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Hamlet.
A NEW VARIORUM EDITION

OF

SHAKESPEARE

EDITED BY
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HONORARY MEMBER OF THE 'DEUTSCHE SHAKESPEARE-GESellschaft'
OF WEIMAR

HAMLET
VOL. I

TEXT

[THIRTEENTH EDITION]

PHILADELPHIA
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
LONDON: 5 HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN
TO THE

'GERMAN SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY'

OF WEIMAR

REPRESENTATIVE OF A PEOPLE

WHOSE RECENT HISTORY

HAS PROVED

ONCE FOR ALL

THAT

'GERMANY IS NOT HAMLET'

THESE VOLUMES ARE DEDICATED

WITH GREAT RESPECT BY

THE EDITOR
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 æsthetic criticism. Whenever editors whose texts are collated have indulged in æsthetic suggestions, these, in the main, have been retained. But in other cases æsthetic 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 æsthetic criticism is observed solely with reference to the arrangement of the mass of material, not because æsthetic 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?
PREFACE

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
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'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 inter-
est 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-
PREFACE

fore 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 Hamlet, 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 imperfect Attestation of a few surviving Spectators. Could how Betterton spoke be as easily known as what he spoke, then might you see the Muse of Shakespeare in her Triumph, with all her Beauties, 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 all, 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. *Ои νεскάζω μη διδώνων,* 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 Karpp imagines he has discovered between the 'courtier's kibe' and Thor's frozen toe, and Flather'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 expectat, &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 Shakespeare. 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, never wavering, 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 infected 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 pro-
crastination, where the killing of a king is the aim. As CHRIST-
opher 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 an-
swered, "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 leger-
demain, when he sang thus astonishingly? Was he, the juggler,
'juggled by aërial 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 slow-
ly. We sit at the Play, and he does it quick.' Just as SHAKE
SPEARE 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 Ham-
let'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
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.

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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 cor-
rection 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 compre-
hension 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.
H AMLET
DRAMATIS PERSONÆ¹

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.
HAMLET, son to the late, and nephew to the present, King.
FORTINERAS, Prince of Norway.
POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain.
HORATIO, friend to Hamlet.
LAERTES, son to Polonius.
VOLTAMAND,
CORNELIUS,
ROSENCRANTZ,⁵
SOURCERNERN,
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.⁶

¹DRAMATIS PERSONÆ] First given by Rowe.
THE TRAGEDY OF

H A M L E T

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...
Cap. Enter Bernardo and Francisco, two
Centinels. QqFy (Bernardo Q.) Rowe +.
Francisco on guard. Sta.

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


Scene I] Gildon (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 per-
emptory as when he fears that he is afraid. Tschirschwitz 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 Fran-
cisco are to bid Horatio and Marcellus make haste. [For other instances of irregu-
larities 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 avoid yourself.

Bert. Long live the king.

Fran. Bernardo?

Bert. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

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

Fran. For this relief much thanks; 'tis bitter cold.

And I am sick at heart.

Bert. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

---

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 Pusey (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, 5; IV, ii, 115; Meas. for Meas. IV, 1, 17. As Fran. speaks the clock is heard striking midnight. [See Abbott, § 191; Mach. III, i, 16; V, iii, 7.]

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

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

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 tragic 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 keynote 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-
HAMLET

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.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier:


14. Stand, ho] Stand ho Q. Stand
   F, he] Om. F, Rowe, Pope, Kn.

Sing. Kity, Del.

Who is] who's F, Rowe, Pope.

Enter... Dyce, White, Sta. Glo.

16—18. O, farewell...night] Cap.

2 lines, Q,F, Rowe+.

16. soldier] 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 lan-
guage 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 Rope 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. CAL-
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 War-
burton].

14. COLERIDGE (p. 148): Observe the gradual transition from the silence and the
still recent habit of listening in Francisco's 'I think I hear 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 dis-
pense; 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. & Juli. 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,' Mach. II, ii, 3.—Ed ]
HAMLET [ACT I, SC. I.

Who hath relieved you?

Frar. Bernardo hath my place. 17

Give you good night. [Exit.

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say,—

What is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus. 20

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

17. Who hath] who has Q'y6. hath my], he's my F F, has my F F, Rowe +, Coll. Dyce, El. White, Sta. Kty, Glo. Mob.

18. Say,...there I Cap. One hne, QqFy.

19. Say,...there I Cap. One hne, QqFy.

20. Say,...there I Cap. One hne, QqFy.


Berardo] Bernardo,—Theob.

Warb. What he's Q, Q, to-might?] Qq to QqFy.

Say,] Say QqFy. Say, Knt, might. F{to Night F{.

19. A piece] WARRINGTON: He says this as he gives his hand [to this effect Warrington inserted a stage-direction]. HEATH and STEEVES: It is merely a humorous, cast expression. TSCHICHTZIT: 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. MORELY: 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. TSCHICHTZIT: 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, ELDER 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 credibilitas,
**ACT I, SC. I.]**

**HAMLET**

*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, Qe.*

fantasy] fantasies F, Q. phan-
take F, F, F.


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

27. minutes] minutes Q, Qe.

28. apparition] apparition Q, Qe.*

30. Tush, tush,] Om. Q'76.

32. a while] a while Q, Qe.

33. two nights] F, Rowe,
Dyce, El. White, Sta. Kty, 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] **CLARKE** : 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] **FRANCIS** : Conf. 1 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] **STEEVES** : 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 testimony to that of our eyes. **CALDECOTT** : To approve or confirm. Ratum habere aliquid.—Baret's Alvarie. Tschisch witz: Exactly corresponding to the Ital. approvar.

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

33. What . . . seen.] **HANMER** 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.' **KRIGHTLEY** reads 'With what.' **CLARKE** : 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 illumine that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one,—

Enter Ghost.

Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again! 40

33. sit we] let's. Q76.
34. let's] let's. Q76.
35. When] When F.  
36. yond] yon F. F.
37. that's] that's Q76.  
38. westward] westward. Q76, 
39. to illumine] Steev. & illumine Q76.  
39. to enlighten] Steev. & illumine Q76.  
39. to enlighten Q76.  
39. one.—] one— Rowe. one. QqFi.  
39. one.—] one— Castl. bell tolls one. Ingleby.
40. Ghost] Qq. Enter the Ghost after eff, line 40, Ff, Rowe +.
40. Ghost] Qq. Enter the Ghost after eff, line 40, Ff, Rowe +.
40. After line 40, Steev. Var. Cald. Knl, 
40. White, Kity, Dyce ii, Huds. & illumin Q76.  
40. White, Kity, Dyce ii, Huds. & illumin Q76.  
40. Two lines, F+; Rowe, +. 
40. Two lines, F+; Rowe, +. 
40. eff] of Qq, F+.

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 ἀρχηγὸς ὑπὸ τὸ σημασθῆναι. But we may omit the comma, and take 'what . . . seen' as an epexegeesis of 'story.' [See Abbott, § 352.]

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!

37. illumine] Clarendon: Not used elsewhere by Sh.

39. beating] Staunton: 'Tolling' of Qq, perhaps imparts additional solemnity to this impressive preparation for the appearance of the spectre.
Ber.  In the same figure, like the king that's dead.  
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
Dit sometimes march’d by heaven charge thee speak!

**Mar.** It is ordain’d.

**Err.** Work, it stales away.

**Hor.** Stay, speak, speak! charge, thee, speak! [Exit Ghost.

**Mar.** Thus gone, and will not answer.

**Err.** How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale;

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you on this?

**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 combat’d;

So frown’d he once, when, in an angry parle,

49. march F, Q 76. march, Q, F-

50. by heaven, Q 76. Pope —, Steev. Var. Cal.

55. you see? you can’t, Q, Q, F-

56. Before, believe, I could not, Q 76.

57. true, try’d, Warb.

58. by heaven, Q 76.

60. very, Osm. Fr, Fr, F-

61. he, Osm. Fr.

62. frown’d, frown’d, F, F-

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. Moberly 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; Mach. 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 iv, which have both an active and a passive meaning, see Abbott, § 3; 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. Clarke: 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:] Hussey erroneously supposes that this word signifies a physicist, combat. Clarke: (Note on Rich II: I, i, 192): ‘Parle’ and parley are
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
Tis strange.

63. smot] smot Q Q F F F F
sleded] sleded Q Q Pope+ 4q, Jen.
Polack] Mal. polax Q Q Q Q Q
Pollax Q F F F Polax F F Polaxz

F. Pole-axe Rowe. Polack Pope+;

64. 'Tis strange.] 'Tis strange—
Rowe+. Om. Seymour.

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 axxe 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 sleded, and the lack of a capital P in pollax, together with its Roman letters (proper names in the old copies being usually printed in Italicis), still presented inexplicable difficulties. FRIESEN inclined to Tieck, believing it more conceivable that the king dashed down on the ice his sleded 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 Polacks would signify the whole Polish army, and it would be monstrous to suppose that the whole army could travel in sleighs; the 'sleded 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 sledged, it refers to a battle-axe, to which a war-club (Old North German slegja) 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 sledded 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 Scandinavian 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.' MOLTKE 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, With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

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

Sing. Dyce i, Kily, Del. ii.

67. particular] particular Q, Q, Q, thought to] is Coll. (MS).
Q, Sta.

Q76. dead] same Ff, Ff, Ff, Rowe. dead Anon.

66. stalk] Amice 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? "Stledded" is a sophistication of the printers, and the correct text is his loadéd poleaxe, i.e. his poleaxe loaded with lead; or his edged poleaxe, i.e. sharpened; or, for ought to the contrary, his sledged poleaxe. This emendation of Moltke's CLARENDON pronounces an antécîmax; 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 Athenæum, 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: 'Stledded' 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. Polague 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,' 'Pollock,' 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 meaker 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. Jonson 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.]

67 thought] STEEVENS: What particular train of thinking to follow.
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

70. *Good now*] **JOHNSON (Dict.):** In good time: *à 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 surmises 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: ‘*Gunnaw*’ (good now) is still an apppellative in Dorsetshire. **CORBON:** ‘Good’ is a vocative, and ‘now’ belongs to ‘sit down.’

72. *toll] 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 *Mach.** II, iv, 4; **ABBOTT,** § 290, for a list of transitive verbs formed from nouns and adjectives; thus ‘pale,’ I, v, 90.]

72. *subject] JENNENS:** A noun of multitude. **CLARENDON:** See I, ii, 33; *Meas. for Meas.** III, ii, 145. [Lear, IV, vi, 110.] Thus, too, ‘the general,’ *Ham.** II, ii, 316.

74. *mart] CLARENDON:** Market, marketing, purchasing. In *Tam. of Shrew,* II, i, 329, it means a mercantile expedition.

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)** inconsequently 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
HAMLET

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 prickt'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,

origin, and that the word must be _imprest_ (Ital. _impresto_), equivalent to 'handsel,' and of common usage in England aforeside; and thus it stands in his text.

_77. toward_ Dyce. In a state of preparation, forthcoming, at hand. See V, ii, 352. [See _Rom. & Jul._ I, v, 120. Florio gives: 'Prajagiare: to perceive a thing that is toward before it come.' Ed.]

_81. but_ See Abbott, § 130, and _Macb._ V, viii, 40.

_82. Fortinbras_ Latham (Athensum, 27 July, 1872) shows that this is a corrupt French form, equivalent to _Fierabras_ or _Fierabas_, which is a derivative from _ferri brachium_; by translating _brachium_, side, we have _Ironside_, or, in Icelandic, _Jarnsida_, 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 _Hen._ VI: V, iv, 163. For lists of words with accents differing from present use, see Abbott, §§ 490, 492. ELER refers to the compact made between Collere and Horwendile in The _Hystoris of Hamlet_, 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
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,

88. those] these Qq.
89. of] on F, Rowe, White, Hud.
in Coll. (MS).
91. return'd] returns Qq, Pope,
(MS).
93. vanquisher;] vanquisher, F.
vanquished; Qq.*
the same] that Pope, Theob.
Han. Johns.
covenant] Cov'nant Fl. comart
Qq, Warb. Cap. Jen. co-mart Qq*,
compact Q'76, Heath, Hunter.
94. article design'd] article design'd
Qq, Qq. articles designe Qq. Articles de-
signe Qq. Article designe F, articles
design'd Pope, Jen. article then sign'a
Coll. (MS). articles' design White,
Huds.
95. sir] Om. Pope.+
96. unimproved] inapproved Qq,
Sing. ii, Ktly. unapproved Anon.*

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.
MOORELY: 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 con-
tracts touching deeds of arms or of war out of the realm.'

89. seized] CLARENDON: Possessed of. Cotgrave: Saisi: seised, layed hold
on, possessed of. [The customary legal term at the present day. Ed.]
90. moiety] CLARENDON: Used generally for any portion. In 1 Hen. IV: III,
i, 96, it means a third.
91. return'd] EARL OF ROCHESTER (1761, Athenaum, 3 April, 1875): These
lands could have no return, that had never been turned or moved from the primitive
owner. Read, enu'd.
93. covenant] 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. STEEVES:
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 slurred; 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 e 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

has the same sense as improv. This last word NARES defines by ‘to reprove or refuse; as from improb, Latin.' SINGER (ed. 1) cites Florio: ‘Improbare, to improove, to impugn, hence ‘unimproved’ means unimpeached, unquestioned. In his ed. 2, Singer adopted Q, ‘as the idea excited by young Fortinbras is of one 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 crieth, Pursue, pursue, And all his unreproved hands did blood and dust embrace.' DYCE follows Gifford, and CLARENDON inclines to the definition of Singer (ed. 2), untutored.

98. Shark'd] STEEVENS: 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.

99. lawless] TSCHICHAWTCH: 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.

99. resolutes] For infected participles and adjectives, see ABBOTT, § 433; and Macb. I, ii, 60, ‘Norways' king.'

100. 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 them.
So by his father lost; and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Ber. I think it be no other but e’en so.
Well may it sort, that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch, so like the king
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,

108-125. Ber. I think...countrymen.] Om. Fl.
113. palmy] flourishing Q76, Rowe.

1. Rummage, the proper stowing of merchandise in a ship; from Du. rumm, 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 mysteryng. Ruminacio, mussitatio.’—Prompt. Parv.

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. Caes. 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, § 209: 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 to Lodge’s Incarnate Devils, 1596. Also, ‘Festuca, a little sticke, a sease-strawe, a tooth-pique, 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,

Warb.


117—120. Transferred by Tsch. to follow **countryman**, line 125.

117, 118. **As stars with...Disasters**

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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 Horatius; 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**, § 8: The superlative, like the Latin usage, sometimes signifies very, with little or no idea of excess.

116. **Jenks**: 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 confined 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 **J'sul. Cat.** ii, ii, which describes the prodigies preceding his death, contained a description of of fierce 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: *Aster* with trains of fire—and dews of blood. Disastrous dimm'd the sun. 'Aster' 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. & Q.**, 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 tritlers, 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, Aster with trains of fire,' &c. Disaster is used as a verb in Ant. & Clopp. 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 "Disasters," 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 asteres or asteras.' W. W. WILLIAMS proposes: 'Asteres with trains of fire and dews of blood, Did over-cast the sun,' &c. STAUNTON awards some plausibility to Malone's emendation, and considers Asteres or Asteres 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 dim'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 distemper: '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. Cæs., 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] fierce Q., fierce Q2, fierce Q3*  
123. *omen coming] omen'd Coming*  
fear'd Coll. conj.


'noted,' and so 'pluralized [sic] the phenomenon.' MOBERLY agrees with Malone in supplying the missing line from the corresponding passage in *Jul. Cap.*, if a line be really lost. CLARENDON: Sh. had probably in his mind the passage in North's *Plutarch*, *Jul. Cap.* p. 739 (ed. 1631): 'Certainly, destinie may easier be foreseee then auidoed, considering the strange and wonderfull signes that were said to be seene before Cæsar's death. For, touching the fires in the element, and spirits running vp and downe it. the night, and also the solitary birds to be seene at noon daies sitting in the great market place, are not all these signes perhaps worth the noting, in such a wonderful chance as happened?' Plutarch also relates that a comet appeared after Cæsar's death for seven nights in succession, and then was seen not 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 'precurer' (*Pham. & 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 Jonson's *Sejanus*, V, x (p. 140, ed. Gifford), 'O most tame slavery, and fierce flattery.'


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 omens, and cites Virgil, *Æm.* 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] DELLIS: This word is accented on the first syllable also in *Hen. V*: IV, ii, 54.
HAMLET

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] climature Dyce
   conj. White, Dyce ii, Huds.
   countrymen.] contrimen. Q
   countrymen—Jen.
   Re-enter Ghost.] Cap. Enter
   Ghost. Qq, White. Enter Ghost again.
   Ff.
   127. [It spreads his armes. Qq, El.
   Om. Ff. He spreads his armes. Q76.

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 Cot-
grave, and Littre gives no early example of its use.

127. WHITE: The stage direction of the Qq may be a misprint for 'He spreads,' &c., indicating Horatio's action in his attempt to stay the Ghost. 'His' might, of
course, refer to the Ghost through 'it;' but there seems to be no occasion for the
Ghost to make such a gesture.

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, his first fell sick.'—Lodge's Illustrations

129, 130. One line, QqFf.
131, 132. One line, Ff, Rowe.
134. 135. One line, Ff, Rowe, Sta.
134. foreknowing] foreknowledge
Coll. (MS).

135. speak | speak |— Rowe+

134. happily] NAES and CLARENDON consider this as equivalent to haply;
TSCHISCHWITZ 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.
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 majestic,

138. you] your Q.q. After speak! line 139, Cam. Cla. 139. as] Q.q. Om. Ff. 140. of it; after line 137, Rowe, &c. After of it; line 139, Cap. After 132, Glo. Mob. 142. [Exit Ghost.] Om. Q.q.

136. uphoarded] STEEVENS: 'If of any of them had bound the spirit of gold by any charmes in caves, or in iron fetters under the ground, they should, for their own souls quiet (which questionless 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 Macb. IV, i, 127. Also ABBOTT, § 463; and i, i, 161.

139. Cock crows] DRYE (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!" and "'Tis gone!" 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 descend on 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.

_Brr._ 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

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145. _For it is,] It is ever Q76._
150. _morn] mornes Q5._
154. _extravagant] extra-vagate Grey._

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145. invulnerable] MALONE: See _Macb._ V, viii, 9, and _King John_, II, i, 252.
150. cock] FARMER: Bourne of Newcastle, in his _Antiquities of the Common People_, informs us: 'It is a received tradition among the vulgar, that at the time of cock-crowing, the midnight spirits forsake these lower regions and go to their proper places. Hence it is that in country places, where the way of life requires more early labour, they always go cheerfully to work at that time.' And he quotes some lines from the first hymn of Prudentius, _Ad Gallicinium_: 'Ferunt, vagantes daemonas, Lactos tenebris noctium, Gallo canente exterritos Sparsim timere, et cedere. Hoc esse signum prescii Norunt reprimisse spei, Qua nos soporis liberi Speramus adventum Dei.' DOUCE quotes from another hymn, said to have been composed by Saint Ambrose, and formerly used in the Salisbury service: 'It contains the following lines, which so much resemble the speech of _Hor._ that one might almost suppose _Sh._ to have seen them: 'Preco diei jam sonat, Noctis profundae pervigil; Nocturna lux viantibus, A nocte nocem segregans. Hoc excitatus Lucifer Solvit polum calagine; Hoc omnis errorum chorus Viam nocendi deserit. Gallo canente spes reditat,'' &c. STEEVENS: Philostratus, giving an account of the apparition of Achilles's shade to Apollonius Tyaneus, says that it vanished with a little glimmer as soon as the cock crowed.—_Vit. Apol._ iv, 16. COLERIDGE: No _Addison_ could be more careful to be poetical in diction than _Sh._ in providing grounds and sources of its propriety. But how to elevate a thing almost mean by its familiarity, young poets may learn in this treatment of the cock-crow.

153. _sea]_ JOHNSON: According to the pneumatology of that time, every element was inhabited by its peculiar order of spirits. The meaning therefore is, that all spirits _extravagant_, wandering out of their element, whether _aerial_ spirits visiting earth, or earthly spirits ranging the air, return to their station, to their proper limits, in which they are confined. We might read:—'at his warning Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies To his confine, whether in sea, or air, Or earth, or fire. And of,' &c. But change is unnecessary.

154. _extravagant]_ STEEVENS: Thus, '—they took me up for a 'stravagant.'—_Nobody and Somebody_, 1598. The same effect is given to 'Aurora's harbinger' in _Mid. N. D._ III, ii, 381. CLARENDON cites _Oth._ I, i, 137.

154. _erring]_ STEEVENS: That is, _wandering_. Thus, _Telemachus_ calls _Ulysses_
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,

*My erring father.*—Chapman's _Odyssey_, lib. iv. 'Erring Grecians we, From Troy returning homewards.'—_ib. lib. ix._ CLARENDON: In Wiclif's version of _Juliet_, 13, the planets are called 'erringe sterris.'

155. _confine_] CLARENDON: The same accent occurs in _Temp._ IV, i, 121; _King John_, IV, ii, 246. Accent on first syllable in _Rich. II._: I, iii, 137.


158. _season_] _i.e._ as though expecting doomsday.

158. _tis bitter cold_] Francisco's remark, 'Tis bitter cold,' I, i, 8, and then with, 'But two months biter, 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 pansies, her clourabines, 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 glossy 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 _Cov._ II, ii, 217. 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.

struck.' [Thus Florio: Assiderare: to blast or strike with a planet, to be taken.—
Ed.]

takes] Dyck: 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.
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.

in part believe] CLARKE: This assent of Hamlet'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. MOBERLY: A happy expression of the half-sceptical, half-complying spirit of Shakespeare's time, when witchcraft was believed, antipodes doubted.

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.

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, '—cheerful Chaunticleere with his note shrill Had warned once, that Phoebus' fiery Car In haste was climbing up the Eastern Hill, Full envious that Night so long his room did fill.'

Break we] See I, i, 33.
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.

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[ Yong Q,F,F, F,]
for, upon my life,] perhaps Q'76.
172, 173. Om. Coll. (MS).
172. shall' do Rowe ii.
173. duty ] duty, Qq (duty, Q).
174. Let's ] Let F,.
175. conveniently ] convenient Qq,
A room ] Cap. substantially. The
Palace, Rowe +.
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 undignified rhetoric,—and yet in what follows concerning the public weal, a certain appropriate majesty. Indeed was he not a royal brother?
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. as befitted] fitted Pope, Theob. 9. of] to Qq, Glo.
Han. Warb. 11, 12, 13. Om. Coll. (MS).
3. bear] hathie Coll. (MS) El. 11. one...one] an...a Qq, Glo. +, Hal.
8. sometime] sometimes Ff, Rowe.

2. that] TSCHISCHWITZ: The simpler form 'that' was used instead of the fuller
form 'though that,' just as in French after queique 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.' SKYMOUR (ii, 141): Read, 'The memory's green; and it be-
fit 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, 19; 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. Tale,
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 "droop" . . .
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 choreography.' FRANCKE
refers to the Homeric phrase, ἄερεν γέλασιν, Iliad, vi, 484, and to Odyssey, xix,

12. mirth . . . dirge] MORELLY: The studied antitheses repeated over and over in
this speech give it a very artificial appearance. The king's political 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.

iii, p. 25) A person in grief is said in Cornwall to be hooted.
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
Taken to wife; nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued 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.
our thanks) Q4. along, for all our
thanks. F1, Rowe
17. follows... know.] Theob. follows... know Q4. follows... know F1,
Rowe. Pope.

14. to wife;] See Macb. IV, iii, 10.
14. barr'd] Caldecott: Excluded, acted without the concurrence of. Claren-
don cites Cymb. I, i, 82, where it means 'thwarted.'
17. that you know,] Walker (Crit. iii, 261): Sh. can never have written any-
hing 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 o r
t, see Walker (Crit. ii, 324) and Abbott, § 342, also 'deject,' III, i, 155; 'hoist,
III, iv, 182; hoist,' III, iv, 207; 'distract,' IV, v, 2; also Macb. III, vi, 38.
21. Colleagued] 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 Col-leagued.
21. dream] Warburton: He goes to war so unprepared that he has no allies
but a dream, with which he is confederated. Claren-don: 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, to throng them; to be in a person's way.
'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

Jen. El. Quincy (MS).
Jen.] now Q'76.

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29. bed-rid] bedred Qq.
31. gait] Cap. gate Qq Ff, Rowe +,
Jen.

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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-driana," to bewitch or fascinate... The participle of this verb,
"be-drida," a disordered man, has, by a false light of cross analogy, generated
the modern "bed-ridden," a half-sister of "hag-ridden."' (Philology of the English
Tongue, p. 22.) The etymology commonly given explains it of one who is carried
or rides on a bed. 'Bed-rid' occurs in 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 'acustomed to,' and thence 'perpetually on,' the bed. Compare the way
in which ἱθαὶ is used in Homer and Herodotus simply to mean 'a place' (ρα ἱθαὶ
ὁθα).

30. gait] NARES: Here used metaphorically, for proceeding in a business.
Of these dilated articles allow.
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor.  In that and all things will we show our duty. 40
Vol. We doubt it nothing; heartily farewell.—

[Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.

dilated] delated Qq, Glo. +. re-
lated Qq, Sing. i. Jen. 41. it nothing] in nothing F, Rowe,
allow.] allows. Johns. Pope i. [Exeunt...] Exit... F,F, F* Om.
White, Kty. allow. [Give them. Coll. Qq.
(MS).

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 allows, 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 Religio and Cantellis 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 us, 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 TSCHEISCHWITZ 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 LYCE 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, iii, 14.

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

41. nothing] TSCHEISCHWITZ: Here used adverbially and like something, in
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. Cap. 
45. lae’ loose F,F,F. 
49. is...to]...is Warb. Han. Johns. Kty. My dear Q’76.

similar cases, analogous to the Greek ἄνθρωπος, e.g. ἄνθρωπος ὑμῶν ἔφη σου Ἀδάμ ἑγεῖτο ἀνθρώπων ἐν σοὶ Ἀσχ. Agam. [1384, ed. Klausen]. CLARENDON cites Twelfth Night, II, iii, 104: Cor. I, iii, 111.
42-45. you . . . thou] ARBUTT, § 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] WARRINGTON 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

[ACT I, SC. ii]

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,—

55. toward] towards P, Rowe, Knat.
57. Two lines P.
Polonius] Polonius F, Q,
58. He hath] Hath Q, Q3.
lord.] lord: F.
58, 59. wrung...petition.] by labour-
58—60. wrung...consent:] Om. F.
59. at last] at the last Pope +.
62, 63. be thine...spend] is thine,
And my best graces; spend Johns. conj
62. thine.], thine; Theob. Warb.
Johns. thine! Cald.
63. gracer] graces: Q’76, Rowe +.
[Exit Laertes. Anon. conj.
64. Hamlet, and] Hamlet.—Kind Warb.
son,—] son— Rowe. femme
Qq. femme? F.

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.

56. pardon] CLARENDON: Leave to depart. So in III, ii, 304. It is equivalent
to ‘leave’ in Cymb. I, iv, 46, and 3 Hen. VI.: IV, i, 87.
57. Polonius] WALKER (Crit. ii, 32): A critic who should suggest that ‘Polonius’
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 Twelve Night, I,
iii, 5, where it means ‘niece,’ and III, iv, 68, where it means ‘uncle.’
64. and]WARBURTON suggested ‘Kind my son,’ or, as we now say, ‘Good
my son,’ whereby, Warburton thinks, a pertinence is gained for Hamlet’s reply,
which it otherwise lacks.
HAMLET

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 MOLTE 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 dramas 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] Hanmer: 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 Gerboduce, 1561, 'In kinde 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. Cæs., 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 Morely 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 Vén. & Ad. 204. 'Surely,' says Knight, 'Hamlet applies these words to himself. The King has called him, 'My cousin Hamlet.' He says, in a suppressed 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 kinde, which doth, or worketh dishonour to his kindred. Degener: Forlignant.'—Abbeau, K. 59. 'Forligner,' says Cotgrave, "to degenerate, or grow out of kind, to confer in conditions from his ancestors." 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 Corboduc. 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. COLE RIDGE: 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 poetic 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 staging 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 blessing (as the proverb is) in to a warme sonne.' —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.

STAUGHTON: Hamlet may mean, 'I am too much in the way; a mote in the royal eye;' but his reply is purposely enigmatical. DVCK (Glos. 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, ye runne Out of God's blessing into the warme sunne.' —Dialogue on Proverbs, Works, 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.' —Polite Conversation, Dialogue I, Works, vol. ix, p. 423. Ray gives as its equivalent, Ab equis ad asinas.
Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,

68. nighted] nightly Ff, Rowe, Knt, 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 Churcings 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 “smile” 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. & Qw. 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); deposed 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 carousings. 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.
HAMLET

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] veiyled F,F,

71. good mother] could mother Q2Q3,

72. common :] Theob. commom, Fl,

73. solemn] solemnbe Q2Q3,

74. it be,] Q3 Q4 Q4. it be;

75. my inky] this mourning Q76.

76. shows] Steev. shows F,F,

77. could mother] could mother Q2Q3,

78. solemn] solemnbe Q2Q3,

79. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

80. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

81. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

82. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

83. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

84. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

85. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

86. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

87. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

88. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

89. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

90. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

91. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

92. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

93. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

94. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

95. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

96. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

97. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

98. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.


100. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

101. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

102. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

103. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

104. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

105. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

106. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

107. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

108. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.


110. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

111. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

112. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

113. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

114. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

115. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.


117. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

118. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

119. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

120. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

121. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

122. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

123. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

124. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

125. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

126. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

127. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

128. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

129. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

130. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

131. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

132. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

133. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

134. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

135. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

136. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

137. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

138. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

139. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

140. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

141. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

142. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

143. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

144. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

145. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

146. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

147. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

148. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

149. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

150. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

151. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

152. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

153. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

154. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

155. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

156. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

157. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

158. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

159. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

160. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

161. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

162. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

163. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

164. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

165. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

166. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

167. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

168. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

169. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

170. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

171. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

172. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

173. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

174. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

175. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

176. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

177. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

178. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

179. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

180. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

181. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

182. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

183. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

184. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

185. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

186. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

187. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

188. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

189. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

190. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

191. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

192. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

193. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

194. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

195. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

196. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

197. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

198. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

199. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

200. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

201. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.


203. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

204. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

205. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

206. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

207. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

208. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

209. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.


211. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

212. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

213. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

214. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.


216. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

217. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

218. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

219. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

220. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

221. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.

222. modes] Cap. moods Q2Q3.

223. haviour] 'haviour Pope+, Cap.
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 perseve

83. denote] denote Q2 Q3 Q4, decoute
85. indeed] may Pope.
89. That] The F. F. F.
90. lost, lost his] his Pope, Han.
92. sorrow] sorrow Q76, F.

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 Q2, 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 'passesth 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 ['passest'] not only suits the tone of the passage better, but the two 's's and the 'sh' in 'passest [h]ow' 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] CLARENDO: The accent is on the first syllable, as in Cor. IV, viii, 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] TSCHISCHWITZ: 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.

92. persever] GIFFORD (Dyce's Remarks, &c., p. 204): So this word was
In obstinate concomitant is a cause
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 unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father; for let the world take note,

93. 94. is a course of] dares express
95. 96. a mind] or minde Q. Cap.
97. Rowe, Jen.
98. 'tis] Om. Pope +.
99. a mind] or minde Q. Cap.
100. steve. var. sigl. ktly.
101. absurd] absurd F. F. F. F.

anciently written and pronounced. See ABBOTT, § 392, for list of words in which the accent is nearer the beginning than with us. See also 'complete,' I, iv, 52; and 'secure,' I, v, 61; 'ploner,' I, v, 163; 'engineer;' III, iv, 206; 'obscure,' IV, v, 207.

93. concomitant] HEATH (p. 523): That is, self-condolence, nourishing our own grief. CALDECOTT holds it to be merely the expressions of grief.
95. incorrect] CALDECOTT: Contumacious towards.
96. what] For the relative use of 'what,' see ABBOTT, § 252.
97. any the most] FRANCKE: Compare 'any the rarest,' Cymb., I, iv, 65; and 'one the wisest,' Hen. VII: II, iv, 48. For the transposition of adjective phrases, see ABBOTT, § 419 a; and Macb. III, vi, 48. CLARENDON refers to ABBOTT, § 18.
99. to sense] CALDECOTT: That is, 'addressed to sense; in every hour's occurrence offering itself to our observation and feelings.'
104. who] For instances of 'who' personifying irrational antecedents, see ABBOTT, § 264.
105. till he] ABBOTT, §§ 184, 206: 'Till' is a preposition, and 'he' is used for him.
107. unprevailing] MALONE: Used of old for unavailing. 'He may often prevail himself of the same advantages in English.'—Dryden, Essay on Dram. Poetry. TSCHISSLWITZ: Here used in its medical sense, like the Latin, 'prevaleere,' e.g. prevalevete contra serpentium ictus, in Pliny. CLARENDON: See Rom. & Jull. III, iii, 60, where it is used in the sense referred to by Malone.
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-
dediate successor, and with that declaration he imparts as noble a love, &c. Read,
therefore, ‘with’ 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 wit
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire;
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

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

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

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply;
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,

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 Universities, 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, 1594, 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 multitude 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 under the earth's orbit, they were under certain circumstances hostile to human plans.

115. 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 prithee; 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 connected, 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, 126
And the king’s rouse the heavens shall bruist again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder.—Come away.

[Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet.

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
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] Q03, cannon QQF, 132. O God! O God! O God, QEQ, & God, God, Q, O God, God, Q, O God, God, Q.


Qq. Mob. Om. Q76.

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 F reads 'too-too,' with the hyphen.

129-159. Coleridge: This sedium vitæ 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 appetite of the ideal is unchecked, realities will seem cold and unmoving. 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 inkbhorn and the plough.

129. solid flesh] MOBERLY: 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 spontaneously, 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] STEEVES: 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 *Atuari.*

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, 77-83, 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 'cannon' must be one of natural religion.

132. slaughter] COXON: 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!
Fie on’t! O fie! ’tis an unwedded 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,

[Text continues with notes and analysis of the poem by various scholars and editors, discussing the meaning and interpretation of the lines.

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 Qq, does
not express the feeling of the speaker so well as the ‘Oh’ of the Ff.

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. Caldecott 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, Caphareus, Rectan.’ Gascoigne, in his Ultimam
march and glittering shafts of War.’ Clarendon: Sh. always accents the antepen-
ulti 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 [skyry] 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.—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month! or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,

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 Queene, 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 'four out' in the north of England. MOBERLY: Here it is used causatively: 'He would not allow it to be beteeming.'

147. or ere] MÄTZNER (iii, 446): A strengthening of the notion of time is given by ever (ére, 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, ii, 11, and line 183 of this scene. Also Mach. IV, iii, 173, or ABBOTT, § 131.

147. shoes] INGLEBY (N. & Q. 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 shows for 'shoes.' Compare line 82, where 'shows of grief' is defined by Hunter to be 'mourning apparel,' nay, by Hamlet himself, to be 'trappings the suits of woe.' What, then, are the shows 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 shows of grief?' Let the text be thus paraphrased, 'Before my mother's, "mourning-weeds" (2 Hen. VI) were worn out, she duffed 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. tears;—why] Steev. tears,
why Qq. tears. Why F. tears—
Why Rowe +.

150. O God] O Heaven F., Rowe +,
with my] with mine F., Rowe +,

152. but] Om. Pope.
153. Hercules.] Hercule, Qq.
month ?] F., (Moneth ? F.).
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
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 transi-
tively, 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;

158. cannot] cannot F.
Jen.
159. break my] Qq,F,F,F,F
break,
my F,"et cel.
Marcellus, and Bernardo.]
161. Horatio,—] Theob. Horatio,

162. Two lines. F.

163. Two lines. F.


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. Tschirschwitz: To say
that 'dexterity' means celerity, involves an intolerable pleonasm when connected with
'wicked speed.' Sh. had clearly in mind the Italian destressa, which contains the
idea of decei, 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] Tschirschwitz: 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 him-
self, that of poor servant, to good friend; or perhaps as Johnson explains it.
ACT I, SC. ii.

HAMLET

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?


Q4 Ff. Marcellus i—Rowe +, Jen.

166. lord,—] Rowe. lord. QqFf.

167. you. Good even, sir.] El. you.

(168. good even] Q, Qq. you (good even for) Qq Ff, you: good even ir. Ff (even, Ff).

(169. in faith] Om. Q76.

170. good my] my good Q76.

171. hear] heare Q3. have Yl, Rowe, Knt, Sing. White.

172. make] take F, F F F, make it truster] be a witnes Q76.

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, 266. 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.

165. 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 as morning. 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. & 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.
HAMLET

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 drink Qq.
here to drink Q'y.
178. see] Om. Qq.

177. I pray thee] I pre thee Q_q, Q;
prethee Q, Q, Q, Cam. I prethee F, I
priethee F, F, Rowe. I'prythee Pope, +
Jen. Sta. student] studion Q_q Q

179. follow'd] followed QqF, Cald.
White. followeth F, F, F, F, F.

180. funeral baked-meats] funereal
baked-meats Kily.
181. marriage tables] marriage
tables Kily.

182. met] Tschirschwitz: Note how averse Hamlet afterwards is to killing his
dearest foe, his uncle, lest he should send him to heaven.

183. dearest] The notes of Horne Tooke, Singer, Caldecott, Dyce, and
Craig on this word are given in full in Rom. & Jut. V, iii, 32. Tooke derives 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.

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two opposite meanings from the single Anglo-Saxon word *deorjan*, to hurt, thence deriving our word *dear*—not cheap (when the season *edere* the crops, causing a *dearth*); hence what is not cheap is precious, valued; whence comes the secondary meaning of *dear*—beloved. In this passage 'dearest' has reverted to its original meaning of *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 *dear*—high-priced, precious, beloved, is the Anglo-Saxon *deor*, *dære,* *dyre*, from the verb *deorjan* or *dyran*, to hold dear, to love. Craik thus explains the different senses which the word assumes: the notion properly involved in it of *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. 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 *dear*, with the different original forms pointed out by Craik. See 'dear soul,' III ii, 28.

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

185. where] For a list of monosyllables frequently pronounced as dissyllables, see Walker, Vors. 136, and Abbott, § 480.

185. mind's eye] Jennens: Thus, ἐξαρχίζεται τοις ἡμερίς τῆς ψυχῆς.—Epistle of St. Clement, cap. 19. Steevens: See R. of L. 1426. Also Chaucer, Man of Law's Tale [line 454]: 'But if it were with eyen of his mynde.' Malone: See Somn. 113, 1.

188. 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.
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? Q76, Sing. ii, 
El. White. Saw who? Q76, Sing. ii, 


192. Season] Defer Q76.

(—Han.)

193. attent] attentue Q,F,F,F,F, 
F,F,F,F, Rowe, Pope, Theob. Ha 

190. who] COLlier (ed. 2): Notwithstanding the (MS), it may be doubt whether Sh. did not write ‘who.’ CLARENDON: Sh. very generally uses who in the accusative. DYCE (Remarks, &c., p. 205): The right punctuation is doub't ‘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; I, ii, 28; III, ii, 199; and Mer. of Ven. IV, i, 197.


193. attent] CLARENDON: This only occurs in one other passage in Sh.: Fa- 
cles, III (Gower), 11. Spenser uses it as a substantivre: ‘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, is used, see ABBOTT (§§ 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, Marston’s Malecontent, 1604: ‘Tis now about the immodest waist of night’ i.e. midnight. Again, in The Puritan, 1607: ‘—are the day be spent to the girls? See Minsheu’s Dist. 1617: ‘Waist, middle, or girdle-steed.’ COLlier: ‘Vast’ used in the same sense in Tempest, I, ii, 327, where ‘vast of night’ means the vacans or void of night, and the phrase here means the silent vacancy of midnight.
ACT I, SC. ii.]

HAMLET

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

Dyce i. El. White, Huds.
cap-a-pe] Capapes Q4 Q8. Cap a Pe Fl. Cap ape Q76.

202. stately by them; thrice] stately by them; thrice Ff, Rowe.

By them thrice Ff, Rowe.
203. fear-surprised] Hyphen, Fl.
204. his] this Q4 Q8.
distill'd] Q4 distill'd Q4 Q8.
bestill'd Ff, bestill'd Ff, Knat. be still'd Ff, be still'd Q76. be-still'd Rowe. be-still'd Cald bechill'd Coll.i(MS).

take wast of Q4 in the sense of waist, or middle of a person, is to impute mere

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

201. Appeare] 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.' COLIER (Notes, &c, p.
433): Neither 'distill'd' nor bestill'd can be satisfactory; but it is apparent that
bestill'd of Ff was a misprint for bechill'd. Bernardo and Marcellus were almost
chlked 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 Qo, they melted, dissolved almost to jelly with,' &c. A pas-
age of Claudian (De Sexto Cons. Hon. v. 345), 'liquefactaque fulgere cupisi Can-
duit, 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
Barcay (ed. 4, p. 764), 'Melt thee, distill thee, turne to wax or snow.' COLIER
(ed. 2): Jelly becomes jelly only by being 'bechill'd:' and when it is argued that
'bechill'd' may mean melted, it is forgotten that Horatio does not say that his com-
rades 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.
ever 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 distil-
ment' 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. 'Solids 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 distil'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 'thrill' to express the effect of terror, Bailey suggests 'a plausible reading,' so he says, for the present passage: 'while they both thrill'd.' 'Or,' if the prefix be should be prefixed, we might read 'while they still'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: 'Bestill'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. Tschirschwitz: Here used like the Latin actus, and, like it, is passive, not active. Compare 'fertur magno mons improbus actu'—Virgil; so also the Italian atto.

207. dreadful] For adjectives which have both an active and a passive meaning, see Abbott, § 3. Thus 'sensible,' I, i, 57 (also passive in Macth. II, i, 36); 'passive' (passive), I, iv, 30. See also Walker (Crit. ii, 78).

209. time] Francke: This inversion gives formality and solemnity to the speaker's words.

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

216. *it* Q, Q₂, Q₃, F₁, F₄ White, Cla. Kty. *his* Q, Sta. *its* Q₂, F₂, Q’76 F₄, et cet.

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] CRANE (Note on *Jul. Crc.* 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*], with an apostrophe] in *Meas. for Meas.* 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 *F₁* 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 (*his*); the passage "that nature which commences it origin," in *Lear*, IV, ii, 32, is not in *F₁*; but *Q₃* has *ith* and *Q₄* *it*. There is also one passage in our English Bible, *Levit. xxv*, 5, in which the reading of the original edition is "of its own accord." The modern reprints give "its." [ROLFE adds: In the Geneva Bible, 1579, we have "it owne acorde," 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 his 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; *Hē*, feminine; *Hī*, neuter. *He* we still retain; for *Hē* we have substituted *She*, apparently a modification of *Sē*, the feminine of the demonstrative; *Hī* we have converted into *It* (though the aspirate is still often heard in the Scottish dialect). The genitive was *Hīre* for the feminine (whence our modern *Her*), and *Hī* both for the masculine and the neuter. It is to be understood, of course, that *its*, however convenient, is quite an irregular forma-
HAMLET

Act I, Scene ii

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. likr] Om. Q’76.
221. honour’d] honourable F₄ Fₛ.
Rowe. honorable F₄.
222. writ down in] them Q’76.
223. of] Om. Q’76.

