This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world’s books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that’s often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book’s long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ **Make non-commercial use of the files** We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ **Refrain from automated querying** Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google’s system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ **Maintain attribution** The Google “watermark” you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ **Keep it legal** Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can’t offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book’s appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google’s mission is to organize the world’s information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world’s books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at [http://books.google.com/](http://books.google.com/)
THE COMPLETE WORKS
OF
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

WITH
A LIFE OF THE POET, EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES, CRITICAL
NOTES, AND A GLOSSARIAL INDEX.


BY THE
REV. HENRY N. HUDSON,
PROFESSOR OF SHAKESPEARE IN BOSTON UNIVERSITY.

IN TWENTY VOLUMES
Vol. III.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY GINN & HEATH.
1880.
Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1880, by
HENRY N. HUDSON,
In the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

GINN & COMPANY:
J. S. CUSHING, PRINTER, BOSTON.
A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

REGISTERED at the Stationers' October 8, 1600, and two quarto editions of it published in the course of that year. The play is not known to have been printed again till it reappeared in the folio of 1623, where the repetition of certain misprints shows it to have been printed from one of the quarto copies. Few of the Poet's dramas have reached us in a more satisfactory state as regards the text.

The play is first heard of in the list given by Francis Meres in his Palladis Tamia, 1598. But it was no doubt written several years before that time; and I am not aware that any editor places the writing later than 1594. This brings it into the same period with King John, King Richard the Second, and the finished Romeo and Juliet; and the internal marks of style naturally sort it into the same company. Verplanck, however, thinks there are some passages which relish strongly of an earlier time; while, again, there are others that have such an energetic compactness of thought and imagery, mingled occasionally with the deeper tonings of "years that bring the philosophic mind," as to argue that they were wrought into the structure of the play not long before it came from the press. The part of the Athenian lovers certainly has a good deal that, viewed by itself, would scarce do credit even to such a boyhood as Shakespeare's must have been. On the other hand, there is a large philosophy in Theseus' discourse of "the lunatic, the lover, and the poet," a manly judgment in his reasons for preferring the "tedious brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisbe," and a bracing freshness in the short dialogue of the chase, all in the best style of the author's second period.

There is at least a rather curious coincidence, which used to
be regarded as proving that the play was not written till after the Summer of 1594. I refer to Titania's description, in ii. 1, of the strange misbehaviour of the weather, which she ascribes to the fairy pickings. For the other part of the coincidence, Strype in his Annals gives the following from a discourse by the Rev. Dr. King: "And see whether the Lord doth not threaten us much more, by sending such unseasonable weather and storms of rain among us; which if we will observe, and compare it with what is past, we may say that the course of Nature is very much inverted. Our years are turned upside down: our Summers are no Summers; our harvests are no harvests; our seed-times are no seed-times. For a great space of time scant any day hath been seen that it hath not rained." Dyce, indeed, scouts the supposal that Shakespeare had any allusion to this eccentric conduct of the elements in the Summer of 1594, pronouncing it "ridiculous"; but I do not quite see it so, albeit I am apt enough to believe that most of the play was written before that date.

The Poet has been commonly supposed to have taken the ground-work of this play from The Knight's Tale of Chaucer. But the play has hardly any notes of connection with the Tale except the mere names of Theseus, Hippolyta, and Philostrate, the latter of which is the name assumed by Arcite in the Tale. The Life of Theseus, in North's translation of Plutarch doubtless furnished something towards the parts of the hero and his "bouncing Amazon"; while Golding's translation of Ovid's story of Pyramus and Thisbe probably supplied hints towards the interlude. So much as relates to Bottom and his fellows evidently came fresh from Nature as she had passed under the Poet's eye. The linking of these clowns with the ancient tragic tale of Pyramus and Thisbe, so as to draw the latter within the region of modern farce, is not less original than droll. The names of Oberon, Titania, and Robin Goodfellow were made familiar by the surviving relics of Gothic and Druidical mythology. But it was for Shakespeare to let the fairies speak for themselves. So that there need be no scruple about receiving Hallam's statement of the matter: "A Midsummer-Night's Dream is, I believe, altogether original in one of the most beautiful conceptions that ever visited the mind of a poet,—the fairy machinery. A
few before him had dealt in a vulgar and clumsy manner with popular superstitions; but the sportive, beneficent, invisible population of the air and earth, long since established in the creed of childhood, and of those simple as children, had never for a moment been blended with 'human mortals' among the personages of the drama.
A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Theseus, Duke of Athens.
Egeus, Father to Hermia.
Lysander, in love with Hermia.
Demetrius.
Philostrate, Master of the Revels to Theseus.
Quince, a Carpenter.
Snug, a Joiner.
Bottom, a Weaver.
Flute, a Bellows-mender.
Snout, a Tinker.
Starveling, a Tailor.

Hippolita, Queen of the Amazons.
Hermia, in love with Lysander.
Helena, in love with Demetrius.

Other Fairies attending their King and Queen. Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

Scene.—Athens, and a Wood near it.

ACT I.

Scene I.—Athens. A Room in the Palace of Theseus.

Enter Theseus, Hippolita, Philostrate, and Attendants.

The. Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another Moon: but, O, methinks, how slow
This old Moon wanes! she lingers my desires,
Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,¹
Long withering out a young man’s révenue.

_Hip._ Four days will quickly steep themselves in nights;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the Moon, like to a silver bow
New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

_The._ Go, Philostrate,
Stir up th’ Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert² and nimble spirit of mirth:
Turn melancholy forth to funerals,—
The pale companion is not for our pomp.—[Exit Philostrate.
Hippolyta, I woo’d thee with my sword,
And won thy love, doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph,³ and with revelling.

_Enter Egeus, Hermia, Lysander, and Demetrius._

_Ege._ Happy be Theseus, our renownèd Duke!⁴
_The._ Thanks, good Egeus: what’s the news with thee?
_Ege._ Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.—
Stand forth, Demetrius.—My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her.—

¹ A dowager is a widow with rights of dower, that is, with a portion of her husband’s property secured to her by law. Of course, so long as she lives, a part of the inheritance is withheld from the children, whose revenue is said to be withered out, because their youth gets withered while they are waiting for it.

² Pert had not always the ill meaning now attached to it. Skinner derives it from the Latin _peritus_, which means _expert, skilful, prompt._

³ Triumph was used in a much more inclusive sense than it now bears; for various kinds of festive or public _display or pageantry._

⁴ The application of _duke_ to the heroes of antiquity was quite common; the word being from the Latin _dux_, which means a chief or leader of any sort. Thus in _1 Chronicles_, i. 51, we have a list of “the _dukes_ of Edom.”
Stand forth, Lysander: — and, my gracious Duke,
This man hath witch’d the bosom of my child: —
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,
And interchanged love-tokens with my child:
Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung,
With feigning voice, verses of feigning love; ⁵
And stol’n th’ impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gauds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, — messengers
Of strong prevailment in unharden’d youth:
With cunning hast thou filch’d my daughter’s heart;
Turn’d her obedience, which is due to me,
To stubborn harshness: — and, my gracious Duke,
Be’t so she will not here before your Grace
Consent to marry with Demetrius,
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens,—
As she is mine, I may dispose of her:
Which shall be either to this gentleman
Or to her death, according to our law
Immediately provided in that case.

The. What say you, Hermia? be advised, ⁶ fair maid:
To you your father should be as a god;
One that composed your beauties; yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax,
By him imprinted, and within his power
To leave the figure, or disfigure it. ⁷

⁵ According to present usage, this should be “verses of feigned love.”
Probably it is but an instance of the indifferent use of the active and passive
forms so common in the Poet’s time. So we have discontentent for discontented, and all-obeying for all-obeyed.
⁶ Be advised is old language for bethink yourself; that is, deliberate or
consider. Very often so in Shakespeare.
⁷ The language is something odd and obscure; but the meaning ap-
ppears to be, “It is in his power either to let the form remain as is, that is,
to leave it undefaced, or to destroy it altogether.” In the Poet’s earlier
period, such jingles as figure and disfigure were too much affected by him.
Demetrius is a worthy gentlemen.

_Her._ So is Lysander.

_The._ In himself he is;
But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

_Her._ I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

_The._ Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

_Her._ I do entreat your Grace to pardon me.

I know not by what power I am made bold,
Nor how it may concern my modesty,
In such a presence here to plead my thoughts;
But I beseech your Grace that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case,
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

_The._ Either to die the death, or to abjure
For ever the society of men.
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires;
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,\(^8\)
Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,
You can endure the livery of a nun;
For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,\(^9\)
To live a barren sister all your life,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless Moon.
Thrice-bless'd they that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
But earthlier-happy\(^{10}\) is the rose distill'd
Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.

_Her._ So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,

---

\(^8\) _Blood_ was continually put for _passions, impulses, and affections._

\(^9\) To _mew_ was a term in falconry; a _mew_ being a _cage or coop_ in which hawks were confined during the season of molting.

\(^{10}\) The meaning probably is, "happy in a more earthly and perishable kind of happiness."
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship, whose unwishèd yoke
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.\(^{11}\)

The. Take time to pause; and, by the next new Moon,—
The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,
For everlasting bond of fellowship,—
Upon that day either prepare to die
For disobedience to your father's will,
Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would;
Or on Diana's altar to protest
For aye austerity and single life.

Dem. Relent, sweet Hermia:—and, Lysander, yield
Thy crazèd title to my certain right.

Lys. You have her father's love, Demetrius;
Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him.

Ege. Scornful Lysander! true, he hath my love,
And what is mine my love shall render him;
And she is mine, and all my right of her
I do estate unto Demetrius.

Lys. I am, my lord, as well derived as he,
As well possess'd; my love is more than his;
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd—
If not with vantage—as Demetrius';
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
I am beloved of beauteous Hermia:
Why should not I, then, prosecute my right?
Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
Upon this spotted\(^{12}\) and inconstant man.

\(^{11}\) Lordship here means dominion or government; and give is used with two accusatives, yoke and sovereignty.

\(^{12}\) Spotted for wicked or false, the opposite of spotless. So in Cavendish's Metrical Visions: "Spotted with pride, viciousness, and cruelty."
The. I must confess that I have heard so much,
And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof;
But, being over-full of self-affairs,
My mind did lose it. — But, Demetrius, come;
And come, Egeus; you shall go with me,
I have some private schooling for you both. —
For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
To fit your fancies to your father's will;
Or else the law of Athens yields you up —
Which by no means we may extenuate —
To death, or to a vow of single life. —
Come, my Hippolyta: what cheer, my love? —
Demetrius, and Egeus, go along:
I must employ you in some business
Against our nuptial; and confer with you
Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

Ege. With duty and desire we follow you.

[Exeunt Thes., Hip., Ege., Dem., and Train.

Lys. How now, my love! why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

Her. Belike for want of rain, which I could well
Beteem them from the tempest of mine eyes.

Lys. Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;
But, either it was different in blood, —

Her. O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low!

Lys. Or else misgraff'ed in respect of years, —

Her. O spite! too old to be engaged to young!

Lys. Or else it stood upon the choice of friends, —

---

13 Here, as in many other places, *business* is a trisyllable.
14 *Beteem* here clearly has the sense of *allow* or *permit*; as in *Hamlet*, i. 2: "So loving to my mother, that he might not *beteem* the winds of heaven visit her face too roughly."
Scene I. A Midsummer-Night's Dream.

Her. O Hell! to choose love by another's eyes!
Lys. Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,
Making it momentary as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;
Brief as the lightning in the collie's night,
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,
And, ere a man hath power to say, Behold!
The jaws of darkness do devour it up:
So quick bright things come to confusion.

Her. If, then, true lovers have been ever cross'd,
It stands as an edict in destiny:
Then let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love as thoughts, and dreams, and sighs,
Wishes, and tears, poor fancy's followers.

Lys. A good persuasion; therefore, hear me, Hermia.
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child:

15 Momentary is an old form of momentary.
16 Smutted or black; a word derived from the collieries.
17 Spleen for a fit of passion or violence, because the spleen was supposed to be the special seat of eruptive or explosive emotions. So in King John, ii. 1:

This union shall do more than battery can
To our fast-closed gates; for, at this match,
With swifter spleen than powder can enforce,
The mouth of passage shall we fling wide ope,
And give you entrance.

18 The old poets very often make two syllables where modern usage allows but one. So, here, patience is properly a trisyllable. Various other words ending in -ience are sometimes used thus by Shakespeare; as also many words ending in -ion, -ian, and -ious. So it is with confusion, third line above.
19 The Poet often uses fancy for love. So, afterwards, in this play: "Fair Helena in fancy following me." And in the celebrated passage applied to Queen Elizabeth: "In maiden meditation fancy-free."
20 This word has occurred once before, but with the accent on the first
And she respects\textsuperscript{21} me as her only son. 
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues: 
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee; 
And to that place the sharp Athenian law 
Cannot pursue us. If thou livest, then, 
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night; 
And in the wood, a league without the town, 
Where I did meet thee once with Helena, 
To do observance to a morn of May,\textsuperscript{22} 
There will I stay for thee.

\textit{Her.} My good Lysander!
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow; 
By his best arrow with the golden head,— 
By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves; 
By the simplicity of Venus' doves; 
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,

syllable: here the accent is on the second syllable, as it ought to be. 
Shakespeare has it repeatedly in both ways: all the other English poets, 
I think, used it as in this place; at least so I have marked it in Spenser, 
Daniel, Dryden, Young, and Thomson. I have not met with the word in 
Milton's poetry, or in Wordsworth's.

\textsuperscript{21} To \textit{respect} in the sense of to \textit{regard}; the two words being formerly 
used as equivalent expressions.

\textsuperscript{22} This refers to the old English custom of observing May-day, as it was 
called, with a frolic in the fields and woods. Stowe, the chronicler, tells us 
how our ancestors were wont to go out into "the sweet meadows and green 
woods, there to rejoice their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet 
flowers, and with the harmony of birds praising God in their kind." The 
celebration of May-day in this manner was a favourite theme with the old 
poets from Chaucer downwards. Wordsworth sings it charmingly in his 
two \textit{Odes to May}; one stanza of which I must add:

\begin{verbatim}
Time was, blest Power? when youths and maids 
At peep of dawn would rise
And wander forth, in forest glades
Thy birth to solemnize.
Though mute the song, — to grace the rite
Untouch'd the hawthorn bough,
Thy Spirit triumphs o'er the slight;
Man changes, but not thou.
\end{verbatim}
When the false Trojan under sail was seen;  
By all the vows that ever men have broke,  
In number more than ever women spoke; —  
In that same place thou hast appointed me,  
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.  


Enter Helena.

Her. God speed fair Helena! whither away?  
Hel. Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.  
Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!  
Your eyes are lode-stars; and your tongue’s sweet air  
More tuneable than lark to shepherd’s ear,  
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.  
Sickness is catching: O, were favour so,  
Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;  
My hair should catch your hair, my eye your eye,  
My tongue should catch your tongue’s sweet melody.  
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,  
The rest I’d give, to be to you translated.  
O, teach me how you look; and with what art  
You sway the motion of Demetrius’ heart!

Her. I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.  
Hel. O, that your frowns would teach my smiles such  
skill!

Her. I give him curses, yet he gives me love.  
Hel. O, that my prayers could such affection move!  
Her. The more I hate, the more he follows me.  
Hel. The more I love, the more he hateth me.  
Her. His folly, Helen, is no fault of mine.

23 Fair for fairness or beauty; a common usage of the time.
24 The lode-star is the leading or guiding star; that is, the polar star.
The magnet is for the same reason called the lode-stone.
25 Favour here has reference to the general aspect, and means about the same as looks or personal appearance. Repeatedly so.
Hel. None but your beauty's: would that fault were mine!

Her. Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;
Lysander and myself will fly this place.
Before the time I did Lysander see,
Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me:
O, then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turned a heaven into a hell!

Lys. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:
To-morrow night, when Phoebe doth behold
Her silver visage in the watery glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,—
A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,—
Through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

Her. And in the wood, where often you and I
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,
There my Lysander and myself shall meet;
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and stranger companies.28
Farewell, sweet playfellow: pray thou for us;
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!—
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.

Lys. I will, my Hermia.—

Helena, adieu:

As you on him, Demetrius dote on you!

Hel. How happy some o'er other-some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know:
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities.

28 Companies for companions. So in King Henry V., i. i.: "His compa-
nies unletter'd, rude, and shallow."
Things base and vile, holding no quantity,\textsuperscript{27}  
Love can transpose to form and dignity:  
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;  
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:  
Nor hath love's mind of any judgment taste;  
Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedly haste:  
And therefore is Love said to be a child,  
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.  
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,  
So the boy Love is perjured everywhere:  
For, ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,\textsuperscript{28}  
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;  
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,  
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.  
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:  
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night  
Pursue her; and for this intelligence  
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:\textsuperscript{29}  
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,  
To have his sight thither and back again. \textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{27} Here \textit{quantity} appears to have the sense of \textit{strength, virtue, or efficacy}. A like use of the word occurs in \textit{Hamlet}, iii. 4: "Sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd, but it reserved some \textit{quantity} of choice, to serve in such a difference."

\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Eyne}, for \textit{eye} or \textit{eyes}, was often used by the poets whenever that sound was wanted for the rhyme.

\textsuperscript{29} The force and fitness of \textit{expense}, here, are partly shown by \textit{pain} in the next line. Staunton aptly notes that, as, to gratify Demetrius with this intelligence, "she makes a most painful sacrifice of her feelings, his thanks, even if obtained, are dearly bought."
SCENE II.—The Same. A Room in Quince’s House.

Enter Quince, Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snout, and Starveling.

Quin. Is all our company here?
Bot. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.¹

Quin. Here is the scroll of every man’s name, which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the Duke and the Duchess on his wedding-day at night.

Bot. First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on; then read the names of the actors; and so grow to a point.

Quin. Marry, our play is The most lamentable Comedy and most cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe.²

Bot. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. — Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll. — Masters, spread yourselves.

Quin. Answer as I call you. — Nick Bottom the weaver.
Bot. Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.
Quin. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.
Bot. What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?
Quin. A lover, that kills himself most gallantly for love.
Bot. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest.—Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ericles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.³

¹ Scríp, from scriptum, is writing; the scroll mentioned just below.
² Probably a burlesque upon the titles of some of the old dramas.
³ Ericles is Bottom’s version of Hercules. Hercules was one of the ranters and roarers of the old moral-plays; and his Twelve Labours formed a popular subject of entertainment. In Greene’s Groatsworth of Wit, 1592, a player tells how he had “terribly thundered” the Twelve Labours of Hercules. In Histriomastix, 1610, some soldiers drag in a company of
This was lofty!—Now name the rest of the players.—This is Heracles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover's is more condoling.

Quin. Francis Flute the bellows-mender.

Flu. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You must take Thisbe on you.

Flu. What is Thisbe? a wandering knight?

Quin. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

Flu. Nay, faith, let not me play a woman; I have a beard coming.

Quin. That's all one: you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.4

Bot. An I may hide my face, let me play Thisbe too: I'll speak in a monstrous little voice;—Thisse, Thisse,—Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear! thy Thisbe dear, and lady dear!

Quin. No, no; you must play Pyramus:—and, Flute, you Thisbe.

Bot. Well, proceed.

players; and the captain says to one of them, "Sirrah, this is you that would rend and tear a cat upon the stage." And in The Roaring Girl, 1611, one of the persons is called Tear-cat. The phrase to make all split is met with repeatedly. So in Beaumont and Fletcher's Scornful Lady, ii. 3: "Two roaring boys of Rome, that made all split." Also in The Widow's Tears, by Chapman, i. 4: "Her wit I must employ upon this business to prepare my next encounter, but in such a fashion as shall make all split."

4 In The Merry Wives, i. 1, Slender says of Anne Page, "She has brown hair, and speaks small like a woman." This speech of Peter Quince's shows, what is known from other sources, that the parts of women were used to be played by boys, or, if these could not be had, by men in masks.
Quin. Robin Starveling the tailor.

Star. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's mother.

— Tom Snout the tinker.

Snout. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You, Pyramus' father; myself, Thisbe's father;—

Snug the joiner, you, the lion's part:—and, I hope, here is a

play fitted.

Snug. Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it

be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

Quin. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but

roaring.

Bot. Let me play the lion too: I will roar, that I will do

any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I will

make the Duke say, Let him roar again, let him roar again.

Quin. An you should do it too terribly, you would fright

the Duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek; and that

were enough to hang us all.

All. That would hang us, every mother's son.

Bot. I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the

ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion

but to hang us: but I will aggravate my voice so, that I will

roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you an

'twere any nightingale.

Quin. You can play no part but Pyramus; for Pyramus

is a sweet-faced man; a proper man as one shall see in a

Summer's day; a most lovely, gentleman-like man: therefore

you must needs play Pyramus.

Bot. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best
to play it in?

6 _An_ is an old colloquial equivalent for _if_. So the Poet uses, indifferently, _an_, or _if_, or both together, _an if_. And so in the common phrase, "without any _ifs_ or _ans_.

6 _Proper_ is _handsome_ or _fine-looking_. Commonly so in Shakespeare.
Quin. Why, what you will.

Bot. I will discharge it in either your straw-colour beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your French-crown-colour beard, your perfect yellow.\(^7\)

Quin. Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and then you will play barefaced.\(^8\)—But, masters, here are your parts: and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night; and meet me in the palace-wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight: there will we rehearse; for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogg’d with company, and our devices known. In the mean time I will draw a bill of properties,\(^9\) such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.

Bot. We will meet; and there we may rehearse more obscenely and courageously.

Quin. Take pains; be perfect: adieu. At the Duke’s oak we meet.

Bot. Enough; hold, or cut bow-strings.\(^{10}\) [Exeunt.

\(^7\) It seems to have been a custom to stain or dye the beard. So Ben Jonson in *The Alchemist*: “He has dyed his beard and all.”

\(^8\) An allusion to the baldness attendant upon a particular stage of what was then termed the French disease.

\(^9\) The properties were the furnishings of the stage, and the keeper of them is, I think, still called the property-man.

\(^{10}\) This saying is no doubt rightly explained by Capell: “When a party was made at butts, assurance of meeting was given in the words of that phrase; the sense of the person using them being, that he would hold, or keep, his promise, or they might ‘cut his bowstrings,’ demolish him for an archer.”
ACT II.

SCENE I. — A Wood near Athens.

Enter, from opposite sides, a Fairy, and Puck.

Puck. How now, spirit! whither wander you?

Fai. Over hill, over dale,
    Thorough bush, thorough brier,
    Over park, over pale,
    Thorough flood, thorough fire,
    I do wander everywhere,
    Swifter than the moony sphere;¹
    And I serve the Fairy Queen,
    To dew her orbs² upon the green.
    The cowslips tall her pensioners be:³
    In their gold coats spots you see:
    Those be rubies, fairy favours,
    In those freckles live their savours:
    I must go seek some dewdrops here,

¹ Collier informs us that “Coleridge, in his lectures in 1818, was very
    emphatic in his praise of the beauty of these lines: ‘the measure,’ he said,
    ‘had been invented and employed by Shakespeare for the sake of its appro-
    priateness to the rapid and airy motion of the Fairy by whom the passage
    is delivered.’” And in his Literary Remains, after analyzing the measure,
    he speaks of the “delightful effect on the ear,” caused by “the sweet transi-
    tion” from the amphimacers of the first four lines to the trochaic of the next
    two.

² These orbs were the verdant circles which the old superstition here de-
    lineated called fairy-rings, supposing them to be made by the night-tripping
    fairies dancing their merry roundels. As the ground became parched un-
    der the feet of the moonlight dancers, Puck’s office was to refresh it with
    sprinklings of dew, thus making it greener than ever.

³ The allusion is to Elizabeth’s band of Gentleman Pensioners, who were
    chosen from among the handsomest and tallest young men of family and
    fortune; they were dressed in habits richly garnished with gold lace.
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.  
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; ⁴ I'll be gone:  
Our Queen and all her elves come here anon.  

**Puck.** The King doth keep his revels here to-night:  
Take heed the Queen come not within his sight;  
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,  
Because that she, as her attendant, hath  
A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king;  
She never had so sweet a changeling; ⁵  
And jealous Oberon would have the child

⁴ It would seem that Puck, though he could “put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes,” was heavy and sluggish in comparison with the other fairies: he was the *lubber* of the spirit tribe. Shakespeare’s “lob of spirits” is the same as Milton’s “*lubbar fiend*,” in *L’Allegro*:

> And he, by friar’s lantern led,  
> Tells how the drudging goblin sweet  
> To earn his cream-bowl duly set,  
> When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,  
> His shadowy flail hath thresh’d the corn,  
> That ten day-labourers could not end:  
> Then lies him down the lubbar fiend,  
> And, stretch’d out all the chimney’s length,  
> Basks at the fire his hairy strength.

⁵ A *changeling* was a child taken or given in *exchange*; it being a roguish custom of the fairies, if a child of great promise were born, to steal it away, and leave an ugly, or foolish, or ill-conditioned one in its stead. So in *The Faerie Queene*, i. 10, 65:

> From thence a Faery thee unweepting reft,  
> There, as thou slepest in tender swaddling band,  
> And her base Elfin brood there for thee left:  
> Such, men do chaungelings call, so chaung'd by Faeries theft.

How much comfort this old belief sometimes gave to parents, may be seen from Drayton’s *Nymphidia*:

> And when a child hap's to be got,  
> Which after proves an idiot,  
> When folk perceive it thriveth not,  
> The fault therein to smother,  
> Some silly, doating, brainless calf,  
> That understands things by the half,  
> Says that the fairy left this aulf,  
> And took away the other.
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild;
But she perforce withholds the lovèd boy,
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy:
And now they never meet in grove or green,
By fountain clear or spangled starlight sheen,
But they do square,⁶ that all their elves, for fear,
Creep into acorn-cups, and hide them there.

_Fai._ Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are you not he
That frights the maidens of the villagery;
Skims milk, and sometime labours in the quern,⁷
And bootless makes the breathless housewife churn;
And sometime makes the drink to bear no barm;⁸
Misleads night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck:
Are not you he?⁹

_Puck._ Fairy, thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,

---

⁶ The Poet repeatedly uses to _square_ for to _quarrel_; _squerer_ for _quarreler_. This use of the word probably grew from the posture or attitude men take when they stand to a fight.

⁷ _Sometime_ and _sometimes_ were used indiscriminately.—_A quern_ was a _hand-mill_ for grinding corn.

⁸ _Barm_ is _yeast_. So in Holland's Pliny: "Now the froth or _barm_, that riseth from these ales or beers, have a property to keep the skin fair and clear in women's faces."

⁹ This account of Puck was gathered from the popular notions of the time. So in Harsnet's _Declaration of Popish Impostures_: "And if that the bowl of curds and cream were not duly set out for Robin Goodfellow, the friar, and Sisse the dairy-maid, why, then either the cottage was burnt next day in the pot, or the cheeses would not curdle, or the butter would not come, or the ale in the fat never would have good head." Likewise, in Scot's _Discovery of Witchcraft_: "Your grandames' maids were wont to
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal: 10
And sometime lurk I in a gossip’s bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab; 11
And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
And on her wither’d dewlap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, 12 telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
And tailor cries, 13 and falls into a cough;
And then the whole quire hold their hips and loff,
And waxen in their mirth, 14 and neeze, and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.
But room now, fairy! here comes Oberon.
Fai. And here my mistress. Would that he were gone!

Enter, from one side, Oberon, with his Train; from the other, Titania, with hers.

Obe. I met by moonlight, proud Titania.

set a bowl of milk for him, for his pains in grinding malt and mustard,
and sweeping the house at midnight; — this white bread and milk was his standing fee.” And in Drayton’s Nymphidia:

This Puck seems but a dreaming dolt,
Still walking like a ragged colt,
And oft out of a bush doth bolt,
Of purpose to deceive us;
And, leading us, makes us to stray
Long winter nights out of the way,
And when we stick in mire and clay,
He doth with laughter leave us.

10 Filly-foal is a female colt, or a young mare. Neighing like, or in the manner of, a filly foal, is the meaning.

11 It is the apple crab, not the animal crab, that is meant.

12 Aunt and uncle were common titles of address to aged people; as they still are, or were of late, to aged servants in the Southern States.

13 Dr. Johnson thought he remembered to have heard this ludicrous exclamation upon a person’s seat slipping from under him. He that slips from his chair falls as a tailor squats upon his board.

14 Waxen is an old plural form of the verb to wax. Of course it means “increase in their mirth.”
Tita. What, jealous Oberon?—Fairies, skip hence:
I have forsworn his bed and company.

Obe. Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy lord?

Tita. Then I must be thy lady: but I know
When thou hast stol'n away from Fairy-land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn,¹⁵ and versing love
To amorous Phyllida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steep of India,
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded? and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

Obe. How canst thou thus, for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?
And make him with fair Aeglè break his faith,
With Ariadne and Antiopa?

Tita. These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never, since the middle Summer's spring,¹⁶
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By pavèd fountain or by rushy brook,
Or on the beachèd margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.

¹⁶ A pipe of corn is an ancient musical instrument, made of the straw of
wheat, oats, or rye; straws of different size being selected, and cut of different
lengths, and then fastened together in a small frame or holder. Such
was the shepherd's pipe, though sometimes made of reeds, so much cele-
brated in classic poetry.

¹⁶ Spring is here used in the sense of beginning. The Poet has elsewhere
"spring of day" in the same sense. So in Job xxxviii. 12: "Hast thou
caused the day-spring to know his place?"
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land
Have every pelting\textsuperscript{17} river made so proud,
That they have overborne their continents:\textsuperscript{18}
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat; and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard:
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
And crows are fatted with the murrain flock;
The nine-men's-morris\textsuperscript{19} is fill'd up with mud;
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,
For lack of tread, are undistinguishable:
The human mortals want\textsuperscript{20} their minstrelsy,—
No night is now with hymn or carol blest:
Therefore the Moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air;

\textsuperscript{17} Pelting was often used for petty or paltry.
\textsuperscript{18} Continent was formerly used of that which contains any thing; as a river is contained within its banks.
\textsuperscript{19} This was a plat of green turf cut into a sort of chess board, for the rustic youth to exercise their skill upon. The game was called nine-men's-morris, because the players had each nine men, which they moved along the lines cut in the ground, until one side had taken or penned up all those on the other. "The quaint mazes in the wanton green" were where the youths and maidens led their happy dances in the open air.
\textsuperscript{20} To want was not unfrequently used in the sense of to lack, or to be without.—All through this speech the Poet probably had in mind the Summer of 1594, which was much celebrated for the strange misbehaviour of the weather. So in Dr. Forman's Diary: "This monethes of June and July were very wet and wonderful cold, like winter, that the \textit{10} dae of Julii many did sty by the fyer, yt was so cold; and soe was it in Maye and June; and scarce too fair dais all that tyme, but it rayned every day more or lesse." Also in Churchyard's poem, \textit{Charitie}, published in 1595:

\begin{quote}
A colder time in world was never seen:
The skies do lour, the sun and moon wax dim;
Summer scarce known, but that the leaves are green:
The winter's waste drives water o'er the brim: &c.
\end{quote}
And thorough this distemper temperature we see
That rheumatic diseases do abound:
The seasons alter; hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;
And on old Hiems' thirt and icy crown
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set: the Spring, the Summer,
The childing Autumn, angry Winter, change
Their wonted liveries; and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which.
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension;
We are their parents and original.

Obe. Do you amend it, then; it lies in you:
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman.\(^{22}\)

Tita. Set your heart at rest:
The Fairy-land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votaress of my order:
And, in the spicèd Indian air, by night,
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side;
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking th' embarkèd traders on the flood;
When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive
And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind;
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait

\(^{21}\) Childing, here, is teeming or fruitful. In the second line below, their increase is the produce of the several seasons, which is supposed to have become so mixed and confounded, that mankind are bewildered, or in a maze. This use of childing and increase is well illustrated in the Poet's 97th Sonnet: "The teeming Autumn, big with rich increase, bearing the wanton burden of the prime," &c.

\(^{22}\) Henchman is an attendant or page; probably from the Saxon hengst, a groom.
Following,—her womb then rich with my young squire,—
Would imitate, and sail upon the land,
To fetch me trifles, and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake I do rear up her boy;
And for her sake I will not part with him.

_Obe._ How long within this wood intend you stay?
_Tita._ Perchance till after Theseus' wedding-day.
If you will patiently dance in our round,
And see our moonlight revels, go with us;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

_Obe._ Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.
_Tita._ Not for thy Fairy kingdom.—Fairies, away!
We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

_[Exit Titania with her train._

_Obe._ Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury.—

My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou remember'st
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back,
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music.

_Puck._ I remember.

---

23 *Since* was sometimes used for *when*; and such is clearly the sense of it here. So in *2 Henry IV.*, iii. 2: "Do you remember *since* we lay all night in the windmill in Saint George's fields?"

24 In Shakespeare's time, *mermaid* appears to have been sometimes used for *siren*.

25 *To hear* is an instance of what is called the gerundial infinitive, and so is equivalent to *at hearing*; the hearing of the seamaid's music being assigned, not as the *purpose*, but as the *cause* of the stars shooting madly from their spheres. See vol. i., page 207, note 12.
Obe. That very time I saw—but thou couldst not—
Flying between the cold Moon and the Earth,
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal thronèd by the West,
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred-thousand hearts:
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery Moon,
And the imperial votaress passèd on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free. 26
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,
And maidens call it love-in-idleness. 27
Fetch me that flower; the herb I show'd thee once:
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb; and be thou here again
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

Puck. I'd put a girdle round about the Earth
In forty minutes.

[Exit.]

Obe. Having once this juice,
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.
The next thing then she waking looks upon,—
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
On meddling monkey or on busy ape,—
She shall pursue it with the soul of love:

26 This delectable passage is universally understood as a compliment to Queen Elizabeth.

27 The tri-coloured violet, commonly called pansies, or hearts-ease, is here meant: one or two of its petals are of a purple colour. It has other fanciful and expressive names, such as Cuddle-me-to-you, Three-faces-under-ahood, Herb-trinity, &c.
SCENE I. A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

And, ere I take this charm off from her sight,—
As I can take it with another herb,—
I'll make her render up her page to me.
But who comes here? I am invisible;
And I will overhear their conference.

Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.

Dem. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stol'n into this wood;
And here am I, and wood 28 within this wood,
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

Hel. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant; 29
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart
Is true as steel: leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

Dem. Do I entice you? do I speak you fair?
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you I do not nor I cannot love you?

Hel. And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love,—
And yet a place of high respect with me,—

28 Wood is an old word for frantic or mad. See vol. i., page 184, note 3.
29 "There is now a dayes a kind of adamant which draweth unto it fleshe, and the same so strongly, that it hath power to knit and tie together two mouthes of contrary persons, and drawe the heart of a man out of his bodie without offending any part of him." — Certaine Secrete Wonders of Nature, by Edward Fenton, 1569.
Than to be us'd as you use your dog?

Dem. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

Hel. And I am sick when I look not on you.

Dem. You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city, and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not;
To trust the opportunity of night,
And the ill counsel of a desert place,
With the rich worth of your virginity.

Hel. Your virtue is my privilege for that.
It is not night when I do see your face,
Therefore I think I am not in the night;
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company,
For you in my respect are all the world:
Then how can it be said I am alone,
When all the world is here to look on me?

Dem. I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild-beasts.

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will, the story shall be changed,—
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tiger,—bootless speed,
When cowardice pursues, and valour flies!

Dem. I will not stay thy question; let me go:
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

Hel. Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.

80 Here, as often, question is talk or conversation.
I'll follow thee, and make a Heaven of Hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well.

[Exeunt Dem. and Hel.]

Obe. Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave this grove,
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love.—

Re-enter Puck.

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck. Ay, here it is.

Obe. I pray thee, give it me.

I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows;
Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with aglantine;
And where the snake throws her enamell’d skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lull’d in this bower with dances and delight;
And with the juice of this I’ll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes;
But do it when the next thing he espies
May be the lady: thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care, that he may prove
More fond on her than she upon her love:
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

Puck. Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

[Exeunt.]

31 Lush is luscious or luxuriant. So in The Tempest, ii. i: “How lush
and lusty the grass looks! how green!”
SCENE II. — Another Part of the Wood.

Enter Titania, with her Train.

Tita. Come, now a roundel¹ and a fairy song; Then, 'fore the third part of a minute, hence; Some, to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds; Some, war with rere-mice² for their leathern wings, To make my small elves coats; and some, keep back The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots and wonders At our quaint³ spirits. Sing me now asleep; Then to your offices, and let me rest.

SONG.

1 Fairy. You spotted snakes with double tongue, Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen; Newts and blind-worms,⁴ do no wrong, Come not near our fairy Queen.

Chorus. Philomel, with melody Sing in our sweet lullaby; Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby: Never harm, nor spell nor charm, Come our lovely lady night; So, good night, with lullaby.

2 Fairy. Weaving spiders, come not here; Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence! Beetles black, approach not near; Worm nor snail, do no offence.

Chorus. Philomel, with melody, &c.

¹ Roundel was the name of a dance in which the parties joined hands and formed a ring; sometimes called a roundelay.
² Rere-mice is an old name for bats.
³ Quaint is ingenious, adroit, cunning. See vol. i., page 180, note 9.
⁴ The blind-worm is what is now called the slow-worm. It is, I believe, quite harmless, but did not use to be thought so.
I Fairy. Hence, away! now all is well:
One aloof stand sentinel.

[Exeunt Fairies. Titania sleeps.

Enter Oberon.

Obe. What thou see'st when thou dost wake,

[Squeezes the flower on Titania's eyelids.

Do it for thy true-love take;
Love and languish for his sake:
Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Pard, 5 or boar with bristled hair,
In thy eye that shall appear
When thou wak'st, it is thy dear:
Wake when some vile thing is near.

[Exit.

Enter Lysander and Hermia.

Lys. Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;
And, to speak troth, I have forgot our way:
We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Her. Be't so, Lysander: find you out a bed;
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

Lys. One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.

Her. Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear,
Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

Lys. O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence! 6
Love takes the meaning in love's conference.
I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit,
So that but one heart we can make of it:
Two bosoms interchained with an oath;
So then two bosoms and a single troth.

5 Pard is an old name for leopard.
6 That is, "understand the meaning of my innocence," or "my innocent meaning."
Then by your side no bed-room me deny;
For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

_Her._ Lysander riddles very prettily:
Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,
If Hermia meant to say, Lysander lied.
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy
Lie further off; in human modesty,
Such separation as may well be said
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid,
So far be distant; and, good night, sweet friend:
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end!

_Lys._ Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;
And then end life when I end loyalty!
Here is my bed: sleep give thee all his rest!

_Her._ With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd!

[They sleep.]

_Enter Puck._

_Puck._ Through the forest have I gone,
But Athenian found I none,
On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love.
Night and silence! who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear:
This is he my master said
Despisèd the Athenian maid;
And here the maiden, sleeping sound,
On the dank and dirty ground:
Pretty soul! she durst not lie
Nearer this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.—
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe.  

_[Squeezes the flower on Lysander's eyelids._

\footnote{Owe is continually used by the old poets for own or possess.}
When thou wakest, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid:
So awake when I am gone;
For I must now to Oberon.

Enter Demetrius and Helena, running.

Hel. Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.
Dem. I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.
Hel. O, wilt thou darkling leave me? do not so.
Dem. Stay, on thy peril: I alone will go. [Exit.
Hel. O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe’er she lies;
For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:
If so, my eyes are oftener wash’d than hers.
No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;
For beasts that meet me run away for fear:
Therefore no marvel though Demetrius
Do, as a monster, fly my presence thus.
What wicked and dissembling glass of mine
Made me compare with Hermia’s sphery eyne?
But who is here? Lysander! on the ground!
Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.—
Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

Lys. [Starting up.] And run through fire I will for thy
sweet sake.
Transparent Helen, Nature shows her art,
That through thy bosom makes me see my heart.
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

Hel. Do not say so, Lysander; say not so.

8 An old phrase, meaning, “wilt thou leave me in the dark?” So in King Lear, i. 4: “So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.”
What though he love your Hermia?  Lord, what though?
Yet Hermia still loves you: then be content.

Lys.  Content with Hermia!  No; I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
Not Hermia, but Helen now I love:
Who will not change a raven for a dove?
The will of man is by his reason sway'd;
And reason says you are the worthier maid.
Things growing are not ripe until their season:
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason;
And, touching now the point of human skill,
Reason becomes the marshal to my will,
And leads me to your eyes; where I o'erlook

Heloise.  Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?
Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,
That I did never, no, nor never can,
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
Good troth, you do me wrong,—good sooth, you do,—
In such disdainful manner me to woo.
But fare you well: perforce I must confess
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.
O, that a lady, of one man refused,
Should of another therefore be abused!  [Exit.

Lys.  She sees not Hermia.  — Hermia, sleep thou there:
And never mayest thou come Lysander near!
For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings;
Or, as the heresies that men do leave
Are hated most of those they did deceive;
So thou, my surfeit and my heresy,
Of all be hated, but the most of me!
And, all my powers, address your love and might
To honour Helen, and to be her knight!]
[Exit.

Her. [Awaking.] Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
Ah me, for pity! what a dream was here!
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear:
Methought a serpent eat my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.—
Lysander!—what, removed?—Lysander! lord!—
What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?
Alack, where are you? speak, an if you hear;
Speak, of all loves!9 I swoon almost with fear.
No? then I well perceive you are not nigh:
Either death or you I'll find immediately. [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I. — The Wood. Titania lying asleep.

Enter Quince, Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snout, and Starveling.

Bot. Are we all met?

Quin. Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place
for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this
hawthorn-brake our 'tiring-house; and we will do it in action
as we will do it before the Duke.

Bot. Peter Quince,—

Quin. What say'st thou, bully Bottom?

Bot. There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and
Thisbe that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a
sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How
answer you that?

9 A petty adjuration of the time, equivalent to by all means.
Snout. By'r lakin, a parlous fear.¹

Star. I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

Bot. Not a whit: I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not kill'd indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the Weaver: this will put them out of fear.

Quin. Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.²

Bot. No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

Star. I fear it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in—God shield us!—a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to it.

Snout. Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

Bot. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect,—Ladies,—or, Fair ladies,—I would wish you,—or, I would request you,—or, I would entreat you,—not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: no, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are:—and there, indeed, let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.³

¹ By'r lakin is a diminutive of by'r Lady, which, again, is a contraction of by our Lady, an old oath of frequent occurrence in these plays; Lady meaning the Virgin Mary. Parlous is a corruption of perils,.
² In alternate verses of eight and six syllables.
³ Shakespeare may here allude to an incident said to have occurred in
Quin. Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things, — that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber; for, you know, Pyramus and Thisbe meet by moonlight.

Snug. Doth the Moon shine that night we play our play?

Bot. A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

Quin. Yes, it doth shine that night.

Bot. Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber-window, where we play, open, and the Moon may shine in at the casement.

Quin. Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moonshine. Then there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisbe, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

Snug. You can never bring in a wall.—What say you, Bottom?

Bot. Some man or other must present wall: and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisbe whisper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother’s son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake; — and so every one according to his cue.

his time, which is recorded in a collection entitled Merry Passages and Jests: “There was a spectacle presented to Queen Elizabeth upon the water, and among others Harry Goldingham was to represent Arion upon the Dolphin’s backe; but finding his voice to be verye hoarse and unpleas”ant when he came to perform it, he tears off his disguise, and swears he was none of Arion, not he, but even honest Harry Goldenham; which blunt discoverie pleased the queen better than if he had gone through in the right way: — yet he could order his voice to an instrument exceeding well.”
Enter Puck behind.

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy Queen?
What, a play toward! I'll be an auditor;
An actor too perhaps, if I see cause.

Quin. Speak, Pyramus.—Thisbe, stand forth.

Pyr. Thisbe, the flowers of odious savour sweet,—

Quin. Odours, odours.

Pyr.—odours savour sweet:
So doth thy breath, my dearest Thisbe dear.

But hark, a voice! stay thou but here awhile,
And by-and-by I will to thee appear. [Exit.

Puck. [Aside.] A stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here. [Exit.

This. Must I speak now?

Quin. Ay, marry, must you; for you must understand he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

This. Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,
Most brisky juvenal, and eke most lovely Jew,
As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

Quin. Ninus' tomb, man: why, you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your part at once, cues and all.—Pyramus, enter: your cue is past; it is, never tire.

This. O,—As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire.

4 Toward, here, is at hand, in hand, or forthcoming. Very often used so by the Poet. Nor is the usage altogether out of date now.
5 Juvenal is youth; so used several times by Shakespeare.
6 The cues were the last words of the preceding speech, which served as a hint to him who was to speak next.
Re-enter Puck, and Bottom with an ass's head.

Pyr. An if I were, fair Thisbe, I were only thine:—
Quin. O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted.—Pray, masters! fly, masters!—Help!

[Exit with Snug, Flute, Snout, and Starveling.

Puck. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier:
Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire;
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn.7

Bot. Why do they run away? this is a knavery of them to make me afeard.

Re-enter Snout.

Snout. O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee!
Bot. What do you see? you see an ass-head of your own, do you?

Re-enter Quince.

Quin. Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art translated.

Bot. I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid.

[Sings.] The ousel-cock so black of hue,
With orange-tawny bill,8

7 The Protean versatility of Puck is celebrated in whatsoever has come down to us respecting him. Thus in an old tract entitled Robin Goodfellow, his Mad Pranks and Merry Fests:

Thou hast the power to change thy shape
To horse, to hog, to dog, to ape.

8 In the opinion of some commentators, the Poet or Bottom is a little out here in his ornithology. This opinion has probably arisen from a change in the use of the name since Shakespeare's day; ousel being then used to
A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.  ACT III.

The thrush with his note so true,
The wren with little quill; —

Tita. [Awaking.] What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

Bot. [Sings.]

The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
The plain-song cuckoo gray,
Whose note full many a man doth mark,
And dares not answer nay; —

for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird? who would give a bird the lie, though he cry cuckoo never so?

Tita. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

Bot. Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days; — the more the pity that some
denote the blackbird. Bottom's orange-tawny bill accords with what Yarrel says of the blackbird: "The beak and the edges of the eyelids in the adult male are gamboge yellow." The whistling of the blackbird is thus noted in Spenser's *Epithalamion*:

> The merry Larke hir mattins sings aloft;
The Thrush replyes; the Mavis descant playes;
The Ousell shrills; the Ruddock warbles soft.

9 The cuckoo is called plain-song, as having no variety of note, but singing in a monotone, after the manner of the ancient simple chant.

10 "Set his wit to a bird" is contradict, argue with, or match himself against a bird. In Troilus and Cressida, ii. i, Achilles says to Ajax, "Will you set your wit to a fool's?" and Thersites replies, "No, I warrant you; for a fool's will shame it." — "Though he cry cuckoo" refers to the likeness of sound in cuckoo and cuckold. So in the song at the end of Love's Labours Lost: "Cuckoo, cuckoo,—O word of fear, unpleasing to a married ear!" See, also, vol. ii., page 47, note xi.
honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek upon occasion.

Tita. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

Bot. Not so, neither: but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

Tita. Out of this wood do not desire to go:
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit of no common rate,—
The Summer still doth tend upon my state;
And I do love thee: therefore go with me;
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee;
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing, while thou on pressèd flowers dost sleep:
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.—
Peas-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustard-seed!

Enter Peas-blossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustard-seed.

Peas. Ready.

Cob. And I.

Moth. And I.

Mus. And I.

All Four. Where shall we go?

Tita. Be kind and courteous to this gentlemen,—
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs,

11 Bottom is chuckling over the wit he has just vented. Gleek is from the Anglo-Saxon gliç, and means catch, entrap, play upon, scoff at. So says Richardson. Glee is from the same original.
12 This is one instance out of many in these plays, showing that wit and wisdom were used as equivalents.
13 What we call humble-bees; so called from their loud humming.
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed and to arise;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

Peas. Hail, mortal!
Cob. Hail!
Moth. Hail!
Mus. Hail!

Bot. I cry your Worships mercy heartily.—I beseech your Worship's name.

Cob. Cobweb.

Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good Master Cobweb: if I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you.—Your name, honest gentleman?

Peas. Peas-blossom.

Bot. I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Good Master Peas-blossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too.—Your name, I beseech you, sir?

Mus. Mustard-seed.

Bot. Good Master Mustard-seed, I know your patience well: that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentlemen of your House: I promise you your kin-

14 "I cry you mercy" is an old phrase for "I ask your pardon."
15 A common form of speech in the Poet's time. So in The Merchant, iv. i: "I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon."
16 Squash seems to have been originally used of such immature vegetables as were eaten in the state of immaturity. In Shakespeare's time, the word had got appropriated to an immature peascod. When or how it came to its present meaning I cannot say.
17 Bottom here seems rather too deep for the editors. Does he mean "your patience" in suffering "that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef" to devour "many a gentleman of your House"? It has been proposed to read "passing well"; but this might be a parlous defeature of Bottom's idiom.
dread hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you of
more acquaintance, good Master Mustard-seed.

Tita. Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.
The Moon methinks looks with a watery eye;
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.
Tie up my love’s tongue, bring him silently.  

[Exeunt.

SCENE II. — Another Part of the Wood.

Enter Oberon.

Obe. I wonder if Titania be awaked;
Then, what it was that next came in her eye,
Which she must dote on in extremity.
Here comes my messenger.—

Enter Puck.

How now, mad spirit!

What night-rule 1 now about this haunted grove?

Puck. My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches,² rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play,
Intended for great Theseus’ nuptial day.
The shallowest thickskin of that barren sort,³

¹ Night-rule is such rule as is apt to govern in the night; revelry.
² This use of patch is said to have grown from the motley or patch-work
dress worn by the “allowed Fool.” At all events, it came to be used gen-
erally as a term of contempt for a simpleton or a clown. Shakespeare has
it repeatedly in that sense. See vol. i., page 104, note 6.
³ Sort here means pack, or company; the same as crew, a little before.
The Poet has several instances of such use; as, “a sort of traitors,” and “a
sort of tinkers,” and “a sort of vagabonds.” “Many in a sort,” a little after,
is another instance.
Who Pyramus presented in their sport,
Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake:
When I did him at this advantage take,
An ass's nowl I fix'd on his head:
Anon his Thisbe must be answer'd,
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves, and madly sweep the sky;
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly;
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls;
He murder cries, and help from Athens calls.
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears thus strong,
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong;
For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch;
Some, sleeves,—some, hats;—from yielders all things catch.

I led them on in this distracted fear,
And left sweet Pyramus translated there:
When, in that moment,—so it came to pass,—
Titania waked, and straightway loved an ass.

Obe. This falls out better than I could devise.
But hast thou yet latch'd the Athenian's eyes
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

---

4 *Nowl* is an old word for head. Perhaps it is but a special application of *knoll*; that use growing from the rounded shape of what we now mean by that word.

5 Yarrell, in his *History of British Birds*, says that Shakespeare here "speaks of the russet-pated (grey-headed) Choughs; which term is applicable to the Jackdaw, but not the real Choughs."

6 *Distracted for distracting*; the passive form with the active tense. See page 9, note 5.

7 *Latch'd*, or *letch'd*, is *licked* or *smeared over*. From the French *lecher*. 
Scene II. A Midsummer-Night's Dream.

Puck. I took him sleeping, — that is finish'd too, —
And the Athenian woman by his side;
That, when he waked, of force she must be eyed.

Enter Hermia and Demetrius.

Obe. Stand close: this is the same Athenian.
Puck. This is the woman, but not this the man.
Dem. O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

Her. Now I but chide; but I should use thee worse,
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in knee-deep,
And kill me too.
The Sun was not so true unto the day
As he to me: would he have stol'n away
From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon
This whole Earth may be bored; and that the Moon
May through the centre creep, and so displease
Her brother's noontide with th' Antipodes.
It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;
So should a murderer look, — so dread, so grim.

Dem. So should the murder'd look; and so should I,
Pierced through the heart with your stern cruelty:
Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear,
As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

Her. What's this to my Lysander? where is he?
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

Dem. I had rather give his carcass to my hounds.

Her. Out, dog! out, cur! thou drivest me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him, then?
Henceforth he never number'd among men!
O, once tell true, tell true, even for my sake!
Durst thou have look'd upon him being awake,
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch! 
Could not a worm, an adder, do so much? 
An adder did it; for with doubler tongue 
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

Dem. You spend your passion on a misprised mood: 
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood; 
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

Her. I pray thee, tell me, then, that he is well. 

Dem. An if I could, what should I get therefor? 

Her. A privilege, never to see me more. 

And from thy hated presence part I so: 
See me no more, whether he be dead or no. 

[Exit. 

Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vein: 
Here therefore for a while I will remain. 
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow 
For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe; 
Which now in some slight measure it will pay, 
If for his tender here I make some stay.

[Lies down and sleeps. 

Obe. What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite, 
And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight: 
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue 
Some true-love turn'd, and not a false turn'd true. 

Puck. Then fate o'er-rules; that, one man holding troth, 
A million fail, confounding oath on oath. 

Obe. About the wood go swifter than the wind, 
And Helena of Athens look thou find: 
All fancy-sick she is, and pale of cheer.

---

8 A touch anciently signified a trick or feat. Ascham has "The shrewd touches of many curst boys." And, in the old story of Howleglas, "For at all times he did some mad touch."  
9 "On a misprised mood" probably means in a mistaken manner. On and in were sometimes used interchangeably; as also mood and mode appear to have been. To misprise is to prise amiss, or to misapprehend.  
10 Cheer is from the old French chère, which Cotgrave thus explains:
With sighs of love, that cost the fresh blood dear: 11
By some illusion see thou bring her here:
I'll charm his eyes against she do appear.

Puck. I go, I go; look how I go,—
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow.

[Exit.]

Obe. Flower of this purple dye,
      Hit with Cupid's archery,
      Sink in apple of his eye!

[Squeezes the flower on Demetrius's eyelids.

When his love he doth espy,
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.—
When thou wakest, if she be by,
Beg of her for remedy.

Ré-enter Puck.

Puck. Captain of our fairy band,
      Helena is here at hand;
      And the youth, mistook by me,
      Pleading for a lover's fee.
      Shall we their fond pageant see?
      Lord, what fools these mortals be!

Obe. Stand aside: the noise they make
      Will cause Demetrius to awake.

Puck. Then will two at once woo one,—
      That must needs be sport alone; 12
      And those things do best please me
      That befall preposterously.

"The face, visage, countenance, favour, looks, aspect." Hence it naturally came to mean that which affects the face, or gives it expression.—Here, again, fancy-sick is love-sick. See page 13, note 19.

11 According to the old notion, that every sigh consumed a drop of blood. So Shakespeare has the phrases, "blood-consuming sighs," "blood-drinking sighs," and blood-sucking sighs."

12 Rare sport; sport so good as to spoil all other.
Re-enter Helena and Lysander.

Lys. Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?
Scorn and derision never come in tears:
Look, when I vow, I weep: and vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.
How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
Bearing the badge of faith, to prove them true?

Hel. You do advance your cunning more and more.
When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray!
These vows are Hermia's: will you give her o'er?
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh:
Your vows to her and me, put in two scales,
Will even weigh; and both as light as tales.

Lys. I had no judgment when to her I swore.

Hel. Nor none, in my mind, now you give her o'er.

Lys. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

Dem. [Awaking.] O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!

To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!
That pure congealed white, high Taurus' snow,
Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow
When thou hold'st up thy hand: O, let me kiss
This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss! 14

13 Should where present usage requires would. The auxiliaries could, should, and would were often used indiscriminately.

14 So in Antony and Cleopatra, iii. 13: "My playfellow, your hand; this kingly seal, and plighter of high hearts." Princess here plainly has the force of the surperlative; the paragon, the purest of white.—This pretty piece of extravagance reminds me of Spenser's Una:

A lovely ladie rode him faire beside,
Upon a lowly ass more white than snow;
Yet she much whiter.
Hel. O spite! O Hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment:
If you were civil and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.
Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
But you must join in souls\(^{15}\) to mock me too?
If you were men, as men you are in show,
You would not use a gentle lady so;
To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,
When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.
You both are rivals, and love Hermia;
And now both rivals, to mock Helena:
A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,
To conjure tears up in a poor maid’s eyes
With your derision! none of noble sort\(^{16}\)
Would so offend a virgin, and extort
A poor soul’s patience, all to make you sport.

Lys. You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;
For you love Hermia: this you know I know:
And here, with all good will, with all my heart,
In Hermia’s love I yield you up my part;
And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
Whom I do love, and will do to my death.

Hel. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

Dem. Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none:
If e’er I loved her, all that love is gone.
My heart with her but as guest-wise sojourn’d,
And now to Helen is it home return’d,
There to remain.

Lys. Helen, it is not so.

\(^{15}\) That is, join *heartily*, or *in earnest*; be of the same mind.

\(^{16}\) *Sort* here means *rank* or *quality*; a common use of the word in Shakespeare’s time. So in *Henry V.*, iv. 7: “It may be his enemy is a gentleman of great sort.”
Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Lest, to thy peril, thou aby 17 it dear.
Look where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

Re-enter HERMIA.

Her. Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,
It pays the hearing double recompense.—
Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

Lys. Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?
Her. What love could press Lysander from my side?

Lys. Lysander's love, that would not let him bide,—
Fair Helena; who more engilds the night
Then all yon fiery O's and eyes of light.
Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,
The hate I bear thee made me leave thee so?

Her. You speak not as you think: it cannot be.

Hel. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.—
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspired, have you with these contrived
To bait 18 me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,

17 Aby or abie means to suffer for. Skinner thinks it is formed, not from abide but from buy; though the two are often confounded. So in The Faerie Queene, ii. 8, 33: "That direfull stroke thou dearely shalt aby." And in Beaumont and Fletcher's Knight of the Burning Pestle: "Foolhardy knight, full soon thou shalt aby this fond reproach; thy body will I bang."

18 To bait is to worry, to bark at, as bears used to be baited by dogs in the old bear-baiting times. So in The Faerie Queene, ii. 8, 42: "A salvaze bull, whom two fierce mastives bayt."
The sister-vows, the hours that we have spent,  
When we have chid the hasty-footed time  
For parting us, — O, and is all forgot?  
All school-day friendship, childhood innocence?  
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,  
Have with our neelds created both one flower,  
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,  
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;  
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,  
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,  
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted;  
But yet a union in partition,  
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;  
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;  
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,  
Due but to one, and crownèd with one crest.  
And will you rend our ancient love asunder,  
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?  
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:  
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for't,  
Though I alone do feel the injury.  

**Her.** I am amazèd at your passionate words.  
I scorn you not: it seems that you scorn me.

---

19 Artificial is here used for the worker in art, not the work; like its Latin original artifex, artist, or artificer.

20 Neeld was a common contraction of needle.

21 Gibbon, in his account of the friendship between the great Cappadocian saints, Basil and Gregory Nazianzen, *Decline and Fall*, chap. xxvii., note 29, refers to this passage, and quotes a parallel passage from Gregory's Poem on his own Life. The historian adds, "Shakespeare had never read the poems of Gregory Nazianzen, he was ignorant of the Greek language; but his mother-tongue, the language of Nature, is the same in Cappadocia and in Britain."

22 Douce thus explains this passage: "We had *two of the first*, i.e., bodies, like the double coats in heraldry that belong to man and wife as *one person*, but which, like our *single heart*, have but *one crest*."
Hel. Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,  
To follow me, and praise my eyes and face?  
And made your other love, Demetrius—  
Who even but now did spurn me with his foot—  
To call me goddess, nymph, divine, and rare,  
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this  
To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander  
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,  
And tender me, forsooth, affection,  
But by your setting on, by your consent?  
What though I be not so in grace as you,  
So hung upon with love, so fortunate;  
But miserable most, to love unloved?  
This you should pity rather than despise.

Her. I understand not what you mean by this.

Hel. Ay, do, perséver, counterfeit sad looks;  
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;  
Wink each at other; hold the sweet jest up:  
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.  
If you had any pity, grace, or manners,  
You would not make me such an argument.23  
But, fare ye well: 'tis partly mine own fault;  
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

Lys. Stay, gentle Helena; hear my excuse:  
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

Hel. O excellent!

Her. Sweet, do not scorn her so.

Dem. If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

Lys. Thou canst compel no more than she entreat:  
Thy threats have no more strength than her weak prayers. —  
Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do:  
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,

23 Argument, here, is subject or theme of sport.
To prove him false that says I love thee not.

Dem. I say I love thee more than he can do.
Lys. If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.
Dem. Quick, come!
Her. Lysander, whereto tends all this?
Lys. Away, you Ethiop!
Dem. No, no, sir:—do;

Seem to break loose, take on as you would follow,
But yet come not: you are a tame man, go!

Lys. Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,
Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent!

Her. Why are you grown so rude? what change is this,
Sweet love?

Lys. Thy love! out, tawny Tartar, out!
Out, loathed medicine! hated potion, hence!

Her. Do you not jest?
Hel. Yes, sooth;\(^{24}\) and so do you.

Lys. Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.
Dem. I would I had your bond, for I perceive
A weak bond holds you: I'll not trust your word.

Lys. What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

Her. What, can you do me greater harm than hate?
Hate me! wherefore? O me! what means my love?
Am not I Hermia? are you not Lysander?
I am as fair now as I was erewhile.
Since night you loved me; yet since night you left me:
Why, then you left me,—O, the gods forbid!—
In earnest, shall I say?

Lys. Ay, by my life;
And never did desire to see thee more.
Therefore be out of hope, of question, doubt;

\(^{24}\) Sooth is truth; as in soothsayer, which originally meant truth-speaker.
Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest
That I do hate thee, and love Helena.

_Her._ O me!—you juggler! you canker-blossom! 25
You thief of love! what, have you come by night
And stol'n my love's heart from him?

_Hel._ Fine, i'faith!

Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie! you counterfeit, you puppet, you!

_Her._ Puppet! why, so; ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures; she hath urged her height;
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.—
And are you grown so high in his esteem,
Because I am so dwarfish and so low?
How low am I, thou painted maypole? speak;
How low am I? I am not yet so low
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

_Hel._ I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me: I was never curst; 26
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;
I am a right maid for my cowardice:
Let her not strike me. You perhaps may think,
Because she's something lower than myself,
That I can match her.

_Her._ Lower! hark, again.

---

25 The canker is a worm that preys on the leaves or buds of flowers, always beginning in the middle. So before, in this play: "Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds." — The verse requires juggler here to be a trisyllable. It appears that divers similar words were sometimes so pronounced.

26 Curst is shrewish, spiteful, scolding; often so used.
Hel. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me. I evermore did love you, Hermia, Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong’d you; Save that, in love unto Demetrius, I told him of your stealth unto this wood. He follow’d you; for love I follow’d him; But he hath chid me hence, and threaten’d me To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too: And now, so you will let me quiet go, To Athens will I bear my folly back, And follow you no further: let me go: You see how simple and how fond I am.

Her. Why, get you gone: who is’t that hinders you? Hel. A foolish heart, that I leave here behind. Her. What, with Lysander? Hel. With Demetrius. Lys. Be not afraid; she shall not harm thee, Helen. Dem. No, sir, she shall not, though you take her part. Hel. O, when she’s angry, she is keen and shrewd! She was a vixen when she went to school; And, though she be but little, she is fierce.

Her. Little again! nothing but low and little!— Why will you suffer her to flout me thus? Let me come to her.

Lys. Get you gone, you dwarf; You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made; You bead, you acorn.

Dem. You are too officious In her behalf that scorns your services.

27 Knot-grass, it seems, was anciently supposed to stop the growth of those to whom it was applied. So in Beaumont and Fletcher’s Knight of the Burning Pestle, ii. 2: “The child’s a fatherless child, and say they should put him into a strait pair of gaskins, ‘twere worse than knot-grass; he would never grow after it.”
Let her alone: speak not of Helena;
Take not her part; for, if thou dost intend\textsuperscript{28}
Never so little show of love to her,
Thou shalt aby it.\textsuperscript{29}

\textit{Lys.} Now she holds me not;
Now follow, if thou darest, to try whose right,
Of thine or mine,\textsuperscript{30} is most in Helena.

\textit{Dem.} Follow! nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jowl.\textsuperscript{31}

[\textit{Exeunt Lysander and Demetrius.}]

\textit{Her.} You, mistress, all this coil is 'long\textsuperscript{32} of you:
Nay, go not back.

\textit{Hel.} I will not trust you, I,
Nor longer stay in your curst company.
Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray;
My legs are longer though, to run away.

\textit{Her.} I am amazed, and know not what to say.

\textit{Obe.} This is thy negligence: still thou mistakest,
Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

\textit{Puck.} Believe me, King of shadows, I mistook.
Did you not tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garments he had on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprise,
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes;

\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Intend} with the sense of \textit{pretend}; the Poet has it repeatedly so. In fact, the two words were used interchangeably, and we often have either in the sense of the other. See vol. ii., page 209, note 4.

\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Suffer or pay dearly for it}; \textit{rued it}. See page 54, note 17.

\textsuperscript{30} This is in accordance with old usage. We have another instance in \textit{The Tempest}, ii. i: "Which, of he or Adrian, for a good wager, first begins to crow?"

\textsuperscript{31} That is, \textit{side by side}, or \textit{with cheeks close together}. \textit{Jowl} is, properly, \textit{jaw}, or \textit{jaw-bone}.

\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Along of} is an old phrase exactly equivalent to \textit{because of}; so used by all writers in Shakespeare's time, and occasionally used still. — \textit{Coil} is \textit{stir, bustle, turmoil}. See vol. i., page 105, note 8.
And so far am I glad it so did sort, 33
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

Obe. Thou see’st these lovers seek a place to fight:
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
The starry welkin cover thou anon
With drooping fog, as black as Acheron;
And lead these testy rivals so astray,
As one come not within another’s way.
Like to Lysander sometime 34 frame thy tongue,
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong;
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius;
And from each other look thou lead them thus,
Till o’er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:
Then crush this herb into Lysander’s eye;
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
To take from thence all error with his 35 might,
And make his eyeballs roll with wonded sight.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision;
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,
With league whose date till death shall never end.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I’ll to my Queen and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmèd eye release
From monster’s view, and all things shall be peace.

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,
For Night’s swift dragons 36 cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger;
At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to churchyards: damned spirits all,
That in crossways and floods have burial;  
Already to their wormy beds are gone;
For fear lest day should look their shames upon,
They willfully themselves exile from light,
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

Obe. But we are spirits of another sort:
I with the Morning's love  
have oft made sport;
And, like a forester, the groves may tread,
Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red,
Opening on Neptune, with fair-blessèd beams
Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.
But, notwithstanding, haste; make no delay:
We may effect this business yet ere day.  

Exit.

Puck. Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down:
I am fear'd in field and town:
Goblin, lead them up and down.

Here comes one.

ons, that is, serpents, who were thought to be always awake, because they slept with their eyes open; and therefore were selected for this purpose. So in Cymbeline, ii. 2: "Swift, swift, ye dragons of the night." And in Milton's Il Penseroso:

Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke.

87 The ghosts of self-murderers, who were buried in crossroads; and of those who being drowned were condemned (according to the opinion of the ancients) to wander for a hundred years, as the rites of sepulture had never been regularly bestowed on their bodies. See the passage in Hamlet, act i., sc. 1: "I have heard, the cock that is the trumpet to the morn," &c.

88 The allusion is, probably, to Cephalus, who was a mighty hunter. Aurora became enamoured of him, and took him for her love. So in The Phaenix Nest, 1593: "Aurora now began to rise againe from watrie couch and from old Tithon's side, in hope to kisse upon Acteian plaine yong Cephalus."
Scene II.  A Midsummer-Night's Dream.

Re-enter Lysander.

Lys. Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

Puck. Here, villain; drawn and ready. Where art thou?

Lys. I will be with thee straight.

Puck. Follow me, then,

To plainer ground. [Exit Lysander, as following the voice.

Re-enter Demetrius.

Dem. Lysander! speak again:
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speak! in some bush? where dost thou hide thy head?

Puck. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,
And wilt not come? Come, recreant; come, thou child;
I'll whip thee with a rod: he is defiled
That draws a sword on thee.

Dem. Yea, art thou there?

Puck. Follow my voice: we'll try no manhood here.

[Exeunt.

Re-enter Lysander.

Lys. He goes before me and still dares me on:
When I come where he calls, then he is gone.
The villain is much lighter-heel'd than I:
I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly;
That fall'n am I in dark uneven way,
And here will rest me. [Lies down.] — Come, thou gentle day!

For, if but once thou show me thy gray light,
I'll find Demetrius, and revenge this spite.  [Sleeps.

Re-enter Puck and Demetrius.

Puck. Ho, ho, ho, ho! Coward, why comest thou not?

39 A strong dash of malignant, or mischievous sportiveness belongs to this character. There was an old local proverb, "To laugh like Robin
Dem. Abide me, if thou darest; for well I wot
Thou runnest before me, shifting every place,
And darest not stand, nor look me in the face.
Where art thou now?
Puck. Come hither: I am here.
Dem. Nay, then thou mock'st me. Thou shalt by this dear,
If ever I thy face by daylight see:
Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me
To measure out my length on this cold bed.
By day's approach look to be visited. [Lies down and sleeps.

Re-enter Helena.

Hel. O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Abate thy hours! Shine comforts from the East,
That I may back to Athens by daylight,
From these that my poor company detest:
And sleep, that sometime shuts up sorrow's eye,
Steal me awhile from mine own company.

[Lies down and sleeps.

Puck. Yet but three? Come one more;
Two of both kinds makes up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad:
Cupid is a knavish lad,
Thus to make poor females mad.

Re-enter Hermia.

Her. Never so weary, never so in woe;
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers;

Goodfellow"; which probably meant, to laugh in mockery or scorn. In
the old Moral-plays, as also in the older Miracle-plays, the Devil was gener-
ally one of the leading characters, and his laughter of fiendish mirth was
always expressed as in the text. So in Gammer Gurton's Needle: "But,
Diccon, Diccon, did not the Devil cry ho, ho, ho?"
40 'By for aby, as before explained; page 60, note 29.
I can no further crawl, no further go;
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.
Here will I rest me till the break of day.
Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray!

[Lies down and sleeps.

Puck. On the ground sleep sound:
I'll apply to your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.

[Squeezing the herb on Lysander's eyelids.
When thou wakest, thou takest
True delight in the sight
Of thy former lady's eye:
And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown:
Jack shall have Jill; 41
Nought shall go ill;
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.

[Exit.

41 This proverb is quoted repeatedly in old plays; and its meaning is
much the same as that of the other proverbial sayings here clustered with it.
So in Love's Labours Lost, v. 2: “Our wooing doth not end like an old play;
Jack hath not Jill.” And in Heywood, 1598: “Come chat at home, all is
well, Jack shall have Jill.” See, also, vol. ii., page 203, note 10.
ACT IV.


Enter Titania and Bottom; Peas-blossom, Cobweb, Moth, Mustard-seed, and other Fairies attending; Oberon behind unseen.

Tit. Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed, While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,¹ And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head, And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy. 
Bot. Where's Peas-blossom?
Peas. Ready.
Bot. Scratch my head, Peas-blossom. — Where's Monsieur Cobweb?
Cob. Ready.
Bot. Monsieur Cobweb, good monsieur, get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipp'd humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur; and, good monsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loth to have you overflown with a honey-bag, signior. — Where's Monsieur Mustard-seed?
Mus. Ready.
Bot. Give me your neif,² Monsieur Mustard-seed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good monsieur.
Mus. What's your will?
Bot. Nothing, good monsieur, but to help Cavalery Cob-

¹ To coy is to stroke with the hand; to fondle, or caress.
² Neif is an old word for fist. So in 2 Henry IV., ii. 4: "Sweet knight, I kiss thy neif."
web to scratch. I must to the barber's, monsieur; for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face; and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

Tita. What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?

Bot. I have a reasonable good ear in music: let us have the tongs and the bones. [Rough music.

Tita. Or say, sweet love, what thou desirest to eat.

Bot. Truly, a peck of provender: I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a great desire to a bottle of hay: good hay, sweet hay hath no fellow.

Tita. I have a venturous fairy that shall seek The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee thence new nuts.

Bot. I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me: I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

Tita. Fairies, be gone, and be awhile away.—

[Exeunt Fairies.

Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms:
So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwist; the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.
O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee! [They sleep.

3 Bottom is here in a strange predicament, and has not had time to perfect himself in the nomenclature of his fairy attendants; and so he gets the names somewhat mixed. Probably he is here addressing Cavalry Peas-blossom, but gives him the wrong name.

4 Bottle is an old word for bundle, from the French bateau. Richardson says, "It is still common in the northern parts of England to call a truss or bundle of hay a bottle."

5 Odd work has sometimes been made with this passage by explaining woodbine and honeysuckle as meaning the same thing; and Singer's explanation still proceeds upon an identity of the two plants. In Jonson's Vision of Delight we have the following: "Behold, how the blue bindweed doth itself infold with honeysuckle." Upon this passage Gifford notes as follows: "The woodbine of Shakespeare is the blue bindweed of Jonson: in many of our counties woodbine is still the name for the great convolvulus."
Enter Puck.

Obe. [Advancing.] Welcome, good Robin. See'st thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity:
For, meeting her of late behind the wood,
Seeking sweet favours for this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her, and fall out with her;
For she his hairy temples then had rounded
With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;
And that same dew, which sometime on the buds
Was wont to swell, like round and orient pearls,
Stood now within the pretty flowerets' eyes,
Like tears, that did their own disgrace bewail.
When I had at my pleasure taunted her,
And she in mild terms begg'd my patience,
I then did ask of her her changeling child;
Which straight she gave me, and her fairies sent,
To bear him to my bower in Fairy-land.
And, now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes:
And, gentle Puck, take this transformèd scalp
From off the head of this Athenian swain;
That he, awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again repair,
And think no more of this night's accidents,
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the fairy Queen.

Be as thou wast wont to be;

[Touching her eyes with an herb.

See as thou wast wont to see:

6 So in Greene's Quip for an Upstart Courtier, quoted by Dyce: 'These with syren-like allurement so entised these quaint squires, that they bestowed all their flowers upon them for favours.'
Dian's bud⁷ o'er Cupid's flower
Hath such force and blessed power.
Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet Queen.
Tita. My Oberon! what visions have I seen!
Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.
Obe. There lies your love.
Tita. How came these things to pass?
O, how mine eyes do loath his visage now!
Obe. Silence awhile. — Robin, take off this head.—
Titania, music call; and strike more dead
Than common sleep, of all these five the sense.
Tita. Music, ho! music, such as charmeth sleep!
Puck. Now, when thou wakest, with thine own fool's eyes
peep.
Obe. Sound, music! [Still music.] — Come, my Queen,
take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.
Now thou and I are new in amity,
And will to-morrow midnight solemnly
Dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly,
And bless it to all fair posterity:
There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.
Puck. Fairy King, attend, and mark:
I do hear the morning lark.
Obe. Then, my Queen, in silence sad,⁸
Trip we after the night's shade:
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wandering Moon.

⁷ Dian's Bud is the bud of the Agnus Castus, or Chaste Tree. "The vertue of this hearbe is, that he will kepe man and woman chaste." Macer's Herbal, by Lynacre. Cupid's flower is the Viola tricolour, or Love-in-Idleness.

⁸ Sad here signifies only grave, serious. Often so.
Tita. Come, my lord; and in our flight
Tell me how it came this night
That I sleeping here was found
With these mortals on the ground.  
     [Exeunt.
     [Horns winded within.

Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus, and Train.

The. Go, one of you, find out the forester;
For now our observation is perform'd;
And, since we have the vaward of the day,
My love shall hear the music of my hounds:
Uncouple in the western valley; let them go;—
 Dispatch, I say, and find the forester.—  
     [Exit an Attend.
We will, fair Queen, up to the mountain's top,
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

Hip. I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,
When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the boar
With hounds of Sparta: never did I hear
Such gallant chiding; for, besides the groves,
The skies, the fountains, every region near
Seem'd all one mutual cry: I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

The. My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
So flew'd, so sanded; and their heads are hung
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Crook-knee'd, and dew-lapp'd like Thessalian bulls;

9 The honours due to the morning of May. So in a former scene: “To do observance to a morn of May.”
10 The early part, the vanward, of the day.
11 Chiding means here the cry of hounds. To chide is used sometimes for to sound, or make a noise, without any reference to scolding. So in Henry VIII.: “As doth a rock against the chiding flood.”
12 The flews are the large chops of a deep-mouthed hound.—Sanded means of a sandy colour, which is one of the true denotements of a bloodhound.
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,
Each under each. A cry more tuneable
Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly:
Judge when you hear. — But, soft! what nymphs are these?

_Ege._ My lord, this is my daughter here asleep;
And this, Lysander; this Demetrius is;
This Helena, old Nedar's Helena:
I wonder of their being here together.

_The._ No doubt they rose up early to observe
The rite of May; and, hearing our intent,
Came here in grace of our solemnity.—
But speak, Egeus; is not this the day
That Hermia should give answer of her choice?

_Ege._ It is, my lord.

_The._ Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns.—

[Exit an Attendant. Horns and shout within. Lys.,
Dem., Hel., and Her., awake and start up.

Good morrow, friends. — Saint Valentine is past:
Begin these wood-birds but to couple now?

_Lys._ Pardon, my lord. [He and the rest kneel to Theseus.
_The._ I pray you all, stand up.

I know you two are rival enemies:
How comes this gentle concord in the world,
That hatred is so far from jealousy,
To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity?

18 "Match'd in mouth like bells" is with their several barking-tones so pitched as to harmonize with each other, like a chime of bells. This is shown by The Edinburgh Review for October, 1872. "It was a ruling consideration," says the writer, "in the formation of a pack, that it should possess the musical fulness and strength of a perfect canine quire. And hounds of good voice were selected and arranged in the hunting chorus on the same general principles that govern the formation of a cathedral or any other more articulate choir." And this is fully justified by extracts from a writer contemporary with the Poet; which, however, are too long for quotation here.
Lys. My lord, I shall reply amazedly,
Half sleep, half waking: but as yet, I swear,
I cannot truly say how I came here;
But, as I think,—for truly would I speak,
And now I do bethink me, so it is,—
I came with Hermia hither: our intent
Was to be gone from Athens, where we might,
Without\textsuperscript{14} the peril of th' Athenian law,—

Ege. Enough, enough, my lord; you have enough:
I beg the law, the law, upon his head.—
They would have stol'n away; they would, Demetrius,
Thereby to have defeated you and me,
You of your wife, and me of my consent,—
Of my consent that she should be your wife.

