Occasions Ff, Rowe, Bos.

and more strange] Om. Qq, Pope +, Cap. Jen. and most strange Anon.

48. Hamlet.] Om. Qq, Jen.

50. abuse, and] abuse? Or Ff, Rowe.
abuse, or Knt.

52-54. 'Tis...me?] Prose, Ff, Rowe.
Ending the lines (character;...says)...
me ? Pope+, Jen. El.

52-53. 'Naked !...alone.'] As quo-
tations, Johns.

54. advise] devise Qq.

55. I'm] I am Qq, Cap. Steev. Var

41. Of him] WALKER (Crit. iii, 208): 'Him' for them, I suspect. [Would ' he received them of them that brought them' be tolerable? Ed.] TSCHISCHWITZ thinks he has mended matters by giving this speech to a servant instead of to a messenger.

45. eyes] CLARENDON: See IV, iv, 6.

47. more strange] ABBOTT, § 6: 'My sudden, and even more strange than sudden.'

49. should] See Macb. IV, iii, 49, or ABBOTT, § 325.

52. character] WALKER (Crit. iii, 269): The verse seems to require that this word (character, as it is, frequently at least, accented in the old poets) should be pronounced ch'aracter, as it is in Middleton's The Roaring Girl, Prologue, 'With wings more lofty; thus her character lies.' [—p. 435, ed. Dyce.]
HAMLET

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,
As checking at his voyage, and that he means

57. shall] Om. Qq.
      and tell] to tell Han.

58. didest] diddest Ff. didst Qq, Jen.

58-60. If it...me?] Two lines, the

first ending so? Ff, Rowe.

60, 61. Ay...peace.] One line, QqFf,


Ay...So you will] Steev. I

my Lord, so you will Qq. If so you't
Ff, Rowe, Knt, White. I, so you'll
Pope+. Ay; so you'll Johns. I will,
my lord; So you will Cap. KITY. If
you'll not Cald.

62. return'd] returned Qq.

63. checking at] the King at QqQ.
liking not Q, Pope+, Jen. Coll. El.

64. checking at Long MS.*

58. Thus... thou] STASTUNTON: The reading of Qq may be thought superior by

some.

59. As...otherwise] DELIUS: We should expect 'How should it not be so?'
Sh. is elsewhere inexact in repeating and in omitting the negative. KEIGHTLEY (Ex-
positor, p. 295): It is manifest that but or not has been omitted. [Keightley reads
'should it but' in his text.] CLARENDON: Perhaps the first clause refers to Hamlet's
return, the second to Laertes's feelings. MARSHALL (p. 197): If the 'should'
were italicised we might make sense of it, thus: 'If it be so' — (i. e. if Ham. has
come back because, on consideration, he did not choose to go to England) — As
how should it be so? (i. e. how should there be any question about it being so?)—
'How (could it be) otherwise?' I admit that in this case we should expect 'if'
'to be repeated.

60. Will...me?] WHITE: The most un-Shakespearian want of accord between
the rhythm and the sense of this hemistich,—the accent being thrown upon 'by'
instead of 'me,'—warrants the opinion that the intelligent correction in the Folio is
by authority. [It is to be borne in mind that White supposes 'ruled' is to be pro-
nounced as a dissyllable. In his text he prints 'ru'd,' and, following the Ff, omits
'Ay, my lord.' Ed.]

60. my lord] WALKER (Crit. iii, 270): Perhaps 'my good lord.'

63. As] ABBOTT, § 115: 'As' is used nearly redundantly before participles to
denote a cause, 'inasmuch as.'

63. checking] STEEVENS: The phrase is from falconry. 'For who knows not,
quoth she, that this hawk, which comes now so fair to the fist, may to-morrow check
at any lure?'—Hinde's Elia sto Libidinose, 1606. DYCE (Gloss.): Applied to a hawk
when she forsakes her proper game and follows some other of inferior kind that
crosses her in her flight. CLARENDON: Compare Twelfth Night, II, v. 124, and
HAMLET

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.
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 unworthiest 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,

---

65. _device_ deuise Q1, Pope, Cap.
67. _breathe_ breath F,F1, Cap.
68. _even_ ev'n Pope + .
69. _accident_ accedent Q2, Pope, Cap.
69-82. _Laer. My lord...graveness._

Om. Ff.
69. _My lord._ Om. Pope + .

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III, i, 71. The use of the word is not quite the same here, because the voyage was Hamlet's 'proper game,' which he abandons. Collier (ed. 1): 'Checking at' was doubtless introduced in the Ff as a conjectural emendation. [Not repeated in Collier's ed. 2.] Dyce: The Ff reading is much more in Shakespeare's manner than liking not.

68. _uncharge_ Caldecott: Acquit of blame. Clarendon: The word is probably coined by Sh. for the nonce.
68. _practice_ Clarendon: Plot, stratagem, treachery. See IV, vii, 139; V, ii, 304.
77. _siege_ Johnson: Of the lowest rank. Clarendon: Seat, thence _rank_, because people sat at table and elsewhere in order of precedence.
82. _health_ Warburton: But a warm furred gown rather implies sickness than
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 into his seat,  
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse  
As he had been incorpsed and demi-natured
With the brave beast. So far he topp'd my thought  
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,  
Come short of what he did.

_Lear._  
_A Norman, was't?_

_King._  
_A Norman._

85. _Normandy;—_ ] _Normandy._ Fl.
86. _can_] ran, Rowe, Cald. Knt i.
87. _doing_] doings, Cald.

88. _As_ ] _And Rowe._
89. _topp'd_] topp'd, Qq, Ff, Rowe,  
_Pope, Han. Cald. Knt._

90. _forgery_ ] _JOHNSON: _I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he would perform

"health." _Sh._ wrote _wealth, i. e._ that the wearers are rich burghers and magistrates.  
[MOBERLY: _This emendation gives better sense._]  
JOHNSON: 'Importing' here may be not _inferring_ by logical consequence, but _producing_ by physical effect. A young man regards _show in his dress, an old man, health._  
MALONE: 'Importing health' means _denoting an attention to health._  
STEEVENS: 'Importing' may only signify,—_implying, denoting._  
Malone's explanation may be the true one.  
CLARENDO N adopts Malone's explanation. [See _Rom. & Jul._ I, i, 86.  
May not this be an instance of what _CORSON (Cornell Rev. Nov. 1876) calls respective construction, and 'health' refer to 'careless livery,' and 'graveness' to 'sables' and 'weeds'?  
Compare III, i, 151: 'The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword;' also _Mach._ I, iii, 50: 'speak thou to me who neither beg nor fear your favour nor your hate;' _Wint. Tale._ III, ii, 164: 'though I with death, and with Reward, did threaten and encourage him.'  
For these and other instances of similar construction, see the _Cornell Rev._ cited above; and see also II, ii, 382. _Ed._]

83, 84. _Normandy . . . against_ ] _CALDECOTT: _With the punctuation of the _Qq_ _FF_ the construction may be: "Here was a gentleman [whom] I've seen myself, and I have also served against the French, And they," &c.

85. _can_] _COLLIER: _The _ran_ of _Ff_ is a mere misprint; people do not _run_ on horseback.  
See _ABBOTT, § 307_, for other instances, found, though very rarely, in _Sh._ of this, the original meaning of 'can.'  
CLARENDO N: Compare _Bacon, Essay xi_, p. 40: 'In evil the best condition is not to will, the second not to can.'

89. _topp'd_] _DYCE (Gloss.): _To rise above, to surpass.  
See _Mach._ IV, iii, 57; _Lear._ I, ii, 21.

90. _forgery_ ] _JOHNSON: _I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he would perform
Hamlet

Lear. Upon my life, Lamond.

King. The very same.

Lear. 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 especially,
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,
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his

93. Lamond. Pope+, Dyce, Sta. 100. sight[ ] fight Rowe ii, Pope.
Glo.+, Huds. Lamond Ff, Rowe, 101. you ; ] you Sir, Ff, Rowe.
Cald. Knt. Lamont White. Lamord 101, 103. the...them ] Om. Ff, Rowe,
Qq et cet.  Pope, Han. 95. the ] our Ff, that Coll. (MS).
very ] Om. Theob. ii, Warb. Johns. Qs, the fencers Q76.
especially ] especially F., Han.
Cam. Cla.

93. Lamond. Malone: Sh. wrote, I suspect, Lamode. See lines 94, 95, where
94. brooch] NARES: An ornamental buckle, pin, or loop. From the French
he is spoken of as 'the brooch and gem of all the nation.' Clarendon: The name
broche, a spit. It is frequently mentioned as an ornament worn in the hat.
appears to have been altogether fictitious. C. Elliot Browne (Athenaun, 29 July,
95. confession] Delius: Here used, because Lamond would not willingly ac-
1876): It is not impossible that this is an allusion to Pietro Monte (in a Gallicized
knowledge the superiority of Laer. over the French in the art of fighting.
form), the famous cavalier and swordsman, who is mentioned by Castiglione ('Il
96. defence] Johnson: That is, in the science of defence.
Cortegiano,' b. i) as the instructor of Louis the Seventh's Master of Horse. In the
97. masterly report] Clarendon: A report which describes Laer. as a master of
English translation he is called 'Peter Mount.' [I regret that these valuable Notes
fence.
98. defence] Johnson: That is, in the science of defence.
Collier (ed. 2): It is not used by any other poet. White: The Qq give a mere
ignorant printing of th' escrimeurs [which White adopts in his text], helped, per-
word as scrimers has been met with in the books on fencing, or anywhere else.
103. report] Walker (Crit. i, 302): Is 'report' the object or the subject of
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,
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.

---

'envenom'? If the latter, read 'your envy.' _Coleridge:_ Note how the King first awakens Laertes's vanity by praising the reporter, and then gratifies it by the report itself, and finally points it by these lines.

_111._ _Walker_ (Crit. iii, 270): Here, and in III, iii, 57, and IV, v, 119, Claudius, like the Ghost, shows something of Hamlet's philosophising turn.

_112._ _begun by time_] _Johnson:_ The meaning may be, _love_ is not innate in us, and co-essential to our nature, but begins at a certain time from some external cause, and being always subject to the operations of time, suffers change and diminution. _M. Mason:_ The King reasons thus:—'I do not suspect that you did not love your father; but I know that time abates the force of affection.' I therefore suspect that we ought to read: 'love is begone by time.' I suppose that Sh. places the syllable _be_ before _gone_, as we say _be-paint, be-spatter, be-think, &c._, or possibly we should read 'by-gone.' _Bailey_ (ii, 14): The dominant idea of the speech is that love is abated by time. Read 'love is _begnaw_ by time,' an expression which exactly conveys the sense required, while the change requisite for perverting it into the received text is slight. Compare _Rich. III_ : I, iii, 222; _Tro. & Cress_ IV, v, 293.

_112._ _by time_] _Seymour_ (ii, 197): Read _betime_. The King means, 'love begins at an early period of life, but as our affections ripen this affection suffers abatement.' _Keightley:_ I cannot make any good sense out of this. I suspect that 'time' may be owing to the same word lower down. The love spoken of seems to be that of children for parents, and possibly the word was _childhood, birth._

_113._ _proof_] _Johnson:_ In transactions of daily experience. _Clarendon:_ Circumstances which prove that time abates love. Compare II, i, 38.

_114._ _fire_] For other instances of the lengthened pronunciation of this word, see _Walker, Ver_ 144; _Abbott_, § 480.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in its own too-much; that we would do

115-124. There...uleer.] Om. Fl. tho...ery Han.
wieke Q'76. wiek Rowe i. that] what Pope+
118. plurisy] plurisie Qq. pleurisie would] should Seymour.
pleurisie Q'76, Rowe, Pope, Theob. Warb. ple-


118. plurisy] Warburton: I would believe, for the honor of Sh., that he wrote
plethory. But I observe the dramatic writers of that time frequently call a fulness
of blood a plurisy, as if it came not from πίθηνα, but from plus, pluris. [This
emendation Warburton communicated by letter to Theobald, who replied that it had
also occurred to him, but that he was doubtful of it, partly from 'the accentual syllae-
ble falling so wrong in the verse, the o being long' [here Theobald's Greek misled
him], and partly because Sh. might have mistaken the nature of pleurisie, as Beau
& Fl. seem to have done: 'those too many excellencies, that feed Your pride, turn t
a pleurisy.'—Custom of the Country [II, i, p. 417, ed. Dyce]. In his edition Theobald
added: 'thou grand decider...that heal'st The earth when it is sick, and cur'st
the world O' the pleurisy of people.'—Two Noble Kinsmen [V, i, p. 417, ed. Dyce].
Tollet, in the Far. 1821, cites: Mascal's Treatise on Cattle, 1662, p. 187, 'Against
the blood, or plurisie of blood. The disease of blood is, some young horses will
feed, and being fat will increase blood, and so grow to a plurisie, and die.' Malone
cites: 'Must your hot itch and plurisy of lust...be fed Up to a surfeit.'—Tis
Pity She's a Whore, IV, iii [Ford's Works, p. 177, ed. Dyce]. Other instances are
given by M. Mason and Nares, in all of which the word is spelled 'plurisy,' and
means a surfeit, a plethory. Whence Nares affirms that it means 'a plethora or
redundancy of blood. Not the same as plurisy, but derived from plus, pluris,
more.' And Nares is followed in the derivation from plus, pluris, by Dyce, Col-
lier, Staunton, White, and Hudson. Gifford also explains: 'Thy plurisy of
goodness is thy ill!' (Massinger's Unnatural Combat, IV, i, p. 196, ed. Gifford) by
'thy superabundance of goodness: the thought is from Sh..,' and cites the present
passage from Hamlet. Coleridge, in his Notes, says, 'I rather think that Sh. meant
plurisy, but involved in it the thought of plethora, as supposing plurisy to arise
from too much blood; otherwise I can not explain 'this should' is like a spend-
thrift sigh That hurts by easing.' In a stitch in the side every one must have
heaved a sigh that 'hurt by easing.' Since writing the above I feel confirmed
that 'pleurisy' is the right word; for I find that in the old medical dictionaries the
pleurisy is often called the "plethory."' In fine, Sh. and the early dramatists were
misled by the sound into supposing that pleurisy was the same as plethory, and it
was accordingly spelled 'plurisy,' as indicating the symptoms implied in its supposed
derivation from plus, pluris. It is better to retain that spelling, although there is no
disease, I believe, so named, or rather so spelled, at present. Ed.]

19-122. that...accidents] Tschischwitz: The fundamental idea of the
HAMLET

[ACT IV, SC. VII.

We should do when we would; for this 'would' changes (120)
And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents,
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?

Lær. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place indeed should murder sanctuarize;

120, 123. 'would... 'should' Italics,
Q.
122. accidents] accedens Q,Q,Q.
123. spendthrift sigh] spend-thrift
figh Q76. spend-thrifts figh Q,Q,
spend-thrifts figh Q,Q, Pope, Cap.
Coll. Sing. spend-thrift-sigh Ktly.
125. Hamlet comes] Hamlet come F,
F, Hamlet, come F.

126. your...in deed] your fathers
fonne indeed F,F, your father's son
indeed F, Pope+, Jen. El. indeede
your fathers fonne Q3, Cap. in deed
your father's son Steev. Var. Sing.
Ktly.
128. murder sanctuarize] protect a
murderer Q76.

whole tragedy. Grant White (Hamlet the Younger, Galaxy, April, 1870, p. 544)
says the same.

119. too-much] Moerly: Like 'a great amiss,' 'the why and wherefore,' and
the like. English had at this time something like the flexibility of the Greek, and
had no difficulty in throwing out phrases like τὸ δόξαν and τὸ πρόδοξα.
120. should... would] See I, v, 32; III, iii, 75; Macb. I, v, 19, and III, vi, 19.
128. spendthrift sigh] Warburton: This nonsense should be read 'a spend-
thrift's sign,' i.e. though a spendthrift's entering into bonds or mortgages gives him
a present relief from his straits, yet it ends in much greater distresses. Heath:
This refers to a very idle opinion, still prevalent among the common people, that
every sigh draws drops of blood from the heart and tends to shorten life. Calde-
cott cites Dr Shewen: To have conceived, previous to the discovery of the cir-
culation of the blood, that sighing sucked the blood, was an idea natural enough
for after, or rather during, a deep sigh the blood flows more freely through the pul-
monary artery and its ramifications in the different lobes of the lungs; and it might
have appeared to the old physiologists to be thus drawn away from the heart and
the general mass into the lungs. How it got back again into the heart, they did not
know. Clarendon: 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 Hen. VI: III, ii,
63; Mid. N. D., III, ii, 97. [See Rom. & Jul. III, v, 58.] Moerly: He who vainly acknowledges that he 'should' have done a thing is like a spendthrift sighing
for his squandered estate.

128. sanctuarize] Clarendon: This verb is probably invented by Sh. No
place should protect murder (such as that which Ham. has perpetrated) from punish-
ment. Compare Rich. III III, i, 42; Cor. I, x, 19.
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
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

130. Will...this] Om. Q'76.
132. those] For instances of the omission of the relative, see IV, vi, 23; Abbott, § 244; Macb. V, vii, 7.
133. fame] same Q.F.F.
135. remiss] CLARENDON: A word seldom if ever used now, except with reference to some particular act of negligence. Here it means careless, indifferent. So in 1 Hen. VI: IV, iii, 59.
137. unbated] unbaited F.F.
138. pass] pace Qq.

130. this...chamber.] Coll. i, El.
131. this...chamber.] Dyce, Sta. White, Del. Huds. Glo.+
132. this...chamber.] Pope, Knt. this...chamber; Theob.+
133. this...chamber?] F.F.F., Rowe, Jen.
134. this...chamber.] Cap. this...chamber: Steev. Var. Sing. this?...chamber! Coll. this?...chamber. Coll. ii.
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,
'Twere better not assay'd; therefore this project
Should have a back or second, that might hold

141. that] Om. Q Q_s, the Q Q_s
142. mountebank] Clarendon: Quack-doctor. See _Oth._ I, iii, 61; 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 Jonson's _Far_, 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.'
143. simples] Clarendon: Herbs, so-called as being the simple ingredients of compound mixtures. See _Rom._ & _Jul._ V, i, 40.
144. moon] To gather simples by moonlight was supposed to add to their medicinal power or 'virtue.'
145. contagion] Clarendon: Used like 'unction,' line 142, for a material object, abstract for concrete, the thing which gives contagion.
146. that] For 'so that,' see IV, v, 211.
147. shape] Johnson: May enable us to assume proper characters, and to act our part.

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150. convenience] contemporaneity Q Q_s
151. us] it Han.
152. look] look'd Rowe.
If this should blast in proof. Soft!—let me see!—
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings;
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,

156. cunnings] commings F, F, F,;
157. I ha't] I hate Q, Q, I ha'n't Q,

Warb.
160. prepared] prepar'd Fl. prefard
161. nonce] once Q, Q, purpoze Q, Q, sipping] tafling Q, Q, 76.

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155. *proof] Steevens: A metaphor taken from the trying or proving of fire-arms or cannon, which blast or burst in the proof.
156. *cunnings] Caldecott, followed by Knight, plausibly explains commings of F, as a meeting in assault, bout, or pass at fence. Minshew: 'Comming, Gall. Venue.' Cotgrave: 'Venue, f. A comming; also, a vennie in fencing.'
159. *As] Equivalent to 'For so.' See IV, iii, 58.
160. *that] Clarendon: 'That' follows 'when,' after a parenthesis or other in tervening words (compare Lear, II, i, 45), completing the conjunction 'When that,' which is used by Sh., as e.g. Jul. Cez. III, ii, 96: 'When that the poor have cried.'
160. *prepared] White: The Qq are decidedly wrong. 'A goblet might be well spoken of as prepared for the nonce, but not as preferred [offered] for the nonce.'
161. *nonce] Clarendon: For the special occasion. The phrase was originally 'for the once,' the 'n' being added for euphony. [See Matzner, vol. i, p. 181.]
160. Hunter (ii, 260): There is little in our poet's writings more painful than such a scene as this; the cool deliberation with which Lae. comes into such a plot is so inconsistent with his character as exhibited in the other parts of the play; the clumsiness of the whole contrivance, and the barefaced manner in which the King is made to expose his villainous purpose to one who is already half his enemy, that one is tempted to ask where the mighty spirit is fled which dictated some portions of this most unequal performance. What an abandonment also of the great design of the tragedy (as announced in the First Act), that there should be a train laid which is to bring about the catastrophe while the principal actor is not cognizant of it, and has, of course, no part in it. The death of the King is in consequence brought about without that intention of the mind of Ham. which was necessary to connect it with the early scenes of the play, and to give dignity to the great catastrophe.
HAMLET

If he by chance escape your venom’d stuck,
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!’ Oh, where?
Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;

162. stuck] tuck Q’76, Rowe +, Jen.
White.
163. But...noise?] Om. Ff, Rowe +,
Knt, Dyce, Sta. White, Huds. Glo.
Enter Queen.] after queen! Ff,
Rowe, Pope, Han.
164. How...queen?] Om. Qq.
How now] how F, Coll.
165. Scene x. Pope +, Jen.

162. stuck] BLACKSTONE: Read tuck, a common name for a rapier. MALONE: ‘Stuck,’ a term of the fencing-school, means thrust. DYCE (Gloss.): More properly stock, an abbreviation of stoccado. WHITE speaks of an ‘old copy’ which reads, ‘your venom’d trick!’ [I have been unable to find any old copy which so reads. ED.]

163. noise] JENNENS finds great significance in these words, as an expression of the King’s guilt, and fear of being overheard.

165. STEEVENS: Compare PER. I, iv, 63. RITSON calls attention to a similar thought in Locrine, one of the Spurious Plays, first published in 1595. Sabren drowns herself, and Queen Gwendoline exclaims: ‘One mischief follows another’s neck.’ [So it reads in the last column of the last page of F,]

168. THOMAS CAMPBELL (?) (Blackwood’s Maga. March, 1833): The Queen was affected after a fashion by the picturesque mode of Ophelia’s death, and takes more pleasure in describing it than any one who really had a heart. GERTRUDE was a gossip,—and she is gross even in her grief.

168. willow] HUNTER (ii, 261): She resorted to the willow ‘to make her a garland, as being forsaken,’ as Benedick says of the Count.

168. aslant] COLLIER: Ascaunt has nearly the same meaning as ‘aslant.’ BRESLEY (p. 159): This willow, the Salix alba, grows on the banks of most of our small streams, particularly the Avon, near Stratford, and from the looseness of the soil the trees partly lose their hold, and bend ‘aslant’ over the stream.

169. hoary] CLARKE: Willow leaves are green on the upper side, but silvery-grey, or hoary, on the under side, which it shows in the glassy stream. CLEARENCE: Compare Virgil, Georgics, ii. 13: ‘Glaucan canentia fronde salicis.’ LOWELL (Among My Books, p. 185): Sh. understood perfectly the charm of indirectness, of making his readers seem to discover for themselves what he means to show them. If he wishes to tell that the leaves of the willow are gray on the under side, he does not
There with fantastic garlands did she come  
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,  
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,  
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

170. There with...come] Therewith...  
make Q, Q_s, Cap. Steev. Var. Coll. El.  
which...she did make Q 76.  
172. give] gave F_s, name to Rowe, Warb.  
173. cold] curl-cold Q, (cucullata Q_s),  
dead men's fingers] deadman's fingers Tsch.  
pendent] Om. Q 76.  
coronet] coronet Q, Q_s  
175. sliver] flour Q, Q_s. sliver Q 76.  
176. her] the F_s, Rowe. these Cald trophies] trophas Q, Q_s.

make it a mere fact of observation by bluntly saying so, but makes it picturesquely reveal itself to us as it might in Nature.

170. come] Jennens interprets the Qq: With the willow she made a garland, and stuck flowers in it. Knight says: To 'make,' of the Qq, here means to 'come,' to 'make way,' to 'proceed.'

171. Farren (Mania and Madness, &c., p. 62): This line is an exquisite specimen of emblematic or picture-writing. The 'crow-flower,' according to Parkinson, was called The Fayre Mayde of France; the 'long purples' are dead men's fingers; the 'daisy' imports pure virginity or spring of life, as being itself 'the virgin bloom of the year.' The order runs thus, with the meaning of each flower beneath:

**CROW-FLOWERS, NETTLES, DAISIES, LONG PURPLES.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fayre Mayde</th>
<th>Nettle</th>
<th>Daisy</th>
<th>Long Purple</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stung to</td>
<td>virgin</td>
<td>cold hand</td>
<td>bloom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'A fair maid stung to the quick, her virgin bloom under the cold hand of death.'

Beasley (p. 159): 'Crow-flowers' are the bulbous crowfoot, Ranunculus bulbosus, and the meadow crowfoot, R. acris. The most common 'nettles' which blossom early are the white dead-nettle, Lamium album, and the purple dead-nettle, L. purpureum. 'Daisy,' Bellis perennis; the only British species, blossoms all the year, and is one of the earliest flowers of spring.

171. long purples] Steevens: In Lyte's Herbal, 1578, its various names, too gross for repetition, are preserved. Malone: One of the grosser names Gertrude had a particular reason to avoid,—the rampant widow. Beasley (p. 160): This is the early purple orchis, Orchis mascula, which blossoms in April and May. The 'cold maids' mistook one of the other orchids, having palmate roots, for 'long purples.' The spotted palmate orchis, Orchis maculata, and the marsh orchis, O. latifolia, have palmate roots, and are called 'dead men's fingers,' which they somewhat resemble. [See also The Garden, 19 Sept. 1874.]


173. cold] Delius: In opposition to 'liberal.'

175 sliver] See Macb. IV, i, 28.
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And, mermaid-like, a while 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 induced
Unto that element; but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodic lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas, then, is she drown'd?

178. mermaid] Marmoide Q₄Q₅
Marmaid F₄
a while] awhile Q₄Q₅, Sing.
Dyce, Glo. +, Kly, Del.
bore] bear F₄, Rowe.
179. snatches] remnants Q₇6.
181. induced] induced Q₃, Pope, Theob. deduced F₄F₂F₁, Rowe. reduced Coll. (MS).