Tension; the t of it (originally hit) is merely the sign of the neuter gender, which does not enter into the inflection, leaving the natural genitive of that gender (hi, hi-s) substantially identical with that of the masculine (he, he-s, hi-s).

To the foregoing Rolfe adds the following instances of it’s in F₄: Temp. I, ii, 95; I, ii, 393; 2 Hen. VI: III, ii, 393; Hen. VIII: I, i, 18. It, or yt, possessive is found in F, in fourteen passages. The following are not mentioned by Craik: Temp. II, i, 163; 2 Hen. IV: I, ii, 131; Hen. V: V, ii, 40; Rom. & Jul. I, iii, 52; Timon, V, i, 151; Ham. I, ii, 216; I, V, i, 209; Ant. & Cleo. II, vii, 49; I, II, viii, 53; Cym. III, iv, 160. Rolfe concludes: No argument in regard to the date of the plays can be based upon the occurrence of these various forms of the possessive its. We find all three in some of the earliest plays, two different forms in the very same play, and it’s in Hen. VIII, which, according to White, is the latest of the plays. The simple fact is, that Sh. wrote in the early part of that transitional period when its was beginning to displace hit and her as the possessive of it, and that just at that time the forms it and it’s were more common than its, though this last was occasionally used even before the end of the 16th century. See Wright’s Bible Word-Book, and Marsh, Lectures on Eng. Lang., First Series, p. 397. [See also Mätzner, i, 296, and Mommsen, Rom. & Jul., p. 22. Indeed, this whole note ought to have been given in the Variorum ed. of Rom. & Jul. I, iii, 52, but my only apology for this and similar omissions in that volume is the terror with which the endless pages in prospect inspired me in those early days; and I have not outgrown it yet. Ed.]

217. like as it would] As if. See II, i, 91, 95; III, iv, 135; Macb. I, iv, 11; or Abbott, § 107, or Mätzner, ii, 128, and iii, 494.

218. even] Just, exactly. See Abbott, § 38, or Schmidt, (s. v.) 4.

219. 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, Bβ; and for the old preterite ‘writ’ in the next line, see I, i, 368.
Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

Mar. We do, my lord.

Ber. Arm'd, say you?

Mar. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

Ber. 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 Qq,


Sta. Del. Glo. +. All. Qq. Both. Ff,

Rowe +.

227–230. My...not ] One line, Steev.

Cald. Bos. Knt i.

227. My lord. ] Om. Q76.

228. face ] face. QqQf

230, 231. What...more ] One line,


El. White, Ktly.


he } he, Sta.

232. Pale, ] Pale Dyce, Sta. Glo. +,

Mob.

226. Arm'd ] KNIGHT. This passage is sometimes read and acted as if it applied to the manner in which Hor. and Mar. were to hold their watch; and we have somewhere seen a criticism which notes line 228 as a memorable example of an abrupt transition. Without doubt it is asked with reference to the Ghost. Hamlet anticipates the re-appearance of the figure when he asks, line 225, and proceeds to those minute questions which carry forward the deep impressions of truth and reality with which everything connected with the supernatural appearance of the Ghost is invested.

229. beaver] Florio (A Worde of Worde, 1598) gives: Bawitra, the chin peec of a caske or head-peece. Bullokar (English Expositor, 1616) defines: Beawer In armour it signifieth that part of the helmet which may bee lifted vp, to take breath the more freely. Douce (i, 439) shows that it is frequently used to denote the whole helmet, as in 3 Hen. VI: I, 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. bavoire, 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 beavers 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, paleness being the 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?
Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.
Mar. } Longer, longer.
Ber. }
Hor. Not when I saw't.
Ham. His beard was grizzled? no?

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 'Pale,' on which his voice rests. He then adds, somewhat impatiently, 'or red?' A semicolon would mark the division better than a comma.

236. 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. 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. As YOU LIKE IT (Gent. Magz. 1760, vol. 1x, 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 between 'grizzled' and 'sable silvered.' He had been most exact in his estimate of the time the Ghost stayed, and he would be equally exact even as to the colour
ACT 1. SC. ii.] HAMLET

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 conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still,

White, Sta. Huds. It F, F*, I'll F
242. I'll...again] As one
line, Ff, Rowe+, White, Huds. Cald. Knt i. treble F, F
Qo. ten'ble
243. night] ngh Qo. Warb. tabled Nicholson (withdrawn).*
242. walk] wak F,
war'nt] Q, Steev. war'nt
Qt. war'nt you Ff, Rowe+, Bos.

and texture of the beard. Ed.] CORSON, however, strongly upholds F*, 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 caught 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. war'nt] For instances of words composed of two short syllables contracted in pronunciation into monosyllables see WALKER, Vers. 65; or ABBOTT, § 463.

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

247. ten'ble] 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 ten'ble.

247. ten'ble] 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 intelligence. 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 companions, 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 require 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 Qa
   what what seeuer Qe
   else shall hap] shall befell Pope +.

250. require] require F; F, F
   fare] fare Q; Q, Q;
   you] ye FF, Rowe +, Jen. Knt.

Dyce, White, Sta. Huds.

251. eleven] a leasen Q, Q, Q,

252. duty] duties Q, White, Huds.
   honour] hownor Qa.

253. loves] love FF, Rowe, Pope,

254. spirit in arms?] spirit in

255. [Exeunt Hamlet.] Glo. Ex
   eunt. Manet Hamlet. Q76.
   eunt Hor. Mar. and Ber. Cap. Exeunt
   (after line 254) QqFF.

256. soul] some Q, Q.
   rise, Though...them, to] Johns.
   rise Though...them to Q. rise, Though
   ...them to F, Mal. rise, Though...them
   from Q76. rise, (The)...them to Pope.

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 Q is of little or no importance, so variable is our old typography as to the final s in such words.

253. loves] STAUTON: The hurried repetition, 'your loves, your loves,' of Qa
well expresses the perturbation of Hamlet at the moment, and that feverish impa-
tience to be alone and commune with himself which he evinces whenever he is particularly moved. CORSON: Love is better than 'loves' of the Qa, 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. Qa 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,

[Scene III.] Scene v. Pope+
A room.... An apartment.... Pope.
...house.] ...Apartment. Cap.
Ophelia.] Ophelia his Sister. Qn.
1. embark'd] Cap. in@barkd Q.Q.Q.
im@barkd Qn. im@barkd F.F.* imbark'd
3. convoy is assistant.] Theob. con-

nnecting it with 'o'erwhelm,' makes equally good sense, and adapts the construction of the sentence better to its vocal expression.

Scene III.] Coleridge: This scene must be regarded as one of Shakespeare's lyric movements in the play, and the skill with which it is interwoven with the dramatic parts is peculiarly an excellence of our poet. You experience the sensation of a pause without the sense of a stop.

1. embark'd] Corson: As applied to things, imbark'd or in@barkd seems preferable to 'embark'd.'

2. as] Abbott, § 109: We almost always apply as, like because, to the past and the present; Sh. often uses it of the future, in the sense of 'according as.' In the present passage a modern reader would at first naturally suppose 'as' to mean since, or because, but the context shows it means 'according as.'

2. benefit] Walker (Crit. i, 94): It is to be observed that the words benefit and beneficent, in our old writers, almost uniformly involve the idea of a benefactor, which has since been dropped, except in cases where the context implies that idea.

4. conferring or receiving a benefit.

3. convoy] Clarendon: That is, conveyance. See All's Well, iv, 10.

5. trifling] Caldecott: That is, gay and thoughtless intimation.

6. fashion] Clarendon: That which is changeable and temporary. See Lyly's Euphues, ed. Arber, p. 81: 'Tush Philautus was liked for fashion sake, but never loved for fancy sake.'

6. toy] That is, caprice, as in Rom. & Jul. IV, i, 119: 'inconstant toy.' Sh. uses this word, as Staunton says (King John, i, 1, 232), with great latitude. See its use in 1, iv, 75. Clarendon: A pastime and fancy, not a deep affection. See Oth. i, iii, 269.

6. blood] Dyce (Gloss.): Disposition, inclination, temperament, impulse. [See line 116 of this scene, and III. ii, 64.]
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Lac. Think it no more;

For nature crescent does not grow alone
In thews and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now;
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will; but, you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own.

13. and] Om. Q.
15. soil nor] soyle nor F, F
16. fear] feare Q. feare F, F
17. weigh'd] wayd Q.Q, maid

all the three instances in which Sh. uses the word (the third is 2 Hen. IV: III, ii, 276).
It comes from the Saxon theaw or theow, whence also thing, and must not be con-
founded with the obsolete theus = manners, or qualities of mind, which is from the
Saxon theow. This latter theaw 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 Turberville'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 maide and of theawe of alle thissere theode' (of
men strongest of maine, 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.'

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. Morerly:
'Ανθρώπων τῆς σώματος συνεκφορά καὶ αἱ ψυχῆς.—Herodotus, iii, 134.
14. Growa] Hudson: The passage would seem to imply that Hamlet is not so
old as he is elsewhere represented to be.

15. cautel] Dyce (Gloss.) : Craft, deceit. 'Cautelle: A wile, cautel, sleight:
a craftie reach, or fetch, gulsful devise or endeavor; also, craft, subtiltie, trumperie,
deceit, cowneage.'--Colgrave. 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 Swinburne, '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. Qq.
19. unvalued inferior Q76.
20. Carve for Carve for QQ, Be
twixt Q76.
21. safety safety Q76, safety Q.
22. sanctity 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 sanctity, 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, i, 208, and Macb. IV, iii, 144. Walker (Crit. iii, 85, also Vers. 159) makes the same conjecture: 'Sanity must surely be the right reading; sanctity, at any rate, is absurd. Frequentius, ut sape fis, pro rariori; the pupil having familiarized sanctity to men's minds.' Both Dyce and Abbett, § 484, 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 Qq or F, in connection with the context? F, manifestly corrects two errors, but makes one—force—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 calumnious 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.

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. WEDGWOOD: Anglo-Saxon, karig (from karion, to care), careful. Dutch, kariig, sordidus, parcus, tenax.—Kilian, Dict. Teutonico-Lat. German, kargg, niggardly. MOBERLY: The meaning conveyed by the superlative is 'a maid who is far gone in chariness,' that is, 'one who is really chary.' [HUDSON in his forthcoming ed. will read Th' unchariest maid: on the ground that 'chariest' gives altogether too weak a sense to suit either the character of the speaker or of the occasion.] Ed.
39. canker] PATTERSON (Nat. Hist. of Insects, &c., p. 34): The canker (Losoenia rosana) chooses for its domicile 'the fresh lap of the crimson rose,' and lives among the blossoms, preventing the possibility of their further development.
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

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.'


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 Mätzner, 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. 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 'Whiles you tread.' The construction is changed by change of thought.

49. puff'd and reckless] Caldecott: Blovated and swollen, the effect of excess; and heedless and indifferent to consequences. 'Ignavus, ineffectu, recklesse.'—Ortus Vocab. 1514.

HAMLET

And reck not his own rede.

_Laer._

O, fear me not.

I stay too long; but here my father comes.

_Enter Polonius._

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

_Pol._ Yet here, Laertes! Aboard, aboard, for shame!

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!

And these few precepts in thy memory

[Laying his hand on Laertes's head.

Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,

51. _rede_ Pope. _reake_ QF, Cald.
      _reake_ F, F,r, Rowe. _reakest_ Seymour.
      _is_ thine Seymour.
      _rede_ Sing. ii. _reed_ Qy, Pope,
      F, F,r, Cald. _read_ F, F,r, Rowe, Johns.
      Cap. Steev. Var. Knt, Coll. i, Dyce,
      White, Huds.

52. _Scyne vi._ Pope+, Jen.
      Enter Polonius.] _Cap._ After
      _reed_ Qy. _After not_ F, Rowe+, Jen.
      [Kneeling to Polonius. _Cap._

53. _Aboard, aboard_] _Get aboard_ Pope, Han.

57. _stay'd_ Brack F, _stayed_ QQ, _flaied_ Qy.

58. _for._ Theob. _for, there_ Qy. _for there: Ff. for there._ Rowe.
      Pope.

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

51. _rede_ Collier: 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_, 1116: 'Ther was noon other remedy ne reed.'

51. _fear_ For other instances of its use as 'fear for,' see III, iv, 7; IV, v, 118; and SCHMIDT, _Sh. Lex_. ABBOTT, § 200: So also the preposition is omitted after 'deprive,' I, iv, 73.

52. _stay_ MOBERLY: 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 sop enough to get them by heart, and retain them for his own. CAPPELL (i, 124): 'This observation of Warburton's' is not ill-grounded; for the moment he's at the end of his lesson, 6 *
Not any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,

62. Their Q., Jen. Glo. +. 60

we are regall'd with a style very different, and flowers of speech is his way.' CALDEWORTH: 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 Q., the "precepts" are printed with inverted commas, as if they were taken from some known source; or, at any rate, as if Polonius had delivered them by an effort of memory alone.' DYE (Remarks, &c. p. 207): Not at all "remarkable." In the Q. (except Q.), 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, prosing 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? Prymne alludes to the practice of bringing living noblemen upon the stage, and names particularly the Lord Admiral, the Lord Treasurer, and Count Gondomer, as persons with whom the stage had made free. Rushton (Shakespeare's Euphuisim, p. 45): The advice of Euphues to Philautus 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] CLARENDE: Used with the accent either on the first or second syllable. As a substantive, with the latter accent, it is found in Rick. III. III, i, 81; as a verb, in Two Gent. II, vii, 4. [R. of L. 807.] CALDEWORTH: The verb has the accent on the first syllable in Sw. 122, 2.

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

61. vulgar] CLARENDE: Common. See Twelfth N. III, i, 135, where 'vulgar proof' = common experience; as 'vulgar tongue' = common language.

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 habet, 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, but not thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;

63. them to them unto Qq, El. unto
Seymour.
Var. Sing.
65. new-hatch'd] Pope. new hatcht
Qq. unhatch't Ff, Rowe.

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 DELIUS explains 'and their adoption tried' as a participial parenthesis: when thou hast put their adoption to the test. TSCHISCHWITZ also (followed by MOBERLY) pronounces this clause a participle, or nominative, absolute, and cites MÖRZNER, 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. Grappuling-hooks is a familiar term, but who ever heard of grappuling 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; grappling with hooks is the act of an enemy and not of a friend.

64. dull] JOHNSON: Do not make thy palm callous by giving every man by the hand. CALDECOTT: Compare Tro. & Cret. II, iii, 201, 'stale his palm.' WALKER (i, 306): Dulls occurs thirteen lines below; may not Sh. have written stale? CLARENDON: Compare Cym. I, vi, 106: 'hands Made hard with hourly falsehood.' [Compare also Ham. V, i, 67.]

65. comrade] BADHAM (Cam. Essays, 1856, p. 282): This is the trashy correction made by later Qq [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, 213, it is on the first. [See INGLEBY, note on line 74. Ed.]


70. costly] TSCHISCHWITZ: The construction is: Costly thy habit buy, as thy purse can. ABBOTT, § 276: The first as is sometimes omitted. See II, ii, 201, 'old as I am.'

71. fancy] MOBERLY: Not marked or singular in device, but with a quiet costliness, 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, De- lius, Clarke, Chambers, Dyce ii, Huds. Or of a most select and generous, chief in that Q, Q. Ar of a most select and gener- ous, chief in that Q. Are of a most select and generous, chief in that Q. Are of a most select and generous chief in that F, and (reading chief) Kn, 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 (M3), Coll. ii, El. Kty. Are most select and gener- ous; chief in that Sing. ii, Chas. Kem- ble. 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 F 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 Minasheu. 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 her- aldry 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, superi- ority. 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. 1): 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 f led to the misprinting of 'choice,' first, chiefe, and afterwards chieff. The (MS) substitutes 'choice,' and 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,

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 transcript 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 'cheifi,' 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. & Q. 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's speech. In line 65, courage of the Q. 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 Pierce 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. & Q. 11 Oct. 1856) upholds the FY, and explains sheaf as a measure by which, according to Skinner, cloth and fine linen were sold. Tschirschwitz thinks that the uniformity of the Q. 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-
HAMLET

And borrowing dull's 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!

Lae. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

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

Lae. 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.

Lae. Farewell. [Exit.]

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

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

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

Knightsley: A word even more appropriate than Steevens's 'choice' would have been taste. J. Beale (N. & O. 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 infuse 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. Monckley: Make these thoughts familiar to you. Hudson: Used, apparently, in the sense of ingrain; the idea being that of so steeping the counsel into his mind that it will not fade out.

83. invites] Theobald preferred invests, supposing the term was military, and that it meant 'besieges, presses upon you on every side.'

85. 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.

88. So] In conditional sentences, according to Matzner, 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.

89. the] For emphatic monosyllables in emphatic places and accented, see
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;

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

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; Mach. IV, iii, 239; Met. for Meas. IV, ii, 120. [Ham. V, ii, 370.]

101. green] NARES: 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, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul

108. 109. not...thus] In parenthesis Q, Qs, Theob.

108. not...phrase] In parenthesis Q, Pope.

Han. Cap.

you'll yeoute Qs

109. tender] render F, Ff
112. call it] call't Pope+, Dyce ii, Huds.

113. to his] to it in his Coll. (MS).

113, 114. my lord...heaven] Rowe.

114. almost...holy] all the Ff, Knt, Sing. almost all the Rowe.

115. springer] spriens Q, Qs, F, Ff

116. prodigal] prodigally Q76.

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 sain't 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 last by: 'ranging so far, becoming so wildly excursive, and running into so many senses of the word tender.' Badham (Cam. Essays, 1856, p. 283): Perhaps some readers will think with me that wrong is a corruption of worrying. The same description of persons will probably read in line 118 '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. 1, 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 springes or snares. The phrase here means 'arts to entrap simplicity.' Clarendon: Compare Gosson, Apologie for the School of Abuse, p. 72 (ed. Arber): 'When Comedie comes vpon the Stage, Cupide sets vpp a Springe for Woodcocks, which are entangled ere they descrie 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 instance, of the free use of adjectives as adverbs, see Abbott, 1.
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

117. Lends] Gius Ff, Rowe, Knt. 119. their] the Warb.
blazes] bavin blazes Nicholson 120. take] take's Q.Q.,
(N. & Qu. 19 Dec. 1866). From this time
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
so 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
býrnsp. In Chaucer, as far as I am acquainted with him, it is uniformly a dissyllable.'
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 BAHAM 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;
MACH. V, v, 49.

120. CORSON upholds the Ft. 'It may be that "For this" = For[th] this, the th
of Forth being absorbed. The verse of the Ft scans better than that of the Qf; in
the latter "fire" must be made dissyllabic, 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.
  your] thy Johns.
  maiden presence] maiden-pres-
122. entreatments] intratments Qq.
  Pope +, Jen. intratments Warb.
123. parley] parole Qq.
125. tether] tider Qq. Qq. teder Qq. Qq.
  may he] he may Theob. ii,
  Warb. Johns.
128. that dye] Q76, Han. that die
  Coll. Sing. El. Mob. the eye Ff, Rowe.
  Cald. Knt. that eye White.
129. mere] Om. Seymour.
  implorators] implorators Qq. Qq.
  implorers Pope +, Cap.
  bonds Qq Ff, Rowe, Pope i +, Jen. Steev.

be observed, too, that this speech is characterized by the double endings, as Bathurst styles them, and the Ff 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. CLARRENDON: 'Parley' in the next line seems to point to the sense of preliminary negotiations, 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 procurer. [See Cotgrave: Maquignoner, To play the Broker, also to play the bawd. Ed.]

128. dye] CALDECOTT, KNIGHT, WHITE, CORSON, follow the Ff. The first thus paraphrases: 'Of the cast, or character, that character of purity, which their garb. or assumed expression of passion, bespeaks.' KNIGHT addsuces, Temp. II, i, 55, 'eye of green,' to show that an eye was used to express a slight tint. DYE 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 manna was as the eye of bdellium.'—NUMBERS xi, 7; later translations substituting 'colour' for 'eye.' STAUNTON thinks 'eye' may possibly be right. MOBERLY: Not of the real stamp which their vesture 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. 375): 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,

132. *slander* Q,F, Rowe, Coll. i, Dyce i, Sta. Glo.
133. *moment's* Q,F, Rowe, Coll. ii, Dyce i, Sta. Glo.

...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.' COLLIERS (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 Caldecott's 'quite as silly as Malone's.'] STAUNTON: 'At one time we were strenuously 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 truth;' 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 noun-compounds where the first noun may be treated as a genitive used adjectively. See II, ii, 464; III, i, 156. CLARENDON: 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.

Hamlet.

The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

135. *come* and *to come* Seymour. *so*  
now, *come* Coll. ii (MS).  
ways] wayer QF F, *waier*  
135, 136. *Look...shall* One line, Cap.  
SCENE IV.] Cap. Om. F. SCENE III.  
Rowe. SCENE VII. Pope+., Jen.

The platform.] Steev. The  
Platform before the Palace. Rowe.  
and] Om. F.  
1. *shrewdly* shrewdly QF.  
F F F,  
it is very cold.] *is it very cold?* F  
F F, F, *Knt* i. *it is very cold?* F F, F, F

This is very common when the first substantive is the name of a place, as in  
'let the wharf,' I, v. 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 seem-  
ing 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 moral  
is ing 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 smoothers the impatience and uneasy feel-  
ings 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 sudden-  
ess 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 ratio inative meditativeness 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 cur-  
rent of the thoughts and words had set in, and the very forgetfulness, in the fervor
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.  
Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.
Mar. No, it is struck.
Hor. Indeed? I heard it not; it then draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within

Indeed! Fi, Jen. I Q76, Rowe+.  
5. it them] them it Fi, Rowe, Knt,  
Dyce, Glo. Mob.  
6. wont to] wanted Heussi.  
[A flourish....] Mal. after Cap.  

of his argumentation, of the purpose for which he was there, aided in preventing the appearance from bemuning 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 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 (Remarks, &c. p. 209): The reading of F, 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 F, 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 Qq are right is shown in the first scene.

2. eager] Wedgwood: French, aigre, eager, sharp, biting; Lat., acer, sharp, severe, vehement, ardent.

5. 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. wont] Abbott, § 5: This is a corruption from womed, from the verb 'wonye, Early English, wonian, Anglo-Saxon, 'to dwell.'

6. ordnance] Collier (ed. 2): Perhaps [in explanation of the Qq] the theatre had only two pieces belonging to it. Ben Jonson, in his '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 Q2.
8. wake] wake Q, Q2, rouse] 'rouse Cap.


Fe, Cald, Knt. wassel Row.+ , Cap.
Jen. Steev. Var. Coll. Sing. White, Kty,

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.'

8. rouse] Gifford (The Duke of Milan.—Massinger, vol. i, p. 237, ed. 1805) 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. Barnaby 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 signification 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 interprets 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 'up-spring' was the 'Hüpfaufl,' the last and consequently the wildest dance at the old German merry-makings. See Ayres's Dramen, ed. by Keller, iv, 2840 and 2846: 'Ey, jist geht erst der hupffauff an. Ey, Herr, jist kummt erst der hupffauff.' 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 Gut'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. 289) went
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

*Hor.*

*Ham.* Ay, marry, is't;

But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom

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12. *Is it* [It is] F₄. 15. *native* a native Han. ii.
13. *is't:* is't; of an antique date; 
15. *born* borne QqF, F₄.

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*act 1, sc. iv.*]  

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12. *Is it* [It is] F₄. 15. *native* a native Han. ii.
13. *is't:* is't; of an antique date; 
15. *born* borne QqF, F₄.

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*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 start—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 carouse by kettle-drums.’*

12. *triumph*] CALDECOTT: This may be the victory consequent upon the acceptance 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 Clymneysland.’—Barr. Stats. 276.* Hamlet, therefore, may speak of Denmark, or Elsinore as the manor, himself as *natives,* 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.
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. Pf; Rowe,  
Pope, Han.
17. *revel*] *rewele* Q₄, *reuelle* Q₄,  
*rewell* Q₄.
17, 18. *revel east and west Make*] Q₄.

tune, though it has passed into a sort of proverbial expression, is essentially non-  
sense: '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 (*Genl.  
Magazine*, 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 Q₄, Malone supposes that they were omitted out  
of deference to Anne of Denmark, the queen of James I. Knight, on the other  
hand, ingenuously conjectures that they were added in Q₄ 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 Pf. Elze be  
lieves that they were erased by Sh., but restored by the printer of Q₄ 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, i, 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 *Look to it*: *For Ie Scalbe 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.
mem.] men; Cap. complexion] complexion Q7, Q9.

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. & Jut. 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 men'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. SIBER
BERSCHLAG (Morgenblatt, No. 47, 1860, p. 1109) adduces 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 Q the dram of Base...of worth out, Theob. +, Cap. Steev. '73, '78, '85, Rann. the dram of base...oft corrupt Anon. conj. sp. Rann. the dram of base...often doute, Steev. '93, Var. '03, Var. '13, Verp. Huds. i, Clarke. the drame [i.e. dream] of ease, The noble substance of a doubt,—
doth all Becket. the dram of ale...over dough or oft a-dough Jackson. the dram of ill...often dout, Cald. Knt, Coll. El. the dram of lead...of a ducat Ingleby conj. or the dram of evil...of a courtier Keightley conj. (withdrawn).* the dram of eale...oft endoubt Nicholson conj. the dram of calce...so adopt Bullock conj. the dram of earth...so adapt Bullock conj. (withdrawn).* the dram of base...overcloud Lloyd conj. the dram of base...often drawn Taylor conj. MS. the dram of ease...oft work out Smyth conj. MS. the dram of ill...of a doubt Heussi.

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 accompanies 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 ventured 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
[36. 'The dram of eale,' &c.]
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 view'd the corruption all along; that some word was slit out of the copy, and 'out' changed to 'a doubt' by the printer's ingenuity: the vacancy cannot be fill'd 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 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 Q4 thus: of eale 4.3. (f. iii). 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.] Davie (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 reverence 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, whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.' [In the Var. 1785, S[tephen] W[eeston] 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 dout, To,' &c. To dout 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 duff, do off—Steevens]. 'Dout' having been written by the transcriber doubt, and the word 'worth' having been inadvertently 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 dout,' &c., for surely it is needless to say—that the noble substance of worth dout,' because the idea of worth is comprehended...
[36. 'The dram of eale,' &c.]

in the epithet noble. N. B. This improvement I owed, about four years ago, to the late Rev. Henry Homer. R ANN (1794?): 'Doth all, &c. oft corrupt; oft work out: eat out: By it’s own scandal.' MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS (Explanations 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. Treas. 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 alloy. COLLIER: It is easy to see how 'ill' might be misprinted eale, and 'of doubt' 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 off, just as doubt for doubt. 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[RAE] (N. & Qu. 21 Feb. 1853): Eafe and sale 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 bore 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 doubt to the noble,' i.e. imports 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 now 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 appli-
ion to the last line. For these reasons, but especially for the last, I adopt offer, as a verb in the infinitive ruled by ‘doth,’ in the sense of causing or compelling. Thus 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. Periplus 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 leave of one dram of baseness. Singer (ed. ii): Most probably Sh. wrote: Doth all the noble substance oft dund.’ 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 Qr, from its more direct opposition to noble. [Singer’s text follows Qr, except that base is substituted for ‘eale.’] Duyce (ed. i): ‘Often’ [in Steevens’s reading] is very questionable, because, in all probability, of in the Qq is a mistake for oft; and 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 Turn. Nichols (Notes on Sh. i, 25): Eal is the old-fashioned mode of spelling ail—ailment, pronounced ale. ‘Doth’ is not the auxiliary verb, but the verb itself, the 3d 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 Qr 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 Athenaum, 18 Aug. 1866. Ed.] Ingleby (op. Staunton): ‘Of a doubt’ is a mis-
[36. 'The dram of eale,' &c.] print for derogate. First, they have the same number of letters. Secondly, they have the o, 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: Inglesby's suggestion is ingenious, but may not the construction have been this: 'The dram of base (or ill, or hale, or lead, or whatsoever word the composer tortured into *eale,' or 'eaye') doth (i.e. doth, worketh) all the noble substance of a pound to its own wileness?' 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 of outo, To, &c. Compare Cor. II, i, 150; 'So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate.'—Par. Lost.; 'Wherain the graver had a strife With nature, to outdo the life.'—Jonson. In Chambers's Household Sh. is the following note: 'We have adopted 'oft subst' [for 'of a doubt'], suggested by Mr Swynfen Jervis, and thus supported:—Som. 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 spelt toye.' 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, but as the commentaries 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 *transubstantiates* 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 Mach. 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 Prettie Tale (l. 14809 of Tywhitt'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 whi I wot the substance is in me, If eny thing schal wel reported be.' That is, I am *so substanced,* 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 quotes 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 Tales, 1567: 'I never harde tell of more doules but twyn, that is to say, dout the candell and dout the fyre.' H. D. (Athenaeum, 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 (Athenaeum, 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 doub To' &c. J. D. M. (Athenaeum, 24 Nov. 1866): The sentence is simply incomplete. I would put a dash after 'scandal.' If completed, it might read 'To his own scandal taint.' KEIGHTLEY (Expositor, 238): I read evil for 'eale,' and for 'of a doubt' out of 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 leavens, for 'of a doubt' of a dough. PROWETT (N. & Qu. 25 Sept. 1869): Is it not possible that there was such a word as 'eale,' and that it was identical with the 'evil' 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 matters 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 'o'erleavens.' 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 Shakespearean Glossaries 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 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 ele being killed and addressed in wine, whosoever 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 (vitiatted 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 (Athenaeum, 20 Nov. 1869) suggests 'The dram of eil Doth all the
noble substance oft traduce 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): '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 Elebors ransacks every vein.' DANIEL (Notes, &c. 1870, p. 73): I propose—'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 meals (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 Gym. IV,ii, 27; Cor. III, i, 322. HUDSON (1870): '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 oft, and 'a doubt' into abate, which was often used by old writers in the sense of cast down or depress. Perhaps attain would give a slightly more congruous sense. MILES (Review of Hamlet, p. 16, 1870): '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 doubt' read oft endow, the final t of 'doubt' 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 doubt To,' &c. HUDSON's forthcoming edition will read, 'The dram of heaven 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 MÜLLER'S Wörterbuch, 'The most wise ben otherwhile of love adoted,' i. e. made fools, 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, 38. it] where it Q76. Sta. Clark, Huds ii. ...armed as before. 42. intents] events Fl, 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 Better-
ton'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, trem-
bling 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 expostulation 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 re-
spectfully, 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
'stand' to recover breath after this exclamation, and before he tremblingly 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 LICHTENBERG'S
account of Garrick, in the Appendix. Ed.]

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

42. intents] NICHOLS (i, 27) advocates 'events' of Fl, in the sense of 'coming
forth.' The Ghost had already appeared twice,—this was the third time of his
coming forth.' CORSO: The reading of the Fl is better than that of the Q7. 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 cer-
tain 'issues' or 'events'; 'thy' is the personal, and not the possessive, adjective pro-
noun; 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 Fi et ceter.
O] Oh, of Fi, Rowe, Cald.
47. canoniz’d] canomized Glo.+Mob.

43. questionable] Theobald: That is, to be conversed with, inviting question,
as in Macb. 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. BLAKEWAY: 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 prob-
ably 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 ‘cer-
emonies’ was pronounced as a trisyllable: ‘cer’monies’? 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, ceremonial? See Macb. III, iv, 36.
Ed.] See Cotgrave: ‘Cerat: A Plaister made of Waxe, Gummes, &c., and cer-
taine oyles; wee also, call it, a Cerot or Searcloth.’
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

Qq, Cap. Jen. El. inurn'd Anon.*
54. we] us Theob. Pope ii +, Jer.

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.

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


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. viii: '... postquam... rex collim sibi... extruxisset, cui post obitum regio diadematem exornatum, armis indutum, inferendum esset cadaver.'

53. Revisits] Walker (Crit. ii, 128): Quare, in cases where it 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 own 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 horrified 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 researches 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 impartment 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?

common expression, natural fools. **Clarendon**: Playthings of nature, completely under her influence. See _Meas. for Meas._ III, i, 11.


57. _wherefore_ See _Walker, Vers._ 111, for instances where the accent in this word is shifted at pleasure from one syllable to another; see _Rom. & Jul._ II, ii, 62. 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 'waues,' they surely are to be followed. **Clarendon**: Either word means 'beckon,' and both are used by Sh. So we have a double form of 'graf' 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.
[36. 'The dram of eale,' &c.]
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 view'd the corruption all along; that some word was slipt out of the copy, and 'out' changed to 'a doubt' by the printer's ingeniousness: the vacancy cannot be fill'd better than by the word in possession; and the line may be cur'd of its 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 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, whosoever 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 dout, To,' &c. To dout 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 duff, do off—Steevens]. 'Dout' having been written by the transcriber doubt, and the word 'worth' having been inadvertently 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 dout,' &c., for surely it is needless to say— 'the noble substance of worth dout,' 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 SCHRIBERUS (Explanations 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, appeared 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. CALDE-COTT 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 bile Doth all the noble substance oft 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 bile (i.e. evil) as nearer to the reading of the first edition. STEARNS (SH. Treas. 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 bile we have now only the word alloy. COLLIER: It is easy to see how 'ill' might be misprinted eale, and 'often doubt' 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 bile Doth all the noble substance oft and out To,' &c. In the old edd. 'off' is constantly used for of, just as doubt for out. 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 oft [i.e. puts off] and doth out [i.e. puts out] all the noble substance,' &c. A. E. B[ARR] (N. & Q. 21 Feb. 1852): Easte 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 grain 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 'doubt' to a mere expletive. Let this restriction be removed, by conferring upon 'doubt the value of an effective verb, and the difficulty disappears: thus, 'the base 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 now 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-
[36. 'The dram of eale,' &c.]

tion to the last line. For these reasons, but especially for the last, I adopt offer, as a verb in the infinitive ruled by 'doth,' in the sense of causing or compelling. Thus 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. PERIÆGUS 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 d'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 adoubt.' Using the word adoubt 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 Q₂ from its more direct opposition to noble. [Singer's text follows Q₂Q₃, except that base is substituted for eale.]

DVCR (ed. i.): 'Often' [in Steeven's reading] is very questionable, because, in all probability, 'of' in the Q₂Q₃ is a mistake for 'oft'; and secondly, as LETTSOM observes to me, 'the words 'To his own scandal'' are fatal to the reading 'dout,' 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. NICHOLLS [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 3d 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 Q₂Q₃ 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. [Nicholls repeated this note substantially in The Athenæum, 15 Aug. 1866. Ed.] INGLEBY (op. Staunton): 'Of a doubt' is a mis-
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,

3. sulphurous QaQs, sulphurous F5, sulphurous Fb.

5. Pity...unfold.] Prose, QaQs.

5 thy] my Qa.


hear.] here, Qs.

7. when] what Q76.

8. What?] Revenge! what? how?


11. to fast in] too fast in Warb. to lasting Heath, Sing. ii, Coll. ii (MS). to fasting Jackson. fast in Inkleby (Once a Week, 30 Aug. ’64).

fires] fire Cald.

6, 7. Speak... hear] Douce: These words are turned into ridicule in The Woman Hater, Beau. and Fl. vol. i, p. 37, ed. Dyce.

6. bound] Delius: Hamlet uses the word in the sense of ready addressed [past part. of Old Norse Gunninn,—see Wedgwood], the Ghost uses it as the past participle of the verb to bind.

11. to fast in] Theorald (Sh. Rest. p. 45) conjectured that we should read roost, but afterwards in his correspondence with his ‘most affectionate friend,’ Worburton (see Nichols, Lit. Hist. vol. ii, p. 559), he said, ‘sed facti primitis,’ and suggested instead, confined fast: presumably he withdrew them both, since he does not allude to them in his ed., where he says: The expression is purely metaphorical. for fasting could be no great punishment for a Spirit. According to the Roman Catholic religion, fasting purifies the soul here, as the fire does in the Purgatory here alluded to; the soul must be purged either by fasting here or by burning hereafter. Heath and Johnson both conjectured to fasting, which the former considered justified by the next line, the meaning being: fires which were to last till the purgation was completed; and which the latter interpreted as unremitting and unconsumed. Collier’s (MS) has the same. Smith [cited by Steevens]: Chaucer has a similar passage with regard to the punishments of hell, Persones Tale, p. 291, ed. Tyrwhitt, 410: ‘And moreover the misere of helle shall be in defaute of mete and drink.’ Steevens: Nash, in Pierce Penniless his Supplication to the Devil, 1595, has the same idea: ‘Whether it be a place of horror, stench and darkness, where men see meat, but can get none, or are ever thirsty,’ &c. So likewise at the conclusion of an ancient pamphlet called The Wyll of the Deysil, bl. i. no date: ‘Thou shalt lyse in frost and fire With sicknesse and hunger,’ &c. But for the foregoing examples, I should have supposed we ought to read, ‘to waste in fires.’ Mason: As spirits were supposed to feel the same desires and appetites that they had on earth,
Till the soul 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 Fl, Rowe, Pope, Qq, Jen. Tsch.
19. an end] on end Pope +, Jen. Mal.
Singe. 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. Tschirschwitz: 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 't is a nedeful thing to suffer panis 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 1, 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, around 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

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 TSCHECHWITZ substitutes the two corresponding lines of Q5.

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 ardenity 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 swoop, not only from the fitness of the word, but from its use in Macb. 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 Macb III, vi, 19.
HAMLET

That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this? Now, Hamlet, hear:
'Tis given out, that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abused; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life

33. roots] roots Qq. roots Ff, Rowe,
i, Sta. Del. Clarke.

34. Lethe] Lethe's Q76, Rowe+.

35. 'Tis] Q76. 'Tis Qq.
It's Ff,
Rowe.


Coll. Sing. Dyce i, White, Sta. Kty,
Del. Huds.

35. orchard] garden Q76.

36. to] Om. Pope.

38. know, thou] knowe thou QqF,Fs.
F5, know thou, Q76.

39. life] heart Q76.

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 (περί πίθων, 5) thus introduces this plant in connection
with the Lethean draft: περαιοδέντας δὲ τὴν λιώην κὰ τὸ εἶλο, λεμών ὑποδέχεται
μέγας, τῷ ἀποτέλεω κατάφορος, καὶ ποτὸν μνήμης πολζον.

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 compar-
ison'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 Qq
are confirmed by the passage from Ant. & Cleo. If in the one case the flag roots 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 nar-
rative, coming nearly to the meaning of the French process verbal. By a procla-
mination, dated 18 Aug. 1553, it was forbidden, without licence, 'to prynye any bookes,
matter, ballet, ryme, interlude, processe, or treatise.'—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!—worn 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,

40, 41. O my...uncle f] Walker (Vers.
290), Sing. ii, Dyce,White, Glo. +, Mob.
One line, Qq,Ff, et cet.
41. My] mine Ff, Rowe, Knt, Sing.
i, Dyce i,White, Sta. Kty, Del.
uncle f] Qq,Ff, Rowe +, Cap.
Jen. Vncle : Q, Vncle. Q, uncle f
Qo, * et cet.
43. witchcraft] witchcraft Q,Ff,
wit] Pope. wits Qq,Ff, Rowe,
Jen. Cald.
43. gifts,—] gifts, Qq,Ff, gifts Ff.

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. lxxix, vol. ii.
42. adulterate] CLARENDON: Like 'emulate,' I, i, 83, for emulous. See LEWIS, Cow. 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 garbage.
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 Q3. 
57. bed, And] bed, Then sink to misery, and Seymour.
58. secy] secret John.
60. custom] Instances are given in the Var. 'to show that an 'after-dinner sleep' (Meas. for Meas. III, i, 33) was in general customary.

ACT I, SC. V.]

HAMLET

55. lust.] but Q3.
56, 57. Will...garbage.] One line, Fl, Rowe.
56. sort Q3. Tsch. seat F,F,F.
57. bed, And] bed, Then sink to misery, and Seymour.
58. secy] secret John.
60. custom] Instances are given in the Var. 'to show that an 'after-dinner sleep' (Meas. for Meas. III, i, 33) was in general customary.

58. morning air] morning-air Kuy.
59. within my orchard] in my Garden Q76.

61. secure] secret John.
62. hebenon] hebona Qq. heben Tsch.

Knt.

56. sate] TSCHISCHWITZ: 'The reading of Q3 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 garbage' on physiological grounds.' 

60. custom] Instances are given in the Var. 'to show that an 'after-dinner sleep' (Meas. for Meas. III, i, 33) was in general customary.

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. xxv, 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

64. leperous] leprous Q2, Q4, Q6, leperous F4, leprous F4, leprous Q8, F4, leprous F4, leprous Q4, F4, leprous Q4, F4.
65. effect] Holds Q76.
66. courses] Hudson: Sh. here implies as much as was then known touching the circulation of the blood.
68. posset] posset Q4.
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,
Unhouse'ld, disappointed, unaniled;

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69. eager Aigre Fr. aigre Knt. Q Q, Vnhusled Q Q, Unhusled FF, Rowe, Pope.
70. bark'd bark't Q Q, bark't Q Q, F F, F F, F F, Rowe, Knt i.
71. lazar-like Laserlike Qq.
72. of queen and Queene FF (Queen F F, F F, Rowe, Knt, Del.
73. dispatch'd dispatch'd Coll. (MS).
74. blossoms blossom White; Dyce, and Ktly conj.
75. sim] sims Ktly conj.
76. Unhouse'ld] Theob. Vnhusled

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69. eager CLARENDON: Cotgrave gives: 'Aigre: Eagre, sharpe, tart, biting, sower.' EARL OF ROCHESTER (1761, cited by C. E. BROWN, Athenæum, 3 April, 1875): The word eagre 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 silliubs, 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 eagre, dropping into milk.'

70. instant HUDSON: Used in the Latin sense of instans, urgent, importunate, itching. CLARENDON: Instantaneous, as in II, ii, 493.

71. dispatch'd WARBURTON: In the sense of bereft. DYCE (Few Notes, &c., p. 139): Depl'st of Coll. (MS) conveys merely the idea of deprivation, while 'dispatch'd' expresses the swiftness 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.

72. Unhouse'ld] POPE: That is, without the sacrament being taken. THEOBALD: From the old Saxon word for the sacrament: husel. Spenser calls the sacramental fire the houling fire.

73. disappointed THEOBALD: Read unappointed, i. e. no reconciliation to Heaven, no appointment of penance by the Church. As in Meas. for Meas. 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. Anyral) [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 unanointed, 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!

78. reckoning] reckning Qq.
79. With all] Withall Q.Q.
80. Oh...oh] Fl. O...8 Q. Q.g

It must be allowed that no instance can be given of the word unmasoiled, but neither does any other instance occur to me of ‘unhouseled’ except here. Hunter (ii, 224): Perhaps unmasoiled may have been the word, which is equivalent to unabsolved.

