

Clark and Wright 1869 W. G. Clark and W. A. Wright
(eds.), Shakespeare -- select plays -- Macbeth (Oxford,
1869), v--xliiii.

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PREFACE.

Macbeth was printed for the first time in the folio of 1623, where it comes between Julius Cæsar and Hamlet, and occupies pages 131--151. It is divided throughout into acts and scenes. The text, though not so corrupt as that of some other plays -- Coriolanus for example -- is yet in many places very faulty, especially as regards the division of the lines. Probably it was printed from a transcript of the author's MS., which was in great part not copied from the original but written to dictation. This is confirmed by the fact that several of the most palpable blunders are blunders of the ear and not of the eye. Here, as elsewhere, we have great reason to join in the regret expressed by the editors of the first folio, that the author did not live to 'oversee' his own works before they were committed to the press.

With regard to the time at which Macbeth was written, if we had the evidence of style alone to guide us, we should assign it to a period when Shakespeare had attained the full perfection of his powers. From the vision of the eight kings, iv. 1. 120,

'Some I see
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry,'

we learn further that it was produced after the union of the two kingdoms under James I. We do not agree with some critics in thinking that this allusion necessarily implies that the play was produced immediately after that king's accession, because an event of such great moment and such permanent consequences would long continue to be present to the minds of men. In act ii. sc. 3, in the Porter's speech,

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Malone believed that the mention of the equivocator 'who committed treason enough for God's sake' was suggested by the trial of Garnett the Jesuit, in March 1606, for participation in the Gunpowder Plot, and that of the 'farmer who hanged himself on the expectation of plenty,' by the scarcity of corn in the autumn of the same year. The latter reference would be quite as apposite if we supposed it to be made to the abundant harvest of any other year, and the Jesuit doctrine of equivocation was at all times so favourite a theme of invective with Protestant preachers, that it could not but be familiar to the public, who in those days frequented the pulpit as assiduously as the stage.

We have however a more precise indication in the Journal of Dr. Simon Forman (privately printed by Mr. Halliwell, from a manuscript in the Ashmolean Museum), who writes as follows: --

'In Macbeth, at the Globe, 1610, the 20th of April, Saturday, there was to be observed first how Macbeth and Banquo two noblemen of Scotland, riding through a wood, there stood before them three women, fairies or nymphs, and saluted Macbeth, saying three times unto him, Hail, Macbeth, king of Codor, for thou shall be a king, but shall beget no kings, &c. Then said Banquo, What, all to Macbeth and nothing to me? Yes, said the nymphs, Hail, to thee, Banquo; thou shall beget kings, yet be no king. And so they departed, and came to the Court of Scotland, to Duncan king of Scots, and it was in the days of Edward the Confessor. And Duncan bade them both kindly welcome, and made Macbeth [sic] forthwith Prince of Northumberland, and sent him home to his own castle, and appointed Macbeth to provide for him, for he would sup with him the next day at night, and did so. And Macbeth contrived to kill Duncan, and through the persuasion of his wife did that night murder the king in his own castle, being his guest. And there were many prodigies seen that night and the day before. And when Macbeth had murdered the king, the blood on his hands could not be washed off by any means, nor from his

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wife's hands, which handled the bloody daggers in hiding them, by which means they became both much amazed and affronted. The murder being known, Duncan's two sons fled, the one to England, the [other to] Wales, to save themselves; they being fled, they were supposed guilty of the murder of their father, which was nothing so. Then was Macbeth crowned king, and then he for fear of Banquo, his old companion, that he should beget kings but be no king himself, he contrived the death of Banquo, and caused him to be murdered on the way as he rode. The next night, being at supper with his noblemen, whom he had bid to a feast, to the which also Banquo should have come, he began to speak of noble Banquo, and to wish that he were there. And as he thus did, standing up to drink a carouse to him, the ghost of Banquo came and sat down in his chair behind him. And he, turning about to sit down again, saw the ghost of Banquo which fronted him so, that he fell in a great passion of fear and fury, uttering many words about his murder, by which, when they heard that Banquo was murdered, they suspected Macbeth. Then Macduff fled to England to the king's son, and so they raised an army and came into Scotland, and at Dunsenanyse overthrew Macbeth. In the mean time, while Macduff was in England, Macbeth slew Macduff's wife and children, and after, in the battle, Macduff slew Macbeth. Observe also how Macbeth's queen did rise in the night in her sleep, and walked, and talked and confessed all, and the Doctor noted her words.'