179. Which time] For instances of the omission of the preposition in adverbial expressions of time, manner, &c., see Abbott, § 202.
179. tunes] Jennens: The reading, 'tunes,' of the Ff is vague, while lauds of the Q3, i.e. hymns or psalms, tells us just what kind of music she died singing. Singer: Lauds were so called from the psalm Laudate Dominum. White: Lauds of the Q3 is a word singularly inappropriate here. Hudson: Lauds might well be preferred, as agreeing better with chanted, and as conveying a touch of pathos which 'tunes' does not quite reach.
180. incapable] Malone: Having no understanding or knowledge. See 'capable,' III, ii, 11; III, iv, 127. Ritson: That is, insensible. Caldecott: Thus: 'conducted into the great hall of the gods, Mercury sprinkled me with water, which made me capable of their divine presence.'—Greene's Orpharion, 1599.
181. native] See I, ii, 47.
181. induced] Mason: We should read either inured or induced. Sh. seems to have forgotten himself in this scene, as there is not a single circumstance in this relation which implies that Oph. had drowned herself intentionally. Malone: 'Induced' is clothed, endowed, or furnished with properties suited to the element of water. Our old writers used induced and endued indiscriminately.
185. muddy] Caldecott: Sh. uses 'muddied' twice in reference to drowning; see Temp. III, iii, 102; 166. V, i, 151.
185. death] Malone: In the first scene of the next Act we find Oph. buried with such rites as betoken she foresid her own life. It should be remembered that the account here given is that of a friend, and that the Queen could not possibly
Queen. Drown’d, drown’d.

Laer. 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;

know what passed in the mind of Oph. when she placed herself in so perilous a situation. After the facts had been weighed and considered, the priest in the next Act pronounces that her death was doubtful. Seymour (ii. 197) : As the Queen seems to give this description from ocular knowledge, it may be asked why, apprised as she was of Ophelia’s distraction, she did not take steps to prevent the fatal catastrophe, especially as there was so fair an opportunity of saving her while she was, by her clothes, borne ‘mermaidlike-up,’ and the Queen was at leisure to hear her ‘chanting old tunes.’ T. C. [Thomas Campbell?] (Blackwood’s Maga., Feb. 1818, p. 511) : Perhaps this description by the Queen is poetical rather than dramatic; but its exquisite beauty prevails, and Oph., dying and dead, is still the same Oph. that first won our love. Perhaps the very forgetfulness of her throughout the remainder of the play, leaves the soul at full liberty to dream of the departed. She has passed away from the earth like a beautiful air,—a delightful dream. There would have been no place for her in the agitation and tempest of the final catastrophe. We are satisfied that she is in her grave. And in place of beholding her involved in the shocking troubles of the closing scene, we remember that her heart lies at rest, and the remembrance is like the returning voice of melancholy music.

Hudson : This passage is deservedly celebrated, and aptly illustrates the Poet’s power of making the description of a thing better than the thing itself, by giving us his eyes to see it with. Clarendon: 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 Lear, IV, vi, 11-24. Besides, there was no one by to witness the death of Oph., else she would have been rescued.

185. drown’d?] Corson: It would appear from the Queen’s reply that Laertes’s speech must have been meant to be interrogative. If exclamatory, the iteration thereupon of the Queen, ‘Drown’d, drown’d,’ is almost ludicrous, and makes one feel that the poor girl has had indeed, as Laer. says in the next speech, ‘too much of water.’

186. drown’d] Warburton: Beau. & Fl. ridicule this passage: ‘I will run mad first, and if that get not pity, I’ll drown myself to a most dismal ditty.’—The Scornful Lady, III, ii, p. 68, ed. Dyce. Elze finds another allusion to this passage in the same play of The Scornful Lady, II, iii, p. 41: ‘Drown’d, drown’d at sea.’ [But this allusion is doubtful; the plot hinges on the supposed drowning at sea of the hero, and such a phrase could hardly be avoided. There are, however, undoubtedly other allusions to Hamlet elsewhere in the play. Ed.]

189. trick] Caldecott: Our habit, a property that makes a part of us. Clarendon: See All’s Well, III, ii, 9; Love’s Lab. V, ii, 416. [Lear, IV, vi, 105.]

191. woman] Steevens: See Hen. V: IV, vi, 31. Caldecott: When these tears are shed this womanish passion will be over.
I have a speech of fire that fain would blaze,
But that this folly doubts it.

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.

ACT V

SCENE I. A churchyard.

Enter two Clowns, with spades, &c.

First Clo. Is she to be buried in Christian burial that
willfully seeks her own salvation?

Rowe+, Jen. Enter...] Cap. Enter...spades and
mattocks, Q'76, Rowe+. Enter two
Clownes, QqFf.
1, 6, &c. First Clo.] i Clowne. Rowe.
Clowne, or Clown, or Clo. or Clo.
QqFf.
1. that] when Qq, Jen. Tsch.

192. of fire] a fire Qq.
Glo. +. doubts F., Cald. drownes Qq
F. drownes F. F., Rowe et cet.
Let's] Om. Pope+.
194. I had] had I Pope ii+, Walker.
195. fear I this] this I fear Anon.
ACT v. Scene L] Q'76. Om. QqFf.
A churchyard.] Cap. A Church.

193. doubts] CALDECOTT: That is, does out, extinguishes. COLLIER: Shake-
spere's word may have been 'douts,' but drownes seems preferable. STRATMANN: If
douts is equivalent to 'douts,' it suits the context better than drownes.
193. COLERIDGE: That Laer, might be excused in some degree for not cooling,
the Act concludes with the affecting death of Oph.,—who in the beginning lay like
a little projection of land into a lake or stream, covered with spray-flowers, quietly
reflected in the quiet waters, but at length is undermined or loosened, and becomes
a fairy isle, and after a brief vagrancy sinks almost without an eddy.

Scene I.] SCHLEGEL (ii, 194): The only circumstance from which this piece
might be found less theatrical than other tragedies of Sh. is, that in the last scenes
the main action either stands still or appears to retrograde. This, however, was in-
vitable, and lies in the nature of the thing. The whole is intended to show that a
consideration, which would exhaust all the relations and possible consequences of a
dea to the very limits of human foresight, cripples the power of acting.

STRACHEY (p. 88): The Clowns open this scene, partly to carry on the action
partly to form, by their utter indifference to the tragedy that is enacting, a back-
ground which shall throw that tragedy and its actors into strong relief; and in
Sec. 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?

Sec. 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.


particularly to bring out Hamlet's character by contrasting it with such extreme opposites.

Halliwell: Until within a very recent period it was customary for one of the Grave-diggers to preface his labors by divesting himself of about a dozen waistcoats, an operation which always created great merriment, and which, perhaps, had come down by tradition from the players of Shakespeare's own time. The Doctor, in The Duchess of Malfi, according to a stage-direction in ed. 1708, 'puts off his four cloaks, one after another,'—a similar stratagem to create the laughter of the audience.

4. straight] Johnson: Make her grave from east to west, in a direct line, parallel to the church; not from north to south, athwart the regular line. Jennens first pointed out that 'straight' here means simply forthwith; and Steevens corroborated it by citations from III, iv, 1; Oth. III, iii, 57; Merry Wives, IV, ii, 81. Malone added from Herbert's Facula Prudentum: 'There is no churchyard so handsome that a man would desire straight to be buried there.' Douce (ii, 261) believes that the Clown refers to the place where the grave should be; suicides were buried on the north side of the church, in unconsecrated ground.

4. crowner] Rushton (Sh. Illustrated by Old Authors, p. 72): This word is generally supposed to be a corruption of the Clown's, but it is merely the English of the Law Latin coronator, from corona, a crown, which Holinshed also uses.

9. se offending] Caldecott: Used for se defendendo, a finding of the jury in justifiable homicide.

11. three branches] Warburton: Ridicule on scholastic divisions without distinction and of distinctions without difference. Elze calls attention to the frequency in The Hystorie of Hamlet of these threefold 'branches of the same idea, e.g. ' 'rob, pill, and spoyle;' 'A valiant, hardy, and courageous prince;' 'gestures, countenances, and words;' 'time, means, and occasions,' &c. Tschischwitz says that this threefold tautological form belongs to the most ancient German—legal usage, and cites Grimm as an authority that it is also true of the Old
Sec. 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 nil he, he goes; mark you that; but if the water come to him and drown him, he drown not himself; argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

Sec. Clo. But is this law?

First Clo. Ay, marry, is't; Crowner's Quest law.

13. hear] here F;

delver,—] Dyce, Sta. Glo. delver:


15. this] his F;

16. himself] himselfe F.

nil he, he goes:] nil he; he goes,

French. A parallel to the present passage is to be found in Grimm: 'egeris, seceris, gesserisve.'

13. delver] WALKER (Crit. iii, 270): Hence it would appear that the Second Clown is not a gravedigger.

21. Crowner's Quest law] SIR JOHN HAWKINS: I strongly suspect that this is in ridicule of a case of forfeiture of a lease to the Crown, reported by Plowden in his 3 Eliza. It seems that Sir James Hales drowned himself in a river in a fit of insanity (produced, it is supposed, by his having been one of the judges who condemned Lady Jane Grey), and the question was whether this did not work a forfeiture to the Crown of his lease. The coroner sat on him, and a verdict of feuo de se was rendered. The legal and logical subtleties arising in the course of the case gave a very fair opportunity of sneering at 'Crowner's Quest law':—Walsh said that the act consists of three parts. The first is the imagination, which is a reflection or meditation of the mind, whether or no it is convenient for him to destroy himself, and what way it can be done. The second is the resolution, which is a determination of the mind to destroy himself, and to do it in this or that particular way. The third is the perfection, which is the execution of what the mind has resolved to do. And this perfection consists of two parts, viz. the beginning and the end. The beginning is the doing of the act which causes death, and the end is the death, which is only a sequel to the act.' Much subtlety was expended in finding out whether Sir James was the agent or the patient; or, in other words, whether he went to the water or the water came to him:—'Sir James Hales was dead, and how came he to his death? It may be answered, by drowning; and who drowned him? Sir James Hales; and when did he drown him? In his life time. So that Sir James Hales being alive caused Sir James Hales to die, and the act of the living man was the death of the dead man. And then for this offence it is reasonable to punish the living man who committed the offence, and not the dead man. But how can he be said to be punished alive when the punishment comes after death?' &c., &c. MA- TONE thinks that Sh. must have heard of this case in conversation, for it was deter-
Sec. 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-Christen.—Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

Sec. Clo. Was he a gentleman?

25. thou say'st] CALDECOTT: That is, speak'st something to the purpose. Walker (Crit. iii, 270): Surely,—'thou say'st true.' Dyce (ed. 2): The expression is elliptical. [May not the full phrase have been 'thou say'st it,' as we find it in Luke xxiii, 3; the mere dental sound, into which, in rapid pronunciation, it degenerates being absorbed by the t of say'st? Ed.]

27. even-Christen] THIRLBY (Nichols's Illust. ii, 229) was the first to point out that this is equivalent to fellow-Christian, and a remnant of the Anglosaxon emne christen, citing Spelman's Gloss., where Spelman erroneously distinguishes between emne and even. STEEVENS cites Chaucer: 'Despitous, is he that hath desdayn of his neighbour, that is to say, of his evencresten.'—The Persones Tale, iii, 294, ed. Morris. NARES cites Sir Thos. More's Works, fol. p. 83: 'Proudly judging the lives of their even Christen;' and 'theye maie not fighte against the Turke, [but] arise in greate plumpes to fighte against their even Christen.'—ib. p. 277. CLARENDON: In Anglosaxon we find the compound efen-biscope, a co-bishop, efen-eme, a fellow-servant. In Forshall and Madden's Glossary to the Wycklifte Versions of the Bible, we find 'euen-caytif,' a fellow-prisoner, 'euen-seruauent,' fellow-servant, and others. [Other instances are given in CALDECOTT ad loc., in HUNTER (New Illust. ii, 261), and in The Myroure of oure Ladye (E. E. Text Soc. p. 73): 'we ar enformed to have . . . loue eche to other, and to all oure euen crystens.' In a note on this passage BLUNT cites: 'Therfore Thomas that is seid Didymus, seide to euen disciplis.—Wycklifte N. T., John xi, 16; and adds: 'The word is also spelt emeristen or emeristen, as in Piers Plowman. It occurs in Swedish in the form jämncresten where jämn is merely the Swedish spelling of our even.']

30. gentleman] DOUCE (ii, 262): Gerard Leigh, one of the oldest writers on Heraldry, speaks of 'Jesus Christ, a gentleman of great lineage, and King of the Jews.' And again, 'For that it might be known that even anon after the creation
First Clo. A' was the first that ever bore arms.

Sec. 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—

Sec. Clo. Go to.

First Clo. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

Sec. 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.

Sec. Clo. 'Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?'


of Adam, there was both gentlenesse and ungentlenesse, you shall understand that the second man that was born was a gentleman, whose name was Abell. I say a gentleman both of vertue and lignage, with whose sacrifice God was much pleased. His brother Cain was ungentle, for he offered God the worst of his fruites.—Accedence of Armorie, 1591. There is still a concealed piece of wit in the Clown's allusion to the spade. Adam's spade is set down in some of the books of heraldry as the most ancient form of escutcheons; nor is it improbable that the lower part of this utensil suggested the well-known form of the old triangular shields.

36. confess thyself] MALONE: And be hanged, the Clown would have said if he had not been interrupted. This was a common proverbial sentence. See Oth. IV, i, 39. SEYMOUR (ii, 198) thinks that it may perhaps mean that he is to go to the priest and make confession of heathenish ignorance.

39. What is he] STEEVENS refers to a collection of similar queries ('which perhaps composed the chief festivity of our ancestors by an evening fire'), preserved in a volume in the University Library at Cambridge. 'The innocence of these Demaundes Joyous may deserve a praise which is not always due to their delicacy.' COLLIERT gives a specimen from a small book, called Demaundes Joyous, printed by
First Clo. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.
Sec. Clo. Marry, now I can tell.
First Clo. To t.'

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 Sec. Clown.

[He digs, and sings.

Wynkyn de Worde, 1511: ‘Demaunde. What almes is worst bestowed that men gyve? A. That is to a blynde man; for as he hath ony thynge gyven hym, he wolde, with good wyll, see hym hanged by the necke that gave it hym.’

50. unyoke] Caldecott: That is, unravel this, and your day’s work is done, your team you may then unharness.

58. Yaughan] Collier (ed. 1): It is just possible that this was a misspelt stage-direction to inform the player that he was to yawn at this point. Collier (ed. 2): The emendation of the (MS), which we accept, is as much as to say, ‘get thee to thy alehouse; fetch me a jug of liquor.’ We must suppose the alehouse understood, and pointed to by the First Clo. White: I suspect that this is a misprint for Tavern. But some local allusion understood at the day may lurk under it. J. San (N. & Qu., 5 Oct. 1861): This is merely Shakespeare’s English way of representing the Danish Johan,—John. Nicholson (N. & Qu., 29 July, 1871): Most probably Yaughan was the well-known keeper of a tavern near the theatre; and we have three items of corroborative evidence which show: First, that a little before the time of this allusion by Sh., which is not found in the Qq, there was about town ‘a Jew, one Yohan,’ most probably a German Jew, who was a perruquier,—he is mentioned by Jonson in Every Man out of his Humour, V, vi; Second, in The Alchemist, I, i, which was produced eleven years afterwards, Subtle speaks of ‘an alehouse, darker than deaf John,’ a name which sounds like that of our foreign John, anglicised, and its owner grown deaf by lapse of time; Third, that there was actually an alehouse attached to the Globe Theatre is proved by the ‘Sonnett upon the Byrneing’ of that playhouse—see Collier’s Annals of the Stage, i, 388). Is it then unlikely that
In youth, when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet,

To contract, Oh! the time, for, Ah! my behave,
Oh, methought, there was nothing meet.

61. contract, Oh,) contract-a Anon.*
Oh! the time) Coll. ii, after Theob.
O the F F F, Rowe, Pope. O, then Rann.
for, Ah/) Coll. ii, after Cap. for
a QqFf, Rowe, Pope. for, a, Theob. +,

62. there was] Ff. there a was Qq.
there, a, was Jen. there-a was Cam. Cla.
nothing meet] Ff. nothing a meet
Qq. nothing, a, meet Jen. nothing so
meet Han.-+, Cap. nothing-a meet Cam.
Del. Cla.

our wandering Jew, either in search of a business, or as a profitable extension of his theatrical connection, set up 'the Globe Public-house;' and was thus, as the known refresher of the thirsty actors and audience, mentioned by both Sh. and Jonson?

CLARENDON: It is impossible to detect the meaning which lies under this corruption.

ELZE (Shakespeare-Jahrbuch, xi, 297), who accepts without qualification San's and Nicholson's suggestion, asks whether there be not an allusion to the same Johan in the sneering 'Johannes factotum' that Greene applies to Sh. C. ELLIOT BROWNE (Athenaeum, 29 July, 1876): Vaughan is a common Welsh name, and it is surely only necessary to suppose that it was borne by some Welsh tavern-keeper near the theatre.

58. stoup] CLARENDON: This word, meaning a 'drinking-cup,' is still used in college halls. It was applied to vessels of various sizes, and occurs elsewhere in Sh.

[See V, ii, 254.]

JENNENS: 'Soope of the Qq represents the clownish pronunciation of sup.

59-62. &c. THEOBALD was the first to discover that the Clown here sings some stanzas from a poem, which, because it was printed in a collection of Sonnets and Sonnettes, written by the right honorable Lord Henry Howard, late Earl of Surrey, and other, and published by Tottel in 1557, Theobald inferred was written by the noble lord whose name by precedence of rank stood on the title-page. But Gascoigne, who was ten years old when Surrey was beheaded, attributes the poem in question to Lord Vaux, in an Epistle to a Young Gentleman, prefixed to his Posies: 'The L. Vaux his dittie, beginning thus I loathe, was thought by some to be made upon his death-bed,' &c. And Warton, in his Hist. of Eng. Poetry, iii, 45, considers that 'undoubted evidence' is found that Thomas Lord Vaux was the author, in a manuscript in the British Museum (Harleian MS, 1703) in which we have a copy of this poem, beginning I loathe that I did love, with this title: 'A dyttye or sonet made by the lord Vaus ['vaux,' ap. Arber, p. xiii], in the time of the noble quene Maruye, representing the image of Death.' It is thus given in Arber's Re-print of Tottel's Miscellanies, p. 173:

The aged lover renounce the love,
I loathe that I did love,
In youth that I thought swerte:
As time requires for my behove
Me thinks they are not mete,
My hastes they do me leese,
My famies all be fede:
And tract of time begins to weare
Gray neavses vpon my bedde,
[59–62. 'In youth, when I did love.']

For age with steyling steppes,
Hath clawed me with his cowche [crowch],
And lusty life away she leaps,
As there had bene none such.
My muse dothe not delight
Me as she did before;
My hand and pen are not in plight,
As they haue bene of yore.
For reason me denies,
This youthly, idle rime:
And day by day to me she cryes,
Leau of these toyes in time.
The wrinckles in my brow,
The furrowes in my face:
Say limpyng age will hedge him now
Where youth must geue him place.
The harbinger of death,
To me I see him ride:
The cough, the colde, the gaspyng breath,
Doth bid me to prouide,
A pikeax and a spade
And eke a shrowdyng shete,
A house of claye for to be made,
For such a gest most mete.

Percy in his Reliques suggests that the different corruptions in these stanzas sung by the Grave-digger [notably line 61] may have been designed by Sh. 'the better to paint the character of an illiterate clown.' Of course there have not been wanting critics who would fain 'offer these lines cur'd and perfect of their limbes, but the task is hopeless, and we must be consoled, as Elze says, by the reflection that the common people in all times and in all climes have sung nonsense. The 'oh' and the 'ah,' as Jennens notes, form no part of the song, but are 'only the breath forced out by the strokes of the mattock.' M. Mason suggests that instead
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.

63. of] in Q'76.  
63, 64. that he sings at] a sings in Q'76, Cap. Jen. he sings at Steev. Var. Sing. i. 'a' sings in Q, Q'.

66. daintier] dintier Q, Q'.

of 'for, ah,' we read for aye, because the Clown means that, though he was in love, it was not meet to contract himself for ever. CLARENDON thinks that 'for-a,' there-a, nothing-a (see Text. Notes), represent the drawing notes in which the Clown sings, like 'stile-a' and 'mile-a,' in Wint. Tale, IV, ii, 133. The first two lines of each of the stanzas sung by the Clown are used by GOETHE in the Second Part of Faust, for a part of the song chanted by the Lemures while digging Faust's grave. It is noteworthy that Goethe adopted the 'crutch' of the original instead of 'clutch.' See the note on that passage in Bayard Taylor's most admirable translation of Faust, vol. ii, p. 528. CHAFFELL (i, 216): On the margin of a copy of the Earl of Surrey's poems, some of the little airs to which his favorite songs were sung are written in characters of the times. From this copy the following tune for 'I loathe that I did love' is taken. On the stage the Grave-digger in Hamlet now sings them to the tune of The Children in the Wood. [See line 89 of this scene.]

Stew.

I loathe that I did love, In youth that I thought sweet: As

time requires for my behove Me-thinks they are not meet.

65. property of easiness] CLARENDON: 'Property' here means individual peculiarity, and 'of easiness' is used with adjectival force, as in I, ii, 4.


68. sense] BUCKNILL (p. 119): This line is but half truth. Does custom blunt the fingers of a watchmaker, the eyes of a printer, or the auditory nerve of a musician? Did the grave-digger do his own sombre work with less skill because he had been accustomed to it for thirty years? Custom blunts our sensations to those impressions which we do not attend to, and it sharpens them to those which we do. Custom in Ham. himself had sharpened the speculative faculties which he exercised, while it
First Clo. [Sings] But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
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?

69-71. steps...shipped me intil the] sand...shifted me into his Johns. conj.
70. claw'd] Pope. claw'd Qq. caught
Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Sta.
71. hath] Om. Cap.
intil] intil Ff. into Qq, Pope+,
the land] his land Han. Warb.
Rann.
72. had never] never had Ff, Rowe.
never had Pope, Han.

[Throws up a skull.] Cap. Om.

had dullest the active powers which depend upon that resolution which he did not practise.

74. jowls] CLARKE: If proof were wanted of the exquisite propriety and force of effect with which Sh. uses words, and words of even homely fashion, there could hardly be a more pointed instance than the verb 'jowls' here. What strength it gives to the impression of the head and cheek-bone smiting against the earth! and how it makes the imagination feel the bruise in sympathy!

75. that] ABBOTT, § 262: The antecedent pronoun is probably to be repeated immediately before the relative: ' (him) that did.'

76. politician] STAUNTON: A plotter, a schemer for his own advantage; thus 1 Hen. IV: I, iii, 241; Twelfth Night, III, ii, 34. CLARENDON: The word is always used in a bad sense by Sh.

76. o'er-reaches] WARBURTON: People in office, at that time, were so overbearing, that Sh., speaking of insolence at the height, calls it 'insolence in office.'

[Ham. III, i, 73.] JOHNSON: It is a strong exaggeration to remark, that an ass can over-reach him who would once have tried to circumvent—. I believe both the words of the Qq and Ff were Shakespeare's. An author in revising his work, when his original ideas have faded from his mind, and new observations have produced new sentiments, easily introduces images which have been more newly impressed upon him, without observing their want of congruity to the general texture of his original design. JENNENS: It is applied to a politician, not as an insolent officer, but as a
Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say 'Good morn-
row, sweet lord! How dost thou, good 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.

80. sweet lord] my lord Q, Q, 2. Jen. good lord] sweet lord Qq, Cap.


81. Such-a-one] such a one's Han. Johns.

82. when he meant] when a went Q, Q, when a went Q, when a meant Q, when a meant Q, beg it] beg him Q, Q. 84. now] now 'tis Rowe. 84. 85. Lady Worm's; chapless] Johns. Lady wormes Chaples, Qq. Lady Wormes, Chaples, F. F, LadyWorme's,


circumventing, scheming, man. CORSON: The Ff, without doubt, give the more expressive term.


84. Worm's] JOHNSON: The scull that was my lord Such-a-one's is now my lady Worm's.

85. mazzard] NARES: A head; usually derived, but with very little probability, from mackoire, French, which means only a jaw. The fact is, that it has always been a burlesque word, and was as likely to be made from mazer, a bowl, as from anything else; comparing the head to a large goblet. WEDGWOOD confirms Nares's derivation. 'In a similar way, Italian succa, properly a gourd, and thence a drinking cup, is used to signify a skull.'

86. trick] CALDECOTT: Knack, faculty.

87. the breeding] See Macb. I, iv, 8.

88. loggats] The nature of this game has been much discussed, but what appears to be the most exact description is thus given by CLARENDO: "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 strewed 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
HAMLET

First Clo.  [Sings] A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet;
Oh, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

[Throws up another skull.

90. For and] For,—and Theob. Han.     Knt, Coll. i.   For and, Pope.

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 Ham. meant to compare the skull to the Jack
at which the bones were thrown. In Jonson's Tale of a Tub, IV, vi: "Now are
they tossing of his legs and arms Like loggats at a pear tree."

89. [Sings] CHAPPELL (i, 200): The traditions of the stage give the following
tune of The Children in the Wood as the air of the Grave-digger's song in Hamlet,
'A pickaxe and a spade':

Slowly and smoothly.

A pick-axe and a spade, a spade, For and a shrouding

sheet, Oh, a pit of clay for to be made For such a guest is meet.

90. For and] DYCE (Remarks, &c., p. 218): The break after 'For' inserted by
modern edd. is quite wrong. 'For and,' in the present version of the stanza, answers
to 'And eke' in that given by Percy (Rel. of A. E. P. vol. i, 192, ed. 1812). Compare
the following passages (to which many others might be added): 'Syr Gy, Syr
Gaven, Syr Cayus, for and Syr Olyuere.'—Skelton, Works, i, 119, ed. Dyce. —
and with him comes the lady, For. and the Squire of Damsels.'—Beau. & Fl.
Knight of the Burning Pestle, II, iii: 'A hippocrene, a tweak, for and a fucus.'—
Middleton's Fair Quarrel, V, i. [In LETTSON's MS note in my copy of Dyce's
Remarks attention is called to the Scotch usage of But and as equivalent to this
'For and,' e.g. 'Or I will burn yoursel therein, Bot and zour babies three.'—Edom
o' Gordon, Percy's Ballads, i, 125. 'He has broke three ribs in that ane's side, But
and his collar bane.'—Johnnie of Breadislet, Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, ii,
345, ed. 1825. CLARENDON, in a note on the present passage in Hamlet, says:
"But and" seems to mean both besides and except.' Ed.]