Dem. My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
Of this their purpose hither to this wood;
And I in fury hither follow'd them,
Fair Helena in fancy following me.
But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,—
But by some power it is,—my love to Hermia,
Melted as melts the snow, seems to me now
As the remembrance of an idle gaud,
Which in my childhood I did dote upon;
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
The object, and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia:
But, like\textsuperscript{15} in sickness, did I loathe this food;
But, as in health, come to my natural taste,
Now do I wish it, love it, long for it,
And will for evermore be true to it.

\textsuperscript{14} Without is here equivalent to beyond. The Poet has it repeatedly so.

\textsuperscript{15} Like was sometimes used with the force of the conjunction as. The usage still holds in some parts of the United States.
The. Fair lovers, you are fortunately met:
Of this discourse we more will hear anon.—
Egeus, I will overbear your will;
For in the temple, by-and-by, with us,
These couples shall eternally be knit:
And, for the morning now is something worn,
Our purposed hunting shall be set aside.—
Away with us to Athens! three and three,
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.—
Come, my Hippolyta. [Execunt The., Hip., Ege., and train.

Dem. These things seem small and undistinguishable,
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

Her. Methinks I see these things with parted eye,¹⁷
When every thing seems double.

Hel. , So methinks:
And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,
Mine own, and not mine own.¹⁸

Dem. But are you sure
That we are well awake? It seems to me
That yet we sleep, we dream.— Do you not think
The Duke was here, and bid us follow him!

Her. Yea; and my father.

Hel. And Hippolyta.

Lys. And he did bid us follow to the temple.

Dem. Why, then we are awake: let's follow him;
And, by the way, let us recount our dreams. [Execunt.

Bot. [Awaking.] When my cue comes, call me, and I

¹⁶ Here, as often, for is equivalent to because, inasmuch as, or since.
¹⁷ "With parted eye" means, apparently, with the two eyes acting separately or independently, and not together or as one.
¹⁸ "As the jewel which one finds is his own and not his own; his own, unless the loser claims it." Not a very satisfactory explanation, perhaps; but the best that is forthcoming. How Demetrius has been Helen's own and not her own, and thus like a double man, is plain enough; but the simile of the jewel is not so clear.
will answer: my next is, _Most fair Pyramus._ — Heigh-ho! — Peter Quince! Flute the bellows-mender! Snout the tinker! Starveling! — God's my life, stolen hence, and left me asleep! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, — past the wit of man to say what dream it was: man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream. Methought I was — there is no man can tell what. Methought I was, and methought I had, — but man is but a patch'd fool, if he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called _Bottom's Dream_, because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of our play before the Duke: peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it after death.20

[Exit.

---

**Scene II. — Athens. A Room in Quince's House.**

_Enter Quince, Flute, Snout, and Starveling._

**Quin.** Have you sent to Bottom's house? is he come home yet?

**Star.** He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt he is transported.1

**Flu.** If he come not, then the play is marr'd: it goes not forward, doth it?

19 I have several times noted the Poet's frequent use of _patch_ for _fool_. In illustration of the matter, Staunton tells of his having seen a Flemish picture of the sixteenth century, "which represents a procession of masquers and mummers, led by a Fool or jester, whose dress is covered with many-coloured coarse patches from head to heel." See page 47, note 2.

20 Of course Bottom means the make-believe death which is to form the catastrophe of "our play."

1 Starveling's _transported_ means the same as Snout's _translated_, used before; that is, _transformed_ or _metamorphosed_.

Digitized by Google
Quin. It is not possible: you have not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus but he.

Flu. No, he hath simply the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens.

Quin. Yea, and the best person too; and he is a very paramour for a sweet voice.

Flu. You must say paragon: a paramour is, God bless us, a thing of naught.

Enter Snug.

Snug. Masters, the Duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married: if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men.²

Flu. O sweet bully Bottom! Thus hath he lost sixpence a-day during his life; he could not have 'scaped sixpence a-day: an the Duke had not given him sixpence a-day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hang'd; he would have deserved it: sixpence a-day in Pyramus, or nothing.

Enter Bottom.

Bot. Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

Quin. Bottom!—O most courageous day! O most happy hour!

Bot. Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask me not what; for, if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing, right as it fell out.

Quin. Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

Bot. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is, that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for the short and the long is, our play is preferred.³ In any

² To make a man is an old phrase for making a man rich or setting him up; making his fortune.
³ Preferred is here used in a way somewhat peculiar, meaning, not that
case, let Thisbe have clean linen; and let not him that plays
the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's
claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for
we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to
hear them say it is a sweet comedy. No more words: away! go; away!

[Exeunt.

ACT V.


Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate, Lords, and
Attendants.

Hip. 'Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.

The. More strange than true: I never may believe
These antique fables nor these fairy toys.
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,¹
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact:²
One sees more devils than vast Hell can hold,—
That is the madman: the lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,

the play is chosen in preference to others, but that it is put forward to a—chance of favour; that is, recommended.

¹ To see the is to boil; and the notion of the brains boiling in such cases
was very common. So in The Tempest, v. 1: "The brains, now useless,
boil'd within the skull." And in The Winter's Tale, iii. 3: "Would any but
these boil'd brains of nineteen and two-and-twenty hunt this weather?"
² That is, altogether composed or made up of imagination. Spenser often
uses all for altogether; and Shakespeare has both all and compact repeated-
edly in these senses. See vol. i., page 109, note 22.
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shape, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
Such tricks hath strong imagination,
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
Or in the night, imagining some fear,⁴
How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

_Hip._ But all the story of the night told over,
And all their minds transfigured so together,
More witnesseth than fancy's images,
And grows to something of great constancy; ⁵
But, howsoever, strange and admirable.

_The._ Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth,—

_E Enter Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia, and Helena._

Joy, gentle friends! joy and fresh days of love
Accompany your hearts!

_Lys._ More than to us
Wait in your royal walks, your board, your bed!

_The._ Come now; what masques, what dances shall we have,
To wear away this long age of three hours
Between our after-supper and bed-time?
Where is our usual manager of mirth?
What revels are in hand? Is there no play,
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?

---

⁴ _Fear for danger, or the thing feared_; a frequent usage.
⁵ _Constancy for consistency or congruity_; such as makes a story credible.
One of the Latin senses of the word.

⁶ _Howsoever in the old sense of at all events_; and _admirable_ in its proper Latin sense of _wonderful._
Call Philostrate.

*Phil.* Here, mighty Theseus.

*The.* Say, what abridgement⁶ have you for this evening? What masque? what music? How shall we beguile The lazy time, if not with some delight?

*Phil.* There is a brief how many sports are ripe: Make choice of which your Highness will see first.

[Giving a paper.

*The.* [Reads.] *The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung* By an Athenian eunuch to the harp. We'll none of that: that have I told my love, In glory of my kinsman Hercules. —

[Reads.] *The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,* Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage. That is an old device; and it was play'd When I from Thebes came last a conqueror. —

[Reads.] *The thrice-three Muses mourning for the death* Of Learning, late deceased in beggary. That is some satire, keen and critical,⁷ Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony. —

[Reads.] *A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus* And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth. Merry and tragical! tedious and brief! That is, hot ice and wondrous swarthy snow. How shall we find the concord of this discord?

*Phil.* A play it is, my lord, some ten words long, Which is as brief as I have known a play; But by ten words, my lord, it is too long,

---

⁶ *Abridgment* probably means something that *abridges*, or *shortens*, the time; a *pastime*. Or it may mean a dramatic performance, that crowds the events of a long period into a brief space of time.

⁷ *Critical* was sometimes used in the sense of *cynical* or *censorious*. So in Iago's well-known saying, *Othello*, ii. i: “For I am nothing, if not *critical*.”
Which makes it tedious; for in all the play
There is not one word apt, one player fitted:
And tragical, my noble lord, it is;
For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.
Which, when I saw rehearsed, I must confess,
Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears
The passion of loud laughter never shed.

_The._ What are they that do play it?

_Phil._ Hard-handed men, that work in Athens here,
Which never labour'd in their minds till now;
And now have toil'd their unbreathed\(^8\) memories
With this same play, against your nuptial.

_The._ And we will hear it.

_Phil._ No, my noble lord;
It is not for you: I have heard it over,
And it is nothing, nothing in the world,
(Unless you can find sport in their intents,)
Extremely stretch'd and conn'd with cruel pain,
To do you service.

_The._ I will hear that play;
For never any thing can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it.
Go, bring them in: — and take your places, ladies.

_[Exit Philostrate._

_Hip._ I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharged,
And duty in his service perishing.

_The._ Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

_Hip._ He says they can do nothing in this kind.

_The._ The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
Our sport shall be to take what they mistake:
And what poor willing duty cannot do,

\(^8\) _Unbreathed_ is _unpractised_ or _unexercised_. The Poet has to _breathe_ repeatedly in the opposite sense. So in _Timon of Athens_, i. 1: "A man _breathed_, as it were, to an untirable and continuatuve goodness."
Noble respect takes it in might, not merit. Where I have come, great clerks have purposed
To greet me with premeditated welcomes;
When I have seen them shiver and look pale,
Make periods in the midst of sentences,
Throttle their practised accent in their fears,
And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,
Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,
Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome;
And in the modesty of fearful duty
I read as much as from the rattling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity,
In least speak most, to my capacity.

Re-enter Philostrate.

Phil. So please your Grace, the Prologue is address'd.

The. Let him approach. [Flourish of Trumpets.

Enter the Prologue.

Pro. If we offend, it is with our good-will.
That you should think, we come not to offend,
But with good-will. To show our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider, then, we come but in despite.
We do not come as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand; and, by their show,

9 According to the ability of the doer, not according to the worth of the thing done. Here, as often, respect is consideration or regard. — Clerks, in the next line, is learned men, or scholars; the old meaning of the word.

10 Address'd is ready, prepared; a common use of the word. So in Love's Labours Lost, ii, 1: "And he and his competitors in oath were all address'd to meet you, gentle lady, before I came."
You shall know all that you are like to know.\[Exit.\]

The. This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Lys. He hath rid his prologue like a rough colt; he knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord: it is not enough to speak, but to speak true.

Hip. Indeed he hath play'd on his prologue like a child on a recorder; a sound, but not in government.

The. His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

Enter the Presenter, with Pyramus and Thisbe, Wall, Moonshine, and Lion, as in dumb-show.

Pres. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
This beauteous lady, Thisbe is certain.
This man, with loam and rough-cast, doth present
Wall, that vile wall which did these lovers sunder;
And through wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
To whisper; at the which let no man wonder.
This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth Moonshine; for, if you will know,

11 Had "this fellow" stood "upon points," his speech would have read nearly as follows:

If we offend, it is with our good-will
That you should think we come not to offend;
But with good-will to show our simple skill:
That is the true beginning. Of our end
Consider then: we come; but in despite
We do not come: as minding to content you,
Our true intent is all for your delight.
We are not here, that you should here repent you.
The actors are at hand; and, by their show,
You shall know all that you are like to know.

12 Recorder was the name of a soft-toned instrument, something like the flute. So in Paradise Lost, i. 550: "Anon they move in perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood of flutes and soft recorders."
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn
To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.
This grisly beast, which Lion hight\(^\text{13}\) by name,
The trusty Thisbe, coming first by night,
Did scare away, or rather did affright;
And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall,
Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.
Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,
And finds his trusty Thisbe's mantle slain:
Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;
And Thisbe, tarrying in mulberry shade,
His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,
Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain,
At large discourse, while here they do remain.

[Exeunt Presenter, Pyramus, Thisbe, Lion, and Moonshine.

The. I wonder if the lion be to speak.

Dem. No wonder, my lord: one lion may, when many
asses do.

Wall. In this same interlude it doth befall
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;
And such a wall, as I would have you think,
That had in it a crannied hole or chink,
Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisbe,
Did whisper often very secretly.
This loam, this rough-cast, and this stone, doth show
That I am that same wall; the truth is so:
And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

The. Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

\(^{13}\) Hight is an old word for is called. So in Love's Labours Lost, i. 1: "This child of fancy, that Armado hight, for interim to our studies, shall relate," &c.
Dem. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord.

The. Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

Enter Pyramus.

Pyr. O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!
O night, which ever art when day is not!
O night, O night! alack, alack, alack,
I fear my Thisbe's promise is forgot! —
And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!
Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne!

[WALL holds up his fingers.

Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
But what see I? No Thisbe do I see.
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss!
Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

The. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

Pyr. No, in truth, sir, he should not. Deceiving me is
Thisbe's cue: she is to enter now, and I am to spy her
through the wall. You shall see it will fall pat as I told you.
Yonder she comes.

Enter Thisbe.

This. O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,
For parting my fair Pyramus and me!
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones,
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

Pyr. I see a voice: now will I to the chink,
To spy an I can hear my Thisbe's face. —
Thisbe!

14 An equivocal or pun was no doubt intended here; one sense of partition being that of dividing a theme of discourse into heads or topics. See Critical Notes.
This. My love! thou art my love, I think.
Pyr. Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's Grace;
And, like Limander, am I trusty still.
This. And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.
Pyr. Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true.
This. As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you.
Pyr. O, kiss me through the hole of this vile wall!
This. I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.
Pyr. Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?
This. 'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay.

[Exeunt Pyramus and Thisbe.

Wall. Thus have I, wall, my part dischargèd so;
And, being done, thus wall away doth go. [Exit.

The. Now is the mural down between the two neighbours.

Dem. No remedy, my lord, when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.16

Hip. This is the silliest stuff that e'er I heard.
The. The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.
Hip. It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.
The. If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a moon and a lion.

Enter Lion and Moonshine.

Lion. You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
May now perchance both quake and tremble here,

16 Limander and Helen, blunderingly, for Leander and Hero; as, a little after, Shafalus and Procrus for Cephalus and Procris. Procris, or Procne was the wife of Cephalus; and when Aurora fell in love with him, and tried to win his heart, he stuck to his Procne. See page 62, note 38.

16 Alluding to the old proverb, "Walls have ears"; which probably grew from the aptness of walls or partitions to transmit sound.
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
Then know that I one Snug the joiner am,
No lion fell, nor else no lion's dam;
For, if I should as lion come in strife
Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.

The. A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.
Dem. The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.
Lys. This lion is a very fox for his valour.
The. True; and a goose for his discretion.
Dem. Not so, my lord; for his valour cannot carry his
discretion; and the fox carries the goose.
The. His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour;
for the goose carries not the fox. It is well: leave it to his
discretion, and let us listen to the Moon.

Moon. This lantern doth the hornèd Moon present; —
Dem. He should have worn the horns on his head.
The. He is not crescent, and his horns are invisible
within the circumference.

Moon. This lantern doth the hornèd Moon present;
Myself the Man-i'-the-Moon do seem to be.
The. This is the greatest error of all the rest: the man
should be put into the lantern. How is it else the Man-i'-'the-Moon?

Dem. He dares not come there for the candle; for, you
see, it is already in snuff.\textsuperscript{17}

Hip. I am a-weary of this Moon: would he would
change!

The. It appears, by his small light of discretion, that he is
in the wane; but yet, in courtesy, in all reason, we must
stay the time.

Lys. Proceed, Moon.

Moon. All that I have to say is, to tell you that the lantern

\textsuperscript{17} A quibble between \textit{snuff} as meaning the cinder of a candle and as
meaning sudden anger. Shakespeare has it repeatedly.
is the Moon; I, the Man-in-the-Moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.\footnote{18}

Dem. Why, all these should be in the lantern; for all these are in the Moon. But, silence! here comes Thisbe.

Enter Thisbe.

This. This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?  
Lion. [Roaring.] O—— [Thisbe runs off.  
Dem. Well roar'd, lion.  
The. Well run, Thisbe.  
Hip. Well shone, Moon.—Truly, the Moon shines with a good grace.  
[_requested_by_B']Tion tears Thisbe's mantle, and exit.  
The. Well moused,\footnote{19} lion.  
Lys. And so the lion vanished.  
Dem. And then came Pyramus.

Enter Pyramus.

Pyr. Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;  
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;

\footnote{18} The legend of the Man-in-the-Moon is very ancient, and is often alluded to by the old Poets. Perhaps it took its origin from the rude and faint resemblance to a man's face which the full Moon presents. At all events, the notion was common in the days of my boyhood: the man was talked of by everybody, and I often saw him. And it appears that he was sometimes introduced upon the English stage. Ben Jonson, in his masque entitled "News from the New World discovered in the Moon," 1620, makes some of the persons tell how Poetry, "the mistress of all discovery," has sent one of her servants to the Moon "in search of truth," and he has just returned; whereupon we have the following:

\textit{Fact.} Where? which is he? I must see his dog at his girdle, and the bush of thorns at his back, ere I believe it.

1 Herald. Do not trouble your faith then: for, if the bush of thorns should prove a goodly grove of oaks, in what case were you and your expectation?

2 Herald. These are stale ensigns of the stage's Man in the Moon, delivered down to you by musty antiquity, and are of as doubtful credit as the makers.

\footnote{19} To mouse is to tear in pieces, as a cat tears a mouse. So in \textit{King John}, ii. 1:

O, now doth Death line his dead chops with steel;  
The swords of soldiers are his teeth, his fangs;  
And now he feasts, mousing the flesh of men.
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,  
I trust to taste of truest Thisbe's sight.

But stay,—O spite!—but mark, poor knight,  
What dreadful dole is here!  
Eyes, do you see? how can it be?  
O dainty duck! O dear!  
Thy mantle good, what, stain'd with blood?  
Approach, ye Furies fell!  
O Fates, come, come, cut thread and thrum;  
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!

The. This passion, and the death of a dear friend, would  
go near to make a man look sad.  
Hip. Beshrew my heart but I pity the man.  
Pyr. O, wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?  
Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear:  
Which is — no, no — which was the fairest dame  
That lived, that loved, that liked, that look'd with cheer.

Come, tears, confound; out, sword and wound  
The pop of Pyramus,—  
Ay, that left pop, where heart doth hop:  
Thus die I, thus, thus, thus. [Stabs himself.  
Now am I dead, now am I fled;  
My soul is in the sky:  
Tongue, lose thy light! Moon, take thy flight!  
[Exit Moonshine.

Now die, die, die, die, die.  

Dem. No die, but an ace, for him; for he is but one.  
Lys. Less than an ace, man; for he is dead; he is nothing.  
The. With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover,  
and prove an ass.  
Hip. How chance Moonshine is gone before Thisbe  
comes back and finds her lover?
The. She will find him by starlight. Here she comes; and her passion ends the play.

Re-enter Thisbe.

Hip. Methinks she should not use a long one for such a Pyramus: I hope she will be brief.

Dem. A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better; he for a man, God warrant us, — she for a woman, God bless us.

Lys. She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

Dem. And thus she moans, videlicet:

This. Asleep, my love? what, dead, my dove?

O Pyramus, arise!

Speak, speak. Quite dumb? Dead, dead? A tomb

Must cover thy sweet eyes.

These lily lips, this cherry nose,

These yellow cowslip cheeks,

Are gone, are gone: lovers, make moan:

His eyes were green as leeks.

O Sisters Three, come, come to me,

With hands as pale as milk;

Lay them in gore, since you have shore

With shears his thread of silk.

Tongue, not a word: come, trusty sword;

Come, blade, my breast imbrue: [Stabs herself.

And, farewell, friends, — thus Thisbe ends,—

Adieu, adieu, adieu. [Dies.

The. Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

Dem. Ay, and Wall too.

Bot. No, I assure you; the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance²⁰ between two of our company?

²⁰ A rustic dance framed in imitation of the people of Bergamasco, (a province in the state of Venice,) who are ridiculed as being more clownish
The. No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse; for, when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it had play'd Pyramus and hang'd himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably discharged. But, come, your Bergomask: let your epilogue alone. — [A dance by two of the Clowns. The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve: — Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy-time. I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn, As much as we this night have overwatch'd. This palpable-gross play hath well beguiled The heavy gait of night. — Sweet friends, to bed. — A fortnight hold we this solemnity In nightly revels and new jollity. [Exeunt.

Enter Puck, with a broom.

Puck. Now the hungry lion roars,21 And the wolf behowls the Moon; Whilst the heavy ploughman snores, All with weary task fordone. Now the wasted brands do glow, Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud, Puts the wretch that lies in woe In remembrance of a shroud. Now it is the time of night,

in their manners and dialect than any other people of Italy. The lingua rustica of the buffoons, in the old Italian comedies, is an imitation of their jargon.

21 Upon this passage Coleridge thus remarks in his Literary Remains: "Very Anacreon in perfectness, proportion, grace, and spontaneity! So far it is Greek; — but then add, what wealth, what wild ranging, and yet what compression and condensation, of English fancy! In truth, there is nothing in Anacreon more perfect than these lines, or half so rich and imaginative. They form a speckless diamond."
That the graves, all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide:
And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team
From the presence of the Sun,
Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolic: not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:
I am sent, with broom, before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.22

Enter Oberon and Titania, with their Train.

Obe. Through the house give glimmering light,
By23 the dead and drowsy fire;
Every elf and fairy sprite
Hop as light as bird from brier;
And this ditty, after me,
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

22 That is, "To sweep the dust from behind the door." Collier informs us that on the title-page of the tract, Robin Goodfellow, his Mad Pranks and Merry Jests, Puck is represented in a wood-cut with a broom over his shoulder. The whole fairy nation, for which he served as prime minister, were great sticklers for cleanliness. In the old ballad entitled The Merry Pranks of Robin Goodfellow, and generally ascribed to Ben Jonson, we have the following:

When house or hearth doth sluttish lie,
I pinch the maidens black and blue;
The bed-clothes from the bed pull I,
And lay them naked all to view:
'Twixt sleep and wake I do them take,
And on the key-cold floor them throw:
If out they cry, then forth I fly,
And loudly laugh out, ho, ho, ho!

23 By seems here to have the force of by means of; — no uncommon use of the word. — Milton was probably thinking of this passage in his Il Penseroso:

Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom.
Tita. First, rehearse your song by rote,
To each word a warbling note:
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,
Will we sing, and bless this place.

**SONG, AND DANCE.**

Obe. Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessèd be;\(^{24}\)
And the issue there create
Ever shall be fortunate.
So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be;
And the blots of Nature's hand
Shall not in their issue stand;
Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,
Nor mark prodigious,\(^{25}\) such as are
Despisèd in nativity,
Shall upon their children be.
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gait;\(^{26}\)
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace, with sweet peace:
And the owner of it, blest,
Ever shall in safety rest.

---

\(^{24}\) This ceremony was in old times used at all marriages. Douce has given the formula from the Manual for the use of Salisbury. In the French romance of Melusine, the Bishop who marries her to Raymondin blesses the nuptial bed. The ceremony is there represented in a very ancient cut. The good prelate is sprinkling the parties with holy water. Sometimes, during the benediction, the married couple only *sat* on the bed; but they generally received a portion of the consecrated bread and wine.

\(^{25}\) *Prodigious* in the Latin sense of *unnatural, portentous, or ill-fated.*

\(^{26}\) That is, take his *way, pursue his course.*
Trip away; make no stay:
Meet me all by break of day.

[Exeunt Oberon, Titania, and Train.

Puck. If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,—
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend:
If you pardon, we will mend.
And, as I'm an honest Puck,²⁷
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,²⁸
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call:
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands,²⁹ if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.

²⁷ Puck, it seems, was a suspicious name, which makes that this merry, mischievous gentleman does well to assert his honesty. As for the name itself, it was no better than fiend or devil. In Pierce Ploughman's Vision, one personage is called hellè Pouke. And the name thus occurs in Spenser's Epithalamion:

Ne let the pouke, nor other evill sprights,
Ne let mischievous witches with theyr charmes,
Ne let hobgoblins, names whose sence we see not,
Fray us with things that be not.

²⁸ Honest Puck, it seems, has a mortal dread of being kissed.
²⁹ Clap your hands, give us your applause.
CRITICAL NOTES.

ACT I., SCENE 1.

Page 8. And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New-bent in heaven.—Instead of New-bent, the old copies have Now-bent, which is inconsistent with what has been said a little before,—“How slow this old moon wanes!” Corrected by Rowe.

P. 9. This man hath witch’d the bosom of my child.—The quartos and first folio have “This man hath bewitch’d.” The second folio rectifies the metre by omitting man. Theobald reads as in the text.

P. 12. O cross! too high to be enthral’d to low!—The old copies have love instead of low. Corrected by Theobald.

P. 13. I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child;
And she respects me as her only son.
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues: &c.—The old text has the last two of these lines transposed. This manifestly upsets the proper order and sequence of the thoughts. The correction is Keightley’s. Such transpositions are uncommonly frequent in this play.

P. 14. By his best arrow with the golden head,—
By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves;
By the simplicity of Venus’ doves.—The third of these lines stands the second in the old copies. I concur with Singer in making the transposition; because, as he aptly notes, the passage clearly alludes to “the golden arrow of Cupid, that knitted souls, as opposed to the leaden one that makes loves unprosperous. The Poet doubtless had in mind Ovid, Metam., i. 468–471:

Eque sagittifera prompsit duo tela pharetra
Diversorum operum: fugat hoc, facit illud amorem:
Quod facit, auratum est et cuspid fulget acuta;
Quod fugat, obtusum est et habet sub arundine plumbum.
P. 15. *Sickness is catching* : *O, were favour so,*  
Yours would *I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;*  
*My hair should catch your hair, my eye your eye,*  
*My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.*  
*Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,*  
*The rest I'd give, to be to you translated.* — In the second of  
these lines, the old copies have your words instead of yours would.  
Corrected by Hanmer. In the last line, the old text reads "The rest  
*I'll give." Corrected by Lettsom, who remarks how apt the old con-  
tractions *I'll* and *I'de* were to be confounded. Again, in the third  
line, the old copies read "My ear should catch your voice." A strange  
reading indeed for the place. The reading in the text was proposed  
by Lettsom. The reasons for it need not be better given than in his  
own words: "As the passage stands at present, Helena wishes her  
ear may resemble the voice of Hermia! I conceive that, in the first  
place, *heare* — *heare* [a common old spelling of *hair*] was transformed  
into *eare* — *eare* by a blundering transcriber. The verse was then  
operated upon by a sophisticator, who regarded nothing but the line  
before him, and was not aware of the true meaning of *my eye your eye,*  
but took *catch* in the ordinary sense, not in the peculiar sense of con-  
tracting disease, which it bears throughout the passage."

P. 16. Her. *His folly, Helen, is no fault of mine.*  
Hel. *None but your beauty's: would that fault were mine!*  
— In the first of these lines, the old text has *Helena* instead of *Helen,*  
and, in the second, *beauty* instead of *beauty's.* The latter correction is  
Mr. P. A. Daniel's.

P. 16. *And thence from Athens turn away your eyes,*  
*To seek new friends and stranger companies.* — So Theobald.  
The old copies have *strange companions* instead of *stranger companies.*  
The need of a rhyme for *eyes* pointed out and justifies the change.  
Also, in the third line before, the old text has "their counsell *sweld*";  
which Theobald happily corrected to "their counsel *sweet.*"

**ACT I., SCENE 2.**

P. 18. *To the rest.* — *Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant.* —  
Staunton prints "To the rest yet, my chief humour," &c., and explains  
*yet* by *now.* Dyce has it the same. I cannot understand why.
CRITICAL NOTES.

P. 19. *This is Eracles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover's is more con-
doling.*—The old text has *lover* instead of *lover's.* Corrected by Mr. P. A. Daniel.

P. 21. Quin. *Take pains; be perfect: adieu.*—So Collier's second folio. The old text makes the words here quoted a part of Bottom's preceding speech.

ACT II., SCENE I.

P. 22. *I do wander everywhere
Swifter than the moony sphere.*—The old copies have "the moons sphere." This has been changed to "the moones sphere" by several editors. As White remarks, "moony sphere" was a recognized poetical phrase in Shakespeare's time. And Steevens pointed out a passage in Sidney's *Arcadia* as supporting the reading in the text: "What mov'd me to invite your presence, sister dear, first to my moony sphere." Whether moones or moony be the right word, I think it is plain that the Poet would not have allowed a breach in the metre here.

P. 24. *That frights the maidens of the villagery;
Skims milk, and sometime labours in the quern,
And bootless makes the, &c.*—Here the old copies have *frights,* as correct grammar requires, and then drop the corresponding forms in the following verbs, printing *Skim, labour, make,* &c. Surely they ought all to run in the same number.

P. 24. *Fairy, thou speak'st aright.* So Collier's second folio. The old copies lack *Fairy.* Other attempts have been made, to complete the verse, but this is the best.

P. 25. *But room now, fairy! here comes Oberon.*—So Dyce. The old copies have "But roome Fairy." The more common reading is "But make room, fairy."

P. 26. *What, jealous Oberon!—Fairies, skip hence.*—The old text has "Fairys, skip hence"; which supposes that Titania is here speaking to Oberon; whereas the words are evidently addressed to her train of fairies. Corrected by Theobald.
P. 27. *The human mortals want their minstrelsy,*—

No night is now with hymn or carol blest.—The old editions read "want their winter heere." This cannot possibly be right: it gives a sense all out of harmony with the context, and is further convicted of error by the strained explanations resorted to in its defence. Theobald at one time conjectured "want their winter cheer"; but he afterwards withdrew the conjecture: nevertheless it has been adopted by several editors. Kightley proposes "want their Summer here"; but I cannot see that this really helps the matter. I think the next line naturally points out minstrelsy as the right correction.

P. 27. *Therefore the Moon, the governess of floods,*

Pale in her anger, washes all the air;
And thorough this distemperature we see
That rheumatic diseases do abound.—The old text has the last two of these lines transposed; which quite untunes the logic of the passage. The correction is Johnson’s.

P. 28. *And on old Hiems’ thin and icy crown.*—The old copies have chin instead of thin. The correction is Tyrwhitt’s, and is very happy. Dyce ridicules the old reading: "In most of the modern editions Hiems figures with a chaplet of summer buds on his chin."

P. 30. *I'd put a girdle round about the Earth*

In forty minutes.—So Collier’s second folio and Lettsom. The old copies have Ile instead of I’d. See note on “The rest I’d give,” page 94.

P. 31. *The one I’l slay, the other slayeth me.*—In the old copies, "The one Ile stay, the other stayeth me. The reading in the text is Thirlby’s.

P. 31. *But yet you draw not iron, for my heart*

Is true as steel.—Lettosm suspects we ought to read though instead of for, and I suspect he is right, as he is apt to be. As though was often written tho, it might easily get misprinted for.

P. 32. *I will not stay thy question; let me go.*—In the old text, questions instead of question. Steevens conjectured the latter; Walker also. See foot-note 30.
P. 32. Puck. *Ay, here it is.*

Obe. *I pray thee give it me.*—The old copies read "Ay, there it is"; which, as Lettsom remarks, is inconsistent with Oberon’s "give it me."

P. 32. *I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows, Where ox-tips and the nodding violet grows;* Quite over canopied with lush woodbine.—Instead of *whereon* and *lush,* the old copies have *where* and *lushious.* It does not seem to me possible that Shakespeare could have tolerated such haltings in the verse here. Elsewhere he uses *lush* with the same sense. The correction was made by Theobald, and is also found in Collier’s second folio.

P. 32. *And where the snake throws her enamell’d skin,* Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:

*There sleeps Titania sometime of the night* Lull’d in this bower with dances and delight.—The order of these two couplets is reversed in the old copies, which breaks the continuity of the thought, making two transitions to Titania where both logic and grammar require there should be but one. Moreover, with the old order it would naturally seem that Oberon was to streak the snake’s eyes instead of Titania’s. The originals also read "And there the snake," &c. In the fourth line, the old copies read "Lull’d in these flowers." Instead of *flowers,* Collier’s second folio has *bowers,* which White adopts. I do not well see why the plural of that word should be used there. Lettsom proposed *this bower,* with the remark, "Probably *bower* was in the first instance miswritten *flower;* then succeeded the sophistication *these flowers,* an awkward attempt to procure sense." The reading *this bower* is further approved in iii. 1, at the close, where Titania, after she has got smitten with Bottom, tells the attendant fairies to "lead him to my bower."

ACT II., SCENE 2.

P. 34. *Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;* Then, ’fore the third part of a minute, hence.—So Theobald. Instead of *’fore,* the old copies have *for,* which, as it must mean *during,* does not at all accord with the business on which Titania orders the fairies to depart. Heath proposes to substitute *in,* and then
explains, "That is, after your song and dance ended, vanish in the third part of a minute, and leave me to my rest." But 'fore gives a sense quite as fitting, and infers an easier misprint; else I should prefer ere.

P. 36. Pretty soul! she durst not lie
Nearer this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.—The old copies have "Neere this lack-love," which Pope changed to "Near to this lack-love." The correction in the text is Walker's.

P. 37. Transparent Helen! Nature shows her art,
That through thy bosom makes me see my heart.—The old text has "Transparent Helena"; upon which Walker notes, "Read Helen, as in half-a-dozen other passages of this play."—Again, in "shows her art," the quartos omit her altogether; the first folio has "her shewes art"; the second, "here shewes art." Corrected by Malone.—In the second line also, the old copies have "see thy heart." Here, again, Walker says, "Read 'my heart.' The old poetical commonplace; e.g., As You like It, v. 4:

That thou mightst join her hand with his
Whose heart within her bosom is."

P. 38. And leads me to your eyes; where I o'erlook

ACT III., SCENE I.

P. 39. There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisbe that will never please.—Walker thinks we ought to read "There are three things," &c. Probably.

P. 41. Let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus.—The old copies have "or let him hold." Probably, as Dyce notes, "a mistake occasioned by or occurring twice just before." Corrected from Collier's second folio.

P. 42. Thisbe, the flowers of odious savour sweet;
So doth thy breath, my dearest Thisbe dear.—Instead of savour, the old copies have savours, which is evidently used as a verb,
and which is not in the style of the blunders that mark the interlude. The same is to be said of the second line, where the old text reads "So hath thy breath," which Pope corrected to "So doth thy breath."

P. 43. An if I were, fair Thisbe, I were only thine.—In the old copies, An is wanting at the beginning of this line, and what follows is printed "were fair, Thisbe." This quite upsets the metre of the line, whereas the verse is remarkably regular throughout the interlude. The printing, "If I were fair, Thisbe," is commonly retained upon the supposal of its being meant as a blunder of Bottom's. But such a blunder, it seems to me, were rather too fine-drawn to be appreciated on the stage. Perhaps we ought to read "If I were true, fair Thisbe," &c.; which is the meaning either way, as the words are spoken in reply to Thisbe's "As true as truest horse," &c.

P. 47. Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently.—The old copies have "my lovers tongue"; which both untunes the metre and gives a wrong sense, as Bottom is plainly Titania's love, and not her lover. Corrected by Pope.

ACT III., SCENE 2.

P. 49. Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in knee-deep.—The old text is "plunge in the deep." Coleridge proposed knee-deep, and Walker approves the happy correction.

P. 49. So should a murderer look, — so dread, so grim.—So Pope. The old copies have dead instead of dread. What sense dead should have there, I fail to perceive. Johnson found dread written in the margin of his copy.

P. 50. And from thy hated presence part I so:

See me no more, whether he be dead or no.—So Pope. The old editions omit so.

P. 52. This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!—Instead of princess, Hanmer reads pureness, and Collier's second folio has impress. Lettsom proposes purest, which is exceedingly apt. See, however, foot-note 14.
P. 53. My heart with her but as guest-wise sojourn'd.—The old editions have to instead of with. Johnson's correction.

P. 54. Lest, to thy peril, thou aby it dear.

Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.—This repetition of dear for a rhyme looks hardly right. Walker suggests "aby it here."

P. 55. Is all the counsel that we two have shared,

The sister-vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us,—O, and is all forgot?
All school-day friendship, childhood innocence?
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Have with our neelds created both one flower.—Instead of sister-vows, the old text has sister's vowes; also, schooledaies instead of school-day, and neelds instead of neelds. Dyce says "there can be little doubt that Shakespeare wrote neelds,—which was a very common contraction of needles." Of course the change is made for metre's sake. —In the fourth line, also, the earlier old copies read "O, is all forgot?" omitting and, which was supplied in the second folio. Spedding proposes "O, is it all forgot?" I should prefer "O, is all this forgot?" The other two corrections are Capell's.

P. 55. Two lovely berries moulded on one stem.—Collier's second folio changes lovely to loving. Dyce rejects the change, on the ground that lovely was "sometimes used as equivalent to loving." And he quotes from The Taming of the Shrew, iii. 2, "And seal the title with a lovely kiss"; also from Peele's Arraignment of Paris, "And I will give thee many a lovely kiss." Which seems, indeed, to make good his point: but is it certain that in the text lovely is to be taken in the active sense of loving?

P. 56. If you had any pity, grace, or manners,

You would not make me such an argument.—So Collier's second folio; the old copies, "If you have any pity," &c.

P. 56. Thy threats have no more strength than her weak prayers.—So Theobald. The old text reads "her weak praise." Hardly worth noting, perhaps.
CRITICAL NOTES.

P. 57.  

*No, no, sir:—do;*  
*Seem to break loose, take on as you would follow,*  
*But yet come not.*—A troublesome passage as it stands in the old copies. I give the folio reading, except that I supply the word *do,* which seems necessary to the sense. Dyce, at the suggestion of Lettsom, supplies *you* instead of *do;* thus: "*No, no, sir; you seem to break loose."

Demetrius is taunting Lysander, as if the latter were making believe that he wants to break loose from Hermia, who is clinging to him, and go apart with Demetrius, and fight it out. This sense, it seems to me, is much better preserved by *do* than by *you.* We have a like use of *do* a little before: "*Ay, do, persèver, counterfeit sad looks.*" Also in *King Lear,* i. i: "*Do; kill thy physician, and the fee bestow upon the foul disease.*"

P. 57. *Out, loathed medicine! hated potion, hence!*—The first quarto has "*O hated potion,*" the others, "*O hated poison.*"

P. 57. *Hate me! wherefore? O me! what means my love?*—So Collier's second folio. The old copies read "*what newes my love?*" I cannot find any sense in *newes* here.

P. 63. *Ho, ho, ho, ho! coward, why comest thou not?*—So Capell. The fourth *ho,* needful to complete the verse, is not in the old copies.

**ACT IV., SCENE I.**

P. 66. *Nothing, good monsieur, but to help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch.*—So the old copies. Gray says, "Without doubt, it should be *Cavalero Peas-blossom:* as for *Cavalero Cobweb,* he has just been dispatched upon a perilous adventure." Accordingly Dyce prints *Peas-blossom* instead of *Cobweb:* but this is assuming the mistake to be the Poet's or printer's, and not Bottom's. I am not sure of that. See foot-note 3.

P. 67. *I have a venturous fairy that shall seek*  
*The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee thence new nuts.*—In the old copies *thence* is lacking, a gap being left in the verse. Other insertions have been proposed,—"*fetch for thee new nuts,*" and "*fetch thee the new nuts.*" I concur with Dyce in preferring that in the text. Hanmer's correction.
A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

P. 67. Fairies, be gone, and be awhile away. —

Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms:

So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle. — In the old copies, what is here printed as the first line is thrust in between the other two. Lettsom suggested the transposition. — The old text also reads "and be alwaies away." Theobald changed alwaies to all ways, which Dyce adopts. The reading in the text is Hanmer's.

P. 68. And her fairies sent

To bear him to my bower in Fairy-land. — So Dyce. The old editions have "her fairy sent," which does not harmonise with the occasion.

P. 70. Uncouple in the western valley; let them go. — So the old copies. Dyce omits the words let them, for no other purpose, I suppose, but to avoid a line of six feet. But this, it seems to me, is hardly reason enough for such a step; for the Poet often intersperses Alexandrines among his regular pentameters; though, to be sure, he does it very little in this play. Of course, "let them go" refers to the uncoupling of the hounds, which were commonly tied or coupled together, to hold them back from pursuit of the game, till it were time to let them go.

P. 70. When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the boar. — The old copies have beare instead of boar. Hamner and Capell printed boar; and Walker remarks that "the story of Meleager would be sufficient to suggest it to Shakespeare."

P. 71. Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells. — I have stated, in foot-note 13, the principle upon which hounds were selected, to make up what was called a cry. As the matter is rather curious, I here add a passage from a writer contemporary with Shakespeare, as quoted in The Edinburgh Review, October, 1872: "If you would have your kennell for sweeteness of cry, then you must compound it of some large dogges, that have deeppe solemne mouthes, and are swift in spending, which must, as it were, beare the base in the consort; then a double number of roaring and loud ringing mouthes, which must beare the counter tenor; then some hollow, plaine, sweete mouthes, which must beare the meane or middle part; and soe with these three parts of musicke you shall make your cry perfect. — If you would have
your kennell for depth of mouth, then you shall compound it of the largest dogges, which have the greatest mouthes, the deepest flewes; and to five or sixe couple of base mouthes you shall not adde above two couple of counter-tenors, as many meanes, and not above one couple of roarers, which, being heard but now and then, as at the opening or hitting of a sent, will give much sweetnesse to the solemnes and gravenesse of the crye; and the musick thereof will bee much more delightfull to the eares of every beholder."

P. 72.  
My love to Hermia,  
Melted as melts the snow, seems to me now, &c. — So Dyce. The old copies are without melts. Capell and Collier's second folio read "Melted as doth the snow." Clearly there ought to be no breach in the metre here.

P. 73. Come, my Hippolyta. — So Steevens, approved by Walker. The old copies omit my.

P. 73. But are you sure
That we are well awaked? — This is not in the folio, and the words But and well are not in the quartos. Capell inserted them; and Lettsom says, "I had hit upon the same conjectures long before I became acquainted with Capell."

P. 74. I will sing it in the latter end of our play before the Duke: peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it after death. — The old copies read "end of a play," and "sing it at her death." The former correction is Walker's, the latter Theobald's.

ACT V., SCENE I.

P. 77. And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shape. — So Pope. The old copies have shapes instead of shape. One of the commonest misprints is that of singleurs and plurals for each other.

P. 78. That is, hot ice and wondrous swarthry snow. — So Staunton conjectures. The old copies have "strange snow." Hanmer printed "scorching snow," and Collier's second folio has "seething snow."
P. 78. A play it is, my lord, some ten words long.—So Hanmer. The old copies, "A play there is"; Collier's second folio, "A play this is."

P. 79. And what poor willing duty cannot do.—So Theobald. The old text lacks willing.

P. 80. When I have seen them shiver and look pale, &c.—So Dyce. The old text has Where instead of When.

P. 81. This man, with loam and rough-cast, doth present.—The old copies here read "with lime and rough-cast." But, in Wall's speech, a little after, they have "This loame, this rough-cast," &c. So, also, in iii. 1: "And let him have some plaster, or some Lome, or some rough-cast about him."

P. 83. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse.—Farmer would read "heard in discourse," taking it as an allusion "to the many stupid partitions in the argumentative writings of the time." I suspect Farmer is right.

P. 84. Now is the mural down between the two neighbours.—So Theobald. Instead of mural, the quartos have Moon used, the folio morall.

P. 84. Here come two noble beasts in, a moon and a lion.—Instead of moon, the old copies have man. Theobald's correction.

P. 85. Then know that I one Snug the joiner am,
No lion fell, nor else no lion's dam.—So Rowe, and Walker also, without knowing that Rowe had anticipated him. The old copies read "A lion fell."

P. 85. He is not crescent.—The old text has no instead of not. Corrected in Collier's second folio.

P. 86. Lys. And so the lion vanished.
Dem. And then came Pyramus.—The old copies invert the order of these two speeches. Spedding suggested the transposition.
CRITICAL NOTES.

P. 87. For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams.—The old copies, quartos and first folio, have beames, second folio, streames. Knight conjectured gleams, and Walker thinks "the alliteration requires" it.

P. 88. And thus she moans.—So Theobald. The old text has meanes instead of moans.

P. 89. Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf beholws the Moon.—The old copies have "be-holds the Moon"; an obvious erratum.

P. 90. Through the house give glimmering light,
By the dead and drowsy fire;
Every elf and fairy sprite
Hop as light as bird from brier.—The first two of these lines have troubled editors a good deal. Dyce pronounces it "a most perplexing passage." Johnson proposed "Through this house in glimmering light." White changes Through to Though; but his reading, together with his explanation, seems rather to darken what is certainly none too light. Lettsom conjectures "Through this hall go glimmering light." This is both ingenious and poetical in a high degree; but he probably would not himself venture on so bold a change. I suspect that By is simply to be taken as equivalent to by means of. Taking it so, I fail to perceive any thing very dark or perplexing in the passage.

P. 91. SONG, AND DANCE.—The stage-direction here is usually printed as if what follows were the fairies' song; which is clearly wrong, the following lines being spoken by Oberon, after the song and dance are ended. As for the fairies' song on this occasion, it has never, I believe, been heard of since.

P. 91. And the owner of it, blest,
Ever shall in safety rest.—The old text inverts the order of these lines. The transposition is Staunton's. Various other changes have been proposed, such as "Ever shall it safely rest," — "E'er shall it in safety rest," — and "Ever shall't in safety rest"; but that in the text seems, on the whole, the most satisfactory.
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

REGISTERED at the Stationers' in July, 1598, but with a special proviso, "that it be not printed without license first had from the Right-Honourable the Lord Chamberlain." The theatrical company to which Shakespeare belonged were then known as "The Lord Chamberlain's Servants"; and the purpose of the proviso was to keep the play out of print till the company's permission were given through their patron. The play was entered again at the same place in October, 1600, his lordship's license having probably been obtained by that time. Accordingly two editions of it were published in the course of that year, one by James Roberts, the other by Thomas Heyes. These were evidently printed from two distinct manuscripts, both of which had probably been transcribed from the author's original copy. The play was never issued again, that we know of, till in the folio of 1623. The repetition of certain peculiarities shows it to have been there printed, with some alterations, from the quarto of Heyes.

The Merchant of Venice was also mentioned by Francis Meres in his Wit's Treasury, 1598. How long before that time the play was written we have no means of knowing; but, judging from the style, we cannot well assign the writing to a much earlier date; though there is some reason for thinking it may have been on the stage four years earlier; as Henslowe's Diary records The Venetian Comedy as having been originally acted in August, 1594. It is by no means certain, however, that this refers to Shakespeare's play; while the workmanship here shows such maturity and variety of power as argue against that supposal. It evinces, in a considerable degree, the easy, unlabouring freedom of conscious mastery; the persons being so entirely
under the author's control, and subdued to his hand, that he seems to let them talk and act just as they have a mind to. Therewithal the style, throughout, is so even and sustained; the word and the character are so fitted to each other; the laws of dramatic proportion are so well observed; and the work is so free from any jarring or falling-out from the due course and order of art; as to justify the belief that the whole was written in same stage of intellectual growth and furnishing.

In the composition of this play the Poet drew largely from preceding writers. Novelty of plot or story there is almost none. Nevertheless, in conception and development of character, in poetical texture and grain, in sap and flavour of wit and humour, and in all that touches the real life and virtue of the workmanship, it is one of the most original productions that ever issued from the human mind. Of the materials here used, some were so much the common stock of European literature before the Poet's time, and had been run into so many variations, that it is not easy to say what sources he was most indebted to for them.

It is beyond question that there was an earlier play running more or less upon the same or similar incidents. For Stephen Gosson published, in 1579, a tract entitled The School of Abuse, in which he mentions a certain play as "The Jew, shown at the Bull, representing the greediness of worldly choosers, and the bloody minds of usurers." This would fairly infer that Shakespeare was not the first to combine, in dramatic form, the two incidents of the caskets and the pound of flesh: but, nothing further being now known touching the order and character of that older performance, we can affirm nothing as to how far he may have followed or used it in the composition of his play.

The original of the casket-lottery dates far back in the days of Mediæval Romance; and the substance of it was variously repeated, from time to time, by successive authors, till Shakespeare spoilt it for further use. It is met with in the Gesta Romanorum, an old and curious collection of tales; and, as the version there given is clearly identified as the one used by Shakespeare directly or indirectly, it seems hardly worth the while to notice, here, any of the other versions.
Anselm, Emperor of Rome, having been long childless, has at length a son born to him. His great enemy, the King of Naples, wishing to end their strife, proposes a marriage between his daughter and the Emperor's son. The latter consents, and in due time the princess embarks for Rome. A terrible storm arising, the ship is wrecked, and all on board perish except the princess. Before she can make good her escape, she is swallowed by a huge whale. But she happens to be armed with a sharp knife, which she uses so vigorously in her strange lodging, that the whale soon has the worst of it. The monster thereupon makes for the shore, and is there killed by a knight, who rescues the princess, and takes her under his protection. On relating her story, she is conveyed to the Emperor, who, to prove whether she is worthy of his son, puts before her three vessels: the first made of pure gold, and outwardly set with rich gems, but within full of dead men's bones; the second made of fine silver, but filled with earth and worms; the third made of lead, but full within of precious stones. On the first is inscribed "Whoso chooseth me shall find what he deserveth"; on the second, "Whoso chooseth me shall find what his nature desireth"; on the third, "Whoso chooseth me shall find what God has disposed to him." The Emperor then orders her to choose one of the vessels, telling her that, if she chooses that which will profit herself and others, she shall have his son. The princess chooses the third, and is forthwith married to the young prince.

The incidents of the bond, the forfeiture, the pound of flesh, and the mode in which the penalty is escaped, are also related in the *Gesta Romanorum*, but not in connection with that of the caskets. It is certain, however, that in this the Poet did not draw from the *Gesta*, but, directly or indirectly, from an Italian novel, by Giovanni Fiorentino, written as early as 1378, though not printed till 1500. The main points of the story are as follows:

Giannetto, the adopted son of a Venetian merchant, Ansaldo, gets permission to visit Alexandria. On his voyage he lands at Belmont, where he finds a lady of great wealth and beauty, and falls deeply in love with her. He returns to Venice, asks for a supply of money to enable him to prosecute his love-suit, and
Ansaldo borrows 10,000 ducats of a Jew on the condition that, if the money be not repaid by a certain day, Ansaldo shall forfeit a pound of his flesh, to be cut off by the Jew. Giannetto gains the lady in marriage; but, forgetful of the bond, prolongs his stay at Belmont till the day of payment is past. Hastening to Venice, he finds the Jew rigid in exacting the penalty, and to be turned from it even by ten times the amount of the loan. The bride, knowing the merchant's position, disguises herself as a doctor of law, repairs to Venice, and gets herself introduced as a judge into the court where the case is on trial: for in Italy, at that time, nice and difficult points of law were determined, not by the ordinary judges, but by doctors of law from Padua, Bologna, and other famous law-schools. The lady, unrecognized by her husband, learns the nature of the case, and, after reading the bond, calls on the Jew to take the pound of flesh, but tells him he must take neither more nor less than exactly a pound, and that he must shed no blood. An executioner is at hand to behead him in case any blood be drawn. The Jew then says he will accept the 100,000 ducats offered; but, as he has declared up and down repeatedly that he will have nothing but the pound of flesh, the judge refuses to allow any repayment of money whatever; and the Jew in a rage tears up the bond and quits the court. Hereupon Giannetto, overjoyed at the happy issue, yields up to the judge, in token of his gratitude, a ring which his wife had given him on their marriage-day; and the judge, on returning home and putting off the disguise, rails at her husband in fine terms about his parting with the ring, which she says she is sure he must have given to some woman.

There is also an old ballad entitled "The cruelty of Gernutus, a Jew, who, lending to a Merchant a hundred crowns, would have a pound of his flesh, because he could not pay him at the day appointed." The ballad is of uncertain date; but Bishop Percy, who reprints it in his Reliques "from an ancient black-letter copy," justly infers it to have been earlier than the play, because "it differs from the play in many circumstances which a mere ballad-maker would hardly have given himself the trouble to alter." I subjoin so much of it as is pertinent to the occasion:
In Venice town, not long ago,
    A cruel Jew did dwell,
Which lived all on usury,
    As Italian writers tell.

Within that city dwelt that time
    A merchant of great fame,
Which, being distressèd, in his need
    Unto Gernutus came;

Desiring him to stand his friend,
    For twelvemonth and a day
To lend to him an hundred crowns;
    And he for it would pay

Whatsoever he would demand of him;
    And pledges he should have.
No, quoth the Jew with fleering looks,
    Sir, ask what you will have.

No penny for the loan of it
    For one year you shall pay:
You may do me as good a turn,
    Before my dying day.

But we will have a merry jest
    For to be talkèd long:
You shall make me a bond, quoth he,
    That shall be large and strong.

And this shall be the forfeiture,—
    Of your own flesh a pound:
If you agree, make you the bond,
    And here is a hundred crowns.

With right good will! the merchant says;
    And so the bond was made.
When twelvemonth and a day drew on,
    That back it should be paid,

The merchant's ships were all at sea,
    And money came not in:
Which way to take, or what to do,
    To think he doth begin.

Some offer'd for his hundred crowns
    Five hundred for to pay;
And some a thousand, two, or three,
    Yet still he did deny.
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

And, at the last, ten thousand crowns
They offer'd, him to save:
Gernutus said, I will no gold, —
My forfeit I will have.

The bloody Jew now ready is,
With whetted blade in hand,
To spoil the blood of innocent,
By forfeit 'of his bond.

And, as he was about to strike
In him the deadly blow,
Stay, quoth the judge, thy cruelty, —
I charge thee to do so.

Sith needs thou wilt thy forfeit have,
Which is of flesh a pound,
See that thou shed no drop of blood,
Nor yet the man confound.

For, if thou do, like murderer
Thou here shalt hanged be;
Likewise of flesh see that thou cut
No more than 'longs to thee;

For if thou take either more or less,
To the value of a mite,
Thou shalt be hanged presently,
As is both law and right.

Gernutus now wax'd frantic mad,
And wots not what to say;
Quoth he at last, Ten thousand crowns
I will that he shall pay;

And so I grant to let him free.
The judge doth answer make, —
You shall not have a penny given:
Your forfeiture now take.
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DUKE of Venice.  LAUNCELOT GOFBO, a Clown, Servant to Shylock.
Prince of Morocco, } OLD GOFBO, Father to Launcelot.
Prince of Arragon, } LEONARDO, Servant to Bassanio.
{ Suitors to Portia.
ANTONIO, the Merchant of Venice.  BALTHAZAR, } Servants to Portia.
BASSANIO, his Friend.    STEPHANO, {  
SOLANIO,  PORTIA, a rich Heiress.
SALARINO,  NERISSA, her Companion.
{ Friends to Antonio and JESSICA, Daughter to Shylock.
GRATIANO,  Bassanio.
LORENZO, in love with Jessica.
SHYLOCK, a Jew.
TUBAL, a Jew, his Friend.

Magnificos of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Jailer, Servants, and other Attendants.

SCENE, partly at Venice and partly at Belmont.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — Venice.  A Street.

Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, and SOLANIO.

Ant. In sooth,¹ I know not why I am so sad: It wearies me, you say it wearies you; But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,² What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born, I am to learn;

¹ "In sooth" is truly or in truth. Soothsayer is, properly, truth-speaker; formerly used of men supposed to be wise in forecasting things.
² To come by a thing is to get possession of it, to acquire it. So the phrase is much used in New England, or was, forty years ago.
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,  
That I have much ado to know myself.  

Salar. Your mind is tossing on the ocean;  
There, where your argosies with portly sail, —  
Like signiors and rich burghers of the flood,  
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea, —  
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,  
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,  
As they fly by them with their woven wings.  

Solan. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,  
The better part of my affections would  
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still  
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind;  
Peering in maps for ports, and piers, and roads;  
And every object that might make me fear  
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt.

A want-wit is a dunce, simpleton, or dunderhead. Wit was continually used for mind, judgment, or understanding.

Argosies are large ships either for merchandise or for war. The name was probably derived from the classical ship Argo, which carried Jason and the Argonauts in quest of the golden fleece.

Signior is used by Shakespeare very much in the sense of lord; signiory, of lordship, meaning dominion. Thus, in The Tempest, i. 2, Prospero says of his dukedom, "Through all the signiories it was the first." Burghers are citizens. So, in As You Like It, ii. 1, the deer in the Forest of Arden, "poor dappled fools," are spoken of as "being native burghers of this desert city."

Pageants were shows of various kinds, theatrical and others; from a word originally meaning, it is said, a high stage or scaffold. Pageants of great splendour, with gay barges and other paraphernalia, used to be held upon the Thames. Leicester had a grand pageant exhibited before Queen Elizabeth, on the water at Kenilworth-Castle, when she visited him there in 1575; described in Scott's Kenilworth.

Venture is what is risked; exposed to "the peril of waters, winds, and rocks." —The Poet very often uses forth for out. So later in the scene: "To find the other forth." And elsewhere we have the phrases, "find his fellow forth," and "inquire you forth," and "hear this matter forth."

Here, as often, still has the force of always, or continually.

Roads are anchorages; places where ships ride at anchor safely.
Would make me sad.

_Salar._ My wind, cooling my broth,
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great might do at sea.
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I should think of shallows and of flats;
And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,¹⁰
Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs,
To kiss her burial.¹¹ Should I go to church,
And see the holy edifice of stone,
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
Which, touching but my gentle vessel's side,
Would scatter all her spices on the stream;
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks;
And, in a word, but even now worth this,¹²
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought,
That such a thing bechanced would make me sad?
But tell not me: I know Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

_Ant._ Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom¹³ trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

_Salar._ Why, then you are in love.

_Ant._ Fie, fie!

_Salar._ Not in love neither? Then let's say you're sad,

¹⁰ _Dock'd in sand_ is stranded.—Italian ships were apt to be named from Andrea Doria, the great Genoese Admiral.

¹¹ To _vail_ is to _lower_, to _let fall._ — The image is of a ship tilted over on one side, the other side up in the air, and the top-mast down in the sand.

¹² Here the actor may be supposed to make a gesture importing _bulk or largeness_. The Poet often leaves his meaning to be thus interpreted.

¹³ _Bottom_, here, is a transport-ship or merchant-man.
Because you are not merry; and 'twere as easy
For you to laugh and leap, and say you're merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus, 14
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh, like parrots at a bag-piper;
And other 15 of such vinegar aspect,
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable. 15

Solan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:
We leave you now with better company.

Salar. I would have stay'd till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented 17 me.

Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it, your own business calls on you,
And you embrace th' occasion to depart.

Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo, and Gratiano.

Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.

Bass. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? say, when?

You grow exceeding strange: 18 must it be so?

14 Janus, the old Latin Sun-god, who gave the name to the month of January, is here called two-headed, because he had two faces, one on either side of his head. There is also an allusion to certain antique two-faced images, one face being grave, the other merry, or a gloomy Saturn on one side, and a laughing Apollo on the other.

15 Other for others was a very frequent usage, especially in antithetic connection with some, as in this instance.

16 Nestor was the oldest and gravest of the Greek heroes in the Trojan war. The severest faces might justly laugh at what he should pronounce laughable.

17 Prevented, in old language, is anticipated. To prevent is literally to go before. So in the Prayer-Book, 17th Sunday after Trinity: "That thy grace may always prevent and follow us."

18 Strange for estranged, distant, or stranger-like. Repeatedly so.
Salar. We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

[Exeunt Salarino and Solanio.

Lor. My Lord Bassanio, since you've found Antonio,
We two will leave you; but at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.
Bass. I will not fail you.
Gra. You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world:
They lose it that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.
Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.
Gra. Let me play the Fool: With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come;
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes? and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio,
(I love thee, and it is my love that speaks,)
There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond;
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;  

19 Respect, in Shakespeare, often means consideration, or concern. So in King Lear, i. i: “Since that respects of fortune are his love, I shall not be his wife.” And so in North’s Plutarch: “The only respect that made them valiant was, that they hoped to have honour.”

20 To play the Fool is, in Gratiano’s sense, to act the part of a jester, such as that of Touchstone in As You Like It, or the Clown in Twelfth Night.

21 Conceit was used for thought, conception, judgment, or understanding; as also opinion for reputation or character.
As who should say, *I am Sir Oracle,*
*And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!*
O my Antonio, I do know of these,
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing; who, I'm very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I'll tell thee more of this another time:
But fish not, with this melancholy bait,
For this fool-gudgeon, this opinion.—
Come, good Lorenzo.—Fare ye well awhile:
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

_Lor._ Well, we will leave you, then, till dinner-time.
I must be one of these same dumb-wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

_Gra._ Well, keep me company but two years more,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

_Ant._ Farewell: I'll grow a talker for this gear.

_Gra._ Thanks, i'faith; for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.

[Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo.]

---

22 "As who should say" was a phrase in common use, meaning "as if any one should say," or "were saying."—A "Sir Oracle" is one who conceives himself to have oracular or prophetic wisdom; a wiseacre.

23 Referring to the judgment pronounced in the Gospel against him who "says to his brother, Thou fool." The meaning, therefore, is, that if those who "only are reputed wise for saying nothing" should go to talking, they would be apt to damn their hearers, by provoking them to utter this reproach. A thing is often said to do that which it any way causes to be done. The Poet has many instances of such usage. So in _Hamlet_, iii. 4: "An act that calls virtue hypocrite."

24 That is, "Do not bait your hook with this melancholy to catch this worthless fish." _Gudgeon_ was the name of a small fish very easily caught; and which none but _fools_ would care to catch.

25 _Gear_ was often used of any business, matter, or affair in hand.

26 Not good for the matrimonial market, unless she have the rare gift of silence to recommend her, or to make up for the lack of other attractions.
Ant. Is that any thing now?

Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them; and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

Ant. Well; tell me now, what lady is the same To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage, That you to-day promised to tell me of?

Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio, How much I have disabled mine estate, By something showing a more swelling port Than my faint means would grant continuance: Nor do I now make moan to be abridged From such a noble rate; but my chief care Is, to come fairly off from the great debts Wherein my time, something too prodigal, Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio, I owe the most, in money and in love; And from your love I have a warranty T' unburden all my plots and purposes How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it; And if it stand, as you yourself still do, Within the eye of honour, be assured My purse, my person, my extremest means,

27 "A more swelling port" is a grander and more imposing appearance, deportment, or out-fit. Something and somewhat were used indiscriminately. "A somewhat more swelling port" is the meaning.—Grant, in the next line, seems to be used, like give, with two accusatives.

28 That is, complain of being abridged, or curtailed. Here, as often, the infinitive, to be, is used gerundively, or like the Latin gerunt, and so is equivalent to of being.

29 Gaged is pledged. So in 1 Henry IV., i. 3: "That men of your nobility and power did gage them both in an unjust behalf."
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

_Bass._ In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the selfsame flight
The selfsame way with more advised watch,
To find the other forth; and, by adventuring both,
I oft found both. I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost: but, if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,—
As I will watch the aim,—or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

_Ant._ You know me well; and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance;
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost,
Than if you had made waste of all I have:
Then, do but say to me what I should do,
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it: therefore speak.

80 Arrows were variously formed for different ranges. A shaft "of the
self-same flight" was an arrow made for shooting the same distance.—_His
for its_, which was not then an accepted word, though it was just creeping
into use. It does not once occur in our English Bible as originally printed
in 1611. Instead of _its_, _his_ is commonly used.

81 _Advisèd_ is _deliberate, careful, or circumspect._

82 _Childhood proof_ is _childish instance or experiment_; a method he had
used when a child. So the Poet has "_childhood innocence._"

83 A youth wilful, or _headstrong, in expense_ is the meaning.

84 _Self_ for _same_ or _self-same_; a frequent usage. So in _King Lear_, i. 1:
"I'm made of that _self_ metal as my sister."

85 Here, as often, _circumstance_ is _circumlocution, or talking round a thing,
instead of coming to the point at once._

86 _Prest_ is _prompt, ready_; from an old French word. Spenser has it re-
peatedly in the same sense. The Latin _præsto_ is the origin of it.
Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,37
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes38 from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages.
Her name is Portia; nothing undervalued39
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia:
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth;
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renownèd suitors; and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,40
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate.

Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;
Neither have I money, nor commodity41
To raise a present sum: therefore go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do:
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is; and I no question make,
To have it of my trust, or for my sake. [Exeunt.

37 Meaning she is beautiful, and has what is better than beauty.
38 Sometimes and sometime were used indifferently, and often, as here, in
the sense of formerly or former.
39 Nothing undervalued is not at all inferior in value. So, later in this
play, we have “ten times undervalued to tried gold.” And nothing as a
strong negative is very frequent.
40 The language is awkward: “as one of them,” we should say.
41 Commodity is merchandise, any thing that might be pledged as security
for a loan.
Scene II.—Belmont. A Room in Portia’s House.

Enter Portia and Nerissa.

Por. By my troth,¹ Nerissa, my little body is a-weary of this great world.

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing. It is no small happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity comes sooner by white hairs,² but competency lives longer.

Por. Good sentences,³ and well pronounced.

Ner. They would be better, if well followed.

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men’s cottages princes’ palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood;⁴ but a hot temper leaps o’er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o’er the meshes of good-counsel the cripple. But this reasoning⁵ is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word choose! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter.

¹ Troth is merely an old form of truth.
² Superfluity, that is, one who is rich and fares sumptuously, sooner acquires white hairs, or grows old. See page 113, note 2.
³ Sentences for maxims, or axiomatic sayings; like Milton’s “brief, sententious precepts.”
⁴ Blood here means the same as temper, a little after; and both are put for passion or impulse generally.
⁵ Reasoning for talk or conversation. The Poet repeatedly has reason, both as noun and verb, in the same sense.
curb'd by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men, at their death, have good inspirations: therefore the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead,—whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you,—will no doubt never be chosen by any rightly, but one who shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee, over-name them; and, as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself. I am much afraid my lady his mother play'd false with a smith.

Ner. Then is there the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown; as who should say, _An you will not have me, choose._ He hears merry tales, and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmann'rly sadness in

---

6 The second will stands for what we call "will and testament."
7 The sense of holy, here, is explained by the words virtuous and good; upright and true. Often so.
8 Level at is guess or infer. The Poet uses aim in the same sense.
9 An equivocate on colt, which was used for a wild, dashing, skittish youngster. The Neapolitans were much noted for horsemanship.
10 Appropriation is used rather oddly here, —in the sense, apparently, of addition. The word does not occur again in Shakespeare.
11 This was Heraclitus of Ephesus, who became a complete recluse, and retreated to the mountains, where he lived on pot-herbs. He was called "the weeping philosopher" because he mourned over the follies of mankind, just as Democritus was called "the laughing philosopher" because he laughed at them. Perhaps Portia has in mind the precept, "Rejoice with those that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."
his youth. I had rather be married to a Death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

_Ner._ How say you by\(^12\) the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

_Por._ God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's; a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine: he is every man in no man: if a throstle sing, he falls straight a-capering; he will fence\(^13\) with his own shadow. If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would\(^14\) despise me, I would forgive him; for, if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

_Ner._ What say you then to\(^15\) Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

_Por._ You know I say nothing to him; for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian; and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper\(^16\) man's picture; but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show?\(^17\) How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his

\(^{12}\) "What say you of, or in reference to?" By and of were often used indiscriminately. So in ii. 8, of this play: "That many may be meant by the fool multitude."

\(^{18}\) To _fence_ is to _manage the sword_; to practise the art of defence, as it is called. Skill in handling the sword was formerly an indispensable accomplishment of a gentleman.

\(^{14}\) _Would_ for _should_; the two being often used indiscriminately. So a little after: "You should refuse to perform."

\(^{15}\) Here _to_ is used like _by_ in note 12. In the next speech, Portia plays upon the word, using it in the ordinary sense.

\(^{16}\) _Proper_ is _handsome_ or _fine-looking_. Commonly so in the Poet's time. In Hebrews, xi. 23, the parents of Moses are said to have hidden him, "because they saw he was a proper child."

\(^{17}\) A _dumb-show_ is an action or character exhibited to the eye only; something like what we call a _tableau._
doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet\textsuperscript{18} in Germany, and his behaviour every where.

\textbf{Ner.} What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

\textbf{Por.} That he hath a neighbourly charity in him; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety, and seal'd under for another.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{Ner.} How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony’s nephew?

\textbf{Por.} Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast. An\textsuperscript{20} the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

\textbf{Ner.} If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father’s will, if you should refuse to accept him.

\textbf{Por.} Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket;\textsuperscript{21} for, if the Devil be within, and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge.

\textbf{Ner.} You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their home, and to trouble you

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Doublet} was the name of a man’s outside upper garment. — \textit{Hose} was used for \textit{trousers} or \textit{stockings}, or both in one. — \textit{Bonnet} and \textit{hat} were used indifferently for a man’s head-dress.

\textsuperscript{19} To \textit{seal} was to \textit{subscribe}; as Antonio afterwards says, “I’ll \textit{seal} to such a bond.” The principal sealed to a bond, his surety \textit{sealed under}. The meaning therefore is, that the Frenchman became surety for another box of the ear, to be given in repayment of the first.

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{An} is an old equivalent for \textit{if}. So used continually in Shakespeare’s time. And so in the common phrase, “without any \textit{ifs} or \textit{ans}.”

\textsuperscript{21} The \textit{wrong} casket. So in \textit{King John}, iv. 2: “Standing on slippers, which his nimble haste had falsely thrust upon \textit{contrary feet}.”
with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence; and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquess of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio: as I think, so was he called.

Ner. True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes look'd upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise. —

Enter a Servant.

How now! what news?

22 Sort appears to be here used in the sense of lot; from the Latin sors. So in Troilus and Cressida, i. 3: "Let blockish Ajax draw the sort to fight with Hector." — "Your father's imposition" means the conditions imposed by your father.

23 Shakespeare here turns the word sibyl into a proper name. That he knew it to be a generic, not an individual name, appears in Othello, iii. 4: "A sibyl, that had number'd in the world the Sun to course two hundred compasses, in her prophetic fury sew'd the work." Bacon, in his essay Of Delays, also uses the word as a proper name: "Fortune is like the market where, many times, if you can stay a little, the price will fall; and again, it is sometimes like Sibylla's offer, which at first offereth the commodity at the full, then consumeth part and part, and still holdeth up the price." The particular Sibyl referred to by Portia is probably the Cumæan Sibyl, so named from Cumæ in Italy, where she had her prophetic seat. Apollo fell in love with her, and offered to grant any request she might make. Her request was that she might live as many years as she held grains of sand in her hand. She forgot to ask for the continuance of her beauty also, and so had a rather hard bargain of it.
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Serv. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave; and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco; who brings word, the Prince his master will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. — Sirrah, go before. —

While we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.

[Exeunt.

SCENE III. — Venice. A public Place.

Enter Bassanio and Shylock.

Shy. Three thousand ducats,—well.¹

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months,—well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound,—well.

Bass. May you stead me?² will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

²⁴ An oversight, perhaps. There were six of them.

²⁵ Condition is temper, disposition. So used continually by Shakespeare, and other writers of his time.

²⁶ Devils were imagined and represented as of dark colour. So, in Othello, Iago says to Brabantio, "The Devil will make a grandsire of you," referring to the Moor's colour. — To strive is to absolve; referring to the priestly act of confession and absolution.

¹ Well has here something of an interrogative force, and perhaps ought to be pointed interrogatively,— "Well?"

² Another instance of the indiscriminate use of words: may for can or will.— "Stead me" is aid me, or let me depend on you.
Shy. Three thousand ducats for three months, and Antonio bound.

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shy. Ho! no, no, no, no: my meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England; and other ventures he hath squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, land-thieves and water-thieves,—I mean pirates: and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats;—I think I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto?—Who is he comes here?

Enter Antonio.

Bass. This in Signior Antonio.

---

8 Shylock means good in a business sense; of good credit.
4 Squandered here is simply scattered, dispersed: a usage of the time.
8 Alluding to the permission given to the Legion of devils to enter into the herd of swine: St. Luke, viii. 33. — Habitation is used of the body; the dwelling-place, in this instance, of the devils.
Shy. [ Aside. ] How like a fawning publican he looks! I hate him for he is a Christian; But more, for that, in low simplicity, He lends out money gratis, and brings down The rate of usance here with us in Venice. If I can catch him once upon the hip, I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him. He hates our sacred nation; and he rails, Even there where merchants most do congregate, On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift, Which he calls interest. Curs'd be my tribe, If I forgive him!

Bass. Shylock, do you hear?

Shy. I am debating of my present store; And, by the near guess of my memory, I cannot instantly raise up the gross Of full three thousand ducats. What of that? Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe, Will furnish me. But, soft! how many months

6 For was often used with the exact sense of our because.

7 Usance, usury, and interest were all terms of precisely the same import in Shakespeare's time; there being then no such law or custom whereby usury has since come to mean the taking of interest above a certain rate. How the taking of interest, at whatever rate, was commonly esteemed, is shown in Lord Bacon's essay Of Usury, where he mentions the popular arguments against it: "That the usurer is the greatest Sabbath-breaker, because his plough goeth every Sunday; that the usurer breaketh the first law that was made for mankind after the fall, which was, 'in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread'; that usurers should have orange-tawny bonnets because they do Judeaize; that it is against nature for money to beget money, and the like." The words in Italic show that usury was regarded as a badge of Judaism.

8 Some explain this as a phrase of wrestling; others, of hunting. To have one on the hip was to have the advantage of him; as when a wrestler seized his antagonist by that part, or a hound a deer.

9 Soft! is an old exclamative, meaning about the same as hold! stay! or not too fast! Often used by Shakespeare.
Do you desire? — [To Ant.] Rest you fair, good signior; Your Worship was the last man in our mouths.

Ant. Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow, By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend, I'll break a custom. — Is he yet possess'd
How much we would?

Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

Ant. And for three months.

Shy. I had forgot, — three months; you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and, let me see, — But hear you: Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.

Ant. I do never use it.

Shy. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep, — This Jacob from our holy Abraham was
(As his wise mother wrought in his behalf)
The third possessor; ay, he was the third,

Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?

Shy. No, not take interest; not, as you would say, Directly interest: mark what Jacob did.
When Laban and himself were compromised That all the eanlings which were streak'd and pied

10 That is, "may you continue well!" or, "good health to you!" So in As You Like It, v. 1: "God rest you merry!" — "Your Worship" was a common title of deference, meaning somewhat less than "your Honour," in the Poet's time.

11 Excess, here, has the exact sense of interest. If one lends a hundred dollars for a year at six per cent, he takes six dollars in excess of the sum lent.

12 Possess'd is informed; a frequent usage. So later in the play: "I have possess'd your Grace of what I purpose."

13 The third, reckoning Abraham himself as the first. How Jacob's "wise mother wrought" is told in Genesis, xxvii.

14 Eanlings are new-born lambs. — A compromise is a contract or mutual agreement. — See Genesis, xxx. 31-43.
SCENE III. THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Should fall as Jacob's hire, the ewes, being rank,
In end of Autumn turn'd to the rams;
And, when the work of generation was
Between these woolly breeders in the act,
The skilful shepherd peel'd me certain wands,
And, in the doing of the deed of kind,\textsuperscript{15}
He stuck them up before the fulsome\textsuperscript{16} ewes,
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning time
Fall parti-colour'd lambs, and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest:
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

\textit{Ant.} This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of Heaven.
Was this inserted \textsuperscript{17} to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?

\textit{Shy.} I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast.
But note me, signior.

\textit{Ant.} Mark you this, Bassanio,
The Devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul, producing holy witness,
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek;
A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
O, what a godly outside falsehood\textsuperscript{18} hath!

\textit{Shy.} Three thousand ducats, — 'tis a good round sum.
Three months from twelve, — then, let me see, the rate—

\textit{Ant.} Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding\textsuperscript{19} to you?

\textsuperscript{15} Kind in its radical sense of nature. The Poet has it repeatedly so.
\textsuperscript{16} Also kindly for natural. See vol. ii., page 143, note 15.
\textsuperscript{17} The meaning of fulsome here appears from the words, "the ewes being rank." In Golding's Ovid, it is used of a sheep's dugs: "Whose fulsome dugs do yeeld sweete nectar."
\textsuperscript{18} Was this inserted in Scripture?" is the meaning, probably.
\textsuperscript{19} Falsehood for knavery, as truth sometimes for honesty.

Shakespeare always has beholding, the active form, in the sense of beholden, the passive. Of course it means indebted.
Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft,
In the Rialto, you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug;
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat, dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine, And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to; you come to me, and you say,
Shylock, we would have moneys: you say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say,
Hath a dog money? Is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats? or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this,—
Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;

20 In this scene we have already had "on the Rialto," and "upon the Rialto." Concerning the place meant, Rogers thus speaks in one of the notes to his poem on Italy: "Rialto is the name, not of the bridge, but of the island from which it is called; and the Venetians say il ponte di Rialto, as we say Westminster-bridge. In that island is the exchange; and I have often walked there as on classic ground. In the days of Antonio and Bassanio it was second to none."

21 Gaberdine was a long, coarse outer garment or frock. Caliban, in The Tempest, ii. 2, wears one big enough, it seems, to wrap both himself and Trinculo in.

22 Go to is an old phrase of varying import, sometimes of reproach, sometimes of encouragement. Hush up, come on, be off, and go ahead are among its meanings.

23 "Eject your spittle." Rheum was used indifferently of what issues from the mouth, the nose, and the eyes.—Spurn, in the next line, is kick; the same as foot.
You spurn'd me such a day; another time
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys?

Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friend;—for when did friendship take
A breed of barren metal of his friend?—
But lend it rather to thine enemy;
Who if he break, thou mayst with better face
Exact the penalty.

Shy. Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants, and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys,
And you'll not hear me: this is kind I offer.

Bass. This were kindness.

Shy. This kindness will I show:
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me:

24 Breed, here, is interest; that which is bred from the principal.
25 This doubling of the subject, who and he, in relative clauses was common with all writers. Bacon has it very often. So in his Advancement of Learning: "Which though it be true, yet I forbear to note any deficiencies."
26 Doit was a small Dutch coin, less in value than our cent.
27 The language is odd, and rather obscure. The sense will come thus: "Let the forfeiture of a pound of your flesh be named or specified as an equivalent for the debt."
Ant. Content, in faith; I'll seal to such a bond, And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me: I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

Ant. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it: Within these two months, that's a month before This bond expires, I do expect return Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

Shy. O father Abraham, what these Christians are, Whose own hard dealing teaches them suspect The thoughts of others!—Pray you, tell me this: If he should break his day, what should I gain By the exaction of the forfeiture? A pound of man's flesh taken from a man Is not so estimable, profitable neither, As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say, To buy his favour, I extend this friendship: If he will take it, so; if not, adieu; And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's: Give him direction for this merry bond; And I will go and purse the ducats straight; See to my house, left in the fearful guard Of an unthrifty knave; and presently I will be with you.


This Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind.

Bass. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

---

28 Dwell here has the sense of continue or abide.

29 To break his day was the current phrase for breach of contract.

30 "Fearful guard" is a guard not to be trusted, or that gives cause of fear. To fear was used in an active as well as a passive sense. So in the next scene: "This aspect of mine hath fear'd the valiant."
Ant. Come on: in this there can be no dismay;  
My ships come home a month before the day.  

[Execunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Belmont. A Room in Portia's House.

Flourish of cornets. Enter the Prince of Morocco and his  
Train; Portia, Nerissa, and other of her Attendants.