We have given the foregoing passage with modern spelling and punctuation. We learn from it that Dr. Forman saw Macbeth for the first time on April 20, 1610. In all probability it was then a new play, otherwise he would scarcely have been at the pains to make an elaborate summary of its plot. And in those days the demand for and the supply of new plays were so great, that even the most popular play had

not such a 'run' nor was so <>frquently 'revived' as at present. Besides, as we have shown, there is nothing to justify the inference, still less to prove, that Macbeth was produced at an

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earlier date. In Beaumont and Fletcher's Knight of the Burning Pestle, a burlesque produced in 1611, we find an obvious allusion to the ghost of Banquo. Jasper, one of the characters, enters 'with his face mealed,' as his own ghost. He says to Venturewell, v. i. (vol. ii. p. 216, ed. Dyce), --

'When thou art at thy table with thy friends,
Merry in heart and fill'd with swelling wine,
I'll come in midst of all thy pride and mirth,
Invisible to all men but thyself.'

This supports the inference that Macbeth was in 1611 a new play, and fresh in the recollection of the audience.

We now turn to a question of greater interest -- whether any other dramatist besides Shakespeare had a hand in the composition of Macbeth. In the folio, iii. 5. 33, is a stage direction, 'Musicke and a Song,' and two lines below, 'Sing within. Come away, come away, &c.' In iv. i. 43 is another stage-direction, 'Musicke and a Song. Blacke Spirits, &c.' Davenant, in his alteration of Macbeth, published 1673, supplied these 'et ceteras,' as we have mentioned in our Notes, by words which were supposed to be his own till they were found in Thomas Middleton's play of The Witch, which was discovered in MS. by Steevens, in 1779. This play contains many other points of resemblance to Macbeth, as for instance (p. 268, ed. Dyce), Hecate says of Sebastian, who has come to seek her aid, 'I know he loves me not.' Compare Macbeth, iii. 5. 13.

In p. 314: --

'For the maid servants and the girls o' th' house
I spiced them lately with a drowsy posset.'

Compare Macbeth, ii. 2. 5, 6.

In p. 329: --

'Hec. Come my sweet sisters; let the air strike our tune.'

Compare Macbeth, iv. i. 129.

To these may be added 'the innocence of sleep,' p. 316, and 'there's no such thing,' p. 317, which remind us of Macbeth, ii. 2. 36, and ii. i. 47. In p. 319, the words 'I'll rip thee down from neck to navel,' recall Macbeth, i. 2. 22.

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There are other passages in Middleton's play which sound like faint echoes of Shakespeare, and there is a strong general likeness between the witches of the two dramas, notwithstanding that the Hecate of the one is a spirit, of the other an old woman.

Steevens, perhaps influenced unconsciously by a desire to

exalt the importance of his discovery, maintained that Shakespeare had copied from Middleton, a view which Malone at first acquiesced in, but subsequently controverted. Indeed, given two works, one of transcendent excellence, the other of very inferior merit, it is much more probable that the latter should be plagiarised from the former than vice versa, if plagiarism there be.

We have no means of ascertaining the date of Middleton's play. We know that he survived Shakespeare eleven years, but that he had acquired a reputation as early as 1600, because in England's Parnassus, published in that year, a poem is by mistake attributed to him. (See Dyce's account of Middleton, prefixed to his edition of his works.)

If we were certain that the whole of Macbeth, as we now read it, came from Shakespeare's hand, we should be justified in concluding from the data before us, that Middleton, who was probably junior and certainly inferior to Shakespeare, consciously or unconsciously imitated the great master. But we are persuaded that there are parts of Macbeth which Shakespeare did not write, and the style of these seems to us to resemble that of Middleton. It would be very uncritical to pick out of Shakespeare's works all that seems inferior to the rest, and to assign it to somebody else. At his worst he is still Shakespeare; and though the least 'mannered' of all poets, he has always a manner which cannot well be mistaken. In the parts of Macbeth of which we speak we find no trace of this manner. But to come to particulars. We believe that the second scene of the first act was not written by Shakespeare. Making all allowance for corruption of text, the slovenly metre is not like Shakespeare's work, even when he is most careless. The bombastic phraseology

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of the sergeant is not like Shakespeare's language even when he is most bombastic. What is said of the thane of Cawdor, lines 52, 53, is inconsistent with what follows in scene 3, lines 72, 73, and 112 sqq. We may add that Shakespeare's good sense would hardly have tolerated the absurdity of sending a severely wounded soldier to carry the news of a victory.