91. for to] See III, i, 167.

impresses me as one of the most pathetic in the whole tragedy. That Sh. introduced

Z
Ham. There's another; why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his

93. may] might Ff, Rowe, Cald. Kn., Glo. +, Tsch. Mob. Sta. 94. quillets] quillites Qq, Qq, quillities Qq, Qq, Qq, Qq, Cap. Jen.

such scenes and such characters with deliberate intention, and with a view to artistic relief and contrast, there can hardly be a doubt. We must take it for granted that a man whose works show everywhere the results of judgement sometimes acted with forethought. I find the springs of the profoundest sorrow and pity in this hardened indifference of the Grave-diggers, in their careless discussion as to whether Ophelia's death was by suicide or no, in their singing and jesting at their dreary work. We know who is to be the guest of this earthen hospitality,—how much beauty, love, and heart-break are to be covered in that pit of clay. All we remember of Oph. reverts upon us with tenfold force, and we recoil from our amusement at the ghastly drollery of the two delvers with a shock of horror. That the unconscious Ham. should stumble on *this* grave of all others, that it should be *here* that he should pause to muse humorously on death and decay,—all this prepares us for the revulsion of passion in the next scene, and for the frantic confession: *I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers Could not with all their quantity of love Make up my sum!* And it is only here that such an asseveration would be true even to the feeling of the moment; for it is plain from all we know of Ham. that he could not so have loved Oph., that he was incapable of the self-abandonment of a true passion, that he would have analyzed this emotion as he does all others, would have peeped and botanized upon it till it became to him a mere matter of scientific interest. All this force of contrast, and this horror of surprise, were necessary so to intensify his remorseful regret that he should believe himself for once in earnest. The speech of the King, *Oh, he is mad, Laertes,* recalls him to himself, and he at once begins to rave. 94. lawyer] C. Elliot Browne (Athenaum, 22 May, 1875): There is a striking imitation of this passage in Raynoldes's *Delarney's Primerose,* 1606 [which, despite the eulogy of Sh. contained in it, Caldecott pronounces 'a very mean performance.' Ed.]:

> *Why might not this have been some lawyer's pate,*
> *The which sometimes brib'd, brawld, and tooke a fee*
> *And lawe exacted to the highest rate;*
> *Why might not this be such a one as he?*
> *Your quirks and quillets, now Sir, where be they?*
> *Now he is mute and not a word can say,' &c.*

94. quiddits] Nares: A contraction of *quiddity*, which is from [Mid. Lat.] *quiditas,* not from *quilibet.* It was used, as quiddity also was, for a subtlety, or nice effeminence. Generally applied to the subtleties of lawyers. Wedgwood: Mid. Lat. *quiditas,* the whitness or distinctive nature of a thing, brought into a by-word by the nice distinction of the schools.

94. quillets] Malone: Nice and frivolous distinctions. The word is rendered by Cole, *Lat. Dict.*: *res frivolata.* Nares follows Bailey in deriving it from *quibble*, a diminutive of *quibble.* Douce (i, 231) derives it from *quilibet.* But Nares objects to this, that the scholastic phrase was uniformly *quodlibet,* never *quilibet.* Wedgwood: Notwithstanding Nares's objection that the scholastic phrase was...
cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this 
95 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 dou-

96. rude] madde Q, Qs, mad Qs Q5, 98. in't] in his Kly.
Jen. 100, 101. is this... recoveries] Om. Qq, 102. his vouchers] vouchers Q3, Jen.
97. action] actions Q5, 102. double ones too] doubles Qq, 
Hum.] Humph Mal. Steev. Bos. 102, 103. 

Habet, and not quidlibet, the derivation from this source was probably correct. F. J.
V. (M. & Qu., 18 Sept. 1875): As 'quidlit' is from the logical term quiditas, why
may not 'quillet' or 'quilit' be from another logical term, qualitas? The word may
have been originally quilit, then the a may have been thinned into i to make it
jingle with 'quidlit.'
94-103. LORD CAMPBELL (p. 110): These terms of art are all used seemingly
with a full knowledge of their import; and it would puzzle some practising barristers
with whom I am acquainted to go over the whole seriatiim, and to define each of
them satisfactorily.
95. tenures] ELZE (The Athenaum, 20 Feb. 1869) thinks that this word has
slipped out of place, that it belongs to the law-terms relative to property, and should
therefore be inserted between 'recognizances' and 'fines' in line 99.
96. sconce] CLARENDON: A colloquial and jocose term, like costard, pate, mazzard, &c.

99, 100. statutes, recognizances, fines, double vouchers, recoveries] Rit-
sion: A recovery with double voucher is the one usually suffered, and is so denomi-
nated from two persons (the latter of whom is always the common crier, or some
such inferior person) being successively vouched, or called upon, to warrant the
tenant's title. Both 'fines' and 'recoveries' are fictions of law, used to convert
an estate into a fee simple. 'Statutes' are (not acts of parliament, but) statutes-
merchant and staple, particular modes of recognizance or acknowledgement for se-
curing debts, which thereby become a charge upon the party's land. 'Statutes' and
'recognizances' are constantly mentioned together in the covenants of a purchase
deed.

100. fine of his fines] CALDECOTT: This is the end of, or utmost attained by,
the operation of all this legal machinery. RUSHTON (Sh. a Lawyer, p. 10): The
first 'fine' means not a penalty, but an end. CLARENDON: Compare All's Well,
IV, iv, 35.
101. fine dirt] WALKER (Crit. i, 316): Foule? DYCER (ed. 2): I believe the
old text is right here. RUSHTON (Sh. a Lawyer, p. 10) acutely interprets this 'fine,'
like the preceding 'fine,' in the sense of last. 'His fine pate is filled, not with fine
dirt, but with the last dirt which will ever occupy it, leaving a satirical inference to
be drawn, that even in his lifetime his head was filled with dirt.'
ble 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? 105

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

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 110 this, sirrah?

First Clo. Mine, sir.—

[Sings] Oh, 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. 115

First Clo. You lie out on’t, sir, and therefore it is not yours; for my part, I do not lie in’t, and yet it is mine.

104. lands] land Q’76, Jen.
hardly] scarcely Q3, Jen.
108. calf-skins] Calue-skinnes Q,F,
F,F, Calue-skinnes Q,F, Calue-skinnes
109. which] that Ff, Rowe +, Knt, Sta.
111. sirrah] sorra Q, Sir Ff, Rowe,
112, 113. Mine...made] Mine for, or
a...made. (as one line) Qq.
113. [Sings] Cap. Om. QqFf.
114. For...meet.] Om. Qq, Cap.
guest] ghost Rowe ii, Pope.
115. it be] it Q,
116. it is] his Q, ‘tis Q’76, Jen.
117. and yet] yet Qq, Pope+, Cap.
119. assurance] CLARENDON: ‘Assurance of lands is where lands or tenements are conveyed by deed.’—Jacob, Law Dict. Here, of course, there is a reference also to the ordinary meaning.
110. assuranc] CLARENDON: O, the rich contrast between the Clowns and Ham. as two extremes! You see in the former the mockery of logic, and a traditional wit valued, like truth, for its antiquity, and treasured up, like a tune, for use.
111. sirrah] See Macb. IV, ii, 30.
115, 116. thine...You] Note that throughout this dialogue Ham. addresses the Clown in the second person singular, while the Clown replies in the second person plural. Ed.
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?
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, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so

118. it is FF, Rowe +, Sta.White. 131. these this Qq, Cam. Cla.
120. away Om. Q'76. taken tooke Qq.
130. undo vndoe Qq. vndoe F,f. not notice Q'76.
follow F,f2,F3,F4, Rowe, Pope, Han. 132. that and F,F3,F4, Rowe.

129. absolute] DYCE (Gloss.): Positive, certain.
130. card] JOHNSON explained this as the card on which the different points of the compass are described, as in Macb. I, iii, 17. MALONE understood it as only another name for chart, and paraphrased its use in the present instance by: 'we must speak with the same precision and accuracy as is observed in marking the true distances of coasts, the heights, courses, &c., in a sea-chart.' DYCE selected this as the definition of the present passage in his Glossary. STAUNTON says it is 'rather an allusion to the card and calendar of etiquette, or book of manners, of which more than one were published during Shakespeare's age.' RITSON notes its use by Osric, V, ii, 109. Whatsoever its immediate derivation, 'to speak by the card' undoubtedly means to speak with precision.

131. These three years] CAPELL (i, 146): Just so many years had King James been in England, bringing with him a Danish queen, when the Quarto that is our guide in this play made its appearance.
132. picked] HANMER: Smart, sharp. JOHNSON: There was, about that time, a picked shoe, that is a shoe with a long pointed toe, in fashion, to which the allusion seems likewise to be made. STEEVENS: This fashion was carried to such excess that it was restrained by proclamation in the fifth year of Edward IV, when it was ordered, 'that the beaks or pykes of shoes and boots should not pass two inches upon pain of cursing by the clergy, and forfeiting twenty shillings. . . . Before this time, and since 1482, the pykes of shoes and boots were of such length that they were fain to be tied up to the knee with chains of silver, and gilt, or at least silken, laces.' MALONE: That is, so spruce, so quaint, so affected. There is no allusion to picked or pointed shoes. [DOUCE agrees with Malone here, because this fashion had expired 33*
near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibë.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

_First Clo._ Of all the days 't was the year, I came to't that _135_
day that our last king Hamlet o'ercame 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 _145_
men are as mad as he.

133. _heel_—hekës F, the courtier] our Courtier F, Rowe +. (Counter Rowe.) your court-
ier White conj.
134. _a_] Om. Q, Qz.
135. _alf_] Om. Qq.
136. o'ercame] Rowe +, Jen. Knt, Dyce, White, Cam. o'recame F, over-
came Qq et cet.
139. _the very_] that very Qq, Pope +,


140. _it_] was F, Rowe +, Knt, Sta. 143. _a_] Cam. Cla. a Qq. he Ff et cet.
145. _him there; there the men are_] Cap. him there, there the men are Qq Qz. him there, there the men are Q, him there, there are men Q, him there, there are men Q. him there, there are men Q. him there, there are men Q. him there, there are men Q. him there, there are men Q. him there, there are men Q. him there, there are men Q.

long before Shakespeare's time.] 'Picked' was a common word in Shakespeare's age in this sense. CLARENDON: 'Colgrave gives: "Misë, Neat, spruce, compt, quaint, picked, minion, trickesie, fine, gay." There may possibly be a covert reference to the pointed shoes.'

133. _kibë_] HUNTER (ii, 264): This should probably be _kibës_ in the plural. It is the same as chilblains; thus, Florio, _Ital. Dict._: _Bugancia_, kibës or chilblains. [My copy of Florio, 1598, reads _Buganie_, the plural, which, I am afraid, galls Hunter's conjecture. Ed.]

135. Of..._year_] CLARENDON: Compare _Rom. & Jul._ i, iii, 16.

139. the..._born_] BLACKSTONE: By this scene it appears that Ham. was then thirty years old, and knew Yorick well, who had been dead twenty-three years. And yet in the beginning of the play he is spoken as of a _very young_ man, one that de-
signed to go back to school, _i.e._ to the University of Wittenberg. The poet in the _Fifth Act_ had forgot what he wrote in the _First_. Tschirschwitz: Blackstone's criticism is founded on a very erroneous idea of German Universities and their arrangements. It is well known that A. v. Humboldt, up to an advanced age, attended lectures (Collegia hörte) under his friend Boeckh.

146. CLARENDON: Compare Marston's _Malcontent_, III, i: 'Your lordship shall ever finde... amongst a hundred Englishmen fourscore and ten madmen.'
Ham. How came he mad?
First Clo. Very strangely, they say.
Ham. How 'strangely'?
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.

149. 'strangely]' Quotation, Cam.
150. losing] looking QqF,F,F
152. I have] where I have Q76.

153. [The words of the Grave-digger are so explicit that the age of Ham. has been generally accepted as that of thirty years, and none the less generally has it been felt that this age does not accord, as Blackstone says, with the impression of his youth which Ham. in the earlier scenes gives us. HALLIWELL [see Text. Notes] attempts to avoid the difficulty by the aid of Q, but this aid will hardly bear analysis. In line 152 of Q, the Clown says 'heres a scull hath bin here this dozen yeares;' the conversation for sixteen lines then turns upon Ham., and his being sent to England. At the end of it Ham. says, 'whose scull was this?' It is by no means certain that the former skull is here referred to; the Clown may have just turned up another. It does not follow, therefore, of necessity that it was Yorick's skull that had lain in the ground a dozen years, and Q fails us here at the most important point. GRANT WHITE, at the beginning of his story of Hamlet the Younger, says that the Prince was twenty years old when the tragedy opens, and at the close his essay, probably overlooking this statement, says that Ham. was thirty years of age in the Fifth Act. No one would impute to so shrewd a scholar as GRANT WHITE the supposition that the action of the tragedy lasted ten years. EDUARD and OTTO DEVRIENT, in their ed. of Sh., contend, and with much force, for Hamlet's extreme youth [see Appendix, Vol. II], and modify their text accordingly. FURNIVALL (New Sh. Soc. Trans, Part ii, 1874, p. 494), speaking of the 'startling inconsistencies' in regard to Hamlet's age, says: 'We know how early, in olden time, young men of rank were put to arms; how early, if they went to a University, they left it for training in Camp and Court. Ham., at a University, could hardly have past 20; and with this age the plain mention of youth [in I, iii, 7; I, iii, 11-12; and I, iii, 123-4] agrees. With this, too, agrees the King's reproach to Ham. for his intent in going back to Wittenberg; and Hamlet's own revolt-of-nature at his mother's quick marriage to his uncle. Had he been much past 21, and had he had more experience of then women, he'd have taken his mother's changeableness more coolly. I look on it as certain, that when Sh. began the play he conceived Ham. as quite a young man. But as the play grew, as greater weight of reflection, of insight into character, of knowledge of life, &c., were wanted, Sh. necessarily and naturally made Ham. a formed man; and, by the time that he got to the Grave-diggers' scene, told us the Prince was 30,—the right age for him then; but not his age when Laer. and Pol. warnd Oph. against his blood that burn'd, his youthful fancy for her,—"a toy in blood"— &c. The two parts of the play are inconsistent on this main point in Hamlets state.
HAMLET

[ACT V, SC. 1]

[153. Hamlet's age.]

What matter? Who wants 'em made consistent by the modification of either part? The "thirty" is not in Q;
yet who wants to go back to that? Minto (The Examiner, 6 Mar. 1875) contends that apart from the Grave-digger's speech and the thirty years of the wedded life of the Player King and the Player Queen (and he is at a loss to understand how these passages came into the play), 'the natural construction is that Ham. and his associates were youths of seventeen, fresh from the University. That was the usual age in Shakespeare's time at which young nobles set out on their travels, and there is no reason to suppose that he thought of altering the University age in his play, and no hint that Ham. was so very much older than his companions.'

... 'A proper conception of Hamlet's age is essential to the understanding of the play. He is a youth called home from the University by his father's death; a youth of the age of Romeo, or of young Prince Hal at the time of his father's accession.'

... 'Hamlet's action is not the weak and petulant action of an emasculated man of thirty, but the daring, wilful, defiant action of a high-spirited sensitive youth, rudely summoned from the gay pursuits of youth, and confronted suddenly with monstrous treachery, with crime that blurs the modesty and grace of nature, that makes the very sunlight fire, and loads the sweet air of heaven with pestilence.' Marshall (p. 181) thinks that Sh. intended Ham. to be nearer twenty than thirty; the general features of his character are those of youth, and the frequent allusions throughout the play to his being very young forbid the belief that he was really thirty years old. The Grave-digger may mean that 'he began to serve his apprenticeship thirty years before; but he may not have come to the trade of grave-maker till some years later; so that it does not necessarily follow that the day when King Hamlet overcame Fortinbras was thirty years previously.'... 'The most material objection against Hamlet's being more than between twenty and twenty-three years of age is that if he were older his mother could scarcely have been the object of such a passion as that of Claudius.'

Minto afterwards (in The Academy, 13 December, 1875) expressed his views at greater length. Against the weighty authority of the Grave-digger is to be placed Laer., whose advice to Oph. in simple prose means that she was not to trust Ham., because he was at an age of changeful fancies and fleeting attachments. Who would speak of the love of a man of thirty as 'a violet in the youth of primy nature'? The very idea is a profanation of words, which carry such fragrance with them when applied to the first love of budding youth. Again, the University age of young noblemen at that time was from seventeen to nineteen, and Laer. had just left the University; Ham. wanted to go back to it, and Hor. is under suspicion of playing 'truant.' The play is full of allusions to the youth of the personages coeval with Ham. Fort. is 'Young Fortinbras,' Laer. is 'Young Laertes,'—the epithet in both cases being repeated. The King speaks of skill with the rapier as a 'very riband in the cap of youth.' Hamlet's envy of Laertes's fame with the rapier has an almost boyish air. Making Ham. thirty also adds some improbability to the succession of Claudius to his murdered brother; if at that age Ham. had tamely submitted to such a usurpation, and desired to go back to school in Wittenberg, he would have been too contemptible a character to be fitted for any dramatist's hero. Prof. Dowden having pronounced, in a notice of Werder's Hamlet (The Academy, 4 Dec. 1875), that theory incredible which 'makes Ham., the utterer of the saddest
and most thoughtful soliloquies to be found in Sh., a boy of seventeen,' Minto replies that we are apt to underrate the precocity of boys of seventeen. 'I venture to say that sad and thoughtful questionings of the mysteries of life are more common among boys under twenty than among men of thirty.' 'Not only is it possible for sad thoughts to come to a youth of seventeen, but it is at such an age, when the character is not deeply founded, that the shattering of first ideals is most overwhelming. The terrible circumstances that overthrew Hamlet's noble mind gave a stimulus to the development of his thoughtfulness apart from an increase of years. The fresher and brighter our conception of the gay boy-world out of which he was summoned, the deeper becomes the monstrous tint of the horrible ambition, murder, and incest, which appalled his vision and paralyzed the clear working of his mind when he was first called upon to play a man's part in the battle of life. Too much has been said of the philosophic temperament of Ham.; impulse and passion were more in his nature than philosophy; his philosophy was not a serene growth, a natural development of a mind predisposed to thought; it was wrung out of him by circumstances terrible enough to make the most obtuse mind pause and reflect.' Prof. Dowden (The Academy, 25 Dec. 1875) urged the following considerations in condemnation of the theory that Ham. was a youth of seventeen: 'The poet's youngest heroines (children of the South) are aged fourteen (Juliet, Marina) and fifteen (Miranda). The age of Perdita is sixteen. Sh. loved these earliest years of budding womanhood. What is the corresponding period of early manhood that charms the poet's imagination? At what age does Sh. conceive that boyhood is blooming into adult strength and beauty? I answer, from twenty-one to twenty-five. The stolen sons of Cymbeline, boys just ready to be men, are aged twenty-three and twenty-two; Florizel looks about twenty-one (Wint. Tale, V, i, 126); Troilus, a beardless youth (two or three hairs upon his chin), is older: 'he ne'er saw three-and-twenty.' I am not aware that we can determine Romeo's age. Prince Hal at the time of his father's accession was some twelve years old, but Sh. represents him as considerably older. When the battle of Shrewsbury took place (Henry being in fact sixteen years old), Sh., I believe, intends his age to be 'twenty-two or thereabouts' (1 Hen. IV. : III, iii, 212). When Henry V ascended the throne, his age was twenty-six, and there is no reason to suppose that Sh., who had up to that point made him older than the Prince Henry of history, now represented him as younger. The Bishop of Ely says: 'My thrice puissant liege Is in the very May-morn of his youth.' Test the theory of Hamlet's extreme youth by the other plays. Are we to imagine the utterer of the soliloquy, 'To be or not to be,' as five or six years the junior of the boys of old Belarius, and that at a period of life when each added year counts for much? Is Florizel,—one of Shakespeare's ideals of youthful grace,—four years older than Ham.? Did Ham. begin his observations on society (V, i, 150) at fourteen? Were his schoolfellows,—dispatched on a critical mission to England,—also youths of seventeen? Can it be proved that any chief male personage in Shakespeare's plays is aged seventeen, or eighteen, or even nineteen? The dating of the Player-King's marriage is important in this discussion. His thirty years' wife (representing Gertrude) is not too old to win a second husband's love; therefore Gertrude, although the 'hey-day of her blood' is 'tame,' is not necessarily too old; we may imagine her forty-seven. But I am not greatly concerned to maintain the
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,—as we have many pokey corpses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in,—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 whoreson dead body. Here’s a skull

Player-King’s and the Grave-digger’s dates, except for the sake of resisting rash tampering with Shakespeare’s text. I can imagine Ham. as a man in the ‘May-morn of his youth’ at twenty-six or twenty-five. I am much concerned, however, to oppose such a misreading of the play as would not only render the conception of Ham. incoherent, but would pervert our view of an entire group of lovely characters,—the Florizels and Polydores and Ferdinands of Sh. And I would note that Sh. found it possible to think of thirty as a youthful age. The Grave-digger himself speaks of ‘young Hamlet.’ In Much Ado we read (of fashions in clothes): ‘How giddily a’ turns about the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty.’ In the Sonnets Sh. names forty (not thirty) as the age when time has marred the face. In the Elegy on Burbadge, that great actor is praised for his equal success in the part of ‘young Hamlet’ and of ‘old Hieronymo.’ If Burbadge represented Ham. as thirty years of age, still, in spite of the thirty years, Burbadge’s Ham. passed for young. I will, however, yield something, and if any critic will efficiently knock upon the mazzard that ‘absolute’ knave, the Clown, I accept as satisfactory the age assigned by Marshall,—twenty-five.

In The Academy, 11 March, 1876, J. W. Hales cites the following quotation from a well-known book as noteworthy with regard to Hamlet’s age: ‘For fashion sake some [Danes] will put their children to schoole, but they set them not to it till they are fourteeene years old; so that you shall see a great boy with a beard leanne his A B C, and sit weeping under the rod when he is thirty years old.’—Nash’s Pierce Penniless’s Supplication to the Devil, ed. Collier, for the Sh. Soc. p. 27. ‘So, after all,’ adds Hales, ‘there is perhaps less inconsisteny in the play than has been supposed. I do not mean that there is none.’

now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

First Clo. A whoreson mad fellow's it was; whose do 165 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.

Ham. Let me see. [Takes the skull.]—Alas, poor

163. has lain] hath lyen you Qq, Jen.
164. hath lain you Cap. Steev. Var. Sing.
3. three and twenty] 23. Qq, Qq, Qq
166. twenty three Qq, Qq, Qq, Qq, Qq.
166. A...was?] Two lines, Ff, Rowe.
168. a'] Coll. a QqFf, Rowe, Knt.
169, 170. This...sir] Twice in Ff, Rowe, Knt, Coll. Del. Sta. White, Kilty.

163. three and twenty] HALLIWELL: I have ventured to alter the text here to a dozen by the aid of Q, in order to avoid a chronological difficulty, and for a similar reason to alter 'thirty' to twenty in line 153. It must be remembered that Ham. is alluded to in the First Act as a very young man.

169, 170. This...sir] WHITE: If the repetition of these words were accidental in the Ff, the chance must be reckoned among gli inganni felici. DYCEx (ed. 2): I wish White had told us what force is added to the dialogue by the repetition. CORSON partially answers Dyce's question by saying that the repetition serves to exhibit the Clown's 'sense of his official importance as he turns the skull over in his hands;' [there also lurks in it a tone of hesitation, as though deliberating carefully the position of the skull in the earth whence it was exhumed before deciding on the ownership. Ed.]

170. Yorick] J. SAN (N. &* Qu., 5 Oct. 1861): This is the German and Danish Georg, Jörg, our George; the English y represents the foreign j, which has the same sound. CLARENDON: Mr Magnússon suggests to us that this name may be a corruption of Roric, Saxo's Roricus, Hamlet's grandfather on the mother's side. LATHAM (Two Dissertations, &c., 1872, pp. 93 and 145): Name for name, the 'Yorick' of Sh. seems to be the Eric of Der bestrafte Brüdermord. If so, the King is his own Jester. Be it so. A Chronicon Erici Regis actually exists. A Gesta Erici Regis may have existed. Hence, by a confusion of which we only get a general notion, out of Gesta Erici Regis may have come Yorick, the King's Jester. ['Jerick' is the name of a 'Dutch Bowr' in Chapman's Alphonus. Ed.]

173. Let...see] KNIGHT: This supersedes any stage-direction.
HAMLET

Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a 175 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 180 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?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander looked o’ this fashion i’ the earth?

Hor. E’en so.

175. borne] bore Qg.
176. and now how] And how Ff, Rowe.
176, 177. in...is] my imagination is Ff, Knt, Del. White. my imagination is now Rowe.
179. gambols] jests Q76.
180. on a roar] in a roar Pope, Mob.

180. Not one] No one Ff, Rowe, White.
182. chamber] table Qq, Jen. Tsch.
183. favour] savour Warb. (mis-print?).
186. a] a Qq. en Q76.

176. abhorred in] WHITE: What is abhorred? At what does Hamlet’s gorge rise? At the skull? He is not speaking of that. What he abhors, what his gorge rises at, is his imagination that here hung the lips that he has kissed. This construction is sustained by the reading of Qg.: ‘those lippes...they abhorre me.’ CLARKE: ‘It’ in this sentence, and in ‘my gorge rises at it,’ is used in reference to the idea of having been borne on the back of him whose skeleton remains are thus suddenly presented to the speaker’s gaze, the idea of having caressed and been fondled by one whose mouldering fleshless skull is now held in the speaker’s hand.

177. gorge] DYCE (Gloss.): Throat, swallow, equivalent to stomach (Fr. gorge).
180. on a roar] CLARENDON: We still say ‘to set on fire,’ and in Exodus, xix, 18, we find ‘on a smoke’ for ‘smoking.’

181. grinning] COLLIER: The skull did not jeer, though it ‘grinned.’
182. chamber] STEEVENS: The table of the Qq means her dressing-table. DOUCE (ii, 264): There is good reason for supposing that Sh. borrowed this thought from some print or picture he had seen. There are several which represent a lady at her toilet, and an old man presenting a skull before the mirror.

183. favour] STEEVENS: Countenance or complexion. CLARENDON: So in 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.’
Ham. And smelt so? puh! [Puts down the skull.
Hor. E'en so, my lord.

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?

Imperious Caesar, dead and turn’d to clay,

193. he] a Qq. 
find] found Jen.
194. consider too] consider: to Fr. consider: too F, F, F +
195. thither] thether Qq F, F +
196. as thus:] Om. Qq, Jen.