Mor. Mislike me not for my complexion,  
The shadow'd livery of the burning Sun,  
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.  
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,  
Where Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,  
And let us make incision for your love,  
To prove whose blood is redder,\(^1\) his or mine.  
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine  
Hath fear'd\(^2\) the valiant: by my love, I swear  
The best-regarded virgins of our clime  
Have loved it too. I would not change this hue,  
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

Por. In terms of choice I am not solely led  
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;\(^3\)  
Besides, the lottery of my destiny

---

\(^1\) Red blood is a traditional sign of courage. Thus Macbeth calls his frightened servant a *lily-liver'd* boy; again, in this play, cowards are said to have *livers white as milk*; and an effeminate man is termed a *milksop*.

\(^2\) Hath *frightened* or *terrified*. See last note of preceding scene.

\(^3\) Portia means that reason and judgment have a voice potential in her matrimonial thoughts. So in *Hamlet*, iv. 3: "The distracted multitude, who like not in their judgment, but their eyes." — *Nice*, here, is *dainty* or *fastidious*.
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing:
But, if my father had not scanted me,
And hedged me by his will, to yield myself
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,
Yourself, renowned Prince, then stood as fair
As any comer I have look'd on yet
For my affection.

Mor. Even for that I thank you:
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets,
To try my fortune. By this scimitar,—
That slew the Sophy, and a Persian prince
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,—
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,
Outbrave the heart most daring on the Earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
To win thee, lady. — But, alas the while! ⁵
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:
So is Alcides beaten by his page;
And so may I, blind Fortune leading me, ¹
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,

⁴ "A History of the Wars between the Turks and Persians," translated from the Italian, was published in London in 1595; from which Shakespeare might have learned that "Saffi, an ancient word signifying a wise man," was "grown to be the common name of the Emperors of Persia." Ismael Sophi is said to have been the founder of what was called the Suffavian dynasty. The same potentate is twice referred to in Twelfth Night. — Solyman the Magnificent had an unfortunate campaign with the Persians in 1535. ⁵ "Alas the while!" "Woe the while!" "Alack a day!" and "Woe worth the day!" were all phrases of the same or of similar import. ⁶ If they try the question of which is the braver man by a game of dice. — Lichas was the servant or page of Hercules, who ignorantly brought to his master from Dejanira the poisoned shirt. Hercules was a descendant of Alceus, and so is called, in the Greek idiom, Alcides.
And die with grieving.

Por. You must take your chance;
And either not attempt to choose at all,
Or swear, before you choose, if you choose wrong
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage: therefore be advised.⁷

Mor. Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance.

Por. First, forward to the temple:⁸ after dinner
Your hazard shall be made.

Mor. Good fortune then!
To make me blest or cursed'st⁹ among men.

[Corrents, and exeunt.

SCENE II.—Venice. A Street.

Enter Launcelot.

Laun. Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from
this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts
me, saying to me, Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,
or good Gobbo, or good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take
the start, run away. My conscience says, No; take heed,
honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo, or, as aforesaid,
honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with
thy heels.¹ Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack:

⁷ Advised, again, for cautious or considerate. See page 120, note 31.
⁸ That is, to the church, to take the oath mentioned just before, and de-
scribed more particularly in the eighth scene of this Act. Bibles were not
kept in private houses in the Poet’s time; and such an oath had to be taken
on the Bible.
⁹ Here the force of the superlative in cursed'st retroacts on blest; so that
the sense is most blest or most cursed. So in Measure for Measure, iv. 6:
“The generous and gravest citizens.”
¹ To scorn a thing with the heels appears to have been an old phrase
for spurning or kicking at a thing. Shakespeare has the phrase again in
Much Afo, iii. 4. Launcelot seems to be in chase of a quibble between
the heels as used in kicking, and the heels as used in running.
"Via!" says the fiend; "away!" says the fiend; for the Heavens, rouse up a brave mind, says the fiend, and run. Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,—or rather an honest woman's son; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste;—well, my conscience says, Launcelot, budge not. Budge, says the fiend. Budge not, says my conscience. Conscience, say I, you counsel well; fiend, say I, you counsel well: to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who—God bless the mark!—is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the Devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very Devil incarnation; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your commandment; I will run.

Enter Old Gobbo, with a basket.

Gob. Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. [Aside.] O Heavens, this is my true-begotten father!

2 "Via!" from the Italian, was much used as a sort of exclamatory imperative, meaning away! or go ahead!

3 For the Heavens was merely a petty oath. To make the fiend conjure Launcelot to do a thing for Heaven's sake, is a specimen of that "acute nonsense" which Barrow makes one of the species of wit.

4 Saving your reverence is a sort of apologetic phrase for saying something coarse or profane; somewhat like our "If you will allow me to say so." "God save the mark" and "God bless the mark," are phrases of similar import. How the two latter grew into such use, or acquired such a meaning, is not very clear. But it appears that certain congenital marks on the person were regarded as ominous or ill-boding. So in A Midsummer, v. i: "Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar, nor mark prodigious, shall upon their children be." And so the phrases appears to have meant, "May God avert the evil omen!" or, "May God render the token auspicious!"
who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel-blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew’s?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew’s house.

Gob. By God’s sonties, ’twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? — [Aside.] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. — Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man’s son: his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, God be thanked, well to live.

5 Sand-blind is dim-sighted or purblind. The origin of the word seems unknown: perhaps it is a corruption of semi-blind. Of course Launcelot makes it the turning-point of a quibble.

6 To try conclusions is the old phrase for to try experiments. It is not quite clear whether Launcelot’s confusions is a blunder for conclusions, or whether it is an intentional parody on the old phrase, by way of joke.

7 Marry was continually used as a colloquial intensive, having the force of verily, indeed, or forsooth; like the Latin heracle and edepol. It grew from a custom of swearing by the Virgin Mary.

8 Sonties is most likely a corruption either of saints or of sanctity. Sauncetes is an old form of saints.

9 Meaning much the same, apparently, as our phrase “to raise the wind”; that is, to make an opportunity, or breed a controversy.

10 Master, which we have flattened into mister, formerly meant something as a title of respect. Shakespeare procured from the Heralds’ College a coat-of-arms for his father, and had himself no right to be called master till he inherited the rank of gentleman thus conferred. Old Gobbo shrinks from giving his son the title, though he keeps calling him master, not knowing who he is.

11 Well to live is an old phrase meaning the same as our well off. The old man is humorously made to contradict himself.
**Laun.** Well, let his father be what ‘a will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

**Gob.** Your Worship’s friend, and Launcelot, sir.

**Laun.** But, I pray you, *ergo*, old man, *ergo*, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot?

**Gob.** Of Launcelot, an’t please your mastership.

**Laun.** *Ergo*, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman — according to Fates and Destinies, and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three, and such branches of learning — is, indeed, deceased; or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to Heaven.

**Gob.** Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

**Laun.** [Aside.] Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? — Do you not know me, father?

**Gob.** Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy — God rest his soul! — alive or dead?

**Laun.** Do you not know me, father? 12

**Gob.** Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

**Laun.** Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: give me your blessing. [Kneels, with his back to him.] Truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long, — a man's son may; but, in the end, truth will out.

**Gob.** Pray you, sir, stand up: I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

**Laun.** Pray you, let’s have no more fooling about it, but

---

12 It was customary for young people to address any old man or woman as father or mother. Hence old Gobbo does not recognize his son on being called father by him. Shakespeare has other instances of the usage. So, in *King Lear*, Edgar, while leading the eyeless Gloster, addresses him repeatedly as *father*, without stirring any recognition, or even suspicion, of the relationship between them.
give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.\textsuperscript{13}

\textit{Gob.} I cannot think you are my son.

\textit{Laun.} I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew’s man; and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

\textit{Gob.} Her name is Margery, indeed: I’ll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. \textit{[Taking hold of his back hair.]} Lord worshipp’d might He be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse\textsuperscript{14} has on his tail.

\textit{Laun.} \textit{[Rising.]} It should seem, then, that Dobbin’s tail grows backward: I am sure he had more hair of\textsuperscript{15} his tail than I have of my face, when I last saw him.

\textit{Gob.} Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How ’gree you now?

\textit{Laun.} Well, well; but, for mine own part, as I have set up my rest\textsuperscript{16} to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master’s a very Jew: give him a present! give him a halter: I am famish’d in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries: if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground.\textsuperscript{17}—O, rare fortune!

\textsuperscript{13} Launcelot is overflowing with quirks, and here purposely inverts the order of his words. He probably means “your child that was, your boy that is, your son that shall be.”

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Fill-horse} is \textit{shaft-horse}, or horse that goes in the \textit{shafts}; \textit{fill} being a common form of \textit{thill}.

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Of} and \textit{on} were often used indiscriminately.

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{To set up one’s rest} was a phrase in frequent use for to make up one’s mind. Said to be taken from the old game of primero, where it meant a determination to stand upon the cards one had in his hand.

\textsuperscript{17} In Venice proper it was not easy to find ground enough to run away upon. Not much surface there but water.
here comes the man: — to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter Bassanio, with Leonardo and other Followers.

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted, that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making; and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. [Exit a Servant.

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your Worship!

Bass. Gramercy! 18 wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir,—as my father shall specify,—

Gob. He hath a great infection, 19 sir, as one would say, to serve,—

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire,—as my father shall specify,—

Gob. His master and he — saying your Worship's reverence—are scarce cater-cousins, 20 —

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is, that the Jew having done me wrong doth cause me,—as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify 21 unto you,—

Gob. I have here a dish of doves 22 that I would bestow upon your Worship; and my suit is,—

18 Much thanks! from the French grand merci.

19 Infection is an honest blunder, probably for inclination.

20 Old Gobbo seems to mean that his son and Shylock are not very near kindred, or do not love each other much. Cater is, most likely, from the French quatre.

21 Frutify is a Gobboism for fructify, which appears to have been a sort of cant term for holding forth; in speech, that is.

22 Upon this passage, Mr. C. A. Brown furnishes the following: "A present thus given, and in our days too, and of doves, is not uncommon in Italy. I myself have partaken there, with due relish, in memory of poor old Gobbo, of a dish of doves, presented by the father of a servant."
Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your Worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet, poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both. — What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.

Gob. That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

Bass. I know thee well; thou hast obtain'd thy suit: Shylock thy master spoke with me this day, And hath preferr'd thee, if it be preferment To leave a rich Jew's service, to become The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.

Bass. Thou speak'st it well. — Go, father, with thy son.— Take leave of thy old master, and inquire My lodging out. — [To his Followers.] Give him a livery More guarded than his fellows': see it done.

Laun. Father, in.— I cannot get a service, no; I have ne'er a tongue in my head.— Well, [Looking on his palm.] if any man in Italy have a fairer table! which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have good fortune! Go to;

23 Another Gobboism for pertinent or appertaining.
24 Defect for effect; another honest blunder.
25 To prefer is, in old English, to recommend, and also to promote. Bassanio plays upon the two senses of the word.
26 "He that hath the grace of God hath enough," or something such, appears to have been "the old proverb" in question. Parted is divided; and Bassanio is supposed to have the better half.
27 That is, ornamented. Guards were trimmings, facings, or other ornaments, such as gold and silver lace.
28 Launcefot, applauding himself for his success with Bassanio, and looking into the palm of his hand, which by fortune-tellers is called the table, breaks out into the reflection: "Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer table, which doth not only promise, but offer to swear upon a book, that I shall have good fortune."
here's a simple line of life! here's a small trifle of wives! alas, fifteen wives is nothing! eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man: and then to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed, — here are simple 'scapes! Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this gear. — Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[Exeunt LAUNCELOT and Old Gobbo.]

Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this:
These things being bought and orderly bestow'd,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteeem'd acquaintance: hie thee, go.

Leon. My best endeavours shall be done herein.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gra. Where is your master?

Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks. [Exit.

Gra. Signior Bassanio, —

Bass. Gratiano!

Gra. I have a suit to you.

Bass. You have obtain'd it.

Gra. Nay, you must not deny me: I must go
With you to Belmont.

29 The line in the palm passing round the root of the thumb was called the line of life; that which begins near the root of the little finger, and extends towards the root of the fore-finger, was the line of fortune.
30 Eleven, says Dyce, is "a vulgarism (and archaism) for eleven,—formerly not uncommon."
31 Launcelot was an adept in the art of chiromancy, which in his time had its learned professors and practitioners no less than astrology. In 1558 was put forth a book by John Indagine, entitled "Brief introductions, both natural, pleasant, and also delectable, unto the Art of Chiromancy, or manual divination, and Physiognomy: with circumstances upon the faces of the Signs." "A simple line of life" written in the palm was cause of exultation to wiser ones than young Gobbo. "The edge of a feather-bed" is probably an absurd variation of the phrase "the edge of the sword."
Bass. Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano:
Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice,—
Parts that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
T' alay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit; lest, through thy wild behaviour,
I be misconstrued in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.

Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely;
Nay, more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh, and say amen;
Use all th' observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent
To please his grandam,—never trust me more.

Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing.

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night: you shall not gauge me
By what we do to-night.

Bass. No, that were pity:
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment. But fare you well:
I have some business.

Gra. And I must to Lorenzo and the rest:
But we will visit you at supper-time.  

[Exeunt.

---

32 Liberal for wanton, reckless, or free beyond the bounds of decorum.
33 People used to keep their hats on while eating dinner. While grace
was saying, they were expected to take the hat off and hold it over the eyes.
34 That is, grave appearance; show of staid and serious behaviour. Ost-
tent is very commonly used for show among old dramatic writers.
35 Gauge is measure or estimate,—Bar is except.
Scene III. — The Same. A Room in Shylock's House.

Enter Jessica and Launcelot.

Jes. I'm sorry thou wilt leave my father so: Our house is Hell; and thou, a merry devil, Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness. But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee: And, Launcelot, soon at 1 supper shalt thou see Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest: Give him this letter; do it secretly; And so farewell: I would not have my father See me in talk with thee.

Laun. Adieu; tears exhibit 2 my tongue. Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! if a Christian did not play the knave and get thee, I am much deceived. But, adieu: these foolish drops do somewhat drown my manly spirit: adieu.

Jes. Farewell, good Launcelot. — [Exit Launcelot. Alack, what heinous sin is it in me To be ashamed to be my father's child! But, though I am a daughter to his blood, I am not to his manners. — O Lorenzo, If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife, — Become a Christian, and thy loving wife! [Exit.

Scene IV. — The Same. A Street.

Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salarino, and Solanio.

Lor. Nay, we will slink away in supper-time, Disguise us at my lodging, and return All in an hour.

1 Soon at is an old phrase for about. So in The Comedy of Errors, i. 2: "Soon at five o'clock I'll meet with you upon the mart." Also in iii. 1: "And soon at supper-time I'll visit you."

2 Exhibit is a Gobboism for inhibit; that is, prevent or restrain.
Gra. We have not made good preparation.
Salar. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.³
Solan. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly ⁴ order'd,
And better in my mind not undertook.
Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock: we have two hours
To furnish us. —

Enter Launcelot, with a letter.

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

Laun. An it shall please you to break up this,⁵ it shall
seem to signify.

Lor. I know the hand: in faith, 'tis a fair hand;
And whiter than the paper that it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.

Gra. Love-news, in faith.

Laun. By your leave, sir.

Lor. Whither goest thou?

Laun. Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup
to-night with my new master the Christian.

Lor. Hold here, take this: [Gives money.] tell gentle
Jessica
I will not fail her; speak it privately;
Go. [Exit Launcelot.] — Gentlemen,
Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?
I am provided of ⁶ a torch-bearer.

Salar. Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight.

Solan. And so will I.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano

³ Old language, meaning the same as bespoken torch-bearers for us.
⁴ Quaintly, derived from the Latin comptus, was often used in the sense
of graceful, elegant, or ingenious.
⁵ Break up is old language for break open.
⁶ The prepositions of, with, and by, were often used indifferently. So in
Bacon's Advancement of Learning: "He is invested of a precedent disposi-
tion." See page 124, note 12.
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

Salar. 'Tis good we do so. [Execunt Salar. and Solan.

Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

Lor. I must needs tell thee all: She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house;
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with;
What page's suit she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to Heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake;
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,—
That she is issue to a faithless jew.
Come, go with me: peruse this as thou goest.
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer.

[Execunt.

Scene V. — The Same. Before Shylock's House.

Enter Shylock and Launcelot.

Shy. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio:—
What, Jessica! — thou shalt not gormandize,
As thou hast done with me, — what, Jessica! —
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out. —
Why, Jessica, I say!

Laun. Why, Jessica!


Laun. Your Worship was wont to tell me I could do no-
thing without bidding.

Enter Jessica.

Jes. Call you? what is your will?

Shy. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica:

7 Faithless in the sense of unbelieving, or without faith.
There are my keys. — But wherefore should I fly?
I am not bid for love; they flatter me:
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian.¹ — Jessica, my girl,
Look to my house. — I am right loth to go:
There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.²

_Laun._ I beseech you, sir, go: my young master doth expect your reproach.

_Shy._ So do I his.³

_Laun._ And they have conspired together,— I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black-Monday⁴ last at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year in the afternoon.

_Shy._ What, are there masques? — Hear you me, Jessica: Lock up my doors; and, when you hear the drum,
And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife,⁵

¹ In i. 3, Shylock says, “I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you.” Did the Poet commit an oversight, or did he mean to put the Jew at odds with himself out of hatred to the Christian?
² To-night here means what we call last night, or the past night.
³ Reproach is a Gobboism for approach. Shylock chooses to take him in the sense of reproach. And he expects Bassanio's reproach through the bankruptcy of Antonio. This may have some bearing on the question whether Shylock has any hand in getting up the reports of Antonio's "losses at sea."
⁴ Easter-Monday. The origin of the name is thus explained by Stowe: "In the 34th of Edward III., the 14th of April, and the morrow after Easter-day, King Edward, with his host, lay before the city of Paris; which day was full dark of mist and hail, and so bitter cold, that many men died on their horses' backs with the cold. Wherfore unto this day it hath been called Black-Monday." — Bleeding at the nose was anciently considered ominous. — The closing part of the speech means nonsense merely.
⁵ There has been some dispute whether wry-neck'd fife mean the instrument or the musician. Boswell cited a passage from Barnabe Rich's Aphorisms, 1618, which appears to settle the matter: "A fife is a wry-neckt musician, for he always looks away from his instrument."
Clamber not you up to the casements then, 
Nor thrust your head into the public street, 
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish’d faces;  
But stop my house’s ears, — I mean my casements: 
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter 
My sober house. — By Jacob’s staff, I swear 
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night: 
But I will go. — Go you before me, sirrah; 
Say I will come.

_Laun._ I’ll go before you, sir. —
Mistress, look out at window for all this; 
There will come a Christian by 
Will be worth a Jewess’ eye. [Exit.

_Shy._ What says that fool of Hagar’s offspring, ha?

_Jes._ His words were, Farewell, mistress; nothing else.

_Shy._ The patch is kind enough; but a huge feeder, 
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day 
More than the wild-cat: drones hive not with me; 
Therefore I part with him; and part with him 
To one that I would have him help to waste 
His borrow’d purse. — Well, Jessica, go in: 
Perhaps I will return immediately: 
Do as I bid you; shut doors after you: 
Fast bind, fast find,— 
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [Exit.

6 Alluding perhaps to the painted masks; but meaning, withal, an insinuation of duplicity, or doublefacedness.

7 Hebrews, xi. 21: "By faith, Jacob, when he was a-dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff."

8 The worth of a Jew’s eye was the price with which the Jews used to buy themselves off from mutilation. The expression became proverbial, and was kept up long after its original meaning was lost.

9 This use of patch sprang from the motley or patched dress worn by professional Fools. Hence a general term of contempt. So in _A Midsummer-Night’s Dream_, iii. 2: "A crew of patches, rude mechanicals, that work for bread upon Athenian stalls."
Jes. Farewell; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [Exit.

Enter Gratiano and Salario, masked.

Gra. This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.

Salar. His hour is almost past.

Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

Salar. O, ten times faster Venus’ pigeons fly
To seal love’s bonds new-made than they are wont,
To keep obligèd faith unforfeited!

Gra. That ever holds. Who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with th’ unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chasèd than enjoy’d.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg’d and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like a prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather’d ribs, and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar’d by the strumpet wind!

Salar. Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode; Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:

10 Classic fable imagined Venus and her son Cupid to ride through the air in a chariot drawn by doves. So in The Tempest, iv. i: “I met her deity cutting the clouds towards Paphos, and her son dove-drawn with her.”
11 “Obligèd faith” is plighted faith, or faith made obligatory by solemn vows, as in marriage.
12 Younker meant a younger, or a young gallant.
13 “Long abode” is long tarrying, or long delay.
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I'll watch as long for you then. Come, approach;
Here dwells my father Jew.—Ho! who's within?

Enter Jessica, above, in Boy's clothes.

Jes. Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.

Jes. Lorenzo, certain; and my love, indeed;
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

Lor. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

Jes. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I'm glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange: 14
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For, if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

Lor. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.

Jes. What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too-too light. 15
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love;
And I should be obscured.

Lor. So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy. 16
But come at once;
For the close 17 night doth play the runaway,
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.

14 Her change of dress; referring to her masculine attire.
15 A pun implied of light in a material and a moral sense.
16 Another pun. Jessica means that she ought to be hidden; Lorenzo
that her brightness is disguised.
17 Close is secret, properly; here, what conceals or keeps dark.
Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.

[Exit above.

Gra. Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew.

Lor. Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her;
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;
And true she is, as she hath proved herself;
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul.—

Enter JESSICA, below.

What, art thou come?—On, gentlemen; away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

[ Exit with JESSICA and SALARINO.

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Who's there?

Gra. Signior Antonio!

Ant. Fie, fie, Gratiano! where are all the rest?
Tis nine o'clock; our friends all stay for you.
No masque to-night: the wind is come about;
Bassanio presently will go aboard:
I have sent twenty out to seek for you.

Gra. I'm glad on't: I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night.

[Exeunt.

18 Gratiano is disguised with a mask, and in swearing by his hood he
implies a likening of himself to a hooded monk swearing by his monastic
character.—There is also a play on the word gentile, which signifies both a
heathen and one well-born.

19 Here but has the force of if not;—"Beshrew me if I do not love her."
So in Othello, iii. 2: "Perdition catch my soul but I do love thee!" The
exceptive but, as it is called; from be out.—Beshrew me is an old adjura-
tion, equivalent to confound me, or plague take me.
Scene VI. — Belmont. A Room in Portia's House.

Flourish of cornets. Enter Portia, with the Prince of Morocco, and their Trains.

Por. Go draw aside the curtains, and discover
The several caskets to this noble Prince. —
Now make your choice.

Mor. The first, of gold, which this inscription bears, —
Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire;
The second, silver, which this promise carries, —
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt, —
Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath. —
How shall I know if I do choose the right?

Por. The one of them contains my picture, Prince:
If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

Mor. Some god direct my judgment! Let me see;
I will survey th' inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket?
Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.
Must give, — for what? for lead? hazard for lead?
This casket threatens: men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages:
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross;
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver, with her virgin hue?¹
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.
As much as he deserves! — Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh thy value with an even hand:
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,

¹ Alluding to the silver light of the Moon, or rather to the virgin Diana, who was the Moon-goddess of old mythology.
Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady:
And yet to be afeard of my deserving,
Were but a weak disabling of myself.
As much as I deserve! Why, that's the lady:
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,
In graces, and in qualities of breeding;
But, more than these, in love I do deserve.
What if I stray'd no further, but chose here?
Let's see once more this saying graved in gold:
*Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.*
Why, that's the lady; all the world desires her:
From the four corners of the Earth they come,
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint:
Th' Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now
For princes to come view fair Portia:
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar
To stop the foreign spirits; but they come,
As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.
One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation
To think so base a thought: it were too gross
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.

2 _Disabling_ here has the sense of _disparaging_ or _depreciating._
3 Christians often made long pilgrimages to kiss the shrine of a saint, that is, the place where a saint's bones were enshrined. And Portia, because she enshrines so much excellence, though still but "a traveller between life and death," is compared to such a hallowed shrine. _Shrine_, however, was sometimes used for _statue_, and so it may be here.
4 A wilderness of indefinite extent south of the Caspian Sea.—*Vasty is waste, desolate, or void.* So Bacon has the noun in his _Advancement of Learning_ : "Their excursions into the limits of physical causes have bred a vastness and solitude in that tract."
5 That is, lead were unworthy even to enclose her cerements, or her
Or shall I think in silver she's immured,
Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?  
O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England
A coin that bears the figure of an angel
Stamp'd in gold, but that's insculp'd upon;  
But here an angel in a golden bed
Lies all within. — Deliver me the key:
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

Por. There, take it, Prince; and if my form lie there,
Then I am yours. [He opens the golden casket.

Mor. O Hell! what have we here?
A carrion Death, within whose empty eye
There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing.

[Reads.] All that glisters is not gold,—
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms infold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgment old,
Your answer had not been insculp'd:
Fare you well; your suit is cold.

shroud. The Poet elsewhere has rib in the sense of enclose or protect: in Cymbeline, iii. 1, he speaks of England as "Neptune's park, ribbed and paled in with rocks unscaleable and roaring waters."

6 This is said to have been just the ratio of silver and gold in 1600. Now it is less than as one to sixteen. — Undervalued is inferior in value. See page 121, note 39.

7 Insculp'd upon is carved or engraved on the outside.—The angel was so called from its having on one side a figure of Michael piercing the dragon. It is said to have been worth about ten shillings. Shakespeare has many punning allusions to it; as in The Merry Wives, i. 3: "She has all the rule of her husband's purse; he hath legions of angels." 

8 A human skull from which the flesh has all decayed.

9 His courtship, which had been made warm by hope, is now chilled and frozen by an entire and hopeless failure.
Cold indeed, and labour lost;  
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost! —  
Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart  
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part.  

[Exit with his Train. Cornets.  
Por. A gentle riddance. — Draw the curtains, go:  
Let all of his complexion choose me so.  

[Exeunt.

SCENE VII. — Venice. A Street.  

Enter Salarino and Solanio.

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail:  
With him is Grattiano gone along;  
And in their ship I'm sure Lorenzo is not.  

Solan. The villain Jew with outcries raised the Duke;  
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship;  

Salar. He came too late, the ship was under sail;  
But there the Duke was given to understand  
That in a gondola  
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica:  
Besides, Antonio certified the Duke  
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.  

Solan. I never heard a passion  
So strange-outrageous, and so variable,  
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:  
My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!  
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats! —

10 Part for depart. So the word was frequently used.  
1 Gondola is the name of the vehicles in which people ride through the  
liquid streets of Venice. In Shakespeare's time Venice was the common  
resort of all who went abroad to see the world; as much so, perhaps, as  
Paris is now: so that to “have swam in a gondola” was a common phrase  
for having travelled.  
2 Passion for passionate outcry; the cause for the effect.
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stol'n from me by my daughter!
And jewels,—two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stol'n by my daughter!—Justice! find the girl!
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats!

Salar. Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
Crying,—his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.

Solan. Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.

Salar. Marry, well remember'd.
I reason'd 3 with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
The French and English, there miscarried
A vessel of our country richly fraught; 4
I thought upon Antonio when he told me;
And wish'd in silence that it were not his

Solan. You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;
Yet do't not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

Salar. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part:
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return: he answer'd, Do not so;
Slubber 5 not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time;
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love. 6

3 Reason, again, in its old sense of converse. See page 122, note 5.
4 For freighted. The Poet has it repeatedly so; and many other such shortened preterites.
5 To stubber is to do a thing carelessly. So in Fuller's Worthies of Yorkshire: "Slightly stubbering it over, doing something for show, and nothing to purpose."
6 Mind of love probably means loving mind, or mind full of love. The Poet elsewhere has mind of honour for honourable mind.
Be merry; and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there.
And even then, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And with affection wondrous sensible.
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.

Solan. I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee, let us go and find him out,
And quicken his embraced heaviness.
With some delight or other.

Salar. Do we so. [Exeunt.

SCENE VIII. — Belmont. A Room in Portia's House.

Enter Nerissa with a Servant.

Ner. Quick, quick, I pray thee; draw the curtain straight:
The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,
And comes to his election presently.

Flourish of Cornets. Enter the Prince of Arragon, Portia, and their Trains.

Por. Behold, there stand the caskets, noble Prince:
If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized:
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.

Arra. I am enjoin'd by oath t' observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail

7 Conveniently is properly or fittingly. — Ostents for shows or manifestations. See page 145, note 34.
8 Sensible for sensitive or tender. The Poet has it repeatedly so.
9 That is, enliven the sadness which he clings to or cherishes.
Of the right casket, never in my life  
To woo a maid in way of marriage; lastly,  
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,  
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

Por. To these injunctions every one doth swear  
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

Arra. And so have I address’d 1 me. Fortune now  
To my heart’s hope! — Gold, silver, and base lead.  
Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.  
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.  
What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:  
Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.  
What many men desire! That many may be meant  
By 2 the fool multitude, that choose by show,  
Not learning more than the fond 3 eye doth teach;  
Which pries not to th’ interior, but, like the martlet,  
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,  
Even in the force and road of casualty. 4  
I will not choose what many men desire,  
Because I will not jump 5 with common spirits,  
And rank me with the barbarous multitude.  
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;  
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:  
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.  
And well said too; for who shall go about  
To cozen fortune, and be honourable  
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume

1 *Address’d* is prepared or made ready; a common usage of the time. So in *The Winter’s Tale*, iv. 4: “Address yourself to entertain them sprightly.”

2 *By*, again, where we should use *of*. See page 124, note 12.

3 *Fond* here, as commonly in Shakespeare, *fond* is foolish.

4 *Where* it is exposed to every accident or mischance.

5 *Jump* for agree. So in *The Taming of the Shrew*, i. 1: “Both our inventions meet and jump in one.” And in *1 Henry the Fourth*, i. 2: “Well, Hal, well; and in some sort it jumps with my humour.”
To wear an undeserved dignity.
O, that estates, degrees, and offices,
Were not derived corruptly! and that clear honour
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover that stand bare! 6
How many be commanded that command!
How much low peasantry would then be glean’d
From the true seed of honour! and how much honour
Pick’d from the chaff and ruin 7 of the times,
To be new-varnish’d! Well, but to my choice:
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.
I will assume desert. — Give me a key,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[He opens the silver casket.

Por. Too long a pause for that which you find there.

Arra. What’s here? the portrait of a blinking idiot,
Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.
How much unlike art thou to Portia!
How much unlike my hopes and my deserving!
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.
Did I deserve no more than a fool’s head?
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

Por. T’ offend, and judge, are distinct offices,
And of opposed natures. 8

Arra. What is here?

[Reads.] The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgment is
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;

6 "How many then would keep their hats on, who now stand bareheaded
as before their masters or superiors." Another instance of the indiscriminate
use of should and would.
7 Ruin here means refuse or rubbish.
8 Portia is something of a lawyer, and she here has in mind the old legal
axiom, that no man is a good judge in his own case.
Such have but a shadow's bliss.
There be fools alive, I wis,9
Silver'd o'er; and so was this.10
Take what wife you will to bed,11
I will ever be your head:12
So be gone, sir; you are sped.13
Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here:
With one fool's head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.—
Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth.14

[Exit with his Train.

Por. Thus hath the candle singed the moth.
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

Ner. The ancient saying is no heresy,—
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

Por. Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

Enter a Servant.

9 To wis is to think, to suppose. Nares derives it from the Saxon wissan. The preterite occurs in St. Luke, ii. 49: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"
10 The idiot's portrait was enclosed in the silver casket, and in that sense was silver'd o'er.
11 An apparent oversight of the Poet's: the Prince was sworn "never to woo a maid in way of marriage." Perhaps, though, he might woo and marry a widow.
12 "You will always have a fool's head, whether married or not."
13 That is, "your case is decided, or done for." So, in Romeo and Juliet, iii. i, Mercutio, when he has received his death-wound from Tybalt, exclaims, "A plague o' both your Houses! I am sped."
14 Wroth is used in some of the old writers for suffering. So in Chapman's 22d Iliad: "Born all to wrath of woe and labour." The original meaning of wrath is pain, grief, anger, any thing that makes one writhe; and the text exemplifies a common form of speech, putting the effect for the cause.
Serv. Where is my lady?

Por. Here: what would my lord?  

Serv. Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify th' approaching of his lord,
From whom he bringeth sensible regrets;  
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen
So likely an ambassador of love;
A day in April never came so sweet,
To show how costly Summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.

Por. No more, I pray thee: I am half afeard
Thou'lt say anon he is some kin to thee,
Thou spend'st such high-day, wit in praising him.—
Come, come, Nerissa; for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

Ner. Bassanio, Lord Love, if thy will it be!  [Exeunt.

---

15 A sportive reply to the Servant's "Where is my lady?" So, in 1 Henry IV., ii. 4, the Hostess says to Prince Henry, "O Jesu! my lord, the Prince!" and he replies, "How now, my lady, the hostess!"

16 Sensible regrets are feeling salutations; or salutations that may be felt, such as valuable presents. See page 159, note 8.

17 High-day is holiday; a time for finely-phrased speaking. So our Fourth of July is a high day; and we all know what Fourth-of-July eloquence is.
ACT III.

SCENE I. — Venice. A Street.

Enter Solanio and Salarino.

Solan. Now, what news on the Rialto?

Salar. Why, yet it lives there uncheck'd, that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wreck'd on the narrow seas; the Goodwins,¹ I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of² her word.

Solan. I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapp'd ³ ginger, or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband.⁴ But it is true, without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio, — O, that I had a title good enough to keep his name company! —

Salar. Come, the full stop,⁵

Solan. Ha, — what sayest thou? — Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salar. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

¹ The Goodwin Sands, as they were called, lay off the eastern coast of Kent. The name was supposed to have been derived from Earl Godwin, whose lands were said to have been swallowed up there in the year 1100. In King John, v. 5, it is said that the supplies expected by the French "are cast away and sunk on Goodwin Sands."

² Here, as often, of is equivalent to in respect of.

³ To knap is to snap, or to break into small pieces. So in 46th Psalm of The Psalter: "He knappeth the spear in sunder."

⁴ The presumption being that by that time she has got so used to the thing as not to mind it much.

⁵ That is, finish the sentence; or "say on till you come to a period."
Solan. Let me say amen betimes, lest the Devil cross my prayer; for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.—

Enter Shylock.

How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

Shy. You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

Salar. That's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal. 6

Solan. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion 7 of them all to leave the dam.

Shy. She is damn'd for it.

Salar. That's certain, if the Devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Solan. Out upon it, old carrion! rebels it at these years?

Shy. I say my daughter is my flesh and blood.

Salar. There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish. 8 But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug 9 upon the mart. Let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer;—

6 A sly allusion, probably, to the dress in which Jessica eloped.
7 Complexion was much used for nature, natural disposition, or temperament. So, in the old tale upon which Hamlet was partly founded, the hero is spoken of as being a "Saturnist by complexion."
8 Rhenish wines are called white wines; named from the river Rhine.
9 Smug is brisk, gay, or spruce; applied both to persons and things. Thus in King Lear, iv. 6: "I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom: what, I will be jovial." And in 1 Henry IV., iii. 1: "Here the smug and silver Trent shall run in a new channel, fair and evenly."
let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; — let him look to his bond.

Salar. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what's that good for?

Shy. To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hinder'd me half a million;¹⁰ laugh'd at my losses, mock'd at my gains, scorn'd my nation, thwart'd my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same Winter and Summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? if we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? revenge: if a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.¹¹

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house, and desires to speak with you both.

Salar. We have been up and down to seek him.

Solan. Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be match'd, unless the Devil himself turn Jew.

[Exeunt Solanio, Salarino, and Servant.

Enter Tubal.

¹⁰ "Hinder'd me to the extent of half a million;" ducats, of course.
¹¹ "I will work mighty hard rather than fail to surpass my teachers."
See vol. ii., page 225, note 11.
Shy. How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now: — two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. — I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewells in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? — Why, so: — and I know not what's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights o' my shoulders; no sighs but o' my breathing; no tears but o' my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too: Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

Shy. What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

Tub. — hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy. I thank God, I thank God! — Is it true, is it true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! — where? in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, one night fourscore ducats.

Shy. Thou stick'st a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy. I am very glad of it: I'll plague him; I'll torture him: I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.
Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.

[Exeunt]

Scene II. — Belmont. A Room in Portia's House.

Enter Bassanio, Portia, Gratiano, Nerissa, and Attendants.

Por. I pray you, tarry; pause a day or two Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong, I lose your company: therefore forbear awhile. There's something tells me — but it is not love — I would not lose you; and you know yourself, Hate counsels not in such a quality. But, lest you should not understand me well, — And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought, — I would detain you here some month or two Before you venture for me. I could teach you How to choose right, but then I am forsworn; So will I never be: so may you miss me; But, if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,

12 The turquoise was held precious not only for its rarity and beauty, but for the magical properties ascribed to it. Among other virtues, it was supposed to have the power of reconciling man and wife, and of forewarning the wearer, if any danger approached him. It was also thought to be a very compassionate stone; changing its colour, and looking pale and dim, if the wearer were ill.

13 To fee an officer, or a lawyer, is to engage him by paying for his services in advance. Acceptance of such payment binds him.
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,
They have o'erlook'd me, and divided me;
One half of me is yours, th' other half yours,—
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours! O, these naughty times
Put bars between the owners and their rights!
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so,
Let fortune go to Hell for it, not I.
I speak too long; but 'tis to peise the time,
To eke it, and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.
Bass. Let me choose;
For, as I am, I live upon the rack.
Por. Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.
Bass. None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear th' enjoying of my love:
There may as well be amity and league
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.
Por. Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
Where men enforced do speak any thing.
Bass. Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.

1 O'erlook'd is eye-bitten; that is, bewitched or fascinated.
2 That is, if it prove so, or should it prove so. — The meaning is, "if the event should prove that I, who am really yours in heart, am not to be yours in fact, or in hand, let the punishment fall upon fortune for misdirecting your choice, and not upon me."
3 To peise is from peser, French; to weigh or poise. So in Richard III.: "Lest leaden slumber peise me down to-morrow." In the text it is used figuratively for to suspend, to retard; as loading a thing in motion naturally makes it go slower.
4 The Poet often has doubt for fear or suspect; here he has fear in the sense of doubt. "Fear the not of enjoying my love."
5 It is pleasant to find Shakespeare before his age in denouncing the futility of this barbarous method of extorting truth. He was old enough to remember the case of Francis Throckmorton in 1584; and that of Squires in 1598 was fresh in his mind. — Clarendon Editors.
Por. Well then, confess, and live.

Bass. Confess, and love,

Had been the very sum of my confession:
O happy torment, when my torturer
Doth teach me answers for deliverance!⁶
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

[Curtain drawn from before the caskets.

Por. Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them:
If you do love me, you will find me out.—
Nerissa, and the rest, stand all aloof.—
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream
And watery death-bed for him.⁷ He may win;
And what is music then? then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crownèd monarch:⁸ such it is
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear,
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
With no less presence,⁹ but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy

⁶ Doubtless many a poor man whose office it was to work the rack, and whose heart had not been burnt to a cinder by theological rancour, had pity on the victim, and whispered in his ear "answers for deliverance"; prompting him to speak what might suffice for stopping the torture.

⁷ Of course the allusion is to the habit, which the swan was imagined to have, of singing herself through the process of dying, or of going out, fading, in music. The closing part of the allusion supposes the bird to sing her life away while floating passively on the water.

⁸ At English coronations, the act of putting on the crown was signalled by a joyous flourish of trumpets; whereupon the whole assembly were to bow their homage to the sovereign.

⁹ Presence for nobility of bearing or deportment.
SCENE II. THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

To the sea-monster: 10 I stand for sacrifice;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With blearèd visages, come forth to view
The issue of th' exploit. Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live: with much, much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.

Music, and the following Song, whilst BASSANIO comments on
the Caskets to himself.

Tell me where is fancy bred,11
Or in the heart or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?

Reply. It is engender'd in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.

Let us all ring fancy's knell:
I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.

All. Ding, dong, bell.

Bass. So may the outward shows be least themselves:
The world is still 12 deceived with ornament.

10 The story, as told by Ovid, is, that Hesione, daughter of the Trojan
King, being demanded by the Sea-monster, and being bound to a rock,
Hercules slew the monster, and delivered her. Bassanio "goes with much
more love," because Hercules went, not from love of the lady, but to gain
the reward offered by Laomedon.

11 This song is very artfully conceived, and carries something enigmatical
or riddle-like in its face, as if on purpose to suggest or hint darkly the
way to the right choice. The clew, however, is such as to be seized only by
a man whose heart is thoroughly right in the matter he goes about. Fancy,
as here used, means, apparently, that illusive power or action of the mind
which has misled the other suitors, who, as Portia says, "have the wisdom
by their wit to lose." And the illusion thus engendered in the eyes, and fed
with gazing, dies just there where it is bred, as soon as it is brought to the
test of experience by opening the wrong casket. The riddle evidently has
some effect in starting Bassanio on the right track, by causing him to dis-
trust such shows as catch the fancy or the eye,—the glitter of the gold and
silver caskets.

12 Still, again, in its old sense of always or continually.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damnèd error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple, but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts:
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stayers of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars;
Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk! And these assume but valour's excrement
To render them redoubtèd. Look on beauty,
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight,
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it:
So are those crispèd snaky golden locks,
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,

13 Approve it is, simply, prove it, or make it good. This use of the word is very frequent in Shakespeare.
14 Stayers in the sense of props, supports, or stays. The word is to be pronounced, here, as one syllable; as cowards also is.
15 Cowards were commonly spoken of as having white livers. Shakespeare has lily-livered and milk-livered in the same sense; and Falstaff instructs us that "the second property of your excellent sherris is the warming of the blood; which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale, which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice."
16 Excrement, from excresco, is used for every thing which appears to grow or vegetate upon the human body, as the hair, the beard, the nails.
17 The meaning, here, is not very obvious; but the words are probably to be construed in the light of what follows. It would seem that false hair, "the golden tresses of the dead," was purchased at so much an ounce; and the more one had of it, the vainer one was.
18 Another quibble upon light. See page 152, note 15. Here, however, it is between light as opposed to heavy, and light in the sense of vanity.
 Upon supposed fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.
Thus ornament is but the guile shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian feature; in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
T' entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas; I will none of thee;
Nor none of thee, thou stale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I: joy be the consequence!

Por. How all the other passions fleet to air,—
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,

19 That is, imagined or imputed fairness. — The Poet has often expressed
a strong dislike of the custom, then in vogue, of wearing false hair. His
68th Sonnet has a passage very like that in the text:

Thus in his cheek the map of days outworn,
When beauty lived and died as flowers do now;
Before the golden tresses of the dead,
The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,
To live a second life on second head;
Ere beauty's dead fleece made another gay.

20 "The skull being in the sepulchre." Ablative absolute.
21 Guile, if it be the right word, must here mean seductive, beguiling, or
full of guile; the passive form with the active sense. See Critical Notes.
22 Feature is used repeatedly by Shakespeare for form, person, or personal
appearance in general. So in The Two Gentlemen, ii. 4: "He is complete
in feature as in mind." Also in King Lear, iv. 2: "Thou chang'st and sex-
cover'd thing, for shame, bemonster not thy feature!" And in Cymbeline,
v. 5: "For feature, laming the shrine of Venus, or straight-pight Minerva,
postures beyond brief nature;" where shrine is statue or image.
23 Midas was a mythological personage who asked of God Bacchus that
whatever he touched might be turned into gold. The request being granted,
and all his food turning to gold in the eating, he implored Bacchus to re-
voke the favour.
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy!
O love, be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;
In measure rain thy joy; scant this excess!
I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,
For fear I surfeit!

Bass. [Opening the leaden casket.] What find I here?
Fair Portia's counterfeit! 24 What demi-god
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,
Parted with sugar-breath: so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs
The painter plays the spider; and hath woven
A golden mesh t' entrap the hearts of men,
Faster than gnats in cobwebs. But her eyes!
How could he see to do them? having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his,
And leave itself unfurnish'd. 25 Yet look, how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow
In underprising it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance. Here's the scroll,
The continent 26 and summary of my fortune:

[Reads.] You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair, and choose as true!

---

24 Counterfeit was used for likeness or portrait. So in The Wit of a Woman, 1634: "I will see if I can agree with this stranger for the drawing of my daughter's counterfeit." And Hamlet calls the pictures he shows to his mother "the counterfeit presentment of two brothers."

25 Unfurnished with a companion. In Fletcher's Lover's Progress, Alcidon says to Clarangé, on delivering Lidian's challenge, which Clarangé accepts,

You are a noble gentleman.
Will't please you bring a friend? we are two of us,
And pity either, sir, should be unfurnish'd.

26 Continent, in old English, is simply that which contains something.
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content, and seek no more.
If you be well pleased with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss.

A gentle scroll. — Fair lady, by your leave; [Kissing her.
I come by note, to give and to receive.²⁷
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing, in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

Por. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich;
That, only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account: but the full sum of me
Is sum of — something; ²⁸ which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised:
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; then happier in this,

²⁷ "I come in accordance with the written direction to give a kiss and to receive the lady."
²⁸ The dash before something is to indicate that the fair speaker hesitates for a term with which to describe herself modestly, yet without any affectation of modesty.
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all, in that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted: but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants, and this same myself,
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

_Bass._ Madam, you have bereft me of all words;
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins:
And there is such confusion in my powers,
As, after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

_Ner._ My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by, and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry good joy: Good joy, my lord and lady!

_Gra._ My Lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
For I am sure you can wish none from me:  

---

29 The _lord_ of a thing is, properly, the _owner_ of it; hence the word is applicable to a woman as well as to a man.

30 "You have so much joy yourselves in each other, that you cannot grudge any to me."
And, when your Honours mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.

Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid; 31
You loved, I loved; for intermission 32
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the caskets there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;
For, wooing here, until I swet again,
And swearing, till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last,—if promise last,—
I got a promise of this fair one here,
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.

Por. Is this true, Nerissa?

Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.

Bass. Our feast shall 33 be much honour'd in your marriage.

Gra. We'll play with them the first boy for a thousand ducats.

Ner. What, and stake down?

31 We are not to understand by this that Nerissa is merely a servantmaid to Portia: she holds the place of companion or friend, and Portia all along treats her as such. They are as nearly equals in rank as Bassanio and Gratiano are, who are a pair of friends, not master and servant. Nor does it conflict with this, that Gratiano speaks of Portia as "her mistress"; for he is in a position that requires him to plead his present cause with a good deal of modesty and deference, lest he should seem to have abused his privilege of accompanying Bassanio on this loving voyage.

32 Intermission is pause or delay. Gratiano means, apparently, that he had been as prompt to fall in love as Bassanio.

33 Shall for will; the two being often used indiscriminately.
Gra. No; we shall ne'er win at that sport, and stake down.
But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?
What, and my old Venetian friend Solanio?

Enter Lorenzo, Jessica, and Solanio.

Bass. Lorenzo and Solanio, welcome hither!
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome.—By your leave,
I bid my very 34 friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.

Por. So do I, my lord;
They are entirely welcome.

Lor. I thank your Honour.—For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But, meeting with Solanio by the way,
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.

Solan. I did, my lord;
And I have reason for't. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you. [Gives Bassanio a letter.

Bass. Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.

Solan. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;
Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there
Will show you his estate. [Bassanio reads the letter.

Gra. Nerissa, cheer yond stranger; bid her welcome.—
Your hand, Solanio: what's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jacobs, we have won the fleece.

Solan. I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost!

Por. There are some shrewd 35 contents in yond same paper,

34 Very, here, is real or true; like the Latin verus.
35 The proper meaning of shrewd is sharp or biting; hence painful.
That steal the colour from Bassanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!—
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must have the half of any thing
That this same paper brings you.

Bass.  

O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins,—I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state \(^{36}\) was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his mere \(^{37}\) enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady,—
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood.—But is it true, Solanio?
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

Solan.  

Not one, my lord.

---

\(^{36}\) State and estate were used interchangeably. So, a little before, we have estate for state, that is, condition: "Will show you his estate."

\(^{37}\) Here, as often, mere is absolute, entire. So in Othello, ii. 2: "Certain tidings importing the mere perdition of the Turkish fleet."
Besides, it should appear that, if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bare the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man:
He plies the Duke at morning and at night;
And doth impeach the freedom of the State,
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,
The Duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

Jes. When I was with him, I have heard him swear,
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him: and I know, my lord,
If law, authority, and power deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por. What sum owes he the Jew?

88 Should, again, where present usage requires would.
89 To ruin, to destroy, is the more common meaning of to confound, in
Shakespeare and the writers of his time.
40 Of greatest importance or consequence. See page 119, note 27.
41 Envious for malicious. So the word was constantly used. Also envy
for malice or hatred.
42 Condition'd is tempered or disposed. See page 127, note 25.—The force
of the superlative, best, is continued over unwearied, in the sense of most.
So in The Witch of Middleton, i. 2: "Call me the horrid'st and unhallow'd
thing that life and nature tremble at." See, also, page 137, note 9.
Bass. For me three thousand ducats.

Por. What, no more?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that.\footnote{43}
Before a friend of this description \footnote{44}
Shall lose a hair through my Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over:
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day:
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer: \footnote{45}
Since you are dear-bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [Reads.] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all mis-
carried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my
bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since, in paying it, it is im-
possible I should live, all debts are clear'd between you and I,
if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use

\footnote{43} The Venetian ducat, in or near the Poet's time, is said to have been
equivalent to nearly $1.53 of our money. At this rate, Portia's 36,000 ducats
would have equalled about $55,000. And money was worth some six times
as much then as it is now!—The coin took its name from the legend in-
scribed upon it: "Sit tibi, Christe, datus, quem tu regis, iste ducatus."

\footnote{44} Here, as often in this play, the ending -tion is properly dissyllabic, and
was so pronounced in the Poet's time. The same with complexion, in ii. 1;
and with occasions, in i. 1. Also with -tian in Christian, i. 3; and with -cean
in ocean, i. 1. This is particularly the case when such a word ends a verse.
Nevertheless it need not be pronounced so now, save when the rhyme re-
quires it, as is very often the case in Spenser.

\footnote{45} Cheer is look or countenance; from the French chere. So in A Mid-
summer-Night's Dream, iii. 2: "All fancy-sick she is, and pale of cheer."
your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

Por. O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!
Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away, I will make haste; but, till I come again, No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay, Nor rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. — Venice. A Street.

Enter Shylock, Salarino, Antonio, and Jailer.

Shy. Jailer, look to him: tell not me of mercy. — This is the fool that lent out money gratis. — Jailer, look to him.
Ant. Hear me yet, good Shylock.
Shy. I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond: I've sworn an oath that I will have my bond. Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause; But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs: The Duke shall grant me justice. — I do wonder, Thou naughty jailer, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.
Ant. I pray thee, hear me speak.
Shy. I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak: I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more. I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool, To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield To Christian intercessors. Follow not; I'll have no speaking: I will have my bond. [Exit.
Salar. It is the most impenetrable cur That ever kept 2 with men.
Ant. Let him alone:

1 Fond, again, in its old sense of foolish.
2 Kept, here, is dwelt or lived; a common usage of the time.
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life; his reason well I know:
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.

_Salar._ I am sure the Duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

_Ant._ The Duke cannot deny the course of law,
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice: if it be denied,
'Twill much impeach the justice of the State;
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go:
These griefs and losses have so 'bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor. —
Well, jailer, on. — Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!  

[Exeunt.

**Scene IV. — Belmont. A Room in Portia's House.**

_Enter Portia, Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica, and Balthazar._

_Lor._ Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of god-like amity; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.

3 That is, _because of the commercial intercourse._ _For_ is often thus equivalent to _because of._

4 Antonio was one of the citizens, while Shylock was reckoned among the strangers of the place. And, since the city was benefited as much by the trade and commerce of foreigners as of natives, justice evidently required that the law should give equal advantages to them both. But to stop the course of law in behalf of citizens against strangers, would be putting the latter at a disadvantage, and so would clearly impeach the justice of the State.

1 _Conceit,_ again, for _conception, idea, or judgment._ See page 117, note 21.
But, if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover ² of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

Por. I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now: for in companions
That do converse and waste the time ³ together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion ⁴
Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit;
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestow'd
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish cruelty!
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore no more of it: hear other things.
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry ⁵ and manage of my house
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,
I have toward Heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return:
There is a monastery two miles off,
And there we will abide. I do desire you

² Lover for friend, the two words being formerly synonymous.
³ Associate, or keep company, and spend the time.
⁴ Proportion sometimes has the sense of form or shape. So in Richard III.: "I that am curtail'd of this fair proportion."
⁵ The ordering. The literal meaning of husband is house-band, which is here implied. Of course manage is management.
Not to deny this imposition,\textsuperscript{6}
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

\textit{Lor.} Madam, with all my heart,
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

\textit{Por.} My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
So, fare you well, till we shall meet again.

\textit{Lor.} Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

\textit{Jes.} I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

\textit{Por.} I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.——

[\textit{Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo.}

Now, Balthazar,
As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all th' endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua: see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed\textsuperscript{7}
Unto the Tranect,\textsuperscript{8} to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone: I shall be there before thee.

\textit{Balth.} Madam, I go with all convenient speed. [\textit{Exit.}

\textsuperscript{6} Imposition is any charge, task, or duty imposed or enjoined. — Here, as also in proportion and contemplation, the ending is properly disyllabic. Also, in companions. See page 185, note 44.

\textsuperscript{7} With the celerity of imagination. So in the Chorus preceding the third Act of \textit{Henry V.:} "Thus with imagined wing our swift scene flies."

\textsuperscript{8} This word evidently implies the name of a place where the passage-boat set out, and is in some way derived from \textit{tranare}, to draw. No other instance of its use has yet occurred. The Poet had most likely heard or read of the place on the Brenta, about five miles from Venice, where a boat was drawn over a dam by a crane.
Por. Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of: we'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

Ner. Shall they see us?

Por. They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplisht
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutr'd like young men,
I'll prove the prettiest fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace;
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice; and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride; and speak of frays,
Like a fine-bragging youth; and tell quaint⁹ lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died;
I could not do withal:¹⁰ then I'll repent,
And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them.
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell;
That men shall swear I've discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I've within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,¹¹
Which I will practise.

Ner. Why, shall we turn to men?

Por. Fie, what a question's that,
If thou wert near a lewd interpreter!
But come; I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us

⁹ Quaint is ingenious, clever, or cunning. See page 147, note 4.
¹⁰ A phrase of the time, signifying I could not help it. So in Fletcher's Little French Lawyer: "I cannot do withal; I have spoke and spoke; I am betrayed and lost too." And in Chapman's May-Day, i. i: "It is my infirmity, and I cannot do withal, to die for't."
¹¹ Jack was a common term of contempt.
At the park-gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day.

[Exeunt.

SCENE V. — The Same. A Garden.

Enter Launcelot and Jessica.

Laun. Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are
to be laid upon the children: therefore, I promise you, I fear
you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my
agitation of the matter: therefore be of good cheer; for,
truly, I think you are damn’d. There is but one hope in it
that can do you any good; and that is but a kind of bastard
hope neither.

Jes. And what hope is that, I pray thee?

Laun. Marry, you may partly hope that your father got
you not,—that you are not the Jew’s daughter.

Jes. That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed: so the sins
of my mother should be visited upon me.

Laun. Truly, then, I fear you are damned both by father
and mother: thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into
Charybdis, your mother: well, you are gone both ways.

Jes. I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me
a Christian.

Laun. Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians
enough before; e’en as many as could well live, one by an-
other. This making of Christians will raise the price of
hogs: if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly
have a rasher on the coals for money.

1 Fear for you, or on your account. So in Richard III., i.x: “The king
is sickly, weak, and melancholy, and his physicians fear him mightily.”

2 Agitation is a Gobboism for cogitation.

3 This refers to a proverbial saying which has been traced back as far as
to Saint Augustine: “Ne iterum quasi fugiens Charybdim, in Scyllam in-
curris.” Halliwell quotes an old saying to the same purpose: “He got out
of the mussy and fell into the pucky.”
Jes. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say: here he comes.

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo: Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in Heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter: and he says, you are no good member of the commonwealth; for, in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork.

Lor. I shall answer that better to the commonwealth than you can the getting up of the negro's belly: the Moor is with child by you, Launcelot.

Laun. It is much that the Moor should be more than reason: but if she be less than an honest woman, she is indeed more than I took her for.

Lor. How every fool can play upon the word! I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence, and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots.—Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

Laun. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

Lor. Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done too, sir; only, cover is the word.

Lor. Will you cover, then, sir?

Laun. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee,

4 What with the quibbles between Moor and more, and between more and less, Launcelot here approves himself a pretty swift punster.

5 Launcelot is playing upon the two senses of cover, which was used both for setting the table and for putting on the hat.

6 That is, going at odds or in discord with the occasion. Launcelot's punning is irrelevant to the matter in hand; out of time.
understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows, bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun. For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern.

[Exit.

Lor. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
The Fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words; and I do know
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricksy word
Defy the matter. — How cheer'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion:
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?

Jes. Past all expressing. It is very meet
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of Heaven here on Earth;
And if on Earth he do not merit it,
In reason he should never come to Heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match,
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawn'd with the other; for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Lor. Even such a husband

1 To defy was often used for to renounce, forsake, or give up. So in 1 Henry the Fourth, i. 3: "All studies here I solemnly defy, save how to gall and pinch this Bolingbroke." Shakespeare alludes, no doubt, to the habit, which then infected all classes, of sacrificing their matter, or letting it go, in their fondness of verbal trickery and trifling, or in their chase after puns and plays upon words. — Tricksy is artful, adroit, or what we might call smartish.

8 It refers to blessing, in the second line above.
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

_Jes._ Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

_Lor._ I will anon: first, let us go to dinner.

_Jes._ Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach._

_Lor._ No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk;
Then, howsoever thou speak'st, 'mong other things
I shall digest it.

_Jes._ Well, I'll set you forth. [Exeunt._

---

**ACT IV.**

**SCENE I. — Venice. A Court of Justice.**

*Enter the Duke, the Magnificoes, Antonio, Bassanio, Gratiano, Solanio, Salarino, and others.*

_Duke._ What, is Antonio here?

_Ant._ Ready, so please your Grace.

_Duke._ I'm sorry for thee: thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

_Ant._ I have heard
Your Grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but, since he stands obdurate,
And that no lawful means can carry me

---

9 An equivocal on _stomach_, which is used in the two senses of inclination to praise and of appetite for food.

1 To _abate, to assuage, to mitigate_, are old senses of _to qualify._

2 The old language in full was _since that_; and Shakespeare, in a second clause, often uses _that_, instead of repeating _since_. Here we should write "since — and _since._" It was the same with _if, when, though_, and some others. _If that_ has occurred several times in this play.
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.

_Duke._ Go one, and call the Jew into the court.
_Solan._ He's ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

_Enter Shylock._

_Duke._ Make room, and let him stand before our face. —
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead' st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought
Thou'llt show thy mercy and remorse, more strange
Than is thy strange-apparent cruelty;
And, where thou now exact' st the penalty, —
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh, —
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enough to press a royal merchant down,
And pluck commiseration of his state

_Env in its old sense of malice or hatred._
_4 "Keepest up this manner or appearance of malice."_
_5 Remorse, in Shakespeare, generally means pity or compassion. The usage was common._
_6 Where for whereas; the two being used interchangeably._
_7 Loose, here, has the sense of remit or release._
_8 Moiety is, properly, half, but was used for any portion._
_9 "Royal merchant" is a complimentary phrase, to indicate the wealth and social standing of Antonio. In the Poet's time, Sir Thomas Gresham was so called, from his great wealth, and from his close financial relations with the Court and the Queen. The term was also applied to great Italian merchants, such as the Giustiniani and the Grimaldi, the Medici and the Pazzi, some of whom held mortgages on kingdoms and acquired the titles of princes for themselves._
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

_Shy._ I have possess'd your Grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.

You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion-flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that:
But, say, it is my humour; is it answer'd?

What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned! What, are you answer'd yet?

Some men there are love not a gaping pig;

Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;

And others, when the bag-pipe sings i' the nose,
Cannot contain their urine for affection.

---

10 Possess'd, again, in its old sense of informed.

11 Perhaps the Poet had London in his mind, which held certain rights and franchises by royal charter, and was liable to have its charter revoked for an act of flagrant injustice.

12 The meaning seems to be, "Suppose I should say," or, "What if I should say it is my humour; is that an answer?" In the Poet's time, humour was used, much as conscience was at a later period, to justify any eccentric impulse of vanity, opinion, or self-will, for which no common ground of reason could be alleged. Thus, if a man had an individual crotchet which he meant should override the laws and conditions of our social being, it was his humour. Corporal Nym is a burlesque on this sort of affectionation.

13 A pig's head as roasted for the table. In England, a boar's head was served up at Christmas, with a lemon in its mouth. So in Webster's Duchess of Malfi, iii. 2: "He could not abide to see a pig's head gaping: I thought your Grace would find him a Jew." And in Fletcher's Elder Brother, ii. 2: "And they stand gaping like a roasted pig."

14 Here, again, for is equivalent to because of. See page 183, note 3.
Masters of passion sway it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be render’d,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
Why he, a wauling bag-pipe, but of force
Must yield to such inevitable shame
As to offend, himself being offended;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer’d?

Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
T’ excuse the current of thy cruelty.

Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answer.

Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love?

Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.

Shy. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew.

You may as well go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf,

Affection, in this place, means much the same as impulse; more properly, the state of being affected or moved by any external object or impression.

15 An axiomatic saying, brought in here with signal aptness. Even the greatest masters of passion move and rule it according as it is predisposed. Shakespeare’s power lies partly in that fact: hence, in his work, the passions are rooted in the persons, instead of being merely pasted on.

16 "Wauling bag-pipe" evidently means the same as "when the bag-pipe sings i’ the nose." The effect in question is produced by the sound of the bag-pipe, and not by the sight, as in the other instances.

17 Of force is the same as perforce; of necessity, or necessarily.

18 Question, here, like reason before, has the sense of talk or converse.

The usage was common, and Shakespeare has it repeatedly.

19 Great, strong, mighty are among the old senses of main.
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise,
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do any thing most hard,
As seek to soften that — than which what's harder? —
His Jewish heart. Therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no further means;
But, with all brief and plain conveniency,
Let me have judgment,²⁰ and the Jew his will.

Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them: I would have my bond.

Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?

Shy. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them. Shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burdens? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer,
The slaves are ours. So do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought, 'tis mine, and I will have it:
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgment: answer; shall I have it?

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,

²⁰ "Let the sentence proceed against me with such promptness and
directness as befits the administration of justice." The Poet often uses brief
for quick or speedy.
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,  
Whom I have sent for to determine this,  
Come here to-day.

_Solan._ My lord, here stays without  
A messenger with letters from the doctor,  
New come from Padua.

_Duke._ Bring us the letters; call the messenger.

_Bass._ Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet!  
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,  
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

_Ant._ I am a tainted wether of the flock,  
Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit  
Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me:  
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,  
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

_Enter Nerissa, dressed like a Lawyer's Clerk._

_Duke._ Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

_Ner._ From both, my lord. Bellario greets your Grace.  
_[Presents a letter._

_Bass._ Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

_Shy._ To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt there.

_Gra._ Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,  
Thou makest thy knife keen; but no metal can,  
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness  
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?

_Shy._ No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

_Gra._ O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog!

And for thy life let justice be accused.²¹  
Thou almost makest me waver in my faith,  
To hold opinion with Pythagoras.²²

²¹ "Let justice be impeached or arraigned for suffering thee to live."
²² The ancient philosopher of Samos, who is said to have taught the transmigration of souls. In _As You Like It_, iii. 2, Rosalind says, "I was
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf, who hang'd for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starved, and ravenous.

_Sky._ Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

_Duke._ This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learnèd doctor to our court. —
Where is he?

_Ner._ He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

_Duke._ With all my heart. — Some three or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this place. —
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

_Clerk. [Reads.]_ Your Grace shall understand, that at the
receipt of your letter I am very sick: but, in the instant that
your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a
young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthazar. I acquainted
him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and An-
tonio the merchant: we turn'd o'er many books together: he
is furnished with my opinion; which, better'd with his own
learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend,
comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your Grace's
request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be
never so berhymed since Pythagoras' time, that I was an Irish rat, which I
can hardly remember." And in Twelfth Night, iv. a, the Clown says to
Malvolio, "Thou shalt hold the opinion of Pythagoras ere I will allow of
thy wits; and fear to kill a woodcock, lest thou dispossess the soul of thy
grandam."

23 That is, _in speaking_. The infinitive used gerundively again.
no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I
never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him
to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish
his commendation.

Duke. You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.—

Enter Portia, dressed like a Doctor of Laws.

Give me your hand. Came you from old Bellario?
Por. I did, my lord.
Duke. You're welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?
Por. I am informed thoroughly of the cause.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?
Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.
Por. Is your name Shylock?
Shy. Shylock is my name.
Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule, that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.—
[To Anto.] You stand within his danger, do you not?
Ant. Ay, so he says.
Por. Do you confess the bond?
Ant. I do.
Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.

24 "Let his youthfulness be no hindrance to his being reverently esteemed."
25 "The controversy for the deciding of which the present inquiry or investigation is held." Question in its proper Latin sense.
26 Through and thorough are but different forms of the same word.
27 To impugn is to controvert, to oppose; literally, to fight against.
28 "Within one's danger" properly meant within one's power or control, liable to a penalty which he might impose. Sometimes, however, it was used for being in debt to one. Here the meaning seems to be "Your life is in his power, and so in danger from him."
Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

Por. The quality of mercy is not strain'd;\(^{29}\)
It dropeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest:\(^{30}\) it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,\(^{31}\)
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,—
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy.\(^{32}\) I have spoke thus much

\(^{29}\) That is, the nature of mercy is to act freely, not from constraint. Portia had used \textit{must} in a moral sense, and the Jew purposely mistook it in a legal sense. This gives a natural occasion and impulse for her strain of "heavenly eloquence."

\(^{30}\) This may mean, either that mercy exists in the greatest plenitude in Him who is omnipotent, or that the more power one has to inflict pain, the more he bows and subdues the heart by showing mercy. If the former, it should be printed "in the Mightiest." It was evidently a favourite idea with Shakespeare that the noblest and most amiable thing is power mixed with gentleness; and that the highest style of manhood is that which knows no fear of pain, but is a child to the touches of compassion.

\(^{31}\) The \textit{thing attributed} or \textit{assigned} for the purpose of \textit{inspiring} awe and of \textit{symbolising} majesty.

\(^{32}\) "Portia, referring the Jew to the Christian doctrine of Salvation, and the Lord's Prayer, is a little out of character." So says Judge Blackstone; whereas the Lord's Prayer was itself but a compilation, all the petitions in it being taken out of the ancient euchologies or prayer-books of the Jews. So
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Shy. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?

Bass. Yes, here I tender't for him in the court;
Yea, thrice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And, I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong;
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por. It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established:
'Twill be recorded for a precedent;
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the State. It cannot be.

Shy. A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!—
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!

Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

Shy. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor; here it is.

Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.

Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in Heaven:
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.

Por. Why, this bond is forfeit; 34

in Ecclesiasticus, xxviii. 2: "Forgive thy neighbour the hurt that he hath
done unto thee, so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest."

33 Truth is honesty here. A true man in old language is an honest man.
And the honesty here shown is in offering to pay thrice the money.

34 Forfeit for forfeited. This shortened preterite has occurred more than
once before. See page 158, note 4.
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. — Be merciful;
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

_Shy_. When it is paid according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

_Ant_. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.

_Por._ Why, then thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife; —

_Shy_. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

_Por._ — For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,35
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

_Shy_. 'Tis very true. O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder36 art thou than thy looks!

_Por_. Therefore lay bare your bosom.

_Shy_. Ay, his breast:
So says the bond: — doth it not, noble judge? —
Nearest his heart: those are the very words.

_Por_. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?

_Shy_. I have them ready.37

---

35 That is, the law relating to contracts is fully applicable in this case.
36 Such double comparatives are frequent. So we have _more better, more braver_, and many others. Good grammar then.
37 _Balance_, though singular in form, is used in a plural sense, referring to the _two scales_ which make the balance. So in Baret's _Atevare_, 1580: "Bal-
ances, or a payre of _balance_."
Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.
Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond?
Por. It is not so express'd; but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.
Shy. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.
Por. Come, merchant, have you any thing to say?
Ant. But little: I am arm'd and well prepared.—
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fall'n to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a lover.
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For, if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life:

---

38 It is ever her custom or wont. Still and use in these senses occur very often. The usage was common.
39 "Speak well of me when I am dead;" or, perhaps, "Tell the world that I died like a man."
40 An equivocation on heart: and it rather heightens the pathos.
41 Which and who were used indifferently, both of persons and things.
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

Por. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

Gra. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:
I would she were in Heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

Ner. 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make, else, an unquiet house.

Shy. [Aside.] These be the Christian husbands! I have a daughter;

Would any of the stock of Bârrabas 42
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!—
We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence.

Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

Shy. Most rightful judge!

Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast:
The law allows it, and the court awards it.

Shy. Most learned judge! A sentence!—Come, prepare!

Por. Tarry a little; there is something else.

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are, a pound of flesh:
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the State of Venice.

Gra. O upright judge!—Mark, Jew: O learned judge!

Shy. Is that the law?

Por. Thyself shalt see the Act:

42 Shakespeare seems to have followed the pronunciation usual in the theatre, Barabbas being sounded Barabas throughout Marlowe's Jew of Malta.
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

Gra. O learnèd judge! — Mark, Jew: a learnèd judge!
Shy. I take his offer, then; — pay the bond thrice,
And let the Christian go.

Bass. Here is the money.

Por. Soft!
The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Gra. O Jew! an upright judge, a learnèd judge!
Por. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh: if thou takest more
Or less than a just pound, — be't but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair, —
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

Gra. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

Por. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.
Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.
Bass. I have it ready for thee; here it is.
Por. He hath refused it in the open court:
He shall have merely justice and his bond.

Gra. A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel! —
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.
Shy. Shall I not have barely my principal?
Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

Shy. Why, then the Devil give him good of it!
I'll stay no longer question.

Por. Tarry, Jew:
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the State;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament I say thou stand'st;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formally by me rehearsed.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.

_Gra_. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself:
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the State,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the State's charge.

_Duke_. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general State,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.⁴³

_Por_. Ay, for the State; not for Antonio.⁴⁴

_Shy_. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house, when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life,

⁴³ "Submission on your part may move me to reduce it to a fine."
⁴⁴ Meaning, apparently, that the reduction of the forfeiture to a fine
should apply only to that half of his goods which was to come to the coffer
of the State, not that which fell to Antonio.
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

Gra. A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.

Ant. So please my lord the Duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more: That, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

Duke. He shall do this; or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

Por. Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

Shy. I am content.

Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.

46 If the court will remit the fine, or acquit Shylock of the forfeiture so far as the claim of the State is concerned. The Poet repeatedly uses quit thus for acquit or release.

46 "That is, in trust for Shylock during his life, for the purpose of securing it at his death to Lorenzo. In conveyances of land, where it is intended to give the estate to any person after the death of another, it is necessary that a third person should be possessed of the estate, and the use be declared to the one after the death of the other, or the estate would be rendered insecure to the future possessor. This is called a conveyance to uses." The anonymous author of the foregoing adds, that Shakespeare has rendered the old Latin law phrase pertaining to the case, "with all the strictness of a technical conveyancer, and has made Antonio desire to have one half of Shylock's goods in use,—to render it upon his death to Lorenzo."
Gra. In christening shalt thou have two godfathers:
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,⁴⁷
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[Exit Shylock.

Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

Por. I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon: ⁴⁸
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

Duke. I'm sorry that your leisure serves you not.—
Antonio, gratify this gentleman;
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

[Exeunt the Duke, Magnificoes, and Train.

Bass. Most worthy gentlemen, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,⁴⁹
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope⁵⁰ your courteous pains withal.

Ant. And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you overcome.

Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied,
And therein do account myself well paid:
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me when we meet again:

⁴⁷ Meaning a jury of twelve men to condemn him. This appears to have been an old joke. So in The Devil is an Ass, by Ben Jonson: “I will leave you to your godfathers in law. Let twelve men work.”
⁴⁸ An old English idiom now obsolete. So in A Midsummer-Night’s Dream, iii. 1: “I shall desire you of more acquaintance.”
⁴⁹ In return for which, or in consideration of which. So the phrase is, I think, always used in Shakespeare.
⁵⁰ The only instance I have met with of cope being used in the sense of requite. A like use of the word in composition, however, occurs in Ben Jonson’s Fox, iii. 5:

He would have sold his part of Paradise
For ready money, had he met a cope-man.
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

_Bass._ Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further:
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,—
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

_Por._ You press me far, and therefore I will yield.—

_[To Ant._] Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your
sake;—

_[To Bass._] And, for your love, I'll take this ring from you.
Do not draw back your hand: I'll take no more;
And you in love shall [51] not deny me this.

_Bass._ This ring, good sir,—alas, it is a trifle!
I will not shame myself to give you this.

_Por._ I will have nothing else but only this;
And now methinks I have a mind to it.

_Bass._ There's more depends on this than on the value.
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation:
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

_Por._ I see, sir, you are liberal in offers:
You taught me first to beg; and now methinks
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.

_Bass._ Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;
And, when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

_Por._ That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
An if [52] your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserved this ring,
She would not hold out enemy for ever
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

_[Exeunt Portia and Nerissa._

[51] _Shall_, again, where we should use _will_. See page 177, note 33.
[52] _An if_ is an old reduplication, with the sense merely of _if_. So the old
writers use _an_, or _if_, or _an if_, indifferently.
Ant. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring:
Let his deserves, and my love withal,
Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment. 53

Bass. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;
Give him the ring; and bring him, if thou canst,
Unto Antonio's house. Away! make haste.—

[Exit Gratiano.

Come, you and I will thither presently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio.  [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—The Same. A Street.

Enter Portia and Nerissa, disguised as before.

Por. Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed,
And let him sign it: we'll away to-night,
And be a day before our husbands home.
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter Gratiano.

Gra. Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en:
My Lord Bassanio, upon more advice,1
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat
Your company at dinner.

Por. That cannot be:
His ring I do accept most thankfully;
And so, I pray you, tell him: furthermore,
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

58 Commandment is properly four syllables here, as if written commande-
ment. And so, in fact, it is spelt in the old copies. Perhaps the old spelling
should in such cases be retained.

1 Upon further consideration. See page 120, note 31. And so in Henry
the Fifth, ii. 2: "It was excess of wine that set him on; and, on our more
advice, we pardon him."
Scene 1.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Grat. That will I do.

Ner. Sir, I would speak with you.—
[To Portia.] I'll see if I can get my husband's ring, Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.

Por. Thou mayst, I warrant. We shall have old² swearing That they did give the rings away to men; But we'll outface them, and outswear them too.
Away! make haste: thou know'st where I will tarry.

Ner. Come, good sir; will you show me to this house?

[Exeunt.

ACT V.

Scene I.—Belmont. Pleasure-grounds of Portia's House.

Enter Lorenzo and Jessica.

Lor. The Moon shines bright. In such a night as this, When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees, And they did make no noise,—in such a night Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan walls, And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents, Where Cressid lay that night.¹

Jes. In such a night Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew,

² Old was a frequent intensive in colloquial speech; very much as huge is used now. So in Much Ado, v. 2: "Yonder's old coil at home." And in The Merry Wives, i. 4: "Here will be an old abusing of God's patience and the king's English."

¹ The story of Troilus and Cressida is dramatized in Shakespeare's play of that name. Troilus was a Trojan prince, one of King Priam's fifty sons. He fell deeply and most honourably in love with Cressida, who, after being mighty sweet upon him, forsook him for his enemy, Diomedes the Greek; which he took to heart prodigiously.
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself; In such a night
And ran dismay'd away.

Lor. Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
In such a night
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waved her love
To come again to Carthage.

Jes. In such a night
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

Lor. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

Jes. And in such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,
And ne'er a true one.

Lor. And in such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

Jes. I would out-night you, did nobody come:
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

---

2 That is, ere she saw the lion himself. The story of “Pyramus and his love Thisbe” is burlesqued in the interlude of Bottom and company in *A Midsummer-Night’s Dream*.

3 Spenser in like sort makes the willow a symbol of forsaken love. So in *The Faerie Queene*, i. 1, 9: “The willow, worne of forlorne paramours.”

4 Twice before in this play we have had allusions to the story of Jason and his voyage to Colchos in quest of the golden fleece. Medea, daughter to the King of Colchos, fell in love with him, helped him to win the fleece, then stole her father's treasure, and ran away with Jason to Greece. Now Jason's father was very old and decayed; and Medea was a potent enchantress, the most so of all the ancient girls: so, with “the hidden power of herbs and might of magic spell,” she made a most plenipotent broth, wherewith she renewed the old man's youth. Ovid has it, that she did this by drawing the blood out of his veins, and filling them with the broth.
Enter STEFANNO.

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?
Steph. A friend.
Lor. A friend! what friend? your name, I pray you, friend?
Steph. Stepháno is my name; and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont: she doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

Lor. Who comes with her?
Steph. None but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my master yet return'd?
Lor. He is not, nor we have not heard from him. —
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Enter LAUNCELOT.

Laun. Sola, sola! wo, ha, ho! sola, sola!
Lor. Who calls?
Laun. Sola! — did you see Master Lorenzo and Mistress Lorenzo? — sola, sola!
Lor. Leave hollaing, man: here.
Laun. Sola! — where? where?
Lor. Here.
Laun. Tell him there's a post come from my master, with

5 In this play the name Stephano has the accent on the second syllable. In The Tempest, written some years later, the same name has it, rightly, on the first.

6 In old times crosses were set up at the intersection of roads, and in other places specially associated with saintly or heroic names, to invite the passers-by to devotion. And in those days Christians were much in the habit of remembering in their prayers whatever lay nearest their hearts. The Poet has the same old thought still more sweetly in two other places.
his horn full of good news: my master will be here ere morning. [Exit.

Lor. Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet no matter: why should we go in?—
My friend Stepháno, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;
And bring your music forth into the air.— [Exit STEPHANO.
How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look, how the floor of Heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:
Such harmony is in immortal souls; ¹⁰

7 The postman used to carry a horn, and blow it to give notice of his coming, on approaching a place where he had something to deliver. Launcc-lot has just been imitating the notes of the horn in his exclamations, Sola, &c. — Expect, in the next line, is wait for or await. The Poet has it repeatedly in that sense. And so in Hebrews, x. 13: “From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.”