77. unmaisle] Pope: No knell rung. Theobald: According to Skinner, Aneal’d is unctus, so that ‘unmaisle’d’ must signify unanointed, not having the extreme unction. Jennens: It can hardly be doubted that Sh. wrote here unmaisle’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 eneined, and had all that a christian man ought to have.’—Morte d’Arthur, vol. iii, p. 350 (ed. T. Wright). Nares: ‘The extreme unction or anlyunge, and confirmacion, he sayd, 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: ἄνειλος, ἀπέκτεινα, ἄνωθεν νεπος, and adds, ἄνειλος, disappoointed or unprovided, unportioned, unprepared with sacrifices for the infernal gods; ἄνωθεν, unhouseled, without the sacrament or holy rites; ἀπέκτεινα, unmaisle, without the holy oile or the honours of burial.

So. 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. Keightley 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!”’

So. Oh] Corsen: A distinction should be made between the emotional interjection, ‘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 consistency requires that the distinction should be made, as it is one that is observed in modern orthography. It is a distinction, too, not merely factitious, as might be supposed, 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] howsoever Qq.
86. aught] aught QqFf, Rowe, Pope,
87. pursuest] pursues Qq.
85. Taint] Taint QqQqQqQq,
89. matin] matine QqFf. morning
88. contrive] design Q76.

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
pronounced like such a dissyllable as alight, 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,
43. Dyce (Gloss.): The former explanation is, I apprehend, the true one. Compare
Nash: '—— the ostrich, the most burning-sighted bird of all others, insomuch
as the female of them hatcheth not hir eys by covering them, but by the effectual
rays of hir eies,' &c.— The Unfortunate Traveller, &c., 1594, sig. H 4. See
Abbott, § 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.
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,
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,

105. pernicious] pernicious Q, pernicious and perfidious Coll. ii (MS).

CLARENDON. BAILEY (ii, 9): Postures or some other word ought to be substituted for 'pressures.' We cannot consistently speak of impressions on the mind being copied in the mind.

105. pernicious] COLLIER (ed. 2): The (MS) adds and perfidious. The two words, 'perrnicious' and perfidious, looking like each other, perhaps the old printer, having composed the first, fancied he had composed both, and thus omitted a very striking and appropriate epithet.

107. tables] FARMER: 'See,—and in the midst of the sermon pulls out his tables in haste, as if he feared to loose that note.'—Hall, in his character of The Hypocrite. STEEVES: So, in the Induction to The Malcontent, 1604: 'I have most of the jests of it [a play] here in my table-book.' Again, in Antonio's Revenge, Bulardo draws out his writing-tables, and writes—'Restort and obtuse, good words, very good words.' BOSWELL: See 2 Hen. IV: IV, i, 201. DOUCE: These tables were sometimes made of slate, in the form of a small portable book, with leaves and clasps. . . . In the Middle Ages, the leaves of these table-books were made of ivory.

HUNTER (ii, 223): This expression is the first in which we have anything like the unsettling of the intellect, and what follows, to the end of the scene, can scarcely be reconciled to an opinion of the perfect sanity of Hamlet, except on the supposition that even now he began to put on the appearance of madness, which is not likely. At the same time, it is to be observed that the light and sportive sallies which follow are not absolutely out of nature, even if we suppose him sane, very powerful events not producing their natural effect at once. Some hours commonly intervene before the mind is awakened, as it were, to a sense of the change which has taken place, and during the interval men do act, not unfrequently, strangely and fantastical. When they begin to consider, then they begin to act in a manner correspondent to their situation and character. BRAKE (N. & Qu. 13 Mar. 1852) denies, what Coleridge asserts (see line 92), that Ham. noted down in his tables 'that one may smile, and smile, and be a villain.' 'This jotting down by Ham., upon a real, substantial table, of one of those "generalized truths," which he had just excluded from the table of his memory, would be too great a literalizing of the metaphor.' It is not this most trite reflection: 'That one may smile,' &c. that Ham. wishes to set down. No, it is the all-absorbing commandment contained in the last line of the Ghost's speech. There is one continued apostrophe from line 105 to 'So, uncle, there you are,' line 110, broken only parenthetically by line 107 while Ham. is getting forth

My wildness and disorder,  
And then, a man of war, wherein he was most resolute  
With all the warlike, martial, learned learning, that befell him in Spain.
HAMLET

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! I remember me.'
I have sworn't.

Hor. } [within] My lord, my lord!
Mar. }

Mar. [within]

Hor. [within]

Ham. So be it!

Lord Hamlet!

Heaven secure him!

and preparing the tables. Line 108 is an admiring comment upon line 106, and 'So, uncle, there you are,' is equivalent to the common exclamation, even at the present day, expressive of misdeeds, or intentions, unexpectedly brought to light. It is by no means uncommon for a sentence expressive of wonder or incredulity to begin with That, as in line 108; we have, in Gym. I, i, 63, 'That a king's children should be so convey'd!' The best possible stage-direction is given by Sh. himself when he makes Ham. exclaim 'Now to my word,' or, now to my memorandum, alluding to the purpose for which he had to get his tables forth. Wherefore punctuate thus: after 'set it down,' a full stop; after 'and be a villain,' a note of admiration; the stage-direction [Writing] to be removed two lines lower down. To this emendation of Brae's, Ingleby added the stage-direction 'Having kissed the tables,' after 'sworn't,' line 112. White thinks that waxen tables were used as late as the Elizabethan period; see Janua Linguarum, 1650: '—now-a-dais we write... with a writing pin in table-books, that it may be cancelled and blotted out by turning the pin the wrong end downward.' Elze: Hamlet is hereby represented as a thinker and a scholar in opposition to the man of action.

110. smile] Morely: 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. 4, p. 31): Ward 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
ACT 1, SC. V.]

HAMLET

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?

115. Hor. [within.] Cald. Hor. Ff, H. bird'] and Qq. boy Pope.
Rowe+. Mar.] Qq, Cam. Hor. [within. Mar. [within.]
Enter... Cap. After sworn't
[without] Sta. * 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 neces-
sary 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. Coleridge: 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 exhaus-
tion and inanity, or seek relief by change. It is thus well known that persons con-
versant 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 com-
mon 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 ridicu-
ulous be excited. The close alliance of these opposites,—they are not contraries,—
apears 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 over-
whelming 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.

lourd 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.
Hor. What news, my lord?
Ham. O, wonderful!
Hor. Good my lord, tell it.
Ham. No; you will reveal it.
Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.
Mar. Nor I, my lord.
Ham. How say you, then; would heart of man once think it?
But you'll be secret?
Hor. Ay, by heaven, my lord.
Mar. 
Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he's an arrant knave.
Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.
Ham. Why, right; you are i' the right;

117. Hor. What news, my lord?] Om. Q. Qs,
118. Ham.] Hora. Qs. Qs,
118, 119. O...Ne?] One line, Steev.
Glo. Mob.
119. you will'] you'll F, you'll F,F,
121, 122. How...secret] Prose, Mob.
121. if?] it, Qq.
122. secret?] secret. Qq, Coll. El.
Kty.
QsQ,Ff.
123. There's...Denmark] Two lines,
Qn. ne'er] F, neere F, ne're F,
125, 126. There...this] Prose, Fl.
126. you are] you're Dyce ii.
i' the}] Cap. i' th' Fl, Pope+, White. in the Qn, Rowe, Jen. Steev.

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 overcome 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 ARBOTT, § 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,

127. circumstance] Dyce (Gloss.): Detail. Clarke: Circumlocation. See III, i, 1; Mer. of Ven. I, i, 154.
130. hath] ha's Ff, has F F F F F.  
131. mine] mine Ff, Rowe, Knt. Coll.  
132. I will] I will Qq, Pope +, Jen. El. Look you, I will Cap.  
Steev. Var.  
133. whirling] Theo. whirling Qq, Warb. hurting Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.  
Cald. Knt, Sing. windy Q'76. hurthing

129. desire] defers Ff, Rowe+, Jen.  
135. Yes, faith,] Yes, Pope+. 'Faith, Cap.
136. Horatio] my Lord Ff, Rowe+,  
Cald. Knt.

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. Tschicschwitz: If Sh. had wished to be historically correct, he would have made a Dane swear by St. Ansgrarius. But since the subject concerned an unexpiated 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.] Moeroby: 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 retort to the 'my lord' in Horatio's speech, and has an effect which is lost in the Qq text.
And much offence too. Touching this vision here, it is an honest ghost, that let me tell you; for your desire to know what is between us, O’ermaster’t as you may. And now, good friends, as you are friends, scholars, and soldiers, give me one poor request.

_Hor._ What is’t, my lord? we will.
_Ham._ Never make known what you have seen to-night.
_Hor._ My lord, we will not.
_Mar._ Nay, but swear’t.
_Hor._ In faith,

My lord, not I.
_Mar._ Nor I, my lord, in faith.
_Ham._ Upon my sword.
_Mar._ We have sworn, my lord, already.

138. 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.
139. _too_] CAPELL (i, 129): The most emphatical word in this sentence is ‘too.’ 
142. _we will_] One line, Steev. Cald. Knt, Sing.
143. _we will_] Om. Pope +. Mar. We will Coll. (MS).
144. Hor. Mar.] Booth. Q3, Q5. Both. Q5, Q
146. We have] We’ve Pope, Han. Dyce ii, Huds.
HAMLET

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [Beneath] Swear.

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


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 (Glos.): 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 subterraneous 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 conscious reverence in his treatment of it,—and the foul earty 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 cellaring;
Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen.

Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [Beneath] Swear.

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

150, 151. Ah, ha,...cellarage.] Prose, Fl, Rowe.


151. on : you hear] one you hear...cellarage] Sellerige Qq, sellereidge Fl, selleridge F, Celleridge F, Rowe, Pope, Theob. Han.

152. the oath] my oath F, Fl, Rowe.

153. seen.] F, F, Walker, Corson. scene, F, F, scene Q, Q, scene, Q, Q, scene, Rowe et cet.


156. Hic] Hic Q.

et] est Rowe ii.

ubique?] ubique, Qq, sur] for Fl, 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 Moralties, 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. Selberschlag (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.


_Ham._ Well said, old mole! canst work i’ 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.

__157-160. Come...sword] As in Ff.__

_End lines, hands...speak...sword. Cam._

_Edd. conj._

__158. sword...heard] Fd, Walker, Corson. sword...heard: Ff,Ff,Ff,Ff._

__160. sword...heard] Ff,Ff,Ff,Ff._

__159. sword...heard] As in Qf._

__161. Swear.] Swear by his sword._


_Steev. Cald. Var. Sta._

__162. canst] canst thou Qf76._

_earth] ground Ff, Rowe+. Cald._

_Knt, Sing. White, Huds._

__163. pioneer] Fd, Dyce, El. White, Sta._

_Del. Glo. +. Pioneer, Qf,Qf,Ff,Ff,Ff._

_Pioneer Qf, Pioneer, Ff,Ff,Ff,Ff, Rowe. pioneer Ff,Ff,Ff,Ff._

_Pope et cet._

_good friends] Om. Seymour._

_friends] friend Ff,Ff,Ff,Ff, Rowe._

__165. give] bid Ff,Ff,Ff,Ff, Rowe._

**Note:**

The passage from Act 1, Scene 5 of _Hamlet_ is a remnant of word for word, part 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 Ff; 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 these 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 unwarlike 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. iii, 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 compliently. Clarendon: Receive it without doubt or question._
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,'

166. your] our Ff, Rowe, Han. Cald.
Knt, White, Dyce ii.

167, 168. Than...come ; ] Han. One
line, QqFf, Rowe + , Jen.Coll. El.White.

168, 169. come; Her] Om. Seymour.


170. swear here Ktly, reading But...mercy.
as one line.

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

170-178. 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.
(Sb. Revis. p. 59).

173. times] time Ff, Rowe + , Cap.

174-178. With...out] In parenthesis,
Cap.

174. this head-shake] Theob this
head shake Qq, Pope. thus, head shake
Ff, Rowe. head thus flak't Q'76, Jen.

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

176, 177. As...might] Prose, Cap.

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

176, 177. an if...an if] Han. and
if...and if QqFf, Rowe + , Jen. and if...
or if Q'76. an...those; An if Seymour.

167. your] WALKER (Crit. ii, 7; iii, 264) prefers our. 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; Anti. & 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.]

172. antic] CLARENDON: Disguised, as in Rom. & Jul. 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. encumber'd] MOBERLY: Folded thus in s gn of wisdom.

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 words), head shake.'

175. of] For instances of 'of' following verbal nouns, see ABBOTT, § 178.
Or 'If we list to speak,' or 'There be, and 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.

Ghost. [Beneath] 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 friend ing 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. they) there F, Rowe+. Jen.
Cald. Knt.
178. giving] givings Warb.
out, to note Mal. conj. (Var.
'85). Steev. out, to note) [See line
170] Qq. out to note, F, Rowe, Pope
i. out to note Mal.

to note) denote Theob. Pope ii

MS.*
179-181. this...Swear.] Knt. this...
doe: So...you: Swear. Ft. this doe
swear. So...you. Qq. Mal. this you
must swear. So...you Q.76. this do ye
swear. So...you! Swear. Pope+, Cald.

This do you swear, So...you! Cap. Jen.
Steev. This do not to, swear; So...you'
Bos.

182. [They kiss the hilt of Hamlet's
sword. White, Huds.

183. Rest, rest.] Rest, Seymour.
[They swear.] Glo.+, Mob.

Warb. Johns.

185. friend ing] friend ship Q.76.

186. God...lack.] Shall never fail
Q.76.
Let us go in] Let's go Anon.*


188. pray.] Rowe. pray, QqFr.

177. There be] DYCE: Hamlet means, 'There be persons, who, if they were at
liberty to speak.'
178. 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
CLARENDON: The 'to' is superfluous in the construction, which follows 'never shall.' Compare
Cor., v, 33; and Merry Wives, IV, iv, 57.

180. most] See Mar. V, iv, 12, and ABBOTT, § 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 him-
self in the third person; which is characteristic of the philosophic man,—reflective,
thoughtful, given to moralize and speak in the abstract.

HAMLET

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

[Exeunt.

ACT II

SCENE I. A room in Polonius's house.

Enter Polonius and Reynaldo.

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

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make 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. see F F.


A room... An Apartment... Rowe.

Enter...Reynaldo.] Cap. Enter old Polonius, with his man or two. Qq.

Enter...Reynoldo. Ff+.

1. his Ff, Rowe, Knt.

these] those two Q,Qs F,Fs F F.

1, 3, 15. Reynaldo] Reynaldo Ff, Rowe +, Cald.

3. marvellous] merwiles Q,Qs mar-
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.

8. keep] Dyce (Gloss.): To live, to dwell.
11. more nearer] For instances of double comparatives, see Abbott, § 11.
Clarendon: 'Neere' of F₃ shows that the double comparative was growing obsolete in 1632. Keightly believes all difficulty to be removed by following Jennens' reading. Moreby: By these natural and circuitous inquiries you will get nearer the point than you possibly could by a direct question. [Pol. repeats this same idea in lines 65, 66. For other instances of double comparatives, see III, ii, 291; III, iv, 157; V, ii, 121. Ed.]
12. it] See Abbott, § 226, for instances of 'it' used indefinitely, as the object of a verb, without referring to anything previously mentioned, and seeming to indicate a pre-existing object in the mind of the person spoken of, 'or in the mind of the speaker, as in this instance,' Clarendon adds.
22. slips] Clarendon: Compare Oth. IV, i, 9. Perhaps Sh. had the other sense of the word in his mind, as in 2 Hen. IV: III, ii, 214: 'graft with crab-tree slip.'
24. To youth] Delius: This qualifies 'companions.'
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?
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

37. Cap. One line, QqFf, Rowe+. Jen.
Huds.
36. *lord* good lord Cap.
38. *warrant* witt Qq, Pope⁺, Jen. El.
39. *sullies* sullie QQ, Pope. ful-
leyes F,F⁸.
40. *the* i'th* Ff, Rowe++, Jen. with
Qq.
41. 42. *Mark...sound.* Mal. One
line, QqFF, Rowe++, Cap. Jen. Sta.
Mark you added to line 40 by Kty.
41. *you* you Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.
Jen.
42. *converse.* converse; Ff, Rowe, Pope.

him] he Q'T6, Pope ii, Theob.

42. *you would* you'd Johns.
43. *seen in* scene. In F,F⁸, seem
In F,F⁸, prenominate prenominat Qq,
Qq.
44. *breathe* Rowe ii. breath QqFf,
Rowe i, Theob. i, Cap. speak Pope, Han.
45. *he closes* Will strait close Seym.
consequence Qq.
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. Knt.

addition] addition QQ.

36. *Ay*] For instances of monosyllabic exclamations taking the place of a whole
foot, see Abbott, § 482, and IV, vii, 60; 'O,' IV, iv, 65; III, i, 49.
38. *fetch of warrant* DYC; (Gloss.): A warranted, sanctioned, or approved
artifice or device. CLARENDON: The fetch of witt of the Qq is "a cunning con-
trivance," and makes as good sense as the reading of the Ff, with which compare
'passages of proof,' IV, vii, 113. In Lear, II, iv, 90, 'fetches' mean pretexts,
excuses.

40. *As...working* CALDECOTT: As having in his commerce with the world
unavoidably contracted some small blemishes.

42. *converse* CLARENDON: Conversation. See Oth. III, i, 40, where it is ac-
cented as here.

42. *him*] For instances where 'him' is put for he, by attraction to whom un-
derstood, for he whom, see Abbott, § 208.

45. *closes...consequence* CALDECOTT: Falls in with you into this con-
clusion.

47. *addition*] Title. See I, iv, 20; Mach. I, iii, 106.
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;

50. _massa_] COLLOER: 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.

63. falsehood takes] falsity takes
Q'76. falsehood, takes Ff. falsehood take
QFQ.assay] takes QFQ.
carp] carpe Q76. carpe Ff.
65. windlasses] windleisses QFQ, Ff.
windlasses Ff, Rowe+. assay] assay QFQ.
66. indirections] indirects QFQ.

64. of reach] Clarendon: Far-sighted. See I, iv, 56. Compare 'we of taste and
65. windlasses] Nares: Metaphorically, art and contrivance, subtleties; e.g.
'Which, by sle drifts, and windlasses 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, windings:—'The
beauties faire of shepherd's daughters bold, With wanton windlasses runne, turne,
play, and passe.'—Tasso, xiv, 34. Hunter (ii, 226): Windlasses 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
windlass over all the champion fields about,' &c. It is also used by Bishop Hacket.
Edinburgh Review (Shakespearean Glossaries, July, 1869): In Shakespeare's
day, windlass, 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 stooppe, And fetched a windlass round about.' Clarendon:
Also Lily's Euphues and his England (ed. Arber), p. 270: 'I now fetching a
windlesse, that I might better have a shoote, was prevented with ready game.'
65. assays of bias] Clarendon: A metaphor from the game of bowls, in
which the player does not aim at the Jack (or 'mistress,' as it was called in Shake-
spare's time) directly, but in a curve, so that the bias brings the ball round. 'Assays
of bias' are therefore indirect attempts.
66. indirections] Clarendon: Indirect methods. We find out indirectly, says
Polonius, what we wish to know directly. See Jul. Cas. IV, iii, 75.
69. God be wi' you] See Mach. III, i, 43, or Walker (Vers. 228).
69. fare you well] Tscheschowitz: Although the double leave-taking is quite
Hamlet

Rey. Good my lord! 70
Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.
Rey. I shall, my lord.
Pol. And let him ply his music.
Rey. Well, my lord.
Pol. Farewell! [Exit Reynaldo.

Enter Ophelia.

How now, Ophelia! what's the matter?

Oph. Oh, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted! 75


71. in] e'm 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, 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 them 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 stily, and let him fiddle his secrets all out. Vischer (S. 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] Moserly: There is a wonderfully fine contrast between the prolix slyness 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. Arau, 1853, p. 96):
Pol. With what, i' the name of God?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle;

76. 't'he] Cap. 't' Q76. Sing. White, Kty.
78. Lord] Prince Q76.
79. stockings] stockings Q9.

The supposition that Hamlet went to Ophelia directly after the interview with the Ghost is incorrect, and for the following reasons: first, the interview between Polonius and Reynaldo implies that some little time has elapsed since the departure of Laertes for Paris; secondly, during this time Ophelia has returned Hamlet's letters, and denied him access; her father asks her, 'Have you given him any hard words of late?' The letter which Polonius reads to the King must, therefore, have belonged to a period before the opening of the drama. Ophelia had strictly obeyed her father's commands, and returned all Hamlet's letters. Thirdly, Polonius goes at once to the King, and yet, when he speaks to him of Hamlet, the King already knew of Hamlet's (feigned) insanity, and therefore must himself have seen the Prince before Ophelia saw him. Fourthly, between the close of the first act and the present scene, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern must have been summoned on account of Hamlet's changed demeanor, and of the King's suspicions which that demeanor had aroused.

77. closet] CLARENDON: A private apartment. Hence the King's private secretary was called 'clerk of the closet.' See III, ii, 315; and King John, IV, ii, 267.
79. foul'd] CAMBRIDGE EDITORS: Theobald reads loose on the authority, as he says, 'of the elder Qq.' It is not the reading of any of the first six, but of those of 1676, 1683, 1693, and 1703. Had Capell been aware of this, he would scarcely have designated Theobald's mistake as a 'downright falsehood.' Theobald at the time of writing his Sh. Restored knew of no Quarto earlier than that of 1637 (S4. Rest. p. 70), and it is just possible that some copy of this edition (Q4) from which that of 1676 was printed may have had the reading 'loose.' [The Cam. Edd. refer to a note on III, iv, 59, where they give two different readings in two different copies of Q4: 'a heaven-kissing' in Ingleby's copy, and 'a heave, a kissing,' in Capell's copy. This variation in copies of the same date has long been known to exist in the other Qq, but, I confess, I was not prepared to find much variation in later Qq of the same date. In no less than twenty-four instances, however, I have found that my copy of Q70 citers from that of the Cam. Edd., as recorded in their notes. Ed.]
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other; 81
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, 85
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] piteous Qs. piteous F; F4.
pitiful F3. 87. and held me hard] Om. F; F4, S,
Rowe.
84. horrors, he] horrors: he F, F4, Rowe,
Jen. horrors; thus he Pope+. Horrors
there, he Anon.* 91. As he] As a Qs.
Long] Long time Pope+, Cap.
Kty.
85, 86. My lord...it.] One line, F, 92. mine] my F; F4, S,
Rowe, Pope i.
Rowe.
Han. His Pope ii.

80. Ungeth'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.

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

82. purport] WALKER (iii, 264): Pronounce 'purpōrt,' not 'piteous.'
82, 83. 80 ... As] See ABBOTT, § 275; and II, ii, 177; or Macb. I, ii, 43.
84. Knightley completed the rhythm of this line by the insertion of is 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?

II: III, iii, 53; Tro. & Cres. 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 'stayed,' but the effect would be painful. The pause after 'it' must supply
the extra syllable.

92. shaking] TSCHEICHTWITZ: 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,—

That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—

96. that done.] Then Pope.+
me] Om. F,F,F,F.
97. shoulder] shoulders Q,Q,F,F,Rowe.+
sorry; Rowe+. sorry; Rowe. Glo.+ Mob.
96. that done.] Then Pope.+
97. shoulder] shoulders Q,Q,F,F,Rowe.+
99. o'doors] adores Q,F,F,+
sorry; Rowe. 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 Lucr. 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 Ahbwarie. Dyce (Gloss.): 'The Bulke of the bodie. Tronie, buste.'—Cotgrave. Clarendon also cites Cotgrave: 'Buste, the whole bulke or bodie of a man, from his face to his middle.' [Minsheu] gives: 'Pechugwera, 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 gale 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. ecstacy] 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 ver, it is also sometimes intensive, as in forget, 'forwairied,' 'forspent.' [It is so used in the past participle of this very verb in Mid. N. 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
H1.3 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: Accentted on the second syllable in Much. I, v, 42.
111. heed THEOBALD preferred speed of the Fl, in the sense either of success, fortune (frequent in Sh.), or of celerity.
112. quoted MASON: Invariably used by Sh. in the sense of to observe. MALONE: 'Quoter, To quote, or marke in the margent, to note by the way.'—Cotgrave. DYCE (Gloss.): To note, to mark,—formerly pronounced, and often written. cot. See Rom. & Jul. I, iv, 31.
113. wreck 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 rock, in the sense of tortured; we have it in the former, as the more probable. UPTON (p. 209): Read: 'rock thee,' i.e. vex and grieve thee.
115. cast 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. 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 a vengd 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!

Rosencrantz. Theob.
Guildenstern] Q'76. Gylde-
sterne Q'. Guildensterne F', Guil-
denfare F,F,F,F.

and Attendants.] Om. Q3. Cum-
alijas. F,F,F. cum aliis. F,F,F. Lords and
other Attendants. Rowe+. 1, 33, 34. Rosencrantz] Mal. Rosen-
craus Q'. Rosencranse F'. Rosincroks
F,F. Rosincrofts F,F,F. Rosineus
Rowe.

Guildenstern] Q'76. Gylde-
sterne Q'. Guildensterne F', Guil-
denfare F,F,F,F.

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 resent-
ment from Hamlet. The poet's obscure expression seems to have been caused by
his affection 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. CALDE-
cott: 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 un-
frequently, 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. TSCHISCHWITZ cannot per-
suade 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] THORBURY (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

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] Moerly: 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 ione as a dissyllable, see  
Walker, Vers. 230; Abbott, § 479, and V, ii, 217.

6. Sith] Moerly: 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. 390 (? 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 come 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 quarto 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  

11. 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.'  
—as, 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. fence
Ff, Rowe et cet.

13. neighbour'd] Qa Qy.

14. knewd] Qa Qy.

15. vouchsafe] vouchsafe Qf, Qy.

16. occasion] occasions Ff, Rowe.+

17. Whether...thu.] Om. Fl. If...

18. open'd] Qy.

19. are] Qy.

20. aught] Han. aught Qy.


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.


24. hope] JOHNSON: That the hope which your arrival has made may be completed 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.
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,

But we] We Fr, Cald. Knt, Dyce
services Fr, Cald. Knt,
To be commanded.] Om. Q, Qp
Two lines, Fr.


The Fr, QqF, Pope+, Jen. CoL
Assure you] I assure Q, Jen.

Glo.+ Mob.

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,
i, 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. 46. sure] be sure Ff F.
48. it hath] I have Fl, Rowe +, Knt. 50. that; that] Cap. that, that QfQf
it has Q76.
52. to] of Johns.
53. [Exit Polonius.] Rowe. Om.
54. my dear Gertrude] Cap. my deere
Gertrard QfQ, my decre Gertrud
QfQf my sweet Queene, that Ff Queen
FfFf, Rowe +, Cald. Knt, Dyce i, Sta.
White, Del. Huds.
57. o’erhasty] haftie Qf (haftie Q).

45. and] KNIGHT: The reading of the Ff means that Polonius holds that his
duty to his king is an obligation as imperative as his duty to his God, to whom his
soul is subject. DYCE (Strictures, &c., 187) truly says that the attempts to explain
the error, one, of the Ff, have proved unsuccessful. HUDSON: I hold my duty both
to my God and to my king, as I do my soul.

47. trail] JOHNSON: The course of an animal pursued by the scent.
51. first] MOBERLY: Thus Polonius gains the opportunity of studying a brief and
pointed oration, the only fault in which is its being altogether needless and mis-
placed.

52. fruit] JOHNSON: The dessert after the meat. CALDECOTT (see Textual Notes):
By news must be meant the talk or leading topic at, &c. HUNTER (ii, 227): The Ff
may suggest the true reading: nuts. We still say, ‘It will be nuts to him,’ where a
person has to hear something that will please him. The allusion to a banquet is
kept up. TSCHISCHWITZ adopts this emendation of Hunter’s.

54. Gertrude] WHITE: This smacks less of the honeymoon than the text of
the Ff.

56. main] CALDECOTT: The chief point. See Tro. & Cress. 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.
HAMLET

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. 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 85.

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 ellipsis 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 a pittance 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] shown Qq. think upon an answer to Han.
78. this] his Ff, Rowe, Cald. Kn.
80. therein] herein Q7 Text.
81. consider'd] considered Qq. well-took k Ff Fg Fh
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 Q4 is one proof,
amongst others, either that the editors of F4 did not disdain the assistance of Q4, imper-
fect as it is, or that Q4 has preserved readings which the editors of F4 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.

79. 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. MATZNER (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.'
['Zounds! 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.]

83. well-took] The reading of F F4 Fg, suggested to THEOBALD (Sh. Rest. p. 191)
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together;
Most welcome home!  

Pol.  
This business is well ended.—

My liege, and madam, to expostulate

85. [Exeunt Vol. and Cor.] Cap.  
85. well] very well Ff, Rowe, Cald.  
Exeunt Embassadors. Qq. Exit Am.  

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. MOBERLY: 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 Aurora, 1650, 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 signification 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 flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true 'tis pity,
And pity 'tis 'tis true; a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then; and now remains
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.

90. since] Om. Qq.
brevity is] brevity's Pope+.
91. limbs] lines Theob. conj. (with-
drawn).
93. it;] it? Q76.
94. mad?] mad, Q.Q., mad. Ff,
Rowe, Pope, Ktly. mad: Cap. Knt,
Coll. White.
97. he is] he's Q.Q.Q., he's Qs,
mad, 'tis] mad, is Cap.
98. 'tis 'tis] it is Ff, Rowe, Pope.
it, 'tis Han.
99. farewell] farewell, wit Anon.*
101. the] the the F.f.
104. thus] thus Qq, Rowe, Pope,
Han. Jen.

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
Two Gen. 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. CLAR-
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 ABBOTT, § 404.
Perpend.

I have a daughter,—have while she is mine,—

Who in her duty and obedience mark,

Hast given me this; now gather and surmise. [Reads.

"To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,


104, 105. Thus...Perpend.] MAGNUS (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. & Q. 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 The Gorb. IV, i, 55, and would not, therefore, here call it a 'vile phrase.' He therefore substituted beautified, which is less of an anticylram 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 beautified, 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 beautify'd'), 'these.' JOHNSON: 'Beautified' seems to be a vile phrase for the ambiguity of its meaning. STEEVES: 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 opposite. CALDECOTT: That is, accomplished. '... metrical speach... by Art beautified and adorned, and brought far from the primitive rudenesse.'—Puttenham's Arte of English Poetrie, 1589 [p. 39, ed. Arber]. DRYCE (Glos.): By 'beautified' (which, however 'vile a phrase,' is common enough in our early writers) I believe Hamlet meant beautiful, and not accomplished.
HAMLET

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 F,F,F,F.
111. phrase; but] phrase, but Qq.
but...Thus] Separate line, Kty.
111, 112. hear. Thus: 'In' Mal.
from Jen. substantially. hear: thus in Qq. hear stho in F. hear—These to Rowe+; hear;—These in Cap. hear.
These, In Knt. hear this; In Tsch. conj.

112. [Reads.] Dyce. Om. QqFf. excellent white Walker, Dyce ii, Del.
excellent white] excellent-white &c.] Om. Ff, Rowe+, Knt.

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 'hears.' 'These in her excellent white bosom, these.' The expression is evidently directive or optative, and given as an introduction to 'Doubt thou, the Starres 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,' &c. See V, ii, 70. See STORFFRICH, Appendix, Vol. ii.

112. bosom] STEEVENS (Two Gent. III. i, 230): 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 *Cym.* V, v, 383.

124. Hamlet] CAMBRIDGE EDITORS: In Q₄ and Q₆ 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 Q₅. In these, the line: 'Thine evermore
This in obedience hath my daughter shown me; 125
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,

moist deere Lady, whilst this machine is to him,' filled up the breadth of the page,
and 'Hamlet' was forced into the line below: (Hamlet. In Q, the last line of the
letter is merely 'machine is to him,' and although there was abundance of room for
the insertion of 'Hamlet,' yet the printer followed copy and retained it in the line
below. Q was printed from Q, and kept up the blunder. Ed.]

125. more above] CALDECOTT perceives a difficulty in the grammar or construction
in the reading both of Ff and Q. 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
foible 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 minuted 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 prescribe 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,

136. a winking] a working Qq.
137. working] working Pope.
138. my young mistress] In parentheseis, F1.
139. this QQ.
140. did bespeak] charged Q76.
142. his] her QQ.
143. she took...And he] see too...
144. 145. For, he Warb.
145. repulsed, a] repuls’d. A F1.
146. Fall into] Fell to Pope +.

138. round] STEEVENS: Roundly, without reserve, as in III, i, 183; III, iv, 5. CALDECOTT: As here used, it cannot be more correctly interpreted than by the reverse of its literal meaning, i.e. without circuitry. In this sense, and senses nearly allied to it, this word is used with great latitude. Dyce (Gloss.) gives eight different uses of round. CLARENDON: The adjective is here used for the adverb, as in Bacon’s Essay, vi: ‘A shew of fearfulness, which in any business doth spoil the feathers, of round flying up to the mark.’ See Abbott, § 60.
139. bespeak] For the use of the prefix be, see Abbott, § 438.
140. 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 destiny. SINGER: In Twelfth Night, II, v, 156, we have ‘in my stars I am above thee.’ WHITE: 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. BAILEY (ii, 6): Substitute o for t, and you have ‘out of thy soar.’ It is not to be concealed that Sh. does not elsewhere employ soar as a noun.
141. prescripts] MALONE: He had ordered, charged, Ophelia to lock herself up from Hamlet; see I, iii, 135.
144. fruits] JOHNSON: She took the fruits of advice, when she obeyed advice; the advice was then made 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,'

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He would not only be thought to have discovered this intrigue by his own sagacity, but to have remarked all the stages of Hamlet's disorder, from his sadness to his raving, as regularly as his physician could have done; when all the while the madness was only feigned. The humor of this is exquisite from a man who tells us, with a confidence peculiar to small politicians, that he could find: 'Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed Within the centre.'

147. watch] CALDECOTT: A sleepless state.
147, 148. thence into ... lightness] Although WALKER (Virt. 20) suggests that here 'weakness' and 'lightness' be pronounced as trisyllables, yet he adds: I rather suspect that we should write, 'thence to a weakness, thence Into a lightness.' ABBOTT, § 483, while conceding the possibility that 'weakness' is a trisyllable, yet thinks that 'the repeated "thence" may require a pause after it, which might excuse the absence of an unaccented syllable.'
149. madness] CLARKE: Sh. intended Hamlet should be deeply moved by Ophelia's unexplained repulse of him, coming immediately upon the shock he receives from the Ghost's revelation, and he seizes upon the one as affording apparent cause for his disturbance of mind arising out of the other, and as giving plausible and ostensible ground for the madness which he assumes, and by which he wishes to be believed to have been seized. Polonius's dedication and his report to the King and Queen of that, and Hamlet's condition, are precisely what the prince desired should successively accrue from his own behaviour. This all appears to us to be in favor of our opinion with regard to Hamlet's feigned insanity.

150. all we] ABBOTT, § 240: A feeling of the uneffeminate nature of the nominatives we and they prevents us from saying 'all we.' [For another instance of a transposed pronoun, see V, ii, 14. Ed.]
150. for] DELIUS: The relative which must be supplied from the foregoing 'wherein.'
151. this] CORSON: The reading of F, 'tis this,' suits better what precedes, and the reply of the Queen that follows.
When it proved otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. [Pointing to his head and shoulder] Take this from
this, if this be otherwise. 155

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. 160

155. [Pointing...] Theob. Pope ii. ending sometimes...here...lobby. Ft, Row.
Om. QqFr, Cap. Del. this, if...otherwise; this; if...
otherwise, F, this, if...otherwise, F, Fr
Fr, Rowe, Pope.
158. further] farther Coll. White, F, FrFr, FFr, Rowe, Cald. Knt.
160. does] does Qq, ha's F, has F, FrFr, FFr, FrFr, F, FFr, FFr, FFr.
HAMLET

ACT II, SC. II.

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.

K. We will try it.

Q. 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?

161. Loose] Tschischwitz: 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.

164. Wretch] Dyce (Gloss.): A term of endearment.

169. 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.

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WINTER'S TALE

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.

172. 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 *mender.* In Barnabe Rich's *Irish Hubub:* 'Senec fornicator, an old fishmonger.' COLERIDGE: That is, you are sent to fish out this secret. This is Hamlet's own meaning. G. M. ZORNLIN (*Kritische Schriften*, iii. 262) 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.' MOBERLY: 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*, ii. 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 fishmonger.' You are a pander, 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...
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. carrion.—] carrion. Qt.
181. good kissing carrion] QqPt,

life time. Dorrin (Shakespeare's Hamlet, &c. 1865, p. 51) refers it to Polonius's aid in promoting the marriage of Claudius and the Queen. See, also, Gréth's extraordinary proverb in his note on this passage in Appendix, Vol. II.

180. sun] Tschischwitz (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, § 101: Debent igiur intueri qui hoc putant, solis huius radiis, quem certe non tanquam creaturam Dei laudant sed tanquam Deumadorant, per cloacarum foetores et quae-cumque horribilia usquequeque diffundi et in his operi secundum naturam suam, nec tamen inde aliqua contaminatione sordescere, cum visibilis lux visibilibus sordibus sit natura coniunctior.

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
Meant. for Meat. 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 frail 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 appositely, 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 i 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 finest summer's day doth 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 QqFf, which he upholds. He says (p. 149) that Sh. considers the 'blessed breeding sun' as the Good principle in the secundity 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.] DYE: 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 explanations 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. MAGNIN (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 'out' 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,—(carogne—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 wench 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, tota calo, 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... carrion] 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 defiled solution.
Hewing: '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 fulfills
all requirement of carrion, whereas men are inferior to that which they should be.
Tschirschwitz: 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.
MOBERLY: 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,' Macb. V, v, 24;
'Look, here comes a walking fire,' Lear, III, iv, 110; 'the dancing banners of the
French,' King John, II, i, 308; 'my dancing soul doth celebrate This feast,' Rich.
II: I, iii, 91; 'laboring art can never ransom nature,' All's Well, II, i, 116; 'more
busy than the laboring spider,' 2 Hen. VI: III, i, 339; 'And let the laboring bark
climb hills of seas,' Ot. II, i, 184; 'thy parting soul,' 1 Hen. VI: II, v, 115; 'parting
guest,' Tro. & Cym. III, iii, 166; '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, 29; '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, these 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 pas-
riage 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

13
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

conceive.—] Coll. Dyce, Sta. White. conceive, Qq, conceive. Ff, Rowe +, Jen. Glo. Mob. conceive:
Still...again.] First marked as 'Aside' by Jen.
187, 188. he said...he] a said...a Qq, but said...he Q'76.
187-190. yet he...again.] 'Aside' by Pope +.
188. far gone, far gone.] farre gone Qq, Pope +, Jen. Cam. Cla.

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.]

185. sun] Petri (Archiv f. u. 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.

185. conception] Steevens: There is a quibble here, similar to that in Lear, I, i, 12, between 'conception,' understanding, and 'conceive,' to be pregnant. Moerby: 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.

188-190. 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;
                      lock F,F,F,
198. _most_] Om. F,F, Rowe, Knt.
                      lock F,F,F,
199. _read_] you mean F,F,F;
                     you mean F,F,F, Cald. you read Rowe.
                      Calm. Dyce i, Del.
197. _plum-tree & plum-tree Qq., or Plum-Tree F,F, Rowe, Knt.
                      White.
198. _lack_] lacks Qq.

189. _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 _Mach._ III, iv, 42; and Abbott, § 274.

195. _satirical rogue_] WARBURTON: He refers to Juvenal, _Sat._ x, 188. 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 proleptically 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 210 honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

203. [Aside] First marked by Johns.
203, 204. Though...lord f] Prose, Qq. Three lines, ending madness...walk... lord f, Ff. Two lines, the first ending in't Rowe + , Jen.
204. in't] in it Steev. Cald. Knt.
206–211. Indeed...you.] Prose, Qq.
Eleven irregular lines, ending apri...
are f...happiness...om., not...of...him,...
meeting...daughter...humbly...you. Ff.
Nine, Rowe + , Jen.
that is] that's Qq, Jen, Cam, Cla.
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 Poetrie, 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 ins-
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.

216. Enter...] As in Cap. Enter Guyderferne, and Rofencraus, Qg (after line 214). Enter Rofineran and Guildenferne. F., Enter Rofineros and Guiderferne, Fg, Fp. Guildenferne. Fg. After line 217, Fp, Rowe++, Jen.
217. the Lord'] my Lord Fl, Rowe, Knt. lord Pope++.
218. SCENE VI. Pope++, Jen.
[To Polonius] Mal.
219. My] Mine Fl, Rowe++, Knt,
221, 222. My...both] Verse, first line ending Guildenstern, Qg, Pope++, Jen.

Press 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 Qg.
223. indifferent] CAPELL (i, 131): Middling. STAUNTON: Medium, average.
Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Gui. '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?

Gui. 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 250 have bad dreams.

228. wait'] Johns. waft Qq. waste Ff, Rowe +, Cap.

229. favour ] Pope. favor. Qq.

230. her ] in her Pope ii +.


233. that ] Om. Qq.

234. but ] sure Q76.

235. 263. Let me attended. Fi. Om. Qq.

238. lord ] Fi, Rowe, Jen. Knt.


244, 245. Why...so. Two lines of verse, the first ending nothing, Walker (Crit. i, 19).

251. had ] had Mal.
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?

259. the court [Cap. th' Court Ft. 264, Elsinore] Mal. Elfinoure
say] Pope. fay Ft. Qq. Elfinower F, Elfinower F, El-
260. Ros. Guil.] Cap. Both Ft. F, El-
F, F, F, F,
264. friendship F, F, F, F,

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 Findor, that the state of humanity is συγκατάνυντι, the dream of a shadow. ["Εὐρήκασι τι τε τις; ου γε νυν ουκ ἐλθομένοι.—Pythia, xii. 135 (ed. Schneiderin). 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 snatchet 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. Moberly: 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, fei, fay, fi. Or it may be an abbreviation of 'faith.' Compare Rom. & JUL. I. v. 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. 265

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

266. even] euer Qq.
268. a halfpenny] of a halfpenny
Theob. Warb. Johns. at a halfpenny
Han. Cap.
269. Come, deal] come, come, deals Qq,
White, Kity, Del.
272. Why] Om. Qq; Pope+, Cap.
275. purpose. You] purpose you Q76.
277. our] your fellowship F,F. our fellowships Q76.

263. 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.' CLARENDON: 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.

270. 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.]

277. consonancy] CLARENDON: 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 Guild.] What say you?

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

Guild. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation pre-

279. ever-preserved] ever preferred Q76. could] can Qq.
charge] change Qq.
youth withal] youth withal White.

280. profferer] 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] STEEVES: 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.]

284. 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. CLARENDON: 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.