In the first thirty-seven lines of the next scene, powerful as some of them are, especially 18--23, we do not recognise Shakespeare's hand; and surely he never penned the feeble 'tag,' ii. 1. 61,

'Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.'

Of the commencement of the third scene of the second act, Coleridge said long ago: 'This low soliloquy of the Porter, and his few speeches afterwards, I believe to have been written for the mob by some other hand.' (Lectures on Shakespeare, &c., vol. i. p. 249.)

If the fifth scene of act iii. had occurred in a drama not attributed to Shakespeare, no one would have discovered in it any trace of Shakespeare's manner.

The rich vocabulary, prodigal fancy, and terse diction displayed in iv. 1. 1--38, show the hand of a master, and make us hesitate in ascribing the passage to any one but the master

himself. There is, however, a conspicuous falling-off in lines 39--47, after the entrance of Hecate.

In iii. 5. 13 it is said that Macbeth 'loves for his own ends, not for you;' but in the play there is no hint of his pretending love to the witches. On the contrary he does not disguise his hatred. 'You secret, black, and midnight hags!' he calls them. Similarly, lines 125--132 of the last-mentioned scene, beginning

'Ay, sir, all this is so' . . .

and ending

'That this great king may kindly say
Our duties did his welcome pay,'

cannot be Shakespeare's.

In iv. 3, lines 140--159, which relate to the touching for the

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evil, were probably interpolated previous to a representation at Court.

We have doubts about the second scene of act v.

In v. 5, lines 47--50,

'If this which he avouches does appear,
There is no flying hence nor tarrying here.
I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish the estate o' the world were now undone,'

are singularly weak, and read like an unskilful imitation of other passages, where Macbeth's desperation is interrupted by fits of despondency. How much better the sense is without them!

'Arm, arm, and out !
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back.'

In v. 8. 32, 33, the words,

'Before my body
I throw my warlike shield,'

are also, we think, interpolated.

Finally, the last forty lines of the play show evident traces of another hand than Shakespeare's. The double stage direction, 'Exeunt, fighting' -- 'Enter fighting, and Macbeth slaine,' proves that some alteration had been made in the conclusion of the piece. Shakespeare, who has inspired his audience with pity for Lady Macbeth, and made them feel that her guilt has been almost absolved by the terrible retribution which followed, would not have disturbed this feeling by calling her a 'fiend-like queen'; nor would he have drawn away the veil which with his fine tact he had dropt over her fate, by telling us that she had taken off her life 'by self and violent hands.'

We know that it is not easy to convince readers that such

and such passages are not in Shakespeare's manner, because their notion of Shakespeare's manner is partly based on the assumption that these very passages are by Shakespeare. Assuming, however, that we have proved our case so far, how are we to account for the intrusion of this second and inferior hand? The first hypothesis which presents itself is that

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Shakespeare wrote the play in conjunction with Middleton or another as 'collaborateur.' We know that this was a very common practice with the dramatists of his time. It is generally admitted that he assisted Fletcher in the composition of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*; and Mr. Spedding has shown, conclusively as we think, that Fletcher assisted him in the composition of *Henry VIII*.

We might suppose, therefore, that after drawing out the scheme of *Macbeth*, Shakespeare reserved to himself all the scenes in which *Macbeth* or *Lady Macbeth* appeared, and left the rest to his assistant. We must further suppose that he largely retouched, and even rewrote in places, this assistant's work, and that in his own work his good nature occasionally tolerated insertions by the other. But, then, how did it happen that he left the inconsistencies and extravagances of the second scene of act i. uncorrected?

On the whole we incline to think that the play was interpolated after Shakespeare's death, or at least after he had withdrawn from all connection with the theatre. The interpolator was, not improbably, Thomas Middleton; who, to please the 'groundlings,' expanded the parts originally assigned by Shakespeare to the weird sisters, and also introduced a new character, *Hecate*. The signal inferiority of her speeches is thus accounted for.

If we may trust Simon Forman's account of the play/¹, it originally began with the scene in which *Macbeth* and *Banquo* appear. Their conversation, which acquainted the audience with the battle which had just occurred, was probably cut out and its place supplied by the narrative of the 'bleeding sergeant,' in which some of Shakespeare's lines may have been incorporated, as (11) 'The multiplying villanies of nature,' and (55--57) 'Confronted him lavish spirit.' The twelve lines which now make the first scene, and which from

¹ On this point, however, we must not lay too much stress. Forman omits all mention of *Macbeth*'s second interview with the witches, iv. 1. 48--124. which is unquestionably Shakespeare's work. And he may have arrived at the theatre a few minutes late.