199. that loam...war] this earth...was or that loam...may have been Seymour.
200. beer-barrel] Beare-barreil Q, Q + Q .

191. we may] Walker (Crit. ii, 248): Surely the old syntax requires may we.
201-204. Dyce (ed. 1): Are these four lines a quotation? Collier (Notes, &c., p. 445): They are marked in the (MS) as a quotation; and they seemed to have occurred to the speaker as extremely apposite to what he had himself just said. We have no notion whence the passage was taken. Dyce (ed. 2) repeats his query, and answers: 'I believe not.' Clarke: Ham. is merely putting into rhyming form the fancy that for the moment passes through his mind. Sh. has made this a marked characteristic with Ham.—a tendency to doggerelize when he is speaking lightly or excitedly; thus III, ii, 281, 282. Again at the close of the present scene, where it is not so much a couplet that conventionally closes a scene as it is a fleer extemporaneously put into rhyme, by way of light turning off from serious thought and remonstrance to a manner that shall favor the belief in his madness.
201. Imperious] Malone: This is used in the same sense as imperial. See Tro. & Cres. IV, v, 172; and Cymb. IV, ii, 35. There are other instances in the Folio of a familiar term being substituted in the room of a more ancient word; e.g. rites for 'crants,' line 220. Dyce (Few Notes, &c., p. 144): 'Imperious' in Shakespeare's time was the usual form of the word. Thus, 'The scepters promis'd of imperious Rome.'—Countess of Pembroke's Tragedie of Antonie (trans. from the French), 1595. Even in Fletcher's Prophetess, written long after Hamlet; 'tis Imperious Rome,' II, iii. Caldecott: It was so used down to at least the middle
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away;
Oh, 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 it: King, Queen, their trains, &c.

The queen, the courtiers; who is that they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken
The corse they follow did with desperate hand,
Fordo it own life; 't was of some estate.

203. that that| that the Jen, Cald.
204. Should] Should Q, Should Q, to expell] to expell Q,F,F,F,F,F,
Rowe+, Jen, Coll. White. expell F,F.
Rowe+: Jen, Coll. White. expell F,F.

Enter... Mal. after Cap. Enter
K. Q. Laertes and the corse. Qq (in margin). Enter King, Queene, Laertes,
and a Coffin, with Lords attendant; Fi.

of the next century. See Drayton's Muse's Elysium: 'Or Jove's emperious Queene.'

DYCE: We find, indeed, 'imperial Caesar' in Cymb. V, v, 474; but then that play comes to us only through the Folio.

204. patch a wall] CALDECOTT cites the following passage from Harrison's Description of England, to show that the text gives no very unfaithful picture of the general state of habitations in the days of Shakespeare's youth: —'in the open champaine countries they are enforced for want of stuffe to vse no studis at all, but onlie posts... with here and there a girding, wherevnto they fasten their splints or radels, and then cast it all ouer with cliae to keepe out the wind, which otherwise would annoie them. Certse this rude kind of building made the Spaniards in queene Marias daies to woonder, but cheeflie when they saw what large diet was vse in manie of these so homelie cottages; in so much that one of no small reputation amongst them said after this manner: 'These English (quoth he) haue their houses made of sticks and durt, but they fare commonlie so well as the king'" (p. 233, ed. New Sh. Soc.).

204. flaw] MALONE: A sudden gust of wind. 'Groppo, a flawe or berrie of winde.'—Florio, Ital. Dict. 1598. DYCE (Gloss.): 'A flaw (or gust) of wind. Tourbillon de vent.'—Cotgrave. 'A flaw of wind is a gust, which is very violent upon a sudden, but quickly endeth.'—Smith's Sea Grammar, 1627.

206. that] CORSON: 'That,' per se, is better than this, Ham. and Hor. being supposed to be at some distance from the procession; and then 'This,' occurring in the next line, referring to 'maimed rites,' adds to the preferableness of the Ff reading.

Couch we awhile, and mark. [Retiring with Horatio. 210

Laer. What ceremony else?

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,

211. Retiring...] Cap. Om. QqFf.
212. [to Horatio. Cap. That...mark] One line, QqFf,
very most Pope+.
mark] make Q, Q4. Om. Q'76.

Priest. Ff. Doct. Qq.
214. as far] so far Theob. ii, Warb.

209. estate] JOHNSON: Some person of high rank.
210. couch] CLARENDON: Lie down, and so hide.
215. warrantise] WHALLEY: Is there any allusion here 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? CLARENDON: This suggestion of Whalley’s receives support from 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. For the word ‘warrantise,’ see Cotgrave: ‘Garentage: m. Warrantie, warrantize, warrantage.’

215. doubtful] SEYMOUR (ii, 199): But the Queen, who was witness of the fact, has told us that the death was accidental, from the breaking of an ‘envious sliver’ of a tree. M ODERLY: Only so far as that she was a lunatic, and had died by her own act; the presumption in such a case being held to be that the act was wilful; and there being always a doubt whether Christian burial could then be demanded; although, as Burn’s Ecclesiastical Law states, there is no record of its having been actually refused in any instance.

216. order] CALDECOTT: That is, the course which ecclesiastical rules prescribe.
218. for] For instances of ‘for,’ meaning instead of, see 1, lii. 131, and ABBOTT, § 148.
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her:
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,

pebbles] Peebles Qq Ff. 220. allow'd] allowed Ff, Rowe.

220. crants] Warburton pronounced this an 'evident corruption of chants; the
true word,' on the ground that a specific rather than a generic term was required to
answer to 'maiden strewments.' Edwards, whose book, Canons of Criticism, was
written in ridicule of Warburton's edition, suggests derisively (7th ed., p. 147) that
Warburton had better have 'pitched upon grants, wantz, pants, or any other, pro-
vided it rhymes to chants; because it would seem by the very next speech of the
Priest that these same chants were the only things denied her ['To sing a requiem'].
If Warburton's reading be approved, we should, to restore integrity, make a slight
alteration in line 221, and read "Her maiden 'struments' for instruments. Music,
not only vocal, but instrumental also.' Heath supposes 'crants' to be a misprint
for granits; that is, 'the ceremonies granted by custom to those who died unmarried,'
and that Sh. afterwards substituted rites. Johnson, on the authority of an anonymous
conjecture, was the first to explain 'crants' as the German word for garlands;
adding, that 'to carry garlands before the bier of a maiden, and to hang them over
her grave, is still the practice in rural parishes.' 'Crants,' therefore, was the original
word, which Sh., discovering to be provincial, and perhaps not understood, changed
to a term more intelligible, but less proper. 'Maiden rites' give no certain or
definite image. Malone doubted whether this and many other changes in the
Folio were made by Sh., as an attentive comparison of the Qq and Ff would show.
Dyce (ed. i) emphasises the fact on which both Warburton and Dr Johnson lay
stress, viz.: that a specific, definitive image is here essential, and that rites does not
fulfil this requirement, while 'crants' does. Of the advocates for rites, Knight and
White are the chief; the former urges that 'the maidens strewments' are the
flowers, the garlands, which piety scatters over the bier of the young and innocent.
The rites included these! White agrees with him, that 'crants' would hereby be a
mere repetition. Elze cannot avoid the conviction that 'crants' is a sophistication,
since a most unusual and foreign word would never be applied to a most usual and
domestic ceremony. In Dyce's second ed. he gives this note of Lettsom's: 'Most
of the edd. explain 'crants' by garlands, but the German Krans is singular, and
the singular seems indispensable here. From a note to Prior's Danish Ballads, it
would seem that young unmarried Danish ladies wear, or wore, chaplets of pearl;
at least, 'fair Elsey' is described as wearing one; and the translator (vol. iii, p. 111)
says that this is the same as the 'virgin &rant (sic) of Oph.' Guided by this, Dyce,
in his Gloss., defines 'crants,' a crown, a chaplet, a garland, and cites Jamieson,
Etym. Dict. of the Scottish Lang.: 'Crance,... Teut. krants, corona, corolla,
sertum, strophium, Killian. Germ. Krans,' &c. It is perhaps worth noting that
Jamieson, in this same passage cited by Dyce, gives an instance of the plural: 'Thair
heids wer garnish'd gallandlie With costly crancis maid of gold.'—Watson's Collection
of Choice Songs, &c., ii, 10. Halliwell gives a wood-cut of a funeral garland
seen by Fairholt in 1844, suspended in St Albans Abbey. 'It was then,' says
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Lær. 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.

Fairholt, 'very old, and I was told by the sexton that such garlands were once commonly borne before the bodies of unmarried women to the grave, and suspended in the church afterwards, but that the custom had ceased twenty years before this time. The substructure was formed of wooden hoops, to which were affixed rosettes of coloured paper, and flowers, real and artificial, covered the whole; when I saw it nothing but the remains of the artificial decorations remained; but the sexton explained to me that the whole had been originally thickly covered with flowers.' According to Nares no other instance of the use of this word had been found; it was reserved for Elze to discover two examples of it elsewhere. In Chapman's Alphonus (ed. Elze, 1867, p. 82) there is the following stage-direction: 'Enter... Saxons, Mentz like Clowns with each of them a Mitre with Corances on their heads.' In a note on 'corances,' Elze says, referring to the present passage in Hamlet: 'Sh., in my opinion, made the acquaintance of this German importation at the Steelyard, or he witnessed the funeral, in London, of some young German girl, where the coffin was decked, according to the German custom, with 'corances;)' nay, both may have been the case. From the present passage it would appear that we ought to write crance. See Cooper's List of Foreign Protestants and Aliens, where "Hans" is usually spelt "Hance" or "Haunce."' The second instance occurs on p. 117, 'When thou hast stolen her dainty rose-cerance.'


221. bringing home] CLARENDON: In these words reference is still made to the marriage rites, which in the case of maidens are sadly parodied in the funeral rites. See Rom. & Jul. IV, v, 85-90. 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.'

222. Of] Equivalent to with. See ABBOTT, § 193, which most nearly explains the use of 'of' here.

225. a requiem] CALDECOTT: Sage of the Ff is grave and solemn. KNIGHT: We suspect some corruption of the text. COLLIER: The (MS) alters sage to sad, which may be the true word. DYCEx: But qy. is it not rather a mistake for such? SINGER: 'Requiem' is so called from the words of the service: 'Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine.'

226. peace-parted] CLARENDON: A singularly-formed compound, of which there
HAMLET

[ACT V, SC. I.

Lear. 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.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia?

Queen. [Scattering flowers] Sweets to the sweet; farewell!
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife.
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not t' have stew'd thy grave.

Lear. Oh, treble woes
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.

237. [Scattering flowers] Johns. Om. Qf.F.

Sweets...farewell] Sweets to the sweet, farewell Qf. Sweets, to the sweet farewell F.F. Sweets, to the sweet farewell F.F. Sweets, to the sweet farewell F.F. Sweets, to the sweet farewell F.F. Rowe. treble woes Qf.Q, et cet.

238. shouldst] would 'st F.F.F., Rowe, Pope.

234. r' have] Fi, Rowe, Knt, Sing, ii, Sta. White. to have Coll. Del. i, El. Kily, Hal. have Qf et cet.

is no other example, for 'peacefully parted,' 'departed in peace.' A similar irregularity is found in the compound 'death-practised.'—Lear, IV, vi, 284.

228. violets] Steevens: Thus Persius, Sat. 1, 37.

232. 333. shouldst have been...to have decked] Abbott, § 360: It is now commonly asserted that such expressions as 'I hoped to have seen him yesterday' are ungrammatical. But in the Elizabethan, as in Early English authors, after verbs of hoping, intending, or verbs signifying that something ought to have been done, but was not, the Complete Present Infinitive is used.

234. woes] Walker (Crit. iii, 271) conjectures woes. In a footnote Lettsom says: It is whimsical enough that the Qf, which in this line correctly read treble for the F terrible, in the very next line read double for the F correct treble. I mention this that they may not be trusted too confidently for 'woe' in preference to 'woes.' [I think it likely that either the r in wer of F, is a misprint for s, or else the compositor mistook the s in the MS from which he set up. Moreover, the plural somewhat avoids the cacophony of the singular: 'Oh, treble woes.' Ed.]

236. ingenious sense] Caldecott: Compare Lear, IV, vi, 287, 288.
Now pife your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made
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!

_Lær._ The devil take thy soul!

_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,

244. **wandering stars** _Clarendon:_ The planets, of which Cotgrave says (s. v. Planette), 'they bee also called Wandering starres, because they never keepe one certaine place or station in the firmament.' In _Albumazar_, I, i, they are called 'wanerders.'

245. **This...Dane** _Grant White_ (Hamlet the Younger, p. 543): With a tremendous revulsion of feeling Ham. breaks forth into passionate exclamations of love and grief; and then, too, at this strange unfitting time he claims his royal rank, and announces himself as 'the Dane.' _Werder_ (p. 202) interprets this as the answer to the question Ham. has just asked.

247. **Thou...well** _Moerby:_ A litotes marking the perfect self-possession of Ham. at first, and his real love for Lær.

249. **For** _See Walker_ (Crit. ii, 290) on the confounding of _Sir for for_, in the Folio.

249. **splenitive** _Clarendon:_ Sh. uses 'spleeny,' _Hen. VIII:_ III, ii, 99; and 'spleenful,' _Tit. And._ II, iii, 191, in the same sense. The spleen was supposed to be the seat of anger. Compare _1 Hen. IV:_ V, ii, 19.
Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand! 251

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. 255

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. Oh, he is mad, Laertes.

251. wisdom] wiseneffe F, F., wise-

nesses F, F., Rowe, Cald. Knt, Del. Dyce
i, Sta. Glo. Mob.

Hold off] Away F, Rowe, Cald.

Knt, Dyce i, Sta.

hand?] hand, Q, Qs. hand? Qs

Qs.

253. Hor.] Gen. F, Rowe, Cald.

Knt.

[to Hamlet. Cap.

[The Attendants part them]

Rowe. After Gentlemen, Cap. Om.

QqFf.

and they...grave] Cap. Om.

QqFf.

254. this] his Rowe.

258. their] there F,.

255. wag] CLARENDON: The word had not the grotesque signification which it now has, and might be used without incongruity in the most serious passages. Compare III, iv, 39, and Mer. of Ven. IV, i, 76, where the verb is transitive. It is intransitive, as here, in Tit. And. V, ii, 87.

258. quantity] CLARENDON: Compare III, ii, 38; III, iv, 75; where, as here, the context implies that the word has a depreciatory meaning.

259. do for her] F. G. T. (N. & Qu., vol. iv, p. 156, 1851) denies that Ham. really rants: ‘Ham. a prince, is openly cursed, and even seized by Laer., and yet he only remonstrates. He uses phrases so homely that there is something very like scorn in them: “What wilt thou do for her?” is the quietude of contempt for Laertes’s insulting rant; and so, if my memory deceive me not, the elder Kean gave it. “Do for her” being contrasted with Laertes’s braggadocio “say.” Then come the possibilities: weep, fight, fast, tear thyself (all, be it noted, common lovers’ tricks), drink up eisel, eat a crocodile. Here the crocodile probably refers to those put up in spirits in apothecaries’ shops. Here we have possibilities put against the rant of Laer.; the doing against the saying; things that could be done, for Ham. ends with “I’ll do it.” But his quick imagination has caught an impetus from its own motion, and he goes on: “Nay, I’ll even out-prate you,” and then follows his superior rant, not uttered with vehemence, but with quiet philosophic scorn.’
ACT V, SC. i.]

HAMLET

405

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? cat a crocodile?

261. For...God.] Om. Q76.
262. 'Swounds] S'wounds Qq, Jen.
Om. Q76. Come Ff, Rowe+, Knt, Sta.
thou'l] th' eout Qs, th' out Q76, Cap.
Qs, x. 
263, 264. Woo't] Wilt Q76. Woul't
Knt, Coll.

263. Woo't] Singer: Woo't, or woof'o, in the northern counties, is the common contraction of would's thou. Walker (Crit. iii, 271): Can any good reason be given why we should write woof't or woul't here and not elsewhere? Lettsom (Footnote to Walker): Halliwell, in his Dict., has 'Woot. Will thee. West.' In the passage before us the context requires will, and this, indeed, is the text of Q.

Clarendon: A colloquialism by which Ham. marks his contempt for Laer. In Ant. & Cleo. IV, ii, 7; IV, xv, 59, it indicates affectionate familiarity.

264. eisel] With the exception of 'the dram of eisel,' no word or phrase in this tragedy has occasioned more discussion than this Esell or Eisle, which, as it stands, represents nothing in the heavens above, or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth, if from the last we exclude the vessels of Q. Rowe and Pope blindly followed the blind compositors of the Q7Ff. Theobald saw the difficulty so clearly that subsequent criticism has chiefly ranged itself on one or other of the two interpretations suggested by him, viz., that the word either represents the name of a river, or is an old word, meaning vinegar. Theobald's objection to its being the name of a river is that it must be some river in Denmark, and that he knew of none there so called, nor any other, idem sonans, nearer than 'the Yssel, from which the Province of Over-yssel derives its title in German Flanders.' This objection comes strangely from Theobald, for none knew better than he that Sh., who did not hesitate to make Ham. swear by St Patrick, would have been just as likely to mention a river in farthest Ind as in Denmark, if the name flashed into his mind, and would have been intelligible to his audience. 'Besides,' continues Theobald, 'Ham. is not proposing impossibilities to Laer., as the drinking up a river would be, but he rather seems to mean, Wilt thou resolve to do things the most shocking and distasteful? and, behold, I am as resolute.' Hamner, forgetful of his own good rule of not giving 'a loose to fancy,' changed 'Esell' into Nile, without a note or comment, in his first edition, to indicate that it was not Shakespeare's word; and then, to fill up the measure of the verse, introduced another woof't before 'eat.' Capell (Notes, &c., i, 146) says it is 'palpable' that a river is intended, but there is no absolute necessity, because a crocodile is mentioned, that the river must be the Nile, and Hamner's better reading would have been Nileus, which would have suited the metre without the addition of woof't.

(See post Elz.) Capell then goes on to say that 'Sh. sought a river in Denmark, and, finding none that would do for him, coined the word—Etilt; in a supposition
[264. ‘drink up eisel.’] that there might be a brook so denominated, which Elinour stood upon, and took it’s name from.’ Capell therefore printed Elisil in his text, in Italic. Steevens says that Ham. certainly meant (for he says he will rant) to dare Laer. to attempt anything, however difficult or unnatural, such as draining the channel of a river, or trying his teeth on an animal whose scales are supposed to be impenetrable, ‘Theobald’s Yssel,’ adds Steevens, ‘would serve Hamlet’s turn or mine. The river is twice mentioned by Stowe, p. 725: “It standeth a good distance from the river Isel, but hath a scoence on Yssel of incredibile strength.” Again, by Drayton, in Polyolbion, The twenty-fourth Song, p. 359, ed. 1748: “Th’ one o’er Isell’s banks the ancient Saxon’s taught; At Over-Isell rests,” &c. But in an old Latin account of Danemarke and the neighboring provinces I find the names of several rivers little differing from Esil, or Eisel, in spelling or pronunciation. Such are the Essa, the Orsil, and some others. . . . Sh. might have written the Weisil, a considerable river which falls into the Baltic Ocean, and could not be unknown to any Prince of Denmark.‘ Malone, in his first edition, 1790, having adopted Theobald’s eisel, discarded it in the Var. 1821, and adopted Steevens’s interpretation on the ground that such hyperbole was common among ancient poets. So in Eastward Hoe, 1609: ‘Come drink up Rhine, Thames, and Meander dry.’ Also Greene’s Orlando Furioso, 1599: ‘Else would I set my mouth to Tygris’ streames, And drinke up overflowing Euphrates.’ And in Marlowe’s Jew of Malta: ‘As sooner shalt thou drink the ocean dry, Than conquer Malta.’ Boswell cites Tro. & Ctes. III, ii, 84, as containing a ‘similar exaggeration,’ but the similarity is by no means exact. More to the purpose is his reference to Chaucer’s Romaunt of the Rose [l. 5712, ed. Morris]: ‘He undirfongith a gret payne, That undirtakith to drynk up Seyne.’ Nares considers the challenge to drink vinagar, in such rant, so inconsistent and even ridiculous that we must decide for the river, whether its name can be exactly found or not. Caldecott agrees with Steevens, that it refers to the Yssel, the most northern branch of the Rhine, one which flows nearest to Denmark, and by Zutphen into the Zuyder Zee. Caldecott adds strength to Steevens’s supposition, that it might refer to the Vistula or Weisil, by showing, in a passage from King Alfred’s Anglosaxon version of Orosius, that Denmark’s possessions once extended as far as the Weisil-mouth; but very sensibly adds that even if Weisil were nearer to the text, both to the eye and ear, than it is, it is very little likely that Sh. was read in the early Danish geographies, or that he gave himself any concern about them; Sh. took his geography from more accessible sources, and from points nearer home. Knight adopts Caldecott’s interpretation. In N. & Qu., vol. ii, p. 241, 1850, Singer started a discussion of the meaning of this phrase by asserting that ‘eisel’ means Wormwood Wine, a nauseously bitter medicament much in vogue in Shakespeare’s time. Could he have proved this, the discovery would have been valuable, but unfortunately the premises from which he drew his conclusion were weak. ‘In Thomas’s Ital. Dict. 1562,’ says Singer, ‘we have “Assentio, Eysell,” and Florio renders Assentio by Wormwood. What is meant, however, is Absinthites or Wormwood wine.’ The inference here is that Florio refers to a liquid Wormwood, whereas he defines ‘Assentio, . . . the herbe Wormwood,’ which, I am afraid, weakens Singer’s conclusion. In the same journal (vol. iv, p. 64, 1851) J. S. W. sums up the controversy, and decides in favor of a river, because to drink a potion of vinegar ‘is utterly tame and spiritless in a place where anything but tameness is wanted, and where it is quite out of keeping with the rest of
[264. 'drink up eisel.']
speech.' Elze contends vigorously for Nilus, not only because 'crocodiles' are immediately mentioned, but because in Elizabethan times the Nile was the home, and the synonym, for everything wondrous and monstrous, and was moreover held to be one of the mightiest of rivers, if not the mightiest. To drink up the boundless Nile is an hyperbole than which nothing could better beft the occasion; Ham. wished to express a pure impossibility. To Delius's well-put objection that it is difficult to see how so familiar a word as Nile could be sophisticated into vessels, Estil, and Estill, Elze opposes the supposition that the Dutch Yssel or the Danish Oesil was a marginal gloss of some wiseacre who thought it more appropriate to the unities of the drama, and which by accident crept into the text. In N. & Q., 12 Feb. 1859, Cuthbert Bede offers a citation which would bring the river much closer to the doors of the Globe theatre than any yet proposed: 'The Saxon etymon of Iseldon, according to Mr Sharon Turner, is Yseldune, i.e. the Down of the Yssel, which I take to have been the original name of some river, most likely of the river of Wells, which flowed into the Fleet River; but I consider also that Yssel or Eysel is the same as Ouvel, the diminutive of Ouse or Euse, in the British language, signifying either a river or water.'—Yseldon; a Perambulation of Islington, by T. E. Tomkins, Esq. Halliwell thinks that Oesil or Isell is referred to, and adds, 'obscure streams certainly, but the reading is hardly to be rejected on that account, for the name would be at least as familiar to an Elizabethan audience as that of the mountain of Ossa, mentioned in the same speech. Sh. in all probability adopted both names from the older play on Hamlet.' Dr Scadding (Canadian Journal, No. LXI, 1866, p. 70) also advocates Nilus, and attributes to 'indistinctness of writing, perhaps, the wrong orthography of a y for an i, and an accidental transposition of syllables in the printing-office' the conversion of 'Nilus into Eysell, Esil or Estil (in these several ways the modern text is given), conjectured by the commentators to be variously esil' (that is, perhaps, vinegar in the sense of poison) or vessels (that is, huge caldrons) or' some proper name. Keightley adopts Yssel, because its name may have been familiar to the English mind from the fact that it was at Zutphen, on its banks, that Sir Philip Sidney received his death-wound.

Thus far I have cited only those who are in favor of the name of a river, and have given all their arguments except one, which I have not repeated in every instance, because all more or less emphasize it; and this argument, which many find convincing, lies in the words 'drink up;' this, it is claimed, means to drain, to exhaust, and must apply to a river or to something concrete,—it cannot apply to vinegar or to anything in the abstract; Ham. never could have challenged Laer. to drink up all the vinegar in the world,—there was a limit even to professed rant. Malone was the first to note that this phrase, 'drink up,' does not of necessity mean to exhaust totally, citing in proof Shakespeare's 11th Sonnet, where it is synonymous with merely to drink: 'Drink up the monarch's plague, this flattery,' and again in the same Sonnet: 'And my great mind most kingly drinks it up;' and in Tro. & Cress II, iii, 211, 'his silence drinks up his applause' (through an oversight Malone cites this from Timon). 'In Shakespeare's time,' adds Malone, 'to drink up often meant no more than simply to drink. So in Florio, Ita. Dict, 1598: 'Sorbire, to sip or sup up any drink.' In like manner we sometimes say, 'when you have swallowed down this potion,' meaning when you have swallowed it.' He might have cited from Hamlet, 1, iv, 10: 'drains his draughts of Rhenish down.' Gifford is more emphatic on this point in a note.
on Jonson's Every Man in his Humour, IV, v (Works, p. 122, ed. 1816, cited by Dyce): 'It may just be observed that off, out, and up, are continually used by the purest and most excellent of our old writers, after verbs of destroying, consuming, eating, drinking, &c.; to us, who are less conversant with the power of language, they appear, indeed, somewhat like expletives; but they undoubtedly contributed something to the force, and something to the roundness, of the sentence.' In confirmation of this use of up, Dyce cites the following passages: Love's Lab. Lost, IV, iii, 305; All's Well, IV, iii, 250; King John, IV, iii, 133; As You Like It, II, i, 62; Tro. & Cres. III, ii, 189. If more instances be needed, at least half a dozen can be found by reference to Schmidt's invaluable Lexicon, s. v. 7; or to Mrs Furness's Concordance to Shakespeare's Poems, s. v. 'up.' The passages, however, cited by Malone and Dyce do not satisfy Grant White of the soundness of Gifford's explanation; he thinks that in all of them 'up' conveys the sense either of totality or completeness, as in the lines from Love's Lab. Lost, All's Well, and Tro. & Cres. III, ii, 189 (and herein Schmidt agrees with him); or of eagerness or insatiability, as in the lines from 114th Sonnet and Tro. & Cres. II, iii, 211. The use of 'up' in the present passage seemed, therefore, to Grant White fatal to the interpretation of 'eisel,' or vinegar. But granting that the sense of 'totality or completeness' is inapplicable here, is not 'eagerness or insatiability' the very sense required? I cannot but believe, therefore, that in the present passage, 'drink up esill,' means no more than 'to quaff esill,' whatever that may be.