8 A small plate, used in the administration of the Eucharist: it was commonly of gold, or silver-gilt.

9 Continually sounding an accompaniment.—Of course everybody has heard of “the music of the spheres,”—an ancient mystery which taught that the heavenly bodies in their revolutions sing together in a concert so loud, various, and sweet, as to exceed all proportion to the human ear. And the greatest souls, from Plato to Wordsworth, have been lifted above themselves, with the idea that the universe was knit together by a principle of which musical harmony is the aptest and clearest expression. Milton touches it with surpassing sweetness in the morning hymn of Adam and Eve, Paradise Lost, v. 177: “And ye five other wandering fires, that move in mystic dance not without song, resound His praise,” &c. See, also, Milton’s Arcades, and Coleridge’s Remorse, Act iii., scene 1, and Wordsworth’s great poem On the Power of Sound, stanza xii.

10 So in Hooker’s Ecclesiastical Polity, v. 38: “Touching musical har-
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.—

Enter Musicians.

Come, ho, and wake Diana with a hymn!
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,
And draw her home with music.

Jes. I'm never merry when I hear sweet music.

Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentive:
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing, and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze,
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods;
Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus: 11
Let no such man be trusted. 12  Mark the music.

mony, such is the force thereof, and so pleasing effects it hath in that very part of man which is most divine, that some have thereby been induced to think that the soul itself by nature is or hath in it harmony.

11 Erebus was the darkest and gloomiest region of Hades.

12 Upon the general subject of this splendid strain touching music and musical harmony, it seems but just to quote a passage hardly inferior from Sir Thomas Browne, Religio Medici: Part ii., Sect. g: "There is a music wherever there is harmony, order, or proportion; and thus far we may
Enter Portia and Nerissa.

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall.  
How far that little candle throws his beams!  
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Ner. When the Moon shone, we did not see the candle.

Por. So doth the greater glory dim the less:  
A substitute shines brightly as a king,  
Until a king be by; and then his state  
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook  
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!

Ner. It is your music, madam, of the house.

Por. Nothing is good, I see, without respect: ¹³
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

Ner. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

Por. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,
When neither is attended; and I think  
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,  
When every goose is cackling, would be thought

maintain 'the music of the spheres': for those well-ordered motions and regular paces, though they give no sound unto the ear, yet to the understanding they strike a note most full of harmony. Whatsoever is harmonically composed delights in harmony; which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all church-music. For myself, not only from my obedience but my particular genius I do embrace it: for even that vulgar and tavern music which makes one man merry, another mad, strikes in me a deep fit of devotion, and a profound contemplation of the first Composer. There is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers: it is an hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world and creatures of God,—such a melody to the ear as the whole world, well understood, would afford the understanding. In brief, it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ear of God. I will not say, with Plato, the soul is an harmony, but harmonical, and hath its nearest sympathy unto music."

¹³ Nothing is good unless it be regarded, heeded, or attended to. Hence the music sounds much better when there is nothing to distract or divert the attention. This explanation is justified by what Portia says in the second speech after.
No better a musician than the wren.\textsuperscript{14}  
How many things by season season’d \textsuperscript{15} are  
To their right praise and true perfection! —  
Peace, ho! the Moon sleeps with Endymion,\textsuperscript{16}  
And would not be awakened. \hspace{1cm}[Music ceases.  
\textit{Lor.} That is the voice,  
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.  
\textit{Por.} He knows me, as the blind man knows the cuckoo,  
By the bad voice.  
\textit{Lor.} Dear lady, welcome home.  
\textit{Por.} We have been praying for our husbands’ welfare,  
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.  
Are they return’d?  
\textit{Lor.} Madam, they are not yet;  
But there is come a messenger before,  
To signify their coming.  
\textit{Por.} Go in, Nerissa;  
Give order to my servants that they take  
No note at all of our being absent hence; —  
Nor you, Lorenzo; — Jessica, nor you. \hspace{1cm}[A tucket\textsuperscript{17} sounds.  
\textit{Lor.} Your husband is at hand; I hear his trumpet:

\hspace{1cm}\textsuperscript{14} The difference is in the hearer’s mind, and not in the songs themselves; and the nightingale is reputed the first of songsters because she sings at the time when she can best be heard.” We have a like thought in the Poet’s road Sonnet.  
\hspace{1cm}\textsuperscript{15} A rather unpleasant jingle in \textit{season} and \textit{season’d}. The meaning is, that, by being rightly \textit{timed}, the things are tempered and made fit for their purpose; hence \textit{relished}.  
\hspace{1cm}\textsuperscript{16} Endymion was a very beautiful youth: Juno took a fancy to him, whereupon Jupiter grew jealous of him, and cast him into a perpetual sleep on Mount Latmos. While he was there asleep, Luna got so smitten with his beauty, that she used to come down and kiss him, and lie by his side. Some said, however, that Luna herself put him asleep, that she might have the pleasure of kissing him without his knowing it, the youth being somewhat shy when awake. The story was naturally a favorite with the poets.  
\hspace{1cm}\textsuperscript{17} A \textit{tucket} is a peculiar series of notes on a trumpet. Probably the word is from the Italian \textit{toccata}, which is said to mean a prelude to a sonata.
We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.

*Por.* This night methinks is but the daylight sick;
It looks a little paler: 'tis a day,
Such as a day is when the Sun is hid.

.Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and their Followers.

*Bass.* We should hold day with the Antipodes,\(^{18}\)
If you would walk in absence of the Sun.

*Por.* Let me give light, but let me not be light;\(^{19}\)
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,
And never be Bassanio so for me:
But God sort all!\(^{20}\) You're welcome home, my lord.

*Bass.* I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend:
This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

*Por.* You should in all sense\(^{21}\) be much bound to him,
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

*Ant.* No more than I am well acquitted of.

*Por.* Sir, you are very welcome to our house:
It must appear in other ways than words,
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.\(^{22}\)

*Gra.* [To Nerissa.] By yonder Moon I swear you do
me wrong;
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk:
Would he were gelt that had it, for my part,
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.

---

\(^{18}\) This is making Portia pretty luminous or radiant. To "hold day with the Antipodes" is to have day at the same time with them.

\(^{19}\) Twice before in these scenes, we have had playing upon *light*: here it is especially graceful and happy. See page 172, note 18.

\(^{20}\) Sort here has the sense of the Latin *sortior*: "God allot all," or dispose all.

\(^{21}\) Is *sense* used for *reason* here? Perhaps *all sense* is put for *every sense* or *all senses*. So the Poet has *house* for *houses*, *horse* for *horses*, &c.

\(^{22}\) This complimentary form, made up only of *breath*. 
Por. A quarrel, ho, already! what's the matter?

Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give to me; whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife, Love me, and leave me not.

Ner. What talk you of the posy or the value?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death;
And that it should lie with you in your grave:
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective, and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk! no, God's my judge,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.

Gra. He will, an if he live to be a man.

Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

Gra. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,
A kind of boy; a little scrubbed boy,
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk;
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee:
I could not for my heart deny it him.

Por. You were to blame,— I must be plain with you,—
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger,
And riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear

23 Knives were formerly inscribed, by means of aqua fortis, with short sentences in distich. The posy of a ring was the motto.

24 Respective is considerate or regardful; in the same sense as respect is explained, page 117, note 19. The word is repeatedly used thus by Shakespeare; as in Romeo and Juliet, iii. 1: "Away to Heaven respective lenity, and fire-eyed fury be my conduct now!"

25 Scrubbed is here used in the sense of stunted; as in Holland's Pliny: "Such will never prove fair trees, but scrubs only." And Verplanck observes that the name scrub oak was from the first settlement of this country given to the dwarf or bush oak.
Never to part with it; and here he stands:
I dare be sworn for him, he would not leave it,
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind cause of grief:
An 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.

_Bass._ [Aside.] Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,

And swear I lost the ring defending it.

_Gra._ My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begg'd it, and indeed
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine:
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.

_Por._ What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.

_Bass._ If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Hath not the ring upon it,—it is gone.

_Por._ Even so void is your false heart of truth.
By Heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed
Until I see the ring.

_Ner._ Nor I in yours
Till I again see mine.

_Bass._ Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

_Por._ If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleased to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?
Nerissa teaches me what to believe:
I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

**Bass.** No, by mine honour, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a Civil Doctor,
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me,
And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him,
And suffer'd him to go displeased away;
Even he that did uphold the very life
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?
I was enforced to send it after him:
I was beset with shame and courtesy;
My honour would not let ingratitude
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;
For, by these blessèd candles of the night,
Had you been there, I think you would have begg'd
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

**Por.** Let not that doctor e'er come near my house.

---

26 Contain was sometimes used in the sense of retain. So in Bacon's *Essays*: "To containe anger from mischiefe, though it take hold of a man, there be two things."

27 A *Civil Doctor* is a doctor of the Civil Law.

28 "Shame and courtesy" is here put for *shame of discourtesy*. The Poet has several like expressions. In *King Lear*, i. 2: "This policy and reverence of age"; which means "This policy, or custom, of reverencing age." Also in i. 5: "This milky gentleness and course of yours;" that is, milky and gentle course. And *Hamlet*, i. 1: "Well ratified by law and heraldry;" meaning the law of heraldry.

29 The "candles of the night" are the Moon and stars. So in *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 5: "Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day stand tiptoe on the misty mountain-tops."
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,  
And that which you did swear to keep for me,  
I will become as liberal as you;  
I'll not deny him any thing I have,  
No, not my body nor my husband's bed:  
Know him I shall, I am well sure of it:  
Lie not a night from home; watch me like Argus:  
If you do not, if I be left alone,  
Now, by mine honour, which is yet mine own,  
I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow.

_Ner._ And I his clerk; therefore be well advised  
How you do leave me to mine own protection.

_Gra._ Well, do you so: let not me take him then;  
For, if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.

_Ant._ I am th' unhappy subject of these quarrels.

_Por._ Sir, grieve not you; you're welcome notwithstanding.

_Bass._ Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong;  
And, in the hearing of these many friends,  
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,  
Wherein I see myself,—

_Por._ Mark you but that!  
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself;  
In each eye, one:—swear by your double self;  
And there's an oath of credit.

_Bass._ Nay, but hear me:  
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear  
I never more will break an oath with thee.  

_Ant._ I once did lend my body for his wealth;  
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried: I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.\textsuperscript{32}

\textit{Por}. Then you shall be his surety. Give him this;
And bid him keep it better than the other.

\textit{Ant}. Here, Lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.

\textit{Bass}. By Heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor!

\textit{Por}. I had it of him: pardon me, Bassanio;
For, by this ring, the doctor lay with me.

\textit{Ner}. And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano;
For that same scrubbèd boy, the doctor’s clerk,
In lieu of this,\textsuperscript{33} last night did lie with me.

\textit{Gra}. Why, this is like the mending of highways
In Summer, when the ways are fair enough:
What, are we cuckolds ere we have deserved it?

\textit{Por}. Speak not so grossly. — You are all amazed:
Here is a letter, read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor;
Nerissa there her clerk: Lorenzo here
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you,
And even but now return’d; I have not yet
Enter’d my house. — Antonio, you are welcome;
And I have better news in store for you
Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly:\textsuperscript{34}
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chancèd on this letter.

\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Advisedly} is \textit{deliberately}; much the same as in note 30.
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{In lieu of}, again, in its old sense of \textit{in return for}, or \textit{in consideration of}.

See page 206, note 49.
\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Suddenly for unexpectedly}; as in the \textit{Litany} we pray to be delivered from “sudden death.”
Ant.: I am dumb.

Bass. Were you the doctor, and I knew you not?

Gra. Were you the clerk that is to make me cuckold?

Ner. Ay, but the clerk that never means to do it, Unless he live until he be a man.

Bass. Sweet doctor, you shall be my bedfellow: When I am absent, then lie with my wife.

Ant. Sweet lady, you have given me life and living; For here I read for certain that my ships Are safely come to road.

Por. How now, Lorenzo! My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.— There do I give to you and Jessica, From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,

85 Life and the means of living. Portia has given Antonio life in delivering him from the clutches of Shylock.

86 In ii. 5, when Shylock is bid forth to Bassanio's supper, and Launcelot urges him to go, because "my young master doth expect your reproof," Shylock replies, "So do I his." Of course he expects that reproach through the bankruptcy of Antonio. This would seem to infer that Shylock has some hand in getting up the reports of Antonio's "losses at sea"; which reports, at least some of them, turn out false in the end. Further than this, the Poet leaves us in the dark as to how those reports grew into being and gained belief. Did he mean to have it understood that the Jew exercised his cunning and malice in plotting and preparing them? It appears, at all events, that Shylock knew they were coming, before they came. Yet I suppose the natural impression from the play is, that he lent the ducats and took the bond, on a mere chance of coming at his wish. But he would hardly grasp so eagerly at a bare possibility of revenge, without using means to turn it into something more. This would mark him with much deeper lines of guilt. Why, then, did not Shakespeare bring the matter forward more prominently? Perhaps it was because the doing so would have made Shylock appear too deep a criminal for the degree of interest which his part was meant to carry in the play. In other words, the health of the drama as a work of comic art required his criminality to be kept in the background. He comes very near overshadowing the other characters too much, as it is. And Shylock's character is essentially tragic; there is none of the proper timber of comedy in him.
After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.

_Lor._ Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starvèd people.

_Por._ It is almost morning,
And yet I'm sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,37
And we will answer all things faithfully.

_Gra._ Let it be so: the first inter'gatory
That my Nerissa shall be sworn on is,
Whether till the next night she had rather stay,
Or go to bed now, being two hours to day:
But, were the day come, I should wish it dark,
That I were couching with the doctor's clerk.
Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.  

[Exeunt.

37 In the Court of Queen's Bench, when a complaint is made against a
person for a "contempt," the practice is that, before sentence is finally pro-
nounced, he is sent into the Crown Office, and, being there "charged upon
interrogatories," he is made to swear that he will "answer all things faith-
fully." — LORD CAMPBELL.
CRITICAL NOTES.

---

ACT 1., SCENE 1.

Page 114. Like signiors and rich burghers of the flood.—The old copies have “burghers on the flood.” Corrected by Steevens. See the quotation from As You Like It, in foot-note 5.

P. 115. And see my wealthy Andrew dock’d in sand.—So Rowe. The old copies have “Andrew docks in sand.” Hardly worth noting.

P. 115. Salar. Why, then you are in love.

Ant. Fie, fie! — So the old copies, leaving the verse defective. Dyce says, “I have little doubt that Shakespeare wrote ‘In love! fie, fie!’”

P. 118. Who, I’m very sure,

If they should speak, would almost damn those ears, &c.—Instead of who, the old copies have when, leaving would damn without a subject. Collier’s second folio retains when, and changes would to ’twould, which Dyce adopts. The correction of when to who was made by Rowe.

P. 119. Is that any thing now? — The old copies read “It is that any thing now.” Hardly deserving of notice, but that Collier retains the old reading, and attempts to explain it.

P. 120. I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,

That which I owe is lost.—Instead of wilful, Warburton proposed witless, and Collier’s second folio has wasteful. The latter is a plausible change.

ACT 1., SCENE 2.

P. 122. It is no small happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean.

—So the folio. The quartos have “no mean happiness.” I prefer to be without the jingle of mean and mean.
P. 123. Will no doubt never be chosen by any rightly, but one who shall rightly love.—So the first quarto has the latter clause. The other old copies read "who you shall rightly love."

P. 123. And he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.—Collier's second folio reads "approbation of his own good parts." Shakespeare has no other instance of appropriation; but he uses approbation for proof; and in that sense the word certainly accords well with the context.

P. 124. If a throttle sing, he falls straight a-capering.—The old copies have Trassell for throttle. Is trassell an old form of throttle? Probably th was sounded like t, in the latter word, and, in the former, a as in what or in chap: so that trassell and tростle would be but putting different letters for the same sound.

P. 125. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?—So the quartos. The folio substitututes other for Scottish; doubtless on account of King James. It may be worth noting that Collier's second folio substitutes Irish for other.

ACT 1., SCENE 3.

P. 128. There be land-rats and water-rats, land-thieves and water-thieves,—I mean pirates.—So Collier's second folio; the old copies, "water theieves, and land theives"; which would naturally mean that the land-thieves were pirates.

P. 130. Is he yet possess'd,
How much we would.—One of the quartos and the folio read "How much he would"; the other quarto, "How much ye would." The correction is Walker's.

P. 131. Was this inserted to make interest good?—Collier's second folio substitutes inferred for inserted. The Poet uses infer for bring in or introduce, and that meaning fits the context well. See footnote 17.

P. 131. A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
O, what a godly outside falsehood hath!—So Rowe and Walker. Instead of godly, the old copies have goodly, the word having
probably been repeated by mistake from the preceding line. And Walker remarks that "goodly and godly, and, in like manner, good and God, have been confounded in various passages of our old writers."

P. 134. Whose own hard dealing teaches them suspect. — So the second folio. The originals have "hard dealings teaches." Confusion of singulars and plurals is among the commonest misprints.

ACT II., SCENE 1.

P. 135. The shadow'd livery of the burning Sun. — So Collier's second folio; the old copies, "the burnish'd Sun." Modern editions print "burnish'd Sun," but the epithet is surely an odd one, to say the least.

P. 136. But, if my father had not scanted me,

And hedged me by his will. — The old copies read "by his wit"; and wit has been explained "sagacity and power of mind." The word was indeed used in a way to include that meaning; but wit is here undoubtedly a misprint for will, which was often written wil. The change is approved by several expressions used in i. 2: "Curb'd by the will of a dead father;" and "perform your father's will;" and "by the manner of my father's will." Corrected by Capell.

ACT II., SCENE 2.

P. 140. Do you not know me, father? — Here not is wanting in the old copies, but is indispensable to the sense of the passage. Supplied by Dyce.

P. 144. Nay, you must not deny me: I must go

With you to Belmont. — The old copies print this speech as prose, and are without Nay at the beginning of it. But the speech was clearly meant to be verse, and Nay completes it as such. It was added by Hanmer and Capell.

ACT II., SCENE 3.

P. 146. If a Christian did not play the knave and get thee, I am much deceived. — So the second folio; the earlier editions, "doe not play the knave."
ACT II., SCENE 4.

P. 147. And whiter than the paper that it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.—So Hanmer. In the first line, that is wanting in the old copies, and is fairly required for the verse.

ACT II., SCENE 5.

P. 150. Go you before me, sirrah:
Say, I will come.
Laun. I'll go before you, sir.—So Walker. The old copies read "I will go before, sir." Hanmer rectified the metre by printing "Sir, I will go before."

P. 151. How like a younker or a prodigal.—So Rowe. Instead of younker, the old copies have younger; a palpable misprint.

P. 152. I'll watch as long for you then. Come, approach.—Come is Pope's insertion; justifiable, probably, on the score of metre. I suspect that Ritson was right in proposing to read "I'll watch as long for you.—Come, then, approach."

ACT II., SCENE 6.

P. 156. Gilded tombs do worms infold.—So Johnson and Collier's second folio; the old copies, "Gilded timber doe," &c.

ACT II., SCENE 7.

P. 159. And even then, his eye being big with tears.—Instead of then, the old copies have there; doubtless repeated by mistake from the line before. Corrected by Dyce.

ACT II., SCENE 8.

P. 161. I will assume desert.—Give me a key,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.—The old copies read "Give me a key for this, And instantly," &c. As the words for this are plainly superfluous both for sense and for metre, and as Hanmer, Ritson, Steevens, and Dyce concur in thinking them an interpolation, I have struck them out.
CRITICAL NOTES.

P. 162. So be gone, sir; you are sped.—So the second folio; the earlier editions omit sir.

ACT III., SCENE 1.

P. 167. Good news, good news! ha, ha!—Where? in Genoa?—Instead of where, the old copies have here. Evidently wrong. Corrected by Rowe.

ACT III., SCENE 2.

P. 169. There may as well be amity and league 'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.—So Walker. The old text has "amity and life." The latter is certainly a strange word for the place, and is made still more unfitting by what the same speaker says a little after,—"Promise me life," &c.

P. 171. How begot, how nourished?
Reply. It is engender'd in the eyes, &c.—So Hanmer and Johnson, following the old editions, all of which, both quarto and folio, print Reply in the margin, and in the same line with "How begot," &c. Other modern editions, generally, print "Reply, reply" in a separate line, between the two lines here quoted, and thus make it a part of the song itself. It is true, the old copies repeat the word, "Réplie, réplie"; but the word was evidently meant as a stage-direction. And it seemed to me that so the arrangement ought to be, long before I knew the printing of the old copies. Perhaps I ought to add that, in the second line, the quartos have eye instead of eyes, the reading of the folios.

P. 172. There is no vice so simple, but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.—So the second folio. It is well-nigh superfluous to note that, instead of vice, the originals have voice; which is readily corrected from virtue in the next line.

P. 172. How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stayers of sand, wear yet upon their chins, &c.—So the folio. Modern editions generally print stairs; for what reason, or with what propriety, is, I think, not very apparent: for, surely, stayers, in the sense of props, supports, or stays, agrees much better with the con-
text. And in most other places, if not in all, the folio has *stairs* spelt *staires*.

- P. 173. *Thus ornament is but the guilèd shore*
  *To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf*
  *Veiling an Indian feature; in a word,*
  *The seeming truth, &c.* — Instead of "guilèd shore," which is the reading of the quartos and the first folio, the second folio has "guilled shore." This is merely an old way of spelling *gilded*, which is Rowe's reading. I am apt to think that so we ought to read. Lettsom has "little doubt that the Poet was thinking of Raleigh's 'Discovery of Guiana,' and wrote *guilled.*" See, however, foot-note 21. — In the third line, the old editions read "Vailing an Indian *beautie*; in a word," &c. With this reading I believe all modern editors are dissatisfied, as indeed they well may be. Hanmer reads "Indian *dowdy*," and Walker conjectures "Indian *gipsy*." Collier's second folio undertakes to heal the difficulty by changing the punctuation, thus: "Veiling an Indian: beauty, in a word," &c. But the corruption is in the word *beauty*, which clearly has no business there, and probably crept in by a sort of contagion from *beauteous* in the preceding line. The Cambridge Editors propose "Indian *beldam*"; which seems to me well worth considering. Lettsom conjectured *favour*, which suggested to me the reading in the text. After having settled upon *feature*, I was glad to find that Mr. Spedding had anticipated me in that conjecture. It has some advantage over the others in the *ductus literarum*, as it involves a substitution of only two letters. And Shakespeare repeatedly uses *feature* in a sense well suited to the place. See foot-note 22.

- P. 173. *Nor none of thee, thou stale and common drudge*
  *'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,*
  *Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,*
  *Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence.* — Here the old copies have *pale* instead of *stale*, and *paleness* instead of *plainness*. *Stale* is Farmer's correction; and Dyce, who adopts it, remarks that the two words "are frequently confounded by early transcribers and printers." We have *stale* coupled with *common* in *1 Henry IV.*, iii. 2: "So *common*-hackney'd in the eyes of men, so *stale* and cheap to vulgar company." — Warburton changed *paleness* to *plainness*, which Staunton adopts, with the just remark, that "the *plainness*, which moves Bassanio *more than eloquence*, is the plain speaking of the inscription on the leaden coffer, contrasted with the tempting labels of its neighbours."
CRITICAL NOTES

P. 175. But the full sum of

Is sum of—something—Instead of something, which is the
reading of the quartos, the folio has nothing. The latter, though gen-
erally preferred, savours, I think, rather too much of affectation of
humility to accord well with Portia’s character. Besides, she seems to
be playing with the likeness of sound in sum and some.

P. 175. Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; then happier in this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all, in that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours, &c.—In the old copies, the second of
these lines stands thus: “But she may learne: happier then this;”
which leaves both sense and metre defective. — In the fourth line,
again, the old copies have is instead of in, which is the reading of
Collier’s second folio. The phrase in that for inasmuch as is often
used by the Poet.

P. 178. What, and my old Venetian friend Solanio.—Here the old
copies introduce, for the first time, a new name, Salerio; but the per-
son is clearly the same who appears in the first scene of the play under
the name of Solanio, and as the common friend of Antonio, Bassanio,
and Salarino. In fact, the old copies present a strange confusion in
regard to two of the names: Salarino, Salarino; Solanio, Salanio,
Salino, Salerio. I therefore concur with Staunton and Dyce in
substituting Solanio for Salerio wherever the latter occurs in this
scene.

P. 179. And I must have the half of any thing
That this same paper brings you.—The old copies read “And
I must freely have”; a redundancy both in sense and in metre. The
word freely occurs five lines after; hence, probably, it crept in here
out of place. Corrected by Pope.

P. 181. Shall lose a hair through my Bassanio’s fault.—So the sec-
ond folio. The other old copies are without my. To cure this defect
in the metre, some editors change through to thorough, which is in-
deed but another form of the same word, and is often used by Shake-
speare.
ACT III., SCENE 3.

P. 183. The Duke cannot deny the course of law,
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice: if it be denied,
'Twill much impeach the justice, &c.—So Capell, who is followed by Staunton. The old copies set a (:) after law, print *Will* instead of *'Twill*; and so make *commodity* the subject of *will impeach*. This greatly obscures, if it does not quite defeat, the meaning of the passage. Staunton aptly notes that, without the second line, "the passage is perfectly logical and easy." See foot-note 3.

ACT III., SCENE 4.

P. 185. And use thou all th' endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua.—Mantua in the old copies; but Padua is spoken of repeatedly as the residence of Bellario.

ACT III., SCENE 5.

P. 189. He finds the joys of Heaven here on Earth;
And if on Earth he do not merit it,
In reason he should never come to Heaven.—Here the old copies present a remarkable variety of readings. Instead of *merit it*, one of the quartos has *meane it, then*; the other, *meane it, it*; which latter the folio repeats, merely changing *In* to *Is* at the beginning of the next line. The reading in the text is Pope's. And it appears that Walker, without knowing of Pope's correction, hit upon the same as regards *merit it*, though he proposed to substitute "'Tis reason" for "*In reason*."

ACT IV., SCENE 1.

P. 192. And others, when the bag-pipe sings i' the nose,
Cannot contain their urine for affection.
Masters of passion sway it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes.—So the old copies, except that they have *swayes* instead of *sway*. The more common reading, which was first proposed by Thirlby, sets a (:) after *urine*, changes *Masters* to *Master*, and puts it in apposition with *affection*, and makes *affection*
the subject of *sways*. But it is not altogether clear to me how, or in what sense, affection may be said to be the master of passion. Then too, in Thirlby's reading, I am something at a loss what the second *it* refers to, whether to *affection* or to *passion*. The old reading, with the simple change of *sways* to *sway*, leaves no doubt on that point; and, if we take *affection* in the sense the Poet elsewhere uses it in, gives an apt and natural meaning; for it is strictly true that masters of passion do sway it, that is, passion, to the mood of its own predispositions. See foot-notes 14 and 15.

P. 193. *Why he cannot abide a gaping pig; Why he, a harmless necessary cat;*  
*Why he, a wauling bag-pipe.* — The old editions read "a *woollen* bag-pipe." It has been urged, in defence of this reading, that bag-pipes were wont to be carried or kept in woollen cases: so were fiddles; but this would hardly make it proper, or even sense, to speak of them as woollen fiddles. Johnson proposed *wooden*, and Sir John Hawkins *swollen*; which latter Steevens adopted, and is Singer's reading. Collier's second folio has *bollen*, which is an old word meaning about the same as *swollen*; and Dyce adopts that reading. *Wauling* is Capell's happy conjecture; and it is remarkable that, in our own day, both Dr. Ingleby and Mr. A. E. Brae, each independently of the other, and without being aware of Capell's conjecture, hit upon the same correction. Mason aptly notes that "it is not by the sight of the bag-pipe that the persons alluded to are affected, but by the sound."

P. 195. *To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt there.* — The old copies have *forfeiture* instead of *forfeit*. *Forfeiture* overfills the verse. The correction was made by Rowe, and was also proposed by Ritson. This scene has *forfeit* repeatedly in the sense of *forfeiture*.

P. 195. *O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog.* — The old copies read "*inexecrable dog*"; which some approve, taking the prepositive *in* as intensive. *Inexorable* in the third folio.

P. 199. *Yes, here I tender't for him in the court;*  
*Yea, thrice the sum.* — The old copies here read "*Yea, twice the summe.*" But it appears from two statements of the same point afterwards, that *thrice* is the right word.
P. 201. From which lingering penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.—So the second folio.
The earlier editions read "Of such misery," omitting the a. Jervis proposes "Of such-like misery"; Lettsom, "And searching misery."

P. 201. Whether Bassanio had not once a lover.—The old copies have "once a love." Lover was continually used for friend, and this play has it repeatedly so; but love, I think, was never used in that sense.

P. 203. I take his offer, then.—This instead of his in the old copies. The two words were very often misprinted for each other. Corrected by Capell.

P. 204. And thou hast incur'd
The danger formally by me rehearsed.—So Hanmer. Instead of formally, the old copies have formorly and formerly.

ACT V., SCENE I.

P. 210. Jess. And in such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well.—
Loren. And in such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew, &c.—So some copies of the second folio. The And at the beginning of both speeches is wanting in the other old editions.

P. 212. Loren. Sweet soul, let's in.—In the old copies the words Sweet soul are made the conclusion of Launcelot's preceding speech. Corrected by Malone.

P. 215. Peace, ho! the Moon sleeps with Endymion.—The old copies have "Peace, how the moone sleepees." The misprint of how for ho or hoa occurs repeatedly. The correction is Malone's.

P. 217. That she did give to me; whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry.—So Collier's second folio. The old text reads "did give me," omitting to, and so leaving the metre defective.
CRITICAL NOTES.

P. 217. And riveted with faith unto your flesh. — “And so riveted” in the old copies; the so having probably crept in here by mistake from the second line before.

P. 218. You give your wife too unkind cause of grief. — So Walker. The old copies have “too unkind a cause.” Such interpolations of a are very frequent, as Walker abundantly shows.

P. 221. In Summer, when the ways are fair enough. — So Collier’s second folio. The old copies have where instead of when.
THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

WITH

A LIFE OF THE POET, EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES, CRITICAL NOTES, AND A GLOSSARIAL INDEX.


BY THE

Rev. Henry N. Hudson,
Professor of Shakespeare in Boston University.

IN TWENTY VOLUMES.

Vol. IV.

BOSTON:
Published by Ginn & Heath.
1880.
Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1880, by
Henry N. Hudson,
In the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

Ginn & Heath:
J. S. Cushing, Printer, Boston.
ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

FIRST published in the folio of 1623, and among the worst-printed plays in that volume. In many places the text, as there given, is in a most unsatisfactory state, and in not a few I fear it must be pronounced incurably at fault. A vast deal of study and labour has been spent in trying to rectify the numerous errors: nearly all the editors and commentators, from Rowe downwards, have strained their faculties upon the work: many instances of corruption have indeed yielded to critical ingenuity and perseverance, and it is to be hoped that still others may; yet there are several passages that seem too hard for any legitimate efforts of corrective sagacity and skill. The matter need not be dwelt upon here, as it is set forth in detail in the Critical Notes. Of course, in a case of such extreme textual corruption, something more of scope than usual must, in all reason, be allowed to conjectural emendation.

No direct and certain contemporary notice of All's Well that Ends Well has come down to us. But the often-quoted list of Shakespeare's plays set forth by Francis Meres in his Palladis Tamia, 1598, includes a play called Love's Labours Won,—a title nowhere else given to any of the Poet's pieces. Dr. Farmer, in his Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare, 1767, first gave out the conjecture, that the two titles belonged to one and the same play; and this opinion has since been concurred or acquiesced in by so many competent critics, that it might well be allowed to pass without further argument. There is no other of the Poet's dramas to which that title applies so well, while, on the other hand, it certainly fits this play quite as well as the one it now bears. The whole play is emphatically love's labours: its main interest throughout turns on the unwearied and finally-successful
struggles of affection against the most stubborn and disheartening obstacles. It may indeed be urged that the play entitled *Love's Labours Won* has been lost; but this, it being considered what esteem the Poet's works were held in, both in his time and ever since, is so very improbable as to be hardly worth dwelling upon. There was far more likelihood that other men's dross would be fathered upon him than that any of his gold would be lost. And, in fact, contemporary publishers were so eager to make profit of his reputation, that they forged his name to various plays which most certainly had no touch of his hand.

There is, then, no reasonable doubt that this play was originally written before 1598. For myself, I have no doubt that the original writing was several years before that date; as early, perhaps, as 1592 or 1593. Coleridge, in his *Literary Remains*, holds the play to have been "originally intended as the counterpart of *Love's Labours Lost*"; and a comparison of the two naturally leads to that conclusion without any help from the title. This inward relation of the plays strongly infers them both to have been written about the same time, or in pretty near succession. Now *Love's Labours Lost* was printed in 1598, and in the title-page is said to have been "newly corrected and augmented"; and its diversities of style naturally infer a considerable interval of time between the original writing and the revisal.

It is abundantly certain, from internal evidence, that the play now in hand also underwent revisal, and this too after a much longer interval than in the case of *Love's Labours Lost*. Here the diversities of style are much more strongly marked than in that play. Accordingly it was Coleridge's decided opinion, first given out in his lectures in 1813, and again in 1818, though not found in his *Literary Remains*, that "*All's Well that Ends Well* was written at two different and rather distant periods of the Poet's life." This we learn from Collier, who heard those lectures, and who adds that Coleridge "pointed out very clearly two distinct styles, not only of thought, but of expression." The same judgment has since been enforced by Tieck and other able critics; and the grounds of it are so manifest in the play itself, that no observant reader will be apt to question it. Verplanck tells us he had formed the same opinion before he learned through
Collier what Coleridge thought on the subject; and his judgment of the matter is given as follows: "The contrast of two different modes of thought and manners of expression, here mixed in the same piece, must be evident to all who have made the shades and gradations of Shakespeare’s varying and progressive taste and mind at all a subject of study."

Some of the more recent Shakespearians are for dividing the Poet’s time of authorship into four or five distinct periods: but I am still content with the threefold division of early, middle, and later periods; as these seem to me enough for all practical purposes. In All’s Well, we have no help, outside of the play itself, towards determining at what time the revision was made, or how long a period intervened between this and the original writing. To my taste, the better parts of the workmanship relish strongly of his later style, — perhaps I should say quite as strongly as the poorer do of his early style. This would bring the revision down to as late a time as 1603 or 1604. I place the finished Hamlet at or near the close of the Poet’s middle period; and I am tolerably clear that in All’s Well he discovers a hand somewhat more practised in sinewy sternness than in the finished Hamlet. I will quote two passages by way of illustrating the Poet’s different styles as seen in this play. The first is from the dialogue of Helena and the King, in Act ii, scene 1, where she persuades him to make trial of her remedy:

The great’st Grace lending grace,
Ere twice the horses of the Sun shall bring
Their fiery torcher his diurnal ring;
Ere twice in murk and occidental damp
Moist Hesperus hath quench’d his sleepy lamp;
Or four-and-twenty times the pilot’s glass
Hath told the thievish minutes how they pass;
What is infirm from your sound parts shall fly,
Health shall live free, and sickness freely die.

Here we have the special traits of Shakespeare’s youthful style, — an air of artifice and studied finery, a certain self-conscious elaborateness and imitative rivalry, — which totally disappear in, for instance, the blessing the Countess gives her son as he is leaving for the Court:
ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

Be thou blest, Bertram! and succeed thy father
In manners, as in shape! thy blood and virtue
Contend for empire in thee, and thy goodness
Share with thy birthright! Love all, trust a few,
Do wrong to none: be able for thine enemy
Rather in power than use; and keep thy friend
Under thy own life's key: be check'd for silence,
But never tax'd for speech. What Heaven more will,
That thee may furnish, and my prayers pluck down,
Fall on thy head!

I the rather quote this latter, because of its marked resemblance to the advice Polonius gives his son in *Hamlet*. Mr. Grant White justly observes that "either the latter is an expansion of the former, or the former a reminiscence of the latter"; and I fully concur with him that the second part of the alternative is the more probable. For a broader and bulkier illustration of the point in hand, the student probably cannot do better than by comparing in full the dialogue from which the first of the forecited passages is taken with the whole of the second scene in Act i. These seem to me at least as apt and telling examples as any, of the Poet's rawest and ripest styles so strangely mixed in this play; and the difference is here so clearly pronounced, that one must be dull indeed not to perceive it.

It has indeed been urged, and truly, that the play twice be-speaks its present title; but both instances occur in just those parts which relish most of the Poet's later style. And the line in the epilogue—"*All is well ended, if this suit be won*"—may be fairly understood as intimating some connection between the two titles which the play is supposed to have borne.

The only known source from which the Poet could have borrowed any part of this play is a story in Boccaccio, entitled *Giletta di Nerbona*. In 1566 William Paynter published an English version of this tale in his *Palace of Pleasure*. Here it was, no doubt, that Shakespeare got his borrowed matter; and the following outline will show the nature and extent of his obligations.

Isnardo, Count of Rousillon, being sickly, kept in his house a physician named Gerardo of Nerbona. The count had a son named Beltramo, and the physician a daughter named Giletta,
who were brought up together. The Count dying, his son was left in the care of the King and sent to Paris. The physician also dying some while after, his daughter, who had loved the young Count so long that she knew not when her love began, sought occasion of going to Paris, that she might see him; but, being diligently looked to by her kinsfolk, because she was rich and had many suitors, she could not see her way clear. Now the King had a swelling on his breast, which through ill treatment was grown to a fistula; and, having tried all the best physicians and being only rendered worse by their efforts, he resolved to take no further counsel or help. Giletta, hearing of this, was very glad, as it suggested an apt reason for visiting Paris, and offered a chance of compassing her secret and cherished wish. Arming herself with such knowledge in the healing art as she had gathered from her father, she rode to Paris and repaired to the King, praying him to show her his disease. He consenting, as soon as she saw it she told him that, if he pleased, she would within eight days make him whole. He asked how it was possible for her, being a young woman, to do that which the best physicians in the world could not; and, thanking her for her goodwill, said he was resolved to try no more remedies. She begged him not to despise her knowledge because she was a young woman, assuring him that she ministered physic by the help of God, and with the cunning of Master Gerardo of Nerbona, who was her father. The King, hearing this, and thinking that peradventure she was sent of God, asked what might follow, if she caused him to break his resolution, and did not heal him. She said, "Let me be kept in what guard you list, and if I do not heal you let me be burnt; but, if I do, what recompense shall I have?" He answered that, since she was a maiden, he would bestow her in marriage upon a gentleman of right good worship and estimation. To this she agreed, on condition that she might have such a husband as herself should ask, without presumption to any member of his family; which he readily granted. This done, she set about her task, and before the eight days were passed he was entirely well; whereupon he told her she deserved such a husband as herself should choose, and she declared her choice of Beltramo, saying she had loved him
from her childhood. The King was very loth to grant him to her; but, because he would not break his promise, he had him called forth, and told him what had been done. The Count, thinking her stock unsuitable to his nobility, disdainfully said, "Will you, then, sir, give me a physician to wife?" The King pressing him to comply, he answered, "Sire, you may take from me all that I have, and give my person to whom you please, because I am your subject; but I assure you I shall never be contented with that marriage." To which he replied, "Well, you shall have her, for the maiden is fair and wise, and loveth you entirely; and verily you shall lead a more joyful life with her than with a lady of a greater House"; whereupon the Count held his peace. The marriage over, the Count asked leave to go home, having settled beforehand what he would do. Knowing that the Florentines and the Senois were at war, he was no sooner on horseback than he stole off to Tuscany, meaning to side with the Florentines; by whom being honourably received and made a captain, he continued a long time in their service.

His wife, hoping by her well-doing to win his heart, returned home, where, finding all things spoiled and disordered by reason of his absence, she like a sage lady carefully put them in order, making all his people very glad of her presence and loving to her person. Having done this, she sent word thereof to the Count by two knights, adding that, if she were the cause of his forsaking home, he had but to let her know it, and she, to do him pleasure, would depart thence. Now he had a ring which he greatly loved, and kept very carefully, and never took off his finger, for a certain virtue which he knew it had. When the knights came, he said to them churlishly, "Let her do what she list; for I purpose to dwell with her when she shall have this ring on her finger, and a son of mine in her arms." The knights, after trying in vain to change his purpose, returned to the lady, and told his answer; at which she was very sorrowful, and bethougth herself a good while how she might accomplish those two things. She then called together the noblest of the country, and told them what she had done to win her husband's love; that she was loth he should dwell in perpetual exile on her account; and therefore would spend the rest of her life in pilgrimages and devotion;
praying them to let him know she had left, with a purpose never to return. Then, taking with her a maid and one of her kinsmen, she set out in the habit of a pilgrim, well furnished with silver and jewels, told no one whither she was going, and rested not until she came to Florence. She put up at the house of a poor widow; and the next day, seeing her husband pass by on horseback, she asked who he was. The widow told her this, and also that he was marvellously in love with a neighbour of hers, a gentlewoman who was poor, but of right honest life and report, and dwelt with her mother, a wise and honest lady. After hearing this, she was not long in deciding what to do. Going secretly to the house, and getting a private interview with the mother, she told her whole story, and how she hoped to thrive in her undertaking, if the mother and daughter would lend their aid. In recompense she proposed to give the daughter a handsome marriage-portion; and the mother replied, "Madam, tell me wherein I may do you service; if it be honest, I will gladly perform it; and, that being done, do as it shall please you." So an arrangement was made, that the daughter should encourage the Count, and signify her readiness to grant his wish, provided he would first send her the ring he prized so highly, as a token of his love. Proceeding with great subtility as she was instructed, the daughter soon got the ring; and at the time fixed for the meeting the Countess supplied her place; the result of which was, that she became the mother of two fine boys, and so was prepared to claim her dues as a wife upon the seemingly-impossible terms which the Count himself had prescribed.

Meanwhile her husband, hearing of her departure, had returned to his country. In due time the Countess also took her journey homeward, and arrived at Montpellier, where, hearing that the Count was about to have a great party at his house, she determined to go thither in her pilgrim's weeds. Just as they were on the point of sitting down to the table, she came to the place where her husband was, and fell at his feet weeping, and said, "My lord, I am thy poor unfortunate wife, who, that thou mightest return and dwell in thy house, have been a great while begging about the world. Therefore I now beseech thee to observe the conditions which the two knights that I sent to thee
did command me to do; for behold, here in my arms, not only
one son of thine, but twain, and likewise the ring: it is now
time, if thou keep promise, that I should be received as thy
wife." The Count knew the ring, and the children also, they
were so like him, and desired her to rehearse in order how all
these things came about. When she had told her story, he knew
it to be true; and, perceiving her constant mind and good wit,
and the two fair young boys, to keep his promise, and to please
his people, and the ladies that made suit to him, he caused her
to rise up, and embraced and kissed her, and from that day forth
loved and honoured her as his wife.

From this sketch it will be seen that the Poet anglicized Bel-
tramo into Bertram, changed Giletta to Helena, and closely fol-
lowed Boccaccio in the main features of the plot so far as regards
these persons and the widow and her daughter. Beyond this,
the novel yields no hints towards the play, while the latter has
several judicious departures from the matter of the former.
Giletta is rich, and has a fine establishment of her own; which
so far reduces the social inequality between her and the Count:
Helena is poor and dependent, so that she has nothing to stand
upon but her nobility of nature and merit. Baltramo, again, has
no thought of going to Florence till after his compelled marriage;
so that his going to the war is not from any free stirring of virtue
in him, but purely to escape the presence of a wife that has been
forced upon him. With Bertram, the unwelcome marriage
comes in only as an additional spur to the execution of a purpose
already formed.

But the crowning innovation upon the matter of the tale lies in
the characters of Lafeu, the Countess, the Clown, and Parolles,
and in the comic proceedings; all which, so far as is known, are
entirely of the Poet's invention. And it is quite remarkable what
an original cast is given to his development of the borrowed
characters by the presence of these; and how in the light of
their mutual interaction the conduct of all becomes, not indeed
right or just, but consistent and clear.
ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

KING of France.
DUKE of Florence.
BERTRAM, Count of Rousillon.
LAFEU, an old Lord.
PAROLLES, a Follower of Bertram.
Several young French Lords who serve with Bertram in the Florentine War.
Steward, Servants to the Countess Clown, of Rousillon.

A Page.
Countess of Rousillon, Mother to Bertram.
HELENA, a Gentlewoman protected by the Countess.
A Widow of Florence.
DIANA, her Daughter.
VIOLENTA, Neighbors and Friends to the Widow.
MARIANA,

Lords attending on the King; Officers, Soldiers, &c., French and Florentine.

SCENE.—Partly in France, and partly in Tuscany.

__________________________________________________________

ACT I.


Enter BERTRAM, the Countess of Rousillon, HELENA, and LAFEU, all in black.

Count. In delivering my son from me, I bury a second husband.

Ber. And I, in going, madam, weep o'er my father's death anew: but I must attend his Majesty's command, to whom I am now in ward, evermore in subjection.

1 From the feudal ages down to a comparatively recent period, the heirs of great estates were, both in England and in parts of France, under the wardship of the Sovereign, who had the disposal of them even in marriage. See vol. i., page 138, note 8.
Laf. You shall find of the King a husband, madam;—you, sir, a father: he that so generally is at all times good must of necessity hold his virtue to you; whose worthiness would stir it up where it wanted,² rather than slack it where there is such abundance.

Count. What hope is there of his Majesty's amendment?

Laf. He hath abandon'd his physicians, madam; under whose practices he hath persecuted³ time with hope; and finds no other advantage in the process but only the losing of hope by time.

Count. This young gentlewoman had a father,—O, that had! how sad a passage⁴ 'tis!—whose skill was almost as great as his honesty; had it stretch'd so far, 'twould have made nature immortal, and death should have play for lack of work. Would, for the King's sake, he were living! I think it would be the death of the King's disease.

Laf. How call'd you the man you speak of, madam?

Count. He was famous, sir, in his profession, and it was his great right to be so,—Gerard de Narbon.

Laf. He was excellent indeed, madam: the King very lately spoke of him admiringly and mourningly: he was skilful enough to have lived still, if knowledge could be set up against mortality.

Ber. What is it, my good lord, the King languishes of?

Laf. A fistula, my lord.

Ber. I heard not of it before.

Laf. I would it were not notorious.—Was this gentlewoman the daughter of Gerard de Narbon?

---

² That is, would awaken or call forth virtue where virtue was wanting, or had not yet appeared. Slack for slacken. Many verbs ending in -en are used by the Poet without that ending; such as to dark, to deaf, to length, to mad, to sharp, to short, &c.

³ Persecuted in its classical sense of pursue or follow up perseveringly.

⁴ Passage is occurrence, any thing that happens or passes.
Count. His sole child, my lord; and bequeathed to my overlooking. I have those hopes of her good that her education promises: her disposition⁵ she inherits, which makes fair gifts fairer; for where an unclean mind carries virtuous qualities, there commendations go with pity,—they are virtues and traitors too:⁶ in her they are the better for their simpliceness:⁷ she derives her honesty, and achieves her goodness.⁸

Laf. Your commendations, madam, get from her tears.

Count. 'Tis the best brine a maiden can season⁹ her praise in. The remembrance of her father never approaches her heart but the tyranny of her sorrows takes all livelihood¹⁰ from her cheek.—No more of this, Helena,—go to, no

⁵ Disposition here means native aptness or tendency; what we sometimes call moral temperament. Shakespeare has, I think, no other instance of the word used just so. Perhaps the text is corrupt. See Critical Notes.

⁶ They, that is, virtuous qualities, are traitors as well as virtues, because they adorn or "sugar o'er" the unclean mind, and thus give it power to tempt and betray.

⁷ Meaning, apparently, that in her the virtues or virtuous qualities are the better for being unmixed with any innate viciousness or what is here called "an unclean mind"; a good, though uncommon, use of simpliceness.

⁸ Bacon has much the same thought in his thirteenth Essay: "Goodness I called the habit, and goodness of nature the inclination." Shakespeare often uses honest for chaste, and honesty for chastity; and such may well be the meaning here. Perhaps, however, honesty here means a certain ingenerate rectitude or harmony of nature, which instinctively finds its joy in the right, and so is held to the right by the mere sweetness of it. Such a natural aptness does indeed beautify the virtues which make up goodness, and which have to be achieved, or, in Bacon's sense, are matter of habit, not of nature. Wordsworth's Ode to Duty has some lines which may be not unfitly quoted here:

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.

⁹ Season here means preserve or keep sweet.

¹⁰ Livelihood for liveliness, or animation. So in Venus and Adonis:

"With this, she seizes on his palm, the precedent of pith and livelihood."
more; lest it be rather thought you affect a sorrow than to have it.

_Hel._ I do affect a sorrow, indeed; but I have it too.  

_Laf._ Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead; excessive grief the enemy to the living.

_Hel._ If the living be enemy to the grief, the excess makes it soon mortal.

_Laf._ How understand we that?  

_Ber._ [Kneeling.] Madam, I desire your holy wishes.

_Count._ Be thou blest, Bertram! and succeed thy father
In manners, as in shape! thy blood and virtue
Contend for empire in thee, and thy goodness
Share with thy birthright! Love all, trust a few,
Do wrong to none: be able for thine enemy
Rather in power than use; and keep thy friend
Under thy own life's key: be check'd for silence,
But never tax'd for speech. What Heaven more will,
That thee may furnish, and my prayers pluck down,
Fall on thy head!—[To LAFEU.] Farewell, my lord: 'tis an
Unseason'd courtier; good my lord, advise him.

_Laf._ He cannot want the best that shall attend
His love.

_Count._ Heaven bless him!—Farewell, Bertram. [Exit.

_Ber._ [To HELENA.] The best wishes that can be forged

11 Helena's sorrow seems or is taken to be for the loss of her father; in that sense it is affected; but it is really for the departure of Bertram.

12 Helena's speech is purposely equivocal and enigmatical; and the sagacious old lord at once perceives that her words mean something more than meets the ear. Mortal was used in two senses,—for deadly, or that which kills, and for perishable, or that which dies. Helena uses it in both senses at the same time; and her chief meaning seems to be, that the grief of her unrequited love for Bertram makes mortal, that is, kills the grief that she felt for her father's death.

13 That is, may fit thee out, or accomplish thee, with noble qualities. So in King Henry VIII., i. 2: "His training such, that he may furnish and instruct great teachers, and never seek aid out of himself."
in your thoughts be servants to you! 14 Be comfortable 15 to
my mother, your mistress, and make much of her.

Laf. Farewell, pretty lady: you must hold the credit of
your father. [Exeunt Bertram and Lafeu.

Hel. O, were that all! I think not on my father;
And these great tears grace his remembrance more
Than those I shed for him. 16 What was he like?
I have forgot him: my imagination
Carries no favour in it but Bertram’s.
I am undone: there is no living, none,
If Bertram be away. It were all one,
That I should love a bright particular star,
And think to wed it, he is so above me:
In his bright radiance and collateral light
Must I be comforted, not in his sphere.
Th’ ambition in my love thus plagues itself:
The hind that would be mated by the lion
Must die for love. ’Twas pretty, though a plague,
To see him every hour; to sit and draw
His archèd brows, his hawking eye, his curls,
In our heart’s table, 17—heart too capable

14 “May you be mistress of your wishes, and have power to bring them
   to effect.” One of the Poet’s significant droppings: Bertram, without mean-
   ing it, prays for the success which Helena finally achieves in winning him to
   herself.

15 Comfortable in the active sense of comforting or giving comfort. The
   Poet has it repeatedly so; also various other like words, as disputable for
   disputations, and medicinal for medicinal. Bacon, in his essay Of De-
   formity, uses deceived in the same way for deceptive: “It is good to con-
   sider of deformity, not as a sign which is more deceived, but as a cause
   which seldom faileth of the effect.”

16 “These tears of mine, which others impute to sorrow for the death of
   my father, but which really spring from grief at the departure of Bertram,
   do more honour to the memory of my father than those I actually shed for
   him.”

17 Table for that on which a picture is painted. So in King John, i. 2:
   “I beheld myself drawn in the flattering table of her eye.”
Of every line and trick of his sweet favour: 18
But now he's gone, and my idolatrous fancy
Must sanctify his relics. Who comes here?
One that goes with him: I love him for his sake;
And yet I know him a notorious liar,
Think him a great way fool, solely a coward; 19
Yet these fix'd evils sit so fit in him,
That they take place, 20 when virtue's steely bones 21
Look bleak i' the wind: withal, full oft we see
Cold wisdom waiting on superfluous folly. 22

Enter Parolles.

Par. Save you, fair queen!
Hel. And you, monarch! 23
Par. No.
Hel. And no.
Par. Are you meditating on virginity?

18 Every line and trait, or peculiarity, of his countenance. So in King
John, i. 1: "He hath a trick of Cœur-de-Lion's face." Also in King Lear,
iv. 6: "The trick of that voice I do well remember." — Capable is susceptible,
or apt to receive.
19 Altogether a coward, or an unmitigable coward.
20 Are invited or allowed to sit by the fire, or are received into a place
where comfort dwells. Evils is here used for vices.
21 Shakespeare seems to have been rather fond of the idea, that virtue
has so much support and comfort in itself, in the strength and toughness of
its bones, that it does not mind roughnesses of climate and usage, and even
delights in steeling or hardening itself against them. So in Cymbeline, iii. 6:
"Plenty and peace breeds cowards; hardness ever of hardiness is mother." See
Critical Notes.
22 Cold in the sense of chilled, and because comparatively naked or bare.
Also superfluous in the antithetic sense of overclothed. So in King Lear,
ii. 4: "Our basest beggars are in the poorest thing superfluous"; where the
context ascertains superfluous to mean overclothed. See Critical Notes.
23 Monarch is probably used here merely as a sportive rejoinder to
queen. See vol. iii., page 163, note 135. Some, however, take it as alluding to
a crazy roll of Italian bombast, much noted in London, who imagined him-
self to be "sole monarch of the universal Earth." See vol. ii., page 46,
note 9.
Hel. Ay. You have some stain\(^{24}\) of soldier in you: let me ask you a question. Man is enemy to virginity; how may we barricado it against him?

Par. Keep him out.

Hel. But he assails; and our virginity, though valiant in the defence, yet is weak: unfold to us some warlike resistance.

Par. There is none: man, sitting down before you, will undermine you, and blow you up.

Hel. Bless our poor virginity from underminers and blowers-up! Is there no military policy, how virgins might blow up men?

Par. Virginity being blown down, man will quicklier be blown up: marry, in blowing him down again, with the breach yourselves made, you lose your city. It is not politic in the commonwealth of Nature to preserve virginity. Loss of virginity is rational increase; and there was never virgin got till virginity was first lost. That you were made of, is metal to make virgins. Virginity, by being once lost, may be ten times found; by being ever kept, it is ever lost: 'tis too cold a companion; away with't!

Hel. I will stand for't a little, though therefore I die a virgin.

Par. There's little can be said in't; 'tis against the rule of Nature. To speak on the part of virginity, is to accuse your mothers; which is most infallible disobedience. He that hangs himself is a virgin:\(^{25}\) virginity murders itself; and should be buried in highways, out of all sanctified limit,\(^{26}\) as

\(^{24}\) *Stain* for *tincture, colour, or, as we should say, smack.*

\(^{25}\) Meaning, he that hangs himself is *like* a virgin,—like in this, that both are self-destroyers.

\(^{26}\) By an ancient law of the Church, suicides were in fact excluded from consecrated ground, and condemned to be buried in the highways. Of course this was with a view to prevent self-murder. It is said that the Roman women, in the good days of the Republic, were at one time so pos-
a desperate offendress against Nature. Virginity breeds mites, much like a cheese; consumes itself to the very paring, and so dies with feeding his own stomach. Besides, virginity is peevish, proud, idle, made of self-love, which is the most inhibited sin in the canon. Keep it not; you cannot choose but lose by't: out with't! within one year it will make itself two, which is a goodly increase; and the principal itself not much the worse: away with't?

_Hel._ How might one do, sir, to lose it to her own liking?

_Par._ Let me see: Marry, ill, to like him that ne'er likes it. 'Tis a commodity will lose the gloss with lying; the longer kept, the less worth: off with't while 'tis vendible; answer the time of request. Virginity, like an old courtier, wears her cap out of fashion; richly suited, but unsuitable: just like the brooch and the toothpick, which wear not now. Your date is better in your pie and your porridge than in your cheek: and your virginity, your old virginity, is like one of our French wither'd pears,—it looks ill, it eats dryly; marry, 'tis a wither'd pear; it was formerly better; marry, yet tis a wither'd pear: will you any thing with it?

sessed with an epidemic of suicide, that the Senate took the matter up, and passed an order that in case any woman killed herself, her body should be exposed, naked, in public. The alarming evil was stopped at once.

27 Inhibited is the same as prohibited, forbidden.

28 There is an equivoque in "out with't," which is used in the two senses of get rid of it and put it out at interest.

29 Parolles plays on liking: she would do ill to lose her virginity in liking him who would destroy it, and so likes it not.

30 A rather singular use of wear; but meaning "which are not worn now," or not in fashion now. I have often heard the phrase, "Such is not the wear now," used in the same sense.

31 A quibble on date, which meant both age and a well-known candied fruit then used in pies, as raisins are now.

32 To make it harmonize with what precedes, yet must here be taken in the sense of now. And such is sometimes its meaning. Helen uses it, just after, in the ordinary sense.—This long strain of foulness and stupidity is undoubtedly an interpolation. Helen's next speech ought to follow directly.
Hel. Not my virginity yet. — You're for the Court:
There shall your master have a thousand loves,
A maunter, and a mistress, and a friend,
A phénix, captain, and an enemy,
A guide, a goddess, and a sovereign,
A counsellor, a traitress, and a dear;
His humble ambition, proud humility,
His jarring concord, and his discord dulcet,
His faith, his sweet disaster; with a world
Of pretty, fond-adoptious christendoms,
That blinking Cupid gossips. Now shall he—
I know not what he shall: God send him well!
The Court's a learning-place; and he is one—

Par. What one, i'faith?

Hel. — that I wish well. 'Tis pity—

Par. What's pity?

Hel. — That wishing well had not a body in't,
Which might be felt; that we, the poorer born,
Whose baser stars do shut us up in wishes,
Might wi' th' effects of them follow our friends,

after, "Are you meditating on virginity?" and the opening ought to be "Not on virginity yet." See Critical Notes.

33 Maunter is an old provincial word for a young girl or maid; said to be from the Danish moer. So, in Ben Jonson's play, The Alchemist, iv. 4, Kastrill, speaking to Face, his sister, says, "Away! you talk like a foolish maunter." See Critical Notes.

34 That is, many fanciful and fondly-adopted appellations or Christian names, to which blind Cupid stands godfather. The verb to gossip is formed from God and sib, and properly means kindred in God: hence sponsors in baptism were termed gossips. See vol. i., page 147, note 22. — Christendom was often used for christening. So in Bishop Corbet's verses to Lord Mordaunt:

One, were be, well examin'd, and made looke
His name in his own parish and church booke,
Could hardly prove his christendome.

35 The Poet often has a double elision of with and the, to make the two coalesce into one syllable.
And show what we alone must think; which never
Returns us thanks.

Enter a Page.

Page. Monsieur Parolles, my lord calls for you. [Exit.
Par. Little Helen, farewell: if I can remember thee, I
will think of thee at Court.
Hel. Monsieur Parolles, you were born under a charitable
star.
Par. Under Mars, I.
Hel. I especially think, under Mars.
Par. Why under Mars?
Hel. The wars have so kept you under, that you must
needs be born under Mars.
Par. When he was predominant.
Hel. When he was retrograde, I think, rather.
Par. Why think you so?
Hel. You go so much backward when you fight.
Par. That’s for advantage.
Hel. So is running away, when fear proposes the safety:
but the composition, that your valour and fear make in you,
is a virtue of a good wing, and I like the wear well.
Par. I am so full of businesses, I cannot answer thee
acutely. I will return perfect courtier; in the which my in-
struction shall serve to naturalize thee, so thou wilt be capable
of a courtier’s counsel, and understand what advice shall thrust
upon thee; else thou diest in thine unthankfulness, and thine
ignorance makes thee away: farewell. When thou hast leis-
sure, say thy prayers; when thou hast money, remember thy
friends: get thee a good husband, and use him as he uses
thee: so, farewell.

Hel. Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,

36 A term in falconry. "A bird of good wing" was a bird of swift and
strong flight.—"I like the wear well" is said with a dash of irony.
Which we ascribe to Heaven: the fated sky
Gives us free scope; only doth backward pull
Our slow designs when we ourselves are dull.
What power is it which mounts my love so high;
That makes me see, and cannot feed mine eye?
The mightiest space in fortune Nature brings
To join like likes, and kiss like native things.
Impossible be strange attempts to those
That weigh their pains in sense; and do suppose
What hath not been can't be. Who ever strove
To show her merit, that did miss her love?
The King's disease,—my project may deceive me,
But my intents are fix'd, and will not leave me. [Exit.

SCENE II.—Paris. A Room in the King's Palace.

Flourish of cornets. Enter the King of France with letters;
Lords and others attending.

King. The Florentines and Senoys¹ are by th' ears;
Have fought with equal fortune, and continue
A braving war.²

1 Lord. So 'tis reported, sir.

¹ That is, the decrees of Providence give us free scope. Fated for fateful or fating; the passive form with the active sense.
² "The mightiest space in fortune" is used, rather boldly, for persons the farthest separated in fortune. So, in Cymbeline, i. 3, we have, "the diminution of space," meaning the seeming diminution caused by distance. Likes is used for equals, and "native things" for things of the same nativity or birth. So that the meaning of the whole seems to be, "Nature brings those who are farthest asunder in fortune to join like equals, and causes them to meet as things bred out of the same stock."
³ Extraordinary attempts seem impossible to those who weigh their labours in the scales of common sense, or who measure exceptional cases by ordinary experience.
⁴ The Siennese are called Senoys in the novel on which this play was partly founded. Sienna was the name of one of the small Italian States.
² Braving is defiant, or using bravado.
King. Nay, 'tis most credible; we here receive it
A certainty, vouch'd from our cousin Austria,
With caution, that the Florentine will move us
For speedy aid; wherein our dearest friend
Prejudicates the business, and would seem
To have us make denial.

1 Lord. His love and wisdom,
Approved so to your Majesty, may plead
For ampest credence.

King. He hath arm'd our answer,
And Florence is denied before he comes:
Yet, for our gentlemen that mean to see
The Tuscan service, freely have they leave
To stand on either part.

2 Lord. It well may serve
A nursery to our gentry, who are sick
For breathing and exploit.

King. What's he comes here?

Enter Bertram, Lafeu, and Parolles.

1 Lord. It is the Count Rousillon, my good lord,
Young Bertram.

King. Youth, thou bear'st thy father's face;
Frank Nature, rather curious than in haste,
Hath well composed thee. Thy father's moral parts
Mayst thou inherit too! Welcome to Paris.

Ber. My thanks and duty are your Majesty's.

King. I would I had that corporal soundness now
As when thy father and myself in friendship
First tried our soldiership! He did look far
Into the service of the time, and was

---

8 Breathing is exercise or action. So in ii. 3: "Thou wast created for men to breathe themselves upon thee." See vol. iii., page 79, note 8.

4 Curious for careful, exact, or pains-taking. See vol. ii., page 223, note 5.
sculpted of the bravest:⁵ he lasted long;
on us both did haggish age steal on,⁶
wore us out of act. It much repairs⁷ me
to talk of your good father. In his youth
He had the wit, which I can well observe
To-day in our young lords; but they may jest,
Till their own scorn return to them unnoted,
Ere they can hide their levity in humour
So like a courtier: contempt nor bitterness
Were in his pride, or sharpness;⁸ if they were,
His equal had awaked them; and his honour,
Clock to itself, knew the true minute when
Exception bid him speak, and at this time
His tongue obey'd his hand:⁹ who were below him
He used as creatures of a nobler place;
And bow'd his eminent top to their low ranks,
Making them proud, as his nobility
In their poor praise he humbled. Such a man
Might be a copy to these younger times;
Which, follow'd well, would démonstrate them now
But goers backward.

Ber.

His good remembrance, sir,¹
lies richer in your thoughts than on his tomb;
So in approof¹⁰ lives not his epitaph
As in your royal speech.

⁶ Trained or instructed by the bravest.
⁶ This doubling of the preposition, on — on, occurs repeatedly.
⁷ Repairs is renovates or rejuvénates.
⁸ The meaning is, neither contempt nor bitterness nor sharpness were in
his pride. So arranged for metre's sake.
⁹ "His hand," for its hand, its not being then an accepted word. The fig-
ure of a clock is kept up. The tongue of the clock speaks the hour to which
the hand points on the dial.
¹⁰ Approof for approval or approbation. A common usage. The mean-
ing seems to be, "His worth is not so highly expressed in the record of his
actions as in your royal praise."
King. Would I were with him! He would always say,—
Methinks I hear him now; his plausible words
He scatter'd not in ears, but grafted them,
To grow there, and to bear,—Let me not live,—
Thus his good melancholy oft began,
On the catastrophe and heel of pastime,
When it was out,—Let me not live, quoth he,
After my flame lacks oil, to be the snuff
Of younger spirits, whose apprehensive senses
All but new things disdain; whose judgments are
Mere fathers of their garments; whose constancies
Expire before their fashions. This he wish'd:
I, after him, do after him wish too,
Since I nor wax nor honey can bring home,
I quickly were dissolv'd from my hive,
To give some labourer room.

2 Lord. You're lov'd, sir;
They that least lend it you shall lack you first.

King. I fill a place, I know't.—How long is't, count,
Since the physician at your father's died?
He was much famed.

Ber. Some six months since, my lord.

King. If he were living, I would try him yet;—
Lend me an arm;—the rest have worn me out
With several applications: nature and sickness
Debate it at their leisure. Welcome, count;
My son's no dearer.

Ber. Thank your Majesty. [Exeunt. Flourish.

11 Plausible is evidently used here in a passive sense for approvable, or
that which is or ought to be applauded. So in Hamlet i. 4: "Or by some
habit, that too much o'er-leavens the form of plausible manners."

12 This, if it be the right text, must mean when the pastime was over or
at an end. See Critical Notes.

13 "Who exercise their minds or faculties in nothing but devising new
modes or styles of dress."
Scene III. — Rousillon. A Room in the House of the Countess.

Enter the Countess, Steward, and Clown.¹

Count. I will now hear: what say you of this gentlewoman?

Stew. Madam, the care I have had to even your content,² I wish might be found in the calendar of my past endeavours: for then we wound our modesty, and make foul the clearness of our deservings, when of ourselves we publish them.

Count. What does this knave here? — Get you gone, sirrah: the complaints I have heard of you I do not all believe: 'tis my slowness that I do not; for I know you lack not folly to commit them, and have ability enough to make such knaveries yours.

Clo. 'Tis not unknown to you, madam, I am a poor fellow.

Count. Well, sir.

Clo. No, madam, 'tis not so well that I am poor; though many of the rich are damn'd: but, if I may have your ladyship's good-will to go to the world,³ Isbel your woman and I will do as we may.

Count. Wilt thou needs be a beggar?

Clo. I do beg your good-will in this case.

¹ The Clown in this play is an "allowed Fool," or jester of the same sort as Touchstone in As You Like It. In Shakespeare's time, and for ages before, such Fools were kept in great Houses, to promote merriment. They were privileged to crack jokes with and upon all ranks of persons.

² To even one's content is to equal his desires, or to do what will content him. So in Cymbeline: "We'll even all that good time will give us."

³ "Going to the world" is an old phrase for getting married, in contradiction to adopting a religious life, or going to the Church, which implied a vow of celibacy. So in Much Ado, ii. 1: "Thus goes every one to the world but I; I may sit in a corner, and cry Heigh-ho for a husband."
Count. In what case?
Clo. In Isbel's case and mine own. Service is no heritage: and I think I shall never have the blessing of God till I have issue o' my body; for they say barns⁴ are blessings.

Count. Tell me thy reason why thou wilt marry.

Clo. My poor body, madam, requires it: I am driven on by the flesh; and he must needs go that the Devil drives.

Count. Is this all your Worship's reason?

Clo. Faith, madam, I have other holy reasons, such as they are.

Count. May the world know them?

Clo. I have been, madam, a wicked creature, as you and all flesh and blood are; and, indeed, I do marry that I may repent.

Count. Thy marriage,—sooner than thy wickedness.

Clo. I am out o' friends, madam; and I hope to have friends for my wife's sake.

Count. Such friends are thine enemies, knave.

Clo. You're shallow, madam; e'en great friends; for the knaves come to do that for me which I am a- weary of. He that ears⁵ my land spares my team, and gives me leave to inn the crop; if I be his cuckold, he's my drudge. He that comforts my wife is the cherisher of my flesh and blood; he that cherishes my flesh and blood loves my flesh and blood; he that loves my flesh and blood is my friend: ergo, he that kisses my wife is my friend. If men could be contented to be what they are, there were no fear in marriage; for young Chairbonne the Puritan and old Poisson the Papist,⁶ how-

⁴ Barns is a corruption, or another form, of the Scottish word hairns. children. The saying referred to probably grew from the passage in the 127th Psalm: "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them."

⁵ To ear is to plough or to till. Much used in the Poet's time, and occurring repeatedly in the English Bible; as in 1 Samuel, viii. 12: "And will set them to ear his grounds, and to reap his harvest."

⁶ Poisson and Chairbonne are French words here turned into proper
SCENE III.  ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

some'er their hearts are sever'd in religion, their heads are both one; they may joll horns together, like any deer i' the herd.

Count. Wilt thou ever be a foul-mouth'd and calumnious knave?

Clo. A prophet I, madam; and I speak the truth the next way: 7

For I the ballad will repeat,
    Which men full true shall find;
Your marriage comes by destiny,
    Your cuckoo sings by kind. 8

Count. Get you gone, sir; I'll talk with you more anon.

Stew. May it please you, madam, that he bid Helen come to you: of her I am to speak.

Count. Sirrah, tell my gentlewoman I would speak with her; Helen I mean.

Clo. Was this fair face, quoth she, the cause
    Why th' Grecians sacked Troy?
Fond done, 9 done fond, good sooth, it was,
    Was this King Priam's joy.

names; the former meaning fasting or fish-eating; the latter, fast-denying or rich-feeding, from chair bonne or bonne chair. Shakespeare had in mind, no doubt, the old French proverb, "Young flesh and old fish are the daintiest." So that the Clown's meaning is, that all men, the best and the worst together, be their religion what it may, share the same fate; all are destined alike to have their heads trimmed with the ideal horns. See vol. ii., page 47, note 11.

7 "The next way" is the nearest way.—The Clown implies a quibble on his title of Fool; and, in calling himself a prophet, refers to the ancient belief that natural fools have something of prophetic inspiration in them, on which account they were held sacred.

8 Kind for nature, the old meaning of the word. See vol. iii., page 131, note 15.—The Clown here gives a new version of an old proverb. In Grange's Garden, 1577, it runs thus:

    Contente yourself as well as I, let reason rule your minde;
    As cuckoldes come by destinie, so cuckoldes sing by kinde.

9 Fond for fondly, and in the sense of foolishly; as the word is commonly
ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

ACT I.

With that she sigh'd as she stood,
With that she sigh'd as she stood,
And gave this sentence then:
Among nine bad if one be good,
Among nine bad if one be good,
There's yet one good in ten.

Count. What one good in ten? you corrupt the song, sirrah.

Clo. One good woman in ten, madam; which is a purifying o' the song. Would God would serve the world so all the year! we'd find no fault with the tithe-woman, if I were the parson: one in ten, quoth 'a! an we might have a good woman born but for every blazing star, or at an earthquake, 'twould mend the lottery well: a man may draw his heart out, ere 'a pluck one.

Count. You'll be gone, sir knave, and do as I command you?

Clo. That man should be at woman's command, and yet no hurt done! Though honesty be no Puritan, yet it will do one's part; it will wear the surplice of humility over the used by Shakespeare.—Good sooth is equivalent to good faith or in truth. —The verb was is repeated in accordance with a usage very frequent in old ballads.—The Clown here recites, and probably corrupts, or alters, a fragment of a ballad on the fall of Troy, meaning, perhaps, to intimate that he has some inkling of the purposed conversation about Helena.

10 The lines which the Clown is charged with corrupting were conjectured by Warburton to have run something thus:

If one be bad amongst nine good,
There's but one bad in ten.

11 The meaning probably is, "Though honesty be no Puritan, yet it will act as the Puritans do: it will comply with the law outwardly in token of its humility," &c. The allusion is to the controversy touching such things as kneeling at the Communion, the ring in marriage, and especially the use of the surplice as an official vestment in the public services of the Church. This controversy was running very high in the Poet's time; all were interested in it: so that the allusion would be generally understood. The Puritans
black gown of a big heart. I am going, forsooth: the business is for Helen to come hither. [Exit.

Count. Well, now.

Stew. I know, madam, you love your gentlewoman entirely.

Count. Faith, I do: her father bequeath'd her to me; and she herself, without other advantage, may lawfully make title to as much love as she finds: there is more owing her than is paid; and more shall be paid her than she'll demand.

Stew. Madam, I was very late more near her than I think she wish'd me: alone she was, and did communicate to herself her own words to her own ears; she thought, I dare vow for her, they touch'd not any stranger sense. Her matter was, she loved your son: Fortune, she said, was no goddess, that had put such difference betwixt their two estates; Love no god, that would not extend his might, only where qualities were level; Diana no queen of virgins, that would suffer her poor knight surprised,¹² without rescue in the first assault, or ransom afterward. This she deliver'd in the most bitter touch of sorrow that e'er I heard virgin exclaim in: which I held my duty speedily to acquaint you withal; sithence,¹³ in the loss that may happen, it concerns you something to know it.

abominated the surplice as a rag of iniquity, and were great sticklers for the black gown, which was to them the symbol of Calvinism. Some of them, however, yielded so far as to wear the surplice over the gown, because their consciences would not suffer them to officiate without the latter, nor the law of the Church without the former.

¹² Meaning, of course, "to be surprised." The words to be were often left understood in such cases, whether in prose or verse. So in Greene's Penelope's Web, 1601, quoted by Dyce: "Least we should be spotted with the staine of ingratitude in suffering the princesse injury unrevelenged." And in Drayton's Harmonie of the Church, 1591: "And suffer not their mouthes shut up, oh Lord!"—"Diana's knights" was a common poetical appellation of virgins.

¹³ Sithence is the old unabridged form of since. It occurs continually in Hooker. Shakespeare has it again in Coriolanus, iii. 3.
Count. You have discharged this honestly; keep it to yourself: many likelihoods inform'd me of this before, which hung so tottering in the balance, that I could neither believe nor misdoubt. Pray you, leave me: stall this in your bosom; and I thank you for your honest care: I will speak with you further anon.—

[Exit Steward.

Even so it was with me when I was young:
If we are Nature's, these are ours; this thorn
Doth to our rose of youth rightly belong;
Our blood to us, this to our blood is born.
It is the show and seal of Nature's truth,
Where love's strong passion is impress'd in youth:
By our remembrances of days foregone,
Such were not faults, or then we thought them none.

Enter Helena.

Her eye is sick on't: I observe her now.

Hel. What is your pleasure, madam?

Count. You know, Helen, I am a mother to you.

Hel. Mine honourable mistress.

Count. Nay, a mother?

Why not a mother? When I said a mother,
Methought you saw a serpent: what's in mother,
That you start at it? I say, I am your mother;
And put you in the catalogue of those
That were enwomb'd mine: 'tis often seen
Adoption strives with nature; and choice breeds
A native slip to us from foreign seeds:
You ne'er oppress'd me with a mother's groan,

14 That is, such things as those referred to just before.—The Countess, so benignantly recalling and revering the dreams of her youth, is a good illustration of Wordsworth's well-known lines,

The Child is father of the Man
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.
Yet I express to you a mother's care:
God's mercy, maiden! does it curd thy blood,
'To say, I am thy mother? What's the matter,
That this distemper'd messenger of wet,
The many-colour'd Iris, rounds thine eye?
Why,—that you are my daughter?

_Hel._ That I am not.

_Count._ I say, I am your mother.

_Hel._ Pardon, madam;
The Count Rousillon cannot be my brother:
I am from humble, he from honour'd name;
No note upon my parents, his all noble:
My master, my dear lord he is; and I
His servant live, and will his vassal die:
He must not be my brother.

_Count._ Nor I your mother?

_Hel._ You are my mother, madam; would you were—
So that my lord your son were not my brother—
Indeed my mother! or were you both our mothers,15
I care no more for than I do for Heaven,
So I were not his sister. Can't no other,
But I your daughter, he must be my brother?

_Count._ Yes, Helen, you might be my daughter-in-law:
God shield, you mean it not! _daughter_ and _mother_
So strive upon your pulse. What, pale again?
My fear hath catch'd your fondness: now I see
The mystery of your loneliness, and find
Your salt tears' head:16 now to all sense 'tis gross
You love my son; invention is ashamed,
Against the proclamation of thy passion,

---

15 "Both our mothers" for mother of us both. — "I care no more for than" is purposely ambiguous; but she means "I care as much for as." — "Can't no other means is there, or can there be, no other way?"

16 Head for spring, source, or cause.
To say thou dost not: therefore tell me true;
But tell me then, 'tis so; for, look, thy cheeks
Confess it, th' one to th' other; and thine eyes
See it so grossly shown in thy behaviours,
That in their kind they speak it: 17 only sin
And hellish obstinacy tie thy tongue,
That truth should be suspected. Speak, is't so?
If it be so, you've wound a goodly clew;
If it be not, forswear't: howe'er, I charge thee,
As Heaven shall work in me for thine avail,
To tell me truly.

Hel. Good madam, pardon me!

Count. Do you love my son?

Hel. Your pardon, noble mistress!

Count. Love you my son?

Hel. Do not you love him, madam?

Count. Go not about; my love hath in't a bond,
Whereof the world takes note: come, come, disclose
The state of your affection; for your passions
Have to the full appeach'd. 18

Hel. Then I confess,
Here on my knee, before high Heaven and you,
That before you, and next unto high Heaven,
I love your son.
My friends were poor, but honest; so's my love:
Be not offended; for it hurts not him,
That he is loved of me: I follow him not
By any token of presumptuous suit;
Nor would I have him till I do deserve him;
Yet never know how that desert should be.

17 "In their kind" is in their way, their language, or as it is their nature to speak. See page 27, note 8.
18 Appeach'd is informed, accused, or given evidence. The verb to peach or appeach was used for what we call "turning State's evidence."
SCENE III.  ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

I know I love in vain, strive against hope;
Yet in this captious and intenible sieve
I still pour in the waters of my love,
And lack not to lose still: 20 thus, Indian-like,
Religious in mine error, I adore
The Sun, that looks upon his worshipper,
But knows of him no more. My dearest madam,
Let not your hate encounter with my love,
For loving where you do: but, if yourself,
Whose aged honour cites a virtuous youth,
Did ever, in so true a flame of liking,
Wish chastely, and love dearly, that your Dian
Was both herself and Love; 21 O, then give pity
To her, whose state is such, that cannot choose
But lend and give, where she is sure to lose;
That seeks not to find that her search implies,
But, riddle-like, lives sweetly where she dies!