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long familiarity we regard as a necessary introduction to the play, are not unworthy of Shakespeare, but on the other hand do not rise above the level which is reached by Middleton and others of his contemporaries in their happier moments.

When King James visited Oxford in 1605, a Latin play or interlude, on the subject of *Macbeth*, was performed in his presence. This, Farmer thinks, may have suggested the subject to Shakespeare. Doubtless Holinshed supplied to the

Oxford dramatist, as to Shakespeare, the materials for his work, and in both cases a subject was chosen from Scottish history with the view of interesting the Scottish monarch. Shakespeare's play would be none the less popular for representing the rightful heir restored to his throne by a victorious English army.

The single authority consulted by Shakespeare for this, as for all other plays connected with the histories of England and Scotland) was Holinshed's Chronicle. The details of Duncan's murder are evidently borrowed from Holinshed's account of the murder of King Duffe by Donwald, which we give here at length, together with the narrative of his pining away under the influence of witchcraft, as it may serve to illustrate some of the expressions in the witch scenes of the play. The reforms commenced by the king had caused great discontent among the nobles.

'In the meane time the king fell into a languishing disease, not so greuous as strange, for that none of his Phisitions coulde perceyue what to make of it. For there was seene in him no token, that either choler, melancolie, flegme, or any other vicious humor did any thing abounde, whereby his body should be brought into such a decay & consumption (so as there remayned vnneath/2 any thing vpon him saue skin & bone:) & sithence it appeared manifestly by all outward signes & tokens, that natural moisture did nothing faile in y/e vital sprits: his colour also was freshe & fayre to behold, with such liuelinesse of lookes, that more was not to be

/2 scarcely, hardly.

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wished for: he had also a temperate desire & appetite to his meate & drinke, but yet could he not sleepe in the night time by any prouocations that could be deuised, but still fell into exceeding sweates, which by no meanes might be restreyned. The Phisitions perceyuing all theyr medicines to wante the effect, yet to put him in some comfort of help, declared vnto him that they would sende for some cunning Phisitions into foraine parties, who haply being inured with such kind of diseases, should easily cure him, namely so soone as the spring of the yeare was once come, whiche of it self should help much thervnto. . . . But about that present time there was a murmuring amongst the people, how the king was vexed with no naturall sicknesse, but by sorcery and Magicall arte, practised by a sort of Witches dwelling in a towne of Murrayland, called Fores. Wherevpon albeit, the Authour of this secrete talke was not knowen, yet being brought to the kings eare, it caused him to sende foorthwith certaine wittie persons thither to enquire of the truth. They that were thus sent, dissembling the cause of theyr iourney, were receyued in the darke of the night into the castell of Fores by the lieutenant of the same, called Donwald, who continuing faithful to the king, had kepte that castell agaynst the rebelles to the kings vse. Vnto him therefore these messengers declared the cause of theyr comming, requiring his ayde for the accomplishment of the kings pleasure. The souldiers whiche lay there in garison had an inkeling that there was

some such mater in hand as was talked of amongst the people, by reason that one of them kept as concubine a yong woman which was doughter to one of y/e witches as his paramour, who told him the whole maner vsed by hir mother & other hir companions, with y/e intent also, which was to make away the king. The souldier hauing learned this of his leman, told the same to his fellowes, who made reporte therof to Donewald, & he shewed it to the kings messengers, & therwith sent for the yong damosell which the souldier kept, as then being within the castell, & caused hir vpon streyt examination to confesse the whole mater as she had scene & knew:

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whervpon learning by hir confession in what house in the towne it was where they wrought theyr mischeeuous misterie, he sent foorth souldiers, about the midst of the night, who breaking into y/e house, found one of the Witches roosting vpon a wooden broche an image of waxe at the fire, resembling in ech feature the kings person, made & deuised as is to be thought, by craft & arte of the Deuill: an other of them sat reciting certain words of enchauntment, & still basted the image with a certaine licour very busily. The souldiers finding them occupied in this wise, tooke them together with the image, & led them into the castell, where being streitly examined for what purpose they went about such maner of enchantment, they answered, to the end to make away y/e king: for as y/e image did wast afore the fire, so did the bodie of the king breake forth in sweate. And as for the wordes of enchauntment, they serued to keepe him still waking from sleepe, so that as the waxe euer melted, so did the kings flesh: by which meanes it should haue come to passe, that when y/e waxe were once cleane consumed, the death of the king should immediatly follow. So were they taught by euill sprites, & hyred to worke the feat by the nobles of Murrayland. The standers by that herd such an abhominable tale told by these Witches, streight wayes brake the image, & caused y/e Witches (according as they had well deserued) to bee burnt to death. It was sayd that the king, at the very same time that these things were a doying within the castell of Fores, was deliuered of his languor, and slepte that night without any sweate breaking forth vpon him at all, and the next day being restored to his strength, was able to do any maner of thing that lay in man to do, as though he had not bene sicke before any thing at all. But how soeuer it came to passe, truth it is that when he was restored to his perfect health, he gathered a power of men, and with the same went into Murrayland against the rebels there, and chasing them from thence, he pursued them into Rosse, & from Rosse into Cathnese, where apprehending them, he brought them backe vnto Fores, and there caused them to