I now turn to the second interpretation by Theobald, who says: 'I am persuaded the poet wrote "eisel," that is, Wilt thou swallow down large draughts of vinegar? The proposition, indeed, is not very grand; but the doing it might be as distasteful and unsavory as eating the flesh of a crocodile. And now there is neither an impossibility nor an anticlimax; and the lowness of the idea is in some measure removed by the uncommon term.' Thereupon he cites Chaucer, The Remaunt of the Rose, line 217: '—breed Kneden with eisel strong and egre;' Shakespeare's 111th Sonnet: 'Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection;' and Sir Thomas More's Poems (p. 21, ed. 1557): 'remember therewithal How Christ for thee tasted eisel and gall.' Capell, in his dissent from this interpretation, indulges in a gird of most unusual humour for him: 'if Eisel, an old word that signifies vinegar, be the right reading, it must be because 'tis wanted for sauce to the crocodile.' Steevens, too, has his merry fling at it: 'neither is that challenge very magnificent which only provokes an adversary to hazard a fit of the heart-born or the colic.' Hunter (ii, 263) thinks that the 'Potions of eyssel' in the 111th Sonnet prove that it was not any river so called, but a desperate drink. 'The word,' he adds, 'occurs often in a sense of which acetum is the best representative, associated with verjuice and vinegar. It is a term used for one ingredient of the bitter potion given to our Saviour on the cross, about the composition of which the commentators are divided. Thus, the eighth prayer . . . in the Salisbury Primer, 1555, begins thus:—"O blessed Jesu! . . . I beseech thee for the bitterness of the assel and gell that thou tasted," &c.' Singer (ed. 2): It was a fashion of the gallants of Shakespeare's time to do some extravagant feat as a proof of their love in honor of their mistresses, and among other the swallowing of some nauseous potion was the most frequent. . . . In Thomas's Ital. Dict., 1562, we have 'Assentio. Eysell;' and Florio renders the same word by Wormwood. Dyce: 'For my own part I certainly believe that eisel is meant here.'
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

265. I'll do't] I'll do't, I'll do't Coll.
(MS). I'll do it too Anon.*
thou] Om. Qq.
here] hither F_3F_4, Rowe. hither
* but Pope+
266. in] in F_4 into Rowe.

the word (and it was common enough formerly) is' spelled Eysell in the 11th Son-
et, ed. 1609. 'In the "hyperbolical" passages cited by Malone, what rivers do those poets mention? The Rhine, the Thames, the Meander, the Euphrates,—and not such obscure streams as the Ysell, the existence of which the commentators had some difficulty in detecting.' Collier says that the (MS) makes no change in Esile. Grant White confesses himself unable to conjecture what the word means; if a river be intended, 'we must regard the word as a remnant of a play, or tale, un-
known to us, which preceded Shakespeare's tragedy.' In N. & Qu. (Aug. 10, 1872),
John de Soyres says that he remembers in a book of Scandinavian legends an ac-
count of Thor's trials of strength with the Giants, and that one of these trials was
to drink a lake Esyl dry, and suggests that this is Hamlet's allusion. The Claren-
don Editors 'consulted Mr Magnusson 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 Utgarolak'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."' The citation from the 11th Sonnet
convinces Moberly that the same word there, is used here; Moberly adds: 'a large
draught of vinegar would be very dangerous to life.' There yet remain, however,
four interpretations to be mentioned. First: In N. & Qu. (Oct. 5, 1872) John
Kershaw calls attention to a passage in Fletcher's Wife for a Month, IV, iv [p. 566,
ed. Dyce], where Alphonso [who is burning up with poison and indulges in the most
extravagant figures of speech] says: 'I'll lie upon my back, and swallow vessels.'
'What more probable, therefore, than that Fletcher's "swallow vessels" had its
origin in Shakespeare's "drinke up vessels" of Q?" Second: Tschischwitz prints
Esile in his text, and explains it as Euphorbia Esula, spurge, a poisonous plant,
whose juice was employed anciently as an emetic. Third: Schmidt (Sh. Lexicon, s.v.
Eysell): 'Hamlet's questions are apparently ludicrous, and drinking vinegar, in order
to exhibit deep grief by a wry face, seems much more to the purpose than drinking
up rivers. As for the crocodile, it must perhaps be remembered that it is a mournful
animal.' Fourth: The late Rev. J. B. Dykes, Mus. Doc. (in a MS note sent to me
by Dr Ingleby), suggests the old English word esyl, signifying ashes, mentioned in
Halliwell's Archæal and Provincial Dict. s. v. Isles [where Halliwell cites: 'Isyl
of syre, favilla,' Pr. Parv. p. 266]. 'One might possibly extract a meaning out of
this: "feeding on ashes," or swallowing flame; but this again is far-fetched and im-
possible.' In conclusion, the present Editor believes Eysell and Esile to be mis-
prints for Eysell

35
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,  
Singeing his 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 a while 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?

270. Singeing] Singing QqF, Rowe,  
Pope, Han. Cap.  Singing Jen. (misc- 
print?).  
zon] Sun Warb.  
271. an] and QqF, Rowe.  
mouth] mouths Q, q, F, F, F.  
272. Queen.] Kin. F.  King. F, F, F.  
F, Rowe, Pope, Cald.  
273. thus] this Qq.

272–276. This . . . drooping] CALDECOTT, who follows the Ff in giving these  
lines to the King, thinks this distribution may be justified on the ground that the King  
was fearful lest Laertes's rage and rebellion should break out anew; and that his  
interference would be more likely to have weight with Laer. than that of the Queen,  
and after what had been concerted between him and Laer., his affected tenderness  
for Ham. would be perfectly understood. KNIGHT: The assignment in the Ff of so  
beautiful and tender an image as that of 'the female dove' to a man represented as  
a coarse sensualist proceeds from a typographical error.

prefix by the (MS) assigns these lines to the Queen, while the two preceding are  
given to the King. It seems likely that the King should interpose to tell the  
spectators of the funeral, 'This is mere madness, And thus a while the fit will work on  
him.' In some consistency with this view, the King just afterwards desires Her. to  
follow Ham., who has rushed out. [COLLIERT, in his ed. 2, adopted this distribution  
of the speeches.]

275. When that] WARBURTON reads E' er that, because 'it is the patience of  
birds, during incubation, that is here spoken of. The pigeon generally sits upon  
two eggs, and her young when first disclosed are covered with a yellow down.'  
HEATH (p. 547): The young nestlings of the pigeon when first disclosed stand in  
need of the kindly warmth of the hen for a considerable time.  
STEEVENS: During  
three days after she has hatched her couplets, the pigeon never quits her nest, except  
for a few minutes 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.  
JOHNSON: Perhaps it should be E' er yet. Yet and yt are easily confounded.

275. disclosed] See III, i, 166, and notes.
I loved you ever.—But it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day

*Exit.*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.—

[Exit Horatio.

[To Laertes] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We'll put the matter to the present push.—

278. loved] loud' F, 
ever.—] Cald. ever, Qq. ever...
Kly. ever; or ever: Ff et cet. 
280. and dog] a doggs Q. a Dog Qq, 
Theob. i. the dog Theob. ii, Warb. 
Johns. Sing. i, El. 
[Exit.] Exit Hamlet Qq. and 

Horatio. Qq (opposite the next line).
[Exit Horatio.] Om. Fl. 
282. [To Laertes] Om. QqFf. 
your] you F,F. 

279, 280. Let ... day] CALDECOTT: 'Things have their appointed course, 
or have power to divert it,' may be the sense here conveyed, though the pro-
verb is usually applied to those who for a time fill stations to which their merits 
give them no claim. Tschirschwitz detects here a reference to Laer., the King, 
and to Ham. himself. 'Let the herculean power of Laer. do what it may, and 
the cat, which creeps stealthily in the dark, mew, the faithful dog will have his 
turn at last.'

280. day] B. STREET (Athenaum, 5 Sept. 1868): These lines are so familiar that 
we pay little attention to their wording, and what seems the correct reading, 'dog 
will have its bay,' has not been suspected. That it is bay, and not 'day,' appears 
so probable as to be almost certain if we consider that a dog might have its day of 
popularity without any distraction from a very Hercules,—at least without any ex-
pressed disparagement of him; the idea is the expression of distraction on the part 
of an inferior against his better. Each animal severally employing its natural utter-
ances in carping at worthiness; the cat mewing its cavils, the dog barking its dislike. 
In The Athenaum, 3 Oct. 1868, 'A. O. S.' showed that the phrase is older than Sh. 
by giving an extract from a letter from the Princess Elizabeth to her sister, Queen 
Mary: ' —— as a doge hath a day, so may I, ' &c. In The Athenaum, 19 Nov. 
1870, P. A. DANIEL adduced two other instances of the use of the phrase. In The 
Interlude (printed in 1573), entitled New Custom, II, iii: 'Well if it chanunce 
that a dogge hath a day,' &c. Also, in Jonson's Tale of a Tub, II, i: 'A man hath his 
hour, and a dog his day.' This was written in 1663, 'later,' adds Daniel, 'than 
Hamlet, no doubt, but Jonson would scarcely have adopted a meaningless bit of 
slang.' Elze (Shakespeare-Jahrbuch, Bd. xi) adds a fourth example from Sum-

282. in] ABBOTT, § 162: 'In' is here used metaphorically, where we should say, 
'in the thought of.'

283. push] CLARENDON: The instant test. For 'present,' see Wint. Tale, I, ii, 
281. For 'push' in the sense of 'crisis,' 'critical moment,' see the same play, V, 
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—
This grave shall have a living monument;
An hour of quiet thereby 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 let me 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,—

284. [Exit Queen. Sta.
Sing. El. Kly, Hal. thirte Q. shortly
Ff et cet.
287. Till] Tell Qq.
SCENE II.] Rowe. SCENE III. Pope, Han. Om. Q\underline{\text{Q}}Ff.
1. sir] Om. Pope, Theob. Han.Warb. now let me] you shall now Q'76.
let me] Ff, Rowe, Cal. Knt, Del.
Dyce, Sta. White. shall you Qq et cet.
2. circumstance] Theob. circumstance.
Q\underline{\text{Q}}Ff, Rowe, Coll. El.
3. my lord] my Lord. Q\underline{\text{Q}}\underline{\text{Q}}\underline{\text{Q}}Ff.
4. methought] my thought Q\underline{\text{Q}}\underline{\text{Q}}Ff.
6. mutines in the] mutines in the
Rowe. mutineers in Pope, Han.
6. bilboes] bilboes; Rowe. Bilboes, Ff. bilbo, Q\underline{\text{Q}}Q\underline{\text{Q}}, bilbo's, Q\underline{\text{Q}}Q.
6, 7. Rashly,—And...it, let] Ed. rashly, And...it: let Qq. rashly, (And...
...it) let Ff, Rowe (prais'd Rowe).
7. rashness (And...it) lets Pope, Theob. Han. i. Warb. rashness (And...it) let
Han. ii. Rashly, And...it—Let Johns, Steev. Var. Sing. i. Rashness (And...
it?) lets Cap. Rashly And...it,—(Let
Jen., ending parenthesis after will. line
11. Rashly, And praise...it,—Let Cald.
Knt. Rashby,—And...it,—let Coll. Del.
El. White, Hal. Rashly,—(And...it;—
let Sing. ii, ending parenthesis after cer-
tain, line 11. Rashly, And...it,—let
Dyce i, Sta. Rashy, And...it, let Glo.+
Mob. Rashy,—And...it; let Dyce ii.
Rashy—And...it!...Let Ktly.

285. living] CLARENDON: Perhaps it is used by the speaker in a double sense;
first, that of enduring, as the Queen would understand it; secondly, Laer. would be
cognizant of the deeper meaning, by which the life of Ham. is menaced.
1. sir] Tschischwitz calls attention to the distant tone with which Ham. speaks
to Hor.; twice in the first four lines, and afterwards, also, he addresses him as Sir;
furthermore, throughout the dialogue the frequent omission of the personal pronoun
(as 'had my desire,' &c.), and the more frequent use of participial and infinitive
clauses, justify the suspicion that the first fifty-five lines are not Shakespeare's.
6. mutines] MALONE. For mutiner or mutineer; see the verb in III, iv, 83.
6. bilboes] STEEVENS: This is a bar of iron with fetters annexed to it, by which
And praised be rashness for it, let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well


mutinous or disorderly sailors anciently were linked together. The word is derived
from Bibboa, a place in Spain, where instruments of steel were fabricated in the
utmost perfection. To understand Shakespeare's allusion completely, it should be
known that, as these fetters connect the legs of the offenders very close together,
their attempts to rest must be as fruitless as those of Ham., in whose mind there was
a kind of fighting that would not let him sleep. Every motion of one must disturb
his partner in confinement. The bibboes are still shown in the Tower of London
among the other spoils of the Spanish Armada.

6. Rashly] JOHNSON: Ham., delivering an account of his escape, begins with
saying, That he rashly——, and then is carried into a reflection upon the weakness of
human wisdom. I rashly—praised be rashness for it——Let us not think these events
casual, but let us know, that is, take notice and remember, that we sometimes succeed
by indiscretion when we fail by deep plots, and infer the perpetual superintendence
and agency of the Divinity. The observation is just, and will be allowed by every
human being who shall reflect on the course of his own life. TYRWHITT suggested
that the rest of Hamlet's speech after 'Rashly,' and Horatio's reply, 'That is
most certain,' should be put in a parenthesis, so that 'Rashly' may be joined in
construction with 'in the dark Groped I,' &c. He also reads: 'And praised be
rashness, for it lets us know,' and does not put a period after 'will' at the end of
the speech, but prints 'will;'——. Although STAUNTON in a note said that he agreed
with Tyrwhitt's suggestion, he nevertheless did not conform his text thereto.
Undoubtedly there is force in Tyrwhitt's arrangement. COLLIER: The reasoning in
this passage is consecutive in Hamlet's mind, but, perhaps, hardly so in his expres-
sions. Tschischwitz follows Tyrwhitt, except that he prints 'for it let us know,'
because 'let' is clearly the perfect tense, since Ham. is speaking of an act that is
past.

6-11. STRACHey (p. 93): That is to say, that when we have exhausted all our
powers of thought and reasoning upon the consideration of the course we should
pursue, and when it yet remains dark to us,—'sickled o'er with the pale cast of
thought,'—then a higher wisdom and providence than our own will assuredly come
to our aid, and employ some apparently unimportant accident,—something which to
us seems merely a rashness or indiscretion,—to strike the hour and give command
for action. This is Hamlet's final, crowning, discovery; a discovery which every
man of Hamlet's tendency of mind must make for himself before it is possible for
him to turn his intellectual powers to practical account and to make his philosop-
ical speculations available to the every-day service of God and man. Till such a
man has learnt the value of accidents in breaking the thread of his meditations
when it is spun long enough, and has formed the habit of seizing and using these
accidents, he must remain an unpractical visionary.

8. Our] WARBURTON prints: 'Rashness . . . . lets us know; Or indiscretion,
&c, and vaguely interprets, 'Rashness acquaints us with what we cannot penetrate
to by plots.' HEATH (p. 547) exposed the futility of this change.

35*
When our deep plots do fail; and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

9. deep] depe Q, Q, deare F, F,
fail Q, Q, faile Q, 
dear F, F, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Dyce i,
Del. Sta.

9. fail] MALONE thinks that pall and 'fail' were by no means likely to have been confounded; he therefore adheres to the Ff, and cites Ant. & Cleo. II, vii, 88. CALDECOTT says that pall means 'lose their spirit, poignancy, and virtue; become abortive.' DYCE (in his first ed. retaining pall in his text) cites the parallel phrase: 'And if I fail not in my deep intent,' Rich. III: I, i, 149. COLLIER (ed. 2): Very possibly 'fail' of the (MS) is the true word. CLARENDON interprets pall: 'to grow vapid, and tasteless, like wine; hence to become vain and worthless,' and cites the passage from Ant. & Cleo. cited by Malone. INGLEBY (The Sh. Fabrications, p. 115) suggests that fall and 'fail' were used as synonymous by Sh., and cites in proof Comm. of Err. I, i, 37; and Merry Wives, I, i, 262; and Sir John Oldcastle: 'London, you say, is safely look'd unto, Alas, poor rebels, there your aid must fall.' In a note on 'if ye fall in' in The Two Noble Kinsmen, III, vi, 236, LITTLEDALE says that Ingleby has confirmed him in thinking that 'fall,' and not fail, is the right reading in that passage, and he gives a fuller note from Ingleby than is contained in The Sh. Fabrications cited above, as follows: Compare line 272 [of this same scene in The Two Noble Kinsmen]: 'Let it not fall agen, Sir.' There are remarkable instances of the use of this intransitive verb as a synonym of fail. Sh. affords us only two certain examples of this: 'her better judgement May fall to match you with her country forms And happily repent.'—Oth. III, iii, 237. Here 'fall' is not happen (Schmidt, wrongly, begin, get into), but fail. [The second instance is the present passage in Hamlet, where] pall is nonsense; and fail makes sense. Fall, of course, is the opposite of succeed. Our word for this is 'fail.' There is also one example in The London Prodigal, and two in Isaiah, xxxi, 3, and lvii, 14, 15. [DYCE disapproved of this suggestion of Ingleby's. Ed.]

10. ends] STEEVENS: Dr Farmer informs me that these words are merely technical. A wool-man, butcher, and dealer in skewers, lately observed to him that his nephew (an idle lad) could only assist him making them: '—he could rough-hew them, but I was obliged to shape their ends.' Whoever recollects the profession of Shakespeare's father will admit that his son might be no stranger to such terms. I have frequently seen packages of wool pinned up with skewers. CALDECOTT says that the phrase is doubtless technical, in so far as it is drawn from a handicraft, and that, as the use of tools is general, the phrases belonging to them pass into general use. KNIGHT fleers at Farmer's suggestion; and HUNTER (ii, 264) says 'the sooner it is expunged the better. Rough-hew is not and never was technical. It is a common English word applicable to all kinds of work where there is room for ordinary manual labor before the master comes and applies a skilful hand. Thus, in Palsgrave's Table of Verbs, 1530: "I rough-hewe a pece of tymber to make an ymage of;" Florio, 1598: 'Abhazear, to rough hew any first draught, to bungle ill-favouredly.'" STAUTON has a note to the same effect, and cites Baret's Alcoveis.
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,

11. certain] MOBERLY: Hor. for once expresses a slight impatience, which cuts short Hamlet's generalisation.
13. sea-gown] SINGER: 'Esclavine . . . a sea-gowne; or a course, high-colored, and short-sleeued gowne, reaching down to the mid leg, and vsed most by sea-men, and Saylors.'—Cotgrave.
13. scarf'd] CLARENDON: Thrown on like a scarf, i.e. without putting the arms through the sleeves. Compare Much Ado, II, i, 197.
14. find out them] CLARENDON: This is here used as if it were a compound verb. Comp. Rom. & Jul. IV, ii, 41; Jul. Cas. I, iii, 134. The objective personal pronoun is frequently placed after, and not before, the preposition which belongs to the verb. Modern usage only admits this order when the pronoun is emphatic. See Abbott, § 240. [Also II, ii, 150.]
15. fingered] HANMER (Some Remarks, &c., p. 46): Hamlet's stratagem was possible, but not very probable; moreover, his commission was kept in a very negligent manner to be thus got from them without their knowing it.
16. 17. 20 . . . to] See Mach. II, iii, 47; III, i, 87, 88; and Abbott, § 281.
17. unseal] DELIUS: It was the breaking of the seal that was the violation of good manners. Thus, in Lear, IV, vi, 264. WHITE: The terminal syllable of the line above probably misled the compositors of the Qq. Here Sh. would have avoided a rhyme; and from line 52 it is plain that he broke a seal.
19. O] DELIUS (Sh. Lex.): In the careless printing of the Qq, 'A' probably signified 'Ah.'
Importing Denmark's health and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervisor, 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 villainies,—
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,

---

22. _ho_ [hoo Q, hoo, Ff, Rowe. 
24. _grinding_ gringding F. 
25. _struck_ strucke F., _strooke_ Q. 
27. _me_ now Q, Pope+, Cap. Jen. 
28. _be-netted_ Hyphenated, Q, Q, Dyce. 
29-31. _villainies._—Ere...play,—I] 


---

21. _Importing_ CLARENDON: See I, ii, 23; IV, vii, 82. Here the word is used 
in a somewhat different sense: 'gravely affecting,' 'concerning.' Compare Love's 
_Lab. Lost_, IV, i, 57.

22. _ho_ [D Elius: This is an exclamation of horror. 
22. _such...life_ CALDECOTT: Such multiplied causes of alarm, such bugbears, 
if I were suffered to live.

22. _bugs_ CLARENDON: Bugbears, objects of terror. Compare _Wint. Tale_, III, 
i, 93. In Coverdale's translation of the _Psalms_ (Ps. xc, or according to the present 
numbering xci, 5) we find: 'So y's thou shalt not need to be afayerd for any bugs; 
by night ner for arrows that fyeth by daye.' In Cotgrave 'Goblin' and 'Bug' are 
given as translations of the French _Gobelin._

23. _supervise_ CLARENDON: On the supervision, on the first reading. The verb 
occurs in _Love's Lab. Lost_, IV, ii, 124. See I, i, 57.

23. _bated_ MALONE: Without any abatement or intermission of time. CLAR- 
ENDON: The execution must follow immediately without any exception of leisure.

29. _villainies_ For other instances of the confusion of _villaine_ and _villainis_ in the 
Folio, see _Walker_ (Crit. ii, 44).

30. 31. _prologue...play_ THEOBALD paraphrased his emendation (which he 
says he owed in part to Warburton and Bishop) thus: Being in their snares, _ere_ I 
could make a Prologue (take the least previous step) to ward off danger, they had
They had begun the play,—I sat me down;
Devised a new commission; wrote it fair;
I once did hold it, as our statists 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.

34. labour'd] labour'd F, F, F, F.
36. yeoman's] yemans Q, Q, Q, Q.
37. effect] effects F, Rowe, Knt. Sta.

begun the play (put their schemes into action) which was to terminate in my de-
struction. WARBURTON: They had begun to act, to my destruction, before I knew
there was a Play towards. Ere I could mark the prologue. HEATH (p. 549)
agrees with his predecessors in thinking that ‘They’ refers to ‘villains,’ not to
‘brains,’ and paraphrases: Before I could take the very first step towards forming
my own scheme, they had already proceeded a considerable way in the execution
of theirs. JOHNSON was the first to refer ‘They’ to its right antecedent, ‘brains’:
‘Before he could summon his faculties, and propose to himself what should be
done, a complete scheme of action presented itself to him. His mind operated be-
fore he had excited it.’ CALDECOTT returns to Heath’s interpretation, as do DELIUS
and ELZE, but, with these exceptions, all the rest follow Johnson. CLARKE sees
herein a vivid picture of Shakespeare’s own mode of composition, his teeming brains
beginning a play, and seeing all its scope and bearings, ere he had well penned the
opening words. MOBERLY: ‘Before I formed my real plan, my brains had done
the work. This line should be carefully remarked. Ham. writes the commission
under a strong impulse rather of imagination than will, the ingenuity of the trick
captivating him. Then the encounter with the pirate puts an end to the chance of
undoing it; and thus he is driven, somewhat uneasily, to justify his action to Hor.
As the latter receives his narrative with something like surprise, and even with a
touch of compassion, we may conclude with safety that Hamlet’s kindly nature
would have cancelled the letters but for the accident which hindered his doing
so.’

33. statists] STEEVENS: Statesmen. BLACKSTONE: Most of the great men of
Shakespeare’s time, whose autographs have been preserved, wrote very bad hands;
their secretaries very neat ones. RITSON: ‘I have in my time, (says Montaigne)
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.’
Florio’s translation, 1603, p. 125.

36. yeoman’s service] STEEVENS: The ancient yeomen were famous for their
military valor. ‘These were the goode archers in times past,’ says Sir Thomas
Smith, ‘and the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France.’ CLARENDON:
They composed the mass of the infantry. Their formidable character is mentioned
by Bacon in his Essay: Of the true greatness of Kingdomes and Estates, p. 122, ed.
W. A. Wright.
Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,  
As England was his faithful tributary,  
As love between them like the palm might flourish,  
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear  
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,

40. like] as Ff, Rowe, Knt, Del. Sta.  
might] should Ff, Rowe, Knt,  

42. a comma] a cement Han. White,

38. conjuration] See Rom. & Jul. V, iii, 68, where this passage seems to have been overlooked by the critics.

42. comma] Theobald (Nichole's Lit. Hist. ii, 579), writing to his 'most affectionate friend,' Warburton, says that it should be either 'no comma,' i.e. as no bar should stand between their friendships.—Or, 'And stand a comma 'tween their enmities,' i.e. as peace should intervene and prevent enmities.' He did not repeat these suggestions in his ed., but adopted Warburton's emendation, and justifies it in a note which he attributes to Warburton: 'The poet without doubt wrote, "And stand a Commere," i.e. a guarantee, a common mother. Nothing can be more picturesque than this image of Peace's standing, drest in her wheaten garland, between the two Princes, and extending a hand to each. We thus frequently see her on Roman coins.' But Warburton, in his ed., goes farther, and says that Commere here means 'a trafficker in love, one who brings people together, a procurer.' [Cotgrave sustains him in this meaning.] Capell (Notes, &c., i, 147) was taken by this allusion to Peace as represented on coins, and so adopted Commere. Heath (p. 549) well interprets: 'As a comma stands between two several members of a sentence, without separating them otherwise than by distinguishing the one from the other, in like manner peace personized, or the Goddess of Peace, is understood to stand between the amities of the two kings.' [Dyce (ed. ii) cites this paraphrase of Heath's, and adds: 'Perhaps so.'] Johnson: The comma is the note of connection and continuity of sentences; the period is the note of abruption and disjunction. Sh. had it perhaps in his mind to write,—That unless England complied with the mandate, war should put a period to their amity; he altered his mode of diction, and thought that, in an opposite sense, he might put, that peace should stand a comma between their amities. Becket (Shakespeare's Himself Again, i, 73) suggested, 'And stand a co-mate,' i.e. a companion; peace should be associate with them.' Staunton considered this 'co-mate' within the range of possibility. And Elze (Athenzum, 11 Aug. 1866) lit upon the same conjecture independently of Becket, and thinks that this coincidence adds strength. It should be added that Elze, one of the very best English scholars in Germany, had merely heard at the time of Becket's conjecture, and had no knowledge of the quality of the rest of that wild 'Nonsense Book.' Tschischwitz follows Becket. Caldecott cites: 'I feare the point of the sword will make a comma to your cunning.'—N. Breton's Packet of Letters, p. 23, 1637.