Count. Had you not lately an intent — speak truly —
To go to Paris?

Hel. Madam, I had.

Count. Wherefore? tell true.

19 Intenible for unretentive, unholding; another instance of the passive form with the active sense. See page 15, note 15.—Captious is explained by some as a shortened form of capacious, meaning receptive. Singer thinks, and rightly, I suspect, that it is used in the sense of the Latin captious for deceptive, fallacious. "The allusion," says he, "is to Bertram, upon whom Helen pours out the stream of her affections, and who certainly does not receive the love she bestows upon him." And he thinks the Poet had in his mind the story of the Danaïdes, which has been thus moralized: "These Virgins, who in the flower of their age pour water into pierced vessels which they can never fill, what is it but to be always bestowing our love on the ungrateful?"

20 That is, lack not a supply to lose still.

21 "A flame so true, that the Goddess of Chastity, whom you worshipped, and the Goddess of Love, were to you one and the same." A very noble thought; as, indeed, every thing in the mind and heart of this heroine is noble.
**Hel.** I will tell truth; by grace itself, I swear. You know my father left me some prescriptions Of rare and proved effects, such as his reading And manifold experience had collected For general sovereignty; and that he will'd me In heedfull'st reservation to bestow them, As notes, whose faculties inclusive were More than they were in note: amongst the rest, There is a remedy, approved, set down, To cure the desperate languishings whereof The King is render'd lost.

**Count.** This was your motive For Paris, was it? speak.

**Hel.** My lord your son made me to think of this; Else Paris, and the medicine, and the King, Had from the conversation of my thoughts Haply been absent then.

**Count.** But think you, Helen, If you should tender your supposed aid, He would receive it? he and his physicians Are of a mind; he, that they cannot help him; They, that they cannot help: how shall they credit A poor unlearn'd virgin, when the schools, Embowell'd of their doctrine, have left off The danger to itself?

---

22 The meaning probably is, that their included and actual virtues and efficacies were greater than they plainly expressed; so that an unpractised or an unlearned eye would not take note how much they contained. Of course there is something of verbal play in notes and note. But the Poet repeatedly uses note for knowledge. So in King Lear, iii. i: “Sir, I do know you; and dare, upon the warrant of my note, commend a dear thing to you.”

23 Is reported or represented to be lost. So in As You Like It, iv. iii: “And he did render him the most unnatural that lived 'mongst men.”

24 “Embowell'd of their doctrine” is exhausted of their learning.
SCENE I.    ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

Hel.    There's something hints,
More than my father's skill, which was the greatest
Of his profession, that his good receipt
Shall, for my legacy, be sanctified
By th'25 luckiest stars in heaven: and, would your Honour
But give me leave to try success,26 I'd venture
This well-lost life of mine on's Grace's cure
By such a day and hour.

Count.    Dost thou believe't?

Hel.    Ay, madam, knowingly.

Count.    Why, Helen, thou shalt have my leave and love,
Means and attendants, and my loving greetings
To those of mine in Court: I'll stay at home,
And pray God's blessing unto thy attempt:
Be gone to-morrow; and be sure of this,
What I can help thee to, thou shalt not miss.        [Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I. — Paris.    A Room in the King's Palace.

Flourish.    Enter the King, with divers young Lords taking
leave for the Florentine war; Bertram, Parolles, and
Attendants.

King.    Farewell, young lord; these warlike principles
Do not throw from you: — and you, my lord, farewell: —
Share the advice betwixt you; if both gain all,
The gift doth stretch itself as 'tis received,
And is enough for both.

1 Lord.    It is our hope, sir,

25 The Poet often thus elides the, so as to make it coalesce with the preceding word. So we have for th', from th', to th', why th', and others.
26 That is, try the sequence, issue, or result. So the Poet often uses success.
After well-enter'd soldiers, to return
And find your Grace in health.

King. No, no, it cannot be; and yet my heart
Will not confess he owes the malady
That doth my life besiege. Farewell, young lords;
Whether I live or die, be you the sons
Of worthy Frenchmen: let higher Italy—
Those 'bated that inherit but the fall
Of the last monarchy—see that you come
Not to woo honour, but to wed it; when
The bravest questant shrinks, find what you seek,
That fame may cry you loud: I say, farewell.

2 Lord. Health, at your bidding, serve your Majesty!

King. Those girls of Italy, take heed of them:
They say, our French lack language to deny,
If they demand: beware of being captives,
Before you serve.

Both Lords. Our hearts receive your warnings.

King. Farewell.—Come hither to me.

[Exit, led out by Attendants.

1 Lord. O my sweet lord, that you will stay behind us!
Par. 'Tis not his fault, the spark.

2 Lord. O, 'tis brave wars!
Par. Most admirable: I have seen those wars.

1 That is, after being well initiated as soldiers.
2 The King means, apparently, that he is still heart-whole; that his spirits do not quail under the conviction that he must soon die. Owses for owns or has; as continually in these plays.
3 Abated or 'bated, if the text be right, is probably to be taken in the sense of cast down or humbled. The verb to abate was often used thus. So, in Coriolanus, iii. 3, we have, “most abated captives”; and in The Warres of Cyrus, 1594: “Those markes of pride shall be abated Downe.” So that the meaning of the passage seems to be, “Let upper Italy, where you are going to act, see that you come to gain honour; those being subdued that inherit but the ruins of their former State.” The last monarchy probably refers to the Roman Empire.
Ber. I am commanded here, and kept a coil with,—Too young, and the next year, and 'tis too early.

Par. An thy mind stand to't, boy, steal away bravely.

Ber. I shall stay here the forehorse to a smock, Creaking my shoes on the plain masonry, Till honour be bought up, and no sword worn But one to dance with! By Heaven, I'll steal away.

1 Lord. There's honour in the theft.

Par. Commit it, count.

2 Lord. I am your accessory; and so, farewell.

Ber. I grow to you, and our parting is as a tortured body.

1 Lord. Farewell, captain.

2 Lord. Sweet Monsieur Parolles!

Par. Noble heroes, my sword and yours are kin. Good sparks and lustrous, a word, good metals: You shall find in the regiment of the Spinii one Captain Spurio, with his cica-trice, an emblem of war, here on his sinister cheek; it was this very sword entrench'd it: say to him, I live; and observe his reports for me.

2 Lord. We shall, noble captain.

Par. Mars dote on you for his novices! [Exeunt Lords.]

—What will ye do?

Ber. Stay; the King.

4 Coil is ado, bustle, or fuss. To be kept a coil with probably means to be pestered with fussing care and attention. See vol. i., page 171, note 12.

5 The forehorse of a team was wont to be gaily tricked out with tufts and ribands and bells. Bertram spurns the idea of being pranked up like such a beast, to squire ladies at the Court.

6 In Shakespeare's time, gentlemen danced with swords at their side; and, as the manly weapon of that ilk was apt to be in their way, fancy swords, short and light, were made for the purpose.

7 Spurio is a Spanish word; and, taking it in its proper meaning, we shall make Captain Spurio about the same as Captain Sham or Captain Humbug, and so own brother to Captain Parolles. It appears that such bescarfed and bespangled and betitled counterfeits sometimes wore a velvet patch on the face in order to hide the place where they had not been hurt, and thus make a way for their braggardism.
Re-enter the King, led back to his chair by Attendants.

Par. Use a more spacious ceremony to the noble lords; you have restrain’d yourself within the list of too cold an adieu: be more expressive to them: for they wear themselves in the cap of the time; there do muster true gait, eat, speak, and move under the influence of the most received star; and, though the Devil lead the measure, such are to be followed: after them, and take a more dilated farewell.

Ber. And I will do so.

Par. Worthy fellows; and like to prove most sinewy sword-men. [Exeunt Bertram and Parolles.

Enter Lafeu.

Laf. [Kneeling.] Pardon, my lord, for me and for my tidings.

King. I’ll see thee to stand up.

Laf. [Rising.] Then here’s a man stands that has bought his pardon.

Would you had kneel’d, my lord, to ask me mercy; And at my bidding you could so stand up.

King. I would I had; so I had broke thy pate, And ask’d thee mercy for’t.

Laf. Good faith, across. But, my good lord, ’tis thus: Will you be cured of your infirmity?

King. No.

Laf. O, will you eat no grapes, my royal fox?

8 "Wear themselves in the cap of the time," is a Parollian phrase for leading or setting the fashion; and it is part of the trade of such to invent new affectations in walking, eating, and speaking.


10 Mercy and pardon were often used thus as equivalents; and to ask mercy or cry mercy was a common phrase for begging pardon.

11 Across, as here used, is from the language of the tilt-yard, and was applied in reproach or derision when a tilter broke his lance across the body of his opponent, and not by a push of the point. Hence it came to be used figuratively, as here, for a miscarriage in a pass of wit.
Yes, but you will my noble grapes, an if
My royal fox could reach them: I've seen a medicine
That's able to breathe life into a stone,
Quicken a rock, and make you dance canary
With sprightly fire and motion; whose simple touch
Is powerful to raise King Pepin, nay,
And give great Charlemain a pen in's hand,
To write to her a love-line.

King. What her is this?

Laf. Why, Doctor She. My lord, there's one arrived,
If you will see her: now, by my faith and honour,
If seriously I may convey my thoughts
In this my light deliverance, I have spoke
With one that, in her sex, her years, profession,
Wisdom, and constancy, hath amazed me more
Than I dare blame my weakness: will you see her,
For that is her demand,—and know her business?
That done, laugh well at me.

King. Now, good Lafeu,
Bring in the admiration; that we with thee
May spend our wonder too, or take off thine
By wondering how thou took'st it.

Laf. Nay, I'll fit you,
And not be all day neither.

King. Thus he his special nothing ever prologues.

Re-enter Lafeu, with Helena.

Laf. Nay, come your ways.

King. This haste hath wings indeed.

12 Medicine for mediciner, that is, a physician.
13 Canary was the name of a very lively dance. See vol. ii., page 34.
14 It is said that Charlemain late in life vainly attempted learning to write.
15 That is, "hath amazed me so much, that I dare not impute the amaze-
ment wholly to my weakness."
Laf. Nay, come your ways;
This is his Majesty, say your mind to him:
A traitor you do look like; but such traitors
His Majesty seldom fears: I'm Cressid’s uncle,
That dare leave two together; fare you well.

King. Now, fair one, does your business follow us?

Hel. Ay, my good lord.
Gerard de Narbon was my father; one,
In what he did profess, well found.16

King. I knew him.

Hel. The rather will I spare my praises towards him;
Knowing him is enough. On's bed of death
Many receipts he gave me; chiefly one,
Which, as the dearest issue of his practice,
And of his old experience th' only darling,
He bade me store up, as a triple 17 eye,
Safer than mine own two, more dear: I have so:
And, hearing your high Majesty is touch'd
With that malignant cause wherein the honour
Of my dear father's gift stands chief in power,
I come to tender it, and my appliance,
With all bound humbleness.

King. We thank you, maiden;
But may not be so credulous of cure,
When our most learnèd doctors leave us, and
The congregated college have concluded
That labouring art can never ransom nature
From her inaidable estate; 18 — I say we must not
So stain our judgment, or corrupt our hope,

16 Well-found is well-skilled or well-learned; the same as well-seen. See vol. ii., page 167, note 19.
17 Triple for third; an odd use of the word, but the Poet has it several times in that sense.
18 Estate for state; the two being used interchangeably.
To prostitute our past-cure malady
To empirics; or to dissever so
Our great self and our credit, to esteem
A senseless help, when help past sense we deem.20

_Hel._ My duty, then, shall pay me for my pains:
I will no more enforce mine office on you;
Humbly entreating from your royal thoughts
A modest one, to bear me back again.

_King._ I cannot give thee less, to be call'd grateful:
Thou thought'st to help me; and such thanks I give
As one near death to those that wish him live:
But, what at full I know, thou know'st no part;
I knowing all my peril, thou no art.

_Hel._ What I can do can do no hurt to try,
Since you set up your rest against remedy.
He that of greatest works is finisher,
Oft does them by the weakest minister:
So holy writ in babes hath judgment shown,
When judges have been babes; great floods have flown

---

19 Where the correlative _so_ and _as_ are rightly in place, the Poet, often in verse, and sometimes in prose, omits _as_. Here the full expression would be, "so stain our judgment, _as_ to prostitute." And again, a little after: "So dissever, _as_ to esteem."

20 The language is obscure, though the general meaning may not be so. Perhaps the words will come intelligible something thus: "I must not so disjoin my great office, or my high-seated person, from the reputation of wisdom that rightly belongs to it, as to respect or put faith in an ignorant offer of help, when I hold my case to be beyond the reach of the most intelligent effort."

21 To _set up one's rest_ was a common phrase for _making up one's mind._ See vol. iii., page 141, note 16.

22 Referring, perhaps, to St. Matthew, xi. 25: "I thank thee, O Father, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Staunton, however, thinks it probable that the particular allusion is to the four youths, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, who were appointed to be brought up for the King's service; as related in Daniel, i. 17 and 20: "As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom. And in all matters of wis-
From simple sources; and great seas have dried,
When miracles have by the greatest been denied.
Oft expectation fails, and most oft there
Where most it promises; and oft it hits
Where hope is coldest, and despair most fits.

King. I must not hear thee; fare thee well, kind maid;
Thy pains, not used, must by thyself be paid:
Proffers not took, reap thanks for their reward.

Hel. Inspired merit so by breath is bar'd:
It is not so with Him that all things knows,
As 'tis with us that square our guess by shows;
But most it is presumption in us when
The help of Heaven we count the act of men.
Dear sir, to my endeavours give consent;
Of Heaven, not me, make an experiment.
I am not an impostor, that proclaim
Myself against the level of mine aim; But know I think, and think I know most sure,
My art is not past power, nor you past cure.

King. Art thou so confident? within what space
Hopest thou my cure?

Hel. The great'st Grace lending grace,

dom and understanding the King inquired of them; and he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm."

23 Alluding, perhaps, to the smiting of the rock in Horeb by Moses.
24 This must refer, apparently, to the Israelites passing the Red Sea, when miracles had been denied by Pharaoh.
25 To proclaim one's self against the level of one's aim, is, I take it, to set up one's profit or self-interest against or above that which he professes to aim at; which is the right virtue of a quack or impostor. Level, here, is drift, course, or direction. Perhaps Heath's explanation is better: "The level of the impostor's aim must be supposed to be reward in case of success. Whenever, therefore, he vaunts his skill and ability, at the same time that he is conscious of his own deficiency in those respects, and that he must miscarry when they are put to the trial, he may be properly said to proclaim himself against the level of his aim."
SCENE I.  ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

Ere twice the horses of the Sun shall bring
Their fiery torcher his diurnal ring;
Ere twice in murk and occidental damp
Moist Hesperus hath quench'd his sleepy lamp;
Or four-and-twenty times the pilot's glass
Hath told the thievish minutes how they pass;
What is infirm from your sound parts shall fly,
Health shall live free and sickness freely die.

King. Upon thy certainty and confidence
What darest thou venture?

Hel.  Tax of impudence;
A strumpet's boldness, a divulged shame;
Transduced by odious ballads; my maid's name
Sear'd otherwise; nay, worse of worst extended, 26
With vilest torture let my life be ended.

King. Methinks in thee some blessèd spirit doth speak,
His powerful sound within an organ weak:
And what impossibility 27 would slay
In common sense, sense saves another way.
Thy life is dear; for all that life can rate
Worth name of life in thee hath estimate, 28—
Youth, beauty, wisdom, courage, virtue, all

26 "Worse of worst extended" is, I presume, exactly equivalent to the phrase in common use, "Let worse come to worst," or, "If worse come to worst." The proper order of the words would seem to be, "nay, worst of worse extended"; which gives the sense of worse driven or pushed on to worst. But perhaps the order in the text was meant to give the sense of that which is worst of all being strained up to something still worse.—Sear'd is scorched, or blasted.

27 Impossibility for incredibility. The Poet has impossible repeatedly in the same sense. So in Much Ado, ii. 1: "Only his gift is in devising impossible slanders." Also in Twelfth Night, iii. 2: "There is no Christian, that means to be saved by believing rightly, can ever believe such impossible passages of grossness."

28 That is, "may be reckoned or estimated among the felicities that wait upon thee.
That happiness and prime 29 can happy call:
Thou this to hazard, needs must intimate
Skill infinite or monstrous desperate.
Sweet practiser, thy physic I will try,
That ministers thine own death, if I die.

Hel. If I break time, or flinch in property
Of what I spoke, unpitied let me die;
And well deserved: not helping, death's my fee;
But, if I help, what do you promise me?

King. Make thy demand.

Hel. But will you make it e'en?

King. Ay, by my sceptre and my hopes of Heaven.

Hel. Then shalt thou give me with thy kingly hand
What husband in thy power I will command:
Exempted be from me the arrogance
To choose from forth the royal blood of France,
My low and humble name to propagate
With any branch or image of the state;
But such a one, thy vassal, who I know
Is free for me to ask, thee to bestow.

King. Here is my hand; the premises observed,
Thy will by my performance shall be served:
So make the choice of thy own time; for I,
Thy resolved patient, on thee still rely.
More should I question thee, and more I must,—
Though more to know could not be more to trust,—
From whence thou camest, how tended on: but rest
Unquestion'd welcome, and undoubted blest.—
Give me some help here, ho! — If thou proceed
As high as word, my deed shall match thy deed.

[Flourish. Exeunt.

29 Prime is youth, the spring-time of life. Prime was not unfrequently used for Spring. So in the Poet's 97th Sonnet: "The teeming Autumn, big with rich increase, bearing the wanton burden of the prime."
SCENE II. — Roussillon. A Room in the House of the Countess.

Enter the Countess and Clown.

Count. Come on, sir; I shall now put you to the height of your breeding.

Clo. I will show myself highly fed and lowly taught: I know my business is but to the Court.

Count. But to the Court! why, what place make you special, when you put off that with such contempt? But to the Court!

Clo. Truly, madam, if God have given a man any manners, he may easily put it off at Court: he that cannot make a leg,^1 put off’s cap, kiss his hand, and say nothing, has neither leg, hands, lip, nor cap; and, indeed, such a fellow, to say precisely, were not for the Court: but, for me, I have an answer will serve all men.

Count. Marry, that’s a bountiful answer that fits all questions.

Clo. It is like a barber’s chair, that fits all buttocks,— the pin-buttock, the quatch-buttock, the brawn-buttock,^2 or any buttock.

Count. Will your answer serve fit to all questions?

Clo. As fit as ten groats is for the hand of an attorney, as your French crown for your taffeta punk,^3 as Tib’s rush for Tom’s forefinger,^4 as a pancake for Shrove-Tuesday, a morris

---

^1 Making a leg is an old phrase for bending the knee, curtsying, or doing an obeisance.

^2 A pin-buttock is a pointed or sharp buttock. Quatch is flat or squat. Brawn is plump or protuberant: used especially of any muscular protuberance.

^3 A French crown, as the words are here used, is a crown made bald by what was called the French disease. Taffeta is a rich silken fabric, with wavy lustre; sometimes called water-silk. Punk is a prostitute.

^4 Tib and Tom were usually joined in familiar poetry, meaning much the same, apparently, as lass and lad. The rush-ring seems to have been a
for May-day, as the nail to his hole, the cuckold to his horn, as a scolding quean to a wrangling knave, as the nun's lip to the friar's mouth, nay, as the pudding to his skin.

Count. Have you, I say, an answer of such fitness for all questions?

Clo. From below your duke to beneath your constable, it will fit any question.

Count. It must be an answer of most monstrous size that must fit all demands.

Clo. But a trifle—neither, in good faith, if the learned should speak truth of it: here it is, and all that belongs to't. Ask me if I am a courtier: it shall do you no harm to learn.

Count. To be young again, if we could: I will be a fool in question, hoping to be the wiser by your answer. I pray you, sir, are you a courtier?

Clo. O Lord, sir! There's a simple putting off. More, more, a hundred of them.

Count. Sir, I am a poor friend of yours that loves you.

Clo. O Lord, sir! Thick, thick, spare not me.

kind of eve-token for plighting troth among rustic lovers. Nares says it was used in jocular marriages, and quotes from Davenant's Rivals: "I'll crown thee with a garland of straw, then, and I'll marry thee with a rush-ring."

The morris was a May-day frolic, with dancing and a hobby-horse performance: originally called Morisco, and said to be derived from the Moors through Spain, where it is still popular under the name of fandango. I quote a part of Stubbes' description in his Anatomy of Abuses, 1595: "They bedeck themselves with scarfs, ribbons, and laces, hanged all over with gold rings, precious stones, and other jewels: this done, they tie about either leg twenty or forty bells; with rich handkerchiefs in their hands, and sometimes laid across over their shoulders and necks, borrowed for the most part from their pretty Mopsies and loving Bessies, for bussing them in the dark. Thus all things set in order, then have they their hobby-horses, their dragons, and other antics, together with their bawdy pipers and thundering drummers, to strike up the Devil's Dance withal."

6 A satire on this silly expletive, then much in vogue at Court and among the sprigs of aristocracy. Ben Jonson ridicules it to repletion in some of his plays.
Par. Nay, 'tis strange, 'tis very strange, that is the brief and the tedious of it; and he's of a most facinorous spirit that will not acknowledge it to be the —

Laf. Very hand of Heaven —

Par. Ay, so I say.

Laf. In a most weak —

Par. — and debile minister great power, great transcendence: which should, indeed, give us a further use to be made than alone the recovery of the King; as to be —

Laf. Generally thankful.

Par. I would have said it; you say well. Here comes the King.

Enter the King, HELENA, and Attendants.

Laf. Lustic, as the Dutchman says: I'll like a maid the better whilst I have a tooth in my head: why, he's able to lead her a coranto.

Par. Mort du vinaigre! is not this Helen?

Laf. 'Fore God, I think so.

King. Go, call before me all the lords in Court. —

[Exit an Attendant.

Sit, my preserver, by thy patient's side;
And with this healthful hand, whose banish'd sense
Thou hast repeal'd, a second time receive
The confirmation of my promised gift,
Which but attends thy naming.

Enter several Lords and BERTRAM.

Fair maid, send forth thine eye: this youthful parcel

7 It is hardly needful to remark that the humour of the foregoing dialogue lies in the pretensions of Parolies to knowledge and sentiments which he is quite innocent of. The penetrating old lord delights in tapping the bedizened wind-bag, and letting out his emptiness.

8 Lustic, the Dutch lustigh anglicised, is lusty, healthful, vigorous.

9 Coranto was the name of a brisk, sprightly dance.
Of noble bachelors stand at my bestowing,
O'er whom both sovereign's power and father's voice
I have to use: thy frank election make;
Thou'lt power to choose, and they none to forsake.

_Hel._ To each of you one fair and virtuous mistress
Fall, when Love please! marry, to each, but one!  

_Laf._ I'd give bay curtal and his furniture,
My mouth no more were broken than these boys',
And writ as little beard.

_King._ Peruse them well:
Not one of those but had a noble father.

_Hel._ Gentlemen,
Heaven hath, through me, restored the King to health.

_All._ We understand it, and thank Heaven for you.

_Hel._ I am a simple maid; and therein wealthiest,
That I protest I simply am a maid.—
Please it your Majesty, I've done already:
The blushes in my cheeks thus whisper me,
_We blush that thou shouldst choose; but, be refused,_
_Let the white death sit on thy cheek for ever;
We'll never come there again._

_King._ Make choice; and, see,
Who shuns thy love shuns all his love in me.

_Hel._ Now, Dian, from thy altar do I fly;
And to imperial Love, that god most high,
Do my sighs stream.—_[To_ I Lord._]_ Sir, will you hear my suit?

_I Lord._ And grant it.

_Hel._ Thanks, sir; all the rest is mute.

---

10 The exceptive _but_ , as it is called; formed from _be out_ , and bearing that sense. Helen _excepts_ Bertram, as she wishes _herself_ to him. — _Marry_ is _indeed, truly_. See vol. i., page 103, note 3.

11 _Curtal_ was a common term for a docked or _curtailed_ horse.

12 _Be refused_ here carries the sense of _if thou be refused_. — _The white death_ means the _paleness of death_.

Scene III. All's Well That Ends Well.

Laf. I had rather be in this choice than throw ames-ace for my life.  

Hel. [To 2 Lord.] The honour, sir, that flames in your fair eyes, 
Before I speak, too threateningly replies: 
Love make your fortunes twenty times above 
Her that so wishes and her humble love! 

2 Lord. No better, if you please. 

Hel. My wish receive, 
Which great Love grant! and so, I take my leave. 

Laf. Do all they deny her? An they were sons of mine, 
I'd have them whipp'd; or I would send them to the Turk, 
to make eunuchs of. 

Hel. [To 3 Lord.] Be not afraid that I your hand should take; 
I'll never do you wrong for your own sake: 
Blessing upon your vows! and in your bed 
Find fairer fortune, if you ever wed! 

Laf. These boys are boys of ice, they'll none of her: sure, 
they are bastards to the English; the French ne'er got 'em. 

Hel. [To 4 Lord.] You are too young, too happy, and too good, 
To make yourself a son out of my blood. 

4 Lord. Fair one, I think not so. 

Laf. There's one grape yet, — I am sure thy father drunk wine. — But, if thou be'st not an ass, I am a youth of fourteen; I have known thee already.  

13 Ames-ace is both aces, the lowest throw upon the dice. So that throwing ames-ace was ill luck: but Lafeu contrasts it with the happy fortune of being Helen's choice. 

14 It is to be understood that, during this part of the scene, Lafeu and Parolles are standing apart and at some distance from the rest, so that they see what is done, but do not hear what is said: hence Lafeu speaks as if Helen were the refused, not the refuser. 

15 Johnson's explanation of this is perhaps right: "Old Lafeu having,
Hel. [To Bertram.] I dare not say I take you; but I give
Me and my service, ever whilst I live,
Into your guiding power. — This is the man.

King. Why, then, young Bertram, take her; she's thy wife.

Ber. My wife, my liege! I shall beseech your Highness,
In such a business give me leave to use
The help of mine own eyes.

King. Know'st thou not, Bertram,
What she has done for me?

Ber. Yes, my good lord;
But never hope to know why I should marry her.

King. Thou knowest she has raised me from my sickly
bed.

Ber. But follows it, my lord, to bring me down
Must answer for your raising? I know her well:
She had her breeding at my father's charge.
A poor physician's daughter my wife! Disdain
Rather corrupt me ever!

King. 'Tis only title thou disdain'st in her, the which
I can build up. Strange is it that our bloods,
Of colour, weight, and heat, pour'd all together,
Would quite confound distinction, yet stand off
In differences so mighty. If she be
All that is virtuous,—save what thou dislikest,
A poor physician's daughter, — thou dislikest
Of virtue for the name: but do not so:
From lowest place when virtuous things proceed,
The place is dignified by th' doer's deed:

upon the supposition that the lady was refused, reproached the young lords
as boys of ice, throwing his eyes on Bertram, who remains, cries out, 'There
is one yet, into whom his father put some good blood; — but I have known
thee long enough to know thee for an ass.' I suspect, however, that the
latter part of the speech refers not to Bertram, but to Parolles.

Title must here be taken as equivalent to want of title. The Poet has
repeated instances of such elliptical language.
Where great additions swell's, and virtue none,
It is a dropsied honour: good alone
Is good without a name; vileness is so:
The property by what it is should go,
Not by the title. She is young, wise, fair;
In these to Nature she's immediate heir;
And these breed honour: that is honour's scorn,
Which challenges itself as honour's born,
And is not like the sire: honours thrive,
When rather from our acts we them derive
Than our foregoers: the mere word's a slave,
Debauch'd on every tomb, on every grave
A lying trophy; and as oft is dumb
Where dust and damn'd oblivion is the tomb
Of honour'd bones indeed. What should be said?
If thou canst like this creature as a maid,
I can create the rest: virtue and she
Is her own dower; honour and wealth from me.

_Ber._ I cannot love her, nor will strive to do't.

_King._ Thou wrong'st thyself, if thou shouldst strive to choose.

_Hel._ That you are well restored, my lord, I'm glad:
Let the rest go.

_King._ My honour's at the stake; which to defend,
I must produce my power.—Here, take her hand,
Proud scornful boy, unworthy this good gift;
That dost in vile misprision shackle up

---

17 Here, as often, additions is titles, or titular honours. — Such contractions as that of swell's for swell us are quite frequent.
18 That is, vileness is also vile, whether it be named so or not.
19 Sire is here a dissyllable, in the same way as fire, hour, &c., often are. — The meaning of what precedes is, "Which proclaims itself as the offspring of honour." To challenge is, in one of its senses, to assert, or to claim as a right.
20 Misprision is misprising, prising amiss; that is, undervaluing.
My love and her desert; that canst not dream,
We, poising us in her defective scale,
Shall weigh thee to the beam; that wilt not know,
It is in us to plant thine honour where
We please to have it grow. Check thy contempt.
Obey our will, which travails in thy good:
Believe not thy disdain, but presently
Do thine own fortunes that obedient right\(^{21}\)
Which both thy duty owes and our power claims;
Or I will throw thee from my care for ever
Into the staggerers and the cureless lapse
Of youth and ignorance;\(^{22}\) both my revenge and hate
Loosing upon thee, in the name of justice,
Without all terms of pity. Speak; thine answer.

Ber. Pardon, my gracious lord; for I submit
My fancy to your eyes: when I consider
What great creation and what dole of honour
Flies where you bid it, I find that she, which late
Was in my nobler thoughts most base, is now
The praised of the King; who, so ennobled,
Is, as 'twere, born so.

King. Take her by the hand,
And tell her she is thine: to whom I promise
A counterpoise; if not to thy estate,
A balance more replete.

Ber. I take her hand.

King. Good fortune and the favour of the Heavens
Smile upon this contract! whose ceremony

\(^{21}\) Obedient right means right of obedience. "Deal justly or rightly with your fortunes by submitting to them."

\(^{22}\) Lapse is fall. The King is warning Bertram to obey, else he will let him go his own headstrong way to irreparable ruin. The staggerers is the reeling and plunging course of one going to the dogs, like a drunken man. Loosing is letting loose. Without is out of or beyond "all terms of pity."
Shall come expedient on the now-born brief, and be perform'd to-night: the solemn feast shall more attend upon the coming space, expecting absent friends. As thou lovest her, thy love's to me religious; else, does err.

[Exeunt the King, Ber., Hel., Lords, and Attendants.

Laf. Do you hear, monsieur? a word with you.

Par. Your pleasure, sir?

Laf. Your lord and master did well to make his recantation.

Par. Recantation! my lord! my master!

Laf. Ay; is it not a language I speak?

Par. A most harsh one, and not to be understood without bloody succeeding. My master!

Laf. Are you companion to the Count Rousillon?

Par. To any count, to all counts, to what is man.

Laf. To what is count's man: count's master is of another style.

Par. You are too old, sir; let it satisfy you, you are too old.

Laf. I must tell thee, sirrah, I write man; to which title age cannot bring thee.

Par. What I dare too well do, I dare not do.

Laf. I did think thee, for two ordinaries, to be a pretty

---

23 Expedient here means quickly or expeditiously, and brief is used in the sense of a short note. So that the meaning of the passage is, "The marriage ceremony shall proceed immediately upon the troth now briefly plighted."

24 That is, "the customary feast shall be put off to a future time, waiting for absent friends." The Poet often uses solemn thus in its classical sense of regular, usual, or customary. See vol. ii., page 195, note 15. He also has expect repeatedly in the old sense of to wait for. So in The Merchant, v. i: "Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming." The same usage is common in the Bible.


26 That is, during the time of two meals or dinners. So in Antony and Cleopatra, ii. 2: "And for his ordinary pays his heart for what his eyes eat only."
wise fellow; thou didst make tolerable vent of thy travel; it might pass: yet the scarfs and the bannerets about thee did manifoldly dissuade me from believing thee a vessel of too great a burden. I have now found thee; when I lose thee again, I care not: yet art thou good for nothing but taking up;²⁷ and that thou'rt scarce worth.

Par. Hadst thou not the privilege of antiquity upon thee,—

Laf. Do not plunge thyself too far in anger, lest thou hasten thy trial; which if—Lord have mercy on thee for a hen! So, my good window of lattice,²⁸ fare thee well: thy casement I need not open, for I look through thee. Give me thy hand.

Par. My lord, you give me most egregious indignity.

Laf. Ay, with all my heart; and thou art worthy of it.

Par. I have not, my lord, deserved it.

Laf. Yes, good faith, every dram of it; and I will not bate thee a scruple.

Par. Well, I shall be wiser—

Laf. E'en as soon as thou canst, for thou hast to pull at a smack o' the contrary. If ever thou be'est bound in thy scarf and beaten, thou shalt find what it is to be proud of thy bondage. I have a desire to hold my acquaintance with thee, or rather my knowledge, that I may say, in thy default,²⁹ he is a man I know.

²⁷ I am not clear as to the meaning of take up here. The Poet uses it several times, punningly, in the sense of taking goods or merchandise on credit. And so Nares understands it here. He says also, "When Læfe adds, 'and that thou'rt scarce worth,' the intention is to play upon another sense of the words, that of taking from the ground." But the phrase now sometimes means, to contradict, or call to account; and such, I am apt to think, may be the meaning of Læfe.

²⁸ A latticed window is a window not so thickly blinded but that it can be seen through.

²⁹ "In thy default" probably means in thy absence. Or it may mean in case of thy being tried for a fault or a delinquency.
Par. My lord, you do me most insupportable vexation.

Laf. I would it were hell-pains for thy sake, and my poor doing eternal: for doing I am past; as I will by thee, in what motion age will give me leave. [Exit.

Par. Well, thou hast a son shall take this disgrace off me; scurvy, old, filthy, scurvy lord!—Well, I must be patient; there is no fettering of authority. I'll beat him, by my life, if I can meet him with any convenience, an he were double and double a lord. I'll have no more pity of his age than I would have of—I'll beat him, an if I could but meet him again.

Re-enter Lafeu.

Laf. Sirrah, your lord and master's married; there's news for you: you have a new mistress.

Par. I most unfeignedly beseech your lordship to make some reservation of your wrongs: he is my good lord; whom I serve above is my master.

Laf. Who? God?

Par. Ay, sir.

Laf. The Devil it is that's thy master. Why dost thou garner up thy arms o'this fashion? dost make hose of thy sleeves? do other servants so? Thou wert best set thy lower part where thy nose stands. By mine honour, if I were but two hours younger, I'd beat thee: methinks thou art a general offence, and every man should beat thee: I think thou wast created for men to breathe themselves upon thee.

Par. This is hard and undeserved measure, my lord.

Laf. Go to, sir; you were beaten in Italy for picking a kernel out of a pomegranate; you are a vagabond, and no true traveller: you are more saucy with lords and honourable personages than the heraldry of your birth and virtue.

30 Meaning "as I will pass by thee." A rather poor quibble on pass.
31 To exercise themselves upon. See page 22, note 3.
gives you commission. You are not worth another word, else I'd call you knave. I leave you. [Exit.

Par. Good, very good; it is so then: good, very good; let it be conceal'd awhile.

Re-enter Bertram.

Ber. Undone, and forfeited to cares for ever!

Par. What's the matter, sweet-heart?

Ber. Although before the solemn priest I've sworn, I will not bed her.

Par. What, what, sweet-heart?

Ber. O, my Parolles, they have married me! I'll to the Tuscan wars, and never bed her.

Par. France is a dog-hole, and it no more merits the tread of a man's foot: to th' wars!

Ber. There's letters from my mother: what the import is, I know not yet.

Par. Ay, That would 32 be known. To th' wars, my boy, to th' wars! He wears his honour in a box unseen, That hugs his kicky-wicky 33 here at home, Spending his manly marrow in her arms, Which should sustain the bound and high curvet Of Mars's fiery steed. To other regions! France is a stable; we that dwell in't jades; Therefore, to th' wars!

Ber. It shall be so: I'll send her to my house, Acquaint my mother with my hate to her, And wherefore I am fled; write to the King

32 Would for should. The Poet has a great many instances of could, should, and would, as also of shall and will, used indiscriminately. The usage was common.

33 Kicky-wicky, or kicky-wicky, says Nares, is "a ludicrous word, of no definite meaning, except, perhaps, to imply restlessness; from kick and wince, in allusion to a restive horse."
That which I durst not speak: his present gift
Shall furnish me to those Italian fields
Where noble fellows strike: war is no strife
To the dark house and the detested wife.

Par. Will this capriccio hold in thee, art sure?
Ber. Go with me to my chamber, and advise me.
I'll send her straight away: to-morrow
I'll to the wars, she to her single sorrow.

Par. Why, these balls bound; there's noise in it. 'Tis hard:
A young man married is a man that's marred: Therefore, away, and leave her; bravely go:
The King has done you wrong; but, hush, 'tis so. [Exeunt.

Scene IV.—The Same. Another Room in the Palace.

Enter Helena and the Clown.

Hel. My mother greets me kindly: is she well?
Clo. She is not well; but yet she has her health: she's very merry; but yet she is not well: but, thanks be given, she's very well, and wants nothing i' the world; but yet she is not well.

Hel. If she be very well, what does she ail, that she's not very well?
Clo. Truly, she's very well indeed, but for two things.
Hel. What two things?
Clo. One, that she's not in Heaven, whither God send her quickly! the other, that she's in Earth, from whence God send her quickly!

34 The house made gloomy by discontent. Here, as often, to has the force of compared to, or in comparison with.
35 This jingling play on marred and married occurs in old Puttenham: "The maid that soon married is, soon marred is."
Enter Parolles.

Par. Bless you, my fortunate lady!

Hel. I hope, sir, I have your good will to have mine own good fortunes.

Par. You had my prayers to lead them on; and, to keep them on, have them still. — O, my knave! how does my old lady?

Clo. So that you had her wrinkles, and I her money, I would she did as you say.

Par. Why, I say nothing.

Clo. Marry, you are the wiser man; for many a man's tongue shakes out his master's undoing: to say nothing, to do nothing, to know nothing, and to have nothing, is to be a great part of your title; which is within a very little of nothing.

Par. Away! thou'rt a knave.

Clo. You should have said, sir, before a knave thou'rt a knave; that's, before me thou'rt a knave: this had been truth, sir.

Par. Go to, thou art a witty Fool; I have found thee.

Clo. Did you find me in yourself, sir? or were you taught to find me? The search, sir, was profitable; and much fool may you find in you, even to the world's pleasure, and the increase of laughter.

Par. A good knave, i' faith, and well fed.¹ — Madam, my lord will go away to-night; A very serious business calls on him. The great prerogative and rite of love, Which, as your due, time claims, he does acknowledge; But puts it off to a compell'd² restraint;

¹ Alluding, perhaps, to the old saying, "Better fed than taught." In ii, 2, the Clown says, "I will show myself highly fed and lowly taught."

² Here to has the force of in submission to. — Compell'd for compelling; an instance of the indiscriminate use of active and passive forms.
Whose want, and whose delay, is strew'd with sweets,
Which they distil now in the curbed time,
To make the coming hour o'erflow with joy;
And pleasure drown the brim.

_Hel._ What's his will else?

_Par._ That you will take your instant leave o' the King,
And make this haste as your own good proceeding,
Strengthen'd with what apology you think
May make it probable need. 4

_Hel._ What more commands he?

_Par._ That, having this obtain'd, you presently
Attend his further pleasure.

_Hel._ In every thing I wait upon his will.

_Par._ I shall report it so.

_Hel._ I pray you.  [Exit Par.] — Come, sirrah.

[Exeunt.

SCENE V. — Another Room in the Palace.

_Enter Lafeu and Bertram._

_Laf._ But I hope your lordship thinks not him a soldier.

_Ber._ Yes, my lord, and of very valiant approof. 1

_Laf._ You have it from his own deliverance.

_Ber._ And by other warranted testimony.

_Laf._ Then my dial goes not true: I took this lark for a
bunting. 2

3 Meaning, apparently, that the delay of the joys, and the expectation of
them; will make them the more plenteous when they come. "The curbed
time" is the time of restraint." "Whose want" is the want of which, refer-
ing to prerogative and rite.

4 May give a specious or plausible appearance of necessity.

1 Valiant approof means approved valour. See page 54, note 27.

2 The bunting has the sky-lark's outside, but nothing of the sky-lark's
soul or song. Yarrell tells us that the bird is provincially called the bunting
lark, from the general resemblance to the sky-lark in the colour of its
plumage.
Ber. I do assure you, my lord, he is very great in knowledge, and accordingly valiant.

Laf. I have, then, sinn'd against his experience, and transgress'd against his valour; and my state that way is dangerous, since I cannot yet find in my heart to repent. Here he comes: I pray you, make us friends; I will pursue the amity.

Enter Parolles.

Par. [To Bertram.] These things shall be done, sir.

Laf. Pray you, sir, who's his tailor?

Par. Sir?

Laf. O, I know him well, I, sir; he, sir, 's a good workman, a very good tailor.

Ber. [Aside to Par.] Is she gone to the King?

Par. [Aside to Ber.] She is.

Ber. [Aside to Par.] Will she away to-night?

Par. [Aside to Ber.] As you'll have her.

Ber. [Aside to Par.] I've writ my letters, casketed my treasure,

Given order for our horses; and to-night,
When I should take possession of the bride,
End ere I do begin.

Laf. A good traveller is something at the latter end of a dinner; but one that lies three-thirds, and uses a known truth to pass a thousand nothings with, should be once heard, and thrice beaten. — God save you, captain.

Ber. Is there any unkindness between my lord and you, monsieur?

Par. I know not how I have deserved to run into my lord's displeasure.

Laf. You have made shift to run into't, boots and spurs and all, like him that leap'd into the custard; and out of it

8 At great civic festivals, when allowed Fools were in vogue, the Lord Mayor's or the Sheriff's Fool was wont to spring upon the table, and, after
you'll run again, rather than suffer question for your residence.

Ber. It may be you have mistaken him, my lord.

Laf. And shall do so ever, though I took him at's prayers. Fare you well, my lord; and believe this of me, there can be no kernel in this light nut; the soul of this man is his clothes: trust him not in matter of heavy consequence; I have kept of them tame, and know their natures. — Farewell, monsieur: I have spoken better of you than you have wit or will to deserve at my hand; but we must do good against evil. [Exit.

Par. An idle lord,\(^4\) I swear.

Ber. I think not so.

Par. Why, do you know him?

Ber. Yes, I do know him well; and common speech Gives him a worthy pass. Here comes my clog.

*Enter Helena.*

Hel. I have, sir, as I was commanded from you, Spoke with the King, and have procured his leave For present parting;\(^5\) only, he desires Some private speech with you.

Ber. I shall obey his will. You must not marvel, Helen, at my course, Which holds not colour with the time, nor does The ministration and required office On my particular. Prepared I was not For such a business; therefore am I found So much unsettled: this drives me to entreat you,

spouting some doggerel verses, leap boldly into a huge custard prepared for the purpose. Ben Jonson, in *The Devil is an Ass*, i. 1, has the following: 

"He may perchance, in tail of a sheriff's dinner, skip with a rhyme o' the table, from New-nothing, and take his Almain leap into a custard."

\(^4\) *Idle*, here, means trifling, foolish, or worthless.

\(^5\) *Parting* for *departing*; the two being used interchangeably.
That presently you take your way for home,
And rather muse than ask why I entreat you;
For my respects are better than they seem,
And my appointments have in them a need
Greater than shows itself, at the first view,
To you that know them not. This to my mother:

\[\text{Giving a letter.}\]

'Twill be two days ere I shall see you; so,
I leave you to your wisdom.

\text{Hel.} \quad \text{Sir, I can nothing say,}

But that I am your most obedient servant.

\text{Ber.} \quad \text{Come, come, no more of that.}

\text{Hel.} \quad \text{And ever shall}

With true observance seek to eke out that
Wherein toward me my homely stars have fail'd
To equal my great fortune.

\text{Ber.} \quad \text{Let that go:}

My haste is very great: farewell; hie home.

\text{Hel.} \quad \text{Pray, sir, your pardon.}

\text{Ber.} \quad \text{Well, what would you say?}

\text{Hel.} \quad \text{I am not worthy of the wealth I owe;}^{8}

Nor dare I say 'tis mine,—and yet it is;
But, like a timorous thief, most fain would steal
What law does vouch mine own.

\text{Ber.} \quad \text{What would you have?}

\text{Hel.} \quad \text{Something; and scarce so much: nothing, indeed.}

I would not tell you what I would, my lord:—
Faith, yes:
Strangers and foes do sunder, and not kiss.

\text{Ber.} \quad \text{I pray you, stay not, but in haste to horse.}

\text{Hel.} \quad \text{I shall not break your bidding, good my lord.}

---

6 In old English, to *muse* commonly has the sense of to *wonder.*
7 *Respects for reasons, considerations, or motives.* Often so.
8 *Owe, again, as usual, for own or possess.* See page 36, note 2.
SCENE I.  ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

Ber. Where are my other men, monsieur?—Farewell:

[Exit Helena.

Go thou toward home; where I will never come,
Whilst I can shake my sword, or hear the drum.—
Away, and for our flight.

Par. Bravely, coragio! [Exeunt.

ACT III.


Flourish. Enter the Duke of Florence, attended; two French Lords and Soldiers.

Duke. So that, from point to point, now have you heard
The fundamental reasons of this war;
Whose great decision hath much blood let forth,
And more thirsts after.

1 Lord. Holy seems the quarrel
Upon your Grace’s party;¹ black and fearful
On the opposer’s.

Duke. Therefore we marvel much our cousin France
Would, in so just a business, shut his bosom
Against our borrowing prayers.

1 Lord. Good my lord,
The reasons of our State I cannot yield,
But like a common and an outward man,²
That the great figure of a council frames

¹ Party for part. The Poet has it so elsewhere, as also part for party.
² “An outward man” is a man not in the secret of affairs. Shakespeare uses inward repeatedly in just the opposite sense.
By self-unable notion: therefore dare not
Say what I think of it, since I have found
Myself in my uncertain grounds to fail
As often as I guess'd.

Duke. Be it his pleasure.

2 Lord. But I am sure the younger of our nation,
That surfeit on their ease, will day by day
Come here for physic.

Duke. Welcome shall they be;
And all the honours that can fly from us
Shall on them settle. You know your places well;
When better fall, for your avails they fall:
To-morrow to the field.                  [Flourish. Exeunt.

SCENE II.—Rousillon. A Room in the House of the Countess.

'Enter the Countess and Clown.

Count. It hath happen'd all as I would have had it, save
that he comes not along with her.

Clo. By my troth, I take my young lord to be a very
melancholy man.

Count. By what observance, I pray you?

Clo. Why, he will look upon his boot, and sing; mend
the ruff, and sing; ask questions, and sing; pick his teeth,
and sing. I knew a man that had this trick of melancholy
sold a goodly manor for a song.

Count. Let me see what he writes, and when he means to
come.                [Opening a letter.

8 "That conceives the great scheme or policy of a State council with a
mind unequal of itself to so large a subject." The Poet several times has
notion for mind, judgment, or conception. So in King Lear, i. 4: "Either
his notion weakens, or his discernings are lethargied."

1 The ruff is the ruffle of the boot; that is, the top of the boot, which
turned over and hung loosely; sometimes fringed with lace, ornamentally.
Clo. I have no mind to Isbel, since I was at Court: our oldlings⁵ and our Isbels o’ the country are nothing like your oldlings and your Isbels o’ the Court: the brains of my Cupid’s knock’d out; and I begin to love, as an old man loves money, with no stomach.

Count. What have we here?

Clo. E’en that you have there. [Exit.

Count. [Reads.] I have sent you a daughter-in-law: she hath recovered the King, and undone me. I have wedded her, not bedded her; and sworn to make the not eternal. You shall hear I am run away: know it before the report come. If there be breadth enough in the world, I will hold a long distance. My duty to you. Your unfortunate son, Bertram.

This is not well, rash and unbridled boy, To fly the favours of so good a King; To pluck his indignation on thy head By the misprising of a maid too virtuous For the contempt of empire.

Re-enter the Clown.

Clo. O madam, yonder is heavy news within between two soldiers and my young lady!

Count. What is the matter?

Clo. Nay, there is some comfort in the news, some comfort; your son will not be kill’d so soon as I thought he would.

Count. Why should he be kill’d?

Clo. So say I, madam, if he run away, as I hear he does: the danger is in standing to’t; that’s the loss of men, though it be the getting of children. Here they come will tell you more: for my part, I only heard your son was run away. [Exit.

² The termination -ling is used here, I take it, just as in various other words, such as foundling, groundling, sapling, worldling, youngling, &c. See Critical Notes.
ALL’S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.  

Enter Helena and two Gentlemen.

1 Gent. Save you, good madam.

Hel. Madam, my lord is gone, for ever gone.

2 Gent. Do not say so.

Count. Think upon patience. — Pray you, gentlemen, —
I've felt so many quirks\(^3\) of joy and grief,
That the first face of neither, on the start,
Can woman me unto't: \(^4\) — where is my son, I pray you?

2 Gent. Madam, he's gone to serve the Duke of Florence:
We met him thitherward; for thence we came,
And, after some dispatch in hand at Court,
Thither we bend again.

Hel. Look on his letter, madam; here's my passport.

[Reads.] When thou canst get the ring upon my finger
which never shall come off, and show me a child begotten of
thy body that I am father to, then call me husband: but in
such a then I write a never.

This is a dreadful sentence.

Count. Brought you this letter gentlemen?

1 Gent. Ay, madam;

And, for the contents’ sake, are sorry for our pains.

Count. I pr’ythee, lady, have a better cheer;
If thou engrossest all the griefs as thine,
Thou robb’st me of a moiety: he was my son;
But I do wash his name out of my blood,
And thou art all my child. — Towards Florence is he?

2 Gent. Ay, madam.

Count. And to be a soldier?

2 Gent. Such is his noble purpose: and, believe’t,

---

\(^3\) Quirks, as the word is here used, are sudden turns, or paroxysms.

\(^4\) “That neither joy nor grief can, on the instant, move or affect me as a woman should be moved, or as women usually are.”
Scene II. All's Well That Ends Well.

The Duke will lay upon him all the honour
That good convenience claims.

Count. Return you thither?
1 Gent. Ay, madam, with the swiftest wing of speed.
Hel. [Reads.] Till I have no wife, I have nothing in France.

'Tis bitter.

Count. Find you that there?
Hel. Ay, madam.

1 Gent. 'Tis but the boldness of his hand, which, haply,
His heart was not consenting to.

Count. Nothing in France, until he have no wife!
There's nothing here that is too good for him,
But only she; and she deserves a lord,
That twenty such rude boys might tend upon,
And call her hourly mistress.—Who was with him?

1 Gent. A servant only, and a gentleman
Which I have some time known.

Count. Parolles, wasn't not?

1 Gent. Ay, my good lady, he.

Count. A very tainted fellow, and full of wickedness.
My son corrupts a well-derived nature
With his inducement.

1 Gent. Indeed, good lady,
The fellow has a deal of that too much,
Which hurts him much to have.

Count. Ye're welcome, gentlemen.
I will entreat you, when you see my son,
To tell him that his sword can never win
The honour that he loses: more I'll entreat you
Written to bear along.

2 Gent. We serve you, madam,
In that and all your worthiest affairs.
Count. Not so, but as we change our courtesies.
Will you draw near? [Exeunt Countess and Gentlemen.
Hel. Till I have no wife, I have nothing in France.
Nothing in France, until he has no wife!—
Thou shalt have none, Rousillon, none in France;
Then hast thou all again. Poor lord! is't I
That chase thee from thy country, and expose
Those tender limbs of thine to the event
Of the none-sparing war? and is it I
That drive thee from the sportive Court, where thou
Wast shot at with fair eyes, to be the mark
Of smoky muskets? O you leaden messengers,
That ride upon the violent speed of fire,
Fly with false aim; pierce the still-moving air;\(^6\)
That sings with piercing; do not touch my lord!
Whoever shoots at him, I set him there;
Whoever charges on his forward breast,
I am the caitiff that do hold him to't;
And, though I kill him not, I am the cause
His death was so effected: better 'twere
I met the ravin\(^7\) lion when he roar'd
With sharp constraint of hunger; better 'twere
That all the miseries which nature owes
Were mine at once. — No, come thou home, Rousillon,
Whence\(^8\) honour but of danger wins a scar,

\(^6\) Change for exchange, or interchange. The Gentleman having said,
"We serve you," the Countess replies, "Not otherwise than as we reciprocate your kind offices." So in Hamlet, i. 2: "Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you."

\(^7\) Still-moving is always-moving. So the poets very often use still. Lettsom illustrates the text by an apt passage from Cicero's De Natura Deorum: "Post Anaxamines aera deum statuit, eumque gigni, esseque immensum et infinitum, et semper in motu."

\(^8\) Ravenous is always-moving. So in Macbeth, iv. 1: "Maw and gulf of the ravin salt-sea shark."

\(^8\) Whence must here mean from the place where. A bold ellipsis!
As oft it loses all: I will be gone;  
My being here it is that holds thee hence:  
Shall I stay here to do’t? no, no, although
The air of paradise did fan the house,
And angels officed all: I will be gone,  
That pitiful rumour may report my flight,  
To console thine ear. Come, night; end, day!
For with the dark, poor thief, I’ll steal away. [Exit.


Flourish. Enter the Duke of Florence, Bertram, Parolles,  
Lords, Officers, Soldiers, and others.

Duke. The general of our horse thou art; and we,
Great in our hope, lay our best love and credence
Upon thy promising fortune.

Ber. Sir, it is
A charge too heavy for my strength; but yet
We’ll strive to bear it, for your worthy sake,
To th’ extreme edge of hazard.

Duke. Then go thou forth;
And Fortune play upon thy prosperous helm,
As thy auspicious mistress!

Ber. This very day,
Great Mars, I put myself into thy file:
Make me but like my thoughts, and I shall prove
A lover of thy drum, hater of love. [Exeunt.

9 That is, filled or discharged all the offices. Offices was much used for the various branches of service or duty in a large domestic establishment.
SCENE IV.—Rousillon. A Room in the House of the Countess.

Enter the Countess and Steward.

Count. Alas! and would you take the letter of her? Might you not know she'd do as she has done, By sending me a letter? Read it again.

Stew. [Reads.]
I am Saint Jaques' pilgrim, thither gone:
Ambitious love hath so in me offended,
That barefoot plod I the cold ground upon,
With sainted vow my faults to have amended.
Write, write, that from the bloody course of war
My dearest master, your dear son, may hie:
Bless him at home in peace, whilst I from far
His name with zealous fervour sanctify:
His taken labours bid him me forgive;
I, his despiteful Juno, sent him forth
From courtly friends, with camping foes to live,
Where death and danger dog the heels of worth:
He is too good and fair for death and me;
Whom I myself embrace, to set him free.

Count. Ah, what sharp stings are in her mildest words!—Rinaldo, you did never lack advice so much, As letting her pass so: had I spoke with her, I could have well diverted her intents, Which thus she hath prevented.

1 At Orleans was a church dedicated to Saint Jaques, where a part of the "true cross" was believed to be preserved. Hence many pilgrimages were made to the shrine.

2 Alluding to the tough trials which Juno's spite caused Hercules to undergo. She hated him as the son of her husband, Jupiter.

3 Advice for consideration or judgment. Often so.
Stew. Pardon me, madam:
If I had given you this at over-night,
She might have been o'erta'en; and yet she writes,
Pursuit would be but vain.4

Count. What angel shall
Bless this unworthy husband? he cannot thrive,
Unless her prayers, whom 5 Heaven delights to hear,
And loves to grant, reprieve him from the wrath
Of greatest justice. — Write, write, Rinaldo,
To this unworthy husband of his wife; 6
Let every word weigh heavy of her worth,
That he does weigh too light: my greatest grief,
Though little he do feel it, set down sharply.
Dispatch the most convenient messenger. —
When haply he shall hear that she is gone,
He will return; and hope I may that she,
Hearing so much, will speed her foot again,
Led hither by pure love. Which of them both
Is dearest to me, I’ve no skill in sense
To make distinction. — Provide this messenger. —
My heart is heavy and mine age is weak:
Grief would have tears, and sorrow bids me speak.

[Exeunt.

Scene V. — Without the Walls of Florence.

Enter an old Widow of Florence, Diana, Violanta, Mariana,
and other Citizens.

Wid. Nay, come; for, if they do approach the city, we
shall lose all the sight.

4 Lettsom remarks that “this is not borne out by Helen's letter.”
5 Whom for which, referring to prayers. The two were often used indiscriminately.
6 “This husband unworthy of his wife” is the prose order.
Dia. They say the French count has done most honourable service.

Wid. It is reported that he has taken their greatest commander; and that with his own hand he slew the Duke's brother. [A tucket afar off.] We have lost our labour; they are gone a contrary way: hark! you may know by their trumpets.

Mar. Come, let's return again, and suffice ourselves with the report of it. Well, Diana, take heed of this French earl: the honour of a maid is her name; and no legacy is so rich as honesty.

Wid. I have told my neighbour how you have been solicited by a gentleman his companion.

Mar. I know that knave: hang him! one Parolles: a filthy officer he is in those suggestions for the young earl.—Beware of them, Diana: their promises, enticements, oaths, tokens, and all these engines of lust, are but the things they go under: many a maid hath been seduced by them; and the misery is, example, that so terrible shows in the wreck of maidenhood, cannot for all that dissuade succession, but that they are limed with the twigs that threaten them. I hope I need not to advise you further; but I hope your own grace will keep you where you are, though there were no further danger known but the modesty which is so lost.

Dia. You shall not need to fear me.

Wid. I hope so.—Look, here comes a pilgrim: I know

---

1 Suggestions for temptations: the more usual meaning of the word in Shakespeare. So in The Tempest, ii. 1: "For all the rest, they'll take suggestion as a cat laps milk." See, also, vol. i., page 195, note 1.

2 That is, the men's promises, &c., are only the pretexts and false colours under which they beguile and seduce their victims.

3 Succession in the sense of a following after; very much as success and succeeding before. See page 35, note 26, and page 55, note 25.—Limed, in the next clause, is ensnared as with bird-lime, an old word that came to signify any sort of trap or snare.
Scene V.  All's Well That Ends Well.

She will lie at my house; thither they send one another: I'll question her.—

Enter Helena, in the dress of a Pilgrim.

God save you, pilgrim! whither are you bound?

Hel. To Saint Jaques le Grand.

Where do the Palmer's lodge, I do beseech you?

Wid. At the Saint Francis here, beside the port

Hel. Is this the way?

Wid. Ay, marry, is't. — Hark you! they come this way.—

[A march afar off.

If you will tarry, holy pilgrim,
But till the troops come by,
I will conduct you where you shall be lodged;
The rather, for I think I know your hostess
As ample as myself.

Hel. Is it yourself?

Wid. If you shall please so, pilgrim.

Hel. I thank you, and will stay upon your leisure.

Wid. You came, I think, from France?

Hel. I did so.

Wid. Here you shall see a countryman of yours
That has done worthy service.

Hel. His name, I pray you.

Dia. The Count Rousillon: know you such a one?

Hel. But by the ear, that hears most nobly of him:
His face I know not. 5

Dia. Whatsoe'er he is,

4 Pilgrims were called Palmer, from the staff or branch of palm which they were wont to carry as a kind of badge.

5 Shall we say here that Shakespeare has unnecessarily made his loveliest character utter a lie? Or shall we dare think that, where to deceive was necessary, he thought a verbal verity a double crime, equally with the other a lie to the hearer, and at the same time an attempt to lie to one's own conscience? — Coleridge.
He's bravely taken here. He stole from France,
As 'tis reported, for the King had married him
Against his liking: think you it is so?

_Hel._ Ay, surely, mere the truth: I know his lady.

_Dia._ There is a gentleman that serves the count
Reports but coarsely of her.

_Hel._ What's his name?

_Dia._ Monsieur Parolles.

_Hel._ O, I believe with him,
In argument of praise, or to the worth
Of the great count himself, she is too mean
To have her name repeated: all her deserving
Is a reserved honesty, and that
I have not heard examined.

_Dia._ Alas, poor lady!
'Tis a hard bondage to become the wife
Of a detesting lord.

_Wid._ Ay, right!—good creature, wheresoe'er she is,
Her heart weighs sadly: this young maid might do her
A shrewd turn, if she pleased.

_Hel._ How do you mean?
May be the amorous count solicits her
In the unlawful purpose.

_Wid._ He does indeed;

6 "Mere the truth" is the _absolute_ truth. Shakespeare has many instances
of both _mere_ and _merely_ used in this sense. So in _Henry VIII._, iii. 2: "To
the _mere_ undoing of all the kingdom." See, also, vol. iii., page 179, note 37.

7 This is merely a modest way of saying, "I have not heard it _doubted_
or _called in question._" Here, as often, _honesty for chastity._

8 _Ay, right!_ refers, of course, to what Diana has just said.

9 Shrewd is, properly, _sharp, biting, cutting_, and is here used in a bad
sense,—_injurious or mischievous_. So, in _King Henry VIII._, v. 3, the King,
referring to Cranmer, quotes as a common saying, "Do my Lord of Can-
terbury a _shrewd turn_, and he is your friend for ever." Here _shrewd turn_
is an _injury or wrong_; and the King approves the saying as implying the
highest commendation,—that of repaying personal enmity with kindness.
SCENE V. \textit{ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.}

And brokes\textsuperscript{10} with all that can in such a suit
Corrupt the tender honour of a maid:
But she is arm'd for him, and keeps her guard
In honestest defence.

\textit{Mar.} \quad The gods forbid else!

\textit{Wid.} \quad So, now they come:—

\textit{Enter Bertram, Parolles, and the Florentine Army with drum and colours.}

That is Antonio, the Duke's eldest son;
That, Escalus.

\textit{Hel.} \quad Which is the Frenchman?

\textit{Dia.} \quad He;

That with the plume: 'tis a most gallant fellow.
I would he loved his wife: if he were honester,
He were much goodlier: is't not a handsome gentleman?

\textit{Hel.} \quad I like him well.

\textit{Dia.} \quad 'Tis pity he's not honest: yond's that same knave

That leads him to these pranks: were I his lady,
I'd poison that vile rascal.

\textit{Hel.} \quad Which is he?

\textit{Dia.} \quad That jack-an-apes with scarfs: why is he melancholy?

\textit{Hel.} \quad Perchance he's hurt i' the battle.

\textit{Par.} \quad Lose our drum! well.

\textit{Mar.} \quad He's shrewdly vex'd at something: look, he has spied us.

\textit{Wid.} \quad Marry, hang you!

\textit{Mar.} \quad And your courtesy, for a ring-carrier!

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item To \textit{broke} is, properly, to act the \textit{pander}, \textit{pimp}, or \textit{go-between}; here it means to have dealings with such persons. The Poet often uses to \textit{broke} and its cognates in this sense. See vol. i., page 168, note 4.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
All's Well That Ends Well

ACT III.

Wid. The troop is past. Come, pilgrim, I will bring you
Where you shall host: of enjoin'd penitents
There's four or five, to Great Saint Jaques bound,
Already at my house.

Hel. I humbly thank you:
Please it this matron and this gentle maid
To eat with us to-night, the charge and thanking
Shall be for me; and, to requite you further,
I will bestow some precepts of this virgin
Worthy the note.

Both. We'll take your offer kindly. [Exeunt.

SCENE VI. — Camp before Florence.

Enter Bertram and the two French Lords.

1 Lord. Nay, good my lord, put him to't; let him have his way.

2 Lord. If your lordship find him not a hilding, hold me no more in your respect.

1 Lord. On my life, my lord, a bubble.

Ber. Do you think I am so far deceived in him?

1 Lord. Believe it, my lord, in mine own direct knowledge, without any malice, but to speak of him as my kinsman, he's

11 To host is to lodge; as a hostel or hotel is a lodging-place. See vol. i., page 85, note 2. — "Enjoin'd penitents" are persons enjoined or required to do penance, by making pilgrimages or otherwise.

12 The Poet, as I have before noted, often uses of where our present idiom requires on. The usage was common. See vol. iii., page 141, note 15.

1 Hilding was much used as a general term of contempt; but here its proper sense is highly intensified. The radical meaning of the word is thrall or slave; so applied to both sexes. A very learned writer in The Edinburgh Review, July, 1869, says that, "when applied to men, it usually emphasizes the sordid characteristics and degrading associations connected with the servile state." See vol. ii., page 173, note 1.
a most notable coward, an infinite and endless liar, an hourly promise-breaker, the owner of no one good quality worthy your lordship's entertainment.

2 Lord. It were fit you knew him; lest, reposing too far in his virtue, which he hath not, he might at some great and trusty business, in a main danger, fail you.

Ber. I would I knew in what particular action to try him.

2 Lord. None better than to let him fetch off his drum, which you hear him so confidently undertake to do.

1 Lord. I, with a troop of Florentines, will suddenly surprise him; such I will have, whom, I am sure, he knows not from the enemy: we will bind and hoodwink him so, that he shall suppose no other but that he is carried into the leaguer of the adversaries, when we bring him to our own tents. Be but your lordship present at his examination: if he do not, for the promise of his life, and in the highest compulsion of base fear, offer to betray you, and deliver all the intelligence in his power against you, and that with the divine forfeit of his soul upon oath, never trust my judgment in any thing.

2 Lord. O, for the love of laughter, let him fetch off his drum; he says he has a stratagem for't: when your lordship sees the bottom of his success in't, and to what metal this counterfeit lump of ore will be melted, if you give him not John Drum's entertainment, your inclining cannot be removed. Here he comes.

2 Leaguer was an outlandish word for camp. So in Sir John Smythe's Discourses, 1590: "They will not vouchsafe in their speaches or writings to use our ancient termes belonging to matters of warre, but doo call a campe by the Dutch name of Legar."

8 Ore is evidently used here in a sense very different from the one it now bears: probably for gold. So in Hamlet, iv. 1: "O'er whom his very madness, like fine ore among a mineral of metals base, shows itself pure." Bullokar and Blount, also, both define "or or ore, gold; of a golden colour." His lordship means, no doubt, that this lump of sham gold will turn out lead or something worse.

4 This was a proverbial phrase for some such practical joking as is now
1 Lord. O, for the love of laughter, hinder not the humour of his design: let him fetch off his drum in any hand.5

Enter Parolles.

Ber. How now, monsieur! this drum sticks sorely in your disposition.

2 Lord. A pox on't, let it go; 'tis but a drum.

Par. But a drum! is't but a drum? A drum so lost! There was excellent command, — to charge in with our Horse upon our wings, and to rend our own soldiers!

2 Lord. That was not to be blamed in the command of the service: it was a disaster of war that Caesar himself could not have prevented, if he had been there to command.

Ber. Well, we cannot greatly condemn our success: some dishonour we had in the loss of that drum; but it is not to be recovered.

Par. It might have been recovered.

Ber. It might; but it is not now.

Par. It is to be recovered: but that the merit of service is seldom attributed to the true and exact performer, I would have that drum or another, or hic jacet.6

Ber. Why, if you have a stomach to't, monsieur, if you think your mystery in stratagem can bring this instrument of honour again into his native quarter, be magnanimous in the enterprise, and go on; I will grace the attempt for a worthy exploit: if you speed well in it, the Duke shall both speak of

called drumming out. Master Drum had various names, Tom, Jack, and John. Holinshed thus describes the thing: "Tom Drum his entertainment, which is to hale a man by the head, and thrust him out by both the shoulders." There is also an old play entitled Jack Drum's Entertainment, 1601, in which the hero passes through a series of inverted exploits not unlike this of Parolles.

6 In or at any hand was a phrase for at any rate, or at all events. See vol. ii., page 170, note 24.

6 Epitaphs commonly began with Hic jacet. The poltroon means that he will either get back the drum or die in the attempt.
it, and extend to you what further becomes his greatness, even to the utmost syllable of your worthiness.

Par. By the hand of a soldier, I will undertake it.

Ber. But you must not now slumber in it.

Par. I'll about it this evening: and I will presently pen down my dilemmas,⁷ encourage myself in my certainty, put myself into my mortal preparation; and, by midnight, look to hear further from me.

Ber. May I be bold to acquaint his Grace you are gone about it?

Par. I know not what the success will be, my lord; but the attempt I vow.

Ber. I know thou'rt valiant; and, to the possibility of thy soldiership, will subscribe for thee. Farewell.

Par. I love not many words. [Exit.

1 Lord. No more than a fish loves water.—Is not this a strange fellow, my lord, that so confidently seems to undertake this business, which he knows is not to be done? damns himself to do, and dares better be damn'd than to do't?

2 Lord. You do not know him, my lord, as we do: certain it is, that he will steal himself into a man's favour, and for a week escape a great deal of discovery; but when you find him once, you have him ever after.

Ber. Why, do you think he will make no deed at all of this, that so seriously he does address himself unto?

1 Lord. None in the world; but return with an invention, and clap upon you two or three probable⁸ lies: but we have almost emboss'd him,⁹—you shall see his fall to-night; for indeed he is not for your lordship's respect.

---

⁷ By dilemmas he means the difficulties of the undertaking, and his plans for overcoming them; the strategic alternatives he will make use of.

⁸ Probable for specious or plausible. See page 61, note 4.

⁹ That is, almost run him down. An emboss'd stag was one so hard chased as to foam at the mouth.
2 Lord. We'll make you some sport with the fox, ere we case him.  
He was first smoked by the old Lord Lafeu: when his disguise and he is parted, tell me what a sprat you shall find him; which you shall see this very night.

1 Lord. I must go look my twigs: he shall be caught.

Ber. Your brother, he shall go along with me.

1 Lord. As't please your lordship: I'll leave you. [Exit.

Ber. Now will I lead you to the house, and show you
The lass I spoke of.

2 Lord. But you say she's honest.

Ber. That's all the fault: I spoke with her but once,
And found her wondrous cold; but I sent to her,
By this same coxcomb that we have i' the wind, Tokens and letters which she did re-send;
And this is all I've done. She's a fair creature:
Will you go see her?

2 Lord. With all my heart, my lord. [Exeunt.

SCENE VII. — Florence. A Room in the Widow's House.

Enter Helena and the Widow.

Hel. If you misdoubt me that I am not she,
I know not how I shall assure you further,
But I shall lose the grounds I work upon.  

10 To case is a hunting-term for to skin. Here it means strip or unmask.
—To smoke a fox is to oust him from his hole, so that the hunters may get him in chase. This was done by filling the hole with smoke.

11 To look is repeatedly used by the Poet with a transitive force. In scene 5, of this Act, we have “they are limed with the twigs that threaten them.” To lime is to catch or ensnare, and twigs was a common term for any kind of trap or snare, whether made with twigs or thoughts.

12 To have in the wind is another term of the chase. Thus explained by Cotgrave, in its transferred and proverbial sense: “To get the wind, advantage, upper hand of; to have a man under his lee.”

1 She would lose this ground, if she should discover herself to Bertram or Parolles, or call them in to identify her.—“But I shall lose” is equiva-
SCENE VII. ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

Wid. Though my estate be fall'n, I was well born, Nothing acquainted with these businesses; And would not put my reputation now In any staining act.

Hel. Nor would I wish you. First, give me trust, the county is my husband, And what to your sworn counsel I have spoken Is so from word to word; and then you cannot, By the good aid that I of you shall borrow, Err. in bestowing it.

Wid. I should believe you; For you have show'd me that which well approves You're great in fortune.

Hel. Take this purse of gold, And let me buy your friendly help thus far, Which I will over-pay and pay again, When I have found it. The county woos your daughter, Lays down his wanton siege before her beauty, Resolved to carry her: let her, in fine, consent, As we'll direct her how 'tis best to bear it. Now his important blood will nought deny That she'll demand: a ring the county wears, That downward hath succeeded in his House From son to son, some four or five descents Since the first father wore it: this ring he holds In most rich choice; yet, in his idle fire, To buy his will, it would not seem too dear, Howe'er repented after.

Wid. Now I see

lent to without losing. A frequent usage. So in Hamlet, i. 3: "Do not sleep but let me hear from you." That is, without letting.

2 Your sworn counsel is your plighted secrecy, or pledge of concealment. The Poet has counsel repeatedly so.

The bottom of your purpose.

_Hel._ You see it lawful, then: it is no more,
But that your daughter, ere she seems as won,
Desires this ring; appoints him an encounter;
In fine, delivers me to fill the time,
_Herself_ most chastely absent: after this,
To marry her, I'll add three thousand crowns
To what is past already.

_Wid._ I have yielded:
Instruct my daughter how she shall persever,
That time and place with this deceit so lawful
May prove coherent. Every night he comes
With music of all sorts, and songs composed
To her unworthiness: it nothing steads us
To chide him from our eaves; for he persists,
As if his life lay on't.

_Hel._ Why, then to-night
Let us assay our plot; which, if it speed,
Is wicked meaning in a lawful deed,
And lawful meaning in a wicked act; 4
Where both not sin, and yet a sinful fact:
But let's about it.

_[Exeunt._

---

4 Helen's intent was lawful, for it was to meet her husband; but her act
is spoken of as wicked, inasmuch as she was to deceive her husband by pret-
tending to act a crime.
ACT IV.

SCENE I. — Without the Florentine Camp.

Enter 1 French Lord, with five or six Soldiers in ambush.

1 Lord. He can come no other way but by this hedge-corner. When you sally upon him, speak what terrible language you will,—though you understand it not yourselves, no matter; for we must not seem to understand him, unless some one among us, whom we must produce for an interpreter.

1 Sold. Good captain, let me be the interpreter.

1 Lord. Art not acquainted with him? knows he not thy voice?

1 Sold. No, sir, I warrant you.

1 Lord. But what linsey-woolsey hast thou to speak to us again?

1 Sold. E'en such as you speak to me.

1 Lord. He must think us some band of strangers i' the adversary's entertainment. Now, he hath a smack of all neighbouring languages; therefore we must every one be a man of his own fancy, not to know what we speak one to another; so we seem to know, is to know straight our purpose: 'though's language, gabble enough, and good enough. As for you, interpreter, you must seem very politic. But couch, ho! here he comes,—to beguile two hours in a sleep, and then to return and swear the lies he forges.

Enter PAROLLES.

Par. Ten o'clock: within these three hours 'twill be time enough to go home. What shall I say I have done? It must

---

1 Some band of foreign troops in the enemy's pay.
2 The chough is a bird of the jackdaw kind.
be a very plausible invention that carries it: they begin to smoke me; and disgraces have of late knock'd too often at my door. I find my tongue is too foolhardy; but my heart hath the fear of Mars before it, and of his creatures, not daring the reports of my tongue.

1 Lord. [Aside.] This is the first truth that e'er thine own tongue was guilty of.

Par. What the Devil should move me to undertake the recovery of this drum, being not ignorant of the impossibility, and knowing I had no such purpose? I must give myself some hurts, and say I got them in exploit: yet slight ones will not carry it; they will say, Came you off with so little? and great ones I dare not give. Wherefore, what's the instance? Tongue, I must put you into a butter-woman's mouth, and buy myself another of Bajazet's mute, if you prattle me into these perils.

1 Lord. [Aside.] Is it possible he should know what he is, and be that he is?

Par. I would the cutting of my garments would serve the turn, or the breaking of my Spanish sword;—

1 Lord. [Aside.] We cannot afford you so.

Par.—or the baring of my beard; and to say it was in stratagem;—

1 Lord. [Aside.] 'Twould not do.

Par.—or to drown my clothes, and say I was stripp'd;—

8 Plausible here must mean plausible or specious: the only instance, I think, of the word so used in Shakespeare. See page 24, note 11.

4 That is, "what proof shall I produce?" or, "in what shall I instance, to bear out my pretence?" The Poet has instance repeatedly so. See vol. i., page 82, note 9.

6 The matter of this allusion, for such it seems to be, has not been traced. Eastern monarchs were well known to have attendants so called.

6 To bare the beard was to shave. So in Measure for Measure, iv. 2: "Shave the head, and trim the beard; and say it was the desire of the penitent to be so bared before his death."
SCENE I. ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

1 Lord. [Aside.] Hardly serve.
Par. — though I swore I leap'd from the window of the citadel, —

1 Lord. [Aside.] How deep?
Par. — thirty fathom.
1 Lord. [Aside.] Three great oaths would scarce make that be believed.
Par. I would I had any drum of the enemy's: I would swear I recover'd it.
1 Lord. [Aside.] You shall hear one anon.

[Alarum within.

Par. A drum now of the enemy's!
1 Lord. Throca movousus, cargo, cargo, cargo.
All. Cargo, cargo, cargo, villianda par corbo, cargo.
Par. O, ransom, ransom! do not hide mine eyes.

[They seize and blindfold him.

1 Sold. Boskos thromuldo boskos.
Par. I know you are the Muskos' regiment;
And I shall lose my life for want of language:
If there be here German, or Dane, low Dutch,
French, or Italian, let him speak to me;
I will discover that which shall undo
The Florentine.

1 Sold. Boskos vauvado:
I understand thee, and can speak thy tongue:
Kerelybonto: — sir,
Betake thee to thy faith, for seventeen poniards Are at thy bosom.

Par. O!
1 Sold. O, pray, pray, pray! —

Manka revania dulche.

1 Lord. Oscorbi dulchos volivorco.

1 Sold. The general is content to spare thee yet;
And, hoodwink'd as thou art, will lead thee on
To gather from thee: haply thou mayst inform
Something to save thy life.

Par. O, let me live!
And all the secrets of our camp I'll show,
Their force, their purposes; nay, I'll speak that
Which you will wonder at.

1 Sold. But wilt thou faithfully?
Par. If I do not, damn me.

1 Sold. Acordo linta:—
Come on; thou art granted space.

[Exit, with Parolles guarded. A short alarum within.

1 Lord. Go, tell the Count Rousillon, and my brother,
We've caught the woodcock, and will keep him muffled
Till we do hear from them.

2 Sold. Captain, I will.

1 Lord. 'A will betray us all unto ourselves:
Inform 'em that.

2 Sold. So I will, sir.

1 Lord. Till then I'll keep him dark and safely lock'd.

[Exeunt.

Scene II.—Florence. A Room in the Widow's House.

Enter Bertram and Diana.

Ber. They told me that your name was Fontibell.
Dia. No, my good lord, Diana.
Ber. Titled goddess;
And worth it, with addition! But, fair soul,
In your fine frame hath love no quality?
If the quick fire of youth light not your mind,
You are no maiden, but a monument:
When you are dead, you should be such a one
As you are now, for you are cold and stern;
SCENE II.  ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

And now you should be as your mother was
When your sweet self was got.