285. 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 in 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, contempla-
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 in-290
deed 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 majestic roof fretted with golden fire,—why,

287,288. discovery, and...queen moult] discovery of...Queen : moult F. discovery
discovery of...queen. Moult Knt. 290. heavily] heavenly F.
Q'76. Rowe. feather, I OQFF. 293. firmament] Om. F., Rowe, Cald.
289. exercises] exercise F., 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 mo-
ment. Still, in as far as it is the looking on of a spectator, and not the participa-
tion 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, § 439: 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 liter-
ally what Hamlet says here, else it contradicts what he says to Horatio, V, ii, 198,
that he had been in continual practice since Laerdes went into France.

291. promontory] Moosely: 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 majestic 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 soul 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! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

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

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no other thing to me but Q. Qen. Coll. El.

Q. F.F et cet.


296-299. The only punctuation in Q. Q. in reason, faculties, moving, action, apprehension, God, world, animals; In the F. F. - Reason, faculty? admirable? Action, Angel, apprehension, God, world, animals; - apprehensions. How, O. Q. 76.


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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, 'derhanging.'

293. fretted] MALONE: See Son. xxi. CLARENDON: From A. S. fratwian, 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 a 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 Q. have: 'What piece of work is a man,' - the 'a' having been shuffled out of its place. In the F. F. instead of the proper transposition, a second 'a' was inserted: 'What a piece of work is a man.' The Quarto of 1607 has, 'What a piece of work is man!' [See line 386.]

297. express] CLARENDON: Exact, fitted to its purpose, as the seal fits the stamp. In Hebr. i. 3, 'express image' is the rendering of ἐρασμός.

299. paragon] CLARENDON: Cotgrave 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 less 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] ye Qq. quoted Jen. conj.
them] Om. Ff, Rowe+. 307. hither] hether Qq.
306. lenten] Q'm. Lenten QqFF. are they] are the QqQ.
307. coted] coasted Ff, Cald. met Q'm. 310. of me] on me Qq.
accept] Rowe+, Jen. 'coted' Cap.

306. lenten] STEEVENS: Sparing, like the entertainments given in Lent. 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 'Amoureux de caresme: A Lenten lover; a bashfull, modest, or maidenly woer; one thats afraid to touch his mistress.'

307. coted] STEEVENS: Overtook. In The Return from Parnassus, 1606: 'marry we presently coted and outstrip them.' 'In the laws of courting,' says Tollel, '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 coasts.'—Drayton, Polyolb. xxiii, p. 1115. CALDECOTT-cites from Golding's translation of Ovid, Met. B, x: 'With that Hippomenes coted her' (where the original has 'preteterit'). DYCE (Gloss.): Compare what Rosencrantz afterwards says of these players, III, i, 17: 'certain players. We o'er-raught (overtook, over-passed) 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 Turbervile: 'In couring at a Deare, if one Greyhound go endways by that is beyond another, it is accompted a Cote.' Again, 'In couring at the Hare, it is not material which dog kylleth her (which hunters call bearing of an Hare), but he that giveth most Cotes, or most tunnes, winneth the wager. A Cote is when a Greyhound goth 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 doe 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; 311
the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown
shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere,

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 Shake-
speare's time as 'humourists,' and who, for the most part, were represented as
capricious and quarrelsome. Delius: Such characters as Faulconbridge, Jaques,
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 serum. Malone: The word 'sere' I am
unable to explain, and suspect it to be corrupt. Perhaps we should read: 'ticked
o' the scene,' i.e. by the scene. Douce: The same expression occurs in Howard's
Defensive against the poysyn of supposed prophecies, 1620: 'Discovering
the moods and humors of the vulgar sort to be so loose and tickle of the sere,' &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 sere is equivalent to light-heeled, loose in character.
Tickle of the sere, 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 ... wyll abyde whysperynge in the ear,
Thynke ye her tayle is not lyght of the sere.'—Commune Secretary and Jalousye,
sere, or, as it is now spelt, scar (or sscar) 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 serre, or talon, in gripping
that mechanism and preventing its action. It is, in fact, a safety 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 flie off by and by, if a man do but touch the sere.' Now if the lock
be so made of purpose, or be worn, or be faulty in construction, this scar, or grip,
may be so tickle or ticklish in its adjustment that a slight touch or even jar may dis-
place it, and then, of course, the gun goes off. Hence 'light,' or 'tickle of the scar'
(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-

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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.

314. blank] blank Q, Q₂
315. Ros. 316. scept] Om. F₁, Rowe +, Cap. Knt,
317. Dyce i, Glo.
318. in the F, F₂, F₃
319. in the F₁, F₃, 320. 321. innovation] innovation? F₁, F₃
322. Rowe.

verse of 'those to whom laughter is most uneasy.' In old matchlock muskets the seat
and trigger were in one piece. This is proved by a passage from Barret's Theorike
and Practike of Modern Warres, 1598, p. 33 [35]: 'drawing down the serre with
the other three fingers.' He has given directions for holding the stock between
the thumb and 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 lame-
ness 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 affectation
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,
56). 'If Rosencrans 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. Rosencrans means that their permission to act any longer at
an established house is taken away in consequence of the new custom of introduc-
ing 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 introduc-
ing 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 miscon-
duct 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
[320. 'inhibition."

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 eyases 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 inueighing against the State, the Court, the Law, the City, and their gouvernements, with the particularizing of private 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 bitterness, and liberall inuicthes against all estates, to the mouths of Children, supposing their inferiority to be a priviledge for any raying, be it neuer so violent, I could advise all such, to curbe and limit this presumed liberty within the bands of discretion and gouvernement. But wise and judicial Censurers, before whom such complaints shall at any time hereafter come, wil not (I hope) impute these abuses to any transgression in vs, who haue euers been carefull and prouident 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 applauses 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 Cavalier 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 322
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 per-
sonal 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 con-
jectures upon this point, we should be disposed to suggest that the 'innovation' re-
ferred 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 Q3, 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
Farther 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 inmoderate 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. Etc.]
Ham. How comes it? do they grow rusty?
Ros. Nay, their endeavour 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

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325-345. Ham. How...load too.] Om. Qr.
328. question] the question Cap.
330. truncheon or cushion Bell (Sh.'s Pack, iii, 163). "

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 never be suppress, while her majesties unfleded minions flaunt it in silkes and satins. They had as well be at their popish seruice in the devil's garments,' &c. Again, ibid.: 'Euen in her majesties chapel do these pretty upstart youtthes profane the Lordes day by the lascivious writing of their tender limbes, and gorgeous decking of their apparell, in feigning bawdike 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 aires, in time, will do it handsomely.
— I like the audience that frequenteth there
With much applause: a man shall not be chock'd
With the stench of gallick, 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 suppress, and that of the children of the chappell converted to the use of the children of the revelers.'

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, noutice,' &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 are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither.

329. berattle] be-ralte F, b. rattle F, b. ralite F, b. ratted F,
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. Morely: 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, Enery one to pay his shot, &c.—Cotgrave. Tschirschwitz: It is very doubtful whether Sh. used so uncommon a word as 'escoted' when the common one, mainstains, was ready to his use. 'I therefore believe that the true word is escorted.' 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.

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 Phisology of the Engl. Tongue, ed. 2, p. 420.

338. both sides] Tschirschwitz 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

345. load] club Theob. conj. (withdrawn).
346. very strange; for] Q'y'6. very strange, for Q, strange for F, Pope, +,
Cald. Knt, Dyce i, Sta. White, Del.

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.'
343. brains.] Caldecott: Sharp and nice discussion.
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 Oth. I, vi, 41, and Psalm xxv, 15, old ed. [now erroneously changed to 'mouths.'—Clarendon]. Clarendon: In Mid. N. D. III, ii, 238, we have 'mouths.' In fact, in the phrase 'to make mouths,' '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 be
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 355 fairly outwards, should more appear like entertainment

Qq. 351. There...players.] Shall we call the players? Q76.
Del. hands Q, Q5.
353. appurtenance] appurtenance 'a
355. my] let me Q, Q5. let

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.
355. extent] COLLIER (ed. 2): Is there not room to doubt here whether ‘extent’ has not been misprinted for extant, 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'.

WELL, III, vi, 73.
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.

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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: Hammer'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: *Hernshaw, heronshaw, 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. 156, 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 *Athenaeum* (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. & Q. 6 July, 1867) suggests *anser*, 'the generic name for our domestic waterfowl.' J. A. Picton (N. & Q. 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 'hernshaw' 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 hawking. Most birds, especially one of heavy flight like the heron, when roused by the falconer or his dog, would fly down or with the wind, in order to escape. When the wind is from the north, the heron flies towards the south, and the spectator
ACT II, SC. ii.

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; 'twas so, indeed.

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

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

Players. Ff, Rowe +, Jen.

[Scene VII. Pope +.

362. Scene VII. Pope +.

363. too;—at] F, F, F, F, to, at Q, Q, F, F,

to, are Q, Q, to, at Q76, Rowe +, Jen.

364. you see there is] as you see is Q, Q.


367. he's] he is Q, Cap.


369. players:] players, Q, Q, Q, Han. Q.

Players. Ff, Rowe +, Jen. 369. it.—You] Johns. it: You Q76.

369. it, You Q, Q, it, you Q, Q, Ff, Rowe, Pope, Cald.

370. a] Cap. a Q, for a F, F, F, F, for on F, F, Rowe +, for o' Cald. Sta.

370. morning:] Cap. morning Q, Q, for on F, F, Rowe +, for o' Cald. Sta.

371. morning] Cap. morning Q, Q, for on F, F, Rowe +, Cal.

372. Rome,—] Rome— Ff. 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 hawking, 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 sets the question at rest, if 'handsaw' be a corruption of hersenew. 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


378. The best] —the best Huds. 379. 380. pastoral-comical, historical-

373. actor] Tschirschwitz: The fun here consists in Hamlet’s mentioning an actor before the officious Polonius can utter the word.

375. Buz] Johnson: Mere idle talk, the bus of the vulgar. Steevens: Only interjections employed to interrupt Polonius. Jonson uses them often for the same purpose, as well as Middleton in A Mad World, my Masters. Blackstone: It was an interjection used at Oxford, when any one began a story that was generally known before. Douce (ii, 231): This expression may continue to exercise the skill of the critics, if they are disposed to pursue the game through the following mazes: ‘Anno DCCCXL Ludovicus imperator ad mortem infinitum, cujus cibus per XL dies solummodo die dominica dominicum corpus fecit. Cum vidisset damnem stare, dixit bus, bux, quod significat foras, foras.’—Alberici monachi trium fontium Chronicum, Leips. 1698. Ducange, under the article Burst, says, ‘Interpretatur despectus vel contemptus. Papias (Ab Hebraico Burst vel Bonus, spretvit).’

377. Then...ass] Johnson: This seems to be the line of a ballad. Elze: At all events, it contains biting ridicule of Polonius, who has just said that ‘The actors are come hither—upon my honour!’

381. indivisible] Delius: This refers to dramas that carefully observed the Unity of Place; ‘poem unlimited’ refers to those that disregarded such restrictions. Tschirschwitz: 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, Morals, Pastoralls, Stage playes & such other like.’ To this last description, ‘stage playes,’ I suppose the ‘poem unlimited’ belonged, which, I presume, was an extemporized 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 Menaichmi, was likewise translated and published in 1595. Prefixed to a map of Cam
Hamlet. O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

382. light. For...liberty, these [Theob. light for...liberty: these Q. light, for...liberty. These F, Rowe, Pope. light for...liberty: these Q?76.


382. 383. the liberty] liberty Q?95.

bridge, in the Second Part of Bruni's Civitates, &c., is an account of the University, by Guilelmus Soonus, 1575. In this curious memoir we have the following passage: 'Januarium, Februariam, et Martium menses, ut noctis tediis fallant in spectaculis populo exhibendis ponunt tanta elegantia, tanta actionis dignitate, ea vocis et vulgus moderatione, ea magnificentia, ut si Plautus, aut Terentius, aut Seneca revivisceret miraextur suas ipsi fabulas, majoreme quam cum inspiciente popul.

Rom. ageretur, volupatam 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 Apologie of Piers Pennistle, by Nashe, 1593: 'For the lowse circumsntance of his poverty before his death, and sending that miserable writte to his wife,' &c. Again, in Bishop Earle's Character of a mure dull Physician, 1638: 'Then follows a writ to his druger 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 extemportal plays, where liberty was allowed to the performers to invent the dialogue, in imitation of the Italian commedia at 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 genus of odes, meaning the genius of lyrical composition. The passages quoted by the Var. commentators are utterly irrelevant. The same erratum occurs, Jew. Cat. III, ii, 225: 'For I have neyther writ nor words, nor worth.' Clarendon: Probably the author did not intend that we should find a distinct meaning in Polonius's words. Corson: The Qs and Fs 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 1567-68, 'Alexandre lecy' was licensed to print 'a ballet intituled the songe of Jephthas.
Pol. What treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why,

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

Pol. [Aside] Still on my daughter.

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

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

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

Ham. Why,

'As by lot, God wot,' and then, you know,


387. Why, 'One] Cap.  Why one Qq Fi, Rowe, Pope.


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 'Jeptha Judge of Israel,' p. 93, vol. iii, Dec. 14, 1624. HALLIWELL gives a facsimile of 'A proper new ballad, intituled, Jepha Judge of Israe,' of which the first stanza runs as follows:

'I read that many years ago,
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 warre there should be,
And who should be the chiefes, 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. CCOLLIER 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.

386. What treasure] WALKER (Crit. i, 89) cites F, as containing another instance, like II, ii, 295, of a interpolated: 'What treasure,' surely for grammar's sake.

394. Nay...not] ZORNIN (S4. 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

399. ‘It...was,’] As a quotation, Pope.
400. pious chanson] Qq, Jen. Pons
Cl in F, Cal. Pans Chanson F F
F, Rubrick Q 76, Rowe. Pont-chan-
sons Han. Cap.
401. abridgements come] Ff, Rowe+,
Cald. Knt. abridgement comes Qq et
cet.
402. You are] Y'are Ff, Rowe+.

399. It came to pass]莫瑟利: ‘As he had a daughter, of course he got into a scrape,’ is the inference suggested.
400. pious chanson] Pope explained the reading of F, 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. Nashe 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 Qq, 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 bons chanson, or a chanson du Pont Neuf. “Vaudievilles, ou Chanson du Pont Neuf, les chansons communes qui se chantent parmi le peuple avec une grande facilité, et sans art: Trivialis cantilena.”—Dictionnaire de Trevoix, 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 Littre, the secondary meaning of Pont-Neuf is: ‘Chanson populaire sur un air très-connu, e.g. ‘Il va tous les ponts-jeufs qui deurent les rues.’ (In this sense it is not printed with capital letters.) But nowhere does he give such a phrase as ‘bons chansons nor chanson, used absolutely when meaning the specific chansons du pont-neuf. Ed.]’
401. 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.
401. 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 (Cl.): In this place it is applied to the players, as being, I presume, the persons who represent an abridgment. 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-
tress! By 'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than
when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray


406. By'r Lady] Byrldy F., Ber-
lady F.F.F., Rowe, Pope, Han. by lady
Q.Q.Q., my Lady Q., Verlady Theob.

407. chopine] Chopine F., chirppine
Pope+. chopin Jen.

404. valanced] valanc'd Q.Q., va-

The apology was once made to Charles II for unpunctuality in beginning a play,
ti at '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
Crutelies, 1611, p. 262, calls them chopines, and gives the following account of them: 'There is one thing used of the Venetian women, and some others dwelling
in the cities and townes subject to the signiory of Venice, that is not to be
observed (I think) amongst any other women in Christendome: which is common
God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not 408
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 girt: so
uncomely a thing (in my opinion) that it is pitty this foolish custom is not cleanse
banished and exterminated out of the citie. There are many of these chapineys 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, so by so much
the higher are her chapineys. 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:
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 cioppino
is in Veneroni’s Dictionary, but Dyce (Glos.) 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 succolo, 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 chipporns, (which
are as high as a man’s leg), they walke between two handmaids, majestickly delibera-
ting 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 affectation, 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 gown so as to fill the place of a tragedy heroine, and so
assumed the cothurnus; which Puttenham described as ‘high corked shoes, or pant-
toffes, which now they call in Spaine and Italy Shoppini.’ [Singer misunderstood
the passage in Puttenham (see Arber’s Rep. p. 49), which is as follows: ‘the actors
[of the parts of great Princes] ware vpon their legges buskins of leather called
Cothurni, and other solemne habits, and for a speciall preheminence did walke vpon
those high corked shoes or pantoffes, which,’ &c. At a Jewish wedding in Jerusa-
lem 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.
Thus, Roger Fenton, in his Treatise of Usury, 1611, p. 23: A poore man desireth a
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. enne to't Ff.

falconsers] Faukners Qq, Paukners Qq, Faukners Ff, Rowe +.
413, 446, &c. First Play.] 1 Play.
Ff. Player, Qq.

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 pceces (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 usuries. And again, 'It is a common custome of his [the usurer's] to buy up crackt ancles 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 ancles, some of which cannot fife, for soldering, and paies double interest to the miser under the cloak of honesty.—Lodge's Wil's Miserie, 1596. CALDECOTT: Another sense is also meant: a voice broken in consequence of licentious indulgence.

410. French] CAPPELL (i, 133): The French are remarkably irregular in all feats of sporting even at this day. STREVENS: 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 keenener 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 417
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 Bellougo and Bellougina,...the Os- 
trina and Sturgeon. ... Of the roes of these four kinds they make very great store 
of Icary or 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 cav- 
er on the stage; but the following line from Sir J. Harrington's 33d Epigram, book iii,
leaves no uncertainty in the matter: 'And cavetæ, 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 cen-
sure, but with a tone of authority that mine could not sound. CLARENDDON: Hen-
ley'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. DYC (Gloss.): Moderation. Tschisch- 
witz: In rhetorical phraseology, 'modesty' is evraèia. Cic. De Off. lib. I, xl, 142,
ed. Orelli: 'Sed illa est evraèia, in qua intelligitur ordinis conservatio. Itaque, e- 
dem nos modestiam apellemus, sed definitur a Stoicis, ut modestia sit scientia rerum 
earum qua afferentur 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, 10, 71: modestia quedam aquirum. 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 be 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 pricketh.'—Baret. DYCE: In spite of Gifford's note, I think the alteration to salt a hasty one—sallets, i.e. salt (rivald) 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.

425. thereabout] CLARENDON: A substantive, like 'whereabout,' in Much. II, i, 58.

425. Theobald (S4. 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
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 savory, 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. 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 Aeneid, 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 fantastically 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,
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. & Cret. V, iii, 40-42) far outstrips 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. CAPELL: 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 nave 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. & Cret. 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 admiration 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 Marlowe 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 timid and unnatural style so much and so unjustly admired in his predecessors or contemporaries, and which he afterwards so happily ridiculed in 'the swaggering value of Ancient Pistol.' Seymour (ii, 172) agrees with Ritson, and Payne (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 (Ferrex & Ferrex, 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 sententious 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 expedient than the one of which he made choice: overcharging the pathos. The language 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 dramatical 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. Æneas'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, 'mobled 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. Priamus 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 Æneas'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. & Cret. and in Mach. 4. The whole of the scene is inferior in workmanship, in characterization, in theatrical requirements, in poetical power. All the 'Æneas'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 Hen. VI, in which Marlowe had written a great part,
ACT II, SC. ii.]  

[425. Æneas’s tale to Dido.] and he 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 Æneas 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 Megara'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 his 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,
Whereas 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 426
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 Q.q.
427–429. see...[Pyrrhus] Cap. Prose,
Q.q; Rowe+; Jen.
428. th' Hyrcanian] th' ionician Q.q. the Hyrcanian F.r. Rowe, Cap. Steev.
Var. Cald. Knt, Coll. Sing. El. Dyce i,
429. 'tis not so] Cap. 'tis not so Q.q,
tis not Q.q. It is not so F.f, Rowe+,
431. his] he F.f.
432. his] his F.f.
the ominous] th' ominous Q.q.

Hecuba are also in the Sh. speech, it is impossible to imagine that he meant these
tables for mere bombast. I do not quote the Hecuba part, as there is nothing corre-
sponding 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 burnst;'
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.
Gueule, the mouth, throat, gullet. GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN BRITISH HERALDRY:
Perhaps from the Persian ghol, 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.
DELIUS: 'Trick'd,' like the following participles, 'baked' 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 caruncles, 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,

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Knt, Dyce, Sta. Del. Huds. the vile Murthers Rowe. murthers vile Pope. + their lord’s murder Jen. et cet. in] in a Rowe i.
443. So, proceed you.] Om. F, F, Rowe +, Knt.

445. antique] Pope. antick Q, Qc, F, F, Pope.
448. to his] in his Rowe ii.
449. match’d] match’ Q, Qc, match F, F, Pope, Cald. match / Theob. conj. (withdrawn).
452. falls...Ilium] falls down sense-
less. Ilium Theob. conj. (withdrawn).

in this fragment parallel with passages in Sh. tend to prove that it was Shakespeare’s own composition.

437–439. streets...murder] ANON (Misc. Obs. 1752, p. 21): Rather read, ‘the parching fires That lend a treacherous and damned light To the vile murthers,’ i.e. the streets being in flames afford a treacherous light. Treacherous because they betray their masters to the destroying Pyrrhus.

439. lords’] DELIUS: ‘Lords’ is better than lord’s, since Priam’s death is not represented till afterwards, and should not be anticipated here.

440. o’er-sized] CALDECOTT: Covered as with glutinous matter.

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,
'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 felleys from her wheel,
'And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven
'As low as to the fiends!' 475

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—Prithee, say on; he's for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps; say on; come to Hecuba.

471. strumpet, Fortune] Hyphened, Ff, Rowe, Pope. 476. too] two F
477. to the] to th' F. F. F.

471. DRYDEN (Preface to Troilus and Cressida, 1679): What a pudder is here kept in raising the expression of trifling thoughts. Would not a man have thought that the Poet had been bound Prentice to a Wheel-wright for his first Rant? and had followed a Ragman, for the clout and blanket, in the second? Fortune is painted on a wheel; and therefore the writer in a rage, will have Poetical Justice done upon every member of that Engin; after this execution be bowis the Nave downhill, from Heaven to the Fiends: (an unreasonable long mark a man would think;) 'tis well there are no solid Orbs to stop it in the way, or no Element of fire to consume it; but when it came to the earth, it must be monstrous heavy, to break ground as low as to the Center. His making milch the burning eyes of Heaven was a pretty tolerable flight too; and I think no man ever drew milk out of eyes before him: yet to make the wonder greater, these eyes were burning. Such a sight indeed were enough to have rais'd passion in the Gods, but to excuse the effects of it, he tells you perhaps they did not see it. [This passage is criticised not as Shakespeare's, but as 'written by some other poet.' Ed.]

Cotgrave.

473. felleys] CLARENDON: 'Iantes: The fellowes of a wheele; the peecees (of wood) whereof the ring, or the rime consists.'—Cotgrave.

478. jig] STEVENS: A jig was not, in Shakespeare's time, only a dance, but a ludicrous dialogue in metre, and of the lowest kind, like Hamlet's conversation with Ophelia [III, ii, 105-115]. In The Hog hath lost his Pearl, 1614, one of the players comes to solicit a gentleman to write a jig for him. Many of these jigs are entered in the Stationers' Company:—'Philips his Jigg of the Slyppers,' 1595; 'Kempe's Jigg of the Kitchen-stuff Woman,' 1595. MALONE: So, also, in the Prologue to Fletcher's Love's Pilgrimage [misquoted; it should be the Fair Maid of the Inn—Collier's Hist. Eng. Dram. Poetry, iii, 380]: 'A jig shall be clapp'd at, and every rhyme Pray'd and applauded,' &c. A jig was not always in the form of a dialogue; it signified a ludicrous metrical composition, as well as a dance. So in Florio: 'Frotola, a countrie gigge, or round, or countrie song, or wanton verse.' COLIER (Hist. Eng. Dram. Poetry, iii, 380): We have no extant specimen of any such performance. It seems to have been a ludicrous composition in rhyme, sung, or
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 gigge, though pronounced with g soft, after the Italian) was a ballad or ditty sung to a fiddle. DYCER (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 Coigre, 'Farce: f. A (fond and dissolve) Play, Comedie, or Enterlude; also, the Tyg 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 mobled 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 depravation of muffled. 'Mobbled 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 mab (in the North pronounced mob), says Ray, in his Dict. of North Country Words, is 'to dress carelessly. Mabs 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 Sh. 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.'

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] WEDGWOOD: Blind, properly near-sighted. Dutch, 'bij sien
propis videre,'—Killian. CLARENDON: In Cor. II, i, 70, it means 'blind.' Here it is
rather, 'blinding.' 'Beesen' is given by Brodgen, in Provincial Words, as still
current in Lincolnshire. [See also notes on its derivation by F. J. V. and JOHN
ADDIS, in N. & Qu. 15 March, 1873; and 19 April, 1873. Ed.]

486. o'er-teemed] CLARENDON: Exhausted by child-bearing.

495. milch] STEEVENS: Drayton has 'exhaling the milch dew.'—Polyolbion,
zill, 171. DUCHE: 'Milche-hearted,' in Hulett's Abecedarium, 1552, is rendered
lemonus; and in Bibliotheca Eliota, 1545, we find 'lemos,' they that were lyghtly.'
STAUNTON: Moist.

496. passion] SINGER: Would have moved them to sympathy or compassion.
ELZE: According to Mommsen (Perkins-Sh. p. 367), passionate had even in Shake-
spere's days an antiquated sound, and for this reason it would appear more appro-
priate here.
Pol. Look, whether he has not turned his colour and 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? 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 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. [Exit Polonius with all the Players but the First.


498. has tears] has not tears Han.
in’r] in ’his White. in his Ktly. Pray you] Ff, Rowe, Knt, Dyce.

prethet Qq. Prethet or Prythet et cet.

499. the rest] Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Dyce, White, Glo. Huds. the rest of this Qq et cet.


503. litor] lived F, Rowe t, Cald. Knt, Del.

504, 506. desert] defart F,F,F.

505. much] Om. Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Dyce, White.

God’s man] Om. Q’76.


510. hear] here Qq 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. abstracta] 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 datives, but from their position before the verb they slipped into nominatives, as ‘Thou.’
—Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play The Murder 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 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.

Ros. Good my lord.

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' ye! [Exeunt Rosencrans and Guildenstern.]—Now I am alone.

Oh what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

514. ha've] have Q, Q, have't Q, Q.
515. for need] for need Q.
515. dozen] dozen F, F, dozen lines Q, Cap.
516. in't] in't F, et cet.
517. you] ye F, Rowe +, White.

515. for need] for need Q.
516. in't] in't F, et cet.
517. you] ye F, Rowe +, White.

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 N
HAMLET

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

For Hecuba?
What’s Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
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 warm’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.

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 gu, 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 appall 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. appall] appal Rowe. appal Q.  Q. appall Q. Q. appall F.  
539. 540. The...Yet I, As in Johns.  540. 541. Yet...and] Yet I, a Seymour.  
539. 540. The...Yet I, As in Johns.  540, 543. Yet...say] Yet I say Pope,  
539. 540. The...Yet I, As in Johns.  Han. (Pope gives omitted passage in  
540. 542. John-a-dreams] John a-dreames  throughout in Q.  545-549. coward...this I] Commas

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-fatuaus, Jack-a-lantern.
John-a-drynes, 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-drynes his man, whom he had hired,' &c. John-a-Drynes is likewise a foolish character in Whetstone's Promes and Cassandra, 1578. COLIER: 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, 1608 (see Sh. Soc. vol. x, pp. 49):
'His name is John, indeede, saies the cinnick; but neither John a nodd, nor John a
dreames, yet either as you take it.' John-a-drynes was, in all probability, a different
person.
542. unpregnant] JOHNSON: Not quickened with a new desire of vengeance;
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 t Ha t this, ha t Dyce, Sta. White, Kty. Huds. Om. Pope+.
551. 'Swounds...it?'] Why I...it? F;
550. Ha?] Separate line, Steev. It begins line 551, QnFr (Hah, QoO,
Hah, QoO, Ff FF), Rowe, Cap.
Jen. Mal., and ends line 549, Coll. Dyce.

549. me] See Abbott, § 220, for instances of 'me' instead of 'for me', in virtue of its representing the old dative.
550. Ha?] Else ingeniously suggests that this was a substitution either by the Censor or by the actors themselves, for the objectionable oath, 'Swounds;' and that both exclamations in the same place cannot be right. The fact that Q reads 'Sure,' renders it not impossible that the coarser oath was substituted for the milder one by the actors.
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.'
552. pigeon-liver'd] White: It was supposed that pigeons and doves owed their gentleness to the absence of gall. 'A Milk-white Doe...About whose Necke was in a Choller wrouth "Only like me my mistress hath no gall."'—Drayton's Ninth Elegy. Clarendon: 'Gall' is here used metaphorically for 'courage,' so Tro. & Cress. 1. iii. 237. [See Harting's Ornithology of Sh. p. 185.]
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 oppression, a conjecture which the Cam. Edd. mark as 'withdrawn.' I gladly accept the fact on their testimony.
554. region] See line 405.
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. 557. vengeanç [u.] Om. Q. (a misprint?)

555-557. Rowe, Cald. Knt, White, Hal. Three lines, ending yoke...heard...play. Q. Three lines, ending Drab...Braine...


This I sure, this F, Rowe.


559. a dear father murder'd] Pope.

dear father murder'd Q, Qe. a dear father murder'd Pope. the Deere

murdered F, F., the dear murder'da F, F.e. Rowe, Cald. Knt, White, Hal.

560. and fall...play] Cap. Three lines, ending yoke...heard...play. Q.

562, 563. drab, A scullion] drabbe; a stallion Q, Qe. drabb; a stallion Q, Qe. drab-A stallion Pope, Jen. drab-A scullion Styob, Han.

And...scullion] One line, Kty.

554, 555. I...offal] Sievers (Archiv f. n. Sprachen, vol. vi, 1849, p. 12) maintains 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 gibbeted 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 himself in this strain of obfuration, and then, in mere shame of what he has done, turns to ranting at himself for having ranted.

559. father] Jenness: There seems to be no necessity for this word here; or rather it is tautology. Boswell: The dear murder'd for the dear person murdered 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 scullion, i. e. a stupid, heartless, white-livered fellow; as in Lear, II, ii, 36; 2 Hen. VI: I, iii, 43.
Fie upon 't! fo! 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;

564. About] JOHNSON: Wits, to your work! Brain, go about the present business.
STEVEVENS, 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, meaning, '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 'braves' as the reading of Q6. 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 conception of the design to try the conscience of the King with the play. This interjection 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] STEVENS: A number of these stories are collected together by Heywood in his Apology for Actors. [See Sk. 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.
I'll tent him to the quick; if he but blench,  575
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.  580

[Exit]

   he but] a doe Q-Q. he do Q76,  575. and the devil] and the deale QQ.
575. be the devil] be the Diswell F.F.F.  580. relative] relevant Mason.
   be a deale QQ. be a diswell QQ. Cap.

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, 236): Flinch. The
meaning is shown in Wase's translation of the Cynegiticon 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 'bleench' 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.
Irving, 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.
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.

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2. "Grating." CLARENB: Context Act. 3 & Cog. I. i. 15. Elsewhere in Sh. the verb is used interchangeably.


4. "keeps." For instance of the omission of the nominative, see AMBOTT, § 499, and IV. ii. 129, IV. v. 146.


6. "disposition." MINSKLY: Not with apparent unwillingness all the time. This verse, as well as IV. ii., shows that Guild has more apprehension than Ros.
ROSE. Niggard of question, but of our demands
Most free in his reply.

QUEEN. Did you assay him

free] Unapt to...of our... Most free Q76.
Most free of...to our...Niggard Han. El.
Heussi. Most free of...of our...Niggard 14, assay] invite Q76.

14. 15. Did...pastime?] One line, Q9
Ff, Rowe+, Jen. Sta. Huds.

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, § 179, 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-raft 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 se 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

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15. To] unto Han.
16. Madam] Please your majesty Seymour, ending lines 15, 16, majesty....we, and reading upon for on, line 17.
17. o'er-raft] o'er-raught Ff, oe-raught Qq. o'er-wrought Ff, o're-took Ff, Rowe, Pope, Theob. Han. o'er rode Warb.
19. about] here about Qq. here about Q'76, Jen. El.
23. and...me] And much content Seymour, reading 23, 25. To...inclined as two lines, ending heart...inclined.
24-27. With...delights.] Pope. Five lines, ending hart...me...inclin'd...edge, ...delights. Qq. Four lines, ending me

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17 o'er-raught] JOHNSON: Over-reached, that is, overtook.
20 order] CLARENDON: We should now use the plural.
23. matter] DELIUS: There is a tinge of contempt in the use of this word.
26. edge] KNIGHTLEY (Expositor, p. 291): Here 'edge' seems used in a peculiar sense, as the substance of egr, to urge, incite.
27. on to] Although THIZALD (SH. Rest. p. 8t) advocated this reading, yet in both of his editions he followed the Qq.
29. closely] DYCE (Gloss.): Secretly, privately.
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 wildness; so shall I hope, your virtue
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

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

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves. [To Ophelia.] Read on this book;

31. Affront Ophelia.] Separate line, Johns. Begins line 32, QqFF, Rowe+,

32. lawful espials} Om. Qq, Pope,

33. Will] We'll Qq,
unseen} and unseen Q76.

34. frankly] frankly Qq, frankly
Qr, frankly F,F,F, Om. Q76.

35. the affliction} Q76. 'th affliction
QqFF, Rowe+., Jen. Coll. El. White,
Dyce ii, Huds.

36. no] no, F, no. F,F,F,F,
38. for your] for my QQ, Pope+,
Cap. El.

39. art} beauty...virtue] Walker. beauti-
ties...virtues QqFF et cet.

40. shall} Om. Pope, Han.


[Exit Queen.] Theob. Om. QqFF.

43. 44. here...ourselves] here, whilst
we (If so your majesty shall please) re-
tire conceale'd Q76.

43. here} here, QQ, here:
Qq, please you] please ye FF, Rowe+

44. [To Ophelia.] Johns.

31. Affront] JOHNSON: To meet directly.

32. lawful espials] STEEVENS: Spies. CALDECOTT: Spies justifiably inquisi-
tive. SINGER: 'An espiall in warres, 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] DYCE (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] lowliness Q, Q₂. lowlilnh Q₂. We are] We're Pope⁺, Jen. Dyce
49. 'tis too] 'tis F. it is but too Han.

47. too much] Johnson : It is found by too frequent experience.

47. visage] Bailey (ii, 341): Can anything be more preposterous than to talk of sugaring 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 1, ii, 140.


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 em-
A vor to discover the train, and to show how one sentiment produces another. 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 alone: 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-
[56. To be, or not to be.]

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 Q₂ 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 conceived 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 intent 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 produced by the change in the point at which this solus speech is introduced. '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 Q₂. 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 56.] 'To be, or not to be: ay, there's the point,' as it is in the Quarto, is equivalent 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, London, 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 Hackett'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,

Anon. (Misc. Okt. 1752), Hoffa, Walker.

59. a sea of] asea of Wards.

arrows] arrows Anon. (Misc.

errors of 58. slings, 59. sea, and 59. a sea of].

man criticisms on this soliloquy, seeziegel, Tieck, Rohrbach, Rümeli (foot-
note), in the Appendix, Vol. II.]

58. slings] Walker (Crit. ii. 16): Stings is undoubtedly the true reading. [See
Gerth's extraordinary interpretation of this word in Appendix, Vol. II.]

59. sea] Popr: Perhaps siege, which continues the metaphor of 'slings,' 'arrows,'
'taking arms,' and represents the being encompassed on all sides with troubles
Theobald: Or one might emend nearer the traces of the text: 'th' essay of
troubles.' [Singer has no doubt that this was the word,] or 'a 'say 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. Aeschylus 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: κακων θαλασσα. 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
Honour 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[rake] (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 we 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 possse 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 inclde 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 asters 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 thronging 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 wrongs 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 seat of troubles, And by a poniard, or by depositing, end them.' Or the line 'inextricably, 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,' &c.—The Passenger of Benvenuto, 1612. KRIGHTLEY (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 bodkin 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 f] Pope. them, Q, Qs. them:
Qs. Ff. them. Rowe, Han. Cap.
Qs. Ff. Ff. more; Q. more: Q, Qs. more: Q, Qs.
61. more; ] more, Q, Qs. more: Q, Qs.
63. to,—] Cap. too; Qq. too; Rowe +,
to sleepe No Q. dye, to sleepe No F, Fs.
Jen. Cald. dye, to sleepe F, F, F, to F, F, F,
to sleepe No F, F, dye, to sleepe No F, F.
Rowe. dye; to sleepe; No Cap. dye: 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, Inglesby cites a passage from Ritson's Memoirs of the Celts (p. 118), which is itself a translation of one in Ἐλιαν, 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 Inglesby'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 Bean. & 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 Compendia, 1576, a book which Sh. had certainly read. In fol. 30 it is said: 'In the holy scripture, death is not accomplished 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? Most 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; 65
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,

64. wish'd. To] weft to Qq. die, to sleep: to Qq. Glo.+
64. 65. To...sleep/] Cap. die to sleepe, 66. come,] come QQs. come? QQ.
To sleepe, Qq. die,—to sleep; To sleep l
Knt, Dyce. die, to sleep;—To sleep, F, Fc.
Sta. die,—to sleepe,—To sleep;— Ktly. shuffled} shuffled'd F,Fc.

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 incumbrance of this mortal body. STEEVENS: Compare A Dolfull Discours of Two Strangers, &c., published by Churchyard, among his Chippes, 1575: 'Yes, 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 sould,' which is the same word as the slough which the snake casts every year. If sense it means the same as 'the case of flesh,' in Bondaça [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.
CALDERCOTT: 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 Shakespeare knew this meaning of the word, but we know with what keen looks he must have examined nature. Beyond a doubt, ravel would be better, but it would harmonise less with the received text. Elze (Shakespeare-Jahrbuch, vol. ii, p. 362) advocates the substitution of vail 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 whips and scorns of time,

by Stevens. Else supports his conjecture very ably, but it is needless. 'Shuffle' decides; a coil may be said to be shuffled off, but soil would be shaken off. HUDDON: As Wordsworth has it: 'the fretful stir unprofitable, and the fever of the world.' In N. & Q. 23 Feb. '56, INGLEBY started the question of how far the popular interpretation of 'coil,' as the body, is justified; the discussion was continued by 'X.' on the 15 March following, who maintained that in every instance where the word is used by Sh. it means turmoil, tumult; and in a second communication to the same journal on the 11th Oct., the same correspondent pertinently asks whether the contrast be not intended between 'coil' and 'quietus.' INGLEBY replied (8 Nov. '56) that the interpretation of body for 'coil' was a popular error, not his, and that it perhaps arose, as suggested to him by a correspondent, from a confusion on the part of the public between the present passage and Colossians, iii, 9, with a reference also to 2 Corinthians, v, 1-5. H. T. RILEY (8 Nov. '56, also) has no doubt that 'coil' refers to the body, and that it was probably suggested by Romans, vii, 24. The coil received its quietus on 18 Sept. '58, by 'A. M. of Greenock,' who cites a derivation of the word from the Gaelic cochail, meaning the scaly integument which clothes the lower limbs of a mermaid [1]. INGLEBY, however, in his excellent Sh. Hermeneutics (p. 88, footnote), says that the analogies are too strong in favor of the 'mortal coil' being what Fletcher, in Bondura, calls the 'case of flesh.' [Caldecott's interpretation, that 'coil' is used in both senses, seems to me the true one. Ed.]

68, 69. Must... life;] WALKER (Crit. iii, p. 265): Arrange metri gratid, if not also to the heightening of the effect, as three lines, ending 'pause.' , 'calamity,' 'life.'

68. pause] CALDECOTT: Stop our career, occasion reflection. MOBERLY: This word is for obvious reasons made to take up the time of three syllables in pronunciation; so correction is needless.

68. respect] WARBURTON: Consideration, motive. SINGER: This is Shakespeare's most usual sense of the word.

70. time] WARBURTON: The evils complained of are not the product of time or duration only, but of a corrupted age or manners. We may be sure that Sh. wrote 'of th' time.' JOHNSON: 'Whips' and 'scorns' have no great connection with one another, or with times. Though at all times scorn may be endured, the times that put men ordinarily in danger of whips are very rare. If 'whips' be retained, read; 'whips and scorns of tyrants.' But I think that quip [anticipated by GREY (ii, 295)]. Ed.), a sneer, a sarcasm, is the proper word. I propose, but not confidently, 'the quips and scorns of title.' [These conjectures of Johnson's were omitted in the Variorum of 1793 and subsequent ones. Ed.] STEEVENS: I think we might venture to read, 'whips and scorns of the times,' i.e. times satirical as the age of Sh., which probably furnished him with the idea. HUNTER (ii, 240): 'Time' is used by early writers as equivalent to the modern expression, The Times. Taylor the Water Poet has: 'mock'd in rhyme, And made the only scornful theme of Time.' Sh. himself seems to use time in the same manner in Rich. III: IV, iv, 106. CLARENDON: Compare Southwell, Saint Peter's Complaint, stanza v, l. 4 [p. 12, ed. Grosart]: 'The scorne of Time, the insamy of Fame.'
The oppressor’s wrong, the proud man’s contumely,
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] 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 you 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 stiked him with boydekins anoone.’—The Monk’s 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,

77. grunt[ grunt Q76, Pope+, Cap.
life,] life Q Q2, Pope, Theob.
Warb.
79. The undiscover’d] The undiscover’d

That undiscover’d Pope+

79. bourn] Cap. bourn Pope+
Rowe.


76. farde] NAES: 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, 243): ‘These fardels’ refer to the evils just specified, and the text should so read. WALKER (Crit. iii, 266): The F1 reading is ‘perhaps right.’ Contract ‘who would’ to who’d.

LETTSON (footnote to forgoing): 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 Q3 loses, with the pronoun ‘these,’ the essential thought: that the crosses which Hamlet has just enumerated are the fardels. CORSON also upholds the F1.

77. grunt] JOHNSON: This can scarcely be borne by modern ears. (Note on ‘hugger-mugger,’ IV, v, 80): If phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost. STEVEN: In Stanyhurst’s Virgil, 1582, ‘supremum congreguit’ 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 displeasing sound: thus Chaucer, ‘But never groan he at no strook but oon.’—The Monkes Tale, line 718, ed. Morris. Compare Jul. Ces. 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 cooles of this age will grate and sweat under this massie burden,’ &c. STEVEN: ‘The noise of many of the wisest.’—Reg. Scot: Discoverie of Witches, 1586.

79. The] KEIGHTLEY (Exp. 382): ‘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] NAES: 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 from Purgatory, not from the last and eternal residence of souls in bliss—
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment

81. ills F_F F
82. of us all] Om. Qq.
83. native hue] healthful face Q.76.
84. hue] heir Qq. heir F_F F_F
85. Is...thought] Shows sick and pale

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 tenebrosum, Illic 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 'invulnerable 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 dived with thought, and anguish.'—Bacon, Henry VII, p. 230. [Compare 'Take no thought for the morrow.'—Matt. vi, 34.]
86. pitch] 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.

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;

well,—Pope. you, well;—Theob. Warb.
you; well, indifferent well. Seymour.