Hunter (ii, 264) thinks Sh. meant to ridicule such an absurd expression in some speech or document of the time. Singer (ed. ii) reads, 'And stand a co-mere,' i.e. as a mark defining them. Mere is a boundary mark, the lipis terminalis of the ancients; and it should be remembered that the god of meres or bounds, Terminus,
HAMLET

And many such-like Ases of great charge,

43. such-like Ases] Such like Affis Fl. such like, as for Qq.
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.

45. further] farther Coll. White.
46. the bearers] those bearers Qq, Jen.

44. knowing] Contracted, or slurred in pronunciation, into a monosyllable. See WALKER (Vers. p. 119), and ABBOTT, § 470. STRATMANN: As know cannot be, nor has ever been, used substantively, it must be a misprint in the Ff.
47. shriving-time] HUNTER (ii, 265): This was a term in common use for any short period. All Ham, meant was that they should be put to instant death.
47. allow'd] HANMER (Some Remarks, &c., p. 46): The punishment of Ros. and Guil. was just, because they had devoted themselves to the service of the Usurper in whatever he should command. MALONE: From The Hystorie of Hamlet, it appears that the faithful ministers of Fenton were not unacquainted with the import of the letters they bore [see Vol. II, p. 103]. Sh. probably meant to describe their representatives, Ros. and Guil., as equally guilty. So that Hamlet's procuring their execution, though certainly not absolutely necessary to his own safety, does not appear to have been a wanton and unprovoked cruelty. STEEVENS: I apprehend that a critic and a juryman are bound to form their opinions on what they see and hear in the cause before them, and not to be influenced by extraneous particulars unsupported by legal evidence in open court. I persist in observing, that from Shakespeare's drama no proofs of the guilt of Ros. and Guil. can be collected. They may be convicted by the old Hystorie; but if the tragedy forbears to criminate, it has no right to sentence them. This is sufficient for the commentator's purpose. It is not his office to interpret the plays of Sh. according to the novels on which they are founded,—novels which the poet sometimes followed, but as often materially deserted. Perhaps he never confined himself strictly to the plan of any one of his originals. His negligence of poetic justice is notorious; nor can we expect that he who was content to sacrifice the pious Oph. should have been more scrupulous about the worthless lives of Ros. and Guil. Therefore I assert that in the tragedy before us their deaths appear wanton and unprovoked; and the critic, like Bayes, must have recourse to somewhat long before the beginning of the play to justify the conduct of its hero.

PYE (p. 326): There is not one word uttered by Ros. and Guil. throughout the play that does not proclaim them to the most superficial observer as creatures of the King, purposely employed to betray Ham., their friend and fellow-student. STRACHEY (p. 96): Something more than Hamlet's own preservation is at stake; he is the representative and avenger of the rights of the crown and laws of Denmark, outraged by a murderer and a usurper, (for he was only elected because he contrived to murder the rightful possessor at a moment when his natural heir was absent); and he has to act under those circumstances, which at rare and long intervals in the history of every country, call on some man to maintain the spirit of the laws by disregarding for a moment their letter. It is Hamlet's duty to avenge the crown
ACT V, SC. ii.]  

**HAMLET**  

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**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; Folded the writ up in 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 Between the pass and fell incensed points Of mighty opposites.

**Hor.** Why, what a king is this!  

| 48. ordinant | ordinate Ff, Rowe, Pope, Cald. Knt.  
| 51. Folded | I folded Rowe+, Cap Ktly.  
| 52. Subscribed | Subscribe Q, Qq,  
| 53. changeling | change was Pope, Han. changing Anon.*  
| 54. sequent | cement Ff. sequell Coll. (MS).  
| 55. knowst | knowest Qq.  
| 56. So...go | So...Rosinerance, go Ff, So Guildenflare and Rosencros, goe Ff, So, Guildenflare and Rosincroft, go  

and laws of Denmark by putting the tyrant to death; and if as a means to that end he has to sacrifice also the base instruments of the tyrant’s will, he is justified in doing it.

| 48. was... ordinant | CLARENDON: Compare ‘was sequent,’ post l. 54.  
| 50. model | MALONE: The copy, the imitation; see Rich. II: III, ii, 153.  
| 51. in form | For the omission of the definite article, compare III, iv, 144.  
| 59. insinuation | MALONE: By their having insinuated or thrust themselves into the employment.  

| 61. Between the pass | MOBERLY: So as to get the dangerous wound which comes from the ‘redding-straik.’

| F 4 | So, Guildenstern and Rosineraus, go Rowe i. So...go Pope+, Jen.  
| 56. go | went Q’76.  
| 57. Why...employment; | Om. Qq, Pope, Han.  
| 58. defeat | debate Ff, Rowe.  
| 59. Does | Does Q, Qq, Qq, Doth Ff, Rowe+, Jen. Dyce ii.  
| 60. the baser | baser F, F, F, F, Rowe, Pope.  
| 62. opposites | opposites Jen. (a misprint?).

| Ff | this ? is this ? Ff, Pope.
Ham. Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now upon—
He that hath kill'd my king, and whored 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


upon—] Bos. Coll. El. Dyce, Sta. White, Glo. +, Mob. upon? Q, Q, Q, 


63. thinks't thee] The editors who follow Q, interpret this as equivalent to 'bethink thee.' WALKER in dealing with this passage exhibited, as his admirable editor, Lettsom, well says, profound critical sagacity, and, almost entirely unaided by any old copies, put aside ancient and modern corruptions, and made his way at once to the genuine reading: 'It may be observed' (Vers. 281) 'that thinks it thee also occurs in the Elizabethan poets in the sense of μηδον δοκι οοι.' He then cites the present passage, and gives the reading of the present text; and also corrects the same phrase in Cartwright, The Ordinary, III, ii (Dodsley, x, 216): "Little think'st thee how diligent thou art To little purpose." Think'st thee, of course. (I understand, by the way, that the thinks in methinks is, originally and etymologically, not the same with our present verb to think; but that it is a corruption of another verb signifying to seem; so that methinks is as it appears to me.) CLARENDON offers another solution: 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 Anglosaxon thincan, to seem, appear, which is used impersonally with all personal pronouns. The other word is then-can, to think, and the distinction is maintained in the German denken and denken. In Rich. III: III, i, 63: 'Where it seems best unto your royal self, for it seems, which is the reading of the earliest Qq, the later editions have 'thinkst' or 'think'st.'

63. stand me] ABBOTT, § 204: This phrase cannot be explained, though it is influenced, by the custom of transposition. Almost inextricable confusion seems to have been made by the Elizabethan authors between two distinct idioms: (1) 'it stands on' (adv.), or 'at hand,' or 'upon' (comp. 'instat,' προσφητ), i.e. 'it is of importance,' 'it concerns,' 'it is a matter of duty;' and (2) 'I stand upon' (adj.), i.e. 'I in-sist upon.' In (1) the full phrase would be: 'it stands on, upon, to me,' but, owing to the fact that 'to me' or 'me' (the dative inflection) is unemphatic, and 'upon' is emphatic and often used at the end of the sentence, the words were transposed into, 'it stands me upon.' 'Me' was thus naturally taken for the object of upon. [In the present passage] it means 'it is imperative on me.' CLARENDON: The construction is here interrupted by the parenthesis.
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?

*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;

---

68-80. To quit...here?] Om. Qq.
68. this] his F, F F, Rowe.
   this arm] his own Coll. (MS).
   and] Om. Han.
70. further] farther Coll. White.
   evil?] Rowe. evil, or evil. Ff.
73-75. It will...Horatio] Han. Three
   lines, ending short...more...Horatio, Ff,
   Rowe. Four, ending short...more...one
   ...Horatio, Pope, Theob. Warb. Johns.
   Walker.

73. interim is] Han. interim's Ff,

---

68. quit] JOHNSON: To requite him.
70. In] For other instances of in equivalent to into, see II, ii, 112; V, i, 266;
   *Macb.* I, iii, 126; and ABBOTT, §159.
71, 72. It...there] STRACHEY (p. 94): Note the usual cautiousness of Hor.,
   who contrives to suggest to Ham, the very strongest of all motives for instantly put-
   ting the King to death, under an indirect and very innocently-sounding remark.
73. mine] MILES (p. 80): You never suspect the errand Ham. is on until you
   happen to hear that little word, 'The interim is mine!' It means more mischief
   than all the monologues! No threats, no imprecations, no more mention of smiling
   damned villain; no more self-accusal; but solely and briefly, 'It will be short; the
   interim is mine!' Then, for the first time, we recognize the extent of the change
   that has been wrought in Ham.; then, for the first time, we perfectly comprehend
   his quiet juggling with the Clown, his tranquil musings with Hor. The man is trans-
   formed by a great resolve: his mind is made up! The return of the vessel from
   England will be the signal for his own execution, and therefore the moral problem
   is solved: the only chance of saving his life from a lawless murderer is to slay him;
   it has become an act of self-defence; he can do it with perfect conscience. He has
   calculated the return voyage; he has allowed the longest duration to his own exist-
   ence and the King's. At the very moment he encounters the Clown in the church-
   yard he is on his death-march to the palace at Elsinore.
75. court] STEEVENS, CALDECOTT, and CLARKE justify count in the sense of
   make account of, reckon up, value.
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

_Hor._ Peace! who comes here?

_Enter Osric._

_Osr._ Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

_Ham._ I humbly thank you, sir._[Aside to Hor._] Dost
know this water-fly?

_Hor._ _[Aside to Ham._] No, my good lord.

_Ham._ _[Aside to Hor._] 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 pos-
session of dirt.

---

80. _Hor._ 2 _Hor._ _F_._
  _Osr._ young _Osr._. _F_._ a Courtier. _Qq._
  _80. Sc._ IV. _Pope+, Jen._
  _81, &c. _Osr._ Cour. _Qq._
  _82. _I humbly...water-fly?_ Two lines, _Qq._
  _sir._—_Dost._ Sir, doff _F_._ _for_;
  doff _F_._ _sir._—_[foh, how the muske-


80. _Osr._ C. ELLIOT BROWNE _The Athenæum, 29 July, 1876_: This was a
name well known at the time. Henslowe's company performed an _Osreyck in 1597_,
perhaps Heywood's lost play of _Marshal Osrick._

83. water-fly] JOHNSON: A water-fly skips up and down upon the surface of
the water without any apparent purpose or reason, and is thence the proper emblem
of a busy trifler. CLARENDON: The name is given to several kinds of flies haunting
water in _Moufet's Theater of Insects_, ed. 1658, p. 943.

88. chough] JOHNSON says this is a kind of jackdaw. HARTING (p. 115) calls
it the Red-legged Crow, or the Cornish Chough, as it is sometimes called, from its
being considered a bird peculiar to the south-west coast of England, though now
known to be much more widely distributed. As to its pronunciation, SKINNER
derives the name _à sono naturali quem avis edit_, and _COTGRAVE_ translates _Caué_
(clearly a case of onomatopoeia), and _Cauette_, by A Chough or Jacke Daw. Fi-
nally, Ritson (p. 92) says that the name of the Cornish bird is pronounced by
the natives _chaw_, which is conclusive. CALDECOTT doubts much if, in the present
instance, from its association with wealth, it have any relation to that bird, but in-
clines to think it should be _chuff_. [Is not Caldecott right here? The _chow_ is,
perhaps, applicable to _Osr._ on the score of chattering, but how about the spacious
possession of dirt, the special application made by _Ham._? If _chuff_ be here meant
Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

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, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is north-erly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

Its application accords with Cotgrave's use of the word: 'Franc-gontier. A substantiall yonker, wealthie chuffe;' or again, 'Maschefouyn: A chuffe, boore, lob-cocke, lozell; one that is fitter to feed with cattell, then to converse with men.' Gifford (Massinger's Duke of Milan, III, i, p. 279, ed. Gifford) says 'chuff is always used in a bad sense, and means a coarse, unmannered clown, at once sordid and wealthy.' Dyce (Gloss. s. v. chuff) adds instances corroborating Gifford from A Gorgious Gallery of Gallant Inventions, 1578, and Marlowe's Ovid's Elegies. Whether it be chow or chuff, the whole speech is puzzling. ED.

90. Sweet] Mommsen (p. 258) shows by manifold examples that 'sweet' was a common mode of address in the Elizabethan court language; it occurs very frequently in Marlowe. See III, ii, 48.

91. a] Abbott, § 81: 'A' is here used emphatically for 'some,' 'a certain.'

92. diligence of spirit] Caldecott: In ridicule of the style of the airy, affected insect that was playing around him.


Dx, Sta. White, Glo. +, Mob. Om. Q3 et cet.


Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 'twere, 100—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—

Ham. I beseech you, remember—

[Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.]

Osr. Nay, in good faith; for mine ease, in good faith. 105

100. sultry] sultry QQ. sultry QQQ. Pope.
102. to you] unto you QQ.76.
103. matter—] Rowe. matter. QQQ.
Knt, Sta. matter;—Cap.

104. remember] Malone, in his ed., 1790, conjectured that Ham, was about to say 'remember not your courtesy,' because he could not possibly have said 'remember your courtesy' when he wanted Osr. to put his hat on. Malone believed that courtesy meant to uncover the head, and accordingly in Love's Lab. Lost, V, i, 103, he added not in Armando's speech, 'I do beseech thee remember not thy courtesy; I beseech thee apparel thy head,' and Dyce shared this opinion, for he considered the 'not' as indispensable. Staunton discarded the 'not' in Love's Lab. Lost, and in a note on the passage says: 'Whatever may have been the meaning of the words, or whether they were a mere complimentary periphrasis, without any precise signification, the following quotations prove beyond a question that the old text is right, and that the expression refers to the Pedant's standing bareheaded;—”I pray you be remembered, and cover your head.”—Lusty Tschentus, ed. Hawkins, p. 142. "Pray you remember your courtesy... Nay, pray you be cover'd."—Every Man in His Humour, I, i, ed. Gifford.' Grant White (The Galaxy, Oct. 1869) upholds Staunton, adding: It seems clear that Osric's completed speech would have been, 'remember your courtesy.' The phrase was a conventional one for 'be covered.' But why? The removal of the hat, in Shakespeare's time, even more than now, was regarded as a mark of courtesy. I am unable to offer any explanation of the phrase which is acceptable even to myself. I can only suggest that the difficulty lies not in courtesy, but in some peculiar and, perhaps, elliptical use of remember. Elze suggests 'remember thy bonnet.'

105. for mine ease] Farmer: This seems to have been the affected phrase of the time. Thus, in Marston's Malcontent, 1604: 'I beseech you, sir, be covered.—No, in good faith for my sake! And in other places. Malone: It appears to have been the common language of ceremony in our author's time. 'Why do you stand bareheaded?' (says one of the speakers in Florio's Second Frutes, 1591,) you do yourself wrong. Pardon me, good sir, (replies his friend;) I do it for my ease.' Again, in A New Way to Pay Old Debts, by Massinger, II, iii, 1633: '—Is't
Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an ab-
solute 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 defninement suffers no perdition in you;

Sir, you are not ignorant of what excel-
ence Laertes is at his weapon. Fi, Rowe,
Pope, Han.

107. gentleman Q2, Q3.
108. showing] shew Q76, Theob.

for your ease You keep your hat off? [In Marston's
Malcontent several of Shake-
speare's fellow-players are introduced by name; among them William Sly, and some
of Osric's affected speeches are there put into his mouth, e.g. the present line, just
cited by Farmer; wherefore MALONE (Var., '21, vol. iii, 206) inferred that he was
the original performer of this part of Ors. See also COLLIER'S Memoirs of Actors,
Sh. Soc. p. 154.]

106–138. Knight conjectures that this passage was cut out of the FF because it
prolonged the main business too much.

107. excellent differences] CALDECOTT: That is, is master of every nice punc-
tilio of good breeding; of every form and distinction that place or occasion may
require. DELIUS thinks it equivalent to different excellences. CLARENDON inter-
prets: 'distinctions marking him out from the rest of men. This affected phrase
was probably suggested by the heraldic use of the word.'

108. feelingly] JENNENS and COLLIER agree in thinking that Q2, Q3 may possibly
be right, with an allusion to the praises which a seller gives to his wares.
STEVENS cites Love's Lab. IV, iii, 240. [Indeed, no interpretation, however far-fetched, would
seem out of place in this scene; perhaps the farther the better.] CALDECOTT inter-
prets it [and DYCE (Strictures, &c., p. 191) says: 'rightly'], 'to speak with insight
and intelligence.'

109. card or calendar] JOHNSON: 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. CLARENDON:
One of Greene's pamphlets (1584) is called 'Gyondinos, The cards of Fancie.'

110. gentrify] CLARENDON: Equivalent to gentility. See II, ii, 22.

110. continent...see] JOHNSON: You shall find him containing and com-
prising every quality which a gentleman would desire to contemplate for imitation.
I know not but it should be read: 'You shall find him the continent.' CLARENDON:
'Part' is here used in a double sense, first keeping up the simile of a map, and next
in the same sense as in IV, vii, 74.

111. defninement] WARBURTON: This is designed as a specimen and ridicule of
the court-jargon amongst the precieux of that time. The sense is in English: 'Sir,
his suffers nothing in your account of him, though to enumerate his good qualities
particularly would be endless; yet when we had done our best, it would still come
short of him. However, in strictness of truth he is a great genius, and of a char-
acter so rarely met with, that to find anything like him we must look into his mirror,
though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect

112. inventorially] inventorially Coll. Glo.+, Mob. *yet but raw Q,Q,Q


and his imitators will appear no more than his shadows.' CLARENDON: The only illustration which can be given of this dialogue, in which Ham. talks nonsense intentionally and Osr. unintentionally, is the dialect of Parolles in All's Well, and of Don Armado and Holofernes in Love's Lab. Lott.

113. yet but yaw] JOHNSON: I believe raw to be the right word; it is a word of great latitude; it signifies unripe, immature, thence unformed, imperfect, unskilful. The best account of him would be imperfect in respect of his quick sail. The phrase 'quick sail' was, I suppose, a proverbial term for activity of mind. HEATH: The meaning undoubtedly is that Laer. was but young (raw) in proportion to the quick progress he had made in all gentlemanly accomplishments. CALDECOTT: Raw is unready, untrained, and awkward. Compare Per. IV, ii, 60; As You Like It, III, ii, 76. DYCE (Remarks, &c., p. 220): 'Nothing, I think, can be more certain than that the passage should stand thus: 'and it [which was often mistaken by our early printers for 'yet,' perhaps because it was written yt] but yaw neither in respect of his quick sail.' "To yaw (as a ship), hoc illuc vacillare, capite nutare."

—Coles's Dict. The substantive "yaw" occurs in Massinger: "O, the yawer that she will make! Look to your stern, dear mistress, and steer right, Here's that will work as high as the Bay of Portugal."—Very Woman, III, v; Works, iv, 293, ed. 1805, where Gifford remarks: "A yaw is that unsteady motion which a ship makes in a great swell, when, in steering, she inclines to the right or left of her course."

ELZE thinks the possible solution of this difficulty is to consider 'yaw' as a transitive verb, and he thus interprets: 'An inventory of Laertes's excellences would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; yet it would not let it stagger hither and thither (like a badly-steered ship), in view of his quick sail.' A quick-sailing ship holds a steadier course than one that sails slowly. STAUNTON says he must admit his inability to understand Dyce's reading, and adds: 'Yet' is certainly suspicious, but the word displaced we have always thought was wit, not it, and the drift of Hamlet's jargon to be this: his qualifications are so numerous, and so far surpass all ordinary reckoning, that memory would grow giddy in cataloguing, and wit be distanced in attempting to keep pace with them. WHITE: There seems to be no doubt that 'yet' was mistaken for 'yet.' CLARKE believes raw to be used in the same sense as in As You Like It, and interprets: 'your description is but inefficient and inadequate after all.' ABBOTT, § 128: The eclipse of the negative explains 'neither.' That is, 'do nothing but lag clumsily behind neither.' 'Neither,' for our either, is in Shakespeare's manner, after a negative expressed or implied. TSCHISCHWITZ says raw is merely a misprint for row, and so gives it in his text, and thus interprets: 'Memory, even with the help of arithmetic, cannot overtake this swift sailer, but can only row while he sails. At the present day we should say: and yet but sail neither in respect of his full steam.' CLARENDON: If this passage stands as Sh. wrote it, any meaning it may have has defied the penetration of commentators to detect. If 'yet' is a mistake for yt or it,
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

116. a.] ns Q.
120. sir? why] Cap. sir, why Qq.
121. more] Om. Q76.
123, 124. Is’t...really] Aside To Ham-

123. tongue?] Theob. tongue, Qq.
124. You...really] Johns. you will

really Q, Q.


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.’

114. sail] COLLI ER (ed. 2) prints sale, and thinks that sellingly of the Qq in line 108 may very possibly be right when taken in connection with it, and ‘inventorily,’ line 112. Sale has reference to the value, and speedy sale of the qualifications, of Laer.

115. article] JOHNSON: This is obscure. I once thought it might have been ‘of great altitude,’ but I suppose it means ‘a soul of large comprehension, of many contents;’ the particulars of an inventory are called articles. CALDECOTT defines it: ‘Of great account or value.’

115, 116. infusion...rareness] JOHNSON: ‘Dearth’ is dearness, value, price. ‘And his internal qualities of such value and rarity.’ CALDECOTT: The qualities with which he is imbued or tinctured are of a description so scarce and choice. CLARENDON defines ‘infusion,’ essential qualities.

117. trace] CLARENDON: Follow. Compare 1 Hen. IV: III, i, 48; and Gorges’s Trans. of Lucan, bk i, p. 36 (ed. 1614): ‘And in their turns next to them trace Prelates of an inferior place.’

121. more rawer] See II, i, 11.

123. Is’t...tongue] JOHNSON: This may mean, Might not all this be understood in plainer language? But then, ‘you will do it, sir, really,’ seems to have no use, for who could doubt but plain language would be intelligible? I would therefore read: Is’t possible not to be understood in a mother tongue? You will do it, sir, really. HEATH (p. 550): Read, ‘It is not possible to understand in another tongue.’ That is, such language as this is the only one which communicates ideas
Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman? 125

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. [Aside to Ham.] His purse is empty already; all's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know you are not ignorant— 130

Ham. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir?

Om. Qq et cet.
Cap. Jen. Steev.'85, Dyce, Sta. Glo.+,
Del. Mob. all his Mal. et cet.
129. sir? Cap.

130. ignorant—] Theob. ignorant. Qq.
132. me. Well, sir?] Glo.+, Mob.
me, well sir. Qq. me. Well, sir. Theob.
Sta. White, Ktly, Del. me.—Well, sir

to us. It is spoken ironically. JENNENS: This speech is addressed to Osr. Hor. finding him posed says, 'Is't not possible to understand? In another tongue you will do't, sir, really,' i.e. Are you defeated at your own weapons? Can't you understand your own kind of jargon? If so, you had better speak in another tongue, make use of common sense without any flourishes, and you'll not be in danger of being put out of countenance. MALONE: This speech is addressed to Ham. 'Another tongue' does not mean, as I conceive, plainer language (as Dr Johnson supposed), but 'language so fantastical and affected as to have the appearance of a foreign tongue;' and in the following words Hor., I think, means to praise Ham. for imitating this kind of babble so happily. I suspect, however, that the poet wrote: 'Is't possible not to understand in a mother tongue?' The very same error occurs in Bacon's Advancement of Learning, 4to, 1605, b. ii, p. 60: '—the art of grammar, whereof the use in another tongue is small, in a foreine tongue more.' The author, in his table of Errata, says it should have been printed,—in mother tongue. STAUNTON: Should we not read, 'in's mother tongue?' WALKER (Crit. iii, 273): Surely read, 'a mother tongue,' with Johnson. [TSCHISCHWITZ adopted it.] HUDSON: Hor. means to imply, that what with Osric's euphuism, and what with Hamlet's catching of Osric's style, they are not speaking in a tongue that can be understood; and he hints that they try another tongue, that is, the common one. MORLEY: 'Can't you understand your own absurd language on another's tongue? Use your wits, sir, and you'll soon be at the bottom of it.'

124. You... really] HEATH (p. 550): Undoubtedly read, 'You do't, sir, rarely,' i.e. You have exactly hit upon the humour of this language. HEUSSI: This is undoubtedly addressed to Osr. To Ham. he would not have used 'sir,' but 'my lord.'

132. approve] JOHNSON: If you knew I was not ignorant, your esteem would not much advance my reputation. To 'approve' is to recommend to approbation. SINGER (ed. 2): 'If you did, it would not tend much toward proving me, or confirming me.' What Ham. would have added, we know not; but surely Shakespeare's use of the word 'approve,' upon all occasions, is against Johnson's explanation of it. CLARENDON: 'Would not be much to my credit.'
OSR. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

HAMLET. 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.

HAMLET. What's his weapon?

OSR. Rapier and dagger.

HAMLET. That's two of his weapons; but, well.

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 fantastical.

133. not ignorant] ignorant Q, Qs, is—] Mal. is: Cap. is, Qq, Theob. Warb. Johns. Jen. is at his weapon? Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. Cald. Knt.

137. for his] Q'76, for this Qq, Cald. Knt.


141. but, well.] Cap. but well. QqFf, Rowe+ , Jen. El. but, well? Anon.

142. king, sir] for King F,.

142. hath wagered] hath wagered Qq. he's wag'd F,; has wag'd F F F, Rowe+. hath wag'd Johns. Cald. Knt, Sta White, Huds.

143. he has imponed] Theob. hee has impaund Qq. he has impaund'd Q'76, Mal. Steev. Bos. El. he impaund'd Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.


and so] or so Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. Cald. Knt.

134-136. I . . . himself] JOHNSON: 'I dare not pretend to know him, lest I should pretend to an equality; no man can completely know another but by knowing himself, which is the utmost extent of human wisdom.'