Dia. She then was honest.

Ber. So should you be.

Dia. No:

My mother did but duty; such, my lord,
As you owe to your wife.

Ber. No more o' that;
I pr'ythee, do not strive against my vows:
I was compell'd to her; but I love thee
By Love's own sweet constraint, and will for ever
Do thee all rights of service.

Dia. Ay, so you serve us
Till we serve you; but, when you have our roses,
You barely leave our thorns to prick ourselves,
And mock us with our bareness.

Ber. How have I sworn!

Dia. 'Tis not the many oaths that make the truth,
But the plain single vow that is vow'd true.
What is not holy, that we swear not by,
But take the High'st to witness: then, pray you, tell me,
If I should swear by God's great attributes,
I loved you dearly, would you believe my oaths,
When I did love you ill? this has no holding,

1 Should for would, as, before, would for should. See page 58, note 32.
2 Meaning the vows he has made not to treat Helen as his wife.
3 Bertram has been swearing love to Diana; and he wants her, in the strength of that oath, to do that which would ruin her. This she justly calls loving her ill, because it is a love that would injure her. And her argument is, that oaths in such a suit are but an adding of perjury to lust. The Poet's 15th Sonnet yields an apt comment on the passage:

But why of two oaths' breach do I accuse thee,
When I break twenty? I am perjured most;
For all my vows are oaths but to misuse thee,
And all my honest faith in thee is lost.

4 That is, this has no consistency, will not hold together. — In what fol-
To swear by Him, when I protest to love,
That I will work against. Therefore your oaths
Are words and poor conditions, best unseal'd.\(^5\)
At least in my opinion.

*Ber.*

Change it, change it;
Be not so holy-cruel: my love is holy;
And my integrity ne'er knew the crafts
That you do charge men with. Stand no more off,
But give thyself unto my sick desires,
Who then recover: say thou'ret mine, and ever
My love as it begins shall so perséver.

*Dia.* I see that men make ropes in such a snare,
That we'll forsake ourselves.\(^6\) Give me that ring.

*Ber.* I'll lend it thee, my dear; but have no power
To give it from me.

*Dia.*

Will you not, my lord?

*Ber.* It is an honour longing to our House,
Bequeathèd down from many ancestors;

\(^5\) To seal an oath or condition is to give it the finishing stroke; that is, to ratify it, and, poetically, to put it in execution. Diana means that Bertram's oaths are sworn for a criminal purpose, and therefore are best kept by being left unexecuted.

\(^6\) As before noted, *in* and *into* were often used indiscriminately; and Shakespeare has many instances of *in* where present usage requires *into*. See vol. ii., page 95, note 50. Such is probably the case here. Perhaps there is also some reference implied to what the Poet elsewhere calls *ropery* and *rope-tricks*, that is, *rogueries*. See vol. ii., page 166, note 14. Nares says that "sometimes a person guilty of such tricks is called a *roper*." See, also, *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 4, note on "full of his *ropery.*" So that Diana's meaning appears to be, "I see that men frame or weave ropes, or *rope-tricks*, so artfully, or *into* such a snare, as to make us forsake our proper selves, and yield up our maiden honour to them." She then proceeds, accordingly, to *feign* compliance with Bertram's solicitations, as if she were really *ensnared* and caught by them. See Critical Notes.
Which were the greatest obloquy i’ the world
In me to lose.

_Dia._ Mine honour’s such a ring:
My chastity’s the jewel of our House,
Bequeathèd down from many ancestors;
Which were the greatest obloquy i’ the world
In me to lose: thus your own proper wisdom
Brings in the champion honour on my part,
Against your vain assault.

_Ber._ Here, take my ring:
My House, mine honour, yea, my life, be thine,
And I’ll be bid by thee.

_Dia._ When midnight comes, knock at my chamber-window:
I’ll order take my mother shall not hear.
Now will I charge you **in the band**⁷ of truth,
When you have conquer’d my yet-maiden bed,
Remain there but an hour, nor speak to me:
My reasons are most strong; and you shall know them
When back again this ring shall be deliver’d:
And on your finger, in the night, I’ll put
Another ring, that what in time proceeds
May token to the future our past deeds.
Adieu, till then; then fail not. You have won
A wife for me, though there my hope be done.

_Ber._ A Heaven on Earth I’ve won by wooing thee.

_[Exit._

_Dia._ For which live long to thank both Heaven and me!
You may so in the end.—
My mother told me just how he would woo,
As if she sat in’s heart; she says all men
Have the like oaths: he has sworn to marry me
When his wife’s dead; therefore I’ll lie with him

⁷ _Band_ is the same as _bond_; that which _binds_ or _obliges._
When I am buried. Since Frenchmen are so braid,\(^8\)
Marry that will, I live and die a maid:
Only, in this disguise, I think't no sin
To cozen him that would unjustly win.

[Exit.

SCENE III.—The Florentine Camp.

Enter the two French Lords and two or three Soldiers.

1 Lord. You have not given him his mother's letter?

2 Lord. I have deliver'd it an hour since: there is something in't that stings his nature; for, on the reading it, he changed almost into another man.

1 Lord. He has much worthy blame laid upon him for shaking off so good a wife and so sweet a lady.

2 Lord. Especially he hath incurred the everlasting displeasure of the King, who had even tuned his bounty to sing happiness to him. I will tell you a thing, but you shall let it dwell darkly with you.

1 Lord. When you have spoken it, 'tis dead, and I am the grave of it.

2 Lord. He hath perverted a young gentlewoman here in Florence, of a most chaste renown; and this night he fleshes his will in the spoil of her honour: he hath given her his monumental ring, and thinks himself made in the unchaste composition.

1 Lord. Now, God delay\(^1\) our rebellion! as we are ourselves, what things are we!

\(^8\) It has been amply shown that braid was sometimes used for crafty, deceitful. Nares derives it from the Saxon bred, cunning; and Hearne, in his Glossary, sets down deceit, guile, among its meanings. Greene, also, in his Never too Late, uses it as a substantive for deceits:

Dian rose with all her maids,
Blushing thus at Love his braids.

\(^1\) Delay, if it be the right word, is here used for assuage, mitigate, or allay. The meaning is clearly the same as in Henry VIII., i. 1: "If with the sap
2 Lord. Merely our own traitors. And as, in the common course of all treasons, we still see them reveal themselves, till they attain to their abhorrd ends; so he that in this action contrives against his own nobility, in his proper stream o'erflows himself.

1 Lord. Is it not most damnable in us, to be trumpeters of our unlawful intents? We shall not, then, have his company to-night?

2 Lord. Not till after midnight; for he is dieted to his hour.

1 Lord. That approaches apace: I would gladly have him see his company anatomized, that he might take a measure of his own judgment, wherein so curiously he had set this counterfeit.

2 Lord. We will not meddle with him till he come; for his presence must be the whip of the other.

1 Lord. In the mean time, what hear you of these wars?

2 Lord. I hear there is an overture of peace.

1 Lord. Nay, I assure you, a peace concluded.

of reason you would quench, or but allay, the fire of passion." Shakespeare nowhere else has delay in this sense; but Spenser has it repeatedly thus. So in The Fairie Queene, ii. 6, 40: "The hasty heat of his avowd revenge delayd." And in iii. 12, 42: "Those dreadfull flames she also found delayd and quenched quite." Also in his 30th Sonnet: "That my exceeding heat is not delayd by her hart-frosten cold."

2 Here, as often, merely is altogether, entirely, or absolutely. So in Hamlet, i. 2: "Things rank and gross in nature possess it merely." See, also, page 76, note 6.

3 Abhorrd ends is ignominious punishments; the horrible ends to which their treason brings them. With ere instead of till, the sense would be, "let out their own secrets before they have accomplished their wicked purpose."

4 That is, blabs out his own secrets; and does this merely from his native incontinence of tongue, or of character.

5 Counterfeit, besides its usual meaning, also meant picture; and the word set shows it to be used in both senses here. — In what precedes, company is put for companion, a sense not peculiar to this place. See vol. iii., page 16, note 26. — Anatomized is thoroughly exposed or shown up. See vol. ii., page 45, note 6.
2 Lord. What will Count Rousillon do then? will he travel higher, or return again into France?

1 Lord. I perceive, by this demand, you are not altogether of his council.

2 Lord. Let it be forbid, sir! so should I be a great deal of his act.

1 Lord. Sir, his wife, some two months since, fled from his house; her pretence a pilgrimage to Saint Jaques le Grand; which holy undertaking, with most austere sanctimony, she accomplish'd; and, there residing, the tenderness of her nature became as a prey to her grief; in fine, made a groan of her last breath; and now she sings in Heaven.

2 Lord. How is this justified?

1 Lord. The stranger part of it by her own letters, which make her story true, even to the point of her death: her death itself, which could not be her office to say was come, is faithfully confirm'd by the rector of the place.

2 Lord. Hath the count all this intelligence?

1 Lord. Ay, and the particular confirmations, point from point, to the full arming of the verity.

2 Lord. I am heartily sorry that he'll be glad of this.

1 Lord. How mightily sometimes we make us comforts of our losses!

2 Lord. And how mightily some other times we drown our gain in tears! The great dignity that his valour hath here acquired for him shall at home be encounter'd with a shame as ample.

1 Lord. The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together: our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipp'd them not; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherish'd by our virtues.—

Enter a Servant.

How now! where's your master?
SCENE III.  ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

Serv. He met the Duke in the street, sir, of whom he hath taken a solemn leave: his lordship will next morning for France. The Duke hath offered him letters of commendations to the King.  

[Exit.

2 Lord. They shall be no more than needful there, if they were more than they can commend.

1 Lord. They cannot be too sweet for the King's tartness. Here's his lordship now.—

Enter Bertram.

How now, my lord! is't not after midnight?

Ber. I have to-night dispatch'd sixteen businesses, a month's length a-piece, by an abstract of success: I have congé'd with the Duke, done my adieu with his nearest; buried a wife, mourn'd for her; writ to my lady mother I am returning; entertain'd my convoy; and, between these main parcels of dispatch, effected many nicer needs: the last was the greatest, but that I have not ended yet.

2 Lord. If the business be of any difficulty, and this morning your departure hence, it requires haste of your lordship.

Ber. I mean, the business is not ended, as fearing to hear of it hereafter. But shall we have this dialogue between the fool and the soldier? Come, bring forth this counterfeit model: 6 'has deceived me, like a double-meaning prophesier.

2 Lord. Bring him forth: [Exeunt Soldiers.] — 'has sat i' the stocks all night, poor gallant knave.

Ber. No matter; his heels have deserved it, in usurping his spurs so long. How does he carry himself?

2 Lord. I have told your lordship already,—the stocks carry him. But, to answer you as you would be understood; he weeps like a wench that had shed her milk: he hath confess'd himself to Morgan, whom he supposes to be a friar,

6 That is, this counterfeit representation or image of a soldier.
from the time of his remembrance to this very instant disaster of his setting i' the stocks: and what think you he hath confess'd?

Ber. Nothing of me, has 'a?

2 Lord. His confession is taken, and it shall be read to his face: if your lordship be in't, as I believe you are, you must have the patience to hear it.

Re-enter Soldiers, with Parolles muffled.

Ber. A plague upon him! muffled! he can say nothing of me.


1 Sold. He calls for the tortures: what will you say without 'em?

Par. I will confess what I know without constraint: if ye pinch me like a pasty, I can say no more.

1 Sold. Bosko chimurcho.

1 Lord. Boblibindo chicurmurco.

1 Sold. You are a merciful general.—Our general bids you answer to what I shall ask you out of a note.

Par. And truly, as I hope to live.

1 Sold. [Reads.] First demand of him how many Horse the Duke is strong. What say you to that?

Par. Five or six thousand; but very weak and unserviceable: the troops are all scattered, and the commanders very poor rogues, upon my reputation and credit, and as I hope to live.

1 Sold. Shall I set down your answer so?

Par. Do: I'll take the sacrament on't, how and which way you will.

Ber. All's one to him. What a past-saving slave is this!

7 Alluding to the play of blind-man's buff, formerly called hoodman-blind, because the blinded player had his hood turned round over his eyes.
Lord. You're deceived, my lord: this is Monsieur Parolles, the gallant militarist,—that was his own phrase,—that had the whole theoretic of war in the knot of his scarf, and the practice in the chape\textsuperscript{8} of his dagger.

Ber. I will never trust a man again for keeping his sword clean; nor believe he can have every thing in him by wearing his apparel neatly.

Sold. Well, that's set down.

Par. Five or six thousand Horse, I said,—I will say true,—or thereabouts, set down,—for I'll speak truth.

Lord. He's very near the truth in this.

Ber. But I con him no thanks for't, in the nature he delivers it.\textsuperscript{9}

Par. Poor rogues, I pray you, say.

Sold. Well, that's set down.

Par. I humbly thank you, sir.

Lord. A truth's a truth,—the rogues are marvellous poor.

Sold. [Reads.] Demand of him, of what strength they are a-foot. What say you to that?

Par. By my troth, sir, if I were to die this present hour, I will tell true. Let me see: Spurio, a hundred and fifty; Sebastian, so many; Corambus, so many; Jaques, so many; Julian, Cosmo, Lodowick, and Gratii, two hundred fifty each; mine own company, Chitopher, Vaumond, Bentii, two hundred fifty each: so that the muster-file, rotten and sound, upon my life, amounts not to fifteen thousand poll; half of the which dare not shake the snow from off their cassocks, lest they shake themselves to pieces.

Ber. What shall be done to him?

\textsuperscript{8} The \textit{chape} is the metallic part of the sheath, covering the point of the sword or dagger. See vol. ii., page 193, note 3.

\textsuperscript{9} That is, no thanks for telling the truth, \textit{considering the purpose} for which he does it. To \textit{con thanks} is to be \textit{obliged}, or to \textit{acknowledge an obligation}, or, simply, to \textit{give} thanks.
1 Lord. Nothing, but let him have thanks.—Demand of him my condition,\textsuperscript{10} and what credit I have with the Duke.

1 Sold. Well, that's set down.—[Reads.] You shall demand of him, whether one Captain Dumain be i' the camp, a Frenchman; what his reputation is with the Duke; what his valour, honesty, and expextness in wars; or whether he thinks it were not possible, with well-weighing sums of gold, to corrupt him to a revolt. What say you to this? what do you know of it?

Par. I beseech you, let me answer to the particular of the intergatories: demand them singly.

1 Sold. Do you know this Captain Dumain?

Par. I know him; a was a botcher's 'prentice in Paris, from whence he was whipp'd for getting the shrieve's fool\textsuperscript{11} with child,—a dumb innocent, that could not say him nay.

[1 Lord lifts up his hand in anger.

Ber. Nay, by your leave, hold your hands; though I know his brains are forfeit to the next tile that falls.\textsuperscript{12}

1 Sold. Well, is this captain in the Duke of Florence's camp?

Par. Upon my knowledge, he is, and lousy.

1 Lord. Nay, look not so upon me; we shall hear of your lordship anon.

1 Sold. What is his reputation with the Duke?

Par. The Duke knows him for no other but a poor officer of mine; and writ to me this other day to turn him out o' the band: I think I have his letter in my pocket.

1 Sold. Marry, we'll search.

\textsuperscript{10} Condition, here, is character: generally, in Shakespeare, it means disposition or temper, which is not far from the same.

\textsuperscript{11} A natural fool, or idiot, probably committed to the Sheriff's care.

\textsuperscript{12} In Whitney's Emblems a story is told of three women who threw dice to ascertain which of them was to die first. She who lost affected to laugh at the result, when a tile suddenly falling killed her.
Par. In good sadness, I do not know; either it is there, or it is upon a file, with the Duke's other letters, in my tent.

1 Sold. Here 'tis; here's a paper: shall I read it to you?

Par. I do not know if it be it or no.

Ber. Our interpreter does it well.

1 Lord. Excellently.

1 Sold. [Reads.] *Dian, the count's a fool, and full of gold,—*

Par. That is not the Duke's letter, sir; that is an advertisement to a proper maid in Florence, one Diana, to take heed of the allurement of one Count Rousillon, a foolish idle boy, but, for all that, very ruttish: I pray you, sir, put it up again.

1 Sold. Nay, I'll read it first, by your favour.

Par. My meaning in't, I protest, was very honest in the behalf of the maid; for I knew the young count to be a dangerous and lascivious boy, who is a whale to virginity, and devours up all the fry it finds.

Ber. Damnable, both-sides rogue!

1 Sold. [Reads.]

*When he swears oaths, bid him drop gold, and take it;*

*After he scores, he never pays the score:*

*Half won is match well made; match, and well make it;*

*He ne'er pays after-debts, take it before;*

*And say a soldier, Dian, told thee this,*

*Men are to mell* [16] *with, boys are but to kiss:*

*For count of this, the count's a fool, I know it,*

*Who pays before, but not when he does owe it.*

*Thine, as he vowed to thee in thine ear,*

**Parolles.**

---

13 "In good sadness" is in good earnest. So the Poet often uses sad.
14 Advertisement for information or warning.
15 Alluding, perhaps, to the story of Andromeda, in old prints, where the monster is often represented as a whale.
16 To *mell* is to meddle, mix, or have to do with.
Ber. He shall be whipp'd through the army, with this rhyme in's forehead.

2 Lord. This is your devoted friend, sir, the manifold linguist, and the armipotent soldier.

Ber. I could endure any thing before but a cat, and now he's a cat to me.

1 Sold. I perceive, sir, by our general's looks, we shall be fain to hang you.

Par. My life, sir, in any case: not that I am afraid to die; but that, my offences being many, I would repent out the remainder of nature: let me live, sir, in a dungeon, i' the stocks, or anywhere, so I may live.

1 Sold. We'll see what may be done, so you confess freely; therefore, once more to this Captain Dumain: you have answer'd to his reputation with the Duke, and to his valour: what is his honesty?

Par. He will steal, sir, an egg out of a cloister: for rapes and ravishments he parallels Nessus: he professes not keeping of oaths; in breaking 'em he is stronger than Hercules: he will lie, sir, with such volubility, that you would think truth were a fool: drunkenness is his best virtue, for he will be swine-drunk; and in his sleep he does little harm, save to his bed-clothes about him; but they know his conditions, and lay him in straw. I have but little more to say, sir, of his honesty: he has every thing that an honest man should not have; what an honest man should have, he has nothing.

1 Lord. I begin to love him for this.

17 Perhaps meaning, as Johnson says, "He will steal any thing, however trifling, from any place, however holy." Staunton thinks that, "if an egg be not a misprint, it may have been used metaphorically for a young girl." And he aptly notes that Macduff's little boy is called egg and young fry by the murderer, in Macbeth, iv. 2.

18 The Centaur killed by Hercules for his attempt on Mrs. Hercules.

19 That is, temper or disposition. See note 10.
BER. For this description of thine honesty? A pox upon him for me, he's more and more a cat.

1 SOLL. What say you to his expertness in war?

PAR. Faith, sir, 'has led the drum before the English tragedians, to belie him, I will not, — and more of his soldiership I know not; except, in that country he had the honour to be the officer at a place there called Mile-end, to instruct for the doubling of files: I would do the man what honour I can, but of this I am not certain.

1 LORD. He hath out-villain'd villainy so far, that the rarity redeems him.

BER. A pox on him, he's a cat still.

1 SOLL. His qualities being at this poor price, I need not to ask you if gold will corrupt him to revolt.

PAR. Sir, for a carded he will sell the fee-simple of his salvation, the inheritance of it; and cut the entail from all remainders, and a perpetual succession for it perpetually.

1 SOLL. What's his brother, the other Captain Dumain?

2 LORD. Why does he ask him of me?

1 SOLL. What's he?

PAR. E'en a crow o' the same nest; not altogether so great as the first in goodness, but greater a great deal in evil: he excels his brother for a coward, yet his brother is reputed

20 In Shakespeare's time, bands of players often went about the country preceded by a drum, to give notice of their arrival at any town where they wished to perform. See vol. ii., page 144, note 18.

21 Mile-end was the spot where the Londoners commonly held their martial sports and exercises.

22 Meaning "He is all cat, and never can be any thing else."

23 A French coin, quart d'écu, the fourth part of the smaller French crown, and equal to about sixteen cents of our money.

24 Fee-simple is an old legal term for possession in absolute and unqualified right; the strongest tenure known in English law. What follows in the speech seems to be little more than legal surplusage, added for the purpose of emphasis, or, perhaps, as suited to the character Monsieur Words.
one of the best that is: in a retreat he outruns any lacquey; marry, in coming on he has the cramp.

1 Sold. If your life be saved, will you undertake to betray the Florentine?

Par. Ay, and the captain of his Horse, Count Rousillon.

1 Sold. I'll whisper with the general, and know his pleasure.

Par. [Aside.] I'll no more drumming; a plague of all drums! Only to seem to deserve well, and to beguile the supposition of that lascivious young boy the count, have I run into this danger: yet who would have suspected an ambush where I was taken?

1 Sold. There is no remedy, sir, but you must die: the general says, you that have so traitorously discover'd the secrets of your army, and made such pestiferous reports of men very nobly held, can serve the world for no honest use; therefore you must die.—Come, headsman, off with his head.

Par. O Lord, sir, let me live, or let me see my death!

1 Sold. That shall you, and take your leave of all your friends. [Unmuffling him.

So, look about you: know you any here?

Ber. Good morrow, noble captain.

2 Lord. God bless you, Captain Parolles.

1 Lord. God save you, noble captain.

2 Lord. Captain, what greeting will you to my Lord Lafeu? I am for France.

1 Lord. Good captain, will you give me a copy of the sonnet you writ to Diana in behalf of the Count Rousillon? an I were not a very coward, I'd compel it of you: but fare you well. [Exeunt Bertram and Lords.

1 Sold. You are undone, captain; all but your scarf, that has a knot on't yet.

Par. Who cannot be crush'd with a plot?

1 Sold. If you could find out a country where but women were that had received so much shame, you might begin an
impudent nation. Fare ye well, sir; I am for France too: we shall speak of you there. [Exit with Soldiers.

Par. Yet am I thankful: if my heart were great, 'Twould burst at this. Captain I'll be no more; But I will eat and drink, and sleep as soft As captain shall: simply the thing I am Shall make me live. Who knows himself a braggart, Let him fear this; for it will come to pass, That every braggart shall be found an ass. Rust, sword! cool, blushes! and, Parolles, live Safest in shame! being fool'd, by foolery thrive! There's place and means for every man alive. I'll after them. [Exit.

SCENE IV. — Florence. A Room in the Widow's House.

Enter HELENA, the Widow, and DIANA.

Hel. That you may well perceive I have not wrong'd you, One of the greatest in the Christian world Shall be my surety; 'fore whose throne 'tis needful, Ere I can perfect mine intents, to kneel: Time was, I did him a desir'd office, Dear almost as his life; which gratitude Through flinty Tartar's bosom would peep forth, And answer, thanks: I duly am inform'd His Grace is at Marseilles; 1 to which place We have convenient convoy. You must know, I am suppos'd dead: the army breaking, My husband hies him home; where, Heaven aiding, And by the leave of my good lord the King, We'll be before our welcome.

1 Here, as, I think, always in Shakespeare, Marseilles is a trisyllable. — Convenient convoy is fitting or suitable attendance or escort.
Wid. Gentle madam,
You never had a servant to whose trust
Your business was more welcome.

Hel. Nor you, mistress,
Ever a friend whose thoughts more truly labour
To recompense your love: doubt not but Heaven
Hath brought me up to be your daughter’s dower,²
As it hath fated her to be my motive
And helper to a husband. But, O strange men!
That can such sweet use make of what they hate,
When saucy³ trusting of the cozen’d thoughts
Defiles the pitchy night! so lust doth play
With what it loathes, for that which is away:
But more of this hereafter. — You, Diana,
Under my poor instructions yet must suffer
Something in my behalf.

Dia. Let death and honesty
Go with your impositions,⁴ I am yours
Upon your will to suffer.

Hel. Yet I pay you
But with the word:⁵ the time will bring on Summer,
When briers shall have leaves as well as thorns,
And be as sweet as sharp. We must away;
Our wagon is prepared, and time invites us:

² Dower for dowerer, as, in the next line, motive for mover. So the Poet has fife for fifer, revolts for revolters, wrongs for wrongers, &c.
³ Saucy, here, is wanton, prurient, or voluptuous. So in Measure for Measure, ii. 4: “Their saucy sweetness that do coin Heaven’s image in stamps that are forbid.” Sometimes, however, the word means impudent, defiant, or over-bold; and such, I think, may well be the meaning here.
⁴ Impositions for things imposed or enjoined.
⁵ Here, again, yet is used, apparently, in the sense of now, still, or as yet: “As yet I am paying you merely with the word of promise; but the time is soon coming for another sort of payment.” This explanation is, in substance, Staunton’s. See page 18, note 32.
All's well that ends well: still the fine's the crown;⁶ Whate'er the course, the end is the renown. [Exeunt.

SCENE V.—Rousillon. A Room in the House of the Countess.

Enter the Countess, LAFEU, and the Clown.

Laf. No, no, no, your son was misled with a snipt-taffeta fellow there, whose villainous saffron would have made all the unbaked and doughy youth of a nation in his colour:¹ your daughter-in-law had been alive at this hour, and your son here at home, more advanced by the King than by that red-tail'd humble-bee² I speak of.

Count. I would he had not know him! it was the death of the most virtuous gentlewoman that ever Nature had praise for creating: if she had partaken of my flesh, and cost me the dearest groans of a mother, I could not have owed her a more rooted love.

Laf. 'Twas a good lady, 'twas a good lady: we may pick a thousand salads ere we light on such another herb.

Clo. Indeed, sir, she was the sweet-marjoram of the salad, or rather, the herb of grace.

Laf. They are not salad-herbs, you knave; they are nose-herbs.³

⁶ Fine is here used in its proper classical sense, for end; as in the old proverbial saying, "Finis coronat opus."

¹ It appears that in the Poet's time saffron was used for colouring pastry. The phrase "unbaked and doughy youth" shows that this custom is alluded to here. Reference is also had to the coxcombical finery, "the scarfs and the bannerets," which this strutting vacuum cuts his dashes in. Yellow was the prevailing colour in the dress of such as Parolles. So Sir Philip Sidney speaks of "a saffron-coloured coat," and Jonson, of "ribands, bells, and saffrond lynnen."

² This seems to identify red as the colour of the dressy braggart's hose; but perhaps the reference is to his scarfs. — It scarce need be said that humble-bee is what we call humble-bee; humble being the adjective of hum.

³ Nose-herbs are herbs to be smelt of, not herbs to be eaten. The Clown's herb of grace is rue.
Clo. I am no great Nebuchadnezzar, sir; I have not much skill in grass.  

Laf. Whether dost thou profess thyself,—a knave or a Fool?  

Clo. A fool, sir, at a woman's service, and a knave at a man's.  

Laf. Your distinction?  

Clo. I would cozen the man of his wife, and do his service.  

Laf. So you were a knave at his service, indeed.  

Clo. And I would give his wife my bauble, sir, to do her service.  

Laf. I will subscribe for thee, thou art both knave and Fool.  

Clo. At your service.  

Laf. No, no, no,  

Clo. Why, sir, if I cannot serve you, I can serve as great a prince as you are.  

Laf. Who's that? a Frenchmen?  

Clo. Faith, sir, 'a has an English name; but his phisnomy is more hotter in France than there.  

Laf. What prince is that?  

Clo. The Black Prince, sir; alias, the Prince of Darkness; alias, the Devil.  

Laf. Hold thee, there's my purse: I give thee not this to suggest thee from thy master thou talkest of; serve him still.  

Clo. I am a woodland fellow, sir, that always loved a

---

4 This pun looks as if grace and grass were sounded alike.  
5 The Fool's bauble was a stick, with the figure of a fool's head at the end, or sometimes with a doll or puppet. An inflated bladder, also, was often attached to it; probably that the owner might strike without hurting.  
6 The allusion is obviously double; and the presence of Edward the Black Prince was indeed rather hot in France. — Such double comparatives as more hotter were common in Shakespeare's time. Also the use of 'a as a colloquial substitute for he or she.  
7 Suggest for tempt, as usual. See page 74, note 1.
great fire; and the master I speak of ever keeps a good fire. But, since he is the prince of the world, let his nobility remain in's Court. I am for the house with the narrow gate, which I take to be too little for pomp to enter: some that humble themselves may; but the many will be too chill and tender, and they'll be for the flowery way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire.

_Laf._ Go thy ways, I begin to be a-weary of thee; and I tell thee so before, because I would not fall out with thee. Go thy ways: let my horses be well look'd to, without any tricks.

_Clo._ If I put any tricks upon 'em, sir, they shall be jades' tricks; which are their own right by the law of Nature.

_[Exit._

_Laf._ A shrewd knave and an unhappy. ²

_Count._ So he is. My lord that's gone made himself much sport out of him: by his authority he remains here, which he thinks is a patent for his sauciness; and, indeed, he has no place, but runs where he will.

_Laf._ I like him well; 'tis not amiss. And I was about to tell you, since I heard of the good lady's death, and that my lord your son was upon his return home, I moved the King my master to speak in the behalf of my daughter; which, in the minority of them both, his Majesty, out of a self-gracious remembrance, did first propose: his Highness hath promised me to do it; and, to stop up the displeasure he hath conceived against your son, there is no fitter matter. How does your ladyship like it?

_Count._ With very much content, my lord; and I wish it happily effected.

_Laf._ His Highness comes post from Marseilles, of as able body as when he number'd thirty: he will be here to-morrow,

² Unhappy for mischievous, or causer of ill hap. Repeatedly so. See vol. i., page 132, note 9.
or I am deceived by him that in such intelligence hath seldom fail'd.

**Count.** It rejoices me, that I hope I shall see him ere I die. I have letters that my son will be here to-night: I shall beseech your lordship to remain with me till they meet together.

**Laf.** Madam, I was thinking with what manners I might safely be admitted.

**Count.** You need but plead your honourable privilege.

**Laf.** Lady, of that I have made a bold charter; but, I thank my God, it holds yet.

Re-enter the Clown.

**Clo.** O madam, yonder's my lord your son with a patch of velvet on's face: whether there be a scar under't or no, the velvet knows; but 'tis a goodly patch of velvet: his left cheek is a cheek of two pile and a half, but his right cheek is worn bare.

**Count.** A scar nobly got, or a noble scar, is a good livery of honour; so belike is that.

**Clo.** But it is your carbonado'd face.

**Laf.** Let us go see your son, I pray you: I long to talk with the young noble soldier.

**Clo.** Faith, there's a dozen of 'em, with delicate fine hats, and most courteous feathers, which bow the head and nod at every man.

[Exeunt.]

---

9 Referring to the pile of the velvet patch. *Pile* was used of velvet very much as it is now of carpets; *three-pile* being the richest. See vol. ii., page 92, note 41.

10 *Carbonado'd* is slashed with stripes or scotched like a piece of meat for the gridiron.
ACT V.

SCENE I. — Marseilles.  A Street.

Enter HELENA, the Widow, and DIANA, with two Attendants.

Hel. But this exceeding posting day and night
Must wear your spirits low; we cannot help it:
But, since you've made the days and nights as one,
To wear your gentle limbs in my affairs,
Be bold ¹ you do so grow in my requital
As nothing can unroot you. — In happy time;

Enter a Gentleman.

This man may help me to his Majesty's ear,
If he would spend his power. — God save you, sir.

Gent. And you.

Hel. Sir, I have seen you in the Court of France.

Gent. I have been sometimes there.

Hel. I do presume, sir, that you are not fall'n
From the report that goes upon your goodness;
And therefore, goaded with most sharp occasions,
Which lay nice manners by, I put you to
The use of your own virtues; for the which
I shall continue thankful.

Gent. What's your will?

Hel. That it will please you
To give this poor petition to the King;
And aid me with that store of power you have
To come into his presence.

Gent. The King's not here.

¹ Be bold, here, is be confident, be assured.
Hel. Not here, sir! Not, indeed:

Gent. He hence removed last night, and with more haste
Than is his use.

Wid. Lord, how we lose our pains!

Hel. All's well that ends well yet,
Though time seem so adverse and means unfit.
I do beseech you, whither is he gone?

Gent. Marry, as I take it, to Rousillon;
Whither I am going.

Hel. I do beseech you, sir,
Since you are like to see the King before me,
Commend the paper to his gracious hand;
Which, I presume, shall render you no blame,
But rather make you thank your pains for it.
I will come after you with what good speed
Our means will make us means.

Gent. This I'll do for you.

Hel. And you shall find yourself to be well thank'd,
Whate'er falls more. — We must to horse again: —
Go, go, provide.

[Exeunt.

Scene II. — Rousillon. The inner Court of the House
of the Countess.

Enter the Clown and Parolles.

Par. Good Monsieur Lavache, give my Lord Lafeu this
letter: I have ere now, sir, been better known to you, when
I have held familiarity with fresher clothes; but I am now,
sir, muddied in Fortune's mood,² and smell somewhat strong
of her strong displeasure.

Clo. Truly, Fortune's displeasure is but sluttish, if it smell

² A quibble between mood and mud, which appear to have been sounded much alike. One sense of mood is caprice.
so strongly as thou speakest of: I will henceforth eat no fish of Fortune's buttering. Pr'ythee, allow the wind.

Par. Nay, you need not to stop your nose, sir; I spake but by a metaphor.

Clo. Indeed, sir, if your metaphor stink, I will stop my nose; or against any man's metaphor. Pr'ythee, get thee further.

Par. Pray you, sir, deliver me this paper.

Clo. Foh, pr'ythee, stand away: a paper from Fortune's close-stool to give to a nobleman! Look, here he comes himself.—

Enter Lafeu.

Here is a pur of Fortune's, sir, or of Fortune's cat, but not a musk-cat,—that has fallen into the unclean fishpond of her displeasure, and, as he says, is muddied withal: pray you, sir, use the carp as you may; for he looks like a poor, decayed, ingenious, foolish, rascally knave. I do pity his distress in my similes of comfort, and leave him to your lordship. [Exit.

Par. My lord, I am a man whom Fortune hath cruelly scratch'd.

Laf. And what would you have me to do? 'tis too late to pare her nails now. Wherein have you played the knave with Fortune, that she should scratch you, who of herself is a good lady, and would not have knaves thrive long under her? There's a cardencu for you: let the justices make you and Fortune friends; I am for other business.

Par. I beseech your Honour to hear me one single word.

---

8 Is "Monsieur Lavache" playing upon the first syllable of Parolles' name, as if it were spelt Purrolles? Hardly, I think. Yet, otherwise, I do not well see how to take his pur. As Nares remarks, "the pur of a cat is well known; but how Parolles could be a pur, it is not easy to say, or what is a pur of fortune." See Critical Notes.
Laf. You beg a single penny more: come, you shall ha't; save your word.

Par. My name, my good lord, is Parolles.

Laf. You beg more than one word, then. Cox' my passion! give me your hand: how does your drum?

Par. O my good lord, you were the first that found me!

Laf. Was I, in sooth? and I was the first that lost thee.

Par. It lies in you, my lord, to bring me in some grace, for you did bring me out.

Laf. Out upon thee, knave! dost thou put upon me at once both the office of God and the Devil? one brings thee in grace, and the other brings thee out. [Trumpets sound.] The King's coming; I know by his trumpets. Sirrah, inquire further after me; I had talk of you last night: though you are a fool and a knave, you shall eat; go to, follow.

Par. I praise God for you.

[Exeunt.

Scene III. — The Same. A Room in the House of the Countess.

Flourish. Enter the King, Countess, Lafeu, Lords, Gentlemen, Guards, &c.

King. We lost a jewel of her; and our esteem Was made much poorer by it: but your son, As mad in folly, lack'd the sense to know Her estimation home.

Count. ’Tis past, my liege;

4 The literal meaning of parolles is words, plural or "more than one." The quibble is obvious enough.

1 Our esteem here means, apparently, "the sum of what we hold estimable." In losing Helen, the King has lost much of this, because she formed a large portion of it.

2 To know a thing home is to know it thoroughly, to appreciate it. So the Poet has many such phrases as "trusted home," "revenge home," and "pay him home."
And I beseech your Majesty to make it
Natural rebellion, done i' the blaze of youth;
When oil and fire, too strong for reason's force,
O'erbear it, and burn on.

King. My honour'd lady,
I have forgiven and forgotten all;
Though my revenges were high-bent upon him,
And watch'd the time to shoot.

Laf. This I must say,—
But first I beg my pardon,—the young lord
Did to his Majesty, his mother, and his lady,
Offence of mighty note; but to himself
The greatest wrong of all: he lost a wife,
Whose beauty did astonish the survey
Of richest eyes; whose words all ears took captive;
Whose dear perfection hearts that scorn'd to serve
Humbly call'd mistress.

King. Praising what is lost
Makes the remembrance dear.—Well, call him hither;
We're reconciled, and the first view shall kill
All repetition. Let him not ask our pardon;
The nature of his great offence is dead,
And deeper than oblivion we do bury
Th' incensing relics of it: let him approach,
A stranger, no offender; and inform him
So 'tis our will he should.

1 Gent. I shall, my liege. [Exit.

King. What says he to your daughter? have you spoke?
Laf. All that he is hath reference to your Highness.

King. Then shall we have a match. I've letters sent me

8 Make it for hold or consider it. To make was used in many ways that are now out of date altogether.
4 "Richest eyes" are eyes most enriched with the treasures of observation.
5 That is, "he refers himself entirely to your Majesty's disposal."
That set him high in fame.

Enter Bertram, with 1 Gentleman.

Laf. He looks well on’t.

King. I am not a day of season,6
For thou mayst see a sunshine and a hail
In me at once: but to the brightest beams
Distracted clouds give way; so stand thou forth,
The time is fair again.

Ber. My high-repented blames,
Dear sovereign, pardon to me.

King. All is whole;
Not one word more of the consumèd time.
Let’s take the instant by the forward top;
For we are old, and on our quick’st decrees
Th’ inaudible and noiseless foot of Time
Steals ere we can effect them. You remember
The daughter of this lord?

Ber. Admiringly, my liege: at first
I stuck my choice upon her, ere my heart
Durst make too bold a herald of my tongue:
Where the impression of mine eye infixing,
Contempt his scornful perspective did lend me,
Which warp’d the line of every other favour;
Scorn’d a fair colour, or express’d it stol’n;7
Extended or contracted all proportions
To a most hideous object: thence it came
That she whom all men praised, and whom myself,
Since I have lost, have loved, was in mine eye
The dust that did offend it.

6 “A day of season” here means a seasonable day; and the King is not
that, inasmuch as he is a mixture of sunshine and hail.
7 There were various kinds of perspective glasses; and one kind distorted
the object, and expressed it, that is, made it look, altogether different from
its proper self. See note on perspectives in King Richard II., ii. 2.
King. Well excused:
That thou didst love her, strikes some scores away
From the great compt: but love that comes too late,
Like a remorseful pardon slowly carried,
To the great sender turns a sore offence,
Crying, That's good that's gone. Our rashier faults
Make trivial price of serious things we have,
Not knowing them until we know their grave:
Oft our displeasures, to ourselves unjust,
Destroy our friends, and after weep their dust:
Our old love waking cries to see what's done,
While shameful hate sleeps out the afternoon. 8
Be this sweet Helen's knell, and now forget her.
Send forth your amorous token for fair Maudlin:
The main consents are had; and here we'll stay
To see our widower's second marriage-day.

Count. Which better than the first, O dear Heaven,
bless!
Or, ere they meet, in me, O nature, cesse! 9

Laf. Come on, my son, in whom my House's name
Must be digested, 10 give a favour from you,
To sparkle in the spirits of my daughter,
That she may quickly come. — [Bertram gives a ring to Lafeu.
By my old beard,
And every hair that's on't, Helen, that's dead,
Was a sweet creature: such a ring as this,

8 The meaning seems to be, "Our former love, awaking to the worth of its lost treasure, weeps too late; the time of remedy having been wasted in shameful hate."
9 Cesse is an old form of cease; used here for the rhyme.
10 Digested here probably means arranged, ordered, or set forth. The Poet has it repeatedly in that sense. So in the Prologue to Troilus and Cressida: "To what may be digested in a play." And in Hamlet, ii. 2: "An excellent play; well digested in the scenes." Also in Antony and Cleopatra, ii. 2: "We have cause to be glad that matters are so well digested."
The last eve, ere she took her leave at Court,
I saw upon her finger.

_Ber._ Hers it was not.

_King._ Now, pray you, let me see it; for mine eye,
While I was speaking, oft was fasten'd to't. —
This ring was mine; and, when I gave it Helen,
I bade her, if her fortunes ever stood
Necessitated to help, that by this token
I would relieve her. Had you that craft, to reave her
Of what should stead her most?

_Ber._ My gracious sovereign,
Howe'er it pleases you to take it so,
The ring was never hers.

_Count._ Son, on my life,
I've seen her wear it; and she reckon'd it
At her life's rate.

_Laf._ I'm sure I saw her wear it.

_Ber._ You are deceived, my lord; she never saw it:
In Florence was it from a casement thrown me,
Wrapp'd in a paper, which contain'd the name
Of her that threw it: noble she was, and thought
I stood engaged: but when I had subscribed
To mine own fortune,¹¹ and inform'd her fully
I could not answer in that course of honour
As she had made the overture, she ceased
In heavy satisfaction,¹² and would never
Receive the ring again.

_King._ Plutus himself,

¹¹ _Subscribed_ in the sense of _submitted_; "had signed my consent to what fortune had written down for me"; referring to his marriage with Helen. — In the preceding clause, "I stood engaged," the meaning seems to be, "She thought I stood engaged to her, because she had made proposals to me, and had mistaken my silence for consent: but when," &c.

¹² That is, _heavy or depressed_, because she was _satisfied or fully assured_ that he could not marry her. How the man lies!
That knows the tinct and multiplying medicine,\(^\text{13}\)
Hath not in Nature's mystery more science
Than I have in this ring: 'twas mine, 'twas Helen's,
Whoe'er gave it you. Then, if you know
That you are well acquainted with yourself,
Confess 'twas hers, and by what rough enforcement
You got it from her: she call'd the saints to surety
That she would never put it from her finger,
Unless she gave it to yourself in bed,—
Where you have never come,—or sent it us
Upon her great disaster.

_Ber._

She never saw it.

_King._ Thou speak'st it falsely, as I love mine honour;
And makest conjectural fears to come into me,
Which I would fain shut out. If it should prove
That thou art so inhuman, — 'twill not prove so; —
And yet I know not: — thou didst hate her deadly,
And she is dead; which nothing, but to close
Her eyes myself, could win me to believe,
More than to see this ring. — Take him away. —

[Guards seize Bertram.]

My fore-past proofs, how'er the matter fall,
Shall tax my fears of little vanity,
Having vainly fear'd too little.\(^\text{14}\) — Away with him! —
We'll sift this matter further.

_Ber._

If you shall prove
This ring was ever hers, you shall as easy

---

\(^{13}\) _Tinct for tincture_, and used here as an alchemical term, meaning "the grand elixir" or "philosopher's stone," which, by its touch, was expected to work such marvels in nature; also called "multiplying medicine," because it was thought able to _multiply_ the stock of gold by transmutation from lead and other base metals. Of course Plutus, the god of wealth, knew the whole secret of the thing perfectly.

\(^{14}\) "The proofs I have already had are enough to acquit my fears of being vain and irrational: I have unreasonably feared too little."
Prove that I husbanded her bed in Florence,
Where yet she never was. \[Exit, guarded.\]

King. I'm wrapp'd in dismal thoughts.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. Gracious sovereign,
Whether I've been to blame or no, I know not:
Here's a petition from a Florentine,
Who had for four or five removes\(^{15}\) come short
To tender it herself. I undertook it,
Vanquish'd thereto by the fair grace and speech
Of the poor suppliants, who by this, I know,
Is here attending: her business looks in her
With an importing visage; and she told me,
In a sweet verbal brief, it did concern
Your Highness with herself.

King. [Reads.] Upon his many protestations to marry me
when his wife was dead, I blush to say it, he won me. Now
is the Count Rousillon a widower: his vows are forfeited to
me, and my honour's paid to him. He stole from Florence,
taking no leave, and I follow him to his country for justice:
grant it me, O King! in you it best lies; otherwise a seducer
flourishes, and a poor maid is undone. DIANA CAPULET.

Laf. I will buy me a son-in-law in a fair, and toll him: \(^{16}\)
for this, I'll none of him.

King. The Heavens have thought well on thee, Lafeu,
To bring forth this discovery.—Seek these suitors:—
Go speedily and bring again the count.—

[Exeunt Gentleman and some Attendants.

\(^{15}\) Removes for stages; a stage being the space of a day's travel. She
had not been able to overtake the King on the road.

\(^{16}\) This is well explained by Dr. Percy, as quoted by Dyce: "I'll buy me
a son-in-law as they buy a horse in a fair; \textit{toul} him, that is, enter him on
the \textit{toul} or \textit{toll}-book, to prove I came honestly by him, and \textit{ascertain my}
title to him."
I am afeard the life of Helen, lady,  
Was fouly snatch'd.

Count. Now, justice on the doers!

Re-enter Bertram, guarded.

King. I wonder, sir, such wives are monsters to you,  
And that you fly them as you swear them lordship, 17  
Yet you desire to marry.—

Re-enter the Gentleman, with the Widow and Diana.

What woman's that?

Dia. I am, my lord, a wretched Florentine,  
Derived from the ancient Capulet:  
My suit, as I do understand, you know,  
And therefore know how far I may be pitied.

Wid. I am her mother, sir, whose age and honour  
Both suffer under this complaint we bring;  
And both shall cease, 18 without your remedy.

King. Come hither, county: do you know these women?  
Ber. My lord, I neither can nor will deny  
But that I know them: do they charge me further?  
Dia. Why do you look so strange upon your wife?  
Ber. She's none of mine, my lord.

Dia. If you shall marry,  
You give away this hand, and that is mine;  
You give away Heaven's vows, and those are mine;  
You give away myself, which is known mine;  
For I by vow am so embodied yours,  
That she which marries you must marry me,—  
Either both or none.

17 Lordship, here, is possession or ownership. This is sworn in the act of marriage: "With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow: In the Name of the Father," &c. — In the text, as is equivalent to as soon as.

18 Cease for decease, die. — Your remedy is your power of remedy.
Laf. [To Bertram.] Your reputation comes too short for my daughter; you are no husband for her.

Ber. My lord, this is a fond and desperate creature, Whom sometime I have laugh'd with: let your Highness Lay a more noble thought upon mine honour Than for to think that I would sink it here.

King. Sir, for my thoughts, you have them ill to friend Till your deeds gain them: fairer prove your honour Than in my thought it lies!

Dia. Good my lord, Ask him upon his oath, if he does think He had not my virginity.

King. What say'st thou to her?

Ber. She's impudent, my lord, And was a common gamester to the camp.

Dia. He does me wrong, my lord; if I were so, He might have bought me at a common price: Do not believe him: O, behold this ring, Whose high respect and rich validity

Did lack a parallel; yet, for all that, He gave it to a commoner o' the camp,

If I be one.

Count. He blushes, and 'tis his:

Of six preceding ancestors, that gem, Conferr'd by testament to th' sequent issue, Hath it been owed and worn. This is his wife; That ring's a thousand proofs.

King. Methought you said You saw one here in Court could witness it.

Dia. I did, my lord, but loth am to produce So bad an instrument: his name's Parolles.

19 Validity for value. The Poet has it elsewhere in the same sense.
20 If Diana has said this to the King, Shakespeare has failed to report it.
Laf. I saw the man to-day, if man he be.

King. Find him, and bring him hither.

[Exit an Attendant.

Ber.

He's quoted for a most perfidious slave,
With all the spots o' the world tax'd and debauch'd;
Whose nature sickens but to speak a truth.
Am I or that or this for what he'll utter,
That will speak any thing?

King. She hath that ring of yours.

Ber. I think she has: certain it is I liked her,
And boarded her i' the wanton way of youth:
She knew her distance, and did angle for me,
Madding my eagerness with her restraint,
As all impediments in fancy's course
Are motives of more fancy; and, in fine,
Her infinite cunning, with her modest grace,
Subdued me to her rate: she got the ring;
And I had that which an inferior might
At market-price have bought.

Dia. I must be patient:
You, that turn'd off a first so noble wife,
May justly diet me. I pray you yet,—
Since you lack virtue, I will lose a husband,—
Send for your ring, I will return it home,
And give me mine again.

Ber. I have it not.

King. What ring was yours, I pray you?

21 Quoted is marked or noted. Repeatedly so.

22 Tax'd is accused, charged, or censured. So the substantive in ii. 1, of this play: "Tax of impudence." Also in As You Like It, ii. 7: "Why, who cries out on pride, that can therein tax any private party?"

23 Fancy for love; often so.—Motive, as before, for mover or moving-power. See page 104, note 2.

24 That is, compel me to fast from the comforts due to a wife.
Dia. Sir, much like
The same upon your finger.
King. Know you this ring? this ring was his of late.
Dia. And this was it I gave him, being a-bed.
King. The story, then, goes false, you threw it him
Out of a casement.
Dia. I have spoke the truth.
Ber. My lord, I do confess the ring was hers.
King. You boggle shrewdly, every feather starts you.—

Enter Parolles, with an Attendant.

Is this the man you speak of?
Dia. Ay, my lord.
King. Tell me, — but, sirrah, tell me true, I charge you,
Not fearing the displeasure of your master,
Which, on your just proceeding, I'll keep off,—
By him and by 25 this woman here what know you?
Par. So please your Majesty, my master hath been an
honourable gentlemen: tricks he hath had in him, which
gentlemen have.
King. Come, come, to th' purpose: did he love this woman?
Par. Faith, sir, he did love her; but how?
King. How, I pray you?
Par. He did love her, sir, as a gentleman loves a woman.
King. How is that?
Par. He loved her, sir, and loved her not.
King. As thou art a knave, and no knave. — What an
equivocal companion 26 is this!
Par. I am a poor man, and at your Majesty's command.
Laf. He's a good drum, my lord, but a naughty orator.
Dia. Do you know he promised me marriage?

25 By was often thus used where we should use of. See vol. iii., page
160, note 2.
26 Companion and fellow were used interchangeably.
Par. Faith, I know more than I'll speak.

King. But wilt thou not speak all thou know'st?

Par. Yes, so please your Majesty. I did go between them, as I said; but more than that, he loved her,—for, indeed, he was mad for her, and talk'd of Satan, and of Limbo, and of Furies, and I know not what: yet I was in that credit with them at that time, that I knew of their going to bed; and of other motions, as promising her marriage, and things which would derive me ill will to speak of; therefore I will not speak what I know.

King. Thou hast spoken all already, unless thou canst say they are married: but thou art too fine in thy evidence; therefore stand aside.—

This ring, you say, was yours?

Dia. Ay, my good lord.

King. Where did you buy it? or who gave it you?

Dia. It was not given me, nor I did not buy it.

King. Who lent it you?

Dia. It was not lent me neither.

King. Where did you find it, then?

Dia. I found it not.

King. If it were yours by none of all these ways, How could you give it him?

Dia. I never gav'rt him.

Laf. This woman's an easy glove, my lord; she goes off and on at pleasure.

King. This ring was mine; I gave it his first wife.

Dia. It might be yours or hers, for aught I know.

King. Take her away; I do not like her now;

To prison with her: and away with him.—

Unless thou tell'st me where thou hadst this ring, Thou diest within this hour.

Dia. I'll never tell you.

27 Too fine here is too artful, too full of finesse.
King. Take her away.
Dia. I'll put in bail, my liege.
King. I think thee now some common customer.
Dia. By Jove, if ever I knew man, 'twas you. 28
King. Wherefore hast thou accused him all this while?
Dia. Because he's guilty, and he is not guilty:
He knows I am no maid, and he'll swear to't;
I'll swear I am a maid, and he knows not.
Great King, I am no strumpet, by my life;
I'm either maid, or else this old man's wife.

[Pointing to LAFEU.

King. She does abuse our ears: to prison with her.
Dia. Good mother, fetch my bail.—Stay, royal sir:

[Exit Widow.

The jeweller that owes the ring is sent for,
And he shall surety me. But, for this lord,
Who hath abused me, as he knows himself,
Though yet he never harm'd me, here I quit 29 him:
He knows himself my bed he hath defiled;
And at that time he got his wife with child:
Dead though she be, she feels her young one kick:
So there's my riddle,—one that's dead is quick:
And now behold the meaning.

Re-enter the Widow, with HELENA.

King. Is there no exorcist 30
Beguiles the truer office of mine eyes?
Is't real—that I see?
Hel. No, my good lord;

28 This is probably addressed to Lafeu; in accordance with the close of her next speech.
29 Quit for acquit. Often so. See vol. iii., page 205, note 45.
30 Exorcist was sometimes used, like conjurer, for one who calls up spirits. Its proper meaning is one who expels them, or drives them away.
'Tis but the shadow of a wife you see,
The name, and not the thing.

_Ber._ Both, both: O, pardon!

_Hel._ O my good lord, when I was like this maid,
I found you wondrous kind. There is your ring;
And, look you, here's your letter; this it says:
_When from my finger you can get this ring,
And are by me with child,—_ And this is done:
Will you be mine, now you are doubly won?

_Ber._ If she, my liege, can make me know this clearly,
I'll love her dearly, ever, ever dearly.

_Hel._ If it appear not plain, and prove untrue,
Deadly divorce step between me and you!—
O my dear mother, do I see you living?

_Laf._ Mine eyes smell onions; I shall weep anon:—
[To Parolles.] Good Tom Drum, lend me a handkercher:
so, I thank thee: wait on me home, I'll make sport with
thee: let thy courtesies alone, they are scurvy ones.

_King._ Let us from point to point this story know,
To make the even truth in pleasure flow.—
[To Diana.] If thou be'st yet a fresh uncroppèd flower,
Choose thou thy husband, and I'll pay thy dower;
For I can guess that, by thy honest aid,
Thou kept'st a wife herself, thyself a maid.—
Of that, and all the progress, more and less,
Resolvedly 31 more leisure shall express:
All yet seems well; and if it end so meet,
The bitter past, more welcome is the sweet.—

[Flourish.

The King's a beggar, now the play is done:
All is well ended, if this suit be won,

31 Resolve and its derivatives were often used in the sense of to assure or
to satisfy. So in Measure for Measure, iii. 1: "I am going to resolve him."
And again in iv. 2: "This shall absolutely resolve you."
That you express content; which we will pay,
With strife to please you, day exceeding day: 32
Ours be your patience then, and yours our parts; 33
Your gentle hands lend us, and take our hearts. [Exeunt.

32 "Day exceeding day" is more and more every day.
33 Our parts is our abilities, mental parts.—"Your hands lend us" is "give us your applause"; by clapping hands, of course.
CRITICAL NOTES.

ACT I., SCENE I.

Page 12. Whose worthiness would stir it up where it wanted, rather than slack it where there is such abundance.—So Warburton and Theobald. The original has lack instead of slack. Possibly a fitting sense may be wrung from lack, but hardly. See foot-note 2.

P. 12. Had it stretch'd so far, 'twould have made nature immortal. —The original has would instead of 'twould, thus leaving the verb without a subject.

P. 13. Her disposition she inherits, which makes fair gifts fairer.—The old text has “her dispositions, — which makes.” Corrected by Rowe. Staunton notes upon the text as follows: “There is scarcely a passage of importance in the earlier scenes of this comedy, the meaning of which is not destroyed or impaired by some scandalous textual error. In the present instance some expression implying chaste or pure, before dispositions, appears to have been omitted. Perhaps we should read ‘the honesty of her dispositions she inherits; — honesty being understood in the sense of chastity, as in the last clause of the passage, ‘she derives her honesty, and achieves her goodness.’” See foot-notes 5 and 8.

P. 14. Lest it be rather thought you affect a sorrow than to have it. — Instead of it after have, the original sets a long dash, as if the sentence were broken off. But it is evident that no broken sentence was intended. Probably, as Dyce remarks, the Poet's manuscript was “here slightly imperfect or illegible.” — It would seem that to ought either to be inserted before affect or omitted before have. But such changes of construction are not uncommon in the old writers. So in Bacon’s Advancement of Learning: “The punishment was, that they should be put out of commons, and not to be admitted to the table of the gods.” And in As You Like It, iii. 2: “Heaven would that she
these gifts should have, and I to live and die her slave.” Also in the Poet’s 58th Sonnet: “That God forbid, I should in thought control your times of pleasure, or at your hand th’ account of hours to crave.”

P. 14. Hel. *If the living be enemy to the grief, the excess makes it soon mortal.*

Laf. *How understand we that?*

Ber. *[Kneeling.] Madam, I desire your holy wishes.*

Count. *Be thou blest, Bertram, &c.* — In the old copies, the first of these speeches is assigned to the Countess, and the order of the next two speeches is transposed. Tieck thought that the first belonged to Helena, and is followed by Staunton and Dyce. Lettsom informs us that Walker was for transposing the other two; and I do not well see how the propriety of doing so can be questioned.

P. 15. *My imagination Carries no favour in it but Bertram’s.* — The original reads “no favour isn’t but”; and Walker thinks the “line is quite complete as it stands, Bertram’s being here a trisyllable.” But I do not see it so: the name is nowhere else used as a trisyllable; while the Poet sometimes varies the accent in names, as well as in words, to suit his verse. Collier’s second folio reads “Carries no favour isn’t but only Bertram’s”; which I am apt to think may be right.

P. 16. *Yet these fix’d evils sit so fit in him,*

That they take place when virtue’s steelly bones

Look bleak i’ the wind: withal, full oft we see

Cold wisdom waiting on superfluous folly.—The epithet steelly of course means made of steel, or of something like steel in hardness and toughness. Hence both Dr. Badham, in *Cambridge Essays for 1856,* and Mr. Williams, in *The Parthenon,* Sept. 6, 1862, would substitute seely, which is an old form of silly, and formerly meant simple, guileless, innocent. Mr. Williams observes, “Helena, speaking in pitying terms of the exposure of virtue’s bones to the cold wind, would hardly characterize them as endowed with the very qualities best fitting them to endure the infliction.” This is at least plausible; and I was at one time minded to adopt the change; but Mr. Joseph Crosby made out so strong an argument for the old reading, that I felt constrained to keep it. See foot-note 21. — In the third line, the old text has “Look bleak i’ the cold wind.” Here it is to be noted that cold
defeats the metre, and also makes an ugly repetition with "Cold wis-
dom." Walker says, "one of the colds must be wrong"; and he at
the same time asks, "what can be made of withal?" He would strike
the word out, and print "Look bleak in the cold wind: full oft we
see," as Pope reads. He also thinks the second cold ought to be re-
placed by some word signifying hungry or half-starved, as he takes
superfluous to mean over-fed or full to excess. But that word, I think,
may just as well be taken in the sense of overclothed. See foot-note 22.
For my part, I have little doubt that the two lines ought to stand
thus:

Look bleak in the cold wind: full oft we see
Bare wisdom waiting on superfluous folly.

P. 17. Loss of virginity is rational increase. — Hanmer printed
"national increase," as Theobald also once proposed. Rightly, I have
very little doubt.

P. 18. Out with't! within one year it will make itself two, which
is a goodly increase; and the principal itself not much the worse.—
The original has "within ten yeare it will make itselfe two"; which
has puzzled the editors a good deal. Various changes have been made
or proposed; but all the rest, I think, ought to be ruled off at once by
that in the text, which leaves nothing to be desired. White is the
author of it.

P. 18. Marry, ill, to like him that ne'er likes it.—The original
reads "that ne'er it likes"; which, it seems to me, gives a wrong
sense. Corrected by Walker.

P. 18. Marry, yet 'tis a witherd pear: will you any thing with it?
Hel. Not my virginity yet. — You're for the Court:
There shall your master have, &c.—The original text of this
play is so shockingly mangled and mutilated, as to try an editor's
patience and judgment to the uttermost. Here, as all admit, we have
a bad gap in the text; and the editors are not agreed as to how it
should be filled: some of them indeed leave it unfilled. The words,
You're for the Court, were supplied by Hanmer; and something of the
sort is plainly necessary to the sense. Staunton thinks, "the deficiency
is more probably in Parolles' speech, where the words, we are for the
Court, may have been omitted by the compositor." But why is this
more probable? I cannot see it so. The words added by Hanmer
make the connection in Helena's speech at least full as apt and clear; this too without leaving the first line of it incomplete. — Dr. Badham thinks that the preceding dialogue, after Parolles' question, "Are you meditating on virginity?" formed no part of the play as written by Shakespeare, and that it was foisted in by some other hand. "I do not hesitate," says he, "to declare my belief that the preceding speeches of Parolles are the mere ribaldry of the players. Not only is the wit utterly unworthy of Shakespeare, but there is nothing of Parolles about it,—none of the extravagant attempts at euphuism in which that red-tailed humble-bee delights. Helena's reverie naturally prompts Parolles to ask if she is meditating on life in a convent; to which Helena answers that she is not thinking of such a state for herself at present." I fully concur in this judgment, and would gladly be rid of the whole passage in question, which has long seemed to me a foul blot in the play, and a scandalous wrong done to the heroine; but, unfortunately, there it is, and there, for aught I see, it must stand. Observe how much more apt and natural the connection would be without that passage:

Par. Are you meditating on virginity?
Hel. Not on virginity yet. — You're for the Court: &c.

P. 19. There shall your master have a thousand loves,
A maither, and a mistress, and a friend, &c. — Instead of maither, the old text has mother, which seems strangely out of place. For A mother Rowe substituted Another; but that does not fit the place any better. Maither is an old word used by Jonson and other writers of the time, and signifying girl or maid. Nares says "the word is still used in Norfolk and Suffolk." It was sometimes written modder, and, in one instance at least, it appears to have been corrupted into mother; as Brome has it, with an evident quibble: "Where maids are mothers, and mothers are maids."

P. 19. His jarring concord, and his discord dulcet,
His faith, his sweet disaster. — Hanmer printed "His faithless sweet disaster"; which I more than suspect to be right.

P. 20. When thou hast leisure, say thy prayers; when thou hast money, remember thy friends. — The old text reads "when thou hast none, remember thy friends." Here none must be understood as referring to leisure: but why should Parolles tell Helena to remember
her friends when she has no leisure? The reading, "when thou hast money," was proposed by Mr. W. W. Williams in The Parthenon, Nov. 1, 1862. It gives at least an intelligible and fitting sense to the passage. And monie, as the word was often spelt, might easily get misprinted none.

P. 21. Impossible be strange attempts to those
That weigh their pains in sense; and do suppose
What hath not been can't be. — So Hanmer and Walker. The original reads "What hath beene, cannot be"; which evidently expresses just the reverse of the speaker's thought.

ACT I., SCENE 2.

P. 23. But they may jest,
Till their own scorn return to them unnoted,
Ere they can hide their levity in humour
So like a courtier. — The old text has "hide their levitie in honour." In order to make any fitting sense out of that reading, honour has to be taken in a sense very different from the one it bears in the third line below. On the other hand, a genial and pleasant humour may be aptly said to hide the jests of the speaker, inasmuch as it takes the sting and venom out of them. Dyce suggests the correction. We have many instances of humour and honour confounded. If honour be the right word, the meaning probably is, "Ere they can cause their levity to be overlooked or lost sight of in their nobleness of character, or the honour in which they are held."

P. 23. Who were below him
He used as creatures of a nobler place;
And bow'd his eminent top to their low ranks,
Making them proud, as his nobility
In their poor praise he humbled. — The original reads "creatures of another place," and "proud of his humility." Hanmer changed another place into a brother race; which I quote merely as showing that he saw the unfitness of another. "A nobler place" was proposed by Williams in The Parthenon, Nov. 1, 1862. How easily a nobler might be misprinted another, is obvious enough. — As to the last two lines of the passage, I can make no sense at all out of them as they stand in the old text. How could the men be said to be proud of his humility? Warburton changes "proud of his" to "proud, and his"; and so Williams would read; who also proposes to make the
last line “In their poor praise the humbler.” This gives the sense of “making his humility the humbler in the praise of those below him, or poorer than he.” But why “make his humility the humbler”? Surely, the sense is not enough bettered to pay for the changes of he to the, and of humbled to humbler. I have no doubt that of got misprinted for as. How apt s, when written long, was to be mistaken for f, Walker has abundantly shown; and no one familiar with the old copies needs to be told that a and o were very often confounded. As for nobility, I must leave it to stand on its own fitness of sense; merely remarking that the occurrence of hum just beneath nob might account for the error, supposing it to be an error.

P. 24. Thus his good melancholy oft began,
On the catastrophe and heel of pastime,
When it was out. — In the first of these lines, the old text has This instead of Thus. An obvious error, — corrected by Pope. In the third line, Staunton plausibly proposes to substitute wit for it. See foot-note 12.

P. 24. To give some labourer room. — In the old copies, labourers. Corrected by Warburton and Walker.

ACT I., SCENE 3.

P. 25. If I may have your ladyship’s good-will to go to the world, Isbel your woman and I will do as we may. — The original has “Isbell the woman and w.” The change of the to your is Dr. Badham’s, who justly supposed the old contraction of your to have been mistaken for that of the. The other correction was made in the second folio.

P. 26. You’re shallow, madam; e’en great friends. — The old text has in instead of e’en. Corrected by Hanmer.

P. 26. For young Chairbonne the Puritan and old Poisson the Papist. — The old text has the names Charbon and Poysam. The correction is from a correspondent of Notes and Queries, August, 1863, who writes as follows: “The characters being French, it was long ago acutely surmised by Malone that Poysam was a misprint for Poisson, — i and long s having been taken for y; — but, unfortunately, his further supposition, that Charbon was meant to indicate the fiery zeal of the Puritans, was unsatisfactory, and gave no support to the previous con-
jecture. As, however, Poisson is significant of the fasting and self-denying Papist, so I think Charbon, Chairbon, or Chairbonne, was given authentically to the fast-denying or sleek Puritan as derivable from chair bonne or bonne chair. The antithesis and the appropriateness of the allusions prove the truth of these emendations and interpretations.” See foot-note 6.

P. 27. Was this fair face, quoth she, the cause
Why th' Grecians sackèd Troy?
Fond done, done fond, good sooth, it was,
Was this King Priam's joy.—So Collier's second folio.
The old texts inverts the last half of the first line, thus, "Was this fair face the cause, quoth she," and in the third lacks "good sooth, it was" altogether. The gap thus left in the verse was filled by Warburton with the words, for Paris he. It seems not unlikely that, as White suggests, the old ballad, from which the Clown is quoting, was known to the author of those corrections. At all events, the words supplied by him are much better than those of Warburton. The original has the song worse printed even than the generality of the play.

P. 28. An we might have a good woman born but for every blazing star. — Instead of for the old text has ore. The correction was made by Mr. Harness. Staunton changes ore to 'fore, which may be equally fitting; but, if 'fore then why not ere?

P. 28. That man should be at woman's command, and yet no hurt done! Though honesty be a Puritan, yet it will do one's part; it will wear the surplice of humility over the black gown of a big heart.—Instead of "do one's part," the original has "do no hurt." With this reading, the passage is impenetrably obscure, if indeed any sense whatever can be made of it. The usual remedy has been to read "Though honesty be a Puritan," &c. Mr. Samuel Bailey thus proposes to substitute a for no, and then to read "yet it will do its part"; but Shakespeare is so chary of using the word its, that I should be slow to adopt that reading. I suspect, with Mr. Bailey, that no hurt slipped in by mistake from the preceding line. See foot-note 11.

P. 29. Love no god, that would not extend his might, only where qualities were level.—So the original, except that it has "would not extend his might onelie, where qualities," &c. The natural sense of
the text is obviously just the reverse of what the occasion requires. This sense would come either by omitting not or by inserting save or some equivalent word: "would not extend his might save only where," &c. It would be strictly in the Poet's usual manner to have written "would but extend his might only where," &c.; and the misprinting of but and not for each other is very frequent. But, as a fitting sense may be got from the passage by supposing it elliptical, I leave it unchanged.

P. 29. Diana no queen of virgins, that would suffer her poor knight surprised. — The words, Diana no, wanting in the old copies, were supplied by Theobald, and have been universally received. See footnote 12.

P. 30. If we are Nature's these are ours. — The original has "If ever we are nature's"; where ever just spoils the metre to no purpose. Probably, as Lettsom thinks, it was derived from even in the line above.

P. 30. By our remembrances of days foregone,
Such were not faults, or then we thought them none. — The old text has "Such were our faults." This reading can nowise be made to cohere, either logically or in sentiment, with the context; one of the many old readings which only a kind of blar-eyed ingenuity can explain; for this will explain you any thing. Hanmer substituted though for or, and has been followed by several editors. This, to be sure, makes the two parts of the line logically coherent; but then it sets the whole line quite at odds with what precedes: for the whole drift of the three preceding couplets is, that the Countess does not regard the things in question as faults at all. The substitution of not for our gives to the whole eight lines a sense entirely fitting and harmonious. And the change merely supposes our to have been repeated by mistake from the line above. Misprints so originating are very frequent. And, surely, the word none points out not as the right correction.

P. 34. Such as his reading
And manifold experience had collected. — So Walker and Collier's second folio. The old copies have manifest instead of manifold.

P. 35. There's something hints,
More than my father's skill, &c. — Instead of hints, the original has in't. Corrected by Warburton.
CRITICAL NOTES.

P. 35.  
I'd venture  
This well-lost life of mine on's Grace's cure. — So Hanmer and Walker. The original has The instead of This.

ACT II., SCENE I.

P. 35. Farewell, young lord; these warlike principles  
Do not throw from you: — and you, my lord, farewell. — Instead of lord, the original has Lords here in both places; but the use of both in what follows shows that lord is probably right. Hanmer made the correction.

P. 37. I grow to you, and our parting is as a tortured body. — The original omits as in this speech. Walker supplies it, in order to make verse; it seems to me quite as needful in order to make sense.

P. 37. You shall find in the regiment of the Spinii one Captain Spurio, with his cicatrice, an emblem of war, here on his sinister cheek. — The original reads “one Captaine Spurio his sicatrice, with an Embleme of warre,” &c. Corrected by Theobald.

P. 38. Laf. [Kneeling.] Pardon, my lord, for me and for my tidings.  
King. I'll see thee to stand up.  
Laf. [Rising.] Then here's a man stands that has bought his pardon.  
Would you had kneel'd, my lord, to ask me mercy;  
And at my bidding you could so stand up. — The original has, in the second of these lines, see instead of fee, and, in the third, brought instead of bought. The corrections are Theobald's. In the fourth line, also, the old text reads “I would you had kneel'd”; and, in the fifth, “And that at my bidding,” &c. In these cases I and that serve no purpose but to defeat the rhythm of the lines.

P. 39.  
Whose simple touch  
Is powerful to arouse King Pepin, nay,  
And give great Charlemain a pen in's hand,  
To write to her a love-line. — So Capell, and, as it seems to me, with evident propriety. The old copies transpose And and To at the beginning of the last two lines.
P. 40. Gerard de Narbon was my father; one,
    In what he did profess, well found. — So Walker. One is lacking in the old copies.

P. 42. And oft it hits
    Where hope is coldest, and despair most fits. — So Theobald and Collier’s second folio. The old copies have shifts instead of fits.

P. 43. Transduced by odious ballads; my maid’s name
    Sear’d otherwise; nay, worse of worst extended,
    With vilest torture let my life be ended. — In the first of these lines, the original has “my maidens name.” Corrected by Walker; who justly observes that “the extra syllable in the body of the line is out of place in rhyme.” — In the second line, the original has “ne worse of worst extended.” White and Dyce read “the worst of worst extended.” I agree with Singer that nay is the better substitute for the unmeaning ne, as it naturally gives emphasis to what follows. See foot-note 26.

P. 43. Youth, beauty, wisdom, courage, virtue, all
    That happiness and prime can happy call. — So Theobald and Warburton. The old text lacks virtue. As the whole speech is in rhyme, an octo-syllabic line is decidedly out of place here.

P. 44. Ay, by my sceptre and my hopes of Heaven. — The original has helpe. Corrected by Thirlby.

ACT II., SCENE 2.

P. 45. Clo. I know my business is but to the Court.
    Coun. But to the Court! why, what place make you special, when you put that off with such contempt? — So Theobald, and rightly, beyond question. The original omits But at the beginning of the second speech.

ACT II., SCENE 3.

P. 48. Why, ’tis the rarest argument of wonder that hath shot out in our latter times.
    Par. And so it is. — What is here given as the closing part of Lafeu’s first speech, the old copies assign to Parolles; and what is here assigned to Parolles, they assign to Bertram, who evidently ought
CRITICAL NOTES.

not to appear on the stage till the other lords come in, when the King sends to summon "all the lords in Court." In this, I follow the order and arrangement of Walker, not being able to see how it can well be bettered.

P. 48. Why, your dolphin is not lustier. — In the old copies of Shakespeare, Dauphin is everywhere, I think, printed Dolphin. Hence some think, Walker among them, that it ought to be Dauphin here. But it seems nowise likely that an old courtier like Lafeu would have spoken thus of the King’s oldest son. On the other hand, the dolphin, being a sportive, lively fish, was an apt and natural object for the comparison.

P. 50. O'er whom both sovereign's power and father's voice I have to use. — So Collier's second folio. The original has "both sovereign power."

P. 51. These boys are boys of ice, they'll none of her. — The original reads "they'll none have her." The correction is Rowe’s, and a right happy one it is too; though most of recent editors reject it.

P. 52. From lowest place when virtuous things proceed, The place is dignified by th' doer's deed. — The old copies have whence instead of when. Hardly worth noting, perhaps.

P. 53. My honour's at the stake; which to defend, I must produce my power. — So Theobald and Collier's second folio. The original has defeate instead of defend.

P. 54. Or I will throw thee from my care for ever Into the staggars and the careless lapse Of youth and ignorance. — Instead of careless, the old text has careless, probably caught from care in the line before. Walker suggested careless, which is strongly approved by Williams, and adopted by Dyce. So in The Merchant, iv. 1: "Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall to careless ruin."

P. 54. Good fortune and the favour of the Heavens Smile upon this contract! whose ceremony Shall come expedient on this now-born brief, And be perform'd to-night. — In the first of these lines, the
original has *King* instead of *Heavens*. Yet the speaker evidently means an invocation or benediction on the match he has just made. Walker, in his long list of "Substituted Words," notes *King* as a probable instance. In the preceding scene we have an unquestioned error of *helpe* for *Heaven*. — In the third line, again, the old text reads "Shall *seeme* expedient." The Poet sometimes uses to *seems* in a manner that is rather strange to us; but I think he nowhere else uses it in a sense at all suitable to this place.

P. 55. Laf. *Are you companion to the Count Rousillon?*
Par. *To any count, — to all counts, — to what is man.*
Laf. *To what is count's man: count's master is of another style.* — I am very much in the dark as to the meaning or the fitness of *master* here. Parolles is claiming to be Bertram’s *companion*, not his master; and Lafeu has just spoken of Bertram as Parolles’s master. The only fitting explanation I can start of “count’s master” is, that it may mean a man whom a count would address by the title of *Master*; which title was then applied to *gentlemen*, not to *servants*. I suspect some textual corruption in *master*; the explanation seeming too far-fetched.

P. 56. *That I may say, in thy default, he is a man I know.* — The old text has “in the default.” Johnson explains this “At a need,” — a sense that has no apparent kindred with the words. The correction is Mr. P. A. Daniel’s.

P. 57. *Scurvy, old, filthy, scurvy lord.* — Dyce notes the second *scurvy* as “an accidental repetition.” Perhaps so; but more likely, I think, a misprint for *mangy* or *lousy*; for Parolles is piling up scurrilous terms that have no fitness but to vent his impotent vexation.

P. 57. *You are more saucy with lords and honourable personages than the heraldry of your birth and virtue gives you commission.* — So Hanmer. In the original *heraldry* and *commission* change places with each other.

P. 59. *War is no stripe*

*To the dark house and the detested wife.* — “Detected wife” in the old copies. Corrected by Rowe.
CRITICAL NOTES.

ACT II., SCENE 5.

P. 62. 
And to-night, 
When I should take possession of the bride, 
End ere I do begin.—The original has And instead of End. Corrected in Collier's second folio and in Lord Ellesmere's first folio.

P. 63. I have spoken better of you than you have wit or will to deserve.—So Singer. The old text lacks wit; but the language shows that some word must have dropped out after have. Malone would insert qualities; Lettsom, power.

P. 63. Par. An idle lord, I swear.
Ber. I think not so.
Par. Why, do you know him?—So Walker and Singer. The original omits not in Bertram's speech, and inserts it the second speech of Parolles, "Why do you not know him?" The context shows both the omission and the insertion to be wrong.

P. 64. 
This drives me to entreat you, 
That presently you take your way for home, 
And rather muse than ask why I entreat you.—Walker says, "Read 'why I dismiss you,' or an equivalent word."

P. 64. Ber. I pray you, stay not, but in haste to horse.
Hel. I shall not break your bidding, good my lord.
Ber. Where are my other men, monsieur?—Farewell:

[Exit HELENA.

Go thou toward home; where I will never come, &c.—Here the original makes the first line of Bertram's second speech a part of Helena's speech; — an arrangement clearly at odds with the situation, as none of Helena's attendants are on the stage in the original. The arrangement given in the text is Theobald's, who makes the following just remarks upon it: "What other men is Helen here inquiring after? Or who is she supposed to ask for them? The old Countess, 'tis certain, did not send her to the Court without some attendants; but neither the Clown nor any of her retinue are now upon the stage. Bertram, observing Helen to linger fondly, and wanting to shift her off, puts on a show of haste, asks Parolles for his servants, and then gives his wife an abrupt dismissal."
ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

ACT III., SCENE 1.

P. 65. I Lord. Holy seems the quarrel
Upon your Grace's party; black and fearful
On the opposer's. — The original has part instead of party, and opposer instead of opposer's. The latter error almost corrects itself: in regard to the former, Walker says, "Read party, with the same meaning, ut sepe." See foot-note 1. — This speech evidently belongs to the same person as the second one after; yet the latter has, in the original, the prefix French E.; as also the speech here assigned to the second Lord there has the prefix French G. There is indeed great confusion of prefixes in other scenes where the French Lords take part. Malone thought, and with good reason, that E. and G. stood for the names of the actors who performed the parts in question. In the list of actors prefixed to the first folio we have the names William Ecclestone, Samuel Gilburne, and Robert Goughe. And, in point of fact, the old copies have a great many instances of actors' names printed as prefixes; doubtless by transfer from the prompter's books.

P. 65. That the great figure of a council frames
By self-unable notion. — So Warburton and Capell. The old text has "self-unable motion," out of which I can make no sense at all. See foot-note 3.