49. long] Om. Q’76. much Pope, Han.

95. you now.] F,F,F,F, Cap. you now
Qq,F,F,F, Rowe, Pope, Sing. Kill. you, now Theob. et cet.

No, not I] No, no F, Rowe,


95. No...ought.] Cap. One line,

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 Ff, 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 ‘pitch’ 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. Hamlet, 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 excited 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?

99. the things] these things Qq, JEN. rich; their perfume lost,] Qq, x.

92. well] MOBERLY: 'Well' becomes twice over a disyllable 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. rff. 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 stuff. Ham. hears the noise, and instantly suspends 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 excused 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.
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 nunery; why wouldst thou be a

109. with] your Fl.
110. into] in Q4, to Q4, Rowe.
111. his] its Pope. it's Cap.
113. sometime] sometimes F5, F4, Rowe, Pope.
114. inoculate] innoculate F4, inoculate F4, inoculate Q4, evacuat Q4, evacuate Q4, evacuate Q4, evacuate Q76, Jen.
115. I loved you not.] I did love you once. Rowe ii; Pope, in the margin.
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.
117. H.] Delius: This refers to 'old stock.'
breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me; I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have 125 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, 125. revengeful, ambitious] revengeful. Ambitious, F,F,F,F.
126. in, imagination is] in imagnation, to F,F, Rowe.

Sing. Kty, Glo. Dyce it, Cla.
129. old] Om. Qq, Pope +, Jen.
132. 133. Let...house.] Two lines, the first ending him, Qq.
133. no where] no way Fi, Cald. Knx. in’s] in his Kty.

125. beck] Steevens: That is, always ready to come about me. Caldecott: With more vicious 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 Lettsom, 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 ignorn-

134. 141. [Aside] Ed.
135. plague plague Qc.
140. too] to Qq.
prattling Cald. Knt i.
143. yourselves, your] your selfes Qc, your selfe QQ, Q,. your self F,F,F, Rowe, Pope, Han.
144. jig] Q'76. gig Qq, gidge Fk.
you amble] & amble Qq, Jen.
145. 146. wantonness your ignorance Qq, your ignorance] ignorance your wantonness Anon. your ignorance] ignorance Qq.
146. 147. God's] Heavens Q'76.
147. God's] Heavens Q'76.
148. monster] DELIUS: Compare Oth. IV, i, 63.
149. 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 Monocles [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 prattlings, as 'jig' and 'amble' do to pace. COLLIER (ed. 2): The (MS) sustains the Qq.
150. nickname] WEDGWOOD: Ekename or nkename, agnomen. — Prompt. Parv. Ekename, from ek, 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 suit the meaning. Such an original may perhaps be found in Lap. like namm, Fin. liika nimi, Esthon. liig nimmi; a by-name, surname, the first element of which in the three languages signifies an excess of, beside.
151. 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.

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.  Go F,  Go F,F,F,  Rowe, Pope, Han.

147. no more marriages] no mo mar-
riage Qq.
148. live] Om. F,F,F,F,
149. [Exit.] Exit Hamlet. Ff.
150. o'erthrown] othroune Q.Q.Q.

151. scholar's, soldier's] Qq, Han.
Sing. ii, Coll. ii, Sta. White, Ktly, Huds.
soldier's, scholar's, QqF et cet.
scholler's, QqF, QqQ, QqQ.
152. expectancy] expectanctie F,F,F,
Q expectation FQ, Jen.

as a mask for their wantonness. MOBERLY: Use ambiguous words, as if you did
not know their meaning.

148. one] MALONE: His step-father. COLE RIDGE: Observe this dallying with
the inward purpose, characteristic of one who had not brought his mind to the steady
acting point. He would pain 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 QqF, 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 odd. who notice
this line justify the reading of Qq, even while following the QqF 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 QqF is correct, and conveys
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 Makk. 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: Conn
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* F; I am F
F, Rowe +.
156. music] musick Q, Q, Q,
word] Han. vowels; Q. vowels:
or vowels: F, Rowe +. vowel / Jen.
157. that noble] what noble Q
158. jangled out of tune] F, Rowe +, Cors. jangled out of time, Q, Jen.
jangl'd, out of tune Cap. et cet.
159. unmatch'd] unmatch'd Q, un-
match'd Jen. (a misprint?)
form] forme Q, F*
160. To have] Cap. T' have Q, F,
Rowe +, Jen. El. White, Dyce ii, Huds.
I see] I see. Exit. Q, Q, Q, Q, El.

pare 2 Hen. IV: II, iii, 21. Tschirschwitz: 'Mould of form' would be a disagreeable 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.
157. tune] See Mach. IV, iii, 235, and notes. Corson: The phrase, 'out of tune,' is certainly an adverbialement 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 body. Conformatio quaedam et figura totius oris et corporis.'—Baret's Alcarius. Dyce (Gloss.): Form, person in general.
160. blown] Capell (i, 136): Youth in its bloom. Clarendon: The metaphor from a flower, as in 152, is resumed here.
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.' Tschirschwitz: 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
ACT III. SC. I.]  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 on brood;
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger; which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England,

Re-enter...] Cap. Enter... QqFr.
Pope+.
162. SCENE III. Pope+, Jen.
164. soul] soule ? F
166. I do doubt] I doubt Jen.
Love] Fl. Love, QQs. Lose:
QqFr. Love / Q76 et cet.
169. it] Om. QQs.
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 Blason, b. ii, ch. xi, p.
238. So in The Booke of Huntynge, Hawkyng, Fishyng: First they ben egges, 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.]

434), says that this idiom is not to be found in any of Shakespeare's authentic
works. RIVES (Harv. Prize Essay, p. 19) notes 'but a single authentic instance':
viz. Wind. Tale, I, ii, 427. ABBOTT, § 152, refers to the present passage, and to
All's Well, V, iii, 181. SCHMIDT (Lexion) furnishes the following in addition.
Pass. Pilgrim, 342; Tit. And. IV, iii, 51; IV, ii, 44; Pericles, IV, ii, 71; Ham.
I, ii, 175 (Qq). In N. & Qu., 19 Dec. 1874, RULE adds: Tam. of the Sh. III, i,
249; and Ham. V, i, 91.
For the demand of our neglected tribute;
Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well; but yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia?
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;
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. [Exeunt.

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174. Whereon...on't?] Three lines, ending beating...himselfe...on't? Qq.
175. but...grief] One line, QqQpQy. do J] I doe Q76. I do Steev.
177. his grief it Qq, reading But...of it as one line. this griefe Ff,

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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. iii, 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.

183. griefs] CORSON: In the sense of grievances. See III, ii, 323.

185. find] CLARENDON: 'If she does not discover his secret.' In All's Wart.
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 robust-

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 1, 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. Coason: 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 (Critt. 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.

9. periwig-pated] Q.76, periwig-pated
Q. periwig-pated F.; periwig parted F. 
Perrywig-parted F.; periwig parted F.
to tatters] to tatters Q. Om. Q.76.

10. split] solest Q. 
12. could] Fi, Rowland, Knt, Dyce;
Strab. would Q 3 et cet.

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 periwig but players and pictures.' Mosely: 'Periwig' is simply an Anglicised pronunciation of *perrugus*.

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*, 1, 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, 2, 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*, 1, 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.' [1, i, p. 442, ed. Dodsley, 1835.] 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 Mahouin of might, And Termagant, my God so bright.' Ritson: 'Grennyng upon her lyke Termagnautes in a play.'—Bale's *Acts of English Notaries, Reliques*, 1, 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 3 *Hen. IV*: V, iv, 114. It is the *Trissigante* of the Italians, or *Tervagant* of the French Romancers. Both Singer and Wedgwood cite Florio, 1611: 'Termiistus, 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 'Termagant.' In *Sir Beues of Hamtown*, line 689, it is spelled 'Teruagaunt.' It occurs as 'Terma-
ACT III, SC. II.]  HAMLET  227

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'er-step not the modesty of nature; for any thing so done 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

\[\text{gaunt' in Chaucer, Cant. Tales, 15221.}
\text{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 r vibration, as it is of the l 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 kinge 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 bye.'—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 braggart tyrant, it is sufficient to cite such lines as these: [I am] the myghtyest conqueroure that eyer walkid on ground; 'All the whole world from the north to the sowthe, I ma them stramde with won worde of my mouthe.' And of his enemies, 'with a twynke of myne eye not won be left alive.' 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 thyng pagon, and in the stree 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.

\[\text{19. from'] For instances of from, meaning apart from, away from, without a verb of motion, see Abbott, § 158; also Mack. 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 scorn.

22. very age'] Johnson: The 'age' of the 'time' can hardly pass. May we
pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy of, though 23
it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious
grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allow-

23. tardy] tardy Q.,
Mason, Walker. off Q'y6Ft et cet.
23, 24. though it make] though it
makes Q'y6, 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
't 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 de-
lineate exactly the manners of the age, and the particular humor of the day.
Keightley (Exp. 292): 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, 1850, 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.
imitates 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 'impress' 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] Mason (p. 387, anticipating Walker, Crit. iii, 266): That is,
come short of. Caldecott: Without spirit or animation; heavily, sleepily done.
Abbott, § 165: 'Off' is perhaps simply of, i.e. 'fallen short of.' Compare superede.
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.' Tschischwitz
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 Q. o're-way F., o're-way F. F. S. F., Rowe, Pope, Han.
29. accent of Christians] accent of Christian Pope +
    nor the] or the Rowe ii, Pope.
30. nor man] Nor Turks Q., El. or Norman F., Rowe. nor Mussulman Farmer. or man Pope, Han. Johns. or Turk White, Huds.

26. theatre] MALONE: Compare Jonson's Postmaster, 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 indelicately 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 journeymen Creator. [The profanity consists in alluding to Christians. Ed.]
30. nor man] COLLIER (ed. 2): Farn er's conj. receives some countenance from Q. The (MS) omits to 'nor man.' WHITE: The reading of the Q 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 even 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. Restored, p. 173): According to the Q 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 these 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 Q Ff, which is 'had made men.' RANS 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 villanous, 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, Sta. Kity, Glo. +, Mob. Om, Qq et cet. 38. too] to Qq. 37. themselves] of themselves Ff, Fff Ff, Om, Qq. 41. [Exeunt Players.] Exit Players.

33. indifferently] Measurably. See III, i, 122. 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 witte,’ &c. Again, in Tarleton’s News from Purgatorio: ‘—I abstained myself from all plays, as wanting that merrye Roscius of plaiers 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 Betwixte Churchyard and Camell, &c., 1560, I find the following passage: ‘But Vices in stage plaies, When theyr matter is gon, They laugh out the reste To the lookers 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 Q1, 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 Q1, which is mere prose, although chopped up into apparent verse, is curious, because it seems levelled at William Kemp, who about this date quitted 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 subdued. 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 Q1 was probably an extemporaneous addition to the text by the actor, and had but a passing application. Halliwell is inclined to think that this addition in Q1 should be retained in the text.
ACT III, SC. ii.

HAMLET

Enter Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

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

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste.— [Exit Polonius.]

Will you two help to hasten them?

Ros. 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 e’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?

Enter...Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.] Enter...Guylphenger & Rosencraus. Qq (after work f line 42).

42. SCENE IV.] Warb. Johns. will...work] One line, Ff, Rowe.

43. too] to Qq.

44. [Exit Polonius.] Fi. Om. Qq.

45. too] to Knt.


Steev. Var. El.

[Exeunt...] Exeunt they two. Qq.

Qq. Exeunt these two. Q. Qs. Exeunt.


F, F, f, What do, Fq. What how, Qq.

Qq. What how, Qq, Qs. Enter Horatio.] Before line 47.

Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. Jen.

48. sweet lord] my lord Q76.

50. coped] copd Qq. cop’d Ff, Rowe.

Pope, Theob. Warb. Cald. met Q76.

51. lord,—] Rowe. lord. Qq Ff, Cald.

Cris.

53. no revenue hast] haft no revenue Q76.

54. thee?] thee, Qq. thee. Ff, Rowe.

Why?] Om. Pope.

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] absurd Q.Q,
57. **fawning.]** fawning; Q.Q, fawning; Q.Q, fawning F.F.F.
      feigning? F.F. Rowe. faining; Cald. hear F.Q.
      hear F.F.F.

58. dear] clear Johns. conj.
58. **her]** my Fl. Knt. distinguish, her election] disting-
      quis her election, Qq (election Q.Qq).
59. distinguish, her election] distinguishing her election, Qq (election Q.Qq).
60. **Hath]** S' hath Q.Q, S' hath Q.

60. **Hath]** S' hath Q.Q, S' hath Q.
62. **fortune's]** fortune F.F.F.

55. **candied]** Dyce (Glos.): Sugared, flattering, glazing. 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. Knightley: I see not what 'pregnant' can mean
      here. It might be better to read fiant, 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 faining, 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 Shakespearian, and may be
      what Sh. wrote. The use of a cognate accusative is a marked feature of Shake-
      speare'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.
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. Hafl
Qq et cet.
64. commingled] Dyce. co-mingled
Fl. commeded Qq. commeded Q76.
commended Q'73. commt'd Cap. conj.

(Notes, i, pt. ii, p. 24)
68. of heart] of hearts Q'76.
71. scene] Scene F, Scene F
72. thee, of] Ff, Rowe+, Cap. Coll.
El. Del. thee of Qq et cet.

63. Hath] CORSON: Hath of the Qq is a solecism. Though the subject-nomina-
tive 'thou' is second person, the predicate-nominaive '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 weare
her in my heart's heart-gore,' whereupon CLARENDON asks, should not 'gore' 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 servor
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 foign madness,
read carefully over the present speech, marking its sobriety of expression even amid
all its ardor, its singleness and purity of sentiment and 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,' as I
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 soul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;

73. a-foot] on foot] Q'76.
74. very] Om. F, F, F.
thy] my F, Knt, Coll, i, Cora.
mine F, et cet.
his occulted] then his hidden 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 expulsive. 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 upholders 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. occulted] 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 speech 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. TSCHESCHWITZ: This is the third time that this theological reflection occurs to the Prince. See I, iv, 40; II, ii, 575.
79. Vulcan's] DELUSS: 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

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, ROSENCRANTZ, GUIDENSTERN, and other Lords attendant, with the Guard carrying torches.

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

80. face.] Face: F, face? F.
81. judgemenst] judgement F,
82. In] To F, Rowe, Pope, Han.
Knt.
83. he] a Q.
84. detecting] detected Q. detection
Q76.
85. SCENE VI. Pope, Han, Jen. SCENE V. Warb. Johns.
They are] They're Pope+, Dyce

CLARENDBON adduces the following rendering by Coverdale of Job, xli, 24: 'His hert is as harde as a stone, and as fast as the stythye that the hammer man smyteth upon.'

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] CLARENDBON: Pay for the thing stolen. Compare Rom. & Jul. I, i, 231. For 'theft' in the sense of the thing stolen, see Exodus, xxii, 4. [See 'offence,' 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 role 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]. CLARENDBON: '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 eat, means both is and eats. The King inquires in the first sense, Hamlet answers in the second.
HAMLET

[ACT III, SC. II.

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?

88-93. Excellent...say?] Prose, Ff.

Eight lines, Qq, ending ‘faith,...nyre,...

so...Hamlet,...mine...Lord...say...’

88. chameleon’s] Camelion’s QqFF.

91. [pass to their Seats. Cap.

92. mine now. My lord.] Johns.

93. ‘the] in the Q’s, Mal. Steev.


88. chameleon’s] CLARENDON: See Sir Thomas Browne’s Vulgar Errors, iii, 22, 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.

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 Prugna, 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,
ACT III. SC. ii.]

HAMLET

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

Ham. And what did you enact?

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

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

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 Alkmene, which have escaped oblivion. On the title-page of Q, it is said, 'As it hath beene diverse times acted by his Highnesses servants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where.'

96. enact] 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?'

97. Cæsar] MALONE: A Latin play on the subject of Cæsar'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 Cæsar before the time of Sh. CLARENDON: It is now known that a piece called Cæsar's Fall was played in 1602 by Antony Munday, Drayton, Webster, Middleton, and others, and it is probable that the Julius Cæsar of Sh. may have appeared as early as 1601.

99. brute] 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. 101

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?

[LYING 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] dear Q, Q, Q, dear Q, Q, Q, Q, Q, Q,
103. mete] Johns. metile QFF, Rowe+.
104. [Aside to the King] Cap. Oh, ho! O, oh, Q, Q, Q, that I! that I! that Q.
105. [LYING... Rowe. Seating himself at Ophelia’s feet. Cap. (after line 103).

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.


105. lap] STEEVES: 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 Fancie: ‘To lie along in ladies lappes.’ DOUCE: 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,
and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by'r lady, he must build churches then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is, 'For, O! for, O! the hobby-horse is forgot.'

124. memory [Memory F., 124, 125. he...hr] Fr. a...a Qq.
by'r lady] by'r-lady F., byr-lady 126, 127. hobby-horse...hobby-horse]
F., ber Lady Qq (Lady Q.), berlady Hoby-horfe...Hoby-horse F,Fas.
F,Fas. Om. Q?76

erly a fawn-color a good deal heightened with red, and that the term came from the French 'couteur d'isabelle.'—According to the Dict. de l'Acad. Fr., 'isabelle' is a color 'entre le blanc et le jaune, mais dans lequel le jaune domine.' It se dit surtout du poil des chevaux.' STAUNTON, who thought that Warburton's emendation was possibly right, says that 'it is not at all improbable that in the scene before us Hamlet was intended to accompany these words with the action of flinging off his mourning cloak. WHITE thinks 'for,' of the QqFr, 'a trifling variation from the true text [viz., 'for'] hardly to be called a corruption. HALLIWELL: Shakespeare's intention was most likely to make Ham, here speak incoherently. If this be not the case, some sort of meaning may be elicited in this way: 'nay, then let the devil wear black, for even I will have a suit of mourning; if I wear one, the devil himself may.' KIGHTLEY [reading, 'I'll not have a suit,' &c.]: When the critics shall have proved,—which they have not done yet,—that a dress trimmed with sable was called 'a suit of sables,' I will grant that Hamlet did not mean mourning, and that the negative is not needful. ELZE (Sb. Jahrbuch, Bd. xi): The contrast between a suit of sables and a black mourning garment lies not in the color, but in the costliness and splendor of the material. In accordance with the immemorial biblical usage of mourning in sackcloth and ashes, mourning garments to this day are made of coarse and harsh material, whereas for the trimming of a suit of sable the most gorgeous and brilliant stuff was selected.

125. not thinking on] KNIGHT: He shall suffer being forgotten.

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 footcloth; 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. DYCE 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.] Steevs., from the Ff, substantially. The Trumpets founds (found Q Q₂). Dume show folowes. Enter a King and a Queene, the Queene embrasing him, and he her, he takes her vp, and declines his head vpon her necke, he lyes him downe vpon a bancke of flowers,he, seeing him asleep, leaves him: anon come in (anon comes Q Q₂): an other man, takes off his crowne, kills it, pours peston in the sleepers eares, and leaves him: the Queene returns, finds the King dead, makes passionate action, the payffner with some three or foure come in (comes in Q Q₂)

again, seems to condole with her, the dead body is carried away, the payffner woos the Queene with gifts, thee seems harth awhile, but in the end accepts loue, Qq, and substantially Cap. Jen.

[Exeunt.]

A King and a Queen] a Duke and Dutchess, with regal coronets, Theob. + .

[Exeunt.]

[Exeunt.]

[Exeunt.] Om. Qq.

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 'blanches.' 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 mischief.

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 Gorboduc and Gascogin'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 be 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 therein. 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?  

Enter Prologue.

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

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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 poisoner.' And that it should therefore read: 'miching Malhecho,' and so introduces it in his text. Henley very properly points out that *mallecho* 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 Queen,* iii, cantos 9, 10? Farmer (cited by Steevens): 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 Year,* 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, *Acciapiarre:* 'To *miche,* to shrug or sneake in some corner.' Caldecott: 'Mychyn or stelyn pryvyle.'

Prompt. Parv. Knight: The skulking crime pointed out in the Dumb Show is, in one sense of Hamlet's wild phrase, *miching mallecho,* his own secret purpose from which mischief will ensue, is *miching mallecho,* in another sense;—in either case 'it means mischief.' Maginn (Fraser's Maga. Dec. 1839): In the Qq we find the traces of the true reading: *mucho mallecho,* much mischief. Dyce (Gloss.): *'Malbecco.* . . . . . An evil action, an indecent and indecorous behaviour; malefaction.'—Connelly's *Span. and Eng. Dict.,* Madrid. Compare: 'Tho. Be humblel, 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 Michele, or secretly to hide himself out of the way, as Truants doe from schoole.' Mackay (*Atheneum,* 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 Phoebus' cart gone round

meaning of the Gaelic into which Ham. in his indignation bursts. 'Miching mallecho' is miannach maitleachadh, the Gaelic for désirous of procrastination. 'Miching' is still in common use in New England, and pronounced (as it is spelled in Webster) meaching or meetching. 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 posy; 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.'
HAMLET

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;

or Que. QrF,Fv, Queen. F, Dutch.

146. orbed] orb'd the Qq.
147. borrow'd] Cap. borrowed Qq
     FT, Rowe + , White, Cam. Cl.
148. times twelve thirties] time, twelve
     thirties Fv, Rowe. time twelve thirty
     Qv76. time twelve thirties Pope + . times
     twelve thirty Han.

150. commutual] co-mutual Fv, Fv
151. &c. P. Queen.] Steev. '78. Quee.

146. wash] DELIAS : Land overflowed by the sea at high water. TSCHEISCHWITZ:
In the Netherlands it is called Watt, the alluvium of the coast. CLARENDON: Obviously, it means the sea itself.

150. commutual] CLARENDON: An intensive, like 'commixture' and 'corrigal.'

151. &c. P. Queen.] STEEVES: 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.'

155. distrust] DELIAS: That is, I am distrustful on your account. Compare
'fear 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.' STEEVES: 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.'

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. TSCHEISCHWITZ 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!


159. love] Lord Qq.

160. sized] cit'd Qq, cit't Qq, cit'd Qq.

161. Where love...there.] Om. Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.

162. Where love...there.] Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.


164. operant] working Fq, their functions] my functions.

165. their functions] my functions.

166. kind] kind, Qq, kind, Fq, a kind Rowe ii.

167. thou—] thou, Qq confound] confound Fq.

157. holds quantity] CAPFELL (i, 137): That is, bear proportion the one to the other. CALDESCOTT: 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 infection in 's' with two singular nouns, see ABBOTT, § 336; Macb. I, iii, 147; III, ii, 37; V, v, 20. Also ABBOTT, § 388a, for a paraphrase of this passage.]

158. CAPFELL (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. 1, 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] STEEVES: Active. See its use with 'poison,' Timon, IV, iii, 25.

164. operant] STEEVES: 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.]
Ham. [Aside] Wormwood, wormwood!

'The instances that second marriage move
'Aren't 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,

Wormwood, wormwood! That's wormwood. Qq (in the margin), Cap.
Jen. Steev. Var.; and Seymour, completing the line with To her, Mark, Horatia.


174. Husband dead] Lord that's dead Qq, Sta.

176. you think] you. Think Fl.

170. wed] Tschirschwitz construes this as an imperative.
174. kill ... dead] Elze: This tautology occurs not in the text. See Tit. And. III, i, 92. Tschirschwitz: Originally the phrase was not tautological, because the Anglo-Saxon curfel 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 active 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 passages 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 'Thebus,' 'Neptune,' &c., and the stiff inversions of 'about the world have times twelve threes been,' 'discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must,' &c.; and, moreover, observe how exactly the couplet commencing the Player-King's speech, 'I do believe,' &c., and the couplet concluding it, 'So think thou wilt,' &c., would conjoin 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.
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 bled, 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 contempt, 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.
[178–203. the dozen or sixteen lines.]

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 unmask 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
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 announct, 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 symptom of the lines which Ham. was to insert.' Gervinus (2te Band, p. 102, 3te 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 Shakspere 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 Hamlet, 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 rôles 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 hercupon 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 Hamlet) 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 Ham. 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 unkennel 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] TSCHEISCHWITZ 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.
'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] either, Qq, either, Q4.
187. enactures] Q76, Johns. enactures Qq. enactures F F F, enactures F F F, Rowe, +.
188. laments] lament Jen. (misprint?)
189. joys] joys F F F, F F F, joy Qq.
189. grieues] grieues. F F F, grieues Qq.
190. nor] and Pope, Han.
190. else] Om. Pope, Han.

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 resolver
is interested, is a debt only to himself, which he may therefore remit at pleasure.

186. 187. violence .. destroy] DELIUS: The plural is to be explained by supposing
that in 'violence' there are two 'violences' understood; 'of grief' and 'of joy.' CLARENDON: A more natural explanation is that the verb is attracted by the
nearer substantive 'enactures.' Compare I, ii, 38.

187. enactures] JOHNSON: What grief or joy enact or determine in their violence
is revoked in their abatement. CLARENDON: Enactments, resolutions. Perhaps
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,
xiii, 16.
Hamlet

Act III, Sc. ii.

'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. favouriter] F., favourite QqF, F2, et cet.
196. kitherto] kithertoo QqQq, kither
to F.
197. friend.] Friend : F., friend ?
F2, F.
199. seasons him] sees in him Anon.*
204. So think] Think still Q'76, Theob.
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 I.]

197. not needs] CLARENDON: For this construction, see Temp. II, 1, 121; Much Ade, 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. DYCIE (Gloss.): 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:
HAMLET

"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
while;
My spirits grow dull, and faint I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep._ [Sleeps.
_P. Queen._ 'Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mishance 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...wise] once I be a widdow,
never I be a wife Q(76) (see Q), Jen. once
be a widdow, never I be wife Q, once
never be, and then a wife Q76.

214. Ham. If...now?] Dyce. Ham.
If...now Q(76) (in the margin) (Ae Q76)
Fl, Ham. If...now— Pope+, Jen. Coll.
White, Del. Ham. [to Oph.] If...now—
t now] her now Coll. [MS. El.

215. 'Tis...wise] Two lines, Fl.

215. here] her Q, Q(76). Fl.
217. [Sleeps] Pope. (After brain),
Fl, Rowe. Om. Q(76). lays him down.
Cap.

218. between] between Q, Q(76). Cap.
[Exit.] Exeunt. Q(76). Exit

220. protests] Fl, Rowe+, Cap. Knt,
doth protest Qq et cet.
too much] to much F.

'the foxe will be an annker,' &c. Also, in _The Vision of Piers Ploughman_, l. 55:
'As ancre and hermites 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 anchore's chere.' 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. Q’76. Qq, Cap. et cet.
227. how?] how Qq. 231. that have] shall have QqQs
229. wife] wife's Theob., +, wife. 232. wince] Steev. winch QqFs,
Kly. Rowe+, Cap. Jen. un
230. o] Ff, Rowe+, Dyce, Glo. of rung F,Fs, 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 trop or turn we give things. HUNTER (ii, 238): 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 reason that we meet with this word thus oddly introduced.

228. image] See Macb, II, iii, 74.
228. Vienna] COLLIERS: The Guiana of Q, 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. RYSON: 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 gawded.' See Mother Bombie, I, iii.

wricked and proverces whose gawld butcher are tutcht, will rehyne again
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-
derer. Pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come:

The croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

\textit{Luc.} 'Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and
'time agreeing;

'Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
'Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
'With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
'Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.'

[Poors the poison into the sleeper's ear.

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

Oph. The king rises!

Ham. What, frighted with false fire!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play!

King. Give me some light.—Away!

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep;
So runs the world away.
Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers,—if the rest of
my fortunes turn Turk with me,—with two Provincial roses
on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, 265
sir?

263. feathers] Malone: It appears from Decker's *Gul's Hornbooks* 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 Quoique*, 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.

264. Provincial] Warton: Hamlet means the roses of Provence, a beautiful species; therefore read Provincial [Capell, Malone, and Steevens adopted this reading] or Provenzial. Douce: Change is unnecessary. There is no evidence that *Provence* was ever remarkable for its roses; whereas, *Provisons*, 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.

265. razed] 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 Province Rose, the double Damaske Rose;' and 'Rose de Provisons. The ordinarie double red Rose.' In either case it was a large rose. The Province or Damask Rose was probably the better known. Gerard, in his *Herbal*, says that the damask rose is called by some 'Rosa provincialis.' Fairholt (*Costume in England*, p. 238) 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. Tschischwitz wildly proposes and adopts 'provincial' for the following reason: 'The passing strangeness of the assumption that actors procured fresh (?) roses from the town of Provisons 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 *razed* 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 *raied* shoes, that is, *striped, spangled*. Steevens: 'Razed shoes' may mean *slashed* shoes, *i.e.* with cuts or openings in them. Sh. might have written *razed* shoes, *i.e.* shoes with high heels. Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1595, has a chapter on corked shoes, *which,* he says, 'bear them up two inches or more from the ground, &c., some of red, blacke, &c., razed, carued, cut, and stitched,' &c. To *rase* and to *race* alike signify to *streak*. See Markham's *Country Farm*: '—baking them all (i.e. wafer cakes) together be-
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. STAUTON: If 'raised' be right, it must mean slashed or open shoes. CLAREN: In Randle Holme's Academy of Armory, bk. iii, ch. i, p. 14, we find: 'Pinked or raised Shoes, have the over leathers grain part cut into Roses, or other devices.'

265. cry WARBUR: 'Allusion to a pack of hounds,' which, says STEEVES, was formerly called a cry. Here it means a troop or company. See Cor. IV, vi, 168, and III, iii, 120. CLAREN: Compare Cotgrave: 'Mente. f. A kennell, or crie 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 Var. 1821, iii, [p. 171. Also COLLIER'S Annals of the Stage, iii, p. 429.] CLAREN: 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 HALLWELL'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 Pollaid doe further humbly represent unto your Lordship. That the housekeepers beeing but six in number, viz., 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 moyety of all the galleries and boxes in both houses, and of the tiring-house doore at the Globe. That the actors have the other moyety, with the outer doores; but in regard the actors are halfe as many more, viz., 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, viz., wages to hired men and boyes, medicke, lightes, &c., amounting to 900 or 1000 li. per annum or thereabouts, being 3 li. a day one day with another; besides the extraordinary charge which the sayd actors are wholly at for apparell and petoes, &c. Whereas the sayd housekeepers out of all their gains have not till Lady Day last payd above 65 li. per annum rent for both houses, towards which they rayse betweene 20 and 30 li. per annum from the tap houses and a tenement and a garden belonging to the premisses, &c., and are at noe other charges whatsoever, excepting the ordinary reparations of the houses. Soe that upon a medium made of the gaynes of the housekeepers and those of the actors one day with another throughout the yeare, the petitioners will make it apparent that when some of the hous-
kepers share 12. a day at the Globe, the actors share not above 3. And then what those gains that are both actors and housekeepers, and have their shares in both, your Lordship will easily judge, and thereby finde the modesty of the petitioners suite, who desire onely to buy for their money one part a piece from such three of the sayd housekeepers as are fittest to spare them, both in respect of desert and otherwise, viz., 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 'housekeeper,' 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 yeeres then to come at the yeere rent of 6 li. 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 li. . . . 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 li., all which moneys so disbursed by your suppliant amount to 506 li., &c. Shankes, who had been one of Shakespeare's fellow-actors, makes an appeal ad misericordiam as 'beeing 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 li. for the proffitt of a third part of one part in the Blackfriers which hee bought for 20 li.' 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 profits arising from the dores, but now the players receave all the commings in at the dores to themselves and halfe the galleries from the housekeepers. Hee built this house upon leased ground, by which meane 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, Shakspeare, Hemings, Condall, Philips and others, partners in the proffitts of that they call the House, but making the leases for twenty-one yeeres hath beene the destruction of ourselves and others for they dyeing 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 extreame rates, and made it into a playhouse with great charge and troble; which after was leased out to one Evans that first sett up the boyes commonly called the Queens 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.


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. 1] MALONE: It should be, I think,—'A whole one';—ay.—' [Most improperly—Dyce, Gloss.] STEVENS: 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 Q3Qf. STRATMANN 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; instead of the eagle, a peacock. THEOBALD (Sh. Restored, p. 94) proposed: First, meacock, a 'cravenly' bird, and metaphorically a dastardly effeminata fellow; Second, paddock, a toad; Third, puttock, 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 monarch, and that now in his stead reigned the most despisit poisoned animal that could be; a mere paddock or toad.' This word I take to be of Hamlet's own substituting. 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—ass, FARMER: A peacock seems proverbial for a fool. Thus, Gascoigne, in his Weeds: 'A theebe, a cowarde, and a peacocke toole.' MALONE: Sh. means that the King Aruts about with a false pomp, to which he has no right. See Florio, 1598: 'Pavone-negiare. To let vp and down fondly gazyngh vp ony sympse, 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 bacioco 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.
[372. 'pajock.']

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 ‘pea-jock’—and their almost invariable name for the turkey-cock is ‘bubally-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, bownock may be suggested. See _Ham. V._ IV, i, 44; and _Twelfth Night._ III, iv, 125. **Eden Warwick (N. & Q., 7 Dec. ’61), finding from Bunsen’s Egypt’s Place, &c._ that the word _Patakie, the name of the ancient Phœnician gods, still survives at the present day in Rome, applied to a coin with a hideous, worn-out impression, which is called a ‘Patacco,’ suggested that ‘pajocke’ is a misprint for _patahia._ **Leo (N. & Q., 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 _hems_ 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—“hiccups.”’

“A very, very . . . [hiccups].”’ [Can this be surpassed? ED.] **Latham (N. & Q., 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. & Q., 23 Sept. ’71) suggests paj-ock, i.e. paji, equivalent to _pachok,_ a contemptuous fellow, and -ock, diminutive. Hence ‘pajock’ or _pachock_ a paltry clown; and cites Spenser, _A View of the present State of Ireland_, p. 536, Globe ed. —

‘Some in Leinster . . . are degenerate, and grown to be as very patchokes as the wild Irish.’ **Keightley (Expositor, 292):** 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 _hauschuk._ 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 QiFF 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 searcheth 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 areared, and a blew breast, and a tale ful of beway, and he hath the foulest feet and riveled . . . 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 theebe. And Plinius sayth that the peacock hath envy 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
Hamlet

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?

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) jojkh, or jokkh, a boy. In Sweden the modern form is jokkr, but the provincial and older form is jokke=psych. In the north of England it is shortened into pack, and in Denmark into jeg. 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 paicke. 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 compleat is probably a quotation. TACCHI-SCHWITZ: 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.
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.

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305. Guil.] Capell (i, 138): It is plain from his last speech that Guil. is not pleased with his reception, and the answer he receives puts him quite out of humor, which answer should be spoke somewhat brusquely, and the receiver make a bow, and retire. Ham. answers to Ros. without considering which of them spoke. [See Textual Notes. Ed.]

311. amazement] CLARENDON: Perturbation of mind from whatever cause.

311. admiration] See I, ii, 192. DELIUS: Each tries to outdo the other in the use of the affected phraseology of the court.

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 grieves 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 Rowe+ White, Huds.

bar] but bar Reed '03, Bos. Coll.

Sing. Kily.

327. sir] Om. Ff, Rowe+ Cald. Knt,

Dyce i, Sta.

grows,—]grows—Pope. grows,

Q, Q, Q, F, F, F, grows, Q, F,

328. Re-enter... Dyce. Enter the Players with Recorders. (after line 326)

gleam of Hamlet's old regard for his schoolfellows shines out here for a moment; but it fades again instantly, and he ends with a jesting allusion to the catechism, intended to avow, rather than to conceal, his feeling that he is using his tongue in a way forbidden, as much as picking and stealing are to his hands.

320. pickers and stealers] JOHNSON: Hands. WHALLEY: The phrase is taken from our church catechism, where the catechumen, in his duty to his neighbor, is taught to keep his hands from picking and stealing. NARES: Examples are common of swearing by the fingers, called in cant phrase, 'the ten bones.' See 2 Hen. VI: i, iii, 193. CALDECOTT: 'Lykere or lytyll theepe.'—Prompt. Par. CLARENDON: 'By this hand!' is a frequent form of asseveration. See Temp. III, ii, 56, 78; Mer. of Ven. V, i, 161.

321. your cause] CLARENDON: The cause of your disorder. So 'your sovereignty of reason,' in I, iv, 73.


327. proverb] MALONE: The remainder of this old proverb is preserved in Whetstone's Promes and Casandra, 1578: 'Whylst grass doth growe, oft stervs the seely steede.' Again, in The Paradise of Daintie Devices, 1578: 'To whom of old this proverb well it servys, 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 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] CHAPEL (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, Lutes, 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 instrument* 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, covered 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 Huntley, and that these were Recorders. 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 single 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 withdraw, will you?' STEEVES: Here Malone added the stage-direction: [Taking Guildenstern 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 Gentled Companion for the Recorder,' by Humphrey Salter, 1668.
Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

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

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. Clarendon: 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] Waerburton: 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...”’ Clarendon: Probably Sh. intended Guildenstern’s words to express an unsparing compliment. As Ham. did not well understand them, commentators may be excused from attempting to explain them.
Hamlet. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

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

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

341. 'Tis It is Q, Jem. Coll. El. 342. and thumb] and thumbe F,F.
341. Del. Cam. F,F & the umber Q,Q, Cap. and the
ventages] Ventige F, Rowe, thumb Q,Q.
342. i, Cald. Knit, White.

339. Guil.] Dr. B. Nicholson: Hitherto Ros. and Guild, 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 Guill. 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.r.

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.Q. 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 umbrière, 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,Q; for then the thumb could not govern the ventages; if, however, it had not a brass key, then the reading of the F,F 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.
Guil. 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?

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?
Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed. 361
Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.
Pol. It is backed like a weasel.
Ham. Or like a whale?
Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then 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. [Exit Polonius.
Ham. 'By and by' is easily said.—Leave me, friends. 370

[Exeunt all but Hamlet.

362. Pol. 363. a weasel...a weasel] an Ouse...an Ouse Pope+. a camel...a camel Cap.
363. backed] back'd F.r. back'd Q., black Q., Pope+. back'd Tollet, El.
364. whale F. whale. Qq.
365. will] I will Q.J. +. Pol. +. will Jn. Glo. +.

366. Pol. Then...said] Four lines, ending by and by...by and by...friends.
368. Pol. (transposing Leave me friends, as a separate line, to follow by and by, line 368; and continuing I will say so to Ham.) Qq. Prose. Pope.

363. backed...weasel] THEOBALD preferred ouse 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 'ouse,' 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, 'it is back'd like a weasel,' i.e. weasel-snouted. So, in Hollinshed's Description of England, p. 172: 'if he be weasell-backed.' Quares 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 proumynote 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 εἰδές.
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;

373. this] the Q'76. 376. lose] Q'76. loofe QqFf.
374. bitter...day] businesses as the bitter day Qq, Steev. Var. businesses as day it 378. not] but not Johns. 379. daggers] dagger Qq.

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 prophanee and execrable, 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 bitterest 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. ii the following note by Mitford: 'The word is better. The "better day" is opposed to the "witching time of night." It is the ἕλπις ἡμᾶς of Homer, Il. 6. 66.'—Gent. Mag. Feb. 1845, p. 135. '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.'

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.


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
HAMLET

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. 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] Moberly: Ros. and Guild 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; Jul. Cat. III, i, 119; Ham. III, iv, 197, given by Clarendon.
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] sbrate, may F, F, F, F.
6. near us] Q'76, Pope+, Cap, Jen.
dangerous F, et cet.
7. lunacies] broues Qq. broues Jen.
broues Anon.*
ourselves provide] provide our selves
Pope+.
9, 10. To keep...live] One line, Rowe,
Pope, Han.
9. many many] many F, F, F, F, Rowe,
Pope, Han.
11. Two lines, the first ending single,
F, F.
13. noyance] QqFf, Rowe+, Dyce,
White, Glo.+, Del. 'noyance Han. et
cet.
14. upon] on Pope+.
weal] weale Qq. 'spirit F, Rowe,
Cald. Knt.
depends and rests] QqFf, Rowe+, et
cet.
Cald. Cam. Cla. depend and rest Han.

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 F 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 broues of the Qq to be, properly read, frowes, 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. STEEVES suggested that perhaps Sh. designed a metaphor from horned cattle, whose powers of being dangerous increase with the growth of their broues! HENLEY improved on this, and maintained 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 frowes 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 hyphenated, 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 'gnettes.'

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. We will haste us.

Guil. [Exeunt Rosencrants and Guildenstern.

15. many. The] many: the Q76.
many, the Q3F.

cease] cease Q. decease Pope.

it is] it is Fl. or it is Q. It's
Pope. 'tis Dyce ii, Hud.

summit] Rowe. somnet Q76.

huge] hough Q. hugh Q.

mortised] mortes'd Q. mortis'd
Ft, Rowe+. Jen.

ruin] Ruine Ft. raine Q.

Never] N'eer Pope+. Walker,

Dyce ii, Hud.

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 [Q3]. 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 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;

29. warrant] warnit Q374.  
35. know] heare Q76.  
[Exit Polonius.] Cap. Exit. (after) know Q76, Rowe+.  
37. primal] Om. Q76.  
upon’] opposit Qq.  
38. can I not] I cannot Q76, Rowe.  
38-39. alas! I cannot Han. that can I not Seymour.

27. Polonius] COLERIDGE: Polonius’s volunteer obstruction 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. WALKER (Crit. ii, 199): ‘Read, for metre’s sake, murderer.’

39. as will] THEOBALD: An ingenious gentleman started, at a heat, this very probable emendation: ‘as ’twill.’ Will signifying barely the determination of mind.

24
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? Whereunto 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.

40. guilt defeats] guilt, defects. F, F, F, F,
43. neglect. What] neglects: what Q4
Q4. neglect: what FL. neglects, what
50. pardon’d] pardon Q4.
51. fault is] faults is Q4.
52. ‘Forgive...murder F] As quot-
tion, Glo. +, Dyce ii. Italics, Han. Huds.
52. murder F] Cald. Glo. +, Dyce ii, Huds. murther Q76. murther, Q, Q4.
54. effects] affects Q4.

40. [Hammer, 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] DELIS: 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] pardoned Q.Q.s  
57. corrupted 'currents] Walker, Dyce  
58. gilded] gilded Q.Q.s, F.s, guided Q.Q.s  
59. prize] purée Coll. ii. (MS).  
60. offence] v. 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. Clarendon : See 'theft,' III, ii, 84.  
61. lies] Clarendon: This word is here used in its legal sense.  
62. ourse] Delius: Equivalent to its.