135. but] WALKER (Crit. iii, 274): Surely the sense requires for. [So in CAPELL'S text.]

138. by them] CALDECOTT: There is nothing here to refer to, no antecedent to 'them.' It must mean 'the qualities ascribed to him by the public voice.'

138. meed] JOHNSON: Excellence. CALDECOTT: 'Reward, or recompense,' it seems here used fantastically for that which challenges it merendo, i.e. 'merit,' and means: 'In this his particular excellence,'

142. wagered] WHITE: The reading of the Ef is in perfect accordance with Shakespeare's usage, and that of his contemporaries. So in Cym. I, iv, 144.

143. imponed] JOHNSON: Perhaps it should be depone. So HUDIBRAS: 'I would upon this cause depone, As much as any I have known.' But, perhaps, 'imponed' is pledge, impawned, so spelt to ridicule the affectation of uttering English words with French pronunciation. COLLIER and DYER (Gloss.) agree in accepting this explanation: that it is Osric's affected pronunciation of 'impaunded.'

145. hangers] STEEVENS: Under this term were comprehended four graduated
Hamlet. What call you the carriages?

Horr. [Aside to Ham.] I knew you must be edified by the margin ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more germane to the matter if we could carry 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-155 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 160

149, 150. Om. Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.
151. carriages] carriage Qq.
152. germane] Ff4, Rowe+, Cap.
153. matter if] matter: If Ff.
cannon] Ff, Rowe+, Cald. Knt,
Dyce, Sta. Glo. Del. Mob. Huds. a
canon or a cannon Qq et cet.
154. it might be] it be Qq, it be
might Qq.
155. swords] Swords: Ff.
155, 156. liberal-conceited] Hyphen by Pope.
156. French bet] French but Ff, French, but Ff,Ff, French; but Rowe.
159. yourself] your selfe Qq. you
Ff, Rowe+, Knt, Sta.
160. laid on] layd on Qq,Qq, one Ff.
nine] mine Ff.
161. that Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt,
Coll. Del. White, Hal.

straps by which the sword was attached to the girdle. See Chapman's Iliad, xi, 27: 'The scaberd was of silver-plate, with golden hangers grac'd.' KNIGHT and HALLIWELL give pictorial illustrations.

147. liberal conceit] CLARENDON: Elaborate design.
149. margent] In old books explanatory comments were printed in the margin. See Rom. &c. Jul. I, iii, 86.
160. twelve for nine] JOHNSON: This wager I do not understand. In a dozen passes one must exceed the other more or less than three hits. Nor can I comprehend how, in a dozen, there can be twelve to nine. The passage is of no importance; it is sufficient that there was a wager. MALONE: The King hath laid that
Ham. How if I answer No?

in a game of a dozen passes, or bouts, Laer. does not exceed you three hits; the King hath laid on the principle of him who makes a bet, with the chance of gaining twelve for nine that he may lose; or the King (by the advantage allowed to Ham.) hath odds, tantamount to four to three. If the words, 'he hath laid on,' refer to Laer., it means that he has laid on the principle of one who undertakes to make twelve passes for nine that his adversary shall make; on the ratio of twelve to nine. Ritson (p. 212) maintains that there were to be but twelve passes in all, and 'Laer., to win, must have got eight hits, whereas Ham. would have won if he had got only five; so that he had clearly the advantage of Laer., in point of number, three whole passes or hits, and the odds were eight to five, which is in the same arithmetical proportion of twelve to nine, in Hamlet's favor before they began to play,' [This is, I think, virtually the same explanation as that given by Elze.] Seymour (ii, 203) : 'If in the dozen passes Ham. shall be hit seven times, and Laer. only three, the King will lose his wager.' Mitford (Gent. Mag. 1845) : The reading of the FF of one for 'laid on' may be an error for won, or on; indeed the whole phrase, 'he hath laid on twelve for nine,' seems very like an interpolation from the margin. One might say that, by a loose manner of speaking, not exceeding three hits may mean not exceeding more than two. It may also be observed that these numbers were probably represented by Arabic figures, and not by letters, and were more liable to be altered and made corrupt. Quarterly Review (March, 1847, vol. lxxix, p. 332) : Osruc never stoops to use the language of ordinary mortals. 'He hath laid on twelve for nine' is not he has laid twelve to nine, but he has wagered for nine out of twelve. The King backs Ham. Laer., who is the celebrated fencer of the age, is to give the Prince great odds:—the King stipulates out of the twelve passes for nine hits from Laer. without his being declared winner. So also in the former part of the sentence, 'he shall not exceed you three hits,' does not mean that the sum of Laertes's hits over Hamlet's shall not be more than three. In a dozen passes six hits each would place them on a par, and Osruc calls Laertes's excess the number of hits that he makes above his own half. This, the King bets, will not surpass three, rendering the total amount to nine, which tallies with the other form under which the bet is expressed. Moberly: 'Each is to attack twelve times, going on till a hit is made; and Laer. bets that he will hit Ham. twelve times before Ham. can hit him nine times. That is: Ham. has three points given him, and with these odds he trusts that he shall win.' Tschischwitz assumes that 'a dozen' is merely an indefinite number, and gives an elaborate calculation on the basis of twenty-one rounds. [It may be said of all these calculations what Clarendon says of one of them, they are doubtless correct, but do not explain the form in which the wager is put.] Steevens refers this very 'unimportant passage' to the members of the Jockey Club, at Newmarket, 'who on such subjects may prove the most enlightened commentators, and most successfully bestir themselves in the cold unpoetic dabble of calculation.'

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, 'tis 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 if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir, after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Ham. Yours, yours.—[Exit Osric.] 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.

166, 167. hall; if...majesty, it] hall, if...majestias, if Qq.
167. majesty, 'tis...me; let] majesty, 'tis...me; let Sta.
168. hold] holding Cap.
169. purpose.] Theob. purpose; Qq Ff, Rowe, Pope.
171. re-deliver you e'en so] Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Dyce, Sta. White, Glo.+

167. breathing time] CLARENDON: The time of relaxation and rest. Compare Much Ado, II, i, 378; Tro. & Cress, II, iii, 121. SEYMOUR (ii, 203) proposes, 'Sir, I will...hall: It is the breathing...me—if it please his majesty, let,' &c., or else, 'Sir, I will...hall, if it please his majesty. It is the breathing time,' &c. It was Hamlet's customary breathing time, whether his majesty pleased or not.

169. will gain] For instances of 'will' used for shall, see WALKER (Vers. 238; and Crit. ii, 348). ABBOTT, § 319, says that 'will' is probably used here by attraction with a jesting reference to the previous 'will.' 'My purpose is to win if I can, or, if not, to gain shame and the odd hits.'

177. lapwing] JOHNSON: I see no particular propriety in this image. Osr. did not run away till he had finished his business. We may read:—'ran away,' i.e. 'This fellow was full of unimportant bustle from his birth.' JENNENS: Osr. is shortly after spoken of as 'young Osric,' he may therefore be supposed to be but a half-formed courtier; and under this image of the lapwing Hor. ridicules his for-
Ham. He did comply with his dug before he sucked it. Thus has he, and many more of the same bevy that I know the drossy age dotes on, only got the tune of the 180

wardness of talk and self-conceit,—his putting on the courtier before he was properly qualified. STEEVENS: Thus, in 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?' MALONE: In Meres's Wit's Treasury, 1598: 'As the lapwing runneth away with the shell on her head as soon as she is hatched.' CALDECOTT: 'He is prematurely hasty, starts almost before he has means, ere he has found legs or message, to carry or be carried.' CLARENDON: The lapwing was also a symbol of insincerity, from its habit of alluring intruders from its nest by crying far away from it. Osr. was both forward and insincere. [See HARTING, Ornithology of Sh., p. 220.]

178. comply] Warburton: The true reading is: compliment, i.e. stand upon ceremony with his dug, to show that he was born a courtier.' CAPPELL (i, 148): 'He must have ask'd the dug's pardon before he handl'd it.' JENNENS justifies the reading of Q2: 'Do you wonder,' says Ham., in effect, 'at his affecting the courtier now? Why he had done it from his very cradle.' CALDECOTT well paraphrases: He was complaisant with, treated it with apish ceremony. The same idea, and partly the same phrase itself, occurs in Ulpian Fulwel's Arte of Flatterie, 1579: 'Flatterie hath taken such habit in man's affections, that it is in moste men altera natura: yea, the very sucking babes hath a kind of adulation towards their nurses for the dugge.'—Preface to the Reader. REED: 'Comply' is right. So in Fuller's Historie of the Holy Warre, p. 80: 'Some weeks were spent in complying, entertainments, and visiting holy places.' In Reed's Var. 1803 and 1813 he added the remark: 'To compliment was, however, by no means an unusual term in Shakespeare's time.' 'This,' says CALDECOTT, 'was said [by Reed] in answer to Malone's assertion in the Pseudo-Rowelian controversy, "that the verb, to compliment, was unknown for half a century after Elizabeth's reign."


before he] before a Qq.
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. and outward] and out of an Qq, and Jen., who puts out of...encounter in parenthesis. an outward Cap. yesty] Hisly Q2 Q3, misly Q4.


184. trial] tryalls Ff, Tryals F3 F4. Rowe +, Knt, Sta.


183. yesty] Clarendon: Hasty of Q Q, may have been a mistake for hasty.

183. fond and winnowed] Warburton: 'Fond' should undoubtedly be 'fann'd', alluding to corn separated by the fan from chaff. The opinions here spoken of may mean the opinions of great men and courtiers, men separated by their quality from the vulgar, as corn is separated from the chaff. This 'yesty collection' insinuates itself into people of the highest Quality, as yeast into the finest flour. Johnson: 'If Q preserved any traces of the original, Sh. wrote “same and renowned,” which is better than “fann’d and winnowed.” The meaning is: these men have got the cant of the day, a superficial readiness of slight and cursory conversation, a kind of frothy collection of fashionable prattle which yet carries them through the most select and approving judgements. This airy facility of talk sometimes imposes upon wise men, Who has not seen this observation verified?' Jennis follows Q4, but modifies it in his text to 'profane and tres-renowned,' 'which is the French method of forming superlatives, i.e. the most renowned;' and paraphrases: such a superficial collection of knowledge as carries them through the most common (profane) and even the most renowned opinions, i.e. opinions, or branches of learning, which bring renown to the learned in them. Steevens: 'Fond,' i.e. foolish, is evidently opposed to 'winnowed,' i.e. sifted, examined. Their conversation was yet successful enough to make them passable not only with the weak, but with those of sounder judgement. The same opposition in terms is in the readings of the Q: profane and vulgar are opposed to trennowned or thrice renowned. Tollet: Fanned and 'winnowed' occur together in Markham's Husbandry, pp. 18, 76, 77. So also 'fan and wind' in Tro. & Cress. V, iii, 41. Caldecott interpreted the phrase: 'All judgements, not the simplest only, but the most sifted and wisest.' Dyce. (Remarks, et., p. 221) pronounces Warburton's emendation 'admirable,' and one which 'evidently restores the genuine reading.' White (St. Scholar, p. 422) advocates 'fond and winnowed,' and interprets: 'They go through and through (i.e. they stop at no absurdity in) the most fond (i.e. affected or foolish) and winnowed (i.e. elaborately sought out) opinions.' But White, having found that 'fan' and 'winnow' are 'often coupled in the
Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him

186. Osric] Ofstricke Qq.

writings of Shakespeare’s day, and ‘that ‘fond’ (foolish) sorts ill with ‘winnowed’ in its figurative sense; in his subsequent edition agreed with Warburton and Dyce that ‘fond’ of the Ff is a misprint for faned, and added, ‘of the meaning of the passage in this form I am not quite sure, though it is probably to be found in Dr Johnson’s paraphrase.’ CLARKE: ‘Probably “fond” is here used to express “fondly cherished,” “dearly esteemed,” while “winnowed” means “choice,” “select.” ‘Fond” is thus used in I, v, 99.’ B. NICHOLSON (N. & Q., 16 Jan. 1864): Ham. of course means that Osr. and his compeers have not that inward wit necessary to parley true euphism, but only the outward trick of the language, which while it passed with folks of like mind, would not stand the trial of better judgement. . . . If for ‘winnowed’ or trennowed, we read vinewed or winnowed—and blue vinney is Dorsetshire, and vinewed is spelt in the Ff of Tro. & Cres.; ‘winewed,’—we have a change that restores the sense,—a word not incongruous with, but suggested by, the metaphorical yesty collection, and a repetition of that Shakespearian expression, a ‘mouldy wit.’ . . . The ‘yesty collection’ is the frothinness of sour stale beer, which passes with those of corrupted and vitiated taste; but when tried and blown upon by the more sober judgement flies off, and does not remain like the true head of sound liquor or wit. Subsequently (N. & Q., 31 Dec. 1864), Nicholson added that he had forgotten the variant of vinewed, which is fenowed or fennowed. ‘The last was doubtless the form chosen by Sh. in this passage.’ BAILEY (ii, 17) changes this whole passage thus: ‘only got the tune of the time, and out of the habit of encounter [got] a kind of yesty diction which . . . the most profound and renowned opinions.’ In support, he adds: 1. That the verb ‘got’ governs both the ‘tune of the time’ and ‘a kind of yesty diction,’ the latter of which the persons concerned got, ‘out of the habit of encounter.’ 2. That diction has been used by Ham. just before in the phrase, ‘to make true diction of him.’ 3. That ‘most profound and renowned’ comes much nearer the old reading than ‘most fond and winnowed.’ Besides, most winnowed is not English. We should not say of one sack of wheat amongst several that it was the most winnowed, but that it was the best winnowed. Tschischwitz proposed and adopted in his text: ‘profound and winnowed,’ on the ground that two opposite ideas, like ‘fond’ and ‘winnowed,’ cannot be connected by ‘and’ so long as ‘most,’ by qualifying both, combined them in one idea. People of Osric’s class are like chaff that is to be found in a deep and well-sifted heap of wheat.” HUDSON: ‘Opinions conceitedly fine and winnowed clean of the dust of common sense; such opinions as are affected by lingual exquisites of all times. CLARENDON inclines to Tschischwitz’s reading: ‘profound and winnowed’ as affording a proper contrast with ‘yesty collection.’ MOBERLY: ‘A set of frothy expressions suited perpetually to express the absurdest and most over-refined notions.’

184. trial] WALKER (Crit. i, 264): I suspect that, according to the old grammar, we ought to read, with the Ff, trials.
in the hall; he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play 187 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 190 whenever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.  

Ham. In happy time.  

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 200 heart; but it is no matter.  

Hor. Nay, good my lord,—  

Ham. It is but folly ever; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

189, 190. purposes ... pleasure ... fitness] Walker (Crit. iii, 274): Note the double meaning. Tschirschwitz: Hamlet's purpose is unchanged to kill the King and avenge his father, when the King is fit for it in the hour of his unholy pleasure. Caldecott expresses a doubt whether 'fitness' applies to the King or to Laer.


194. entertainment] Caldecott: Conciliating behavior.

199. odds] Malone: 'With the advantage that I am allowed.'

200. Coleridge: Sh. seems to mean all Hamlet's character to be brought together before his final disappearance from the scene: his meditative excess in the grave-digging, his yielding to passion with Laer., his love for Oph. blazing out, his tendency to generalize on all occasions in the dialogue with Hor., his fine gentlemanly manners with Osr., and his and Shakespeare's own fondness for presentiment.
Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it. I will obey it.

Ham. Not a whit; we defy augury; there’s a 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, of what aught he leaves, knows, what is’t to leave betimes? Let be.

205. obey it.] obey. Ff, Rowe, Knt.
207. there’s a] Ff, Rowe, Knt, Dyce.
Sta. Glo. Mob. there is Qq, Cap. Jen.
Cam. Cla. there’s Pope, Han. there is a Q’76, Theob. et cet.
208. now] Om. Qq, Jen.
210. will] well Qq, Rann.
all.] Pope, +, Jen. Coll. El. White, Ktly, Hal. Del. all, QqFf, all: or all; Rowe et cet.
210, 211. man, of aught he leaves, knows, what is’t?] Warb. Cap. Jen.
man of aught he leaves, knows what is’t Qq. man has aught of what he leaves.

What is’t Ff (subs.). man has aught of what he leaves, what is’t Rowe, Pope, Theob. Cald. Knt, Del. Dyce, Sta. White, Glo. +, Mob. (ought Rowe, Pope). man owes aught of what he leaves, what is’t Han, man knows aught of what he leaves, what is’t Johns. Steev.’73,’78,’85, Rann.
man,...leaves,—knows;—what is’t Sing.
i. man...leaves knows what ’tis Qq,’76,’83,’95,’03. man,...leaves, knows what it is Ktly (marking the sentence as unfinished: betimes...).


203. gain-giving] THEOBALD (Sh. Restored, p. 127): The same as mis-giving. We thus use gainsay.

206. repair] See I, i, 57.

207. augury] CORNHILL MAGAZINE (‘Presentiments,’ October, 1866, p. 459): This passage is one of the simplest, as it is one of the strongest, proofs of Shakespeare’s belief in presentiments. In all the instances he gives us, the moral to be drawn is that the warning is neglected and the fate comes. At first we might think that Hamlet’s feeling was natural. He had detected the King’s villainy, and he knew his own counterplot would not long be secret. But it is plain that he suspected nothing in the challenge to fence with Laer. He never once examined the foils, or measured them, but picked up the first that came to hand, and took the length on trust. Just before, when Hor. warned him, he had said, ‘The interim is mine,’ and he clearly looked forward to having things his own way till the next news from England. [See Rom. & Jul. V, i, 1.]

208-211. If...betimes?] Tschischwitz (Sh. Forschungen, i, 62) calls attention to an ‘exactly parallel’ passage in the Dedication to Giordano Bruno’s Candelabo.

‘By this philosophy my soul is elevated and my capacity for thinking enlarged. But whatsoever may be the appointed hour of that evening which I am awaiting, when the change will take place, I, who am in the night, await the day, and those who are in the day await the night. Everything that exists is either at hand or at a distance, near or far, now or later, instantly or hereafter.’

210, 211. man...is’t?] WARBURTON: ‘It is true that, by death, we lose all the goods of life; yet seeing this loss is no otherwise an evil than as we are sensible of it; and since death removes all sense of it, what matters it how soon we lose.
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. **212**

*The King puts Laertes's hand into Hamlet's.*

**Ham.** Give me your pardon, sir; I've done you wrong;
But pardon't, as you are a gentleman

**212. Scene V. Pope+**, Jen.

Enter...] Ff (subs.). A table prepared, Trumpets, Drums and officers with Cushions, King, Queene, and all the state, Foiles, daggers, and Laertes. Qq. El.

Osric and other Attendants...] Osrick with other Attendants... Theob. with other Attendants... Ff.

**King.** King. [Taking Laertes

by the hand. Sta:


214, 215. One line, Qq.


them? Therefore, come what will, I am prepared.' **JOHNSON:** 'The reading of the Quarto was right, but in some other copy the harshness of the transposition was softened, and the passage stood thus: Since no man knows aught of what he leaves. For knows was printed in the later copies has by a slight blunder in such typographers. I do not think Warburton's interpretation of the passage the best that it will admit. The meaning may be this: Since no man knows aught of the state of life which he leaves, since he cannot judge what other years may produce, why should he be afraid of leaving life betimes? Why should he dread an early death, of which he cannot tell whether it is an exclusion of happiness or an interception of calamity? I despise the superstition of augury and omens, which has no ground in reason or piety; my comfort is, that I cannot fall but by the direction of Providence. Hamer's conjecture is not very reprehensible: Since no man can call any possession certain, what is it to leave? The Ff have received their best interpretation from Caldecott, viz.: Since no man has (i.e. has any secure hold, or can properly be denominated the possessor, of) any portion of that which he leaves, or must leave, behind him, of what moment is it that this leave-taking, or parting with a possession so frail, should be made thus early?' **COLLIER** truly remarks that no old copy is at all well printed in this scene; and Dyce pronounces the present passage suspicious. White thinks the Qq are manifestly wrong. **CLARKE** prefers the Qq on what, I think, is the true ground, so finely paraphrased by Johnson: That it is more characteristic of Ham, to think little of leaving life, because he cannot solve its many mysteries, than because he cannot carry with him life's goods. **CLARENDON** thinks that Johnson's is perhaps the true reading.

213. pardon] **JOHNSON:** I wish Ham. had made some other defence; it is unsuitable to the character of a brave or a good man to shelter himself in falsehood. Seymour (ii, 204) believes that the passage from 'This presence,' &c., line 215, down to 'enemy,' line 226, is an interpolation. The falsehood contained in it is too ignoble. **WALKER** (Crit. iii, 274): Arrange: '—I 't have done you wrong; but pardon't, As you're a gentleman. This presence knows.' [That is, in two lines, the first ending 'pardon't. **Ed.**]
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.
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.

Lacer I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most

215-217. This...done] Three lines, ending heard...distraction...done, Rowe +, Jen. Steev Mal. Sing. i, Cald. Knt, Sta.
216. punish'd] punished Rowe ii, Pope, Han.

distraction.] distraction, Q2Q3, distraction? Fi.
218. nature, honour] nature honour

218. exception] CLARENDON: This word, 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, I, ii, 40.
231. brother] Hunter (ii, 265): The change in Ff might be made by Sh. after he retired to Stratford, the passage as it originally stood coming too near to an incident which had recently occurred in the family of Greville in that neighborhood, where one of them had by misadventure killed his brother with an arrow.
231. nature] STEEVENS: A piece of satire on fantastical honor. Though nature is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of older men of the sword whether artificial honor ought to be contented with Hamlet's submission.
To my revenge; but in my terms of honour
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 ungored. 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,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin Hamlet,

236. precedent] Johns. president Qq


238. offer'd] offered Q.

239. ] I do F, F, F, F, Rowe. I doe F,

240. ]...play] Prose, Qq.

241. Come on.] Om. Qq, Pope, Theob.


235. masters . . . honour] Walker (Crit. i, 244) suspects that 'masters' is a
misprint for master, and that one of the two 'honours,'—the latter,—has originated
in the other in line 233.

236. peace] CLARENDON: 'An opinion and precedent which will justify me in
making peace.' CLARKE: The stiffness of egotistical susceptibility, the petty anxiety
to preserve the world's good opinion, the regard to social claims rather than to natural
affections, the artificial and not the true gentleman,—all are admirably embodied
in Laertes.

241. Come on] JENNENS: This being a phrase used immediately before attacking,
cannot be proper here; they had not yet received the foils.

244. Stick] CALDECOTT: This seems to have been a favorite phrase with Sh.
See Cor. V, iii, 73; Ant. & Cleo. I, iv, 13. CLARENDON: 'Stand in brilliant rel-
ief.' 'Indeed' seems rather to belong to Laertes's speech. KEIGHTLEY (Exposi-
tor, p. 297): In my edition I most rashly read Strike. In the language of the time,
stick off meant set off, show off, display.
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?

Ocr. Ay, my good lord.

[They prepare to play.]
King. Set me the stoupes 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,
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,

exercises.' Ham. had said that he had 'foregone all custom of exercise.' In my edition I have made an Aside here to the Queen, who may have made a sign of dissent; but a speech of the Queen's to the same effect may have been what is lost.

254. stoups] Johns. $\theta$roges $Q,Q,Q,Q$. $\theta$roges $Q$, Pope+. $\theta$roges Ff, Rowe. $\theta$roges F, Rowe.


256. of the third'] of a third $F,F,F$.

257. ordinance] Ordinance $F$.

259. union] Vnion Q, Onixe $Q,Q$.

Onixe $Q$, Onyx Q'76, Pope.

261. Two lines, Ff.

262. trumpets] trumpets Ff, Rowe+

263. trumpets] trumpets $F,F,F$, Rowe

264. heavens to heaven to $Q,Q,F,F$.

Rowe, Cap. Mal. Steev. Cald. Knl,

Sing. Bos. Cam. HUDS. ClA.

exercises.' Ham. had said that he had 'foregone all custom of exercise.' In my edition I have made an Aside here to the Queen, who may have made a sign of dissent; but a speech of the Queen's to the same effect may have been what is lost.

252. This likes me well] See II, ii, 80.

252. a length] For instances of 'a' being used for one, see ABBOTT, § 81. Also Rom. & Jul. II, iv, 187: 'Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?' Compare the Scotch 'ae.'

256. quit ... exchange] CLARENDON: That is, pay off Laer. in meeting him at the third encounter.

259. union] THEOBALD: The finest sort of pearl, which has its place in all crowns and coronets. The King afterwards refers to it, line 269. MALONE: Florio, Ital. Dict., 1598, gives 'Vnione... Also a faire, great, orient pearle, called an vnion.' And Bullokar, Eng. Expositor, 1621, to the same effect. STEEVENS: See Holland's trans. of Pliny, p. 255: '... our dainties and delicats here at Rome, haue deuised this name for them, and call them Vnions; as a man would say, Singular, and by themselves alone.' It may be observed that pearls were supposed to possess an exhilarating quality. Thus, Rondelet, lib. i, de Testac. c. xv: 'Uniones quae a conchis, &c, valide cordiales sunt.' CLARENDON: Mr King (Nat. Hist. 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.'

262. kettle] NARES: For kettledrum.

263. canvoneer] WALKER (Vers. 225): The flow of the verse seems to require canvoneer.
'Now the king drinks to Hamlet!'—Come, begin;—
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Lae. Come, my lord. [They play

Ham. One.


Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Lae. 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?

Lae. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

265. 'Now.....Hamlet'] Quotation

[Trumpets the while. Qq.

267. Come, my lord.] Come on for.

Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Sta. So on, sir Rowe ii.

[They play.] Om. Qq.

hit. Drum, trumpets and shot. Flourish, a piece goes off. Qq.
hit. Flourish. El.

Well,] Well; Ff. Well, Qq.


again.] again—Rowe +, Jen.

269. Two lines, Ff.


271. set ii] set Ff.


Qq. Come—Rowe +.

[They play.] As in text, Cap.


confess] confess Qq. confess


269. pearl] Steevens: Under pretence of throwing a 'pearl' into the cup, the King may be supposed to drop some poisonous drug into the wine. [See Capell's stage-direction at line 270, in Text. Notes.] Ham. seems to suspect this, when he afterwards discovers the effects of the poison, and tauntingly asks him, 'Is thy union here?'