P. 66. But I am sure the younger of our nation. — The old text has nature. Corrected by Rowe.

ACT III., SCENE 2.

P. 66. I knew a man that had this trick of melancholy sold a goodly manor for a song. — The original has know instead of knew, and hold instead of sold. The latter error was corrected in the third folio.

P. 67. Our oldlings and our Isbels o'the country are nothing like your oldlings and your Isbels o'the Court. — Here the original has the strange reading, "Our old Lings and our Isbels a' th Country are nothing like your old Ling and your Isbels a' th Court." This is commonly printed "our old ling — your old ling." But what in the world can ling mean here? I can get no meaning out of it. Walker "suspects that old ling is a corruption of some other word or words." No wonder. But we all know what the words oldling, youngling, hireling,
stripling, underling, &c., mean.—Oldlings, in the text, is probably to be taken as an indirect allusion to the Countess under the notion of old country-folks in general: "Our old folks and our sweethearts of the country are nothing like your old folks and your sweethearts of the Court." I must add Lettsom’s query: "Is not old ling, in the second place, a corruption for youngling?"—Since writing the above, I have received the following note from Mr. Joseph Crosby:

In the North of England, County of Westmoreland, the peasantry have a very common word to coddle; not a slang word, but a regular provincialism in daily use, and having been so for years. This word exactly corresponds with our American term to spark, and implies to hug, to kiss, to court. If John is paying his attentions to—courting—Isbel, he is said to coddle, or to be coddling, her. And this word coddling means both the action and the object of it. John is coddling Isbel, that is, sparking her; and Isbel is John’s coddling, that is, his doxy or sweetheart. Now this term would exactly fit the Clown’s tongue: "Our country coddlings or sparkings are nothing like your coddling at Court: my Isbel down here is a greenhorn at the business compared with the Isbels I found up there; whose more seductive manners, city style, and closer embraces have knocked the brains out of my country Cupid; and I begin to love, as an old man loves money, with no stomach." This would do first-rate, if we were only certain that Shakespeare was familiar with this provincialism. The word does not occur in his works, except once, and then has a totally different meaning, namely, a young, immature apple. (Twelfth Night, i. 5.)

P. 67. E’en that you have there.—Here, again, the original has In instead of E’en. See note on "e’en great friends," page 132.

P. 68. If thou engrossest all the griefs as thine,
Thou robb’st me of a moiety.—The original has "all the griefs are thine." Corrected by Rowe and in Collier’s second folio.

P. 69. ’Tis but the boldness of his hand, which, haply,
His heart was not consenting to.—So Dyce. The old text reads "his hand haply, which."

P. 69. The fellow has a deal of that too much,
Which hurts him much to have.—The original reads "Which holds him much to have." Hanmer printed "Which ’hoves him not much to have"; and Collier’s second folio has "Which ’hoves him much to leave." My thought at one time was, that we ought to read "Which ’hoves him much to have," on the ground that it behaved Paroles to have a good deal of impudence, inasmuch he had nothing else. But this is probably drawing it too fine. On the other hand, hurts might easily get misprinted holds, and I can make no sense with the
latter here. The correction was proposed by Keightley, but occurred to me independently.

P. 70.  

O you leaden messengers,  
That ride upon the violent speed of fire,  
Fly with false aim; pierce the still-moving air,  
That sings with piercing. — The original reads “move the still-peering aire,” and the second folio changes peering to piercing. The more common reading is “move the still-piercing air.” The reading in the text is Hanmer’s, repeated by Capell. I much prefer it to any other that has been offered. See foot-note 6.

ACT III., SCENE 5.

P. 74. Their promises, enticements, oaths, tokens, and all these engines of lust, are but the things they go under. — So Hanmer. The original reads “are not the things.” This makes the pronoun they refer to promises, &c.; and the meaning is, that those promises, &c., are not the things they pretend to be, or would pass for. Rather tame, I think. With the reading in the text, they refers to the same antecedent as their, that is, the persons whom Mariana is speaking of. Hanmer’s correction has the high approval of Heath; and perhaps no two words are oftener confounded than but and not. See foot-note 2.

P. 76. Ay, right! — good creature, wheresoe’er she is,  
Her heart weighs sadly. — The original reads “I write good creature,” &c. The second folio changes write to right. The affirmative particle ay is commonly printed I; and the present is doubtless one of the many instances where the wrong word got into the text from sameness or similarity of sound. The reading here given is Capell’s, and is quite satisfactory, I think. Of course the words Ay, right! are spoken in assent to what Diana has just said.

P. 77. ’Tis pity he’s not honest: yond’s that same knave  
That leads him to these pranks. — Instead of pranks the old text has places. As nothing has been said of any places, Theobald substituted paces, meaning irregular steps or courses. Lettsom proposed passes, which Dyce adopts. Heath proposed pranks, which, I think, gives a fitter sense, and is certainly better for the verse.
CRITICAL NOTES.

ACT III., SCENE 6.

P. 79. O, for the love of laughter, let him fetch off his drum.—So Collier's second folio. The original is without off. See second speech before.

P. 79. When your lordship sees the bottom of his success in't, and to what metal this counterfeit lump of ore will be melted.—The original has “of this success,” and ours instead of ore. Corrected, the first by Rowe, the other by Theobald.

P. 80. Hinder not the humour of his design.—So Theobald. The old text has honor instead of humour. I suspect we ought to read “the humour of this design,” as Lettsom proposes.

P. 81. And for a week escape a great deal of discovery.—The old text has discoveries; at which Walker asks, as he well may, “Is this good English?”

P. 81. But when you find him once, you have him ever after.—The old text has out instead of once. The correction is Mr. P. A. Daniel's.

ACT III., SCENE 7.

P. 83. First, give me trust, the county is my husband.—Here the original has “the Count he is.” Also, in the second speech after, “The Count he wooes.” Yet in the same speech the original has “A ring the County wears.” Walker says, “Read ‘the County is,’ &c., ‘the County wooes,’ &c.”

P. 83. Lays down his wanton siege before her beauty,

Resolved to carry her.—Instead of Resolved, the first folio has Resolve, which is changed to Resolves in the second.

P. 84. Herself most chastely absent: after this,

To marry her, &c.—The original lacks this, which was added in the second folio.

P. 84. With music of all sorts.—The original has Musickes.
P. 84. *Is wicked meaning in a lawful deed,*

*And lawful meaning in a wicked act.*—So Warburton. Instead of the second *wicked*, the original repeats *lawful*; which Walker pronounces "certainly wrong"; and Lettsom says, "Read *wicked* with Warburton." See foot-note 4.

**ACT IV., SCENE 1.**

P. 86. *Tongue, I must put you into a butter-woman's mouth, and buy myself another of Bajazet's mute.*—The original has *Bajazet's Mule.* Corrected by Warburton.

P. 87. *If there be here German, or Dane, low Dutch,*

*French, or Italian, let him speak to me.*—The original reads "*Italian, or French.*" Transposed for the metre.

P. 88. *Inform 'em that.*—The old text is "*Inform on that.*" Corrected by Rowe.

**ACT IV., SCENE 2.**

P. 89. *If I should swear by God's great attributes, &c.*—The original has *Joves* instead of *God's*; doubtless, as the Cambridge Editors note, "in obedience to the statute against profanity."

P. 90. *This has no holding,*

*To swear by Him, when I protest to love*  
*That I will work against.* Therefore, &c.—This passage has been a standing puzzle to the editors, and has called forth a great deal of comment. The original reads "To swear by him *whom* I protest to love"; and upon this the difficulty has mainly turned. Out of that reading I do not see how any consistent or intelligible meaning can be drawn. Dyce, following Johnson, prints "To swear to him whom I protest to love"; but this, it seems to me, does not help the matter at all. The reading *when* is Singer's; and it is the only one that I have been able to find my way in. The original also has *him* after *against*; which not only hurts the metre, but seems to me to upset the whole sense of the passage. Probably the transcriber or compositor did not understand the meaning of *That* here, and so sophisticated the language into disorder, substituting *whom* for *when*, and inserting him, as the objects of *to love* and of *against.* See foot-notes 3 and 4.
Therefore your oaths
Are words and poor conditions, best unseal'd,
At least in my opinion.—Here, again, we are indebted to Mr. Williams for what seems to me a very valuable correction. The old text has but instead of best. See foot-note 5.

Be not so holy-cruel: my love is holy;
And my integrity ne'er knew the crafts
That you do charge men with.—The original lacks my in the first of these lines. Staunton suggests that it ought to be inserted; and I think the occurrence of my in the next line shows it to be necessary.

I see that men make ropes in such a snare,
That we'll forsake ourselves.—This is commonly regarded as one of the most troublesome passages in Shakespeare. The original reads “I see that men make rope's in such a scarre.” All the modern editors, so far as I know, from Rowe downwards, have given up ropes, or rope's, as an unquestionable corruption; and most of them have substituted hopes. Rowe reads “make hopes, in such affairs”; Malone, “hopes, in such a scene”; Collier's second folio, “hopes, in such a suit”; Staunton, “hopes, in such a snare”; Dyce, “hopes, in such a case”; and Singer, “hopes, in such a scarre”; explaining that “a scarre here signifies any surprise or alarm; what we should now write a scare”; which, I must say, appears to me well-nigh absurd. White rejects all the forecited changes, and prints just as in the original; but without offering any explanation. Perhaps I ought to add, that Lettsom would read “hopes, in such a 'scape’”; while Mr. Williams proposed “I see that men may cope's in such a sort”; and supported this bold reading with great ingenuity and fertility of argument. Nevertheless I have scarce any doubt that ropes is the right lection. And if we understand make in the sense of to frame or to weave, and in as having the force of into, I suspect much of the difficulty will vanish. That in and into were often used indiscriminately, is well known to all students of our older literature. Dyce points out many examples of in for into in Shakespeare. I will add two more. In King Henry VIII., i. 2: “I'm sorry that the Duke of Buckingham is run in your displeasure.” And in Coriolanus, i. 2: “So, your opinion is, Aufidius, that they of Rome are enter'd in our counsels.” It may not be amiss to add, that the words in question are spoken by Diana in pursuance of
an arrangement made beforehand with Helen, for the purpose of entrapping Bertram into a meeting with the latter as his wife. By that arrangement, Diana, after enough of resistance to blind the eyes of her wooer, is to make believe that she accepts his vows. And those words are intended, apparently, as her first step in the process of seeming to yield. She means to have Bertram think that his art and ardour have prevailed. This sense is plainly defeated by hopes. With ropes, whether taken in the sense of cords or of tricks, or of both, the last clause of the speech depends on such, as, I think, it should. See footnote 6. — In regard to the other word, for which, following Staunton, I have substituted snare, it appears that both scarre and scar are elsewhere misprinted for scorse, an old word much used in the Poet’s time, and meaning equivalent, offset, exchange, barter, or bargain. So, in Troilus and Cressida, i. 1, the folio has “Let Paris bleed, ’tis but a scar to scorne, Paris is gor’d with Menelaus horne.” Also in Cymbeline, v. 5: “This man hath more of thee merited, then a Band of Clotens had ever scarre for.” The folio has scar or scarre some twenty-five times, but in much the larger number of cases the word is printed scarre, and this too when it has the sense of cicatrice. In the two passages just quoted, for scar and scarre we want some word meaning equivalent or offset. Mr. A. E. Brae holds it “preposterous” to substitute scorse in those places, though he admits that the sense of this word is there required: he would retain the old letters, and explain them to that sense,—a sense which they do not bear in any other writer, and which they would not have conveyed to any readers or hearers at that time. This seems to me the extreme dotage of literal tenacity; and I hold it preposterous to suppose that Shakespeare would have thus coined a new word, when he had one at hand, already well known, and precisely suited to his use; a new word, too, that would have been taken in a sense altogether different from that which he evidently meant to convey. Mr. Brae, however, has done good service in calling attention to the old word scorse. He points out several apt instances of it. It occurs in Drayton’s Ideas, 52: “Let us scorse, And for a piece of thine my whole heart take.” Also in The Faerie Queene, ii. 9, 55: “And recompenst them with a better scorse.” And in Harrington’s Orlando Furioso, xx. 78: “This done, she makes the stately dame to light, And with the aged woman clothes to scorse.” In the passage of Shakespeare before us, Mr. Brae thinks Diana’s meaning to be, “Men expect that in such a bargain we’ll throw ourselves away without equivalent.” In this, however, he supposes “make hopes” to
be the true reading. Mr. H. H. Furness, in a letter to me, thinks that *ropes* coheres with *scarre*, in the sense explained above, just as well as *hopes*: "Men play tricks in such a bargain, to make us lose sight of our own interest." But I do not quite see it so: I rather agree with Mr. Joseph Crosby, who writes me that, "if we accept Mr. Brae's interpretation of *scarre*, we shall be compelled to adopt *hopes*, the common reading." Such being, or at least seeming to be, the case, I confess I am something in doubt whether to give up *ropes* or *scorse*; and heartily wish I could see the way clear for retaining them both.

**ACT IV., SCENE 3.**

P. 93. *Is it not most damnable in us, to be the trumpeters of our unlawful intents?* — So Hanmer. The original reads "Is it not meant damnable." Walker says, "most, of course."

P. 93. *That he might take a measure of his own judgment, wherein so curiously he had set this counterfeit.* — The old text has *judgements.* The instances of singulars there misprinted plurals are almost endless.

P. 94. *Sir, his wife, some two months since, fled from his house; her pretence a pilgrimage, &c.* — The original reads "her pretence *is* a pilgrimage."

P. 94. *The stranger part of it by her own letters.* — So Collier's second folio. The original has "The stronger part."

P. 94. *Her death itself, which could not be her office to say was come, is faithfully confirm'd by the rector of the place.* — In the original, *was* and *is* change places with each other. Lettsom proposed the transposition.

P. 96. 1 Lord. Hush, hush! *Hoodman comes!* — The original makes *Hush, hush!* a part of the preceding speech. Corrected by Walker.

P. 96. Ber. All's one to him. *What a past-saving slave is this!* — So Capell. In the original the first clause of this speech concludes the preceding. A very palpable error.
P. 97. Ber. I will never trust a man again for keeping his sword clean; &c.—The original assigns this speech to "Cap. E.," which is there the prefix to the speeches of the second Lord. It belongs to Bertram, surely, as Walker suggests. The second Lord has not trusted Parolles.

P. 97. 1 Lord. A truth's a truth,—the rogues are marvellous poor.—This is given to Parolles in the old text. Walker observes that "the words belong to one of the Lords: so, just before, the first Lord says, 'He's very near the truth in this.'"

P. 97. By my troth, sir, if I were to die this present hour, I will tell true.—The original has live instead of die. Corrected by Walker. A little further on in the same speech, Julian is Walker's correction for Guiltian.

P. 99. Men are to merr with, boys are but to kiss.—So Theobald. The old text has not instead of but.

P. 100. I perceive, sir, by our general's looks, &c.—The original has your instead of our. Corrected by Capell.

ACT IV., SCENE 4.

P. 104. Yet I pay you
But with the word: the time will bring on Summer, &c.—The original reads "Yet I pray you: But with the word," &c. The passage has long been a theme of controversy. Blackstone proposed "Yet I fray you But with the word"; which has been adopted by some editors. That reading seems to me entirely at fault, however "elegant" it may be. The reading in the text was proposed by Staunton. See foot-note 5.

P. 104. Our wagon is prepared, and time invites us.—The original has "time revives us." Hanmer changed revives to reviles, which is also found in Collier's second folio. Invites is Johnson's correction; and, as White remarks, is supported by what Polonius says to his son, in Hamlet, i. 3: "The time invites you; go, your servants tend." Lettsom thinks that revives is right, and that the fault is in time, which may have got repeated from the third line above, and displaced some other word, perhaps hope. That may indeed be.
CRITICAL NOTES.

ACT IV., SCENE 5.

P. 105. I would he had not known him.—Instead of he, the original repeats I; which is clearly wrong. Corrected by Hanmer as proposed by Theobald.

P. 105. They are not salad-herbs, you knave.—The original lacks salad, which was inserted by Rowe. The context fully approves the insertion. Collier's second folio has pot-herbs.

P. 107. But, since he is the prince of the world, let his nobility remain in's Court.—The old text has sure instead of since. Corrected by Hanmer.

P. 107. Indeed, he has no place, but runs where he will.—So Hanmer. The original reads "no pace."

P. 108. Count. A scar nobly got, &c.—So the second folio. The first has the prefix Laef. to this speech. As, in this scene, the original has Lady, Lad., and La., prefixed to the speeches of the Countess, such a misprint might easily occur. And Dyce agrees with Malone, that the Countess would be more likely than Lafeu to speak thus of Bertram.

ACT V., SCENE 1.

P. 109. Enter a Gentleman.—The original has "Enter a gentle Astringer"; which means nobody can tell exactly what. In the third scene, the same person appears again, and is there called simply "a Gentleman."

ACT V., SCENE 2.

P. 111. Here is a pur of Fortune's, sir, or of Fortune's cat.—Mason thought we ought to read "a puss of Fortune's." I have hardly any doubt that he was right. See foot-note 3.

P. 111. I do pity his distress in my similes of comfort.—The original has "smiles of comfort." Corrected by Warburton. Walker says, "Of course, similes."
ACT V., SCENE 3.

P. 113. Natural rebellion, done i' the blaze of youth.—So Warburton and Collier's second folio; also proposed by Theobald. The original has "the blade of youth."

P. 115. To the great sender turns a sore offence,
Crying, That's good that's gone. Our rashuer faults
Make trivial price of serious things we have.—In the first of these lines, the original has sour instead of sore, which is from Collier's second folio; and, in the second line, "Our rash faults." The latter correction is Lettsom's.

P. 115. Our old love waking cries to see what's done.—So Mason and Collier's second folio. The original has owne instead of old.

P. 115. Count. Which better than the first, &c.—The original prints this line and the next as part of the King's preceding speech.

P. 116. Such a ring as this,
The last eve, ere she took her leave at Court,
I saw upon her finger.—The original reads "The last that ere I took her leave." The correction of I to she is found in Rowe and Hanmer, and in Collier's second folio. The latter also substitutes time for that, as Hanmer also does. The correction of that to eve is Lettsom's; who remarks upon the passage as follows: "That is certainly an intruder; the word occurs three times a little above; but time does not seem a fit substitute. I has in the like manner crept in from the line below, no doubt, displacing she. I would therefore read, 'The last eve, ere she took her leave at Court,' that is, the last eve that we met, just before she, &c. The last evening on which Lafeu and Helen could have seen each other, was the evening on which Helen was married, had her final audience of the King, and departed from the Court."

P. 118. I will buy me a son-in-law in a fair, and toll him: for this, I'll none of him.—So the second folio. The first has "I will buy me a sonne in Law in a faire, and toule for this. Ile none of him." See foot-note 16.

P. 119. I wonder, sir, sith wives are monsters to you.—Instead of sith, the original repeats sir; a very easy misprint. Corrected by Dyce.
CRITICAL NOTES.

P. 120. *He blushes, and 'tis his.* — The original has "and 'tis hit." Pope's correction.

P. 121. *Her infinite cunning, with her modest grace,*

*Subdued me to her rate: she got the ring;*

*And I had that which an inferior might*

*At market-price have bought.* — The original has "Her insuite comming": which was a great puzzle to the editors, till Walker proposed "Her infinite cunning." A first-class correction. — The old text has modern also instead of modest, which was proposed by Mr. Williams in *The Parthenon,* Nov. 1, 1862. Modern was indeed often used for common, ordinary, or trite, and so it has occurred in this play. See page 47, note 1. But Mr. Williams justly urges that such a meaning is quite unsuited to the occasion and to the speaker's evident purpose. He writes as follows: "Could Bertram wish it to be believed that he had been betrayed by a woman of but commonplace attractions? — a fact which would increase, rather than diminish, his culpability in the eyes of the King. Nor does he speak of beauty; for Diana is present to give more pertinent evidence in that particular. It was to her plausible and hypocritical demeanour that Bertram would pretend that he fell a victim." — The old text also has "which any inferior." Walker says, "I believe we should read an, or perhaps my, for any."

P. 121. *You, that turn'd off a first so noble wife.* — The original reads "that have turn'd off."

P. 122. *Tell me,* — but, sirrah, *tell me true, I charge you.* — The original reads "Tell me sirrah, but tell me true." Corrected by Walker.

P. 125. *And are by me with child,* — And *this is done:*

*Will you be mine, now you are doubly won?* — The old text reads "And is by me with childe, &c. This is done." The correction of is to are was made by Rowe. The other correction is Mr. P. A. Daniel's. The two lines being a rhyming couplet, there should evidently be no halting in the metre.
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

ENTERED at the Stationers’ in August, 1600, and published in quarto the same year, with the words, “As it hath been sundry times publicly acted,” in the title-page; which would naturally infer the piece to have been written in 1599. All the internal marks of style bear in favour of the same date; the play being in this respect hardly distinguishable from As You Like It. After the one quarto of 1600, the play is not met with again till it reappeared in the folio of 1623. As the text of the folio differs but in a very few slight particulars from that of the quarto, the probability is that the later was reprinted from the earlier copy. And perhaps none of the Poet’s plays has reached us in a more satisfactory state; the printing being such as to leave little room for doubt as to the true text.

As with many of the author’s plays, the plot and story of Much ADO About Nothing were partly borrowed. But the same matter had been so often borrowed before, and run into so many variations, that we cannot affirm with certainty from what source the Poet directly drew. So much of the story as relates to Hero, Claudio, and Don John, bears a strong resemblance to the tale of Ariodante and Ginevra in the fifth and sixth books of Ariosto’s Orlando Furioso. Still there is little if any likelihood that the Poet took his borrowed matter from that source. A connection between the play and one of Bandello’s novels is much more distinctly traceable from the similarity of names and incidents. In the novel, Fenicia, the daughter of Lionato, a gentleman of Messina, is betrothed to Timbroe de Cardona, a friend of Piero d’Arragona. Girondo, a disappointed lover of the lady, goes to work to prevent the marriage. He insinuates to Timbroe that she is disloyal, and then to make good the charge arranges to have his own hired servant in the dress of a gentleman ascend by
a ladder of ropes and enter the house of Lionato at night, Timbreo being placed so as to witness the proceeding. The next morning Timbreo accuses the lady to her father, and rejects the alliance. Fenicia sinks down in a swoon; a dangerous illness follows; and, to prevent the shame of her alleged trespass, Lionato has it given out that she is dead, and a public funeral is held in confirmation of that report. Thereupon Girondo becomes so harrowed with remorse, that he confesses his villany to Timbreo, and they both throw themselves on the mercy of the lady's family. Timbreo is easily forgiven, and the reconciliation is soon followed by the discovery that the lady is still alive, and by the marriage of the parties.

This brief statement marks the nature and extent of Shakespeare's obligation to Bandello. The parts of Benedick and Beatrice, of Dogberry and Verges, and of several other persons, are altogether original with him; at least no traces of them have been found in any other book or writing: so that he stands responsible for all the wit and humour, and for nearly all the character, of the play. As no translation of Bandello has been discovered of so early a date as the play, it does not well appear how the Poet could have become acquainted with the novel except in the original. But the Italian was then the most generally studied language in Europe; educated Englishmen were probably quite as apt to be familiar with it as they are with the French in our day; Shakespeare, at the time of writing this play, was thirty-five years old; and we have other indications of his having known enough of Italian to be able to read such a story as Bandello's in that language. Dyce, however, whose judgment is apt to be right in such cases, remarks on the subject as follows: "There is a French version of Bandello's tale in the third volume of Belleforest's Histoires Tragiques, &c.: but some English translation of it, which is no longer to be found, was in all probability what Shakespeare used."
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DON PEDRO, Prince of Arragon.
JOHN, his bastard Brother.
CLAUDIO, a young Lord of Florence.
BENEDICK, a young Gentleman of Padua.
LEONATO, Governor of Messina.
ANTONIO, his Brother.
BALTHAZAR, Servant to Don Pedro.
Borachio, Followers of John.
CONRADE, Followers of John.

DOGBERRY, Two Officers.
VERGES, FRANCIS, a Friar.
A Sexton.
A Boy.

HERO, Daughter to Leonato.
BEATRICE, Niece to Leonato.
MARGARET, Gentlewomen attending on Hero.
URSULA.

Message, Watchmen, and Attendants.

SCENE, Messina.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — Before the House of Leonato.

Enter Leonato, Hero, and Beatrice, with a Messenger.

Leon. I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

Mess. He is very near by this: he was not three leagues off when I left him.

Leon. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

Mess. But few of any sort, and none of name.

Leon. A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine called Claudio.
Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro. He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age; doing, in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion: he hath, indeed, better better'd expectation than you must expect of me to tell you how.

Leon. He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

Mess. I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him; even so much, that joy could not show itself modest enough without a badge of bitterness.

Leon. Did he break out into tears?

Mess. In great measure.

Leon. A kind overflow of kindness: there are no faces truer than those that are so wash'd. How much better is it to weep at joy than to joy at weeping!

Beat. I pray you, is Signior Montanto return'd from the wars or no?

Mess. I know none of that name, lady: there was none such in the army of any sort.

Leon. What is he that you ask for, niece?

Hero. My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua.

Mess. O, he's return'd; and as pleasant as ever he was.

Beat. He set up his bills here in Messina, and challenged

---

1 The Poet repeatedly uses to better thus in the sense of to surpass. So in The Winter's Tale, iv. 3: "What you do still betters what is done."

2 An idea which the Poet introduces more than once. So in Macbeth, i. 4: "My plenteous joys, wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves in drops of sorrow."

3 Montanto is an old term of the fencing-school, humorously or sarcastically applied here in the sense of a bravado.

4 Sort for rank. So in A Midsummer-Night's Dream, iii. 2: "None of nobler sort would so offend a virgin;" and in Measure for Measure, iv. 4: "Give notice to such men of sort and suit as are to meet him."

5 This phrase was in common use for affixing a printed or written notice in some public place, long before Shakespeare's time, and long after.
SCENE I. MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

Cupid at the flight; and my uncle's Fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid, and challenged him at the bird-bolt. I pray you, how many hath he kill'd and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he kill'd? for, indeed, I promised to eat all of his killing.

Leon. Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

Mess. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

Beat. You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it: he's a very valiant trencher-man; he hath an excellent stomach.

Mess. And a good soldier too, lady.

Beat. And a good soldier to a lady: but what is he to a lord?

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man; stuff'd with all honourable virtues.

Beat. It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuff'd man: but for the stuffing,—well, we are all mortal.

Leon. You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

Beat. Alas, he gets nothing by that! In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man govern'd with one: so that if he have wit enough to

6 The flight was a long, slender, sharp arrow, such as Cupid shot with; so called because used for flying long distances, and to distinguish it from the bird-bolt, a short, thick, blunt arrow, used in a lower kind of archery, and permitted to fools. "A fool's bolt is soon shot," is an old proverb.

7 He'll be even with you; or, as we should say, he'll be up with you.

8 Mede, in his Discourses on Scripture, speaking of Adam, says, "He whom God had stuffed with so many excellent qualities." Beatrice starts an idea at the words stuffed man, and prudently checks herself in the pursuit of it, as leading to an indecent allusion.

9 In Shakespeare's time, the five wits was used to denote both the five senses, and the intellectual powers, which were thought to correspond with the senses in number. Here it means the latter.
keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference\textsuperscript{10} between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature.—Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

\textit{Mess}. Is't possible?

\textit{Beat}. Very easily possible: he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block.\textsuperscript{11}

\textit{Mess}. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.\textsuperscript{12}

\textit{Beat}. No; an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer\textsuperscript{13} now that will make a voyage with him to the Devil?

\textit{Mess}. He is most in the company of the right-noble Claudio.

\textit{Beat}. O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease: he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! if he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere he be cured.

\textit{Mess}. I will hold friends with you, lady.

\textit{Beat}. Do, good friend.

\textit{Leon}. You will never run mad, niece.

\textit{Beat}. No, not till a hot January.

\textit{Mess}. Don Pedro is approach'd.

\textsuperscript{10} An heraldic term. So, in \textit{Hamlet}, iv. 2, Ophelia says, "O, you must wear your rue with a difference." \textit{Difference} is \textit{distinction}, in these cases. See, also, vol. ii., page 182, note 11.

\textsuperscript{11} The mould on which a hat is formed. Here \textit{shape} or \textit{fashion}.

\textsuperscript{12} A phrase from the custom of servants and retainers being entered in the books of those to whom they were attached. To be \textit{in one's books} was to be \textit{in favour}. That this was the sense of the phrase appears from Florio: "\textit{Casso}. Cashier'd, crossed, cancelled, or put \textit{out of booke} and checke roule."

\textsuperscript{13} That is \textit{quarreller}. To \textit{square} was to take a posture of defiance or of resistance. See vol. iii., page 24, note 6.
Enter Don Pedro, Don John, Claudio, Benedick, and Balthazar.

D. Pedro. Good Signior Leonato, you are come to meet your trouble: the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it.

Leon. Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your Grace: for, trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but, when you depart from me, sorrow abides, and happiness takes his leave.

D. Pedro. You embrace your charge too willingly. I think this is your daughter.

Leon. Her mother hath many times told me so.

Bene. Were you in doubt, sir, that you ask'd her?

Leon. Signior Benedick, no; for then you were a child.

D. Pedro. You have it full, Benedick: we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly, the lady fathers herself. 14—Be happy, lady; for you are like an honourable father.

Bene. If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is.

Beat. I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you.

Bene. What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living?

Beat. Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed on as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

Bene. Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

14 This phrase is said to be common in Dorsetshire: "Jack fathers himself;" that is, points out or identifies his father by his resemblance to him.
Beat. A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

Bene. God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratch'd face.

Beat. Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

Beat. A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

Bene. I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. But keep your way, o' God's name; I have done.

Beat. You always end with a jade's trick: ¹⁵ I know you of old.

D. Pedro. This is the sum of all: Leonato,—Signior Claudio and Signior Benedick,—my dear friend Leonato hath invited you all. I tell him we shall stay here at the least a month; and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer: I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

Leon. If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn.—Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the Prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

D. John. I thank you: I am not of many words, but I thank you.

Leon. Please it your Grace lead on?

D. Pedro. Your hand, Leonato; we will go together.

[Exeunt all but Benedick and Claudio.]

Claud. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior Leonato?

¹⁵ Jade was used of an unreliable or balky horse. See vol. ii., page 171, note 25.
Bene. I noted her not; but I look'd on her.
Claud. Is she not a modest young lady?
Bene. Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment; or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?
Claud. No; I pray thee speak in sober judgment.
Bene. Why, i'faith, methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise: only this commendation I can afford her,—that, were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and, being no other but as she is, I do not like her.
Claud. Thou think'st I am in sport: I pray thee tell me truly how thou likest her.
Bene. Would you buy her, that you inquire after her?
Claud. Can the world buy such a jewel?
Bene. Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow? or do you play the flouting Jack, to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song?
Claud. In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I look'd on.
Bene. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter: there's her cousin, an she were not possess'd with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you?
Claud. I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.
Bene. Is't come to this, in faith? Hath not the world

16 A play upon note, which was used, as it still is, of musical sounds.
17 "With a sad brow" means with a serious purpose, or in earnest.
18 "Do you scoff and mock in telling us that blind Cupid has the sight of a greyhound, and that Vulcan, a blacksmith, is a good carpenter?"
19 To join you, go along with you, in singing.
one man but he will wear his cap with suspicion? 20 Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? Go to, i'faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it, and sigh away Sundays. 21 Look; Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

Re-enter Don Pedro.

D. Pedro. What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

Bene. I would your Grace would constrain me to tell.

D. Pedro. I charge thee on thy allegiance.

Bene. You hear, Count Claudio: I can be secret as a dumb man, I would have you think so; but on my allegiance,—mark you this, on my allegiance.—He is in love. With whom? now that is your Grace's part. Mark how short his answer is;—With Hero, Leonato's short daughter.

D. Pedro. If this were so, so were it utter'd.

Bene. Like the old tale, my lord: It is not so, nor 'twas not so; but, indeed, God forbid it should be so. 22

20 Subject his head to the disquiet of jealousy.
21 Alluding to the manner in which the Puritans usually spent Sunday, with sighs and groanings, and other emphatic marks of devotion.
22 This is the burden of an old tale, related by Mr. Blakeway, as follows: Mr. Fox, a bachelor, made it his business to decoy or force young women to his house, that he might have their skeletons to adorn his chambers with. Near by dwelt a family, the lady Mary and her two brothers, whom Mr. Fox often visited. One day, the lady thought to amuse herself by calling upon Mr. Fox, as he had often invited her to do. Knocking some time, but finding no one at home, she at length opened and went in. Over the portal was written, Be bold, be bold, but not too bold. Going forward, she saw the same over the stairway, and again over the door of the chamber at the head of the stairs. Opening this door, she saw at once what sort of work was carried on there. Retreating hastily, she saw out of the window Mr. Fox coming, holding a sword in one hand, and with the other dragging a young lady by the hair. She had just time to hide herself under the stairs before he entered. As he was going up stairs the young lady caught hold of the banister with her hand, whereon was a rich bracelet; he then cut off her hand, and it fell, bracelet and all, into Mary's lap, who took it, and, as soon as she
Claud. If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

D. Pedro. Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

Claud. You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

D. Pedro. By my troth, I speak my thought.

Claud. And, in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

Bene. And, by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

Claud. That I love her, I feel.

D. Pedro. That she is worthy, I know.

Bene. That I neither feel how she should be loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me: I will die in it at the stake.

D. Pedro. Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic in the despite of beauty.

Claud. And never could maintain his part but in the force of his will.23

Bene. That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks: but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead, or hang my could, hastened home. A few days after, Mr. Fox came to dine with her and her brothers. As they were entertaining each other with stories, she said she would tell them a strange dream she had lately had. She said, I dreamed, Mr. Fox, that as you had often invited me to your house, I went there one morning. When I came, I knocked, but no one answered; when I opened the door, over the hall was written, Be bold, be bold, but not too bold. But, said she, turning to Mr. Fox and smiling, It is not so, nor it was not so. Then she went on with the story, repeating this at every turn, till she came to the room full of dead bodies, when Mr. Fox took up the burden of the tale, saying, It is not so, nor it was not so, and God forbid it should be so; which he kept repeating at every turn of the story, till she came to his cutting off the lady's hand; then, upon his saying the same words, she replied, But it is so, and it was so, and here the hand I have to show, at the same time producing the hand and bracelet from her lap; whereupon the men drew their swords, and killed Mr. Fox.

23 Alluding to the definition of a heretic in the schools.
bugle in an invisible baldric, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is, (for the which I may go the finer,) I will live a bachelor.

_D. Pedro._ I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

_Bene._ With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord; not with love: prove that ever I lose more blood with love than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen, and hang me up at the door of a brothel-house for the sign of blind Cupid.

_D. Pedro._ Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

_Bene._ If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat, and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder, and called Adam.

_D. Pedro._ Well, as time shall try:

_In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke._

_Bene._ The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns, and set them in my forehead: and let me be vilely painted; and in such great letters as they write, _Here is good horse to hire_, let them sig-

---

24 Quibblings, rather swift and subtle, between the different senses of horn; the speaker meaning that he would not render himself liable to have such an ornament in his forehead. A recheat was a peculiar sound of the bugle-horn, whereby the hounds were called back from the chase. Baldric is the belt whereby the huntsman's horn is slung. It is here called invisible, in reference to the old ideal horn, which, though never seen, is sometimes felt. See vol. ii., page 47, note 11.

25 The fine is the conclusion. — "Go the finer" means, probably, have the more money to spend in dress or in finery.

26 A capital theme for satire and jest.

27 It seems to have been one of the cruel sports of the time to enclose a cat in a wooden tub or bottle suspended aloft to be shot at.

28 Alluding to Adam Bell, "a passing good archer," who, with Clym of the Clough and William of Cloudesly, were outlaws as famous in the North of England as Robin Hood and his fellows were in the midland counties.

29 This line is from Kyd's _Spanish Tragedy_, 1599.
nify under my sign, Here you may see Benedick the married
man.

Claud. If this should ever happen, thou wouldst be horn-
mad.

D. Pedro. Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in
Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

Bene. I look for an earthquake too, then.

D. Pedro. Well, you will temporize with the hours. In
the mean time, good Signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's:
commend me to him, and tell him I will not fail him at sup-
per; for indeed he hath made great preparation.

Bene. I have almost matter enough in me for such an
embassage; and so I commit you —

Claud. To the tuition of God: From my house (if I had
it) —

D. Pedro. The sixth of July: Your loving friend, Bene-
dick.

Bene. Nay, mock not, mock not. The body of your dis-
course is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guards
are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends
any further, examine your conscience: and so I leave you.

[Exit.

Claud. My liege, your Highness now may do me good.

D. Pedro. My love is thine to teach: teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

Claud. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

30 Venice bore much the same character in Shakespeare's time as Paris
does in ours; being celebrated as the great metropolis of profligate intrigue
and pleasure.

31 Guards is trimmings of the dress, or facings. See vol. iii., page 143,
note 27.—Sometime and sometimes were used indifferently. See vol. iii.,
page 24, note 7.

32 Old ends probably means the formal or ordinary conclusions of letters,
which were often couched in the quaint language used a little before.
'D. Pedro. No child but Hero; she's his only heir. Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

Claud. O, my lord, When you went onward on this ended action, I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye, That liked, but had a rougher task in hand Than to drive liking to the name of love: But, now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts Have left their places vacant, in their rooms Come thronging soft and delicate desires, All prompting me how fair young Hero is, Saying, I liked her ere I went to wars.

D. Pedro. Thou wilt be like a lover presently, And tire the hearer with a book of words. If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it; And I will break with her \(^{33}\) and with her father, And thou shalt have her. Was't not to this end That thou begann'st to twist so fine a story?

Claud. How sweetly do you minister to love, That know love's grief by his complexion! But, lest my liking might too sudden seem, I would have salved it with a longer treatise.\(^{34}\)

D. Pedro. What need the bridge much broader than the flood? The fairest grant is to necessity. Look, what will serve is fit: 'tis once,\(^{35}\) thou lovest;

---

\(^{33}\) In old language, to break with any one is to open or broach a matter to him. The phrase now means to fall out, quarrel, or break friendship, with any one. See vol. i., page 174, note 3.

\(^{34}\) Treatise for talk, tale, or discourse. — To salve a thing is to temper, to assuage, to mitigate, or palliate it. Repeatedly so.

\(^{35}\) This use of once has been something of a puzzle to the editors. It is pretty clear that the word was occasionally used in the sense of enough; and such is the aptest meaning here. The Poet has it thus repeatedly. See vol. i., page 107, note 15.
And I will fit thee with the remedy. 
I know we shall have revelling to-night: 
I will assume thy part in some disguise, 
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio; 
And in her bosom I’ll unclasp my heart, 
And take her hearing prisoner with the force 
And strong encounter of my amorous tale: 
Then, after, to her father will I break; 
And the conclusion is, she shall be thine. 
In practice let us put it presently. 

[Exeunt.

SCENE II. — A Room in Leonato’s House.

Enter, severally, Leonato and Antonio.

Leon. How now, brother! Where is my cousin, your son? hath he provided this music?

Ant. He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange news, that you yet dreamt not of.

Leon. Are they good?

Ant. As the event stamps them: but they have a good cover; they show well outward. The Prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley in my orchard,1 were thus much overheard by a man of mine: The Prince discovered to Claudio that he loved my niece your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance; and, if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top, and instantly break with you of it.

Leon. Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

Ant. A good sharp fellow: I will send for him; and question him yourself.

1 Pleached is the same as pleated or plaited; that is, folded or interwoven. — Orchard was used for garden; from hort-yard.
Leon. No, no; we will hold it as a dream till it appear\(^2\) itself: but I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you and tell her of it. — [Exit Antonio.—Several persons cross the stage.] Cousin,\(^3\) you know what you have to do. — O, I cry you mercy,\(^4\) friend; go you with me, and I will use your skill. — Good cousin, have a care this busy time.

[Exeunt.]

Scene III. — Another Room in Leonato's House.

Enter Don John and Conrade.

Con. What the good-year,\(^1\) my lord! why are you thus out of measure sad?

D. John. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds it; therefore the sadness is without limit.

Con. You should hear reason.

D. John. And when I have heard it, what blessing bring-eth it?

Con. If not a present remedy, yet a patient sufferance.

D. John. I wonder that thou, being (as thou say'st thou

\(^2\) *Appear* is used repeatedly by the Poet as a transitive verb, and in the sense of to *show*, to *manifest*, to *make apparent*. So in *Cymbeline*, iv. 2: "This youth, howe'er distress'd, *appears* he hath had good ancestors." Also in *Coriolanus*, iv. 3, in the passive voice: "Your favour is well *appeared* by your tongue." And in *Troilus and Cressida*, iii. 3: "*Appeal* it to your mind that, through the sight I bare in things to come," &c. — This use of the word was pointed out to me by Mr. Joseph Crosby.

\(^3\) Leonato sees his brother's son crossing the stage among the other persons, and stops him. *Cousin* was constantly used for *nephew*, *niece*, or, more generally still, for *kinsman*.

\(^4\) "I cry you mercy" is I ask your pardon. Used constantly so by the Poet. See vol. iii., page 46, note 14.

\(^1\) *Good-year* is best explained as a corruption of the French *goujeer*, the old name of what was known far and wide as the *morbys Gallicus*. If that explanation be right, which some doubt, it presents a strange instance of the transmogrification of words into the reverse of their original senses.
art) born under Saturn,² goest about to apply a moral medi-
cine to a mortifying mischief.  If I cannot hide what I am:³ I
must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests;
eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure;
sleep when I am drowsy, and tend on no man's business;
laugh when I am merry, and claw⁴ no man in his humour.

Con. Yea, but you must not make the full show of this
till you may do it without controlment. You have of late
stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly
into his grace;⁵ where it is impossible you should take true
root but by the fair weather that you make yourself: it is
needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

D. John. I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose
in his grace;⁶ and it better fits my blood to be disdain'd of
all than to fashion a carraige to rob love from any: in this,
though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must
not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted
with a muzzle, and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I
have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my mouth, I
would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in
the mean time let me be that I am, and seek not to alter
me.

Con. Can you make no use of your discontent?

² In old astrological language, to be "born under Saturn" was to have a
"Saturnine complexion," as it was called; that is, to be of a moping, mel-
ancholy, or misanthropic temper.
³ An envious and unsocial mind, too proud to give pleasure and too sullen
to receive it, often endeavours to hide its malignity from the world, and from
itself, under the plainness of simple honesty or the dignity of haughty inde-
pendence.
⁴ To claw, in the sense of to scratch, and to ease by scratching, was some-
times used for to soothe, flatter, or curry favour. See vol. ii., page 52, note 11.
⁵ This use of grace in the sense of favour was very common.
⁶ The meaning is, "I would rather be a wild dog-rose in a hedge than a
garden rose of his cherishing." Richardson says that in Devonshire the dog-
rose is called canker-rose.
D. John. I make all use of it, for I use it only. — Who comes here?—

Enter Borachio.

What news, Borachio?

Bora. I came yonder from a great supper: the Prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonato; and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

D. John. Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?

Bora. Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

D. John. Who, the most exquisite Claudio?

Bora. Even he.

D. John. A proper squire! And who, and who? which way looks he?

Bora. Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

D. John. A very forward March-chick! How came you to this?

Bora. Being entertained for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the Prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad conference: I whipt me behind the arras; and there heard it agreed upon, that the Prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtain'd her, give her to Count Claudio.

7 I use nothing else; have no other counsellor.
8 Model is here used in an unusual sense; but Bullokar explains it, "Model, the platforme, or form of any thing."
9 A presumptuous or aspiring youngster; thinking to marry much above his rank. Claudio is regarded as a pushing upstart.
10 Such a perfuming of rooms was often resorted to as a substitute for cleanliness. So in Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy: "The smoke of juniper is in great request with us at Oxford, to sweeten our chambers."
11 Sad, again, for serious, earnest, grave. See page 161, note 17.
12 Arras were the tapestries with which rooms were lined before plastering grew into use; so named from a town in France where they were made,
D. John. Come, come, let us thither: this may prove food to my displeasure. That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way. You are both sure,\textsuperscript{13} and will assist me?

Con. To the death, my lord.

D. John. Let us to the great supper: their cheer is the greater that I am subdued. Would the cook were of my mind! Shall we go prove what's to be done?

Bora. We'll wait upon your lordship. [Exeunt.

\textbf{ACT II.}

\textbf{Scene I.—A Hall in Leonato's House.}

Enter Leonato, Antonio, Hero, Beatrice, and others.

Leon. Was not Count John here at supper?

Ant. I saw him not.

Beat. How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burn'd an hour after.

Hero. He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Beat. He were an excellent man that were made just in the midway between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image, and says nothing; and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

Leon. Then half Signior Benedick's tongue in Count John's mouth, and half Count John's melancholy in Signior Benedick's face, —

Beat. With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world, — if he could get her good-will.

\textsuperscript{18} Sure is still used sometimes in the sense of to be relied upon.
Leon. By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

Ant. In faith, she's too curst.

Beat. Too curst is more than curst: I shall lessen God's sending that way; for it is said, *God sends a curst cow short horns*; but to a cow too curst He sends none.

Leon. So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

Beat. Just, if He send me no husband; for the which blessing I am at Him upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face: I had rather lie in the woollen.¹

Leon. You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

Beat. What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel, and make him my waiting-gentlewoman? He that hath a beard is more than a youth; and he that hath no beard is less than a man: and he that is more than a youth is not for me; and he that is less than a man, I am not for him: therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bear-ward,² and lead his apes into Hell.

Leon. Well, then, go you into Hell?

Beat. No; but to the gate; and there will the Devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and say, *Get you to Heaven, Beatrice, get you to Heaven; here's no place for you maids*: so deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter: for the Heavens,³ he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

¹ Probably meaning, lie between the blankets, without sheets. Beatrice is thinking, apparently, that a beard would make kissing rather uncomfortable. Wearing woollen next the skin was sometimes imposed as a penance. See vol. ii., page 104, note 71.

² Bear-ward is, properly, a keeper of a bear or bears: here it seems to stand for a showman of strange beasts in general, and of monkeys in particular. Beatrice is alluding to certain odd old notions about the future destiny of those who die old maids. See vol. ii., page 174, note 2.

³ "For the Heavens" is probably intended here as a petty oath.
Ant. [To Hero.] Well, niece, I trust you will be ruled by your father.

Beat. Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy, and say, Father, as it please you:—but yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy, and say, Father, as it please me.

Leon. Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

Beat. Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmaster'd with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and, truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

Leon. Daughter, remember what I told you: if the Prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

Beat. The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the Prince be too important,⁴ tell him there is measure⁵ in every thing, and so dance out the answer. For, hear me, Hero: Wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace:⁶ the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure, full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and, with his bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink apace into his grave.

Leon. Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

Beat. I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by daylight.

⁴ Important for importunate. Repeatedly so. See page 83, note 3.

⁵ A measure, in old language, besides its ordinary meaning, signified also a grave, solemn dance with slow and measured steps like the minuet; and therefore is described as "full of state and ancientry."

⁶ The cinque-pace was a dance, the measures whereof were regulated by the number five.
Leon. The revellers are entering, brother: make good room.

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, Balthazar, Don John, Borachio, Margaret, Ursula, and others, masked.

D. Pedro. Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

Hero. So you walk softly, and look sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and especially when I walk away.

D. Pedro. With me in your company?

Hero. I may say so, when I please.

D. Pedro. And when please you to say so?

Hero. When I like your favour; for God defend the lute should be like the case! 7

D. Pedro. My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove. 8

Hero. Why, then your visor should be thatch'd.

D. Pedro. Speak low, if you speak love. [Takes her aside.

Balth. Well, I would you did like me.

Marg. So would not I, for your own sake; for I have many ill qualities.

Balth. Which is one?

Marg. I say my prayers aloud.

Balth. I love you the better: the hearers may cry, Amen.

Marg. God match me with a good dancer!

Balth. Amen.

Marg. And God keep him out of my sight when the dance is done!—Answer, clerk. 9

7 "God forbid that your face should be like your mask."

8 Alluding to the fable of Baucis and Philemon in Ovid, who describes the old couple as living in a thatched cottage: Stupulis et cannis tecta palus-tri; which Golding renders "The roofe thereof was thatched all with straw and fennish reede."

9 The clerk here meant is the clerk of the parish, a part of whose duty was to lead the responses of the congregation in the religious service.
Balth. No more words: the clerk is answered.
Urs. I know you well enough; you are Signior Antonio.
Ant. At a word, I am not.
Urs. I know you by the waggling of your head.
Ant. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.
Urs. You could never do him so ill-well, unless you were the very man. Here's his dry hand up and down: you are he, you are he.
Ant. At a word, I am not.
Urs. Come, come, do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he: graces will appear, and there's an end.
Beat. Will you not tell me who told you so?
Bene. No, you shall pardon me.
Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?
Bene. Not now.
Beat. That I was disdainful, and that I had my good wit out of the Hundred Merry Tales. Well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.
Bene. What's he?
Beat. I am sure you know him well enough.
Bene. Not I, believe me.
Beat. Did he never make you laugh?
Bene. I pray you, what is he?
Beat. Why, he is the Prince's jester: a very dull Fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders: none but

10 This phrase seems to mean exactly or precisely. See vol. i., page 184, note 4.
11 This was the term for a jest-book in Shakespeare's time, from a popular collection of that name, about which the commentators were much puzzled, until a large fragment was discovered in 1815, by the Rev. J. Conybeare, Professor of Poetry in Oxford. It was printed by Rastell, and therefore must have been published previous to 1533.
12 Shakespeare has impossible repeatedly in the exact sense of incredible. Also, once at least, impossibility for incredibility. See page 43, note 27.— "Only his gift" means his only gift.
libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in
his wit, but in his villainy; for he both pleases men and
angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him.
I am sure he is in the fleet: I would he had boarded
me.\textsuperscript{13}

\textit{Bene.} When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what
you say.

\textit{Beat.} Do, do: he'll but break a comparison or two on
me; which, peradventure, not mark'd, or not laugh'd at,
strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge'
wing saved, for the Fool will eat no supper that night. \textit{[Music
within.]} We must follow the leaders.

\textit{Bene.} In every good thing.

\textit{Beat.} Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the
next turning. \textit{[Dance. Then exequunt all but Don John,
Borachio, and Claudio.}

\textit{D. John.} Sure my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath
withdrawn her father to break with him about it. The ladies
follow her, and but one visor remains.

\textit{Bora.} And that is Claudio: I know him by his bearing.

\textit{D. John.} Are not you Signior Benedick?

\textit{Claud.} You know me well; I am he.

\textit{D. John.} Signior, you are very near my brother in his
love: he is enamour'd on Hero. I pray you, dissuade him
from her, she is no equal for his birth: you may do the part
of an honest man in it.

\textit{Claud.} How know you he loves her?

\textit{D. John.} I heard him swear his affection.

\textit{Bora.} So did I too; and he swore he would marry her
to-night.

\textsuperscript{18} To \textit{board} sometimes meant to \textit{address} or to \textit{accoast}. But the word \textit{flee}
shows that Beatrice has an eye to the meaning of \textit{board} as a naval term.
And I suppose we all know what it is to board an enemy's ship in a sea-
SCENE I. MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING. 177

D. John. Come, let us to the banquet.

[Exeunt Don John and Borachio.

Claud. Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.
'Tis certain so; the Prince woos for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things
Save in the office and affairs of love:
Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues;
Let every eye negotiate for itself,
And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch,
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.15
This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not. Farewell, then, Hero!

Re-enter Benedick.

Bene. Count Claudio?

Claud. Yea, the same.

Bene. Come, will you go with me?

Claud. Whither?

Bene. Even to the next willow, about your own business,
count. What fashion will you wear the garland of? about
your neck, like an usurer's chain?16 or under your arm, like
a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the
Prince hath got your Hero.

Claud. I wish him joy of her.

Bene. Why, that's spoken like an honest drover: so they
sell bullocks. But did you think the Prince would have served
you thus?

Claud. I pray you, leave me.

14 Let, which occurs in the next line, is understood here.
15 Blood was very often put for passion or impulse.
16 Chains of gold were in Shakespeare's time worn by wealthy citizens
and others, in the same manner as they are now on public occasions by the
aldermen of London. Usury was then a common topic of invective.
Bene. Ho! now you strike like the blind man: 'twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

Claud. If it will not be, I'll leave you. [Exit.

Bene. Alas, poor hurt fowl! now will he creep into sedges. But, that my Lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The Prince's Fool! Ha! it may be I go under that title because I am merry. Yea, but so I am apt to do myself wrong.—I am not so reputed: it is the base, though bitter, disposition of Beatrice that puts the world into her person, and so gives me out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

Re-enter Don Pedro.

D. Pedro. Now, signior, where's the count? did you see him?

Bene. Troth, my lord, I have played the part of Lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren: I told him, and I think I told him true, that your Grace had got the good-will of his young lady; and I offered him my company to a willow-tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipp'd.

D. Pedro. To be whipp'd! What's his fault?

Bene. The flat transgression of a school-boy, who, being

17 Though, if the text be right, would seem to be used here in the sense of because or since. And so the Poet has it repeatedly; and sometimes it renders his meaning very obscure to us. See vol. ii., page 31, note 22.

18 That is, fathers her own thoughts upon the world, and then quotes the world as her authority for them. A common trick of petty spite.

19 A most expressive image of dismal loneliness. A warren was a place for keeping wild animals, and secured by royal grant against all intruders, for the owner's exclusive sport: so that the special duty of the keeper of it was to maintain an utter solitude about himself and his lodging.

20 A garland of willow was the common badge, at least in poetry, of forsaken lovers. So in poor Barbara's song, Othello, iv. 3: "Sing all a green willow must be my garland." See, also, vol. iii., page 210, note 3.
overjoyed with finding a bird's-nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

_D. Pedro._ Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

_Bene._ Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stol'n his bird's-nest.

_D. Pedro._ I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

_Bene._ If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

_D. Pedro._ The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you: the gentleman that danced with her told her she is much wrong'd by you.

_Bene._ O, she misused me past the endurance of a block! an oak but with one green leaf on it would have answered her; my very visor began to assume life and scold with her. She told me—not thinking I had been myself—that I was the Prince's jester, and that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible conveyance, upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks poniards, and every word stabs: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect to the north star. I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgress'd: she would have made Hercules have turn'd spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her: you shall find her the infernal Até in her good apparel.

---

21 *Impossible,* again, as before explained. See page 175, note 12.—*Conveyance* has the sense, here, of *swiftness* or *dexterity.* The word was used technically in reference to feats of jugglery and legerdemain.

22 Até was the daughter of Jupiter, and the goddess of mischief and dis-
would to God some scholar would conjure her; for certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in Hell as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follow her.

D. Pedro. Look, here she comes.

Re-enter Claudio, Beatrice, Hero, and Leonato.

Bene. Will your Grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes that you can devise to send me on; I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the farthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair of the great Cham's beard; do you any embassage to the Pig-mies; rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy. You have no employment for me?

D. Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Bene. O God, sir, here's a dish I love not: I cannot endure my Lady Tongue.

[Exit.

D. Pedro. Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick.

Beat. Indeed, my lord, he lent it me awhile; and I gave him use for it,—a double heart for his single one: marry, once before he won it of me with false dice, therefore your Grace may well say I have lost it.

cord. The words good apparel look as if the Poet might have been thinking of her as one of the Furies, whom the ancient poets and painters were wont to represent in rags. For turn'd spit, see vol. i., page 87, note 9.

23 How difficult this had been, may be guessed from Butler's account of that distinguished John:

While like the mighty Prester John,  
Whose person none dares look upon,  
But is preserved in close disguise  
From being made cheap to vulgar eyes.

24 Use in the mercantile sense, interest. See vol. iii., page 129, note 7.
D. Pedro. You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

Beat. So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

D. Pedro. Why, how now, count! wherefore are you sad?

Claud. Not sad, my lord.

D. Pedro. How then? sick?

Claud. Neither, my lord.

Beat. The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count,—civil as an orange,\textsuperscript{25} and something of that jealous complexion.

D. Pedro. I'faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true;—though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit\textsuperscript{26} is false. — Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won; I have broke with her father, and his good-will obtained: name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

Leon. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his Grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it!

Beat. Speak, count, 'tis your cue.

Claud. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much. —Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you, and dote upon the exchange.

Beat. Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

\textsuperscript{25} A quibble, probably. At that time, England, it seems, had her oranges chiefly from Seville, in Spain; and this name was pronounced the same as civil. Yellow is, time out of mind, the colour of jealousy. Staunton, however, thinks the allusion is to the sour or bitter taste, and not to the yellow colour, of the orange. Not likely, I think.

\textsuperscript{26} Conceit, as usual, for conception, idea, or thought. The word and its cognates always had a good sense. See vol. iii., page 117, note 21.
D. Pedro. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

Beat. Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

Claud. And so she doth, cousin.

Beat. Good Lord, for alliance!—Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sunburn'd; I may sit in a corner, and cry Heigh-ho for a husband!

D. Pedro. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

27 The meaning seems to be, "Good Lord, how many alliances are forming!" or, "How matrimony prospers!"

28 As a nun entering a cloister was said to give up the world, or to forsake the world, so, on the other hand, going to the world, and tying one's self to the world, were common expressions for entering upon the cares and duties of married life. The phrase in the text is used repeatedly by Shakespeare in that sense. See page 25, note 3.

29 Upon this passage, the Rev. Joseph Hunter, in his New Illustrations of Shakespeare, makes a very learned and elaborate comment. It appears that "to be sunburned," "to be in the sun," and "to be in the warm sun," were phrases in common use for being without a home, in the full English sense of the term; that is, without the shelter and protection of household kindred and domestic ties; left alone in the world, and so exposed to its social inclemencies. And the phrases seem to have grown into use from a passage in the 21st Psalm, which, in the old translation, as we have it in the Psalter, reads thus: "The Lord himself is thy keeper; the Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand; so that the Sun shall not burn thee by day, neither the Moon by night." The authorized version gives it as follows: "The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand: the Sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the Moon by night." This Psalm, in the older version, formed part of the "Office for the Churching of women," and thus its benedicitions became familiarly associated with the occasions of honourable motherhood. So that, as Mr. Hunter says, "the matron, 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, was spoken of as one 'still left exposed to the burning of the sun.'" Perhaps I should add, that the phrases came to have a much wider application. So, in King Lear, ii. 2, when the old King has been turned off by one of his daughters, and is seeking refuge with the other, Kent says to himself, "Good King, that must approve the common saw, Thou out of Heaven's benediction comest to the warm sun." And so Wither,
Beat. I would rather have one of your father's getting. Hath your Grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

D. Pedro. Will you have me, lady?

Beat. No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days: your Grace is too costly to wear every day. But, I beseech your Grace, pardon me: I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.

D. Pedro. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

Beat. No, sure, my lord, my mother cried; but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born.—Cousins, God give you joy!

Leon. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

Beat. I cry you mercy, uncle.—By your Grace's pardon.

[Exit.

D. Pedro. By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady.

Leon. There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord: she is never sad but when she sleeps; and not ever\textsuperscript{30} sad then; for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dream'd of unhappiness,\textsuperscript{31} and waked herself with laughing.

D. Pedro. She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

Leon. O, by no means: she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

in his \textit{Abuses Stript and Whipt}, after speaking of having left the home of his childhood in Hampshire and gone alone to London, adds,

\begin{quote}
What do I mean, to run
\textit{Out of God's blessing thus into the sun!}
What comfort or what goodness here can I
Expect among these Anthropophagi?
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{30} Not ever here means not always. So in \textit{Henry VIII.}, v. x: "And not ever the justice and the truth o' the question carries the due o' the verdict with it."

\textsuperscript{31} Unhappiness here is mischief. So unhappy was often used for mischievous. See page 107, note 8. Also vol. ii., page 76, note 2.
D. Pedro. She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

Leon. O Lord, my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad!

D. Pedro. Count Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

Claud. To-morrow, my lord: time goes on crutches till love have all his rites.

Leon. Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night; and a time too brief, too, to have all things answer my mind.

D. Pedro. Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing: but, I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. I will, in the interim, undertake one of Hercules' labours; which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection the one with the other. I would fain have it a match; and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

Leon. My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

Claud. And I, my lord.

D. Pedro. And you too, gentle Hero?

Hero. I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

D. Pedro. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him. He is of a noble strain, of approved valour, and confirm'd honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in

---

32 Old language for "just a seven-night." So in The Merchant, iv. 1: "Nor cut thou less nor more but just a pound of flesh: if thou takest more or less than a just pound," &c. — A seven-night is a week.

33 Strain is stock, lineage, or descent; often used thus by the Poet. So in Henry V., ii. 1: "And he is bred out of that bloody strain that haunted us in our familiar paths." The word is from the Anglo-Saxon strynd, and is sometimes spelt stren.
love with Benedick;—and I, with your two helps, will so practise on Benedick, that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer: his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. — Another Room in Leonato’s House.

Enter Don John and Borachio.

D. John. It is so; the Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

Bora. Yea, my lord; but I can cross it.

D. John. Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinable¹ to me: I am sick in displeasure to him; and whatsoever comes athwart his affection ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

Bora. Not honestly, my lord; but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

D. John. Show me briefly how.

Bora. I think I told your lordship, a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting-gentlewoman to Hero.


Bora. I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady’s chamber-window.

D. John. What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

Bora. The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the Prince your brother; spare not to tell him that he hath

¹ Medicinable for medicinal: the passive form with the active sense; according to the usage so frequent in several classes of words in Shakespeare’s time. See page 15, note 15.
wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio (whose estimation do you mightily hold up) to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

_D. John._ What proof shall I make of that?

_Bora._ Proof enough to misuse the Prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato. Look you for any other issue?

_D. John._ Only to despite them, I will endeavour any thing.

_Bora._ Go, then; find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the Count Claudio alone: tell them that you know that Hero loves me; intend a kind of zeal both to the Prince and Claudio, as,—in love of your brother’s honour, who hath made this match, and his friend’s reputation, who is thus like to be cozen’d with the semblance of a maid,—that you have discover’d thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial; offer them instances; which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber-window; hear me call Margaret, Hero; hear Margaret term me Claudio; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding: for in the mean time I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent; and there shall appear such seeming truth of her disloyalty, that jealousy shall be call’d assurance, and all the preparation overthrown.

_D. John._ Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice. Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

2 _Intend_ for _pretend_; the two words being used interchangeably in the Poet’s time. So in Richard III., iii. 5: “Tremble and start at wagging of a straw, intending deep suspicion.” See, also, vol. ii., page 209, note 4.

3 Here we are to understand, no doubt, that Borachio intends to have a prearrangement with Margaret, whereby they are to conduct their interview under the names of Claudio and Hero, though, of course, Margaret is to be kept ignorant of the purpose thereof. See Critical Notes,
Bora. Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

D. John. I will presently go learn their day of marriage.

[Exeunt.

Scene III. — Leonato's Garden.

Enter Benedick and a Boy.

Bene. Boy,—

Boy. Signior?

Bene. In my chamber-window lies a book: bring it hither to me in the orchard.

Boy. I am here already, sir.

Bene. I know that; but I would have thee hence, and here again. [Exit Boy.]—I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laugh'd at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love: and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known when he would have walk'd ten mile a-foot to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. (He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now he is turn'd orthographer; his words are a very fantastical banquet,—just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair,—yet I am well; another is wise,—yet I am well; another virtuous,—yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace.
Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God.² Ha, the Prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour.

[Withdraws into the arbour.]

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato, followed by Balthazar and Musicians.

D. Pedro. Come, shall we hear this music?

Claud. Yea, my good lord. How still the evening is, As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!

D. Pedro. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

Claud. O, very well, my lord: the music ended, We'll fit the hid fox with a pennyworth.

D. Pedro. Come, Balthazar, we'll hear that song again.

Balth. O, good my lord, tax not so bad a voice To slander music any more than once.

D. Pedro. It is the witness still of excellency To put a strange face on his own perfection. I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.

Balth. Because you talk of wooing, I will sing; Since many a wooer doth commence his suit

¹ This seems to us a strange use of cheapen; but it is in strict accordance with the old sense of the word, which was to bargain for or purchase. And it appears that the usage was not entirely extinct in Johnson's time; for we have the following instance in a letter published in the Rambler: "She that has once demanded a settlement has allowed the importance of fortune; and when she cannot show pecuniary merit, why should she think her cheapener obliged to purchase?"

² Disguises of false hair and of dyed hair were quite common, especially among the ladies, in Shakespeare's time; scarce any of them being so richly dowered with other gifts as to be content with the hair which it had pleased Nature to bestow. The Poet has several passages going to show that this custom was not much in favour with him.
To her he thinks not worthy; yet he wooes,
Yet will he swear he loves.

_D. Pedro._ Nay, pray thee, come;
Or, if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.

_Balth._ Note this before my notes,—
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

_D. Pedro._ Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks;
Note notes, forsooth, and nothing!\(^3\) [Music.

_Bene._ [Aside.] Now, Divine air! now is his soul ravished!
Is it not strange that sheeps' guts\(^4\) should hale souls out of
men's bodies?\(^5\) Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

**Balthazar sings.**

_Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever;
One foot in sea, and one on shore;
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so,
But let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny;
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no mo
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
_Since Summer first was leavy.
Then sigh not so, &c._

_D. Pedro._ By my troth, a good song.

\(^3\) It would seem, from this, that *nothing* was sounded like *noting.*

\(^4\) An odd, perhaps intended as a characteristic, expression for *catgut.*

\(^5\) So, *in Twelfth Night,* ii. 3, music is humorously described as able to
"draw three souls out of one weaver."
Balth. And an ill singer, my lord.

D. Pedro. Ha, no, no, faith; thou singest well enough for a shift.

Bene. [Aside.] An he had been a dog that should have howl'd thus, they would have hang'd him: and I pray God his bad voice bode no mischief! I had as lief have heard the night-raven,⁶ come what plague could have come after it.

D. Pedro. Yea, marry, dost thou hear, Balthazar? I pray thee, get us some excellent music; for to-morrow night we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber-window.

Balth. The best I can, my lord.

D. Pedro. Do so: farewell. [Exeunt Balthazar and Musicians.]—Come hither, Leonato. What was it you told me of to-day, that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

Claud. [Aside to Don Pedro.] O, ay: stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits.⁷—[Aloud.] I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

Leon. No, nor I neither; but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

Bene. [Aside.] Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

Leon. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think

---

⁶ The terms night-raven and night-crow were used as synonymous by the old poets, and both were applied to the night-heron, whose singing was thought ill-omened. So in 3 Henry VI., v. 6: "The night-crow cried, aboding luckless time." And Milton, in L'Allegro: "And the night-raven sings."

⁷ An allusion to the stalking-horse, whereby the fowler ancienly screened himself from the sight of the game. It is thus described in John Gee's New Shreds of the Old Snare: "Methinks I behold the cunning fowler, such as I have known in the fen-countries and elsewhere, that do shoot at woodcocks, snipes, and wild fowl, by sneaking behind a painted cloth which they carry before them, having pictured on it the shape of a horse; which while the silly fowl gazeth on, it is knocked down with hail-shot, and so put into the fowler's budget."
of it: but that she loves him with an enraged affection,—it is past the infinite of thought.

_D. Pedro._ May be she doth but counterfeit.

_Claud._ Faith, like enough.

_Leon._ O God, counterfeit! There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it.

_D. Pedro._ Why, what effects of passion shows she?

_Claud._ [Aside.] Bait the hook well; this fish will bite.

_Leon._ What effects, my lord! She will sit you,—you heard my daughter tell you how.

_Claud._ She did, indeed.

_D. Pedro._ How, how, I pray you? You amaze me: I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

_Leon._ I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

_Bene._ [Aside.] I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence.

_Claud._ [Aside.] He hath ta'en the infection: hold it up.

_D. Pedro._ Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

_Leon._ No; and swears she never will: that's her torment.

_Claud._ 'Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says: _Shall I, says she, that have so oft encounter'd him with scorn, write to him that I love him?_

_Leon._ This says she now when she is beginning to write to him; for she'll be up twenty times a night; and there will she sit in her smock till she have writ a sheet of paper. My daughter tells us all.

_Claud._ Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

_Leon._ O, when she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice between the sheet?
Claud. That.

Leon. O, she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence;\(^8\) rail'd at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her: *I measure him*, says she, *by my own spirit; for I should flout him, if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should.*

Claud. Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, cries, *O sweet Benedick!* *God give me patience!*

Leon. She doth indeed; my daughter says so: and the ecstasy hath so much overborne her, that my daughter is sometime afeared she will do a desperate outrage to herself: it is very true.

D. Pedro. It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

Claud. To what end? He would but make a sport of it, and torment the poor lady worse.

D. Pedro. An he should, it were an alms-deed to hang him. She's an excellent-sweet lady; and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

Claud. And she is exceeding wise.

D. Pedro. In every thing but in loving Benedick.

Leon. O, my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one that blood hath the victory. I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

D. Pedro. I would she had bestowed this dotage on me: I would have daff'd\(^9\) all other respects,\(^10\) and made her half myself. I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what he will say.

Leon. Were it good, think you?

---

\(^8\) The *silver* halfpence then in use were very minute pieces.

\(^9\) *Daff* is another form of *doff*, meaning *do off*, or *put aside*.

\(^10\) *Respect* for consideration or regard. Commonly so in Shakespeare.
Claud. Hero thinks surely she will die; for she says she will die, if he love her not; and she will die, ere she make her love known; and she will die, if he woo her, rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

D. Pedro. She doth well: if she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible spirit.

Claud. He is a very proper man.

D. Pedro. He hath indeed a good outward happiness.

Claud. 'Fore God, and, in my mind, very wise.

D. Pedro. He doth indeed show some sparks that are like wit.

Leon. And I take him to be valiant.

D. Pedro. As Hector, I assure you: and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise; for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most Christian-like fear.

Leon. If he do fear God, 'a must necessarily keep the peace: if he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

D. Pedro. And so will he do; for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick, and tell him of her love?

Claud. Never tell him, my lord: let her wear it out with good counsel.

Leon. Nay, that's impossible: she may wear her heart out first.

D. Pedro. Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter: let it cool the while. I love Benedick well; and I could

11 Contemptible for contemptuous. Another instance of the indiscriminate use of active and passive forms. See page 185, note 1.

12 Here, as usual in Shakespeare, proper is handsome or fine-appearing. See vol. iii., page 124, note 16.
wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

Leon. My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

Claud. [Aside.] If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation.

D. Pedro. [Aside.] Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter: that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb-show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner.

[Exeunt Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato.

Benedick advances from the arbour.

Bene. This can be no trick: the conference was sadly\(^{13}\) borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry: I must not seem proud: happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair, — 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness; and virtuous, — 'tis so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving me, — by my troth, it is no addition to her wit,\(^{14}\) — nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit

---

\(^{13}\) Sadly for seriously or in earnest; just as sad twice before.

\(^{14}\) A good instance of wisdom and wit used synonomously. So too a little before, when Claudio says Benedick is "very wise," and Don Pedro replies, "He doth indeed show some sparks that are like wit." — "Cannot reprove" is cannot refute or disprove. So in 2 Henry VI., iii. 1: "Reprove my allegation, if you can."
broken on me, because I have rail'd so long against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? a man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences, and these paper-bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? no, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day, she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

Enter Beatrice.

Beat. Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

Bene. Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

Beat. I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me: if it had been painful, I would not have come.

Bene. You take pleasure, then, in the message?

Beat. Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and not choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior? fare you well. [Exit.

Bene. Ha! Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner: there's a double meaning in that. I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me: that's as much as to say, Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks. If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I will go get her picture. [Exit.

15 "Take pity on her," we should say. See page 78, note 12.
ACT III.

SCENE I. — LEONATO'S Garden.

Enter Hero, Margaret, and Ursula.

**Hero.** Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour; There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice Proposing with the Prince and Claudio: Whisper her ear, and tell her, I and Ursula Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse Is all of her; say that thou overheard'st us; And bid her steal into the pleached bower, Where honeysuckles, ripen'd by the sun, Forbid the sun to enter; — like favourites, Made proud by princes, that advance their pride Against that power that bred it: — there will she hide her, To listen our propose. This is thy office: Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

**Marg.** I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently.

[Exit.

**Hero.** Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come, As we do trace this alley up and down, Our talk must only be of Benedick. When I do name him, let it be thy part To praise him more than ever man did merit: My talk to thee must be, how Benedick

---

1 *Proposing* is talking or conversing; from the French *propos*. A little after, we have the noun, “to listen our *propose,*” in the same sense. — This scene, as also the preceding, takes place in “Leonato's garden”; yet here, as before, it is said, in the text, to be in the orchard. Which shows that *orchard* and *garden* were synonymous. The Poet often has *orchard so.*
Is sick in love with Beatrice. Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay. Now begin;

Enter Beatrice, behind.

For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

Urs. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait:
So angle we for Beatrice; who even now
Is couchèd in the woodbine coverture.
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

Hero. Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false-sweet bait that we lay for it.

[They advance to the bower.

No, truly, Ursula, she's too disdainful;
I know her spirits are as coy and wild
As haggard's² of the rock.

Urs. But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

Hero. So says the Prince and my new-trothèd lord.

Urs. And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?

Hero. They did entreat me to acquaint her of it;
But I persuaded them, if they loved Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

Urs. Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full, as fortunate a bed
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

Hero. O god of love! I know he doth deserve

² The haggard is a wild hawk. Latham, in his Book of Falconry, says,
"Such is the greatness of her spirit, she will not admit of any society until
such a time as nature worketh."
As much as may be yielded to a man:
But Nature never framed a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice;
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising what they look on; and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak: she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endear'd.

_Urs._
Sure, I think so;
And therefore certainly it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

_Hero._ Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely-featured,
But she would spell him backward: if fair-faced,
She'd swear the gentleman should be her sister;
If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antic,
Made a foul blot; if tall, a lance ill-headed;
If low, an agate very vilely cut;
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;
If silent, why, a block mov'd with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out;
And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

_Urs._ Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

_Hero._ No, nor to be so odd, and from all fashions,

---

8 That is, _misinterpret_ him. An allusion to the practice of witches in uttering prayers. In like sort, we often say of a man who refuses to take things in their plain natural meaning, as if he were on the lookout for some cheat, "He reads every thing backwards."

4 A _black_ man here means a man with a dark or thick beard, which is the _blot_ in nature's drawing. The _antic_ was the fool or buffoon of the old farces.

6 An _agate_ is often used metaphorically for a very diminutive person, in allusion to the figures cut in agate for rings. Queen Mab is described "in shape no bigger than an _agate stone_ on the forefinger of an alderman."
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable:
But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She'd mock me into air; O, she would laugh me
Out of myself, press me to death with wit!
Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly:
It were a better death than die with mocks,
Which is as bad as die with tickling. 

_Urs._ Yet tell her of it: hear what she will say.

_Hero._ No; rather I will go to Benedick,
And counsel him to fight against his passion.
And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with: one doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

_Urs._ O, do not do your cousin such a wrong!
She cannot be so much without true judgment
(Having so swift and excellent a wit
As she is prized to have) as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.

_Hero._ He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

_Urs._ I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy: Signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument, and valour,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.

_Hero._ Indeed, he hath an excellent-good name.

_Urs._ His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.
When are you married, madam?

---

6 The allusion is to an ancient punishment inflicted on those who refused
to plead an indictment. If they continued silent, they were pressed to
death by heavy weights laid on their stomach.

7 This word is intended to be pronounced as a trisyllable; it was some-
times written tickeling.

8 Argument, here, seems to mean discourse or conversation.
Hero. Why, every day to-morrow.\(^9\) Come, go in:
I'll show thee some attires; and have thy counsel
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

Urs. [Aside.] She's limed,\(^{10}\) I warrant you: we've caught her, madam.

Hero. [Aside.] If it prove so, then loving goes by haps:
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.

[Exeunt Hero and Ursula.]

Beatrice advances.

Beat. What fire is in mine ears?\(^{11}\) Can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand: \(^{12}\)
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band;
For others say, thou dost deserve, and I
Believe it better than reportingly.

[Exit.]

---

\(^9\) The best explanation of this is Staunton's, that Hero plays upon the form of the question, meaning that she is a married woman to-morrow, and every day after that.

\(^{10}\) *Limed* is *ensnared* or *caught*, as with *bird-lime*, which was at first a sticky substance spread where birds were apt to light; but the word came to be used of any trap or snare. See page 82, note \(\text{II}\).

\(^{11}\) Alluding to the proverbial saying, which is as old as Pliny's time, "That when our ears do glow and tingle, some there be that in our absence do talke of us."

\(^{12}\) This image is taken from falconry. She has been charged with being as wild as *haggards of the rock*; she therefore says that, **and as her heart is, she will tame it to the hand.**
SCENE II. — A Room in Leonato's House.

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, and Leonato.

D. Pedro. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon.

Claud. I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

D. Pedro. Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage, as to show a child his new coat, and forbid him to wear it. I will only be bold with Benedick for his company; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth: he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little hangman 1 dare not shoot at him; he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper,—for what his heart thinks, his tongue speaks.

Bene. Gallants, I am not as I have been.

Leon. So say I: methinks you are sadder.

Claud. I hope he be in love.

D. Pedro. Hang him, truant! there's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touched with love: if he be sad, he wants money.

Bene. I have the toothache. 2

D. Pedro. Draw it.

Bene. Hang it!

Claud. You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards. 3

1 Hangman is executioner; here meaning the slayer of hearts.
2 This is well illustrated by a passage in Fletcher's False One, ii. 3:

O, this sounds mangily,
Poorly, and scurvily, in a soldier's mouth!
You had best be troubled with the tooth-ache too,
For lovers ever are, and let your nose drop,
That your celestial beauty may befriend you.

3 Alluding, apparently, to the old custom of drawing and quartering criminals after hanging them.
D. Pedro. What! sigh for the toothache?
Leon. Where is but a humour or a worm?⁴
Bene. Well, every one can master a grief but he that has it.
Claud. Yet say I he is in love.
D. Pedro. There is no appearance of fancy⁵ in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises; as, to be a Dutchman to-day, a Frenchman to-morrow; or in the shape of two countries at once, as, a German from the waist downward, all slops,⁶ and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet. Unless he have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is.
Claud. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs. He brushes his hat o' mornings: what should that bode?
D. Pedro. Hath any man seen him at the barber's?
Claud. No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him; and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuff'd tennis-balls.
Leon. Indeed, he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.
D. Pedro. Nay, he rubs himself with civet:⁷ can you smell him out by that?
Claud. That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in love.
D. Pedro. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

⁴ The ulcer at the root of a diseased tooth was thought to be a worm, which it sometimes resembles.
⁵ A play upon the word fancy, which Shakespeare uses for love, as well as for humour, caprice, or affectation.
⁶ Large, loose breeches or trousers. Hence a slop-seller for one who furnishes seamen, &c., with clothes. Our word slop-shop is no doubt a relic of the same usage. See vol. ii., page 58, note 5.
⁷ Civet is the old name of the perfume, musk, derived from an animal called civet-cat. So, in As You Like It, Touchstone calls perfume "the flux of a cat."
CLAUD. And when was he wont to wash his face?