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. Clarendon: See 'theft,' III, ii, 84.  
57. corrupted 'currents] Walker (Crit. iii, 267): Write 'currents,' as in I Hen. IV: II, iii, 58. (Note, too, occurrences, Hen. V: V, Prologue, line 40.) Lettsom (Footnote to the above): In Beau. & Fl., Beggar's Bush, I, i, 8: 'So much to all the occurrences of my country,' we have the word at full length. So, in Hamlet, V, ii, 344. [Unless we adopt this excellent emendation of Walker's, we are forced to the conclusion of Clarendon's, that these lines, 57 and 58, 'offer an example of that confusion of metaphor so frequent in Sh.' Compare III, i, 59.' This 'confusion of metaphor' is certainly frequent enough, but I can see no need of retaining as an instance of it a passage that can be cleared up by an apostrophe. The word is given in full, occurrences, in Miscellaneous Obs. on Hamlet, 1752, p. 37. ED.]  
58. above by] Tschischwitz calls attention to this adverbial use of 'by,' and Dyce prints show-by. [Consistency would print, 'To give-in evidence;' line 64. ED.]  
59. prize] Collier (ed. 2): There cannot be a doubt of the propriety of an emendation [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 (Structures, &c., p. 189): The 'prize' is equivalent to 'the thing acquired by wicked means,' i.e., the crown.  
60. 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.'  
62. ourselves compelled] Tschischwitz: For another instance of the omission
HAMLET

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, now he is praying;

Hamlet's soliloquy. [Enter... ] ...at a Distance. Cap.

Jen. can not [can not] cannot QqFf, Rowe+,
Warb. can not Warb.

66. aught Han.
69. angeli] Angeli Q1, Q2,
70. steel') steel') steel') Q2,
72. Om. Seymour.

[Retires...] TheoB. (sub.). The
King kneels. Rowe+...remains in Action of Prayer. Cap. Om. QqFf.

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? JOHNSON: 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. assay] See BAX's forcible explanation of this word, III, i, 59, p. 208.

72. well] COLLIER: 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 persevere in religious duties. The solution is in the divine medium of the Christian doctrine of expiation; not what you have done, but what you are, must determine.

72. Enter Hamlet] COLLIER: When Ham. enters behind, another stage-direction by the (MS) states that he has his sword drawn ready to kill the King, if his resolution hold. The old mode of acting the scene appears to have been, that, when

of the substantive verb, see II, ii, 230. CLARENDON instances I, ii, 90; and RICH.

II: IV, i, 129.

64. evidence] DELIUS: Contrary to the rule that a witness may not criminate himself.
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.

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. Hammer (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 doat 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. Molesky: 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
not doing now the act of vengeance from which his soul shrinks, though an unbinding
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 Macb. I, v, 19; I, vii, 34;
and Abbott, § 329.

77. sole] Warburton: The Ff lead us to the true reading, which is 'false son,'
i.e. disinherit. 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: 'The only son, who am bound to punish his
murderer.' Caldecott: Foule (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,' foule.
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;

79. hire and salary] CALDECOTT: A thing, for which from him I might claim a recompence.
80. bread] MALONE: 'Behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread and abundance of idleness,' &c.—Ezechiel, xvi, 49.
81. broad blown] CLARENDON: Compare what the Ghost says of himself, I, v, 76, &c.
81. flush] CLARENDON: Full of sap and vigor.
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. & Cres. 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 him. [Not repeated in his ed.] WARBURTON (Nichols's Illust. ii, 648): The true word is plainly hest, 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, whereto it goes. My mother stays.—

SHAKESPEARE: 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, arripio.’—Prompt. Par. 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. & Q., 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 through the furrow. This is the W. hynt, O. W. hent (Zeuss, 100, 101), a way, a course; compare Lat. sem-ius, Gothic tiniks. Hamlet’s words would convey to the mind of a West-countryman 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 character, 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. [STEEVENS 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, now will I kill thy body and soule, and at that instant thrust him through with his rapier.’—Brief Discourse of the Spanish State, with a Dialogue annexed intitled Philobasilis, 410, 1590, p. 24. CALDECOTT: Sh. had a full justification in the practice of the
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days.

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

97. [Rising] Rises, Cap. (after up).
The King rises, and comes forward.
Theob. +. Om. QqPf.

SCENE IV.] Cap. SCENE II. Rowe.
SCENE XI. Pope, Ham. Jen. SCENE X.
Warb. Johns.

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 bar-
barous 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 sub-
sequent 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 pro-
claim (IV, vii, 129): ‘Revenge should have no bounds,’ and he makes even the phi-
losophizing and moralizing Squire of Kent, in his beloved retirement from the
turmoil of the world, exclaim on killing Cade, a 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. COLEnIDGE: Oh what a lesson concerning the essential difference between
wishing and willing, and the folly of all motive-mongering, while the individual
self remains!
Much heat and him. I’ll silence me e’en here.

Pray you, be round with him.

Ham. [Within] Mother, mother, mother! 5

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. 10

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

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.
Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so;

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;

And—would it were not so!—you are my mother.

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

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

You go not till I set you up a glass

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....so l—you] Pope (subs.). And would it were not so, you Qn.
But would you were not so. You
Fi, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Del. But, 'would,

You were not so l——You Theob. Warb.

Johns. Del.

17. set] send Coll. (MS), El.

18. you] Om. Qr76.

budge] bowge QfFf.

19. set you up] set up Ff. Ff

20. glass Where...you.] glasse.

Where...you? Ff (glass, Ff).

20. inmost] most Qr. 'vmost Qr76.


QrQr. Help how. Qrr. Help. ho. Pope

+., Jen. El.


Rowe. Om. QqFf.

What, ho!...help ] Ft. What how

helps. QrQr. What ho! helps. QrQr.


Var. El.

24. [Drawing] Draws. Mal. (after

rat?). Om. QqFf.

How...dead?] Two half lines, ci-


Knt.

ducat] Ducat Qf. Ducate Ff

Ducet Qr76.

[ Makes....arras.] Cap. (subs.).

Om. QqFf.

177; ' news;' 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, i, 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. DYCER (ed. ii): I do not think so.

14. rood] DYCER (Gloz.): 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 Traitor, 1635, Depazzi says of a secreted listener,
**Act III, Sc. iv.**

*Hamlet*

*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? 26

*Queen.* Oh, what a rash and bloody deed is this? 27

*Ham.* A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother, As kill a king, and marry with his brother. 28

*Queen.* As kill a king? 29

*Ham.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—

[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.


33. [Drops the arras. White. 37. *brazen*] brazen Qq, brazen Glo. +.


*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. *Else:* According to Grimm, Correspondance Littéraire Sénède, Jan. 11, 1776, Chevalier Rulige '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 Histories of Hamlet, p. 94 and p. 100, in reference to the Queen's innocence; also Q, 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 darest 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 dierers' oaths; oh, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks

42. hypocrite] hippocris Q Qs. hipo-

crit Qs.

45. dierer'] Theob. ii. Dieris Q3 FL
dier's Cald.

crs} makes Fl, 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. & Cæs. 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.'


45. 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. Tschirschwitz: Probably a misprint for con traction, formed by analogy with the Ital. contrattazioni. [This conjectural emendation (which Stratmann terms judicious, and compares with affectation of the Fl for 'affection' of the Qq in II, ii, 422) Tschirschwitz 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,
ACT III, SC. iv.]

HAMLET

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

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

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.

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 Marh. II, iii, 74. MOBERLY: Heaven blushe-
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 Q5]:
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, ii, 149; and Oth. II, i, 263. 

T
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 (Gloss.): *Index*, a prelude, anything preparatory to another. Tschischwitz: The explanations of ‘in the index’ are very lame. Instead of ‘in,’ we should manifestly read *it*, 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 traiter*. 
ACT III, SC. iv.]

HAMLET

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? Hal! have you eyes?

55. was] Om. F.F.F',
this] his Q.Q.Q'.f, Rowe, Cald. Knt.
56. and a] and Q.Q'.
57. and] or Fl, Rowe +, Knt.

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 limbs
Of Atlas, mountain tough, that Heauen on boysthous shoulders bear;
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.

60. ear] Observe, in Textual Notes, the gradual corruption of 'ear' into Deer, the compositors were misled by that which they corrupted. Ed.

64. mildew'd] mildewed Q.Q'.
65. brother] breath Fl.

CLARENDON: This epithet seems either to have suggested the word 'moor' in the following line, or to have been suggested by it.

66. 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 milk I battened 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 judgment; 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. 71-76. Sense....difference.] Om. FL
it's] its F6, Rowe, Pope, Han.
71. step] stoop Coll. ii (MS), El.

our flocks with the fresh dews of night.' DYCE (Gloss.): 'To batten (grow fat),
pinguesco.'—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 Fox, I, i: 'With these thoughts
so battens.'

69. hey-day] STEEVENS: Thus, in Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, 1632:
'—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! exclama-
tions 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 motion,' i.e. intellect, reason, &c. This alludes to the famous peripatetic
principle of Nil fit in intellectu, quod non fuerit in sensu. CAPELL (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: Whichever
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,
Far. I, i, p. 188, ed. Gifford: 'How does his apoplex?' 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

Pope, Han.

Philaster, II, ii: 'She's as cold of her favour as an apoplexy.' The word is not found in Sh.; for the reading 'apoplexy' in 2 Hen. IV: IV, iv, 130, is a conjectural emendation made by Pope for the metre's sake.

73. err] Clarend: 'Would not err so,' the sense being completed by what follows.

74. thrall'd] Hudson: Sense was never so dominated by the delusions of insanity but that it retained some power of choice.

75. quantity] Clarend: '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 Hoodwink play, or hoodmanblinde, in some places called the blindmanbhf.'—Baret's Artearie. Collier (ed. 2): An explanation of the game, if wanted, may be found in Strutt's Sports and Pastimes. Clarend: See All's Well, IV, iii, 136. Cotgrave gives: 'Clignemusset. The childish play called Hodman blind, Harrise-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 Janisaries—became wonderfully discontented and began to mutine in diverse parts of the citie.' Clarend: See Jonson's Sejanus, III, i: 'Had 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, Ver. 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,

86. [ardour] Pope. aridure QqF, my Qq.
Rowe. 90. grained] grained QqQ2Q3Q4. groned
88. As Fi, Rowe Qq. panders] pardons Qq, Pope, Tsch.
Hamlet] Om. Seymour. 91. not leave, cause there Qq.
89. eyes into my very] very eyes into

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 Gen. IV, iv, 79; Mer. of Ven. V, i, 172.
92. enseamed] THEOBALD: Scam is properly the fat or grease of a hog. It is used in Tro. & Cres. II, iii, 195. STEEVENS: Beau. & Fl. use inseeded in the same sense. See [Triumph of Death, p. 535, vol. ii, ed. Dyce]: 'His lechery inseeded
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,— Theob. Cam.
96. that is not] that's not the Q'y.
97. is not] that's not a Ky
twentieth] twentieth Qq.

upon him.' In The Book of Hawkyng, bl. 1., n. d., we are told that 'ensaye of a
hauke is the grece.' In Randle Holme's Academy of Airmory and Blazon, B. II,
ch. ii, p. 238, we are told that 'Enzame is the purging of a hauk 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 hauk.' 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 incautious of Qq, is the true text. [Cotgrave gives: 'Gramoue, a dish made
of slices of cold meat fried with Hogs seame.' There is also a note on this passage in
355, but the foregoing explanations are ample for so unsavory a subject. Ed.]

95. enter in] Abbott (§ 159): In for into, with enter, see Rich. II: II, iii,
160; Rich. III: V, iii, 227.

97. tithe] Stratmann: Kyth of the Qq is evidently the true reading.

98. vice] Theobald was the first who noted that this means 'that buffoon char-
acter 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, 364, 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 prin-
cipal 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 Mag-
dalen, 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!

Quee[n. No more!

Ham. A king of shreds and patches—

Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
ACT III, SC. IV.] HAMLET

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 F. you, Rowe, Cald.
Knt, Coll. El. Corson.

105. Om. Seymour.

he's] he's Q. he's F.
mad] mad— Theob. Warb.


107, 108. passion...dread] perform...
dead Q76.

109. Oh, say f) As in Theob. Closes
previous line, Q77F, Rowe, Pope.

110. almost blunted] almost-blunted
Ktly, Huda.

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 exclama-
tion in line 135. In the (MS) it is unarm'd. If, therefore, the Ghost did not wear a 'nightgown,' he was unarm'd 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. KNIGHTLEY
(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: Night-
gown here is the same as dressing-gown.

103. me...me] MARSHALL (p. 54): 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] DYCCE: The composer of the Folio has here omitted by mista-
take the letter 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] JOHNSON: That, having suffered time to slip and passion
to cool, lets go, &c. CLARENDON: 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] CLARENDON: Urgent, requiring immediate attention. Compare
Mach. Acto, II, i, 74; Tw. & 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. Q5
117. you do] you doe Qq, you F.
Cald. thus you F.F.F, Rowe +, Cap.
118. the incorporeal] th incorporeal Qq, Fq, F. Fq, the corporall QF,Fq, the corporall Qq.Fq, the corporall Fq, Rowe.
121. bedded[ beaded] beaded Q. Q5, Om. Q. 76.


121. hair . . . Starts] 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 Isak 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. Dyce (Gloss.): 'And albeit hayre were of it selve the most abiect excrement that were, yet should Poppeas 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. 1639, sig. B 2. Clarendon: Bacon, Natural History, cent. 1, 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! 125
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!

126. conjoin'd] coniayned Q5, Q6, [Pointing to the Ghost. Rowe+.
upon] on Pope+.
129. effects] MALONE: Used for actions, deeds effected. SINGER: We should
certainly read effects, 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 entertains no such apprehen-
sion, 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 appar-
ition. [Thus also Quincy (MS.).]
135. see notes on stage-direction, line 102. STEEVES, not having the aid
afforded by Q5, 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.’
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 unction 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,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past, avoid what is to come,
HAMLET

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.

or Fr. on Qq et cet.
152. ranker] ranker Q. Q. F. rank w. rank F. 
153. these] this F. 
courb] F. 
curb] QqF. curb F. 

weeds] Johnson: Do not, by any new indulgence, heighten your former
offences.

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,
emphasising 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 'Poulisif ... Pursie,
short-winded, breathing with difficult.'

155. courb] Stevens: Bend and truckle. From French courber. So, in the
Vision of Piers Plowman, 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, courbe; as Cary
does, Purg. x, 1. 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 di-
vided between compunction on her misconduct and a sense of her duty.

157, 158. Moreby: 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 wall of sorrow and transmutes it to a soul-
strengthening resolve.

157. worser] For instances of double comparatives, see II, i, 111; III, ii, 291;
V, ii, 121.

158. live] Strattmann: Leave, of the Qq, seems to be the true reading.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,

161

Tald. Dyce, Glo., +, Clarke. eate Of habits devill, Qq. eat Of habit's devil, Rowe,
Steev. Var. Sing. i. eat, Of habit's devill, Pope. eat Of habits evil, Theob.

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. li, 574), says: 'I would read and point the devil as of habits 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 devil 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. Maga. 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. Caldecot: '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 devill when the evil spirit is meant. Delius (ed. i): The opposition between 'angel' and 'devil' shows that the latter as well as the former refers to 'monster, custom:' 'devil,' 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 'devil' 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. Kightley: 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

on to refrain night Q4, on: refrain to night Q76, 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. (1785),

been effaced in the poet's MS. We have an exact parallel in smell, 'all,' in Timon,
I, 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 l. 164. MOBERLY:
This noble passage contains Shakespeare's philosophy of custom (800),
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. STEEVENS: This very
rational conjecture may be countenanced by the same expression in Mer. of Ven. IV,
i, 217. SINGER (ed. i) [reading 'either guell,' 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.—Crict. i, 308. BAILEY (ii, 12): Ham. means to say that custom
can either bring the devil into our natures, or throw him out. I therefore propose:
'And either house the devil,' which forms an appropriate counterpart to
HAMLET

[ACT III, SC. IV.]

[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, 8 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 composer of Q₂ to omit the latter. H. D. (Athenaeum, 18 Aug. '66): Why not read, 'To master the devil, and throw him out.' Bolton Cornet (N. & Qu., 8 Dec. '66): Read 'And either aid the,' &c. J. Witherell (N. & Qu., 22 Dec. '66) believes that sound and sense are satisfied by 'And his 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. '66): I propose, 'And either throw,' &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 is well-keeping, 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. Claremond: 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. Morley [reading 'either quell']: Either quell him once and for all, his attacks whenever they arise. Ingleby (St. Hermeneutics, p. 125) records two emendations suggested to him by friends: Sylvester proposes, 'either smash the devil,' of which Q₂ 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.' Curth suggests 'rein, rule, throw,' kind, chain, &c.; quell, lay, and smash suggest charm, worst, quench, fire, boil, cast, thorn, dam, shame, crow, tame, &c.; while aid suggests fire, cause, stir, serve, feed, &c. Besides which, there are many dissyllables that befit the sense and measure, as skill, chase, &c. And why not read 'see 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 mile 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 wise, 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
Han. heart's have Johns. Heavens
hath Kty.
174. me...me] him with me, and me
with this Han. this with me, and me
with this Johns.
175. Thus] This Qq.
180. One...lady.] Om. Ff, Rowe.
Hark, one...lady. Cap. But one...lady.
Steev. Bos. Sing. i. One...good my lady.
Kty.

[the Queen] have habituated yourself. Now, that meaning 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] SKYMO R (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 'r,' which, according to Abbott, are prolonged in scansion, see ABBOTT, § 485.

26 *
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 bloat Qq.

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.'—Rivson.

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.'

185. to ravel] Dyce (Gloss.): To unravel, unweave,—to unfold, to disclose.

186. but 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. MOHERLY: 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.

189. paddock] paddock Qq.
ACT III, SC. IV.

HAMLET

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;

195. conclusions, in the basket] conclusions in the basket Q;

198. breathe] breath Q3 F F* Cap.

200. that?] that. Q.Q. that, Q.Q.

Alack.] Om. Seymour, ending

lines 196–199, assured,...life,...said...

that?

200, 201. Alack...en.] Cap. Two

lines, the first ending forgot, in Qq.

One line, Ff, Rowe +, Jen. Mal.

French Dictionarie, appended to Cotgrave, we have 'A gibbe (or old male cat). Macou.' [A misprint for Malou; 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 mac.' 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: Graymalkin was the female cat. The toad, bat, and cat were supposed to be familiar 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's 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. Moeller: The Queen keeps her word, and is rewarded by the stoning 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 engineer
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.

---

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_, § 335.

203. _fang'd_ JOHNSON: 'Adders with their fangs, or poisonous teeth, undrawn._ SEYMOUR (ii, 191): It means, rather, with their poisonous teeth _extracted_; _Caldcott_ 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_ 'trustor,' I, ii, 172; 'pioneer,' I, v, 163.

207. _hoist_ _Dyce_ (Gloss.): For _hoised_ or _hoisted_ (not as _Caldcott_ 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 dental. _See_ I, ii, 20.

207. _petar_ CLARENDON: Cotgrave gives: 'Petart: A Petard, or Petarre; an Engine (made like a Bell, or Morter) wherewith strong gates are burst open.'

209. _at_ _Abbott_, § 143: 'At' is used like _near_ with a verb of motion, where _we_ should use _up to_. _Morely_: Like Virgil's ' _It caelo clamor._'

210. line] MALONE: Still alluding to a countermine.

211. _packing_ CLARENDON: 'Contriving,' 'plotting.' 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 _Lyll_., 'who made the
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, Q5.

215. in life] in's life Q76.
foolish] moft foolish Q4, 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 invested 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 service 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 Hamlet's 'tugging out' Pol., and, like that, perpetuated on the modern stage only from sheer ignorance of the circumstances which originated such a practice: Rom. & Jul. III, ii, 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. & Cress. V, viii, 21, 22; Jut. Caz. 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 multiplied, 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 exhibiting 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. 1, 25): Write foolish-prating; unless, indeed, 'foolish' is opposed to 'grave,' and 'prating' to 'secret.'

215. a . . . knave] Moorerly: 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...J 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 Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Qq
(Enter Q, Q).

1. There's... heave] Two lines, Ff, matter] matters Ff, Rowe.

sighs; these... heave] Pope+, Jen.
Mal. Coll. El. White. sighs. These...
heave Ff. sighs, these... heave, Qq, Sta.
Kilty, Huds. sighs, or sighs; these...
heave; Rowe et cet.

4. &c. Queen.] Ger. or Ger. in Qq.

Bestow... while.] Om. Ff, Rowe,

Pope, Han. Knt. 4. a little while] Om. Seymour.
[Exeunt... Q76. To Ros. and Guild
Steev. Var. Cald. Sing. Dyce, Sta. Kilty,
Om. Qq/Ff.

5. my good] mine own Qq, Jen. Cam.

Clq.
to-night/] Han. to night?] Qq/Ff.

6. Gertrude] Gertrard Qq, Ger-
trad Qq. Gertrard Qq.

How] hast thou seen? and how

Seymour.

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 ELIZZ agrees with him, that Act IV
should begin with the present 1V, 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 under-
stands '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,F,F,F,F, Q,f (Q,f)
9. fit:] fit F, Rowe.
Sing. Glo., +, Dyce ii, Mob. Whips his rapier out, cries Cal. i. He whips his rapier out, cries Kly. He whips his Rapier out, and cries F et cet.
11. this] his F, Rowe, Pope, Han.
12. kept...haunt] restrained Q:v.s.
13. kept...haunt] harm Johns. conj.
14. answer'd] answered F, Dyce i, Sta.
15. answer'd] answered F, Dyce i, Sta.
16. answer'd] answered F, Dyce i, Sta.
17. a rat, a rat'] a rat F Pope, +.
18. kept...haunt] restrained Q:v.s.
19. a rat'] a rat F Pope, +.
20. kept...haunt] restrained Q:v.s.
21. kept...haunt] restrained Q:v.s.
22. kept...haunt] restrained Q:v.s.
23. kept...haunt] restrained Q:v.s.

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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.

12. to us] DYCE, in a note on IV, v, 89, reads 'on us."

17. to us] DYCE, in a note on IV, v, 89, reads 'om us.'

18. short] CLARENDON: Kept, as it were, tethered, under control; opposed to loose,' IV, iii, 2.

18. haunt] STEEVE: 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.

[Exeunt. 45

SCENE II. Another room in the castle.

_Ham_. Safely stowed.

_Ros._ [Within] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

_GuiL._ 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?

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40-44. _so,...air._ Om. Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.


SCENE II.] Pope.

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40. _slander._ THEOBALD (Sh. 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, 1, 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 Ewey, 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. STRATMANN: 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


Jen. 'tis kin] it is kin Q, Q₃. 'it is a kin Q₇₆.

12. sponge.] spunge.—Cap. spunge!—


6. Compounded] Jennens retains the reading of Q, Q₃, 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,"' &c. Coleridge: Hamlet's madness is made to consist in the free utterance of all the thoughts that had passed through his mind before;—in fact, in telling home-truths.

12. replication] Rushton (Sh. a Lawyer, p. 54): This is an exception of the second degree made by the plaintiff upon the answer of the defendant.

15. soaks] Bailey (ii, 343), in this speech of Hamlet's, would transpose the sentences, so that lines 15, 20, containing the simile of a sponge, should follow immediately 'authorities' in line 16; and for 'soaks up' he would read 'sucks up,' and for 'gleaned' he suggests 'glutted.'

15. countenance . . . authorities] Clarendon: The first means favour, as in I, iii, 113; V, i, 26. The latter, office of authority.

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 [brainer], Minerva keeps a coile.'

19. needs] Seymour (ii, 193) finds an equivoco here between to need and to know.
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. Jen. nothing. Han.

22. sponge . . . dry again] CALDECOTT: 'When princes . . . have used courtiers as sponges to drink: 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 drunk their fill, were the fittest to be pressed.'—Barnabe 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. JENNER: 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 etymological. 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, as 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 kingliness. 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.]
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 f] Lord. Qq.
29. Of nothing f] Of nothing, Qq.
Of nothing F, F, F, f, Rowe. A thing
or nothing Han.
30. Hide...after.] Om. Qq.
31. Enter...[ Cap. Enter
   King, and two or three. Qq. Enter
   King, Ff.
1. I have f] I'tw Pope, Dyce ii, Hud.
2. upon Kty.
3. om f.
6. weigh'd f] wayed Qq.
Warb. even Jen. (a misprint ?).

29. Of nothing ] JOHNSON: Should it not be read: Or nothing? When the
   courtiers remark that Ham. has contemnously called the King a thing, Ham. de-
   fends 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 cxliv, 4: 'Man is like a thing of nought.' [—Prayer Book Version.
   —— of vanity.—Authorized Version.] NARES quotes Beau. & Fl. Humorous Lieu-
   tenant, IV, vi: 'And though a thing of nothing, thy thing ever.' [—p. 517, ed.
   Dyce.]

29. Hide...after] HAMMER: 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. MOHERLY:
   Ham. sheathes his sword ('a Toledo or an English fox'—point of fox,' &c., proba-
   bly 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 sicknesse is to be recurred of so vnskilfull a Phisitien,
   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 will follow thy counsel,
   and become thy cure.'—[Euphuus, p. 67, ed. Arber.]

27 *
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


my lord] the Lord Qq. Cap. the lord Hamlet Q.76.

Enter...[They enter. Qq.


20. he is] a is Q.Q.Q.


c’em] Om. Pope, Han.

23. oursewer] our selfe F..
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,

26. Alas, alas!] Alas, alas.] Q, Q. Q.
27. may fish] may eat fish.] Jen.

Johns. Cald.
32. Where is] Where’s Cald.
35. indeed, if] if indeed Q.

37. [To some...] Cap. Om. Q, Q, F.
38. He] A Q.

[Exeunt...] Cap. Om. Q, F.
[Exeunt...] Cap. Om. Q, F.
39. deed, for thine] deed of thine, for
thine F, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Del. i.
40. at help] fits Fair Q, F, at helm
41. send] send Q.
42. With fiery quickness;] Om. Q.
therefore] then Pope, Han.

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 ABBRUTT,
§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.—

[Execunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,— As my great power thereof may give thee sense,

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adjective 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 whit.'

44. _is bent_ CORYN: '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. COLIER: 'Him' [of the _Fr_] seems to have no reference, unless Ham. be mentally adverting to his father. MORSLEY: 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.

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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.

61. set] let Pope ii. set by Han. Johns. 67. my haps...begun] F (happes F.)
Cap. Kity. rale Anon.* see Coll. (MS). my haps, my joys will nere begin Q3,

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 pryece; assimare.' [Brett's Ateoriz 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: Sicke
of an Hectick, or continuall Feauer.' Only here, either as substantive or adjective, in
Sh.
67. haps...began] JOHNSON: This being the end of a scene, should, according
to Shakespeare's custom, be rhymed. Perhaps he wrote, 'Howe'er my haps,
my joys are not begun.' [Collier's (MS) has hopes.] If 'haps' be retained, the
meaning will be: 'till I know 'tis done, I shall be miserable,' whatever befall me.
WALKER (Crit. iii. 268): Begun, certainly; rhyme is demanded here. As to the
rest, know. LETTSOM (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.

Scene IV.  Pope.  Scene II.  Rowe.

A plain... Cap.  A camp.  Rowe.
A camp, on the Frontiers of Denmark.  Theob.

Enter... Glo.  Enter Fortinbras with his Army over the stage.  Q.  Enter Fortinbras with an Armie.  F.  Enter Fortinbras, and Forces, marching.  Cap.

1.  greet the] to the F.F.F, Rowe.


5.  ought] Han.  ought Qq.F.

6.  duty] durie F.

8-13.  Go...sir?] As four lines, ending these f...sir,...Who...sir?] Steev.  Bos.  Cald.  Knt, Coll.  Sing.  El.  White, Kdly.


[Exeunt...] Exit Fortinbras, with the Army.  Theob.  Exit.  Ff.  Om.  Qq.  Enter...and others.] Dyce.  Enter...Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, &c.  Theob.  Enter Hamlet, Rosencraus, &c.  Qq.  Om.  Ff.


10.  They] The Q.

6.  eye] STEEVENS: Compare Ant. & Cleo. II, ii, 212.  The phrase seems to have been a formulary for the royal presence.  See The Establishment of the House- hold 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] STAUNTON: 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-
ACT IV, SC. IV.]

HAMLET

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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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 (Nicholls'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 garr | son'd.'
Ham. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats 25
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't please you go, my lord? 30

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. 35
Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not

26. twenty thousand] 20,000 Q76.
27. Ham. many thousand Han.
28. Cap. buy you Q76.
29. b' w' ye Respect, Jen. b' wi' you
31. Go Go on Kyly.
32. [Exeunt... Dyce. Exec. Manet
34. I'll] Q76. feeds, Q76.
35. such] shr. Q76.

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,' etc.
Tschirschutz 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.'

27. Imposthume] CLARENDON: Cotgrave, 'Apostume: f. An Impostume; an
inward swelling full of corrupt matter.' CALDECOTT: Compare notes in Ham. IV. iv, ii, 32.

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 11, 150. JOHNSON: Such latitude of comprehension, such
power of reviewing the past and anticipating the future.

37. Looking, etc.] THEOBALD: An expression purely Homeric. Conf. Iliad, iii,
109; xviii, 250.
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 fust, a cask, fust, fusty, tasting or smelling of the cask.
40. scruple] see abott, § 168. clarendon: scruple which consists in thinking or results from thinking.
44. to do] for instances of the infinitive active where we should use the passive.
see abott, § 359; macb. v. vi. 5.
45. sith] see ii, i, 6; and abott, § 132.
50. mouths] see ii, ii. 347
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

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, Gerard, and a Gentleman. Qq. Enter
Queene and Horatio. Ff, Johns. Steev.
Var. Cald. Sing. Knt, Dyce, Del. White,
Clarke. Enter Queen, Horatio, and Attendants. Rowe. Enter Queen, and a
Gentleman. Han. Enter Queen, attended; 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-
fquently, antithetical 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
his army,—with this flash of a better fortune for Denmark awhart 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 more than two days, and at the end of Act V we find ambassadors announcing the death of Ros. and Guil., 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.

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 both 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 strew

youm Jen. pope El. (Athenaeum, 11
Aug.'66).
10. batch] both F,F_4, Rowe.
11. as her] as Q,Q_4, at her F_4.
14-16. Hor....in.] Blackstone, Coll.
Sta. Kity, Glo.+., Mob. Given to Queen
in Ff, 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 Ff.

3. will] See Abbott, § 319.
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] Steadman: 'Thought' is possibly a misprint, caught from the line
above, for meant, or seem, 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 collected,
yet there is enough to put a mischievous interpretation to it. Steevens: That this word once signified mischievous is seen in Holland's Pliny's Nat. Hist. b.
xix, ch. vii: '— the shrewd and unhappie 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. 7v] in To F, 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 ... split] 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, Stevens, and Concordance to Shakespeare's Poems.

19. jealousy] Clarendon: Suspicion. Guilt is so full of suspicion that it unskilfully betrays itself in fearing to be betrayed.

20. Ophelia] Hunter (ii, 258): Perhaps the 'lute' of Qq 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 pathetick than this scene; which, I suppose, proceeds from the utter insensibility Oph. has 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. Ó, 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 not too 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
HAMLET

From another one?
By his cockle-hat and staff
And his sandal shoon.

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

25. cockle-hat] Warwick: 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.
29, 30. He is...He is] He’s...He is
Pope, Theob. Johns. He’s...He’s Han.
Warb.
30–32. He...stone.] Cap. Two lines,
QqFr, Rowe++, Jen.
33. O, ho!] Qq. Om. Ff, Rowe,
Pope, Theob. Han, Warb. Kn, Dyce,
Sta. White, Glo. Huds. O, oh! Cap. Oh,
34. [Sings] Cap. Om. QqFr.
his] the Warb.

Enter King.] After stone, line 32.

29–32, 34–38. The continuation of the same song, and to the same tune.
31. grass-green] ELLER adopts green grass of Collier’s (MS) and Percy’s Reliques.
37. bewept] KNIGHTLEY: We might read unwep, as in Rich. III: II, ii, 65; or as I have done unbwept, 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 QqFr 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
King. How do you, pretty lady?
Oph. Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a 40
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,

God dild Ff, Rowe, Pope, Theob.
Godild Han. God yield Warb. God
dild Dyce.
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 Pol. 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 wicked-
ness 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 bewilder-
ded 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 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 (1720), The Quaker's Opera (1738), &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 puggy.' 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
Then up he rose, and donn’d his clothes,  
And dopp’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:\n
[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, Q4 
Ff, Rowe+. Six in Cap. 
50. donn’d] donn’d Q4, d’on’d Cap. 
Jen. 
clothes] close Q4. clothes F, Rowe. 
51. dopp’d] dopp’d Q4 Ff, Rowe+. 
d’eft Han. d’eft Warb. d’op’d Cap. 
d’eft Jen. 
52. the maid, that out] the maid, let 
in F4, a maid, that out F4 Ff, Rowe, 
Pope. a maid, but out Han.

55. Indeed, la?] Johns. Indeed la? 
Ff, Rowe, Cald. Indeed Q4 Q2. Indeed 
Jen. Steev. Var. Sing. Indeed F Pope, 
Han. 
56. [Sings] Cap. Om. Q4 Ff. 
Gis] gis Q4 F, F. 
Saint] S. Ff, Rowe, Pope, Theob. 
Han. Warb.

56–59. Four lines, Q4 Ff. Six, Cap. 
57. and fie] an fie F4 F, Rowe. 
59. to blame] too blame Q4 F2 Q4 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. dopp’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. 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 Usuum Sarum, or in the Benedictionary of Bishop 
Athelwold. I believe the word to be only a corrupted abbreviation of Jesu, 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 Jesu, there is certainly a Saint Gishen, with whose name it 
corresponds. Douce: Ridley’s conjecture is the true one; but the corruption is 
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 (Gloz.) : 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 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,
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.
76. but Q76. the which we're Pope+.
77. Dyce, Sta. Huds.
78. their] Om. Qq.
79. and we have] We've Pope+.
80. but greenly.] Om. Q76. Transferred to next line by Cap.
81. In hugger-mugger] Olyferey Q76.
82. In private Pope, Theob. Han.
85. [buzers] whispers Q76.
86. Feeds on his wonder] Johns. Feeds on this wonder Qq, Rowe, Pope, Theob.
87. Warb. Keeps on his wonder Ff (Keeps F,F.). Feeds on his anger Han.
89. Wherein necessity] Whence animosity Han.

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.

79. greenly] JOHNSON: Unskilfully, with greenness, without maturity of judgement.

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. fills 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 conduct.' CALDECOTT: At lofty distance and seclusion. TSCHISSLWITZ suggests 'keeps in his wonder, wraps himself in clouds.'

88. Wharin] JOHNSON: Wherin (that is, in which pestilent speeches) necessity, or the obligation of an accuser to support his charge, will nothing stick, &c.
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.
91. murdering-piece] Hyphen, Q.Q,
places,...places] Place...places, Ff,
Rowe, Pope.
92. Queen. Alack,....this f] Om. Qq,
Pope, Han.
93. SCENE VI. Pope +, Jen.
Where] Attend, where Qq. At-
Sing. El. White, Ktly; all but Jen.
reading Attend I 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,
nailes, 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
Beau. & 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 murderers, was a small piece of artillery; in Fr. meurtrière,
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, parceque tirant par icelle a descne, ceux auxquels
on tire sont facilement meurtris.'—Nicot. 'Visiere meurtrière, a port-hole for a murther-
ing 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, logickie and the Switzers, may be hired to fight for any body.'
—Nash, Christ's Tears 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'erbear's your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry 'Choose we; Laertes shall be king!'
Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds,
'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!' 105
Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
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] shou'ts Han. 'applaud' applaud'd Qq.
104. Laertes king ] Om. Q76.
107. Enter...following.] Cap. Enter Laertes with others. Qq. after line 106.
108. this king ] Sirs,] the King, fir's'

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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 hunteath 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, 'Calmy,
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,
Why thou art thus incensed.—Let him go, Gertrude.—

115. _unsmirched brows_ | White, Kty, Dyce ii._ unsmirched brow _Q_ _Q_ _Q_ _Q_ , _unsmirched brow _Q_ _Q_ _Q_ _Q_ , _unsmirched brow _F_ _F_ _F_ _F_ , _Rowe, brow _Q_ _Q_ _Q_ _Q_ , and unsmirched brow _Theob._ +, and unsmirched brows _Johns._ _unsmirched brow _F_ _F_ _F_ _F_ , Cap. et cet.

115. _unsmirched]_ White: Clean, not defiled. This seems to be an allusion to a proverb often introduced in the old comedies. Thus, in The London Prodigal, 1605: ‘—as true as the skin between any man’s brows.’ _Collier (ed. 2):_ This seems the only place where Sh. uses this word, meaning _unsullied_. We have elsewhere ‘smirched’ and ‘besmirched’ for _dirtied._

115. _brows_ | White: ‘Between’ shows that the _s_ is manifestly needed.

116. _true_ | Delius: That is, faithful.

118. _fear_ | See I, iii, 51.

118. _person_ | Delius: It is to be inferred that the Queen throws herself between her husband and the enraged Laër. _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 managers have long done so.

119. _divinity_ | Boswell: In Chettle’s _England’s Mourning Garment_ is the following 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 despised all feare, and was, as all princes are or should be, so full of divine fulness, that guiltie mortality durst not behold 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.
HAMLET

ACT IV, SC. V.

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,


127. blackest] black Pope, Han. 128, 129. grace, to...pit!] grace, to...pit I Qq.


Glo. +, Huds. Mob. worlds Qq. world’s Pope et cet. 135. They] The Qq. 135, 136. Good...certainty] One line, Qq. 135-139. Good...fier] Will you in revenge of your Dear fathers death de- fury both friend and foe? Qq’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 worlds,’ 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?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

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

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,

   is't? is't Q, if Fl. if 'tis not
Rowe.

138. That, swoopstake) Dyce, Sta. Glo. +, Del. Huds. That swoopstake Q, Q, Q,
   That swoopstake Q, Q, That swoopstake Q, F, F, F, Rowe. (That swoop-stake,) Pope
   +, That, swoop-stake Johns. et cet.
   you will] will you Theob. conj.

139. loser f) Q '78. Lofer. F, F, Pope.
   Lofer. Q, Q, Fl.

140. then f) then. F, F, F, F, F.
141. his] this Q '76.
   ope] hope F.

142. pelican) Politician F, F.
143. Repast] Relieve Q '76.


146. sensibly] sensibly Q, Q, Q, Rowe. senible Q, Q, Q, Q, Rowe, Theob. Warb.

former words, 'both the worlds,' is not unsuitable to his excited state of mind.
[Pope's] reading might be the meaning of the reading of Q, in which no apostrophe is used to distinguish the genitive singular from the nominative plural. WHITE pronounces Pope's reading 'cramped, literal, inferior'.

138. swoopstake] CLARENDON: The metaphor is from a game at cards, where the winner sweeps or draws the whole stake. The meaning is somewhat confused by this admixture of metaphor. MOBERLY: Are you going to vent your rage on both friend and foe; like a gambler who insists on sweeping the stakes, whether the point is in his favor or not?

142. pelican] CALDECOTT quotes DR SHERWIN: 'By the pelican's dropping upon its breast its lower bill to enable its young to take from its capacious pouch, lined with a fine flesh-colored skin, this appearance is, on feeding them, given. H. B. FORREST (N. & Qu., 26 June, 1869) suggests that Sh. might have drawn his knowledge on this point from Prodigorum ac Ostentorum Chronicon., Basle in, 1557. Moreover, in this book there is a full description of 'The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads Do grow beneath their shoulders.' RUSHTON (Shakespeare's Euphuism, p. 9) cites 'the Pelican, who stricketh blood out of his owne bodye to do others good.'—Euphuys and his England (p. 341, ed. Arber). CLARENDON: In Rich. II: 11. 1, 126, and Lear, III, iv, 77, young pelicans are used as illustrations of filial impiety.
It shall as level to your judgement pierce
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [Within] Let her come in!
Lear. How now! what noise is that?—

Re-enter Ophelia.

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid 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

147. pierce] pear Qq. 'pear Q76. 'pear
Cap. ey. A noise within. Let her come in (as a stage-direction, in the margin), Ff, Rowe, Theob. Han. Warb. Jen.
Danes. [Within] Cap. Laer. Qq,
Pope. Om. Ff, Rowe, Theob. Han.
148, 149. Let...that] One line, Pope.
149. Re-enter...] Coll. Dyce, El. Sta.
White, Del. Glo. +, Huds. Enter Opheliana. (after ey, line 148) QqFl. Enter Ophelia, fantastically drest with Straws and Flowers. Rowe et cet.
150. Burn out] Burn on Pope i.
151. by] Ff, Rowe, Cap. Knt, Coll.
with Qq et cet.
152. Till] Tell Qq.
153. cars] cars Qq. cars F,Fu.
turn] turne Qq. turns F,Fu, Rowe, Knt, Coll. El. White.
154. a peere] a poore Qq. a sick Q76.
155. Nature...lovers.] Om. Qq.
156. an old] a poore Qq. a sick Q76.
157-159. Nature...lovers.] Om. Qq.
157, 158. fine...instance] fine... fine,...ince Pope conj.

147. pierce] WHITE: Pear 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: Pear 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-entrance.' [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 Qq, it is to be inferred that she merely has 'her haire downe.' EB.]

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 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_  

160. barefaced] _bare-faced Q.Q._
Glo. +. Song. Qq. Om. Ff, Rowe et cet.
161. Hey...nonny:] _Hey...mony: Ff. Om. Qq, Pope+, Cap. Jen._
(MS). _rain'd Qq et cet._
163. Fare...dove] _Q'75._ tear, Qq Ff.  
164. 165. Hadst...thus:] _Prose in Ff._  
166. 167. _You...a-down-a_] In Italics as a song first by Johns. Cap. indicated the present text by beginning _'Down'_ with a capital; Steev. (1778) adopted it, and is followed by all bdd. except Sta. Glo. +, who return to Johns. and insert [Sings] before _'You,'_ and divide into two lines, the first ending _a-down._
166–168. _You...daughter_] Three lines, ending _dowme,...it,...daughter._ Qq. Prose, Ff et cet. except Sta. Glo.+.
166. _Down a-down_ a dowme a downe _Qq._ a down a down Jen. Sta. Glo, Gia._
166. and] Ff, Rowe+, Jen. _And_ Qq. an Cap. et cet.

sent her most precious senses after the object of her inflamed affection. 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 fal'n in love, and where 'tis fal'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 fal'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 subulised_ 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 Musi. of the Olden Time._

161. nonny] Nares: Such unmeaning burdens are common to ballads in most languages. It appears from Florio'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.

Lae. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray 170

meaning. STEEVENS: I am informed that among the common people of Norfolk to nonny signifies to trifle, 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: Filibustacchina, the burden of a country song, as we say hay downe a downe downa. Dyck: 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. Dyck (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 apposite 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 much grace by the wheel, 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 F1 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

171. there is] there's F3F4, Rowe +, 171. pansies] Johns. Pacientes F4,
Cap. (in Errata).

169. matter] See II, ii, 95; and Lear, IV, vi, 178.

170. rosemary] See Rom. & 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, 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, pensies.' 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 (Sk. Garden, p. 156).

173. document] Edinburgh Review (Shakespearian 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 f for flatterers,' &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. o Qq Ff, Rowe, Pope.

disssemble. 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 'columnines,' 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 mundifie our sight, and tak: away the filme or web that ouercasteth 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. columnines] STEEVENS: In All Fools, by Chapman, 1605: ‘a columnbe? 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. S[TEPHEN] W[ESTON]: Columbine was an emblem of cuckoldom on account of the horns of its nectaria, 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 Pastorals, 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 Satiromastix. 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 wear 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 Florio s. v. ruta, and Cotgrave s. v. rue. There is no ground, therefore, for sup-
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,—

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 (sp. 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. 390, and *St. 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 doore and in your bake sid, and have in your windowes good store of rewe and herbe 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 houssse cleane . . . . and stringe our windowes with wormwode and rewe.'