273. a touch] Elze: Laer. distinguishes between 'a hit' and 'a touch,' and confesses that he was touched, but not hit. Keightley (Expositor, p. 298): With the Qq I omit these words, as needless to the sense and injurious to the measure.
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,—

275. Here...napkin] Here's a napkin rub thy brows, my son. Coll. (MS.)
F4. Here's a napkin F,F3,F4, Rowe,
Cald. napkin, rub] Handkerchief, wipe
Q76. Here...brows ] Here is a napkin,

rub thy brows, my son. Coll. (MS.)
276. carouses to] salutes Q76.
277. Good] Thank you, good Cap. madam,—] Rowe, madam. Q76

274. fat] Roberts, the player, in his Answer to Pope, 1729, stated that John Lowin acted Henry VIII and Hamlet; it is also known on the authority of Wright, in his Historia Histrionica, 1699, that Lowin acted Falstaff. Hence Steevens conjectured that, if the man who was corpulent enough to act Falstaff and Henry VIII should also appear as Hamlet, this observation was put by Sh. into 'the mouth of her majesty to apologize for the want of such elegance of person as an audience might expect to meet with in the representative of the youthful Prince of Denmark, whom Oph. speaks of as the "glass of fashion and the mould of form."' MALONE: Wright and Downes, the prompter, concur in saying that Taylor was the performer of Hamlet. Roberts alone has asserted (and apparently without authority) that Lowin acted this part. But, in truth, I am convinced it was neither Taylor nor Lowin, but probably Burbadge. Taylor apparently was not of the company till late, perhaps after 1615, and Lowin not till after 1603. COLLIER, in his Memoirs of the Principal Actors in the Plays of Sh., Sh. Soc. Publications, 1846, p. 51, shows conclusively that Burbadge was the original Hamlet, and cites in proof the Elegy upon him, copied from a MS in the possession of Heber, containing an enumeration of the various parts in which Burbadge was distinguished. Shakespeare's words are there used in reference to the fatness of the actor: 'No more young Hamlet, though but scant of breath, shall cry "Revenge!" for his dear father's death.' STAUNTON: Does the Queen refer to Ham. or Laer. ? CLARKE: We believe that this refers not to Burbadge, but to Ham. himself, who, as a sedentary student, a man of contemplative habits, one given rather to reflection than to action, might naturally be supposed to be of somewhat plethoric constitution. This accords well with his not daring to 'drink' while he is heated with the fencing bout; with his being of a 'complexion' that makes him feel the weather 'sultry and hot;' with his custom of walking 'four hours together in the lobby;' with his having a special 'breathing time of the day;' and with his telling Hor. that he has 'been in continual practice' of fencing,—as though he took set exercise for the purpose of counteracting his constitutional tendency to that full habit of body which is apt to be the result of sedentary occupation and a too sedulous addiction to scholarly pursuits. W. ALDIS WRIGHT (N. & Qu., 9 March, 1867, p. 202) states that, in 1864, he received a letter from Dr Ingleby, communicating a 'fine reading' proposed by 'Mr H. Wyeth, of Winchester,' of faint for 'fat.' PLEHWE (Hamlet, Prinz von Dänemark, Hamburg, 1862, p. 214) refers to IV, vii, 158, and conjectures that the same word is here used: hot.

King. Gertrude, do not drink!

Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.

King. [Aside] It is the poisoned cup! it is too late!

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Lac. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think't.

Lac. [Aside] And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes; you but dally;

I pray you, pass with your best violence;

I am afear'd you make a wanton of me.

Lac. Say you so? come on. [They play.

Osr. Nothing, neither way.

277. Gertrude] Gertrude, Gertrude

278. Two lines, Ff. [Drinks. Han. drinks, and tenders the Cup to Hamlet. Cap.


281. Come...face] Steevens: These very words (the present repetition of which might have been spared) are addressed by Doll Tearsheet to Falstaff, when he was heated by his pursuit of Pistol.

283. conscience] Clarke: This symptom of relenting is not only a redeeming touch in the character of Laer. (and Sh., in his large tolerance and true knowledge of human nature, is fond of giving these redeeming touches even to his worst characters), but it forms a judiciously interposed link between the young man's previous determination to take the Prince's life treacherously, and his subsequent revelation of the treachery. From the deliberate malice of becoming the agent in such a plot, to the remorseful candor which confesses it, would have been too violent and too abrupt a moral change, had not the dramatist, with his usual skill, introduced this connecting point of half compunction.

286. wanton] Ritson: You trifle with me as if you were playing with a child. Hudson: This is a quiet but very significant stroke of delineation. Laer. is not playing his best, and it is the conscience of what is at the point of his foil that keeps him from doing so; and the effects are perceptible to Ham., though he dreams not of the reason.
HAMLET

[ACT V, SC. II.

Laer. Have you at you now!

[Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.


289. Stage-direction] SEYMOUR (ii, 204): It is common in the exercise of the sword for one combatant to disarm the other by throwing, with a quick and strong parry, the foil out of his hand; and Ham., having done this, might, agreeably to the urbanity of his nature, have presented his own foil to Laer., while he stopped to take up that of his adversary; and Laer., who was only half a villain, could not have hesitated to accept the perilous accommodation, and, indeed, had not time allowed him to avoid it. M. C. (New Monthly Mag., vol. xiii, p. 301, March, 1820): After Ham. is hurt in the next round Laer. should master his foil. Ham. thus on the point of being disarmed, should by a vigorous effort seize the sword of Laer. Thus both parties would hold both weapons, and in separating each would retain that of which he had a better hold. By these means an exchange might easily take place. It is quite unnecessary that the parties should be ignorant of the circumstance. Ham. is not aware of its importance; but Laer. sees his imminent peril. Horror, remorse, and shame would make him parry imperfectly in the next round, wherein he receives his mortal wound. TIECK (Ludwig Tieck von Rud. Kipke, Leipzig, 1855, ii, 220, cited by Elze) thus explains the exchange of rapiers: At the back of the stage there is a table, on which lie the rapiers. The combatants take them up, fight a round, and replace them on the table, and conversation occupies the pause between the rounds. The King then lets Osric, or some other courtier, change the rapiers unobserved, so that the poisoned one falls to Ham. and is taken up by him. For the King, whose character is always consistent, cannot permit Laer. to survive, who had just headed a rebellion, and was moreover privy to the whole plot against Ham. [See Tieck, Appendix, Vol. II.] ELZE thinks that in scuffling the rapiers are dropped, and are accidentally changed in picking them up, and that Laer. is too excited and Ham. too unsuspicious to notice the change. HEUSSI attaches but little importance to the whole matter,—actors have more adroitness in managing such things than scholars at their desks, anyhow; the spectators need not see so very exactly that there has been an actual exchange. It is enough that the combatants become violently incensed, and that a spectator at a distance could not rightly say what was done in the scuffle. The issue makes it clear enough. [No aid, that I can find, is to be obtained from Vincentio Saviolo his Practise, 1595. In sig. H 3, directions are given for ‘fastening your left hand on the hilts of your enemies sword.’—En.] The following stage-directions are given in Tom Taylor’s Acting Edition of Hamlet, 1873: ‘[Laertes wounds Hamlet; who in return disarms him, and catches his foil.]’ After ‘Ham. Nay, come again,’ line 290:—‘[He throws Laertes a foil, but, by mistake, retains the one he had disarmed him of, and wounds him with it.]’ In A Study of Hamlet, by E. B. H. (London, 1875), the passage is thus given:—‘[Laertes wounds Hamlet, who in return disarms him—Laertes then, to prevent himself being struck by Hamlet, rushes on him and clutches his foil—they struggle.]’ King. Part them! they are incarn’d. [Hamlet leaves his foil in Laertes’s grasp and picks up the poisoned one.] Ham. Nay, come
**ACT V, SC. ii.**

**HAMLET**

King.  
Part them! they are incensed.

Ham. Nay, come, again. [The Queen falls.

Osr. Look to the queen there, ho! 290

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, Osric;

I am justly kill’d with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed. 295

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Ham—

let—

The drink, the drink!—I am poison’d!

[Dies.

Ham. O villany!—Ho! let the door be lock’d!

Treachery! seek it out!

Laertes falls.


[The Queen falls.] Cap. Om.

QqF.

tere, ho! F, there hoa F,F,F,F, there howe Q, Q, there hoe Q, Q, there.

—Ho! Sta. Del.

291. Two half-lines, Cap.

is it?] is’t Ff, Rowe, Pope, Theob.


292. How is’t, Laertes?] Ho! is’t?

Laertes? Q4.

293. Two lines, Ff.

to mine] in my Q76, Han.

mine own] mine F, my F,F,F,


Steev. Mal.

springe] springe Q, Q, Q, F, F, F,

Rowe, Pope, Theob. Han. Cap.

Osr] Q, F, F, Q.

294. I am] I’m Pope+, Hal. Dyce

ii, Huds.

295. swoons] Q’76. Swoons QqF,F.


296. drink,—] Cap. drink. Ff, drinke, or drink, QqF,F,F,F, drink— Rowe+

296, 297. O my...drink!] One line, Ff, Rowe+, Jen.

296. Hamlet,] Ham Q, Ham, Q.

297. poison’d!] Poisoned, Qq. Poison’d.

F,F; poison’d— Rowe+, Jen.

[Dies.] Queen dies. Rowe. Om.

QqF.

298. villany] villaines Q5, villain

Q’76.

Ho!] Theob. ii. How Q, Q, How


Knt. Coll. ho Q’76. how?— Jen.

Ho! Cald. Ktly.

298, 299. Ho!...out!] One line, Ktly.

299. out?] out. QqF. out— Rowe+, Jen.

[Laertes falls.] Cap. Om. Qq

Ff, Rowe+, Dyce, Glo.+, Mob.

again. [and rushing furiously on Laertes, wounds him and he falls:* [See also Vol. II: Edwin Booth; Marquard; Flathe; Doering; von Friessen. Ed.]

290. ho!] Staunton: The exclamation, ‘ho!’ meaning stop! should perhaps be addressed to the combatants, and not to those who are to raise the Queen.

293. woodcock] F. J. V. (N. & Qu., 8 Aug. 1874): This bird is trained to decoy other birds, and sometimes, while strutting incautiously too near the springs, it becomes itself entangled.
Laer. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain; 300
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,
Unbated and envenom'd; the soul 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. Oh, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.
Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,

300. It is...slain;) Two lines, Ff.
here, Hamlet. Hamlet] Ff,
Rowe, Coll. El. White, Ktly, Del. Huds.
here Hamlet. Hamlet Ff,Ff,Ff, here
Hamlet Qq. here. Hamlet Pope, Theob.
Han. here, Hamlet, Warb. here, Hamlet
Johns. Jen. here, Hamlet: Hamlet
Cap. et cet.
301. medicine] medicin QqQqQq, medi-
cine Johns. Cap.
302. hour of] hours Qq. hour's
303. thy hand] my hand Qq.
304. Unbated] Imbaited Theob. conj.
(withdrawn, Sh. Rest. p. 192).
305. to] so Q'83.
306. poison'd] poysom'd Ff,Ff, pos-
som'd Qq.
307. can] am Qq.
more—] Rowe+, Jen. more,
QqFf. more;— Steev. Mal. Dyce.
more;— Cap. et cet.
307. to blame] too blame QqFf,
308. envenom'd too!] inuenom'd to,
QqQq. envenom'd to, QqQq.
308, 309. The...work.] One line, Qq, White.
310. All.] Osr. and Lords. Mal.
312. Here] Heare QqQq.
damned Dane.] One line, Ff.
incestuous] incesious Qq.
murderous] murderous Ff,Ff.
311. but hurt] ROHRBACH (p. 37): Claudius's last words are characteristic; he
says that he is merely wounded, although he knows that the sword which has stabbed
him is poisoned. Thus tenacious is he of that which he has, this present life, until
Ham. forces down his throat the poisoned drink. To his latest breath he is the type
of strength and quick decision. Even his death, his last step, is quick and decided,
as had always been his style of action.
Drink off this potion! Is thy union here? Follow my mother! [King dies.]

Lær. 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,

313. off this] of this Qq. thy union] the Onyx Q76, Pope. the union Theob.+
314. [King dies.] Om. Qq.
314, 315. He...himself.] One line, Qq.
315. temper'd] Rowe. temper'd Qq.

318. me!] Pope. me. QqFf. [Dies.] Om. Qq.
319. thee free] the free Theob. i.
320. I am] I'm Pope+, Huds. adieu! farewell Q76.
322. to this] at this F5 F7 F4, Rowe.
323, 324. time (as...arrest) oh] time as...arrest. O Q4Q5.

313. Drink] Capell (i, 149): The literal sense of these words leads us to imagine that Ham. pours some of the poisoned cup into the mouth of the King as he lies gasping, or else dashes what is left on't upon him. But how, then, could Hor. in either case say what he does in line 329? Ham. would hardly pour it so gently as to leave much behind. It is probable that the expression is figurative, and spoken upon making the King, who had declared he was only 'hurt,' taste again of his 'sword.'

315. union] Caldecott: There may be a play here upon the word 'union.' Moberly: Was this cursed drug the pearl that you said you were putting in? 'cakes unleavened tempered with oil.'

316. temper'd] Clarendon: Mixed, compounded. Compare Exodus, xxcix, 2: of Ham., must, one would think, in the second instance have lost something of its active quality, and would consequently have been more slowly operative upon Laer. [Possibly Ham. gave Laer, a mortal thrust in return for the 'scratch,' which was all that Laer. was aiming at. So that Laer. dies of the wound, Ham. of the poison. Ed.]

322. mutes] Johnson: That are either auditors of this catastrophe, or at most only mute performers, that fill the stage without any part in the action.
Is strict in his arrest) oh, 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 God!—Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!

[ACT V, SC. ii.]

324. strict[strict'd F, strict't F.]
     his] this F F F F,
     you—] Pope. you, Q Q Q F F F F,
     Rowe. you ! Q Q Q Q F F F F;
     Q'76.

325. be—] Coll. be; Q. be: Ff.
     be—] Rowe+.

326. cause aright] cause a right Q.
     Q Q causes right Ff, Rowe.
     327. the] be F F F,
     Never believe] Never; believe
     Han.
     [takes the cup. Coll. (MS).

328. I am] I'm Pope+, Dyce ii.
     antique] anticke Q Q Q F Q Q Q antike
     Q Q F F F F. Antick F F F.

329, 330. As...cup] Separate line, Ff,
     Rowe.

329. thou'rt] Cap. th'art Q Q F F, Rowe+.

330. by heaven.] Om. Q'76.
     have't] hate Qq. haven't F F F,
     ha't Cap. have it Steev. Var. Cald.
     Knt, Coll. i, White, Hal. Del.

[Struggling, Hamlet gets it.
     Coll. (MS).

331. O God!—Horatio,) Cap. O god
     Horatio, Q Q Q, O God Horatio! Q Q Q,
     O Horatio Q'76. Oh good Horatio, F,
     F F F, Pope+, Del, Dyce, Glo.+, Mob.
     Oh, good Horatio, F f, Rowe, Knt, Sta.

332. live] I leave Q, Jen. leave
     White.
     me!] Jen. me? Q q, Rowe+,
     White. me. Ff.

323. as] See IV, iii, 58. ABBOTT (§ 110): An ellipsis must be supplied here:
     'Had I but time (which I have not)—as,' &c.

323. sergeant] RITSON: The bailiff or sheriff's officer. MALONE: So in Sil-
     vester's Du Bartas.—' And Death, drud serjant of th' eternall Judge, Comes very
     late to his sole-seated Lodge.'—The Third Day of the first Week. p. 30, ed. 1633.
     HUNTER (ii, 266): Silvester is the earlier writer, but Shakespeare's substitution of
     'fell' for 'dread' shows a master hand.

326. cause aright] DELIUS (ed. i): Perhaps the text of the Ff should read
     'cause's right!' [Not repeated in ed. ii.]

328. Roman] FRANZ HORN (ii, 91): This allusion is characteristic; in the very
     first scene Hor. described vividly the omens that took place 'ere the mightiest Julius
     fell.'

332. live behind] STAUNTON: Compare, 'No glory lives behind the back of
     such.'—Much Ado, III, i, 110. WHITE: The reading of the Ff infelicitously
     makes 'Things standing thus unknown' parenthetical, and as Q Q, has 'shall I leave
     behind me,' and Q, 'What a scandal wouldst thou leave behind,' I have no doubt
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.— [March sfar 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._ Oh, 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;
So tell him, with the occurrants, more and less,


[March....shot within.] Steev.
March sfarre off, and shout within. Ff.
A march a farre off. Qq. March at some distance...within. Dyce ii. Om. Cap.
this f] this f [Exit Osrick. Jen.
337. SCENE vi. Pope+, Jen.

[Enter Ofrick. QqFf, Rowe+,
Jen.

338. To the] To th' QqFf, Rowe.
339. To; th' Qq, Th' Qq.
338, 339. To;...voly.] Pope. One line, QqFf, Rowe.
338. ambassadors] ambassador Han.
340. quite] quie F.
338. o'er-crows] o'er-grows QqQf.
340. o'er-grows Pope+, Jen. El. oerthrows E. B. H.
344. and less] or less F, Rowe+, Jen.
Sing.: I, Caid.

that in the Folio there is a slight misprint. The possible objection that Ham., and
not the things unknown, would leave the name, is of a prosaic sort that need not be
regarded. STRATMANN: It can hardly be denied that the reading of the Qq is more
natural than that of the Ff.

340. o'er-crows] JENNENS: As a victorious cock crows over his defeated antagon-
ist. STEEVENS: This expression is also found in Chapman’s Odyssey, lib. xxi:—
‘and told his foe It was not fair, nor equal, t’overcrow The poorest guest.’ MAL-
LONE: Again, in the epistle prefixed to Nash’s Apologie of Pierre Pennillesse, 1593:
‘About two yeeres since a certayne demi-divine took upon him to set his foote on
mine, and overcrose me with comparative terms.’ CLARENDON: 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 doughill beginneth nowe to over-
crowe soe high mountaynes, and make himselfe great protector of all outlawes and
rebells that will repayre vnto him.’ TSCHISCHWITZ adopts over-awes in his text, as
‘the only word which affords a suitable sense.’

344. occurrants] STEEVENS: Incidents, occurrants. Compare: ‘As our occur-
rants happen in degree.’—Drayton’s Barons’ Wars, bk i, canto xii. CLARENDON:
Compare Holland’s Pliny, xxv, 2: ‘This occurrant fell out in Lacetania, the nearest
part unto vs of Spain.’
Which have solicited—the rest is silence.

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?

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346. Now...prince,] Two lines, Ff. cracks crack F.


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345. solicited] WARBURTON: That is, brought on the event. HEATH (p. 551): That is, incited me to the act of vengeance I have just performed. MASON: The sentence is left imperfect. WALKER (Crit. iii, 274): ‘Solicitor,’ like many other words derived from the Latin,—as religion for worship or service, &c.,—had not yet lost its strict Latin meaning. LETTSOM (foot-note to foregoing) The original signification of the Latin word seems to have been to move, and the various meanings attached to it by lexicographers are but modifications of this primary one. Ham. seems to have been thinking of the events that had ‘solicited’ or moved him to recommend Fort. as successor to the throne. CLARENDON: Compare Rich. II: I, ii, 2. [See Macb. I, iii, 130.]

345. The rest is silence] CLARENDON: If Hamlet’s speech is interrupted by his death, it would be more natural that these words should be spoken by Hor. MOBERLY: To Ham. silence would come as the most welcome and most gracious of friends, as relief to the action-wearied soul, freedom from conflicting motives, leisure for searching out all problems, release from the toil of finding words for thought; as the one sole language of immortality, the only true utterance of the infinite.

345. WHITE: The O, o, o, o, of the Folio is the addition, doubtless, of some actor.

346. cracks] Elsewhere used by Sh. where we should now use break. See Per. III, ii, 78; Cor. V, iii. 9.

347. rest] COLLIER (ed. ii): The remainder of the tragedy is struck through with a pen in the (MS) and the word Finis subjoined, to show that it was there at an end. The concluding lines also are thus converted into a couplet: ‘Now cracks a noble heart: good night, be blest, And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.’ Another ‘tag’ is added afterwards, of a very poor and inanimate character, most unlike the language of Sh, which, it seems, the performer of the part of Hor. was also to deliver when the piece was abbreviated; it is as follows:—While I remain behind to tell a tale, That shall hereafter turn the hearers pale.’ Although the conclusion is hastened in this way, the old annotator has continued his corrections to the end of the tragedy, as it has come down to us; but from what source he derived
Enter Fortinbras, and the English Ambassadors, with Drum, Colours, and Attendants.

Fort. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it ye 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,
So bloodily hast struck?

348. Enter...] Theob.+ Jen. Cam. Cla. Enter Fortinbras and English Ambassadors, Ff, Rowe, Pope. Enter Fortenbrafe, with the Embassadors. Qq (Fortinbras Q, Qq). Enter...Embassadors, and others, Cap. et cet.


his information we know not; perhaps he had at one time witnessed the performance in its entirety, and had remedied defects from the recitation of the actors.

351. quarry] The game killed. See Mach. IV, iii, 206.

351. cries on] Johnson: To exclaim against. I suppose when unfair sportsmen destroyed more quarry or game than was reasonable the censure was to cry Havock. Caldecott: See Oth. V, i, 48. White: 'This heap of dead proclaims an indiscriminate slaughter.' Clarendon: '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 ed. of Johnson's Dict., it is enacted, 'That no man be so hardy to crye havoke, upon payne of hym that is so founde begynner, to dye therefore; and the remenant to be emprened, and theyr bodys punished 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, 455, 462. The etymology of the word is purely conjectural. Some derive it from the Welsh hafoc, destruction; others from the A. S. hafoc, a hawk; others from the French hai, vouex, a cry to hounds.

352. feast] Caldecott: This allusion has, no doubt, some connection with the usage of all the northern nations, their Ambarvalia or Arval suppers referred to by Ham. I, ii, 180. Compare 'Death feasts.'—King 'John,' II, i, 354.

352. toward] See I, i, 77.

352. eternal] Walker (Crit. i, 62) gives two other instances besides this and I, v, 21 (which see), where 'eternal' seems to be used for inferior: 'Jul. Cæs. I, ii, 169; Oth. IV, ii, 154. 'This seems to be still in use among the common people. I need scarcely notice the Yankee 'tarnal.'
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,
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,

357. command] commandment, line 357, Q, Q.
Q. commandment F, Rowe, Pope.
358. White, 359. Polack Q, Q, Rowe, Pope.
360. life] breath Q. 361. breath Q76.
362. jump] apt Q76. full Pope.
363. Polack] Polack Q, Q, Pollock Q, Q, Q, Pollock
forced cause] for no cause Q, Q, Q, Q.

359. his mouth] Of course this refers to the King, as Warburton long ago pointed out. But, strange to say, THEOBALD referred it to Ham., a noteworthy slip in one of the best editors Sh. ever had, and it is quite as remarkable that the slip escaped the notice of the subsequent Variorum editors, who omitted no chance of making merry over 'poor Tib and his Toxophilus.'

361. carnal] MALONE: Of sanguinary and unnatural acts, to which the perpetrator was instigated by concupiscence, or, to use Shakespeare's own words, by 'carnal stings.' Hor. alludes to the murder of old Hamlet by his brother, previous to his incestuous union with Gertrude. A Remarka asks, 'Was the relationship between the usurper and the deceased king a secret confined to Hor.'? No, but the murder of Hamlet by Claudius was a secret which the young Prince had imparted to Hor., and to him alone; and to this it is he principally, though covertly, alludes.

362. Of accidental . . . cause] DELIUS: The first line refers to Pol., the second to Ros. and Guil., whose deaths were 'forced' on Ham.
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,
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
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;

372. inventors'] Theob. ii. inventors
Qq. Inventors F,F,F, Rowe, Pope, Han.
Theob. i. Inventor's F,F.
374. noblest] noblest's Q76, Pope ii,
376. rights] rights, Q.Q. Rites Ff.
377. doth...me.] Separate line, Ff.
Rowe.

now to] are to Ff.
378. shall have also] shall have
always F,, Cald. shall always F,F.

shall always F,,
379. And...mouth ;] Separate line, Ff.
on more] no more Qq, Rowe,
Pope.
380. same] scene Coll. ii (MS).
381. lest...mischance] Separate line,
Ff.

while] whiles Ff, Rowe.
382. plots and'] plots, and Ff, Rowe,
383. to the] off the F,F, Rowe,
Pope.

370. put on] MALONE: Instigated. See Cor. II, i, 272. [See I, iii, 94.]
371. upshot] CLARENDON: This conclusion of the tragedy. In archery the
'upshot' was the final shot, which decided the match. It is used in the same meta-
phorical sense in Twelfth Night, IV, ii, 76.
376. rights of memory] MALONE: Some rights which are remembered.
379. voice will draw on] THEOBALD: Hor. is to deliver the message given
him by Ham., lines 343, 344, and justly infers that Hamlet's 'voice' will be seconded
by others.
380. same] COLLIER (ed. ii) : The alteration by the (MS) is so much superior
to the QqF in reference to the words 'perform'd' and 'stage,' which occur just
afterwards, that we make the change, not only without reluctance, but with thank-
fulness for the improvement upon the usual tame and unfigurative line. 'Same' for
'scene' was the easiest possible misprint from carelessly written manuscript.
382. On] CALDECOTT: In consequence of. [See ABOTT, § 180.]
382. four captains] HUNTER (ii, 266): As may be seen in the monument in
Westminster Abbey of Sir Francis Vere, a soldier, who died 1608. This was no
doubt at that time the accustomed mode of burial of a soldier of rank.
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 bodies;
after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.

385. Two lines, Ff.
royally] royall Qq.
386. soldiers’] Souldiours Ff,
rites] right Qq, Cap. rights
Q76, Knt.
388. bodies] body Ff, Rowe+, Cald.
389. amiss] amisse Qq. amis Ff.

384. put on] CALDECOTT: Put to the proof, tried.
390. MOBERLY: Ham. has gained the haven for which he longed so often; yet without bringing guilt on himself by his death; no fear that his sleep should have bad dreams in it now. Those whom he loved, his mother, Laer., Oph., have all died guiltless or forgiven. Late, and under the strong compulsion of approaching death, he has done, and well done, the inevitable task from which his gentle nature shrank. Why, then, any farther thought, in the awful presence of death, of crimes, conspiracies, vengeance? Think that he has been slain in battle, like his Sea-King forefathers; and let the booming cannon be his mourners.
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END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

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