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be hanged vpon gallowes and gybettes. Amongst them there were also certaine yong Gentlemen right beautifull and goodly personages, being neare of kinne vnto Donewald captaine of the Castell, and had bene perswaded to be partakers with the

other rebelles more through the fraudulent counsell of diuers wicked persons than of theyr owne accorde: Wherevpon the foresayde Donewald lamenting theyr case, made earnest labour and suyte to the king to haue begged theyr pardon, but hauing a playne deniall, he conceyued suche an inwarde malice towardes the king, (though he shewed it not outwardly at the firste) that the same continued still boyling in his stomake, and ceased not, till through setting on of his wife and in reuenge of suche vnthankefulnesse, he founde meanes to murder the king within the foresayd Castell of Fores where he vsed to sojourne, for the king beyng in that countrey, was accustomed to lie most commonly within the same castel, hauing a speciall trust in Donewald, as a man whom he neuer suspected: but Donwald not forgetting the reproche whiche his linage had susteyned by the execution of those his kinsmen, whome the king for a spectacle to the people had caused to be hanged, could not but shew manifest tokens of great grieffe at home amongst his familie: which his wife perceyuing, ceassed not to trauallye with him, till she vnderstood what the cause was of his displeasure. Whiche at length when she had learned by his owne relation, she as one that bare no lesse malice in hyr harte towardes the king, for the like cause on hyr behalfe than hir husband did for his freendes, counselled him (sith the king oftentimes vsed to lodge in his house without any garde aboute him, other than the garyson of the castell, whiche was wholly at his commaundement) to make him away, and shewed him the meanes whereby he might soonest accomlishe it. Donwalde thus being the more kindled in wrath by the woordes of his wife, determined to follow hyr aduise in the execution of so haynous an acte. Wherevpon deuising with himselfe for a while, whiche way he might best accomlishe his cursed intention, at length he gate oportunitie and sped his purpose

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as followeth. It chaunced, that the king vpon the day before he purposed to departe forth of the Castell, was long in his oratorie at his prayers, and there continued till it was late in the night, at the last comming foorth he called suche afore him, as had faithfully serued him in pursute and apprehention of the rebelles, and giuing them hartie thankes, he bestowed sundry honorable giftes amongst them, of the which number Donwald was one, as he that had bene euer accompted a moste faithfull seruaunt to the king. At length hauing talked with them a long time, he got him into his pryue chamber, only with two of his chamberlaynes, who hauing brought him to bedde came foorth againe, and then fell to banqueting with Donewald and his wife, who had prepared diuers delicate dishes, and sundry sorts of drinke for theyr arere supper/3 or collation, whereat they sat vp so long, till they had charged theyr stomakes with suche full gorges, that theyr heades were no sooner got to the pyllow, but a sleepe they were so fast, that a man might haue remoued the chamber ouer them, rather than to haue awaked them out of theyr drunken sleepe. Then Donewalde though he abhorred the act greatly in his harte, yet through instigation of his wife, he called foure of his seruants vnto him (whom he had made

priuie to his wicked intent before, and framed to his purpose with large giftes) and now declaring vnto them, after what sorte they should worke the feate, they gladly obeyed his instructions, and speedely going about the murder, they enter the chamber (in which the king lay) a litle before cockes crow, where they secretely cut his throte as he lay sleeping, without any buskling/⁴ at all: and immediatly by a posterne gate they caried foorth the dead body into the fieldes, and throwing it vpon an horse there prouided ready for that purpose, they conuey it vnto a place, distant aboute twoo myles from the castell, where they stayed, and gat certayne labourers to helpe them to turne the course of a litle riuer

^{/3} Literally, an after-supper; a late meal after the usual supper.

^{/4} bustling.