### 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, be 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 *Quij for an Upstart Courtier*, has explained the significance of this flower: '—Next them grew the dissembling daisie, to warne such light-of-love werches not to trust every faire promise that such amorous bache-
[Sings] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Later. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Oph. [Sings] And will he not come again?

181. [Sings] Cap. Om. Q7F, Rowe
182. Thought] Thoughts Q76.
184. [Sings] Song. Q7. Om. Fl.
185. he...he] a...a Q7. a...a

Lors make them.' Dyce (Gloss.): Does Oph. mean that the daisy is for herself.
Clarendon: It does not appear to whom she gives it; probably either to the King
or Queen.

179. violet] Malone: In A Handfull of Pleasant Delites, above quoted, the
violet is thus characterized; 'Violet is for faithfulness, Which in me shall abide.'
Clarendon: Perhaps she says this to Hor.

181. [Sings] Chappell (Popular Music of the 'Olden Time,' vol. i, p. 233):
This song is contained in Anthony Holborne's Citharn Schools, 1597; in Queen
Elizabeth's Virginal Book; in William Balle's Lute Book; and in many other
manuscripts and printed books. There are two copies in William Balle's Lute
Book, and the second is entitled 'Robin Hood' is to the greenwood gone;' it is, there-
fore, probably the tune of a ballad of Robin Hood, now lost. In Fletcher's Two
Noble Kinsmen, II, i, the jaller's daughter, being mad, says, 'I can sing twenty more.

... I can sing The Broom and Bonny Robin.' In Robinson's Schoole of Mus-
icke (1603), and in one of Dowland's Lute Manuscripts (D. d., 2. II, Cambridge),
It is entitled ' Robin is to the greenwood gone;' in Addit. MSS. 17786 (Brit. Mus.),
'My Robin,' &c.

Slowly, and ad libitum.

My Robin is to the greenwood gone.

182. Thought] Malone: 'Thought' here, as in many other places, means mel-
ancholy. Caldecott: See Prompt. Parv.: 'Thought, or heavynesse yn herte. Mec-
ticia, molestia, tristicia.' [See III, i, 85.]
This fragment, sung by Ophelia, was also noted down by W. Linley. It appears to
HAMLET

And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead,
Go to thy death-bed,
He never will come again.
His beard 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!

186, 187. Two lines, Johns. One, Qq Ff, Rowe+. 191, 192. Two lines, Johns. One, QqFf, Rowe+.
as Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. Cald. Knt, El. 193, 194. God...souls.] One line, ending the song with God buy you in a separate line, Qq.
Sta. Del. is Knt ii. was as Qq et cet. 190. All flaxen] Flaxen Qq, Jen. poll] Han. pile QqFf.

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,

Go to thy death-bed, He never will come again.

187. Go] Collier (ed. 2): The reference is to the person who is dead, therefore the (MS) correctly has Gone.
189. Steevens: This and several circumstances in the character of Oph. seem to have been ridiculed in Eastward Hoe by Jonson, Chapman, and Marston, 1605: 'His head as white as milk, All flaxen was his hair; But now he is dead, And lain in his bed,And never will come again,' III, i. Singer: Hamlet is the name of a foolish footman in the same scene. I know not why this should have been considered an attack on Sh.; it was the usual license of comedy to sport with everything serious and even sacred. Hamlet Travesie may as well be called an invidious attack on Sh.
193, 194. God...souls.] Steevens: This is the common conclusion to many of the ancient monumental inscriptions. Berthelette, the publisher of Gower's Com-
And of all Christian souls, I pray God.—God be wi' you! [Exit

Lear. 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, Qs. on Johns. Christian] Christians Qs.
I pray God] Om. Q, Pope +,

Jen. God be wi' you] Cap. Separate
line, Q Qs. God buy you Q, Qs. God
buy you Q, Qs. God buy ye F, Fs. God
but ye F, God but ye F, Q, Rowe +,
be wi' ye Glo.

[Exit.] Exeunt Ophelia. F,
Om. Q. Exit dancing distractedly.
Coll. (MS).

194, 195. And... God f] And peace be
with his soul and with all Lovers souls.
Q'76.

195. Do you see this, O God f] Cap.
Do you this & God. Qq. Do you see
this, you gods f F (Gods F), Rowe +.
196. commune with] common with F,
Cald. Knt, El. March in Q'76.
197. deny] deny Q,
200. collateral] collartall Q, Qs.
collartall Qs. Collarall F, Collar-
erall Fs.
201. kingdom] kindome Qs.

fessio Amanitis, 1554, speaking first of the funeral of Chaucer, and then of Gower,
says: '—— be lieth buried in the monasterie of Seynt Peter's at Westminster, &c.
On whose soules and all christen, Jesu have mercie.' Morely: 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] Stevens: 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 Pophisher, by Dionysé Settle, bl. 1., 1577: 'Our Generall, repayred
with the ship boat to common or sign with them.' Again, in Holinshed's account
of Jack Cad'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 St. Scholar, p. 421, was beguiled by the
'homely strength' of the F, text into approval of Boswell's interpretation of it,
much to Dyce'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 Hudson says Milton so accents 'commune,' and so also even
Wordsworth. Ed.]

198. 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.  

Later.  
Lest 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 't 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?

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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 our-
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. Qq.
Sailors Saylors F, F*x. Sea-faring
men Qq. Cam. Cla.
3. [Exit...] Han. Om. Qq Ff.
5. greeted, if] greeted. If Qq.
Sailors.] Saylors. Ff (Sailor Fg).
God...him] Save you Sir? Q?76.
6. you] your Fx.
an't] and Qq. and 't F, F*x.
9. come] came Qq.
ambassador] Embassador Qq. Amb-
assador F, F*x. Ambassador F.
12. Hor. [Reads] Reads the Letter.
Ff. Hor. Qq.
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 acci-
dents, 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. thieves of mercy] CLARENDON: Merciful thieves. See note on I,
ii, 4.

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
30 *
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 F₃,F₄,q speed Q₄,q
, speed Q,q, Cap. Glo. +.
would'st] wouldest Q₃,F₃,F₄,q; Pope+
Jen. White, Cam. Cla.
23. thine] your F₃,F₄,q, Rowe, Cald. thy
Pope+, Q. Om. Q₇₆.
24. bore of the] lord of the Qq. Om.
Q₇₆, Pope, Theob. Han. Warb.
25. much] so much F₃,F₄,q, Rowe.
28. He that...thine] So that...thine
Qq. Om. Q₇₆.

the close of the interview with his mother: 'O 'tis most sweet When in one line
two crafts directly meet.'—If the word \textit{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 engi-
niner Hoist with his own petar; and 't shall go hard But I will delive 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 instants 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 \textsc{Snider}, Appendix, Vol. II, p. 183.]

21. as] \textsc{Clarendon}: We must either take 'as' = \textit{as though}, or supply \textit{withal}
after 'death.'
23. will make] For instances of the omission of the relative, see \textsc{Abbott}, § 244,
24. bore] \textsc{Johnson}: The calibre of a gun, or the capacity of the barrel. 'The
matter would carry heavier words.' \textsc{Tschirschwitz} cannot persuade himself that
'bore' is not a verbal substantive from 'to bear,' and means 'capacity for bearing.'
28. \textsc{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-
fect 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

29. make] Q, Q₂, Pope +, Jen. Glo. +,  
Dyce ii. Om. Q, Q₂, give Ff et cet.  
31. [Exeunt.] Exit. Ff.

Scene VII. Cap. Scene IX. Pope +,  
Jen.

Another...castle.] Cap. (subs.).  
4. which] who Q, Q₂.  
6. proceeded] proceeds Q, Q₂, Q₃, proceed Q₃.  
8. safety,] safetie, greatness, Q, Q₂, Q₃, safetie, greatness, Q, Q₂, safetie, greatness,  
Q, safetie, greatness, Jen. Steev. Var.  
9. O, for two] For two Q, Q₂. Two  
10. to...unsinew'd] to you perhaps  
ssein weak Q, Q₂.  
unsinew'd] unsinew'd Q, Q₂, unsinew'd F, Fᵢ, unsinew'd F, Fᵢ.  
Knt, Kty, Del.  
they are] tha'r Q, Q₂. Pope +.  
y're Q, Q₂, Dyce ii. Cam. Huds.

1. acquaintance seal] For other similar instances of Shakespeare's use of legal phraseology in reference to seals, see Rushton, Sh. a Lawyer, p. 29.
7. crimeful] Clarendon: The Ff are probably right in giving this rarer word, which is not used elsewhere by Sh.
8. Clarendon: The Qq make this line an Alexandrine. But this is no grave objection, as the next line is Alexandrine also. Walker (Crit. iii, 269) proposed to make 'As by' a line by itself, but withdrew it, as 'much too harsh.'
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,— 12
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,

either which] either Q?76. either-
which Sing. ii, Ktly.
14. She's so conjunctive] She is so
concilium Qq. She is so precious Q?76.
18. general gender] people Q?76.

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.'

17. count] ABBOTT, § 460: For account.
18. general gender] JOHNSON: The common race of the people. DELIUS:
'Gender' is applied to herbs in Oth. I, iii, 326. CALDECOTT: See 'the general,'
II, ii, 416.

20. Would] CLARENDON: The Qq make 'convert' indicative instead of infti-
native. 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 impendentibus rupibus aqua
guttatim distillant, unde Dropping Well vocant, in quem quicquid ligni immissitur,
lapisio cortice brevi obduci et lapides cere 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.

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 Tschischwitz. 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, 295,
and also The Athenaum. 20 Feb. 1869): The corruption appears to be here not in
ACT IV, SC. VII.

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.

Lar. 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] timbered Q.Qo, tymbered Qo, timbered Ff.
23. arm'd] arm'd F.
24. have I] I have Qo.
25. love] love Qo.
27. Whose worth] Who was W. Who has Johns. Who, once Quincy (MS).
28. mount] the mount Q.76.

22. timber'd'] '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 'graves,' is found also in 2 Hen. IV: IV, iv, 50, where, as here, something mean becomes ennobled. For the spelling, compare 'thraves,' instead of 'thraues' (Chapman's Iliad, xi, 477); and 'stale,' instead of 'steale or steale' (Ib. iv, 173). STRATMANN praises this emendation of Elze's as judicious.

23. John diligence finds the reading of the Ff so unnatural and impossible that he adopts that of Q.Qo, 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 arms 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.

25, 26. have . . . driven] ABBOTT, § 425: Here note that though the first line could be re-transposed, and Lar. 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 ourself;
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, Fii.
31. beard'] beord Qg. beards Q76.
with danger] of danger Cap.
conj. (Notes, i. p. 29).
32. pastime] pasttime Fg.
shortly shall] shall soon Pope + .
34. ourself'] your selfe Fg. your self
F, Fg, Rowe, Pope.
35. imagine—] imagine. Qg.

Enter... ] Enter a Messenger. Ff.
...a Gentleman. Cap. After news f line
36. How...Hamlet] Om. Qg, Pope,
Han...
36. 37. Letters...queen] Theob. Prose,
Ff, Rowe.
37. This to your] These to your Qg,
38. Hamlet f] Hamlet, Qg.
Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.—

Leave us. [Exit Messenger.

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

HAMLET.

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?

Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

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

And in a postscript here, he says 'alone!'

Can you advise me?

Laer. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come;

---

41. Of...them.] Om. Ff, Rowe;+,
Cald. Knt.
hear] Om. Ff, read Ff;+.
41, 42. Laertes...s.] One line, Qq,
Jen. Knt.
42. s.] 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-
son) thereunto Q;+.
45. asking your] asking you QqFf;
Rowe, Pope.
45, 46. pardon thereunto,] pardon,
thereunto Q,Q;+.
pardon, thereunto Q;+
46. occasion] Occasions Ff, Rowe;+
and more strange] Om. Qq, Pope
+, Cap. Jen. and most strange Anon.+
48. Hamlet.] Om. Qq, Jen.
50. abuse, and] abuse I Or Ff, Rowe
abuse, or Knt.
52-54. 'Tis...me I] Prose, Ff, Rowe.
Ending the lines (character;...sает)... me I Pope;+, Jen. El.
52-53. 'Naked I...alone.' As quo-
tations, Johns.
54. advise] deuise 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 mes-
enger.

45. eyes] CLARENDON: See IV, iv, 6.
47. more strange] ABBOTT, § 6: 'My sudden, and even more strange than
sudden.'

49. should] See Mach. 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'acter, as it is in Middleton's The Roaring Girl, Prologue, 'With
wings more lofty; thus her character lies.' [—p. 435, ed. Dyce.]
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
‘Thus didst thou.’

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

Laert. 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] so tell Han.
didst Marsh. from Q.
58-60. If it... me?] Two lines, the
first ending so Ff, Rowe.
60, 61. Ay... peace.] One line, QqFf,
62. return’d] returned Qq.
63. checking at] the King at Qq,
liking not Qq. Ff, Pope+, Jen. Coll. El.
Ay... so you will] Steev. I

58. Thus... thou] STAUNTON: The reading of Q4 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 disyllable. In his text he prints ‘rul’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 Elianto 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
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit now ripe in my device,
Under 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.

Laert. 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.

Laert. 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,
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 incorpored 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.

LATER.
A Norman, was't?

KING. A Norman.

Normandy, Qq, Cald.
84. I've] I have Qq.
against.] Han. against Qq.Fl.
85. can] ran Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt l.
86. into] Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Sta.
unto Qq et cet.
87. doing] doings Cald.

he had] Q76. had he Qq.Fl,
Cam. Cla.
89. topp'd] topp Qq. peft, Ff, Rowe,
my thought] me thought Qq.
91. Come] Came Cap. conj. (Var.
Readings, p. 30) Cla.

'health.' Sb. 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. Clarendon 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, 15: 'The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword;' also Macb. I, iii, 60: '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.Fl. the construction may be: 'Here was a gentleman [whom] I've seen myself, and I have also] served against the French, And they,' etc.

85. can] Collier: The ran of Ff is a mere misprint; people do not run on horseback. See Abb. § 307, for other instances, found, though very rarely, in Sh. of this, the original meaning of 'can.' Clarendon: 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 Macb. IV, iii, 57; Lear, I, ii, 21.

90. forgery] Johnson: I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he could perform.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well; he is the brooch indeed

And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you,

And gave you such a masterly report,

For art and exercise in your defence,

And for your rapier most especially,

That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed

If one could match you; the scrimmers of their nation,

He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,

If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his


95. the] our Ff. that Coll. (MS).

96. He made] Hec mad Ff.


especially] especially Ff, especiall


100. sight] sight Rowe ii, Pope.

101. you;] you Sir. Ff, Rowe.

101, 103. the...them] Om. Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.

101. the scrimers] the Scrimures Q4.

Q5, the fencers Q'76.


Sir, this] This Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.

93. Lamond] MALONE: Sh. wrote, I suspect, Lamode. See lines 94, 95, where he is spoken of as 'the brooch and gem of all the nation.' CLARENDON: The name appears to have been altogether fictitious. C. ELLIOT BROWNE (Athenaeum, 29 July, 1876): It is not impossible that this is an allusion to Pietro Monte (in a Gallicized form), the famous cavalier and swordsman, who is mentioned by Castiglione ('Il Cortegiano,' b. i) as the instructor of Louis the Seventh's Master of Horse. In the English translation he is called 'Peter Mount.' [I regret that these valuable Notes on Shakespeare's Names reached me too late to be inserted in due place in the commentary under the first appearance of each character. They will be found, however, in the Appendix, Vol. II, p. 241. Ed.]

94. brooch] NARES: An ornamental buckle, pin, or loop. From the French broche, a spit. It is frequently mentioned as an ornament worn in the hat.

96. confession] DELIUS: Here used, because Lamond would not willingly acknowledge the superiority of Laer. over the French in the art of fighting.


98. defence] JOHNSON: That is, in the science of defence.

101. scrimmers] JOHNSON: Fencers. MALONE: From escrimeur, Fr. a fencer. COLLIER (ed. 2): It is not used by any other poet. WHITE: The Qq give a mere ignorant printing of the escrimeurs [which White adopts in his text], helped, perhaps, by an accidental putting of the space on the wrong side of the s. No such word as scrimmers 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
HAMLET

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—

Lear. 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?

Lear. 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.

106. o'er] ore QqF, over F_s F_r F_s, Bos. Coll. Sing. El. Ktly, Huds.
Rowe. 107. this—] this. QqF, F_r F_s, him] you Qq, Cap. Mal. Steev.

‘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 begnaun 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.’
KIGHTLEY: 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: Cir-
cumstances which prove that time abates love. Compare II, i, 38.

114. fire] For other instances of the lengthened pronunciation of this word, see
WALKER, Vers. 144; ABBOTT, § 485.
There lives within the very flame of love  
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;  
And nothing is at a like goodness still,  
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,  
Dies in its own too-much; that we would do  

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 πλέον, 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 accental syllable falling so wrong in the verse, the s being long' [here Theobald's Greek misled him], and partly because Sh. might have mistaken the nature of pleurisy, as Beaú & Fl. seem to have done: 'those too many excellencies, that feed Your pride, turn to a plurisy.' —Custom of the Country [II, i, p. 417, ed. Dyce]. In his edition Theobald added: 'thou shall decider . . . that healst The earth when it is sick, and curst the world O' the plurisy of people.' —Two Noble Kinsmen [V, i, p. 417, ed. Dyce]. Tollet, in the Var. 1821, cites: Masoch's Treatise on Cattle, 1662, p. 187, 'Against the blood, or plurisy of blood. The disease of blood is, some young horses will feed, and being fat will increase blood, and so grow to a plurisy, 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 plethory 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, Collier, 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 spendthrift 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 plurisy 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.]

119-122. that . . . accidents] Tschischwitz: The fundamental idea of the
We should do when we would; for this 'would' changes
And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents,
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer:
Hamlet comes back; what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

_Laer._

To cut his throat i' the church.

_King._ No place indeed should murder sanctuarize;

 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 ὥμνησεν and ὥπων.

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 spendthrift's sigh,' 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. _Caldcott_ cites Dr. _Sherwen_ : To have conceived, previous to the discovery of the circulation 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 pulmonary 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.

128. sanctuarize] _Clarendon_ : This verb is probably invented by _Sh._ No place should protect murder (such as that which Ham. has perpetrated) from punishment. 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 same  
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.  
this,...chamber.] Coll. i, El.  
this,...chamber, Q,F,F’, this,...chamber  
Q,F’; this,...chamber? F,F,F’, Rowe.  
Pope, Knt. this?...chamber; Theob.+,  
Jen. this...chamber? Cap. this,...chamber: Steev. Var. Sing. this?...chamber! Cal. this?...chamber. Coll. ii.

133. fame] fame Q,F,F’,  
137. foils.] Foles F.  
un-baited F,F’.  
past] passe F,F’, pace Q.

132. those] For instances of the omission of the relative, see IV, vi, 23; ABBOTT, § 244; Mac. V, vii, 7.

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. peruse] See II, i, 90.

139. unbated] POPe (ed. 2): Not blunted, as foils are. Or, as one edition has it, unbaited or envenomed. [No edition has yet been found with this reading. Two years before Pope’s second edition was published in 1728, Theobald, in his St. Restored, p. 119, in a note on this passage had conjectured unbaited, and also on the same page suggested ‘imbaited and envenom’d’ for ‘unbated and envenom’d,’ V, ii, 304. Hence arose, probably, Pope’s error. Theobald, in the Appendix, p. 192, withdrew these conjectures, and supposes that ‘unbated’ may here mean unbaited, or not robbed of its point; nor, he adds, can the conjecture hold in the second passage without tautology, because ‘envenom’d’ signifies the same as imbaited. Ed.] STEVENS: In North’s Plutarch it is said of one of the Metelli, that ‘he shewed the people the cruel fight of fencers at unbated swords.’ MALONE: Not blunted, as foils are by a button fixed to the end. So in Love’s Lab. I, i, 6: ‘That honour, which shall bate his scythe’s keen edge.’ CLARENDON: See Rich. III: V, v, 35. Also, ‘rebate,’ Meas. for Meas. I, iv, 60.

139. practice] JOHNSON: Although the meaning of stratagem, or privy treason, is not incongruous here, yet I rather believe that nothing more is meant than a thrust for exercise. M. MASON: It means a favorite pass, one that Laer. was well practised in. The treachery lay in the use of a sword unbated and envenomed. CLARENDON: A treacherous thrust. See line 68 of this scene.
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


142. anoint] lamnoid Fx.

143. that but dip] that but dippe Q.Q.

144. I but dip F.

148, 149. With....death.] One line, Q.


151. convenience] consuiciane Q.Q.

152. shape. If...fail.] Rowe+, Jen.

153. If...fail.] Rowe+, Jen.

Coll. El. White, Kity, Del. Huds. shape
_if...fail, Q. shape, if...faile; F F F
shape if...fail; F shape: if...fail,
Cap. et cet. substantially.

152. look] lookt F, look'd Rowe.
If this should blast in proof. Soft!—let me see!—
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunning;
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,

Qq. Soft— Rowe+, Jen. Soft; Cap. et cet.
156. cunning] commings Ff Ff Ff
Cald. Knt. commings Ff

Warb.
159. As] And Pope, Han. Ktly. make your] make you Jen. that end] the end Ff, Rowe, th' end Pope, Han.
161. nonce] once Q Q, purpose Qgate Q. sipping] tainting Q76.

155. proof] STEEVENS: A metaphor taken from the trying or proving of fire-arms or cannon, which blast or burst in the proof.
156. cunning] CALDECOTT, followed by KNIGHT, plausibly explains comming 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. Fal. Cas. 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 MÄTZNER, vol. i, p. 181.]
HUNTER (ii, 260): There is little in our poet's writings more painful than such a scene as this; the cool deliberation with which Lear 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.
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise?—

Enter Queen.

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow.—Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. 'Drown'dl! Oh, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;

162. stuck] tuck Q76, Rowe, +, Jen.
But...noise?] Om. Ft, Rowe, +, Jen.
Kat, Dyce, Sta. White, Huds. Glo.
Enter Queen.] After queen / Ft
Rowe, Pope, Han.

163. But...noise?] Om. Ft, Rowe, +, Jen.
How...queen?] Om. Qq.
How now?] how F, +, Coll.
How now?] how F, +, Jen.

164. Hansen's note. 168. growing o're Q76.
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

There with...make Q.Q. Jen. Near
which...she did make Q.76.
give] gave F.
name] name to Rowe, Warb.
cold] cult-cold Q (cultcold Q).
dead men's fingers] deadman'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 Q: 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.

Fayre Mayde { stung to | virgin | cold hand |
the quick, | bloom | of death. |

'A fair maid stung to the quick, her virgin bloom under the cold hand of death.'

BEISLEY (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. BEISLEY (p. 160): This is the early purple orchis, Orchis mascula, which blossoms in April and May. The 'cold maids' mistake one of the other orchids, having palmated roots, for 'long purples.' The spotted palmate orchis, Orchis maculata, and the marsh orchis, O. latifolia, have palmated 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 indue
Unto that element; but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas, then, is she drown'd?

178. mermaid] Marmaid Q Q₂
179. snatches] remnants Q'76.
180. incapable] Having no understanding or knowledge. See 'capable,' III, ii, 11; III, iv, 127. Ritson: That is, insensible. Caldecott: This: 'conducted into the great hall of the gods, Mercury sprinkled me with water, which made me capable of their divine presence.'—Greene's Orphanion, 1599.
181. native] See I, ii, 47.
185. death] Malone: In the first scene of the next Act we find Oph. buried with such rites as betoken she forsook 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.

Laez. 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 pitty, 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; Louis Lab. V, ii, 416. [Lear, IV, vi, 105.]

191. woman] Stevens: 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 sain 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
wilfully seeks her own salvation?

192. of fire] a fire Qf.
Glo. ] doubts F, Cald. droumes Qq
Let's] Om. Pope.+
194. I had] had I Pope ii+, Walker.
195. fear I this] this I fear Anon.
ACT V. SCENE I] Q76. Om. QqFf.
A churchyard.] Cap. A Church.

Rowe+, Jen.
Enter.] Cap. Enter...spades and
mattocks. Q76. Rowe+. Enter two
Clownes. QqFf.
1, 6, &c. First Clo.] 1 Clown. Rowe.
Clowne, or Clown, or Clow. or Clo.
QqFf.
1. that] when the Qq, Jen. Tsch.

193. doubts] COLDECO: That is, does out, extinguishes. COLLIER: Shakes-
speare's word may have been 'douts,' but droumes seems preferable. STRATMANN:
If doubts is equivalent to 'douts,' it suits the context better than droumes.

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 1.] 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. Thi. however, was in-
evitable, 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
deed 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 crown' er 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.

3, 8, &c. Sec. Clo.] 2 Clown. Rowe. 9. se offendendo] Ff (in Italics). jo Other, or Othe, or Oth. Qq. Other. Ff. offended Qq. 11. to act, to do] an Act to do, Fl (dor F,) an Act to do, Rowe, Pope i. 12. and to perform; argal,] to per-

particular 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, 87; Merry Wives, IV, ii, 81. MALONE added from Herbert's Jacula Prudentum: 'There is no churchyard so handsome that a man would desire straight to be buried there.' DOUCK (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. crownner] 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 offendendo] CALDEZCOTT: 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. TSCHICHSCHWITZ says that this threefold tautological form belongs to the most ancient Germanic legal usage, and cites Grimm as an authority that it is also true of the Old
Sec. Clo. Nay, but hear you, goodman deliver.—

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 drowns 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.

French. A parallel to the present passage is to be found in Grimm: 'egeris, feceris, gesseris.'

13. deliver.—] 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 felo 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 subtilty 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. Malone 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 Gro. 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] CALDWELL: 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 Illustr. ii. 229) was the first to point out that this is equivalent to fellow-Christen, and a remnant of the AngloSaxon *emne-Christen*, citing Spelman's Gloss., where Spelman erroneously distinguishes between *emme* and *even*. STEVENS cites Chaucer: 'Despitous, is he that hath desdagn of his neighbour, that is to say, of his evenchristen.'—The Persones Tale, iii, 294, ed. Morris. NARES cites Sir That. More's Works, fol. p. 83: 'Proudly judging the livings of their even Christen;' and 'thei maie not fighte against the Turke, [but] arise in grete plumpes to fighte against their even Christen.'—ib. p. 277. CLARENDON: In AngloSaxon we find the compound *even-biseopp*, a co-bishop, *even-esne*, a fellow-servant. In Forshall and Madden's Glossary to the Wycliffite Versions of the Bible, we find *eeuen-caytt*, a fellow-prisoner, *eeuen-seruuent*, fellow-servant, and others. [Other instances are given in CALDWELL ad loc., in HUNTER (New Illust. ii. 261), and in The Myroure of our Lady (E. E. Text Soc. p. 73): 'we ar enformed to haue . . . loue ech to other, and to all ooure euyn crysten.' In a note on this passage BLUNT cites: 'Therfore Thomas that is seid Didymus, seide to euyn disciplis.—Wycliffis N. T., John xi. 16; and adds: 'The word is also spelt *emreisisten* or *emerisisten*, as in Piers Plowman. It occurs in Swedish in the form *jämr水晶* where *jämar* 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 outrivels 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?'


(Notes, i, 31).

36. not] Om. Warb.

of Adam, there was both genternes and ungenternes, 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.'—Accession 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 comm n 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 Demauandes Joyous may deserve a praise which is not always due to their delicacy.' COLLIERS gives a specimen from a small book, called Demauandes Joyous, printed by
ACT V, SC. I.]

HAMLET

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 hathe ony thyng given 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. i): It is just possible that this was a misspelt stage-
direction to inform the player that he was to yawm at this point. COLLIER (ed. 2):
The emendation of the (MS), which we accept, is as much as to say, 'get thee to yon
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 tine
of this allusion by Sh., which is not found in the Q, 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 ale-
house attached to the Globe Theatre is proved by the 'Sonnet upon the Barneing'
of that playhouse (see Collier's Annals of the Stage, i, 388). Is it then unlikely that
HAMLET

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.*

62. there was] Fl. there a was Qt.

Oh! the time] Coll. ii, after Theob.

there a, was] Jen. there a was Cam. Cla.

Q. then Rann. nothing meet] Fl. nothing a meet

for, Ah?] Coll. ii, after Cap. for

Qq. nothing, a, meet Jen. nothing to

a Qq. Qq. Rowe, Pope. for, a, Theob. +,

meet Han. +, Cap. nothing—a meet Cam.


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. ELBE (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 BROWN (Athenaeum, 29 July, 1876): Yaughan 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: Soop 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 Sentences and Sonnettes, written by the right honorable Lorde Henry Howard, late Earle of Sury, 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 Poiesies: ‘The L. Vaux his ditty, beginning thus I loath, 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 dyttyle or sonet made by the lord Vaux [‘vaux,’ ap. Arber, p. xiii], in the time of the noble queene Marye, representing the image of Death.’ It is thus given in Arber’s Reprint of Tottel’s Miscellany, p. 173:

The aged lover renounced love.
I loathe that I did love,
In youth that I thought sweete:
As sire requires for my behoove
Me thinks they are not mete,
My lustes they do me leese,
My fantasie all be fledde:
And at of time begins to wane,
Gray herris upon my hedde.
[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 have bene of yore.
For reason me denies,
This youthful, idle rime:
And day by day to me she cries,
Leave of these toys in time.
The wrinkles 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 pikenax and a spade
And eke a shrowdyng sheete,
A house of claye for to be made,
For such a gest most mete.
Me thinks I heare the clarke,
That knols the careful knell:
And bids me lesse my woeful warke,
Ere nature me compelle.
My kepers knit the knot,
That youth did laugh to scorne:
Of me that clene shalbe forgot,
As I had not ben borne.
Thus must I youth gesse vp,
Whose hedge I long did weare:
To them I yelde the wanton cup
That may it better beare.
Loe here the bared scull,
By whose baid signe I know:
That stoupyng age away shall pull,
Which youthfull yeres did sowe.
For beauty with her bande
These croked cares hath wrought:
And shipped me into the lande,
From whence I first was brought.
And ye that bide behinde,
Haue ye none other trust:
As ye of claye were cast by kinde,
So shall ye waste to dust.

Percy in his Reliques suggests that the different corruptions in these stanzas as 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. Sing. ii, Kty.
63, 64. that he sings at] a sings in Qq, he sings in Q'76, Cap. Jen. he sings at Steev. Var. Sing. i. a' sings in Warb. Johns.
65. in him] to him Pope ii, Theob.
66. daintier] diantier Q2 Q3.

of 'for a,' 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 drawling notes in which the Clown sings, like 'stil 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. CHAPPELL (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.]

Slow.

I loathe that I did love, In youth that I thought sweet: As

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
HAMLET

First Clo. [Sings] But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intill 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 and 89. First Clo. [Sings] Cap.
Clowne sings. Ff. Song. Qq.
69-71. steps...shifted me intill the...sand...shifted me into his Johns. conj.
70. claw'd] Pope. clawed Qq. caught Ff, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Sta.
71. hath] Om. Cap.
    intill] intill Ff. into Qq. Pope,+
    the land] his land Han. Warb.
Rann.
72. had never] never had Ff, Rowe.
    ne'er] had Pope, Han.
[Throws up a skull.] Cap. Om.
QqFf.

had dulled 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 ais can o'er-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 mor-
row, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?' This might 80
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 85
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.

---

circumventing, scheming, man.  CORSON: The Ff, without doubt, give the more
expressive term.

84. Worm's] JOHNSON: The skull 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 machoire, 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 mast, 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 drink
ning 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 CLARENDON: 'Loggats,' diminutiv
of log. The game so called resembles bowls, but with notable differences. First,
it is played not on a green, but on a floor strewn with ashes. The Jack is a wheel
of lignum-vite 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
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.] 


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’:

Slightly and smoothly.

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 Gawen, Syr Cayus, for and Syr Olynere.’—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 twear, for and a fucus.’—Middleton’s Fair Quarrell, V, i. [In Lettsom’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 yourself 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 Bredfield, Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, ii, 345, ed. 1825. CLARENDON, in a note on the present passage in Hamlet, says:

91. for to] See III, i, 167.

92. guest] LOWELL (Among My Books, p. 210): This Grave-diggers’ scene always impresses me as one of the most pathetic in the whole tragedy. That Sh. introduced
Ham. There’s another; why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quilletts, his

93. may] might F, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Glo.+, Tsch. Mob.
Sta. quilletts] guillettes Q, Qs, guillittes

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 beforehand. 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. reacts 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 (Athenaeum, 22 May, 1875): There is a striking imitation of this passage in Raynoldes’s Dolarmy’s Primrose, 1606 [which, despite the eulogy of Sh. contained in it, Caldecott pronounces ‘a very mean performance.’ Ed.]:

‘Why might not this have been some lawier’s pate,
The which sometimes brib’d, brawl’d, and took a fee
And lawe exacted to the highest rate;
Why might not this be such a one as he?
Your quirks and quilletts, 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.] miditis, not from quiddibet. It was used, as quiddity also was, for a subtilty, or nice refinement. Generally applied to the subtleties of lawyers. Wedgwood: Mid. Lat. quiditas, the whiteness or distinctive nature of a thing, brought into a by-word by the nice distinction of the schools.

94. quilletts] Malone: Nice and frivolous distinctions. The word is rendered by Cole, Lat. Dict.: res frivola. Nares follows Bailey in deriving it from quibibet, a diminutive of quibble. Douce (1, 231) derives it from quiddibet. But Nares objects to this, that the scholastic phrase was uniformly quodlibet, never quiddibet. Wedgwood: Notwithstanding Nares’s objection that the scholastic phrase was quod
cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries; is this the fine of his fines and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and dou-

97. action] actions Q. 100, 101. is this...recoverer] Om. Qq. 102. his vouchers] vouchers Qq, Jen.

libet, and not quidlibet, the derivation from this source was probably correct. F. J. V. (N. & Qn., 18 Sept. 1875) : As 'quiddit' is from the logical term quiditas, why may not 'quillet' or 'quillet' be from another logical term, qualitas? The word may have been originally qualit, then the a may have been thinned into i to make it jingle with 'quiditt.'

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 seriastim, and to define each of them satisfactorily.
95. tenures] ELZE (The Athenæum, 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] RITCHISON : A recovery with double voucher is the one usually suffered, and is so denominated from two persons (the latter of whom is always the common crier, or some 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 tail into a fee simple. 'Statutes' are (not acts of parliament, but) statutes-merchant and staple, particular modes of recognizance or acknowledgement for securing 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? DYCE (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. land] land Q 76, Jen.

105. hardly] scarcely Qq, Jen.


109. which] that Ff, Rowe +, Knt, Sta.


112, 113. Mine...made] Mine for, or a...made. (as one line) Qq.

113. [Sings] Cap. Om. Qq Ff.

114. For...meet.] Om. Qq, Cap. guest] guest Rowe ii, Pope.

115. it be] it Qq. it's Q 76.

116. it is] tis Qq. 'tis Q 76, Jen.

Cam. Cla.


it is] it's Q 76.

103. Indentures] CLARENDON: Indentures were agreements made out in duplicate, of which each party kept one. Both were written on the same sheet, which was cut in two in a crooked or indented line, in order that the fitting of the two parts might prove the genuineness of both in case of dispute.

105. box] RUSHTON (Sh. a Lawyer, p. 10): Ham. compares a grave to a box, because conveyancers and attorneys keep their deeds in wooden or tin boxes.

109. 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. COLENSIDE: 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 MACH. 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] 'tis F, Rowe +, Sta. White.
120. away] Om. Q76.
130. undo] undo Q, undo F,
follow F,F,F, F, Rowe, Pope, Han.
131. these] this Q, Cam. Cia.
taken] toke Q, notice Q76.

129. absolute] Dyce (Glos.): 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, 159. Whatsoever its immediate derivation, 'to speak by the card' undoubtedly means to speak with precision.

131. These three years] Capell (1, 1) 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] Hamburger: 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 shoees and bootes 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 shoees and bootes 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.
near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

First Clo. Of all the days i' 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. kib[e] kibes F.,
the courtier] our Courtier Fl,
Rowe+.(Courtier Rowe.) your courtier White conj.
134. a] Om. Q.Qq
135. all] Om. Q.Qq
136. o'ercame] Rowe+, Jen. Knt,
Dyce, White, Cam. o'ercame Fl. o'ercame Qq et cet.
Cald.
139. the very] that very Qq, Pope+

140. is] was Fl, Rowe+, Knt, Sta.
142, 143. a'] Cam. Cls. a Qq. he
Ff et cet.
143. is] is Qq. 'tis Cap. Jen. Steev.
145, 146. him there; there the men are] Cap. him there, there the men are Q Qq. him there, there are men Qq, him there, there are men Qq, him there, there are men Fl, Rowe+, Knt, Sta.

long before Shakespeare's time.] 'Picked' was a common word in Shakespeare's age in this sense. CLARENDON: 'Coigreave gives: 'Misie, Neat, spruce, compt, quaint, picked, minion, trickiesie, fine, gay.' There may possibly be a covert reference to the pointed shoes.'

133. kibe] HUNTER (ii, 264): This should probably be kibes in the plural. It is the same as chibblains; thus, Florio, Ital. Dict. : Bugancia, kibes or chibblains. [My copy of Florio, 1598, reads Bugancie, the plural, which, I am afraid, galls Hunter's conjecture. Ed.]


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 of as a very young man, one that designed 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. TSCHISCHWITZ: 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 hortè) under his friend Boeth.

146. CLARENDON: Compare Marston's Malcontent, III, i: 'Your lordship shall ever finde . . . amongst a hundred Englishmen fourscore and ten madmen.'
ACT V, SC. I.  

HAMLET  

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.  
152. sexton] Sexten Q, Q F, F, F,  
150. losing] losing Q, F, F, F, F  
153. here] Om. Q 76.  
152. I have] where I have Q 75.  
153. thirty] twenty Hal.

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 1922 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 DEVRIJEN, 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 passed 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 cooly. 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 burnt his youthful fancy for her,—'a toy in blood'—&c. The two parts of the play are inconsistent on this main point in Hamlet's state.
[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 fierce, 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, 18 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
[153. Hamlet's age.]

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 de-
velopment 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 hereines
(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 woman-
hood. 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 utter-
er 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 four-
teen? Were his schoolfellows,—dispatched on a critical mission to England,—also
youths of seventeen? Can it be proved that any chief male personage in Shakes-
peare'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 (re-
presenting Gertrude) is not too old to win a second husband's love; therefore Ger-
trude, although the 'key-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 Clu. I’faith, if a’ be not rotten before a’ die,—as 155
we have many pocky corse 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 Clu. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade 160
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 charac-
ters,—the Florizes and Polydore and Ferdinands of Sh. And I would note that
Sh. found it possible to think of thirty as a youthful age. The Grave-digger him-
self speaks of ‘young Hamlet.’ In Much Ado we read (of fashions in clothes):
* How giddily a’ turns about all 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 effi-
ciently 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 fourteene years old; so that you shall see a great boy with a beard
learne his A B C, and sit weeping under the rod when he is thirty years old.*—
Nash’s *Pierce Penniles’s Supplication to the Devil*, ed. Collier, for the Sh. Soc.
p. 27. *So, after all,* adds Hales, ‘there is perhaps less inconsistency in the play
than has been supposed. I do not mean that there is none.*

1876, p. 42).
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 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


three and twenty] 23. Qq, Qq;

20. Qq, Qq;

165, 166. A...was?] Two lines, Fl,

Rowe.

165. a'] Coll. a QqFf, Rowe, Knt.


Cald. El.

169, 170. This...sir] Twice in Fl,

163. three and twenty] HALLIWELL: I have ventured to alter the text here to a deum by the aid of Qq, 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.

165, 170. This...sir] WHITE: If the repetition of these words were accidental in the Fl, the chance must be reckoned among glii inganni felici. DYCE (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 George Jorg, 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 betrachte Brüdermord. If so, the King is his own Jester. Be't 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. ['Jeric' is the name of a 'Dutch Bowr' in Chapman's Alphonsus. Ed.]

173. Let...see] KNIGHT: This supersedes any stage-direction.
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} borne Q. 176. and now how] And how Q. Ff. 176. and now how] And how F, Rowe. 176, 177. in...is] my imagination is Ff, Knt, Del. White. my imagination is now Rowe. 179. gambols} jests Q.76. 180. on a roar} in a roar Pope, + Mob.

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 Q, '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 returned 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,

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. & Cret. 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 Antonio (trans. from the French), 1595. Even in Fletcher's Prophets, written long after Hamlet: 'tis imperious Rome,' II, iii. Caldecott: It was so used down to at least the middle
HAMLET

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 train, &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; 'twas of some estate.

[ACT V, SC. I]

of the next century. See Drayton's Musæ Elsyium: '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 champagne countries they are enforced for want of stuffe to vse no studs 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 clae to keepe out the wind, which otherwise would annoie them. Certes this rude kind of building made the Spaniards in queene Maries daies to woonder, but cheeifie when they saw what large diet was used in manie of these so homelie cottages; in so much that one of soe small reputation amongst them said after this maner: 'These English (quoth he) have 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, Itæ, 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,

210. Couch sue] Stand by Q’76.

[Retiring…] Cap. Om. QqFf.

211. [to the Priests. Cap.

211, 213. ceremony] Cerimony Ff.

212. [to Horatio. Cap.

That…mark] One line, QqFf.

Rowe+, Jen. Cam. Cla. Two half-lines (dividing at Laertes), Cap. et cet.

very] most Pope+.

mark] make Q.q. Om. Q’76.

214, 223. First Priest.] i. P. Cap.

Priest. Ff. Doch. Qq.

214. as far] so far Theob. ii, Warb.


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. Möserly: 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 Burin’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 I, iii. 131, and Abbott, § 148.
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her;
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants.

220. crants] Crants Qq. Rites Ff.
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 deservingly (7th ed., p. 147) that Warburton had better have 'pitched upon grants, wants, pants, or any other, provided 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 'strowments' " for instruments. Music, not only vocal, but instrumental also. Heath supposes 'crants' to be a misprint for grants, 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 correspondent, 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 "maiden 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 krant (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.: 'Cransce . . . Teut. krants, corona, corolla, sertum, strophium, Kilian. 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 garnishit gallandie 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.

_Læt._ 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 _Alpheus_ (ed. Elze, 1857, p. 83) there is the following stage-direction: 'Enter . . . SAXON, 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 'crances,' 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 "Haunc."' The second instance occurs on p. 117, 'When thou hast stolen her dainty rose-corance.'

221. strewments [CLARENDON: Compare _Rom. & Jul._ IV, v, 79 and 89; _Jb._ V, iii, 260; _Wint._ Told, IV, iv, 128; _Cymb._ IV, ii, 218.