D. PEDRO. Yea, or to paint himself? for the which I hear what they say of him.

CLAUD. Nay, but his jesting spirit; which is now crept into a lute-string, and new-govern'd by stops.

D. PEDRO. Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him. Conclude, conclude he is in love.

CLAUD. Nay, but I know who loves him.

D. PEDRO. That would I know too: I warrant, one that knows him not.

CLAUD. Yes, and his ill conditions; and, in despite of all, dies for him.

D. PEDRO. She shall be buried with her face upwards.

BENE. Yet is this no charm for the toothache. — Old signior, walk aside with me: I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear. [Exeunt Benedick and Leonato.

D. PEDRO. For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

CLAUD. 'Tis even so. Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice; and then the two bears will not bite one another when they meet.

Enter Don John.

D. JOHN. My lord and brother, God save you
D. PEDRO. Good den, brother.
D. JOHN. If your leisure served, I would speak with you.
D. PEDRO. In private?

8 Love-songs, in Shakespeare's time, were sung to the lute. So in 1 Henry IV.: "As melancholy as an old lion, or a lover's lute." — The stops of a lute or guitar are the ridges across the finger-board where the strings are pressed down. Hamlet calls them frets. There is a quibble on stops.

9 Condition was continually used for temper or disposition.

10 Hobby-horse was sometimes used for a silly fellow.

11 A colloquial abridgment of good even; also used for good day.
D. John. If it please you: yet Count Claudio may hear; for what I would speak of concerns him.

D. Pedro. What's the matter?

D. John. [To Claudio.] Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

D. Pedro. You know he does.

D. John. I know not that, when he knows what I know.

Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.

D. John. You may think I love you not: let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest. For my brother, I think he holds you well; and in dearness of heart hath holp to effect your ensuing marriage,—surely suit ill spent and labour ill bestowed.

D. Pedro. Why, what's the matter?

D. John. I came hither to tell you; and, circumstances shorten'd, (for she hath been too long a-talking of,) the lady is disloyal.

Claud. Who, Hero?

D. John. Even she; Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

Claud. Disloyal!

D. John. The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say she were worse: think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber-window enter'd, even the night before her wedding-day: if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be so?

D. Pedro. I will not think it.

D. John. If you dare not trust that you see, confess not

---

12 To aim is to guess; often so used. See vol. i., page 201, note 2.

13 Holp or holpen is the old preterite of help; occurring often in the Psalter.
that you know: if you will follow me, I will show you enough; and, when you have seen more, and heard more, proceed accordingly.

*Claud.* If I see any thing to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow, in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

*D. Pedro.* And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

*D. John.* I will disparage her no further till you are my witnesses: bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

*D. Pedro.* O day untowardly turned!

*Claud.* O mischief strangely thwarting!

*D. John.* O plague right well prevented!

So will you say when you have seen the sequel.  

*[Exeunt.*

Scene III. — A Street.

*Enter Dogberry and Verges, with the Watch.*

*Dog.* Are you good men and true?

*Verg.* Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

*Dog.* Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the Prince's watch.

*Verg.* Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

*Dog.* First, who think you the most desertless man to be constable?

*1 Watch.* Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal; for they can write and read.

*Dog.* Come hither, neighbour Seacoal. God hath bless'd you with a good name: to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.
2 Watch. Both which, master constable,—

Dog. You have: I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern. This is your charge: You shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the Prince's name.

2 Watch. How if 'a will not stand?

Dog. Why, then take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

Verg. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the Prince's subjects.

Dog. True, and they are to meddle with none but the Prince's subjects.—You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and talk is most tolerable and not to be endured.

2 Watch. We will rather sleep than talk: we know what belongs to a watch.

Dog. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only, have a care that your bills\(^1\) be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

2 Watch. How if they will not?

Dog. Why, then let them alone till they are sober: if they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for.

2 Watch. Well, sir.

Dog. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue

---

\(^1\) A sort of halberd, or hatchet with a hooked point, used by watchmen.
of your office, to be no true man;¹ and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

2 Watch. If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

Dog. Truly, by your office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

Verg. You have been always call'd a merciful man, partner.

Dog. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

Verg. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it.

2 Watch. How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

Dog. Why, then depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes will never answer a calf when he bleats.

Verg. 'Tis very true.

Dog. This is the end of the charge: You, constable, are to present the Prince's own person: if you meet the Prince in the night, you may stay him.

Verg. Nay, by'r Lady,² that I think 'a cannot.

Dog. Five shillings to one on't, with any man that knows the statues, he may stay him: marry, not without the Prince be willing; for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

Verg. By'r Lady, I think it be so.

¹ A true man is an honest man: the humour of the passage turns partly on that sense of true.
² By'r Lady is a contraction of "by our Lady," an ancient form of swearing; referring, of course, to the Virgin Mother.
Dog. Ha, ah-ha! — Well, masters, good night: an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own; and good night. — Come, neighbour.

1 Watch. Well, masters, we hear our charge: let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

Dog. One word more, honest neighbours. I pray you, watch about Signior Leonato's door: for, the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night. Adieu: be vigilant, I beseech you. [Execunt Dogberry and Verges.

Enter Borachio and Conrade.

Bora. What, Conrade! —

1 Watch. [Aside.] Peace! stir not.

Bora. Conrade, I say! —

Con. Here, man; I am at thy elbow.

Bora. Mass, and my elbow itch'd; I thought there would a scab follow.

Con. I will owe thee an answer for that: and now forward with thy tale.

Bora. Stand thee close, then, under this pent-house, for it drizzles rain; and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

1 Watch. [Aside.] Some treason, masters: yet stand close.

Bora. Therefore know I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

---

4 Coil is stir, bustle, tumult. See vol. i., page 105, note 8.
5 "By the Mass" was a very common oath; Mass being the old name of the Lord's Supper.
6 A rather curious note of Shakespeare's acquaintance with Italian. Borachio does not mean that he is himself either drunk or a drunkard; he merely refers to the significance of his own name, — a glutton or a wine-bibber. Thus in Florio's Italian Dictionary: "Boraccia, a boracho or bottle made of goat's skin, such as they use in Spain. Boracchiere, to glutonize." Of course there is an implied reference to the proverb, in vino veritas.
SCENE III.  MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.  209

Con.  Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?
Bora.  Thou shouldst rather ask, if it were possible any
villain should be so rich; for, when rich villains have need
of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.
Con.  I wonder at it.
Bora.  That shows thou art unconfirm'd. Thou knowest
that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing
to a man.
Con.  Yes, it is apparel.
Bora.  I mean, the fashion.
Con.  Yes, the fashion is the fashion.
Bora.  Tush! I may as well say the fool's the fool. But
see'st thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?
1 Watch.  [Aside.]  I know that Deformed; 'a has been a
vile thief this seven year; 'a goes up and down like a gentle-
man: I remember his name.
Bora.  Didst thou not hear somebody?
Con.  No; 'twas the vane on the house.
Bora.  See'st thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this
fashion is? how giddily he turns about all the hot bloods
between fourteen and five-and-thirty? sometime fashioning
them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the Reechy painting, some-
time like god Bel's priests in the old church-window, some-
time like the shaven Hercules in the Smirch'd worm-eaten
tapestry, where his codpiece seems as massy as his club?
Con.  All this I see; and I see that the fashion wears out

7 Unpractised in the ways of the world.
8 Reechy is discoloured with smoke. Reeking is still used in a similar sense.
9 Soiled, sullied. Probably only another form of smutched. The word is
used repeatedly by Shakespeare, and is met with in Smollet. Not found
elsewhere, I think. — Here, again, sometime for sometimes, the two being then
used interchangeably. — Scripture stories, also classical fables and legends
were wont to be pictured, by embroidery or otherwise, on the tapestries or
hangings with which rooms were lined; and the Poet has many allusions to
the custom. See page 170, note 12.
more apparel than the man. But art not thou thyself giddy
with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale
into telling me of the fashion?

_Bora._ Not so, neither: but know that I have to-night
wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero’s gentlewoman, by the name
of Hero: she leans me out at her mistress’ chamber-window,
bids me a thousand times good-night,—I tell this tale vilely:
—I should first tell thee how the Prince, Claudio, and my
master, planted and placed and possessed by my master Don
John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

_Con._ And thought they Margaret was Hero?

_Bora._ Two of them did, the Prince and Claudio; but the
devil my master knew she was Margaret; and partly by his
oaths, which first possess’d them, partly by the dark night,
which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villainy, which
did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went
Claudio enraged; swore he would meet her, as he was ap-
pointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the
whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o’er night,
and send her home again without a husband.

_1 Watch._ We charge you, in the Prince’s name, stand!

_2 Watch._ Call up the right master constable. We have
here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever
was known in the commonwealth.

_1 Watch._ And one Deformed is one of them: I know
him; ’a wears a lock.10

_Con._ Masters, masters,—

_2 Watch._ You’ll be made bring Deformed forth, I war-
rant you.

10 A lock of hair, called “a love-lock,” was often worn by the gay young
gallants of Shakespeare’s time. This ornament and invitation to love was
cherished with great care by the owners, being brought before and tied with
a riband. Prynne, the great Puritan hero, spit some of his bile against this
fashion, in a book on _The Unloveness of Love-locks._
SCENE IV. MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING. 211

Con. Masters,—

1 Watch. Never speak: we charge you let us obey you to go with us.

Bora. We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills.11

Con. A commodity in question,12 I warrant you.—Come, we'll obey you. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV. — A Room in LEONATO'S House.

Enter HERO, MARGARET, and URSULA.

Hero. Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

Urs. I will, lady.

Hero. And bid her come hither.

Urs. Well. [Exit.

Marg. Troth, I think your other rabato1 were better.

Hero. No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

Marg. By my troth, 's not so good; and I warrant your cousin will say so.

Hero. My cousin's a fool, and thou art another: I'll wear none but this.

Marg. I like the new tire2 within excellently, if the hair

11 We have the same conceit in 2 Henry VI., iv. 7: "My lord, when shall we go to Cheapside, and take up commodities upon our bills?" The Poet has several like quibbles upon bills. See vol. ii., page 220, note 16.

12 Question refers to the examination or trial that the speaker expects to undergo, now that he is caught.

1 The rabato was a kind of ruff or collar for the neck, such as were much worn in the Poet's time, and are often seen in the portraits of Queen Elizabeth. Dekker calls them "your stiff-necked rebatoes." The word is from the French rebattre, to beat back; and the thing is said to be so called because put back towards the shoulders. Shakespeare uses rebate, from the same source, and with a similar meaning.

2 Tire is head-dress. So in The Merry Wives of Windsor, iii. 3: "Thou hast the right arched beauty of the brow, that becomes the ship-tire, the
were a thought browner; and your gown's a most rare fashion, i'faith. I saw the Duchess of Milan's gown that they praise so.

_Hero._ O, that exceeds, they say.

_Marg._ By my troth, 's but a night-gown in respect of yours: cloth-o'-gold, and cuts, and laced with silver, set with pearls down sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts round underborne with a bluish tinsel: but for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

_Hero._ God give me joy to wear it! for my heart is exceeding heavy.

_Marg._ Twill be heavier soon by the weight of a man.

_Hero._ Fie upon thee! art not ashamed?

_Marg._ Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think you would have me say, saving your reverence, a husband: an bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend nobody. Is there any harm in the heavier for a husband? None, I think, an it be the right husband and the right wife; otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy: ask my Lady Beatrice else; here she comes.

_Enter Beatrice._

_Hero._ Good morrow, coz.

tire-valiant, or any tire of Venetian admittance." — "A thought browner" is a shade browner.

8 In respect of is here exactly equivalent to in comparison with. Commonly so in the old writers. And so in the 30th Psalm of the Psalter: "Thou hast made my days as it were a span long, and mine age is even as nothing in respect of Thee."

4 That is, with pearls set along down the sleeves. _Side sleeves_ are long, full sleeves. _Side_ is from the Anglo-Saxon _sid_, long, ample. Peele, in his _Old Wives' Tale_, has "side slops," for long trousers. Our word _side_, in its ordinary use, has reference to the length of the thing to which it is applied. — _Round_ is equivalent to roundabout.

6 Quaint is ingenious or elegant; probably from the Latin _comptus._
**Beat.** Good morrow, sweet Hero.

**Hero.** Why, how now! do you speak in the sick tune?

**Beat.** I am out of all other tune, methinks.

**Marg.** Clap us into *Light o' Love*;\(^6\) that goes without a burden: do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

**Beat.** Yea, *Light o' Love*, with your heels! then, if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barns.\(^7\)

**Marg.** O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels.

**Beat.** 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin; 'tis time you were ready.—By my troth, I am exceeding ill: heigh-ho!

**Marg.** For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?

**Beat.** For\(^8\) the letter that begins them all, H.\(^9\)

**Marg.** Well, an you be not turn'd Turk,\(^10\) there's no more sailing by the star.

**Beat.** What means the fool, trow?\(^11\)

**Marg.** Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire!

---

\(^6\) *Light o' Love* is the title of a popular song often mentioned by old writers. The words of it are supposed to be lost. The reason given for "clapping into" it here is, that it "goes without a burden"; there being no one present to sing a burden. And the words, "Do you sing it, and I'll dance it," infer that *Light o' Love* was, strictly, a *ballet*, to be sung and danced. The air or tune was found by Sir John Hawkins in "an ancient manuscript." — The matter of this note is from Chappell's *Popular Music*, &c.

\(^7\) A quibble between *barns*, repositories for corn, and *bairns*, children, formerly pronounced *barns*. So in *The Winter's Tale*, iii. 3: "Mercy on us, a *barn*! a very pretty *barn*!"

\(^8\) Here *for* has the sense of *because of*; but there is a quibble involved between that sense and the sense it bears in the preceding speech. *Because* and *because of* are both among the old senses of *for*, in frequent use.

\(^9\) That is, for an *ache*, or a *pain*, formerly pronounced like the letter *H*. So in *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 7: "I had a wound here that was like a *T*, but now 'tis made an *H*." The word occurs just so again in *The Tempest*.

\(^10\) To turn *Turk* is an old phrase for proving treacherous or unfaithful.

\(^11\) So in *The Merry Wives*: "Who's there, *trow*?" In both places, the phrase is equivalent to *I wonder*; though it commonly meant *think*. 
**Hero.** These gloves the count sent me; they are an excellent perfume.

**Beat.** I am stuff’d, cousin; I cannot smell.

**Marg.** A maid, and stuff’d! there’s goodly catching of cold.

**Beat.** O, God help me! God help me! how long have you profess’d apprehension?  

**Marg.** Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become me rarely?

**Beat.** It is not seen enough; you should wear it in your cap. — By my troth, I am sick.

**Marg.** Get you some of this distill’d Carduus Benedictus, and lay it to your heart: it is the only thing for a qualm.

**Hero.** There thou prickest her with a thistle.

**Beat.** Benedictus! why Benedictus? you have some moral in this Benedictus.

**Marg.** Moral! no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning; I meant, plain holy-thistle. You may think perchance that I think you are in love: nay, by'r Lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list; nor I list not to think what I can; nor, indeed, I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love, or you will be in love, or

---

12 *Apprehension* was sometimes used for *sarcasm*, or for the faculty of saying sarcastic things. So, in *I Henry VI.*, ii. 4, Richard Plantagenet, on being taunted by Somerset as “a yeoman,” replies, “I’ll note you in my book of memory, to scourge you for this *apprehension*.” And so the verb in ii. 1, of this play: “Cousin, you *apprehend* passing shrewdly.”

13 Carduus Benedictus, or the blessed thistle, was one of the ancient herbs medicinal, like those which in our day a much-experienced motherhood has often applied successfully to the “ills that flesh is heir to.” Thus in Cogan’s *Haven of Health*, 1595: “This herb, for the singular virtue it hath, is worthily named Benedictus, or Omnimoreia, that is, a salve for every sore, not known to the physicians of old time, but lately revealed by the special providence of Almighty God.”

14 Some *hidden meaning*, like the *moral* of a fable. So in *Lucrece*: “Nor could she moralize his wanton sight.” And in *The Taming of the Shrew*: “To expound the meaning or moral of his signs and tokens.”
that you can be in love. Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man: he swore he would never marry; and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging: and how you may be converted, I know not; but methinks you look with your eyes as other women do.

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?
Marg. Not a false gallop.

_Re-enter Ursula._

Urs. Madam, withdraw: the Prince, the count, Signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town, are come to fetch you to church.

_Hero._ Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula.

_Exeunt._

_SCENE V._ — _Another Room in Leonato's House._

_Enter Leonato, with Dogberry and Verges._

Leon. What would you with me, honest neighbour?
Dog. Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you that decrees you nearly.
Leon. Brief, I pray you; for you see it is a busy time with me.
Dog. Marry, this it is, sir,—
Verg. Yes, in truth it is, sir.
Leon. What is it, my good friends?
Dog. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.
Verg. Yes, I thank God I am as honest as any man living that is an old man and no honester than I.

15 Grudging in the sense of grumbling, murmuring, or repining.
Dog. Comparisons are odorous: *palabras*,¹ neighbour Verges.

Leon. Neighbours, you are tedious.

Dog. It pleases your Worship to say so, but we are the poor Duke’s officers;² but truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find it in my heart to bestow it all of³ your Worship.

Leon. All thy tediousness on me, ha!

Dog. Yea, an ’twere a thousand pound more than ’tis; for I hear as good exclamation on your Worship as of any man in the city; and, though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

Verg. And so am I.

Leon. I would fain know what you have to say.

Verg. Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your Worship’s presence, have ta’en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

Dog. A good old man, sir; he will be talking: as they say, When the age is in, the wit is out: God help us! it is a world to see!⁴ — Well said, i’faith, neighbour Verges: — well, God’s a good man;⁵ an two men ride of a horse, one

¹ How this Spanish word came into our language is uncertain. It seems to have been current for a time, even among the vulgar, and was probably introduced by sailors, as well as the corrupted form, *palaver*. We have it again in the mouth of Sly the Tinker: “Therefore, *paucas pallabris*; let the world slide: Sessa.”

² This stroke of pleasantry, arising from the transposition of the epithet *poor*, occurs in *Measure for Measure*. Elbow says, “If it please your Honour, I am the *poor Duke’s* constable.”

³ Of and on were used indifferently in such cases.

⁴ This was a common apostrophe of admiration, equivalent to *it is wonderful*, or *it is admirable*. Baret in his *Alvearie*, 1580, explains “It is a world to heare” by “It is a thing worthie the hearing, *audire est opera pretium*.” In Cavendish’s *Life of Wolsey* we have “Is it not a world to consider?”

⁵ This appears to have been a sort of proverbial saying. So in the old Moral-play of *Lusty Juventus*: “He wyl say that *God is a good man*.”
must ride behind. — An honest soul, i'faith, sir; by my troth, he is, as ever broke bread: but God is to be worshipp'd: all men are not alike,— alas, good neighbour!

_Leon._ Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

_Dog._ Gifts that God gives.

_Leon._ I must leave you.

_Dog._ One word, sir: Our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended two auspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your Worship.

_Leon._ Take their examination yourself, and bring it me: I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

_Dog._ It shall be suffigance.

_Leon._ Drink some wine ere you go: fare you well.

_Enter a Messenger._

_Mess._ My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband.

_Leon._ I'll wait upon them: I am ready.

_[Exeunt Leonato and Messenger._

_Dog._ Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacoal; bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the jail: we are now to examination those men.

_Verg._ And we must do it wisely.

_Dog._ We will spare for no wit, I warrant you; here's that [Touching his forehead.] shall drive some of them to a non-come: only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the jail.

_[Exeunt._

Also in _A Hundred Merry Taysl_, 1526: “In the dole tyme there came one which sayde that god was a good man.” And in Burton's _Anatomie of Melancholy_: “God is a good man, and will doe no harme.”

6 A characteristic blunder for _non com._, the old abbreviation for _non compos mentis_. Probably a further blunder was intended; honest Dogberry having confounded _non com._ and _nonplus_. To _nonplus_ a man is to stagger or puzzle him, to _put him to a stand._
ACT IV.

SCENE I. — The Inside of a Church.

Enter Don Pedro, Don John, Leonato, Friar Francis, Claudio, Benedick, Hero, Beatrice, and Attendants.

Leon. Come, Friar Francis, be brief; only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

F. Fran. You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady?

Claud. No.

Leon. To be married to her, friar: you come to marry her.

F. Fran. Lady, you come hither to be married to this count?

Hero. I do.

F. Fran. If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

Claud. Know you any, Hero?

Hero. None, my lord.

F. Fran. Know you any, count?

Leon. I dare make his answer,—none.

Claud. O, what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do, not knowing what they do!

Bene. How now! interjections? Why, then some be of laughing, as, Ha, ha, he!

Claud. Stand thee by, friar.—Father, by your leave: Will you with free and unconstrainèd soul Give me this maid, your daughter?
Leon. As freely, son, as God did give her me.

Claud. And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

D. Pedro. Nothing, unless you render her again.

Claud. Sweet Prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.—

There, Leonato, take her back again:
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.—
Behold how like a maid she blushes here!
O, what authority and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal!
Comes not that blood as modest evidence
To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none:
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed;
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

Leon. What do you mean, my lord?

Claud. Not to be married, not to knit my soul
To an approved wanton.

Leon. Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof,
Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth,
And made defeat of her virginity,—

Claud. I know what you would say: if I have known her,
You'll say she did embrace me as a husband,
And so extenuate the 'forehand sin:
No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large;
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd
 Bashful sincerity and comely love.

Hero. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?

Claud. Out on thy seeming! I will write against it:
You seem'd to me as Dian in her orb,
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals
That rage in savage sensuality.

_Hero._ Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?
_Claud._ Sweet Prince, why speak not you?
_D. Pedro._ What should I speak?
I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about
To link my dear friend to a common stale.

_Leon._ Are these things spoken? or do I but dream?
_D. John._ Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.
_Bene._ This looks not like a nuptial.

_Hero._ True! — O God! ¹

_Claud._ Leonato, stand I here?
Is this the Prince? is this the Prince's brother?
Is this face Hero's? are our eyes our own?

_Leon._ All this is so: but what of this, my lord?

_Claud._ Let me but move one question to your daughter;
And, by that fatherly and kindly ² power
That you have in her, bid her answer truly.

_Leon._ I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.

_Hero._ O, God defend me! how am I beset! —
What kind of catechising call you this?

_Claud._ To make you answer truly to your name.

_Hero._ Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?

_Claud._ Marry, that can Hero;
Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.

¹ Hero's words are in reply to the speech of Don John.
² Shakespeare has _kind_ repeatedly in its primitive meaning, _nature_, and here _kindly_ for _natural_. So in the first scene of this play: "A kind overflow of kindness;" where, of course, a play on the word is intended. See, also, vol. ii., page 143, note 15. And so in _The Faerie Queene_, i. 3, 28:

The earth shall sooner leave her kindly skill
To bring forth fruit, and make eternall dearth,
Than I leave you, my life, yborne of heavenly birth.
What man was he talk'd with you yesternight
Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?
Now, if you are a maid, answer to this.

_Hero._ I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.

_D. Pedro._ Why, then are you no maiden. — Leonato,
I'm sorry you must hear: upon mine honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grieved count
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window;
Who hath indeed, most like a liberal\(^3\) villain,
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret.

_D. John._ Fie, fie! they are not to be named, my lord,
Not to be spoke of;
There is not chastity enough in language,
Without offence to utter them. — Thus, pretty lady,
I'm sorry for thy much misgovernment.

_Claud._ O Hero, what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been placed
About the thoughts and counsels of thy heart!
But fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell,
Thou pure impiety and impious purity!
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious.

_Leon._ Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?

[HERO swoons.

_Beat._ Why, how now, cousin! wherefore sink you down?
_D. John._ Come, let us go. These things, come thus to light,

\(^3\) Liberal here, as in many places of these plays, means _licentious, free beyond honour, or decency._ So in _Othello_, ii. i: "Is he not a most profane and _liberal_ counsellor?"
Smother her spirits up.  

_Bene._ How doth the lady?  

_Beat._ Dead, I think:—help, uncle:—  
_Hero! why, Hero!—uncle!—Signior Benedick!—friar!_  

_Leon._ O Fate, take not away thy heavy hand!  

Death is the fairest cover for her shame  
That may be wish'd for.  

_Beat._ How now, cousin Hero!  

_F. Fran._ Have comfort, lady.  

_Leon._ Dost thou look up?  

_F. Fran._ Yea, wherfore should she not?  

_Leon._ Wherfore! Why, doth not every earthly thing  

Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny  
The story that is printed in her blood?—  

Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes:  
For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,  

Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,  
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,  
Strike at thy life. Grieved I, I had but one?  
Chid I for that at frugal Nature's frame?  
O, one too much by thee! Why had I one?  

Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?  
Why had I not with charitable hand  
Took up a beggar's issue at my gates,  
Who smirched thus and mired with infamy,  

I might have said, _No part of it is mine_;  
_This shame derives itself from unknown loins?_  
But mine, and mine I loved, and mine I praised,  

And mine that I was proud on; mine so much  
That I myself was to myself not mine,

---

4 The story which her _blushes_ discovered to be true.  

5 The _rearward_ here means simply the _rear_. To strike on the _rearward_ of a thing is to _follow_ the thing with a blow.
Valuing of her; why, she — O, she is fall’n
Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again,
And salt too little which may season give
To her foul-tainted flesh!

Bene. Sir, sir, be patient.

For my part, I am so attired in wonder,
I know not what to say.

Beat. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied!

Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

Beat. No, truly, not; although, until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.

Leon. Confirm’d, confirm’d! O, that is stronger made
Which was before barr’d up with ribs of iron!
Would the two Princes lie? and Claudio lie,
Who loved her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash’d it with tears? Hence from her! let her die.

F. Fran. Hear me a little;
For I have only silent been so long,
And given way unto this course of fortune,
By noting of the lady: I have mark’d
A thousand blushing apparitions start
Into her face; a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness beat away those blushes;
And in her eye there hath appear’d a fire,
To burn the errors that these Princes hold
Against her maiden truth. Call me a fool;
Trust not my reading nor my observation,
Which with experimental seal doth warrant
The tenour of my books; trust not my age,
My reverend calling, nor divinity,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here

6 Experimental seal is the pledge, proof, or verification of experience.
Under some blighting error

Leon. Friar, it cannot be.
Thou see'st that all the grace that she hath left
Is, that she will not add to her damnation
A sin of perjury; she not denies it:
Why seek'st thou, then, to cover with excuse
That which appears in proper nakedness?

F. Fran. Lady, what man is he you are accused of?

Hero. They know that do accuse me; I know none:
If I know more of any man alive
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sins lack mercy! — O my father,
Prove you that any man with me conversed
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death!

F. Fran. There is some strange misprision\(^7\) in the
Princes.

Bene. Two of them have the very bent of honour;
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lies in John the bastard,
Whose spirits toil in frame of villainies.

Leon. I know not. If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention,
Nor fortune made such havoc of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall find, awaked in such a cause,
Both strength of limb and policy of mind,

---

\(^7\) *Mispri son* is *mistake* or *misapprehension*. Much used in the Poet's time. *Misprise* occurs repeatedly also in the same sense; as "I am altogether misprised," in *As You Like It*. 
Ability in means and choice of friends,
To quit me of them throughly. 8

*F. Fran.* Pause awhile,
And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the Princes left for dead :
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it that she is dead indeed ;
Maintain a mourning ostentation, 9
And on your family's old monument
Hang mournful epitaphs, and do all rites
That appertain unto a burial.

*Leon.* What shall become 10 of this? what will this do?

*F. Fran.* Marry, this, well carried, shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse; 11 that is some good :
But not for that dream I on this strange course,
But on this travail look for greater birth
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Upon the instant that she was accused,
Shall be lamented, pitied, and excused
Of every hearer: for it so falls out,
That what we have we prize not to the worth
While we enjoy it; but, being lack'd and lost,
Why, then we rack 12 the value, then we find
The virtue that possession would not show us
While it was ours. So will it fare with Claudio .

---

8 To *quit* was in common use for *requite*: the Poet has it repeatedly so.
— *Throughly* and *thoroughly* are but different forms of the same word; also
*through* and *thorough*: as to be *thorough* in a thing is to go *through* it.
Shakespeare uses either form indifferently, to suit the occasions of his verse.

9 *Ostentation* is *show*, *appearance*, or *display*. The Poet has *ostent* in the
same sense. See vol. iii., page 145, note 34.

10 A rather singular use of *become*. Of course it has the sense of *come to
be*, or, simply, *come*.

11 *Remorse* was continually used for *pity*, the *relenings* of compassion.

12 Strain it up to the highest pitch. So in the common phrase, *rack-rent.*
When he shall hear she died upon his words,
Th' idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination;
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
More moving-delicate and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
Than when she lived indeed; then shall he mourn,
(If ever love had interest in his liver,13)
And wish he had not so accused her,—
No, though he thought his accusation true.
Let this be so, and doubt not but success14
Will fashion the event in better shape
Than I can lay it down in likelihood.
But, if all aim at this15 be levell'd false,
The supposition of the lady's death
Will quench the wonder of her infamy:
And, if it sort16 not well, you may conceal her
(As best befits her wounded reputation)
In some reclusive and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

Bene. Signior Leonato, let the friar advise you:
And though you know my inwardness17 and love
Is very much unto the Prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this

13 The liver was formerly thought to be the seat of the passions.
14 Success in the sense of sequel, issue, or result. See page 55, note 25.
15 This evidently refers to what precedes; and the meaning of the passage appears to be, "But if all expectation of, or all planning for, this result be falsely, that is, wrongly, directed." To level is still used for to take aim.
16 To sort was frequently used in the sense of to fall out, happen, or result. The Poet has it repeatedly thus. So again in v. 4, of this play: "I am glad that all things sort so well."
17 Inwardness is here used for intimacy. The Poet has inward, both as noun and adjective, in a similar sense. See vol. ii., page 74, note 8.
As secretly and justly as your soul
Should with your body.

Leon. Being that I flow in grief,
The smallest twine may lead me.\footnote{This is one of Shakespeare's subtle observations upon life. Men, overpowered with distress, eagerly listen to the first offers of relief, close with every scheme, and believe every promise. He that has no longer any confidence in himself is glad to repose his trust in any other that will undertake to guide him. — JOHNSON.}

F. Fran. 'Tis well consented: presently away;
For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.—
Come, lady, die to live: this wedding-day
Perhaps is but prolong'd: have patience and endure.

[Exeunt Friar Francis, Hero, and Leonato.

Bene. Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?
Beat. Yea, and I will weep awhile longer.
Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You have no reason; I do it freely.

Bene. Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wrong'd.

Beat. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me that would right her!

Bene. Is there any way to show such friendship?

Beat. A very even way, but no such friend.

Bene. May a man do it?

Beat. It is a man's office, but not yours.

Bene. I do love nothing in the world so well as you: is not that strange?

Beat. As strange as the thing I know not. It were as possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you: but believe me not; and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin.

Bene. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

Beat. Do not swear by it, and eat it.

Bene. I will swear by it that you love me; and I will make him eat it that says I love not you.
Beat. Will you not eat your word?
Bene. With no sauce that can be devised to it. I protest I love thee.
Beat. Why, then God forgive me!
Bene. What offence, sweet Beatrice?
Beat. You have stayed me in a happy hour: I was about to protest I loved you.
Bene. And do it with all thy heart.
Beat. I love you with so much of my heart, that none is left to protest.
Bene. Come, bid me do any thing for thee.
Beat. Kill Claudio.
Bene. Ha! not for the wide world.
Beat. You kill me to deny it. Farewell.
Bene. Tarry, sweet Beatrice.
Beat. I am gone, though I am here:¹⁹ there is no love in you: nay, I pray you, let me go.
Bene. Beatrice, —
Beat. In faith, I will go.
Bene. We'll be friends first.
Beat. You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy.
Bene. Is Claudio thine enemy?
Beat. Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O that I were a man! What, bear her in hand²⁰ until they come to take hands; and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour, —O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.
Bene. Hear me, Beatrice, —
Beat. Talk with a man out at a window! a proper saying!

¹⁹ "Though my person stay with you, my heart is gone from you."
²⁰ A common phrase of the time, signifying to take, lead, carry along, as an expectant or friend. See vol. ii., page 210, note 1.
Bene. Nay, but, Beatrice,—

Beat. Sweet Hero! she is wrong'd, she is slandered, she is undone.

Bene. Beat—

Beat. Princes and counties! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count, Count Confect; a sweet gallant, surely! O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie, and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

Bene. Tarry, good Beatrice. By this hand, I love thee.

Beat. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

Bene. Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wrong'd Hero?

Beat. Yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul.

Bene. Enough, I am engaged; I will challenge him. I will kiss your hand, and so leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account. As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin: I must say she is dead: and so, farewell.

[Exeunt.

21 Countie was the ancient term for a count or earl.

22 That is, an image of a man, cast in sugar; such a nobleman as confectioners sell, "a sweet gallant": of course spoken in contempt.

23 Trim seems here to signify apt, fair-spoken. Tongue used in the singular, and trim ones in the plural, is a mode of construction not uncommon in Shakespeare.
Scene II.—A Prison.

Enter Dogberry, Verges, and Sexton, in gowns; and the Watch, with Conrade and Borachio.

Dog. Is our whole dissembly appeared?
Verg. O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton.
Sex. Which be the malefactors?
Dog. Marry, that am I and my partner.
Verg. Nay, that's certain; we have the exhibition to examine.¹

Sex. But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before Master Constable.
Dog. Yea, marry, let them come before me.—What is your name, friend?
Bora. Borachio.
Dog. Pray, write down Borachio.—Yours, sirrah?
Con. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.
Dog. Write down master gentleman Conrade.—Masters, do you serve God?

Con. { Yea, sir, we hope.

Bora. }

Dog. Write down that they hope they serve God; and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains!—Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

Con. Marry, sir, we say we are none.

Dog. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him.—Come you hither, sirrah: a word in your ear, sir; I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

¹ This is a blunder of the constable's, for "examination to exhibit." In the last scene of the third act, Leonato says, "Take their examination yourself and bring it me."
Bora. Sir, I say to you we are none!

Dog. Well, stand aside. — 'Fore God, they are both in a tale.² Have you writ down that they are none?

Sex. Master Constable, you go not the way to examine: you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Dog. Yea, marry, that's the eftest way.³ — Let the watch come forth. — Masters, I charge you, in the Prince's name, accuse these men.

1 Watch. This man said, sir, that Don John, the Prince's brother, was a villain.

Dog. Write down Prince John a villain. — Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother, villain.

Bora. Master Constable,—


Sex. What heard you him say else?

2 Watch. Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

Dog. Flat burglary as ever was committed.

Verg. Yea, by the Mass, that it is.

Sex. What else, fellow?

1 Watch. And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

Dog. O villain! thou wilt be condemn'd into everlasting redemption for this.

Sex. What else?

2 Watch. This is all.

² "They are both in a tale" means they both make the same answer, or their answers tally; that is, correspond or agree together. In the Poet's time, accounts were often kept by cutting notches in a stick. The stick was then split in two, so as to give the notches in duplicate, one set for each of the parties. These were called tally-sticks; and when both were in a tale, this certified the accuracy of the account.

³ The quickest or the handiest way.
Sex. And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away; Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner refused, and upon the grief of this suddenly died. — Master Constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's: I will go before and show him their examination. [*Exit.*

Dog. Come, let them be opinion'd.

Verg. Let them be in the hands —

Con. Off, coxcomb!

Dog. God's my life, where's the sexton? let him write down the Prince's officer, coxcomb. — Come, bind them. — Thou naughty varlet!

Con. Away! you are an ass, you are an ass.

Dog. Dost thou not suspect my place? dost thou not suspect my years? — O that he were here to write me down an ass! but, masters, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. — No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a householder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and every thing handsome about him. — Bring him away. — O that I had been writ down an ass! [*Exeunt.*

---

It may seem strange that Dogberry should thus boast of his *losses*; but the man's pride probably fastens on the point of his still being rich notwithstanding his losses. It has been suggested, however, that *losses* may be a characteristic blunder for *lawsuits*. 

---

4
ACT V.

SCENE I. — Before Leonato's House.

Enter Leonato and Antonio.

Ant. If you go on thus, you will kill yourself; And 'tis not wisdom thus to second grief Against yourself.

Leon. I pray thee, cease thy counsel, Which falls into mine ears as profitless As water in a sieve: give not me counsel; Nor let no comforter delight mine ear But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine. Bring me a father that so loved his child, Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine, And bid him speak to me of patience; Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine, And let it answer every strain for strain, As thus for thus, and such a grief for such, In every lineament, branch, shape, and form: If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard, Bid sorrow wag, cry hem when he should groan, Patch grief with proverbs, make misfortune drunk With candle-wasters,¹ — bring him yet to me,

¹ It appears that to stroke the beard and cry hem was often represented as a common gesture preparatory to the utterance of a wise saying, or to a display of profound book-learning. So in Troilus and Cressida, i. 3: "Now play me Nestor; hem and stroke thy beard." Also in Chapman's May-Day, ii. 1: "Thou shalt now see me stroke my beard, and speak sententiously." So that candle-wasters here evidently means those who "burn the midnight oil" in study. Jonson has it thus in his Cynthia's Revels: "Heart, was there ever so prosperous an invention thus unluckily perverted and spoiled by a
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man: for, brother, men
Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptual medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,
Charm ache with air, and agony with words.
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow;
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency
To be so moral when he shall endure
The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel:
My griefs cry louder than advertisement.²

Ant. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leon. I pray thee, peace! I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache patiently,
However they have writ the style of gods,
And made a push³ at chance and sufferance.

Ant. Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
Make those that do offend you suffer too.

Leon. There thou speak'st reason: nay, I will do so.
My soul doth tell me Hero is belied;
And that shall Claudio know; so shall the Prince,


whoreson book-worm, a candle-waster?" And so in The Hospital of Incurable Fooles, 1600: "I which have known you better and more inwardly than a thousand of these candle-wasting book-worms." The general idea in the text is that of curing grief by sage counsel, as men often lose the sense of pain or misfortune in a drunken sleep.

² Advertisement, even as now used, might easily pass over into the kindred sense of admonition or instruction.

³ Push is an old exclamation, equivalent to pish. So in Timon of Athens, iii. 6: "Push! did you see my cap?" spoken by one of the Lords when old Timon hurls stones at them, and drives them out from the sham banquet to which he had invited them.
SCENE I. MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

And all of them that thus dishonour her.
   Ant. Here comes the Prince and Claudio hastily.

   Enter Don Pedro and Claudio.

   D. Pedro. Good den, good den.
   Claud. Good day to both of you.
   Leon. Hear you, my lords, —
   D. Pedro. We have some haste, Leonato.
   Leon. Some haste, my lord! well, fare you well, my lord: —

Are you so hasty now? well, all is one.

   D. Pedro. Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.
   Ant. If he could right himself with quarrelling,

Some of us would lie low.
   Claud. Who wrongs him?
   Leon. Who!

Marry, thou wrong'st me; thou dissembler, thou.
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword;
I fear thee not.

   Claud. Marry, beshrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear:
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

   Leon. Tush, tush, man; never fleer and jest at me:
I speak not like a dotard nor a fool,
As, under privilege of age, to brag
What I have done, being young, or what would do,
Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me,
That I am forced to lay my reverence by,
And, with grey hairs and bruise of many days,
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.
I say thou hast belied mine innocent child;
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lies buried with her ancestors, —
O, in a tomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of hers, framed by thy villainy!

Claud. My villainy!

Leon. Thine, Claudio; thine, I say.

D. Pedro. You say not right, old man.

Leon. My lord, my lord,
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare,
Despite his nice fence and his active practice, 4
His May of youth and bloom of lusthood.

Claud. Away! I will not have to do with you.

Leon. Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast kill'd my child:
If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.

Ant. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed:
But that's no matter; let him kill one first; —
Win me and wear me, — let him answer me. —
Come, follow, boy; come, sir boy, follow me:
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence; 5
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

Leon. Brother, —

Ant. Content yourself. God knows I loved my niece;
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains,
That dare as well answer a man indeed 6
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue;
Boys, apes, braggárts, Jacks, milksops! —

Leon. Brother Antony, —

Ant. Hold you content. What, man! I know them, yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple, —

4 Practice here means exercise, or well-practised skill, in the use of the sword. — Nice fence has much the same meaning, — exactness in the art of defence, or of fencing.

5 Foining is an old word for thrusting. — Fence is sword-practice, a teacher of which is still called a fencing-master.

6 Indeed here goes with man, not with answer; a real man, or one who is indeed a man; as in Hamlet's "A combination and a form indeed."
Scambling, 7 out-facing, fashion-mongering boys, 
That lie, and cog, 8 and flout, deprave, and slander, 
Go anticly, show outward hideousness, 
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words, 
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst; 
And this is all.

Leon. But, brother Antony,—

Ant. Come, 'tis no matter:
Do not you meddle; let me deal in this.

D. Pedro. Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience. 9

My heart is sorry for your daughter's death:
But, on my honour, she was charged with nothing
But what was true, and very full of proof.

Leon. My lord, my lord,—

D. Pedro. I will not hear you.

Leon. Come, brother, away. — I will be heard.

Ant. And shall,

Or some of us will smart for't. [Exeunt Leonato and Antonio.

D. Pedro. See, see; here comes the man we went to seek.

Enter Benedick.  

Claud. Now, signior, what news?

7 Scambling appears to have been much the same as scrambling, shifting, or shuffling. "Griffe graffe," says Cotgrave, "by hook or by crook, squimble-squamble, scamblingly, catch that catch may."
8 To cog is to cheat, to cajole, to play sly tricks. See vol. ii., page 85, note 24.—To go anticly is to go fantastically or apishly, like a buffoon. See page 198, note 4.—"Show outward hideousness" is well explained in As You Like It, i. 3: "We'll have a swashing and a martial outside; as many other mannish cowards have that do out face it with their semblances."
9 That is, "rouse, stir up, convert your patience into anger." An image of sleep is implied in regard to patience. Patience is, properly, repose of mind; and to wake one's patience is to disturb it, to put it from itself. We have a like use of wake in Richard II., i. 3: "To wake our peace, which in our country's cradle draws the sweet infant breath of gentle sleep."
Bene. Good day, my lord.

D. Pedro. Welcome, signior: you are almost come to part almost a fray.

Claud. We had like to have had our two noses snapp'd off with two old men without teeth.

D. Pedro. Leonato and his brother. What think'st thou? Had we fought, I doubt 10 we should have been too young for them.

Bene. In a false quarrel there is no true valour. I came to seek you both.

Claud. We have been up and down to seek thee; for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit? 6

Bene. It is in my scabbard: shall I draw it?

D. Pedro. Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

Claud. Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit. — I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels; draw, to pleasure us. 11

D. Pedro. As I am an honest man, he looks pale. — Art thou sick, or angry?

Claud. What, courage, man! What though care killed a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

Bene. Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, an you charge it against me. I pray you, choose another subject.

Claud. Nay, then give him another staff: this last was broke cross. 12

10 Doubt was very often used in the sense of fear or suspect. So in 1 Henry IV., i. 2: "But I doubt they will be too hard for us." — "Too young for them" is, as we should say, "too much for them"; that is, too strong. The Poet has young just so in several other instances.

11 "I will bid thee draw thy sword, as we bid the minstrels draw the bows of their fiddles, merely to please us."

12 The allusion here is to tilting. It was held very disgraceful for a tilter to have his spear broken across the body of his adversary, instead of by a push of the point. See page 38, note 11.
D. Pedro. By this light, he changes more and more: I think he be angry indeed.

Claud. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.\textsuperscript{13}

Bene. Shall I speak a word in your ear?

Claud. God bless me from a challenge!

Bene. [Aside to Claud.] You are a villain; I jest not: I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare. Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have kill'd a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you.

Claud. Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

D. Pedro. What, a feast? a feast?

Claud. I'faith, I thank him; he hath bid me to a calf's-head and a capon; the which if I do not carve most curiously, say my knife's naught. — Shall I not find a woodcock\textsuperscript{14} too?

Bene. Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

D. Pedro. I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy wit the other day. I said, thou hadst a fine wit: True, says she, a fine little one. No, said I, a great wit: Right, says she, a great gross one. Nay, said I, a good wit: Just, said she, it hurts nobody. Nay, said I, the gentleman is wise: Cer-

\textsuperscript{13} So Sir Ralph Winwood in a letter to Cecil: "I said, what I spake was not to make him angry. He replied, If I were angry, I might turn the buckle of my girdle behind me." The phrase came from the practice of wrestlers, and is thus explained by Holt White: "Large belts were worn with the buckle before, but for wrestling the buckle was turned behind, to give the adversary a fairer grasp at the girdle. To turn the buckle behind was therefore a challenge."

\textsuperscript{14} A woodcock was a common term for a foolish fellow; that savoury bird being supposed to have no brains. Claudio alludes to the stratagem whereby Benedick has been made to fall in love. So Sir William Cecil, in a letter to Secretary Maitland, referring to an attempted escape of some French hostages: "I went to lay some lime-twigs for certain woodcocks, which I have taken."
tain, said she, a wise gentleman.\textsuperscript{15} Nay, said I, he hath the tongues: That I believe, said she, for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning; there's a double tongue; there's two tongues. Thus did she, an hour together, trans-shape thy particular virtues; yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in Italy.

\textit{Claud.} For the which she wept heartily, and said she cared not.

\textit{D. Pedro.} Yea, that she did; but yet, for all that, an if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly. The old man's daughter told us all.

\textit{Claud.} All, all; and, moreover, God saw him when he was hid in the garden.

\textit{D. Pedro.} But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

\textit{Claud.} Yea, and text underneath, \textit{Here dwells Benedick, the married man?}

\textit{Bene.} Fare you well, boy: you know my mind. I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour: you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not.—My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you: I must discontinue your company. Your brother the bastard is fled from Messina: you have among you kill'd a sweet and innocent lady. For my Lord Lackbeard there, he and I shall meet; and till then peace be with him. \hfill [Exit.

\textit{D. Pedro.} He is in earnest.

\textit{Claud.} In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

\textit{D. Pedro.} And hath challenged thee?

\textit{Claud.} Most sincerely.

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Wise gentleman} was probably used ironically for a silly fellow; as we still say a \textit{wiseacre}. 
D. Pedro. What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit!

Claud. He is then a giant to an ape: but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.

D. Pedro. But, soft you! let me pluck up my heart, and be sad. Did he not say, my brother was fled?

Enter Dogberry, Verges, and the Watch, with Conradé and Borachio.

Dog. Come, you, sir: if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance: nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be look'd to.

D. Pedro. How now! two of my brother's men bound! Borachio one!

Claud. Hearken after their offence, my lord.

D. Pedro. Officers, what offence have these men done?

Dog. Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanderers; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things; and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

D. Pedro. First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Claud. Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited.

D. Pedro. Who have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood: what's your offence?

Bora. Sweet Prince, let me go no further to mine answer:

16 Meaning, apparently, "Let me rouse up my spirits, and be ready for serious business." This play has sad repeatedly in the same sense. See page 170, note 11.

17 That is, one meaning put into many different dresses; the Prince having asked the same question in four modes of speech.
do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light; who, in the night, overheard me confessing to this man, how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero; how you were brought into the orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments; how you disgraced her, when you should marry her: my villainy they have upon record; which I had rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

_D. Pedro._ Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

_Claud._ I have drunk poison whiles he utter'd it.

_D. Pedro._ But did my brother set thee on to this?

_Bora._ Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

_D. Pedro._ He is composed and framed of treachery; And fled he is upon this villainy.

_Claud._ Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear In the rare resemblance that I loved it first.

_Dog._ Come, bring away the plaintiffs: by this time our sexton hath reform'd Signior Leonato of the matter. And, masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

_Verg._ Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and the sexton too.

_Re-enter LEONATO and ANTONIO, with the Sexton._

_Leon._ Which is the villain? let me see his eyes, That, when I note another man like him, I may avoid him: which of these is he?

_Bora._ If you would know your wronger, look on me.

_Leon._ Art thou the slave that with thy breath hast kill'd Mine innocent child?
Scene I. Much Ado About Nothing.

Bora. Yea, even I alone.

Leon. No, not so, villain; thou beliest thyself:
Here stand a pair of honourable men,
A third is fled, that had a hand in it.—
I thank you, Princes, for my daughter's death:
Record it with your high and worthy deeds;
'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

Claud. I known not how to pray your patience;
Yet I must speak. Choose your revenge yourself;
Impose me to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sin: yet sinn'd I not
But in mistaking.

D. Pedro. By my soul, nor I:
And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
I would bend under any heavy weight
That he'll enjoin me to.

Leon. I cannot bid you bid my daughter live,—
That were impossible: but, I pray you both,
Possess the people in Messina here
How innocent she died; and, if your love
Can labour aught in sad invention,
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb,
And sing it to her bones,—sing it to-night:
To-morrow morning come you to my house;
And, since you could not be my son-in-law,
Be yet my nephew: my brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copy of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us:

To possess signified to inform, to make acquainted with. So in The Merchant, iv. 1: "I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose."

It was the custom to attach, upon or near the tombs of celebrated persons, a written inscription, either in prose or verse, generally in praise of the deceased.

It would seem that Antonio's son, mentioned in i. 2, must have died since the play began.
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.

Claud. O noble sir,
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me!
I do embrace your offer; and dispose
For henceforth of poor Claudio.

Leon. To-morrow, then, I will expect your coming;
To-night I take my leave.—This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I believe was pack'd in all this wrong,
Hired to it by your brother.

Bora. No, by my soul, she was not;
Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me;
But always hath been just and virtuous
In any thing that I do know by her.

Dog. Moreover, sir, (which indeed is not under white and,
black,) this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass: I
beseech you, let it be remember'd in his punishment. And
also, the watch heard them talk of one Deformed: they say
he wears a key in his ear, and a lock hanging by it; and
borrows money in God's name,—the which he hath used so
long and never paid, that now men grow hard-hearted, and
will lend nothing for God's sake: pray you, examine him
upon that point.

Leon. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

21 To be packed is to be one of a pack, set, or gang; that is, an accom-
plice or confederate.

22 It was one of the fantastic fashions of Shakespeare's time to wear a
long hanging lock of hair dangling by the ear: it is often mentioned by con-
temporary writers, and may be observed in some ancient portraits. The
humour of this passage is in Dogberry's supposing the lock to have a key
to it.

23 Used in the sense of practised, or been used to do. The Poet has the
verb to use repeatedly in the same way. So, in The Merchant, i. 3, Shylock
says, "Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow upon advantage,"
and Antonio replies, "I do never use it."
Casino. Your Worship speaks like a most thankful and re-
verend youth; and I praise God for you.

Leon. There's for thy pains.

Dog. God save the foundation! 24

Leon. Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank
thee.

Dog. I leave an arrant knave with your Worship; which
I beseech your Worship to correct yourself, for the exam-
ple of others. God keep your Worship! I wish your Worship
well; God restore you to health! I humbly give you leave
to depart; and, if a merry meeting may be wish'd, God pro-
hibit it! — Come, neighbour.

[Exit Dogberry, Verges, and Watch.

Leon. Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell.

Ant. Farewell, my lords: we look for you to-morrow.

D. Pedro. We will not fail.

Claud. To-night I'll mourn with Hero.

[Exit Don Pedro and Claudio.

Leon. Bring you these fellows on. We'll talk with Mar-
garet,
How her acquaintance grew with this lewd 25 fellow.

[Exit.

Scene II. — Leonato's Garden.

Enter, severally, Benedick and Margaret.

Bene. Pray thee, sweet Mistress Margaret, deserve well at
my hands by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

Marg. Will you, then, write me a sonnet in praise of my
beauty?

24 A phrase used by those who received alms at the gates of religious and
charitable houses. Dogberry probably means, "God save the founder."

25 Here lewd has not the common meaning; but rather means knavish,
wicked, depraved; like the Latin pravus. Repeatedly so.
Bene. In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it.

Marg. To have no man come over me! why, shall I always keep men below stairs?

Bene. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth; it catches.

Marg. And yours as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

Bene. A most manly wit, Margaret; it will not hurt a woman: and so I pray thee, call Beatrice. I give thee the bucklers.¹

Marg. Give us the swords; we have bucklers of our own.

Bene. If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice; and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

Marg. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I think hath legs.

Bene. And therefore will come.— [Exit MARGARET.

[Sings.]  

The god of love, that sits above,  
And knows me, and knows me,  
How pitiful I deserve,—

I mean in singing; but, in loving, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of panders, and a whole book-full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse,—why, they were never so truly turned over and over as my poor self in love. Marry, I cannot show it in rhyme; I have tried: I can find out no rhyme to lady but baby,—an innocent rhyme; for scorn, horn,—a hard rhyme; for school, fool,—a babbling

¹ To give the bucklers was to yield the victory; whereby the victor got his adversary's shield and kept his own.
rhyme; very ominous endings: no, I was not born under a rhyming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms. —

Enter Beatrice.

Sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I call'd thee?

Beat. Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me.

Bene. O, stay but till then!

Beat. Then is spoken; fare you well now. And yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came for; which is, with knowing what hath pass'd between you and Claudio.

Bene. Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

Beat. Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome; therefore I will depart unkiss'd.

Bene. Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit. But I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge; and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

Beat. For them all together; which maintain'd so politic a state of evil, that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

Bene. Suffer love,—a good epithet! I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will.

Beat. In spite of your heart, I think: alas, poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours; for I will never love that which my friend hates.

Bene. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

3 Festival terms is choice language. So mine Host in The Merry Wives says of Fenton, "he speaks holiday." And Hotspur, in 1 Henry IV., "With many holiday and lady terms he question'd me."

8 Is under challenge, or now stands challenged, by me.
Beat. It appears not in this confession: there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

Bene. An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours. If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps.

Beat. And how long is that, think you?

Bene. Question!—why, an hour in clamour, and a quarter in rheum: therefore is it most expedient for the wise (if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary) to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself. So much for praising myself, who, I myself will bear witness, is praiseworthy: and now tell me, how doth your cousin?

Beat. Very ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Very ill too.

Bene. Serve God, love me, and mend. There will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Enter Ursula.

Urs. Madam, you must come to your uncle. Yonder's old coil at home: it is proved my Lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the Prince and Claudio mightily abused; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone. Will you come presently?

---

4 When men were not envious, but every one gave others their due.

5 This means, apparently, "You ask a question indeed!" — In what follows, "an hour in clamour" refers, no doubt, to the continuous ringing of the bell; and rheum is tears, — the tears which "the widow weeps"; that word being used indifferently for the secretions of the eyes, mouth, and nose. "A quarter," I presume, may mean either a quarter of a year or a quarter of an hour: probably the former, though the latter seems more germane to the speaker's satirical humour or mood.

6 Old coil is huge bustle or stir. Coil has occurred before in this play. See page 208, note 4. Old was in frequent use as a colloquial augmentative. See vol. iii., page 209, note 2.

7 Abused is deceived, cheated, or imposed upon. A very frequent usage.
Beat. Will you go hear this news, signior?
Bene. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes; and moreover I will go with thee to thy uncle.

[Exeunt.

Scene III. — The Inside of a Church.

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, and Attendants, with music and tapers.

Claud. Is this the monument of Leonato?
Atten. It is, my lord.
Claud. [Reads from a scroll.]

Done to death¹ by slanderous tongues
Was the Hero that here lies:
Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,
Gives her fame which never dies.
So the life that died with shame
Lives in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there upon the tomb, [Fixing up the scroll.
Praising her when I am dumb.—
Now, music, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

Soub.

Pardon, goddess of the night,
Those that slew thy virgin knight;²

¹ This phrase occurs frequently in writers of Shakespeare's time: it appears to be derived from the French phrase, faire mourir.
² Knight was a common poetical appellation of virgins in Shakespeare's time; probably in allusion to their being the votarists of Diana, whose chosen pastime was in knightly sports. So in The Two Noble Kinsmen, v. 1:

O, sacred, shadowy, cold, and constant queen,
Abandoner of revels, mute, contemplative,
Sweet, solitary, white as chaste, and pure
As wind-fan'd snow, who to thy female knights
Allow'st no more blood than will make a blush,
Which is their order's robe.
For the which, with songs of woe,
Round about her tomb they go.
Midnight, assist our moan;
Help us to sigh and groan,
Heavily, heavily:
Graves, yawn, and yield your dead,
Till death be uttered,
Heavily, heavily. 3

Claud. Now, unto thy bones good night! —
Yearly will I do this rite.

D. Pedro. Good morrow, masters; put your torches out:
The wolves have prey’d; and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowsy East with spots of grey.
Thanks to you all, and leave us: fare you well.

Claud. Good morrow, masters: each his several way.

D. Pedro. Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds;
And then to Leonato’s we will go.

Claud. And Hymen now with luckier issue speed’s
Than this for whom we render’d up this woe!  [Exeunt.

Scene IV. — A Room in Leonato’s House.

Enter Leonato, Antonio, Benedick, Beatrice, Margaret,
Ursula, Friar Francis, and Hero.

F. Fran. Did I not tell you she was innocent?
Leon. So are the Prince and Claudio, who accused her

8 We are indebted to Sidney Walker for the best explanation of this obscure passage: “With regard to the words, ‘graves yawn,’ &c., I know not why we should consider them as any thing more than an invocation,—after the usual manner of funeral dirges in that age, in which mourners of some description or other are summoned to the funeral,—a call, I say, upon the surrounding dead to come forth from their graves, as auditors or sharers in the solemn lamentation. Uttered, expressed, commemorated in song.”
Upon the error that you heard debated:  
But Margaret was in some fault for this,  
Although against her will, as it appears  
In the true course of all the question.  

_Ant._ Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.  

_Bene._ And so am I, being else by faith enforced  
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.  

_Leon._ Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,  
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves,  
And when I send for you, come hither mask'd:  
The Prince and Claudio promised by this hour  
To visit me.—You know your office, brother: [Exeunt Ladies.  
You must be father to your brother's daughter,  
And give her to young Claudio.  

_Ant._ Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.  

_Bene._ Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.  

_F. Fran._ To do what, signior?  

_Bene._ To bind me, or undo me; one of them. —  
Signior Leonato, trutn it is, good signior,  
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.  

_Leon._ That eye my daughter lent her: 'tis most true.  

_Bene._ And I do with an eye of love requite her.  

_Leon._ The sight whereof I think you had from me,  
From Claudio, and the Prince: but what's your will?  

_Bene._ Your answer, sir, is enigmatical:  
But, for my will, my will is, your good-will  
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd  
I' the state of honourable marriage: —  
In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.  

_Leon._ My heart is with your liking.  

_F. Fran._ And my help.

---

1 _Question_ is used by Shakespeare in a great variety of senses. Here it means, apparently, _investigation_ or _inquiry_, one of its Latin senses. See vol. iii., page 197, note 25.
Here come the Prince and Claudio.

_Enter Don Pedro and Claudio, with Attendants._

_D. Pedro._ Good morrow to this fair assembly.

_Leon._ Good morrow, Prince; — good morrow, Claudio: We here attend you. Are you yet determined
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?

_Claud._ I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiop.

_Leon._ Call her forth, brother; here's the friar ready.

_[Exit Antonio._

_D. Pedro._ Good morrow, Benedick. Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness?

_Claud._ I think he thinks upon the savage bull. —
Tush, fear not, man; we'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee;
As once Europa did at lusty Jove,
When he would play the noble beast in love.

_Bene._ Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low;
And some such strange bull leap'd your father's cow,
And got a calf in that same noble feat
Much like to you, for you have just his bleat.

_Claud._ For this I owe you: here come other reckonings.—

_Re-enter Antonio, with the Ladies masked._

Which is the lady I must seize upon?³

_Ant._ This same is she, and I do give you her.

_Claud._ Why, then she's mine. — Sweet, let me see your face.

_Leon._ No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar, and swear to marry her.

⁳ Seize upon is here a technical term in the law, and means take possession of. The Poet has it repeatedly so.
Claud. Give me your hand before this holy friar:
I am your husband, if you like of me.

Hero. And when I lived, I was your other wife:

[Unmasking.

And when you loved, you were my other husband.

Claud. Another Hero!

Hero. Nothing certain:
One Hero died defiled; but I do live,
And, surely as I live, I am a maid.

D. Pedro. The former Hero! Hero that is dead!

Leon. She died, my lord, but whiles her slander lived.

F. Fran. All this amazement can I qualify;
When, after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death:
Meantime let wonder seem familiar,

And to the chapel let us presently.

Bene. Soft and fair, friar.—Which is Beatrice?

Beat. [Unmasking.] I answer to that name. What is your will?

Bene. Do not you love me?

Beat. Why, no; no more than reason.

Bene. Why, then your uncle, and the Prince, and Claudio
Have been deceived; for they swore you did.

Beat. Do not you love me?

Of course Hero means that she was defiled in the same sense that she
died. She was believed to be defiled, and she was believed to be dead, and
she was, in reality, just as much the one as the other, and no more. The
word is used just so again in King Lear, iii. 6: "When false opinion, whose
wrong thought defiles thee," &c. But, indeed, loss of good name and of
social sweetness through evil report or false imputation is a sort of death to
a soul like Hero's, or rather something worse than death; and a perfect
recovery from such a loss is, to her, like a coming to life again. See Criti-
cal Notes.

The meaning probably is, "Let that which seems wonderful be treated
as a common or ordinary event"; that is, act as if there were nothing
strange about it.
Bene. Troth, no; no more than reason.
Beat. Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula
Are much deceived; for they did swear you did.
Bene. They swore that you were almost sick for me.
Beat. They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.
Bene. 'Tis no such matter. Then you do not love me?
Beat. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.
Leon. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.
Claud. And I'll be sworn upon't that he loves her;
For here's a paper, written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

Hero. And here's another,
Writ in my cousin's hand, stol'n from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

Bene. A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts.
Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

Beat. I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I
yield upon great persuasion; and partly to save your life, for
I was told you were in a consumption.

Bene. Peace! I will stop your mouth. [Kissing her.

D. Pedro. How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

Bene. I'll tell thee what, Prince; a college of wit-crackers
cannot flout me out of my humour. Dost thou think I care
for a satire or an epigram? No; if a man will be beaten
with brains, he shall wear nothing handsome about him. In
brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to
any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore
never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man
is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion. — For thy part,
Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but in that

6 In that was much used for inasmuch as or because.
art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin.

Claud. I had well hoped thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgell'd thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double-dealer; which, out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

Bene. Come, come, we are friends. Let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels.

Leon. We'll have dancing afterward.

Bene. First, of my word; therefore play, music! — Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife: there is no staff more reverend than one tipped with horn.⁶

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, your brother John is taken in flight, And brought with armed men back to Messina.

Bene. Think not on him till to-morrow: I'll devise thee brave punishments for him. — Strike up, pipers! [Dance. [Exeunt.

⁶ Alluding, no doubt, to the walking-sticks or staves of elderly persons, which were often tipped or headed with horn, sometimes crosswise, in imitation of the crutched sticks or potences of the friars. Chaucer's Somnour describes one of his friars as having a "scripp and tipped staff"; and he adds that "His felaw had a staf tipped with horn."—Benedick's sportive quibble upon horn is, I presume, obvious enough. See, however, vol. ii., page 47, note 11.
CRITICAL NOTES.

ACT I., SCENE I.

Page 155. Enter Leonato, Hero, and Beatrice, with a Messenger. — The old copies have "Enter Leonato, Governour of Messina, Innogen his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his Neece, with a messenger." Again, at the beginning of the second Act, the wife is introduced among the other persons. But, as "Innogen his wife" does not utter a word throughout the play, and as there are divers places where she could hardly be a mere dummy were she present, the name is rightly omitted in modern stage-directions. Theobald may be right in the conjecture, that "the Poet had in his first plan designed such a character, which, on a survey of it, he found would be superfluous, and therefore he left it out."

P. 155. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour, &c. — Here, and also in the first speech of the play, the old editions have Peter instead of Pedro.

P. 159. Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed on as Signior Benedick? — The old text has it instead of on. It is evident that the word should be either her or on.

P. 160. Scratching could not make it worse, an'twere such a face as yours. — So Collier's second folio. The old text reads "such a face as yours were." Here were is manifestly a good deal worse than superfluous.

P. 162. D. Pedro. If it were so, so were it utter'd. — In the old copies, this speech is assigned to Claudio. I can see no fitness, or even meaning, in the speech, as coming from him; whereas the Prince might very naturally say, "If Claudio were really in love with Hero, he
would declare it.” And Benedick’s next speech, I think, fairly infers this to be spoken by the Prince. Of course it is a word of encouragement to Claudio.

P. 165. My love is thine to teach: teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn, &c.—The first teach sounds hardly right, and the word may have been repeated in advance by mistake. Walker suggests changing it to use; but I think the word learn, at the end of the next line, speaks something in favour of the old reading.

P. 166. The fairest grant is to necessity.—The original text is “the necessity”; which may be strained to sense, but hardly. The slight change of the to to was proposed by Hayley.

ACT I., SCENE 2.

P. 168. Cousin, you know what you have to do.—The old copies have the plural, cousins, here. But the use of cousin a little after in this speech, and also in the first speech of the scene,—“Where is my cousin, your son?”—shows that the singular is required. See footnote 3.

ACT I., SCENE 3.

P. 168. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds it.—Here it, plainly needful to the sense, is wanting in the old copies.

P. 169. You have of late stood out against your brother.—Collier’s second folio reads “You have till of late.” Singer prints until, which he says is supplied in his corrected folio. The insertion is highly plausible, to say the least.

ACT II., SCENE 1.

P. 173. Falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink apace into his grave.—The old copies read “till he sink into his grave.” The reading in the text was conjectured by Capell, and is found in Collier’s second folio. As the Cambridge Editors note, the reading is supported by a passage in Marston’s Insatiate Countess. One of the persons says, “Think of me as of the man whose dancing dayes you see are not yet done”; and another replies, “Yet you sink a pace, Sir.”
CRITICAL NOTES.

P. 174. Balth. Well, I would you did like me.—This and Baltazar's next two speeches are assigned to Benedick in the old copies. The needful correction was made by Theobald, and is generally received; Dyce remarking that "two prefixes, each beginning with the same letter, are frequently confounded by transcribers and printers: so, in Love's Labours Lost, ii. 1, six speeches in succession which belong to Biron are assigned in the folio to Boyet."

P. 177. This is an accident of hourly proof, Which I mistrusted not. Farewell, then, Hero!—So Collier's second folio and several modern editions. The old copies have therefore instead of them.

P. 178. I told him that your Grace had got the good-will of his young lady.—The old text reads "of this young lady." There being nothing for this to refer to, Walker proposed the change. His and this were very often misprinted each for the other.

ACT II., SCENE 2.

P. 186. Hear me call Margaret, Hero; hear Margaret term me Claudio.—As Borachio is to act the man in this interview, Theobald substituted that name here for Claudio, and has been followed by several editors. But it appears to be a part of the arrangement that, as Borachio is to address Margaret by the name of Hero, so Margaret is to receive him under the name of Claudio. So much is fairly implied in the expression "hear Margaret term me." As Claudio was to witness the encounter, he would of course know that he was not himself the person talking with the supposed Hero; and both he and the Prince might well be persuaded that Hero received a clandestine lover, whom she called Claudio, in order to deceive her attendants, should any be within hearing; and this they would naturally deem an aggravation of her offence.

P. 186. Hero shall be absent, and there shall appear such seeming truth of her disloyalty.—The old copies read "of Heroes disloyaltie," thus repeating the name. Capell made the correction.

ACT II., SCENE 3.

P. 187. And now he is turn'd orthographer.—Instead of orthographer, the old copies have ortography and orthography. Hardly worth the notice.
P. 188. We'll fit the hid fox with a pennyworth. — The old copies read "fit the kid-foxe"; which has been explained in different ways, but hardly to any sense that fits the occasion. The correction is Warburton's.

P. 192. Weeps, sob's, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, cries, O sweet Benedick! — The old copies read "prays, curses, O sweet Benedick." I cannot imagine what curses should have to do there. The change is from Collier's second folio.

P. 192. An he should, it were an alms-deed to hang him. — So Collier's second folio; the old copies, "an alms to hang him." Alms does not give the right sense; and alms-deed was a current phrase, which the Poet elsewhere uses, to express much the same meaning which is required here; as in 3 Henry VI., v. 5, Margaret says to Gloster, "murder is thy alms-deed."

P. 193. If he do fear God, 'a must necessarily keep the peace: if he break the peace, &c. — The old copies read "keep peace," omitting the article: but, as they have it in the next clause, it should evidently be supplied. Corrected by Dyce.

P. 195. Just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and not choke a daw withal. — So Collier's second folio; the old copies omit not.

ACT III., SCENE 2.

P. 203. Which is now crept into a lute-string, and new-govern'd by stops. — The old copies read "and now govern'd." The correction is Walker's, who points out many like instances of now and new confounded.

P. 203. She shall be buried with her face upwards. — Theobald printed "with her heels upwards," which defeats the sense and humour of the passage. Don Pedro, playing on the word dies, which has just been used, means that the lady shall be buried in her lover's arms. So, in The Winter's Tale, iv. 3, Perdita says to Florizell, "Not like a corse; or if, — not to be buried, but quick, and in mine arms."
P. 204. Claud. Who, Hero?

D. John. Even she, Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.—Lettsom, in a private letter to Dyce, observed that "some very necessary words seem to have been omitted here"; and he queries whether Claudio's speech ought not to stand thus: "Who, Hero? my Hero? Leonato's Hero?" I cannot help thinking the query well-placed.

ACT III., SCENE 3.

P. 209. Thou shouldst rather ask, if it were possible any villain should be so rich; for when rich villains, &c.—So Warburton, with manifest propriety; the old copies, "if any villanie should be so rich."

P. 211. I Watch. Never speak: we charge you let us obey you to go with us.—Absurdly assigned to Conrade in the old copies. Corrected by Theobald.

ACT IV., SCENE 1.

P. 219. Hero. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?

Claud. Out on thy seeming! I will write against it:

You seem'd to me as Dian in her orb.—Here, in the second line, the old copies have "on thee seeming," and, in the third, "You seem to me." Errors that almost correct themselves. The first was corrected by Pope, the other by Hanmer.

P. 220. Claud. Sweet Prince, why speak you not?—Assigned to Leonato in the old copies. Claudio naturally calls on the Prince to confirm the charges he has just made. Tieck, I believe, was the first to propose giving the speech to Claudio; and Dyce remarks, "To Claudio, as I saw long ago, it assuredly belongs."

P. 221. About the thoughts and counsels of thy heart.—The old copies have "About thy thoughts"; thy having doubtless got repeated by mistake. Corrected by Rowe.

P. 222. Chid I for that at frugal Nature's frame?—Hanmer printed "Nature's hand," and Collier's second folio has "Nature's frown." But frame is probably right, meaning the framing, disposing, or ordering of Providence. A like use of frame occurs later in this scene: "Whose spirits toil in frame of villainies."
P. 223. *For I have only* silent been so long. — The old copies transpose silent and been, to the spoiling of the metre. Corrected by White.

P. 223. *Trust not my reading nor my observation,*
*Which with experimental seal doth warrant*
*The tenour of my books; trust not my age,*
*My reverend calling, nor divinity,*
*If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here*
*Under some blighting error.* — Here the old copies have, in the first line, observations, in the third, book, in the fourth, "reverence, calling," and in the last, biting. Heath proposed books, and "reverend calling" and blighting are from Collier's second folio. Hanmer reads observation.

P. 224. *The practice of it lies in John the bastard.* — The old copies have lives instead of lies. The correction is Walker's, who cites divers instances of lie and live misprinted each for the other.

P. 224. *But they shall find, awaked in such a cause,*
*Both strength of limb and policy of mind.* — So Collier's second folio, and Walker. The old copies have kind instead of cause. Kind is clearly wrong in sense, and makes, besides, a most ill-placed rhyme with mind; which, occurring thus in the midst of blank-verse, Walker pronounces "inadmissible, to say nothing of the sense."

P. 226. *But, if all aim at this be levell'd false.* — The old copies read "all aim but this." I can only understand this as referring to what precedes, and but is incompatible with such reference. See footnote 15.

**Act iv., Scene 2.**

P. 232. Dog. *Come, let them be opinion'd.*
Verg. *Let them be in the hands—*
Con. *Off, coxcomb! —* So modern editions generally, following Malone. In the old copies, the last two speeches are run together, thus: "Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe." It seems not unlikely that something may be lost; but the common arrangement is the best that can be done with the text as it stands. That Conrade uses the term coxcomb, is evident from Dogberry's next speech: "God's my life, where's the sexton? let him write down the Prince's officer, coxcomb."
ACT. v., SCENE i.

P. 233. And bid him speak to me of patience.—So Hanmer, Ritson, Walker, Collier’s second folio, and Dyce. The old text omits to me.

P. 233. If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard,
Bid sorrow wag, cry him when he should groan,

*Patch grief with proverbs, &c.* — The old copies read “And sor-
rowe wagge, crie hem,” &c., out of which it is hardly possible to make
any sense. Various changes of the text have been printed and offered.
The one here adopted is Capell’s, which Dyce pronounces “incom-
parably the best yet proposed.” — Of course wag means be gone.

P. 235. Claud. Who wrongs him?
Leon. Who!

*Marry, thou wrong’st me; thou dissembler, thou.* — The exclam-
ative Who! in Leonato’s speech is wanting in the old copies. Supplied
by Walker, and justified on grounds both of sense and of metre. The
old copies also have “thou dost wrong me,” instead of “thou wrong’st
me.”

P. 236. Come, follow, boy; come, sir boy, follow me.—The old text
gives this line thus: “Come follow me boy, come sir boy, come follow
me.” Yet the whole speech is printed there as verse, and was evi-
dently meant to be such.

P. 237. Go anticly, show outward hideousness.—The old copies
have “and show,” to the spoiling of the metre. The context has so
many ands, that the word might easily get repeated once too often.
The correction is Speeding’s.

P. 237. Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience.—Hanmer
changed wake to rack; and Dyce pronounces wake “a most suspicious
lection, though defended by several commentators.” Nevertheless wake
is most probably right. An image of sleep is implied, and aptly im-
pied, in regard to patience. See foot-note 9.

P. 241. But, soft you! let me pluck up my heart, and be sad.—Here
the original text has a very strange reading, “let me be, plucke up my
heart,” &c. This has commonly been changed to “let be: pluck up,
my heart.” Dyce and White print “let me be: pluck up, my heart.”
The reading here given was proposed by Malone. It clears the passage of obscurity at least, and, I think, reduces it to tolerable English. See foot-note 16.

P. 241. Secondarily, they are slanderers.—So Walker; the old copies, slanders. Possibly slanders may have been intended as a blunder of Dogberry's; but I think not, as this would be rather overloading the speech in that kind; and Walker cites various examples of similar errors.

**Act v., Scene 2.**

P. 246. To have no man come over me! Why, shall I always keep men below stairs?—The old copies read "shall I always keep below stairs?" omitting men. This seems to defeat the passage of all suitable meaning. Steevens proposed to insert men. Singer proposes them.

P. 247. Let me go with that I came for.—For, which is necessary to the sense, is wanting in the old copies. Supplied by Pope.

P. 249. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes.—Collier says, "The Rev. Mr. Barry suggests to me, that the words heart and eyes have in some way changed places in the old copies."

**Act v., Scene 3.**

P. 250. Graves, yawn, and yield your dead, Till death be uttered

_Heavily, heavily._—So the quarto: the folio reads "Heavenly, heavenly," though it has "Heavily, heavily" three lines before. Hereby hangs a long tale of critical discussion. Knight, Verplanck, Staunton, and White follow the folio; Dyce and various others, the quarto. Upon the folio reading Walker puts something very like an extinguisher, thus: "The folio and Knight read Heavenly, heavenly; a most absurd error, generated (ut saxe) by the corruption of an uncommon word to a common one. So in Hamlet, ii. 2,—'it goes so heavily with my disposition,'—the folio has heavenly; as Dyce has also noticed. My note, however, was suggested by the sense of the passage.—The explanation of uttered, as signifying ousted, is one of the many unfortunate exhibitions of half-learning to which our Poet has given occasion." See foot-note 3.
CRITICAL NOTES.

P. 250. Clau... Now, unto thy bones good night! — Yearly will I do this rite. — In the old copies these two lines are assigned to Lord. Corrected by Rowe.

P. 250. And Hymen now with luckier issue speed's. — The o.d text has speeds. Speed's is a contraction of speed us, designed to rhyme with weeds, in the second line before. The Poet has many such contractions, and some even bolder than this. Thirlby makes the following apt note upon the passage: "Claudio could not know, without being a prophet, that this new proposed match should have any luckier event than that designed with Hero. Certainly, therefore, this should be a wish in Claudio; and, to this end, the Poet might have wrote speed's, that is, speed us: and so it becomes a prayer to Hymen."

ACT v., SCENE 4.

P. 252. Ant. This same is she, and I do give you her. — So Theobald. The old editions assign this speech to Leonato; which is clearly wrong, as it contravenes the arrangement expressly made before.

P. 253. One Hero died defiled; but I do live, And, surely as I live, I am a maid. — So the quarto. The folio omits defiled, and leaves a gap in the verse; perhaps because the Editors judged that word to be unsuiting, and did not see what to substitute. Collier has proposed to read "One Hero died reviled"; and urges it on the ground that Hero had, in truth, been reviled, but had not really been defiled, and that she would naturally shrink from applying that word to herself. But, as she represents herself to be "another Hero," and is supposing the reputed defilement and death of the first Hero to have been real, I doubt whether this objection will hold. See foot-note 3.

P. 253. Why, then your uncle, and the Prince, and Claudio Have been deceived; for they swore you did. — The word for is wanting here in the old copies. Perhaps we ought to read, as in the third speech after, "Are much deceived... they did swear you did." The reading in the text is Capell's.

P. 255. Bene. Peace! I will stop your mouth. — In the old editions, this speech is absurdly assigned to Leonato. Corrected by Theobald.
THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW

AN INITIAL FINE OF 25 CENTS WILL BE ASSESSED FOR FAILURE TO RETURN THIS BOOK ON THE DATE DUE. THE PENALTY WILL INCREASE TO 50 CENTS ON THE FOURTH DAY AND TO $1.00 ON THE SEVENTH DAY OVERDUE.

OCT 21 1941

APR 7 1941

13 May 60 CT

REC'D LD

APR 29 1960