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running through the fieldes there, and digging a deepe hole in the chanell, they burie the body in the same, ramming it vp with stones and grauel so closely, that setting the water into the right course agayne, no man coulde perceyue that any thing had bene newly digged there. This they did by order appointed them by Donewald as is reported, for that the bodie shoulde not be founde, and by bleeding (when Donewald shoulde be present) declare him to be giltie of the murder. For that suche an opinion men haue, that the dead corps of any man being slayne, will bleede abundantly if the murderer be present: but for what consideration soeuer they buried him there, they had no sooner finished the worke, but that they slew them, whose help they vsed herein, and streightwayes therevpon fledde into Orkney.

'Donewald aboute the time that the murder was a doing, got him amongst them that kepte the watch, and so continued in companie with them al the residue of the night. But in the morning when the noyse was reysed in the kings chamber how the king was slaine, his body conueyed away, and the bed all berayed/⁵ with bloud, he with the watche ran thither as though he had knowen nothing of the mater, and breaking into the chamber, and finding cakes of bloud in the bed & on the floore about the sides of it, he foorthwith slewe the chamberlaynes, as giltie of that haynous murder, and then like a madde man running to and fro, hee ransacked euery corner within the castell, as though it had bene to haue seene if he might haue founde either the body or any of y/e murtherers hid in any pryue place: but at length comming to the posterne gate, & finding it open, he burdened the chamberlaines whom he had slaine with al the fault, they hauing the keyes of the gates committed to their keeping al the night, and therefore it could not be otherwise (sayde he) but that they were of counsel in the committing of that moste detestable murder. Finally suche was his ouer earnest diligence in the inquisition and triall of the offen-

^{/5} smeared.

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dours herein, that some of the Lordes began to mislike the mater, and to smell foorth shrewed tokens, that he shoulde not be altogither cleare himselfe: but for so much as they were in that countrey, where hee had the whole rule, what by reason of his frendes and authoritie together, they doubted to vtter what they thought till time and place shoulde better serue therevnto, and herevpon got them away euery man to his home. For the space of .vj. moneths together after this haynous murder thus committed, there appeared no sunne by day, nor Moone by night in any parte of the realme, but stil was the skie couered with continual clowdes, and sometimes suche outragious windes arose with lightnings and tempestes, that the people were in great feare of present destruction.' (History of Scotland, pp. 206--209, ed. 1577.)

The sentence last quoted is clearly the origin of what Ross says in act ii. scene 4:

'By the clock, 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp,' &c.

The other natural portents mentioned in the same scene are borrowed from Holinshed's account of those which followed the murder of King Duffe. 'Monstrous sightes also that were seene within the Scottishe kingdome that yeare were these, horses in Lothian being of singuler beautie and swiftnesse, did eate their owne flesh, & would in no wise taste any other meate. In Angus there was a gentlewoman brought forth a childe without eyes, nose, hande, or foote. There was a Sparhauke also strangled by an Owle.' (p. 210.) These circumstances have been interwoven by the dramatist with Holinshed's account of Macbeth and Duncan, from which we now give all the passages which have any bearing upon the play.

'After Malcolme succeeded his Nephew Duncan, the sonne of his daughter Beatrice: for Malcolme had two daughters, y/e one which was this Beatrice, being giuen in mariage vnto one Abbanath Crinen, a man of great nobilitie, and Thane of the Isles and west partes of Scotlande, bare of that mariage the foresayd Duncan: The other called Dooda, was married

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vnto Synell the Thane of Glammis, by whom she had issue one Makbeth a valiant gentleman, and one that if he had not bene somewhat cruell of nature, might haue bene thought most worthie the gouernment of a realme. On the other parte, Duncan was so softe and gentle of nature, that the people wished the inclinations & maners of these two cousines to haue bene so tempered and enterchaungeably bestowed betwixt them, that where the one had to much of clemencie, and the other of crueltie, the meane vertue betwixt these two extremities, might haue reygned by indifferent particion in them bothe, so shoulde Duncan haue proued a worthy king, and Makbeth an excellent captaine.

'The beginning of Duncanes reigne was very quiet & peaceable, without any notable trouble, but after it was perceyued how negligent he was in punishing offenders, many misruled persons tooke occasion thereof to trouble the peace

and quiet state of the common wealth, by seditious commotions whiche firste had theyr beginnings in this wise.