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 _sae_, which may be the true word. DYCE: But _sae_ is it not rather a mistake for _sach_? SINGER: _Requiem_ is so called from the words of the service: _'Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine.'_
HAMLET  [ACT V, SC. I]

Laer. Lay her i' the earth;—
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring!—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia?

Queen. [Scattering flowers] Sweets to the sweet; farewell!
I hoped thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife.
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not t' have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. 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.]
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,  
Till of this flat a mountain you have made  
To o’er top old Pelion or the skyish head  
Of blue Olympus.

**Ham.** [Advancing] What is he whose grief  
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow  
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand  
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,  
Hamlet the Dane!  
[Leaps into the grave.  
Lear. The devil take thy soul!  
[Grappling with him.

**Ham.** Thou pray’st not well.  
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;  
For, though I am not splenitie and rash,  
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
HAMLET

Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand!

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,—

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

[The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme

Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son, what theme?

Ham. I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers

Could not, with all their quantity of love,

Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?

King. Oh, he is mad, Laertes.

i, Sta. Glo. Mob.

Hold off] Away F.F., Rowe, Cald.

Knt, Dyce i, Sta.

hand | hand, Q.Q. hand | Q, Q.


Q4. 254. this] his Rowe.

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.

256. 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.'
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 cisel? eat a crocodile?

261. For...God] Om. Q'y. 
262. 'S wounds] S wounds Qq, Jen.
Om. Q'y. Come Ff, R. +, Knt. Sta.
'thou'lt] th' out Q, Q. th' out Qq.
263, 264. Woo't] Will Q'y. Wou't
Knt. Coll.

263. Woo't] SINGER: Woo't, or wout'a, in the northern counties, is the common contraction of woul'th thou. WALKER (Crit. iii, 271): Can any good reason be given why we should write wout or woul'th 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 woul'th, 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. cisel] With the exception of 'the dram of eale,' no word or phrase in this tragedy has occasioned more discussion than this Eisel or Esile, 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 QQF. 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 Ysel, from which the Province of Over-ysel 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 'Eisel' 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 woot 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 Niles, which would have suited the metre without the addition of woot. (See post Elze.) Capell then goes on to say that 'Sh. sought a river in Denmark, and, finding none that would do for him, coin'd the word—Eisel; in a supposition
that there might be a brook so denominated, which Estimour stood upon, and took it's name from.' Capell therefore printed Estil in his text, in Italics. Steevens says that Ham. certainly meant (for he says he will rant) to dare Lear. 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 scone on Yssel of incredible strength." Again, by Drayton, in Polyblion, 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 Denmark and the neighboring provinces I find the names of several rivers little differing from Estil, or Isell, in spelling or pronunciation. Such are the Essa, the Oesil, and some others. . . . Sh. might have written the Weissel, 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 isel, 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' streams, And drink up overflowing Euphrates.' And in Marlowe's Jew of Malta: 'As sooner shalt thou drink the ocean dry, Than conquer Malta.' Boswell cites Tro. & Ceres. III, ii, 84, as containing a 'similar exaggeration,' but the similarity is by no means exact. More to the purpose is his reference to Chancer's Romaunt of the Rose [l. 5712, ed. Morris]: 'He undirfongith a gret peyne, That undir takith to drynk up Seyne.' Nares considers the challenge to drink vinegar, 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 Weissel, by showing, in a passage from King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon version of Orosius, that Denmark's possessions once extended as far as the Weissel-mouth; but very sensibly adds that even if Weissel 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 little from 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 'isel' 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 Absinthte 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 the
[364. '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 befit 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, Eisle, and Eissel, Elze opposes the supposition that the Dutch Yssel or the Danish Osil 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 etymology of Iseld, 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 Yssell is the same as Ousel, the diminutive of Osse or Eyse, in the British language, signifying either a river or water.'—Yseldone; a Perambulation of Islington, by T. E. Tomkies, Esq. Halliwell thinks that the Osel or Isel 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. L.XI, 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 'Niyus into Eysell, Eysel or Eissel (in these several ways the modern text is given), conjectured by the commentators to be variously eisel (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 114th 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. & Cres. II, iii, 211, 'his silence drinks up his applause' (through an oversight Malone quotes from Timon). 'In Shakespeare's time,' adds Malone, 'to drink up often meant no more than simply to drink. So in Florio, Ital. Dict. 1598: "Sorbirè, 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, I, 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. & Cret. 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. & Cret. III, ii, 189 (and herein Schmidt agrees with him); or of eagerness or insatiability, as in the lines from 114th Sonnet and Tro. & Cret. II, iii, 321. 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 antichlimax; and the lowness of the idea is in some measure removed by the uncommon term.' Thereupon he cites Chaucer, The Roemant of the Rose, line 217: '——breed Kneden with eisel strong and eger.' 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 gibe 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-burn or the colic.' Hunter (ii, 263) thinks that the 'Potions of eysell' 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 acutum 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 . . . I beseech thee for the bitterness of the ayself and gall 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. Eyssel,' 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

the word (and it was common enough formerly) is spelled Eysell in the 111th Sonnet, ed. 1609. 'In the "hyperbolical" passages cited by Malone, what rivers do those poets mention? The Rhine, the Themis, the Meander, the Euphrates,—and not such obscure streams as the Youell, 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, unknown to us, which preceded Shakespeare's tragedy.' In N. & Qu. (Aug. 10, 1872), John de Soysre says that he remembers in a book of Scandinavian legends an account 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 Clarendon Editors consulted Mr Magnussen 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 Utgarð'soki's, where he had to empty a horn the other end of which emptied into the sea: in consequence, he only achieved drinking the ocean down to the ebb mark." The citation from the 111th Sonnet convinces Morely that the same word there, is used here; Moerly 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 Eysel in his text, and explains it as Euphorbia Esula, spurge, a poisonous plant, whose juice was employed ancienly 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 mornfui 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 isyl, signifying ashes, mentioned in Halliwell's Archaic and Provincial Dict. s. v. Isles [where Halliwell cites: 'Isyl of fyre, fasilla,' 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 impossible.' In conclusion, the present Editor believes Eysel and Esile to be misprints for Eysell.
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?

---

271. an] and QQ F1, Rowe, Del. Glo. +.
272. mouth] mouths Qs F1 F3 F4 F5.
273. Rowe, Pope, Cald.
273. thus] this Qs.

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.

274–276. Anon... drooping] Collier (Notes, &c., ed. 2, p. 445): A new 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 Hor. to follow Ham., who has rushed out. [Collier, in his ed. 2, adopted this distribution of the speeches.]

275. When that] Warburton reads '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 '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. 280

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] loved F, F;
 ever.—] Cald. ever, Qq. ever...
Kty. ever; or ever; Ff et cet.

280. and dog] a dogge Q, a Dog Qq
Theob. i. the dog Theob. ii, Warb.
Johns. Sing. i, El.

Horatio. Qq (opposite the next line).
[Exit Horatio.] Om. Ff.

282. [To Laertes] Om. QqFf.
 your] you F, F.

279, 280. Let . . . day] CALDBOTT: 'Things have their appointed course, 
nor have we 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. TSHERTSZWDZ 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 (Athenaeum, 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 detracton from a very Hercules,—at least without any ex-
pressed disparagement of him; the idea is the expression of detracton on the part 
of an inferior against his better. Each animal severally employing its natural utter-
ances in carping at worthines; the cat mewing its cavings, the dog barking its dislike.
In The Athenaeum, 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 Athenaeum, 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 chaotic 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 

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.
285. An] In an Kily.
Sing. El. Kily, Hal. thirtie Q, shortly
Fl et cet.
287. Tell Qq.

SCENE II.] Rowe. SCENE III. Pope,
Han. Om. Qq.Ff.

A hall...] Cap. A Hall. Rowe. A
Hall, in the Palace. Theob.

now let me] you shall now Q.76.
Dyce, Sta. White. shall you Qq et cet.
2. circumstance] F Theob. circum-
stance. Qq.Ff, Rowe, Coll. El.
3. my lord] my Lord. Qq.Fq.Fq.F
4. methought] my thought Qq.Fq.F
5. mutines] mutinies in the

6. mutines in the] mutinies in the

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;
therefore, 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

7, 8. know] own Coll. (MS).

mutinous or disorderly sailors anciently were linked together. The word is derived from Bilboa, 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 bilboes 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 expressions. Tschirschwitz 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,—sicklied 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 philosophical 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.
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.
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,
Importing Denmark’s health and England’s too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

_Hor._ Is’t possible?

_Ham._ Here’s the commission; read it at more leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

_Hor._ I beseech you.

_Ham._ Being thus be-netted round with villainies,—
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,

22. _ho_ 1] _hoe_ Q.q. _hoo_ F.f, Rowe.
24. _grinding_ 1] _grinding_ F_f.
25. _struck_ 1] _struck_ F_f. _strooke_ Q.q.
strook Cap.
Rowe.
Mal. Cald. Sing. Knt, Del. ii, Ktly
_Ay, beseech_ Sta.
29. _be-netted_ 1] _Hyphened, Q.Q.
_Dyce_ Sta. Glo.+., Mob.

_villaines, Or...play, I Q.q. El. Villaines,
Ere...Play. I ff (Villaines Ere F.F.),
Rowe. Pope. villainy. (Ere...procedes,
to my bane They...play;) I Thob. vil-
laines, and Ere...brains, They having
...play; I Ham. villaines, (Ere I could
mark the prologue to my bane They had
...play;) I Warb. villaines, Ere...play:
I Johns. Jen. Cald. Knt, Sing. ii. vil-
lainies.—Or...play;—I Cap. Steev. Var.
Sing. i, Cam. Clu. (play,—Cam. Clu.),
villaines,—Ere...play,—I Coll. Del. i,
White, Hal. Ktly (villainy Ktly).

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, ii, 57.
22. _ho_ 1] DELIUS: 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,
iii, 93. In Coverdale’s translation of the _Psalms_ (Ps. xc, or according to the present
numbering xc, 9) we find: ‘So yt thou shalt not need to be arrayed for any bugges
by night ner for arrowe that fyeth by daye.’ In Cotgrave ‘Goblin’ and ‘Bug’ are
given as translations of the French _Goblin_.
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 _villainie_ 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
ACT V, SC. ii.] HAMLET 417

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.

31. sat] sate Ff, Rowe +. 36. yeoman's] yeomans QQQ.
34. labour'd] laboured FFF. 37. effect] effects Ff, Rowe, Knt. Sta.

begun the play (put their schemes into action) which was to terminate in my destruction. 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 before 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. statistae] 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) seen some, who by writing did earnestly get both their titles and living, to disavow their apprenticeship, marre their pen, and affect the ignorance of so vulgar a quality.' 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 affraid the 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.

2 B
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 'twixt their amities,

Huds. commerçeing Anon. (sp. Sing.
\[40\]
should Fl, Rowe, Knt,
\[41\]
\[42\] 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 (Nicholls’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 'twixt 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 further, and says that Commere here means ‘a trafficker in love, one who brings people together, a procurer.’ [Coggrave 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.’ [DVCE (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 interruption 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. companion; peace should be associate with them.’ Staunton considered this ‘co-mate within the range of possibility.’ And Elze (Athenaum, ii Aug. 1866) it 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.’ Tschirschwitz 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 lapis terminalis of the ancients; and it should be remembered that the god of meres or bounds, Terminus,
And many such-like Ases of great charge.

was wont to end the strifes and controversies of people in dividing their lands. To this suggestion Dyck (ed. 1) adds: 'But our author's text is not to be amended by the insertion of words coined expressly for the occasion; and to me at least all this tampering of critics with the passage does not prove that it is corrupt.' White finds 'comma' incomprehensible, and adopts Hamner's reading, cement, which 'is supported, in accent and all, by Ant. & Cleo. III, ii, 29. And see Octavia's subsequent description of herself, scene iv, as standing between, praying for both parts. Clarke: 'Comma' is here employed as the term applied by theoretical musicians to express 'the least of all the sensible intervals in music,' showing the exact proportions between accords. Tuners of organs and piano-fortes use the word 'comma' thus to the present day. The term in its musical sense is fully explained in Hawkins's Hist. of Music (pp. 28, 122, 410, ed. Novello, 1853). From the context of the present passage, there is far greater probability that Sh. had in view a term referring to concord, than one alluding to the method of stopping; and we think that he here uses the word 'comma' to express a link of amicably harmonious connection. That he was well acquainted with various technical terms in music we have several proofs in his writings. Bailey (i, 55): 'That Peace wearing a garland should stand as a punctuation-mark between persons or abstractions of any kind is as pure nonsense as ever flowed from penman or printer. I suggest, 'And hold her olive 'tween their amities.' Compare Shakespeare's use of 'the olive' elsewhere in a Hen. IV, and Twelfth Night. The transformation of holds her olive into 'stands a comma' arose 'by a very simple blunder. It is clearly a case of the incorporation of a marginal direction into the text. The compositor had before him the genuine line, and put it accurately into type, except that he omitted to place the mark of elision ('') before tween, and the proof-reader wrote the correction in full, 'a comma,' in the margin; this the compositor inserted in the text under the misconception that 'a comma' was to be substituted for 'her olive.' And thus 'hold a comma' was next changed into 'stand a comma.' In Q2 there is no elision mark [if Bailey had said comma here, would it not have revealed the fallacy of his whole theory? would the proof-reader have called for 'comma' when he meant an apostrophe? Ed.] before tween, which is just what my theory requires; for, supposing the error to have been made originally in Q1, it is obvious that the words a comma would be introduced into the text instead of the elision mark.' Cartwright (New Readings, &c., p. 37) proposed, 'And stand as one atween;' two years later (N. & Qu., 20 June, 1868) he conjectured, 'And stand as concord.' J. Wetherell (N. & Qu., 27 June, 1868): 'Read: 'And stand at-one between their majesties.'

43. Ases] Johnson: A quibble is intended between as the conditional particle, and as the beast of burthen. That charg'd anciently signified loaded may be proved from the following passage in The Widow's Tears, by Chapman, 1612: 'Thou must be the ass charg'd with crowns, to make way.' Malone: It should be remembered that the letter s in the particle as in the midland counties is usually pronounced hard, as in the pronoun us. Dr Johnson himself always pronounced the particle as hard, and so I have no doubt did Sh. It is so pronounced in Warwickshire at this day. Clarendon: Compare Twelfth Night, II, iii, 184, 185.
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debate more, or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.

knowing Pope, Theob. Han. Warb. know
of Ff et cet.
45. further] farther Coll. White.
46. the bearers] those bearers Qq. Jen.
47. No F, Pope, Han.
shriving-time] Hyphen, Theob.
ii. shriving time Jen. (misprint?).
allow'd] allow'd Qq, Q, C allowed
F, Rowe, Cal.

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 (i, 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 Hysterie of Hamlet, it appears that the faithful ministers of Fenton were not acquainted 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. STEEVES: 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 materialized 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. 346): 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. 95): 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
How was this seal’d?  
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.

So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to’t.

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.

Why, what a king is this!

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.

CLARENDON: Compare ‘was sequent,’ post l. 54.

MALONE: The copy, the imitation; see Rich. II: III, ii, 153.

For the omission of the definite article, compare III, iv, 144.

MALONE: By their having insinuated or thrust themselves into the employment.

MOBERLY: So as to get the dangerous would which comes from the ‘redding-staik.’
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

66. Thrown...life] His angle for my proper life thrown out Coll. (MS).

63. thinks't thee] The editors who follow Q, interpret this as equivalent to 'betheke thee.' WALKER in dealing with this passage exhibited, as his admirable editor, Lettsom, well says, profound critical sagacity, and, almost entirely unsaid 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 muon boest uoe.' 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.' 'Thinks't 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 es. The word 'think' in this passage is not the same in origin as 'think' used personally, but comes from Anglesaxon 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 'seems,' which is the reading of the earliest Qq, the later editions have 'thinks't' 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. 'instant,' προφήτης), 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 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 emphatic, 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. 70. further] farther Coll. White.
68. his F, F, F, Rowe. 70. evil?] Rowe. evill. or evil. Fl.
this arm] his own Coll. (MS.) 73-75. It will...Horatio] Han. Three
and] Om. Han. lines, ending short,...more...Horatio, Fl.
74. life’s] life Reed’03, Bos. Cald. Rowe. Four, ending short...more...one
Huds. 78. court his favours] Rowe. count
74. life’s] life Huds. 78. court his favours] Rowe. count
Knt, Coll. i. court his favour Theob.

73. interim is] Han. interim’s Fl.

68. quit] JOHNSON: To requite him.
70. In] For other Instances of in equivalent to into, see II. ii, 112; V. i, 266;
Mack. 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
putting 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 jesting with the Clown, his tranquil musings with Hor. The man is
transformed 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;
he 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 existence
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.

78. 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 Osr._

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—_[Aside to Hor._ Dost

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 cough, but, as I say, spacious in the pos-
session of dirt.

80. Hor._] 2 Hor. _[Osr._ young Ofricke. _F._

Courtier. Qq.

81. SCENE IV. Pope +, Jen.


82. I humbly...water-fly?] Two lines,

Qq.

82, 84, 85. Aside...] Dyce ii, Kty,

Clarke, Huds. As an Aside, first by

Cap.

83. 'tis] It is. johns.

84. 'tis] It is. cap. (corrected in
cosh counth)

Errata.

79. bravery] dyce (Glos.): Bravado.

80. Osr. c. elliot browne (the Athenæum, 29 July, 1876): This was a

name well known at the time. Henslowe's company performed an Oserick 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 Theorr 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 Canet

(clearly a case of onomatopeia), and Canvette, by a Chough or Jacke Daw. Fi-

nally, ritten (p. 92) says that the name of the Cornish bird is pronounced by

the natives chow, 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

possesion 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 northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

90. lordship] Lordshippe Q, Q, Q.
friendlispe Ff, Rowe, Knt, Del. i.
leisure] leasur Q, Q, Ff.
sultray] soultry Q, Q, Ff. fully
98. But yet] Om. Ff, Rowe, Pope,
Han, Knt, Dyce i, Sta.
99. hot for my complexion.] Ff,
Rowe +, Cald. Knt, Coll. Del. Dyce,
Sta. White, Hal. Glo. Huds. hot, or
my complexion. Qq (complexion. Q, Q).
hot, or my complexion—Warb. Cap.
Mob.

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 chaw or chuff, the whole speech is puzzling. End.

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.
94. hot] Theobald: ‘—— igniculum brumae si tempore poscias, Accipit endromidem; si dixeris, estuo, sudat.’—Juvenal, Sat. iii.
99. complexion] Those who follow the Qq adopt Warburton’s explanation: Ham. was going on to say ‘or my complexion deceives me,’ but the over-complaisance of Osr. interrupted him. Walker (Crit. ii, 322) follows the Qq, because ‘for’ of the Ff is so frequently misprinted for or. Lettsom upholds the Ff. Daniel (p. 76) suspects that Hamlet’s speech should end at ‘hot,’ and that ‘for my complexion’ is a petty oath (‘Fore my complexion!’), which should be given to Osr. See Rosalind in As You Like It: ‘Good my complexion!’ III, ii, 204.
HAMLET

[ACT V, SC. II.

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

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104. remember—] Pope. remember.

104. [Hamlet.. hat.] Johns. Om.

105. in good faith] F1, Rowe+; bad Q3

105. [Q3 Fl, Q4, Pope; Cap. Jen.

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104. remark] 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 Armado'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 Juvenis, ed. Hawkins, p. 142. "Pray you remember your courtesy. Nay, pray you be covered." —Every Man in His Humour, I, i, ed. Gifford. GRANT WHITE (The Galaxy, Oct. 1869) upholds Staunton, adding: It seems clear that Osrice'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 ease! 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 Fruits, 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 absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing; indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see. 110

Ham. Sir, his definition suffers no perdition in you;

106-138. Sir, here...unfellowed.] Qq. [In Marston’s Malcontent several of Shakespeare’s fellow-players are introduced by name; among them William Sly, and some of Osrile’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 Osr. 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, master of every nice punctilio of good breeding; of every form and distinction that place or occasion may require. DELIUS thinks it equivalent to different excellences. CLARENDON interprets: ‘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 Qq 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 interprets it [and DYCER (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 ‘Guydonius, The cards of Fancie.’


110. continent...see] JOHNSON: You shall find him containing and comprising 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. definition] 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, he 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 character 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] inventorialy Coll.  
ii (misprint?),  


dizzy] dissie Q, Qr. doe Qr.  
edissie Q, Qr. defy Anon.  

113. yet but yaw] Qr, El. Sta. Kly,  

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. Lost.

113. yet but yaw] JOHNSON: I believe raw to be the right word; it is a word of great latitude; it signifies unsure, immature, thence unformed, imperfect, unskillful. 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. DYECK (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), huc illic vaillare, capite nutare."—Coles's Dict The substantive "yaw" occurs in Massinger: "O, the yawes that she will make! Look to your stern, dear mistress, and steer right, Here's that will work as high as the Bay of Portugall."—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 wiz, not it, and the drift of Hamlet's jargon to be this: his qualifications are so numeros and so far surpass all ordinary reckoning, that memory would grow giddy in cataloguing, and wiz be distanced in attempting to keep pace with them. WHITE: There seems to be no doubt that 'yet' was mistaken for 'yest.' 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 ellipsis 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 sailor, 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 115
dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his
umbra...
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?

126. Laertes?} Laertes. Qq, Jen. 130. ignorant—] Theob. ignorant.
Om. Qq et cet. 132. me. Well, sir?] Glo.+, Mob.
Del. Mob. all his Mal. et cet. Sta. White, Kitly, 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, 410, 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 euphism, 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. MOBERLY: '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 don't, sir, rarely,' i.e. You have exactly hit upon the humour of this language. HEUSS: 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—

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man woll, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he’s unfellowed.

Ham. What’s his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That’s two of his weapons; but, well.

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

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133. not ignorant[Q.Q.,
is—] Mal. is— Cap. is— Qq.
137. for his[Q76, for this Qq, Cald. Knt.
138. them,...meed] Steev. them....
Knt.
139. meed, Qq. Theob. Warb. Johns. Jen. them...this meed Cap.
141. but, well.] Cap. but well. Qqff,
Rowe+, Jen. El. but, well? Anon.
142. king, sir] for King Ff.
143. he has imponed[Q76, for impon’d Qq. he has impon’d Q76, Mal. Steev. Bos. El. he impon’d Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.

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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 CAVELL’s text.]

138. 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.’

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.’

wagered] WHITE: The reading of the Ff is in perfect accordance with Shakespeare’s usage, and that of his contemporaries. So in Cym. I, iv, 144.

imponed] JOHNSON: Perhaps it should be deponed. So Hudiibras: ‘I would upon this case depone, As much as any I have known.’ But, perhaps, ‘imponed’ is pledged, impawned, so spelt to ridicule the affectation of uttering English words with French pronunciation. COLLIER and DYCE (Gloss.) agree in accepting this explanation: that it is Orrie’s affected pronunciation of impasoned.

hangers] STEEVENS: Under this term were comprehended four graduated
dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilt, most delicate 146 carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. [Aside to Ham.] I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangiers.

Ham. The phrase would be more germane to the matter if we could carry cannon by our sides; I would it might be hangiers 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 'imposed,' 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

 straps by which the sword was attached to the girdle. See Chapman's Iliad, xi, 27: 'The scaberd was of silver-plate, with golden hangiers 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. & Jul. I, iii, 86.

156. liberal-conceited] Hyphen by Pope.

159. yourself] your selfe Qq, you Ff, Rowe +, Knt, Sta.
160. laid on] layd on QqQqQqQqQq, one Ff.

165. swords: Swords: Fi.
come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe 161 the answer.

_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 F1 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): Osrict 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 Osrict 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 unpoeitic dabble of calculation.'

HAMLET

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 Osr.] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.
Ham. He did comply with his dug before he sucked it. Thus has he, and many more of the same bevy that I know the drossy age dothes on, only got the tune of the 180

wardness of talk and self-conceit,—his putting on the courtier before he was properly qualified. STEVENS: 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.' CAPELL (i, 148): 'He must have ask'd the dug's pardon before he handleth it.' JENNER justifies the reading of Q.: '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 Ulpius Fulweil's Art of Flatterie, 1579: 'Flatterie hath taken such habit in man's affections, that it is in most men altera natura: yes, 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.' Reed having, however, omitted to produce any instance, and none having been given from any other quarter, we shall instance Lord Burleigh, who died 1598; and who, in his Letter of Advice to his son, says: 'Be sure to keep some great man.... Compliment him often with many, but small, gifts, and of little charge.' So 'free from inhumane austerite on the one side and voyde of fond and idle complementing indulgence on the other.'—Chadwicke's Funeral Sermon, 1613.' [See II, ii, 354; both there and here SINGER maintains his interpretation of 'embrace.]

179. bevy] TOLLET: He has just called Osr. a lapwing, hence the propriety of 'bevy.' WHITE: It is a more characteristic classification of Osr. than breed.
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. 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 'some 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?' Jennens follows Q, 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. Stevens: '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 Qq: profane and vulgar are opposed to trennoued or thrice renowned. Tolle: 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.' Dyck. (Remarks, &c., p. 221) pronounces Warburton's emendation 'admirable,' and one which 'evidently restores the genuine reading.' White (Sh. 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 Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him

185 Osric] Otricke Q3.

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 fond, 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. & Qu., 16 Jan. 1864): Ham. of course means that Osr. and his companions 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 'vinewod' or 'vinnewod—and blue vinney is Dorsetshire, and vinnewod is spelt in the Ff of Tro. & Cress.' whinist,'—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 'ysters collection' is the frothiness of sour and stale beer, which passes with those of corrupted and vitiated taste; but when tried and blown upon by the more sober judgment falls off, and does not remain like the true head of sound liquor or wit. Subsequently (N. & Qu., 31 Dec. 1864), Nicholson added that he had forgotten the variant of 'vinewod,' which is 'fennowed or fennewed.' '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. Tschitschowitz 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 Osr.'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 Tschitschowitz's reading; 'profound and winnowed' as affording a proper contrast with 'yesty collection.' Morely: 'A set of frothy expressions suited perpetually to express the absurdest and most over-refined notions.'
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 enter-
tainment to Laertes before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. 195

[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 foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-
giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

194. to use] see Walker (Crit. i, 16),
reading lines 193-196 as verse, ending
use...Laertes...me.
195. fail] goe Q, goe Q, Rowe, Knt.
196. [Exit Lord.] Theob. Om. Qq
Ft. Exit Courtier. Cap.
197. lose this wager] loofe Q. loft
Q76, Jen. El.
wouldst] wouldst Ft. Rowe,

White, Huds.

200. how ill all’s] how all Ft. how
all’s Rowe. how ill all is Coll. (MS).
202. good my] my good Theob. ii,
Warb. Johns.
lord,—] Cap. lord. QqFt, Cald.
203, 204. gain-giving] gaingiving
Q, gaaing Q, Popei. hodeing
Q76. migiving Pope ii. 'gaingiving
Cap.

189, 190. purposes...pleasure...fitness] Walker (Crit. iii, 274): Note
the double meaning. Tschischwitz: 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.

193. In happy time] Like the French à la bonne heure. See Rom. &e Jul. III,
v, ii0, and notes. Clarendon refers to Rich. III: III, iv, 22; Oth. III, i, 32.
194. entertainment] Caldecott: Conciliating behavior.
195. 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 tend-
ency 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 205 forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

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 210 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'y6, Theob. et cet.  
208. now] Om. Qq, Jen.  
210. will] well Qq.  
all.] Pope +, Jen. Coll. El. White,  
Kty, Hal. Del. all, QqFf. all: or all:  
Rowe et cet.

210, 211. man, of aught he leaves,  
Steev.'93, Var. Coll. Sing, ii, El. Clarke,  
man of ought he leaves, knows what is't  
Qq. man ha's ought of what he leaves.

What is't Fl (subs.). man has ought of  
what he leaves, what is't Rowe, Pope,  
Theob. Cald. Knt, Del. Dyce, Sta. White,  
Glo. +, Mob. (ought Rowe, Pope). man  
owes ought of what he leaves, what is't  
Ham. man knows ought 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 Kty (marking the sentence as un-  
finished: betimes...).

211. Let be] Om. Ff, Rowe, Pope,  
Glo. Mob.

203. gain-giving] THEOSBALT (Sh. Restored, p. 127): The same as mis-giving.  
We thus use gain-say.

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 Laert. 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. &c. JUL. V, 1, 1.]

206–211. If...betimes?] TSCHEISCHWITZ (Sh. Forschungen, i, 62) calls attention to an 'exactly parallel' passage in the Dedication to Giordano Bruno's Candelaba.  
* By this philosophy my soul is elevated and my capacity for thinking enlarged. But  
whate'er 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 dis-  
tance, 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


Enter... FF (sub.). A table prepar'd, 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 ought 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, why it will admit. The meaning may be this: Since no man knows ought 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. Hammond'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 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.

Laer. 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. Kn, Sta.
216. punish'd] punished Rowe ii, Pope, Han.
218. nature, honour] nature honour

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215-231. This...done] Three lines, ending heard...distraction...done, Rowe +, Jen. Steev Mal. Sing. i, Cald. Kn, Sta.
216. punish'd] punished Rowe ii, Pope, Han.
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 reconcilement,
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.

Lae. 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.

Lae. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

_Ham._ Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds 't' 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?

_Osr._ Ay, my good lord.

[They prepare to play.

247. _wager'_] Cap. _wager_. QqFf, Huds.
Rowe+., Jen. _Very well_] Well Pope+.

248. _hath_ has Qq, Cam. _laid_ layed Qq, layde Qq.

250. _better'd_] better Qq.

249. _weak'er_ weeker Qq, Qq.

247, 248. Very . . . side] Heath (p. 550) pronounces this passage, as at present punctuated, stark nonsense, which is to be remedied by a comma after 'lord,' and a semicolon after 'laid;' That is: 'Your wager, my lord, is prudently laid; you have given odds to the weaker side.' And the King's reply is in proof: 'But since that time he is greatly improved, therefore we are allowed odds.' Johnson: The odds were on the side of Laer, who was to hit Ham. twelve times to nine. It was perhaps the author's slip. Jennens solved the difficulty, in noting that the odds here alluded to are those that were laid in the wager, viz. the greater value of the King's stake as compared with Laertes's, and not to the number of hits, which is what the King refers to in his reply. Ritson computes the value of the King's six Barbary horses in comparison with the rapiers, &c., as about twenty to one, and adds, 'these are the odds here meant.' Moserly: 'I understand that your grace has taken care that points shall be given me; but for all that, I fear that I shall be the weaker. No, replies the King, I have seen you both, and the points given will counterbalance his Paris improvement.'

250. _better'd . . . odds_] Jennens: 'Since the wager he gains if he should win is better than what we shall gain if he loses, therefore we have odds, that is, we are not to make as many hits as Laer.' Caldecott: 'Better'd, _i.e._ stands higher in estimation. Delius (and Moserly in the preceding note) refer 'better'd' to Laertes's proficiency acquired in Paris. Keightley (Expositor, p. 298): If he (_i.e._ Laer) was bettered, in the ordinary sense of the word, how could the odds lie against him? _You're_ would give better sense than _he's_; but it does not satisfy me. A line has evidently been lost, and the latter part may be addressed to the Queen, The lost line may have been something like this: 'Tis true he did neglect his
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King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.—
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
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.

252. This likes me] 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
union.' And Bullokar, Eng. Expositor, 1621, to the same effect. STEEVENS: See
Holland's trans. of Pliny, p. 255: '... our dainties and delicacies here at Rome,
haue devised this name for them, and call them Vnions; as a man would say, Singu-
lar, 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., valde 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] NAES: For kettledrum.

263. cannoneer] WALKER (Vers. 225): The flow of the verse seems to require
cannoneer.
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‘Now the king drinks to Hamlet!’—Come, begin;—
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Lear. Come, my lord. [They play

Ham. One.

Lear. No.

Ham. Judgement.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Lear. 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?

Lear. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

265. ‘Now….Hamlet’) Quotation marks, Coll.; Dyce, El. White, Hal.

[Trumpets the while. Qq. 267. Come, my lord.’) Come on for.
Ft, Rowe, Cald. Knt, Sta. So on, sir
Rowe ii.

[They play.] Om. Qq.

Judgement f Cap. 268. hit.] hit. Drum, trumpets and
shot. Flourish, a piece goes off. Qq.
hit. Flourish, El.

Well.] Well: Ft. Well, Qq.
El. Dyce, Sta. White.
again.] again—Rowe+, Jen.

269. Two lines, Ft.

270. cup.] Trumpets…] Mal. Om.
Qq. Trumpets found, and shot goes off.
Ft. Trumpet found, shot goes off. F,F,F,
F, drinks, and puts Poison in the Cup.
Flourish. Ordinance within. Cap. After
health. Cap. Dyce, Sta. Glo.+, Clarke,
Mob. After cup. Ft et cet.

271. set it] set Ft.

Qq. Come—Rowe+.

[They play.] As in text, Cap.
(reading: [play]), Glo.+, Dyce ii,
Clarke, Huds. Del. ii, Mob. Om. Qq,Ff,
Jen. After awhile. Pope+. After say
you? Rowe (reading: They play again)
et cet.

273. A touch, a touch] Om. Qq, Cap.
Jen. Kty.

confess] confess Qt. confess

Q76, Cap. Jen.

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: Lear. 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.)
F, F₂, F₃, F₄, Rowe, 276. carouses to] salutes Q'76.
Cald. 277. Good] Thank you, good Cap.
apkin, rub] Handkerchief, wife madam,—] Rowe. madam. Q₉
Q'76. Ff, Cap. Knt, Sta. madam! Dyce,
Here...brows ;] Here is a napkin, Glo. +, Clarke, Huds. Del. Mob.

[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 Histriomachia*, 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 Burbage. 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 Burbage 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 Burbage 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 Burbage, 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, Prins von Dänemark, Hamburg, 1865, p. 214) refers to IV, vii, 158, and conjectures that the same word is here used: hot.

King. Gertrude, do not drink! 277
Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.
King. [Aside] It is the poisoned cup! it is too late! 280
Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.
Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.
Lear. My lord, I'll hit him now.
King. I do not think't.
Lear. [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 afraid you make a wanton of me.
Lear. Say you so? come on. [They play.
Osr. Nothing, neither way.

278. Two lines, Ff. [Drinks. Han. drinks, and tenders the Cup to Hamlet. Cap.
think' [think it Mal. Steev. Var.
283. 'tis...'gaunt'] Ff, Rowe, Sing. ii, Dyce, Sta. Kly, Glo. Huds. Mob. it is...again] Qq et cet.
284. Two lines, Ff.

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.
285. 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.
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 stooped 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 Maga. 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. Kämpfe, Leipzig, 1855, ii, 220, cited by Else) 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 Oric, 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.] Else 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. HEUSCH 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 Vincenzo Saviolo his Practise, 1595. In sig. H 3, directions are given for ‘fastening your left hand on the hilts of your enemies sword.’—Ed.] 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 foils:]’ 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 incens’d. [Hamlet leaves his foil in Laertes’s grasp and picks up the poisoned one.] Ham. Nay, come
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—296

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.


there, ho] F., there how, F.F.F., there how, Q.Q., there. —Ho! Sta. Del.


292. How is't, Laertes?] Hoist [β

Laertes?] Q. 293. Two lines, Ff.


294. I am] I'm Pope+, Hal. Dyce ii, Huds.

295. swoons] Q’76. founds QqF.F. Q7 F., founds F.F., Glo.+, Mob.

296. drink,—] Cap. drink. F, drinkes, or drink, QqF.F.F., drink—Rowe+.

296, 297. O my...drink!] One line, Ff, Rowe +, Jen.

296. Hamlet.] Ham Q. Ham, Q.

297. poison’d!] prey/med. Qq. prey/med. F., poison’d—Rowe+, Jen.

[Dies.] Queen dies. Rowe. Om. QqF.

298. villany] villaines Q. villain Q’76.


298, 299. Ho!...out!] One line, Kily. 299. out...out. QqF., out—Rowe+, Jen.

[Laertes falls.] Cap. Om. Qq Ff, Rowe+, Dyce, Glo.+, Mob.

again. [and rushing furiousi on Laertes, wounds him and he falls;* [See also Vol. II: EDWIN BOOTH; MARQUARD; FLATHE; DOERING; VON FRIFSEN. 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.
Laert. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good,
In thee there is not half an hour of life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenomed; 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,

more; Cap. et cet.

307. to blame] too blame QqF.
308. envenom’d too?] envenom’d to,
Qq. envenom’d to, QF.
308, 309. The...work] One line, Qq.
White.
308, 309. envenom’d...work ] One
309. to thy] do thy Theob. ii+
[Stabs the King.] Rowe. Hurts
the King. Ff. Om. Qq.
310. All.] Osr. and Lords. Mal.
312. Here] Heare Qq.
damned Danes.] One line, Ff.
infectious] infectious Qq.
murderous] murderous F, F.
murderous F, F, Row.+
more;— Steev. Mal. Dyce.

308. too] STAUTON: Recurring to what Laert. had just said, ‘Unbated and en-
venom’d,’ Ham. examines the foil, and, finding the button gone, exclaims: ‘The
point—’ and then, without finishing the sentence,—’unblunted’—hurries on to—
‘envenom’d too!’ &c. [Staunton’s text, followed by Delius, thus reads: ‘The point
—envenom’d too!’—’]

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.]

_Lear._ 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. 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.'

313. union] CALDECOTT: There may be a play here upon the word 'union.' MORELLY: Was this cursed drug the pearl that you said you were putting in? 315. temper'd] CLARENDON: Mixed, compounded. Compare _Exodus_, xxix, 2: 'cakes unleavened tempered with oil.'

318. Dies] CALDECOTT: We here find Lear, who was not wounded till after Ham., first dying of a poison described as singularly quick in its operation. The purposes of the drama might require that Ham. should survive, and the same quantity of poison may affect different constitutions differently, but the poison of the 'anointed' sword, which had first entered the body, and was steeped with the blood, 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 Lear. [Possibly Ham. gave Lear. a mortal thrust in return for the 'scratch,' which was all that Lear. was aiming at. So that Lear. 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.
HAMLET  [ACT V, SC. II.

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!

324. strict] strick'd F. strick't F.,
325. be] this F.F.F., you—] Pope. you, Q.Q.F.F.F.,
Rowe. you' Q.Q. you. F. you;
Q'y 76.
326. cause aright] cause a right Q.
327. the] be F.F.,
Never believe] Never; believe
Han.
328. I am] I'm Pope+, Dyce ii.
329. thou'rt] Cap. th'art Q.Q.F.,
Rowe+.
330. by heaven.] Om. Q'y 76.
331. O God]—Horatio,] Cap. O god
Horatio, Q.Q., O God Horatio! Q.Q.
Q'y 76. Oh good Horatio, F.,
332. live] I leave Q.Q. Jen. leave
White.
333. me] Jen. me? Q.Q. Rowe+,
White. me. F.

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 Silvester's "Du Bartas."—And Death, adr sergeant 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 afar off, and shot within.

What warlike noise is this?

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. 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 occurments, more and less,

Warb. Th th' Q, Q3, Ff.
[March....shot within.] Steev.
338, 339. To....soley.] Pope. One
March afar off, and shout within. Ff.
338. ambassadors] ambassador Han.
A march a farre off. Q. March at some
distance...within. Dyce ii. Om. Cap.
340. quite] qui Fc.
this f this f [Exit Osrick. Jen.
338. o'er-crows] o're-grows Q, Q3,
[Enter Osrick. QqFf, Rowe+.
340. o'er-grows Pope+ Jen.
337. SACRIFICE VI, Pope+, Jen.
344. 8 or less] or less F, Rowe+, Jen.
Jen. Sing, i, Cald.

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 antagonis-

TSTEVEN: This expression is also found in Chapman's Odyssey, lib. xxii:—
and told his foe It was not fair, nor equal, t' overcrow The poorest guest.' MAL-
LOE: Again, in the epistle prefixed to Nash's Apologie of Fierce Penlines, 1593:
'About two yeeres since a certayne demi-divine took upon him to set his footes on
mine, and overcrowe me with comparative terms.' CLARENDON: Johnson quotes
from Spenser's View of the Present State of Ireland (Globe ed., p. 660): 'A base
villain, that being but of late grown out of the doughthill beginneth nowe to over-
crowe soe high mountaynes, and make himselfe greete protectour of all outlawes
and rebels that will repayre vnto him.' TSCHISCHWITZ adopts over-awes in his text,
as 'the only word which affords a suitable sense.'

344. occurments] STEVEN: Incidents, occurrences. Compare: 'As our occur-

TENTS happen in degree.'—Drayton's Barons' Wars, bk i, canto xii. CLARENDON:
Compare Holland's Pliny, xxv, 2: 'This occurrent fell out in Lactania, 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?

March within.
Hamlet

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...J. Theob.+, Jen. Cam.
Cla. Enter Fortinbras and English Ambassador...F, Rowe, Pope. Enter Fortenbrasse, with the Ambassadors.Qq (Fortenbrasse Qq). Enter...Embassadors, and others. Cap. et cet.
349. this the F,F, Rowe.
350. aught Han. aughtQqF,F, Rowe,
Pope, Theob. Cap. search.) /search /Qq76.

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 Macb. 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 cry havoke, upon payne of hym that is so founde begynner, to dye therefor; and the remauntaunt to be emprysoned, and theire 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 hafo, destruction; others from the A. S. hafoc, a hawk; others from the French haie, 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 infernal: 'Jul. Cæs. I, ii, 160; Oth. IV, ii. 154. 'This seems to be still in use among the common people, I need scarcely notice the Yankee 'ternal.'
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. 351. commandment Qq (commandment, line 357, Qq.
360. life] breath Q76.
362. jump] apt Q76. full Pope.
363. Polack] Pollock Qq, Pollock

359. 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 Toxicophilus.'

362. jump] See 1, i, 65.

368. 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 Remarker 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.

369, 370. Of accidental ... cause] DELIUS: The first line refers to Pol., the second to Ros. and Guili., 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;

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*Footnotes:

372. inventors'] Theo.b. ii. inventors
Qq. Inventors F,F,F,F. Rowe, Pope, Han.
Theob. i. Inventor's F.F.F_.
374. nobles'] nobles' Q'76, Pope ii,
376. rights'] rights, Q,F,F. Rites Ff.
377. doth...me.] Separate line, Ff.
378. shall have also] shall have always F,F,F.
379. And...mouth;] Separate line, Fl.
380. same] scene Coll. ii (MS).
381. lest...mischance] Separate line, Fl.
382. plots and] plots, and Ff, Rowe,
383. to the] off the F,F,F. Rowe, Pope.

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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 metaphorical 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] COLIER (ed. ii): The alteration by the (MS) is so much superior to the Qq Ff in reference to the words 'perform'd' and 'stage,' which occur just afterwards, that we make the change, not only without reluctance, but with thankfulness 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 ABBOTT, § 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.
HAMLET

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, Fl.
royally] royall Qq.
386. soldiers' [Souldiers F.
rites] right Qq. Cap. rights
Q't, Knt.
388. bodies] body Fl, Rowc+, Cal'd.
389. amis] amiiff Qq. amis F.

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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