'Banquho the Thane of Lochquhaber, of whom the house of the Stewardest is discended, the whiche by order of lynage hath nowe for a long time enjoyed the crowne of Scotlande, euen till these our dayes, as he gathered the finaunces due to the king, and further punished somewhat sharpely suche as were notorious offenders, being assayled by a number of rebelles inhabiting in that countrey, and spoyled of the money and all other things, had muche ado to get away with life after he had receyued sundry grieuous woundes amongst them. Yet escaping theyr handes after he was somewhat recouered of his hurtes and was able to ride, he repayed to the courte, where making his complaint to the king in most earnest wise, he purchased at length that the offenders were sente for by a Sergeant at armes, to appeare to make aunswere vnto suche mater as shoulde be layde to theyr charge, but they augmenting theyr mischeeuous acte with a more wicked deede, after they had misused the messenger with sundry kindes of reproches, they finally slew him also.

'Then doubting not but for suche contemptuous de-

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meanour agaynst the kings regall authoritie, they shoulde be inuaded with all the power the king coulde make, Makdowalde one of great estimation amongst them making first a confederacie with his nearest frendes and kinsmen, tooke vpon him to be chiefe captayne of all suche rebelles, as woulde stande against the king, in maintenance of theyr grieuous offences lately committed against him. Many slanderous wordes also, & rayling taunts this Makdowald vttered against his prince, calling him a faynt harted milkesop, more meete to gouerne a sort of idle monkes in some cloyster, than to haue y/e rule of suche valiant and hardy men of warre as the Scottes were.

'He vsed also suche subtile perswasions and forged allurements, that in a small time he had got together a mightie power of men: for out of the westerne Isles, there came vnto him a great multitude of people, offering themselues to assist him in that rebellious quarell, and out of Ireland in hope of the spoyle came no small number of Kernes & Galloglasses offering gladly to serue vnder him, whither it shoulde please him to lead them. Makdowald thus hauing a mightie puyssance about him, encountred with suche of the kings people as were sent against him into Lochquhabir, and discomfiting them, by fine force tooke theyr captaine Malcolme, and after the end of the batayle smooted his head.

'This ouerthrow beyng notified to the king, did put him in wonderfull feare, by reason of his small skill in warlyke affayres. Calling therefore his nobles to a counsell, willed them of their best aduise for the subduing of Makdowald and other the rebelles.

'Here in sundry heades (as it euer happeneth) being sundry opinions, whiche they vttered according to euery man his skill, at length Makbeth speaking muche against the kings softnesse, & ouer muche slacknesse in punishing offenders, whereby they had such time to assemble together, he pro-

mised notwithstanding, if the charge were committed vnto him and to Banquho, so to order the mater, that the rebelles should be shortly vanquished and quite put downe, and that

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not so much as one of them shoulde be founde to make resistance within the countrey.

'And euen so came it to passe: for being sente foorth with a newe power, at his entring into Lochquhaber, the fame of his comming put y/e enimies in suche feare, that a great number of them stole secretely away from theyr captaine Makdowald, who neuerthelesse enforced thereto, gaue batayle vnto Makbeth, with the residue whiche remained with him, but being ouercome and fleing for refuge into a castell (within the whiche hys wyfe and chyldren were enclosed,) at length when he saw he coulde neyther defend the hold any longer against his enimies, nor yet vpon surrender be suffered to depart with lyfe saued, he first slew his wife & children, and lastly himselfe, least if he had yeelded simply, he shoulde haue bene executed in most cruell wise for an example to other.

'Makbeth entring into the castel by the gates, as then set open, founde the carcase of Makdowald lying dead there amongst the residue of the slaine bodies, whiche when he behelde, remitting no peece of his cruell nature with that pitifull sight, he caused the head to be cut off, and set vpon a pooles ende, & so sent it as a present to the king who as then lay at Bertha.

'The headlesse trunke he commaunded to be hong vp vpon an high payre of gallowes. Them of the Westerne Isles, suyng for pardon in that they had ayded Makdowald in his trayterous enterpryse, he fined at great summes of money: and those whom he tooke in Lochquhabir, being come thither to beare armure agaynst the king, he put to execution.

'Herevpon the Iland men conceyued a deadly grudge towards him, calling him a couenant breaker, a bloody tyrant, and a cruell murtherer of them, whom the kings mercie had pardoned. With whiche reprochfull woordes Makbeth being kindled in wrathfull yre against them, had passed ouer with an army into the Isles, to haue taken reuenge vpon them for theyr liberall talke, had he not bene otherwayes perswaded by some of his frendes, and partely pacified by giftes pre-

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sented vnto him on the behalfe of the Ilandmen, seeking to auoyde his displeasure.

'Thus was iustice and lawe restored againe to the old accustomed course by the diligent meanes of Makbeth. Immediately wherevpon worde came that Sueno king of Norway was arriued in Fyfe with a puyasant army to subdue the whole realme of Scotland.'

Here follows a short digression about Sueno and his three sons, and the division of England between Canute and Edmund Ironside. The narrative then proceeds: --

'The crueltie of this Sueno was suche, that he neyther spared man, woman, nor childe, of what age, condition or

degree so euer they were, whereof when king Duncane was certified, hee set all slouthfull and lingering delayes aparte, and began to assemble an army in moste speedy wise, like a right valiant Captayne: for oftentimes it happeneth, that a dull cowarde, and slouthfull person constraigned by necessitie, becommeth right hardie and actiue. Therefore when his whole power was come together, he deuided the same with three batayles/6. The firste was led by Makbeth, the seconde by Banquho, and the king himselfe gouerned in the mayne batayle or middlewarde, wherein were appoynted to attende his person the moste parte of all the residue of the Scottishe nobilitie.

'The army of Scottishmen beyng thus ordered, came vnto Culros, where encoutring with the enimies, after a sore and cruell foughten batayle, Sueno remayned victorious, and Malcolme with his Scottes discomfited. Howbeit the Danes were so broken by this batayle, that they were not able to make long chase on theyr enimies, but kepte themselues all night in order of batayle, for doubte least y/e Scots assembling together againe, might haue set vpon them at some aduantage.

'On the morrow when the fieldes were discovered, and that it was perceyued how no enimies were to be founde

/6 See note on v. 6. 4.

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abroade, they gathered the spoyle, whiche they deuided amongst them, according to the lawe of armes.

'Then was it ordeyned by commaundement of Sueno, that no Souldier shoulde hurte either man, woman, or childe, excepte suche as were founde with weapon in hande ready to make resistance, for he hoped now to conquere the realme without further bloudshed.

'But when knowledge was giuen how Duncane was fled to the castell of Bertha, and that Makbeth was gathering a new power to withstand the incursions of the Danes, Sueno raised his tentes and comming to the sayd castell layde a strong siege rounde about it. Duncane seyng himselfe thus enuironned by his enimies, sent a secrete message by councill of Banquho vnto Makbeth, commaunding him to abide at Inche cuthill, till hee hearde from him some other newes.

'In the meane time Duncane fell in fayned communication with Sueno as though he would haue yeilded vp the Castell into his handes vnder certaine conditions, and this did he to driue time, and to put his enimies out of all suspition of any enterpryse ment against them, till all things were brought to passe that might seme for the purpose.

'At length when they were fallen at a poynt/7 for rendring vp the holde, Duncane offered to sende foorth of the castell into the campe greate prouision of vitayles to refresh the army, whiche offer was gladly accepted of the Danes for that they had bene in greate penurie of sustenance many dayes before.

'The Scots herevpon tooke the iuyce of Mekilwort beries/8, & mixed the same in theyr ale and bread, sending it thus spiced and confectioned in great abundance vnto their eni-

mies.

'They reioysing that they had got meate and drinke suffi-

/7 See note on iv. 3. 135.

/8 Hector Boece calls it Solatrum amentiale, that is, deadly nightshade; of which Gerarde in his Herball writes, 'This kinde of Nightshade causeth sleepe, troubleth the minde, bringeth madnes if a fewe of the berries be inwardly taken.' Perhaps this is the 'insane root' of i. 3. 84.

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cient to satisfie theyr bellies, fell to eating and drinking after such greedy wise, that it seemed they stroue who might deuoure & swallow vp most, till the operation of the beries spred in suche sorte through all the partes of their bodies, that they were in the ende brought into a fast dead sleepe, that in maner it was vnpossible to awake them.

'Then foorthwith Duncane sent vnto Makbeth, commaunding him with all diligence to come and set vpon the enimies, being in easie pointe to be ouercome.

'Makbeth making no delay came with his people to the place, where his enimies were lodged, & first killing the watche, afterwards entred the campe, and made suche slaughter on all sides without any resistance, that it was a wonderfull mater to behold, for the Danes were so heauy of sleepe, that the most parte of them were slayne & neuer styrred: other that were awakened eyther by the noyse or otherwayes foorth, were so amazed and dymme headed vpon their wakening, that they were not able to make any defence, so that of the whole numbers there escaped no moe but onely Sueno himselve and tenne other persons, by whose help he got to his shippes lying at rode in the mouth of Tay.

'The most parte of the maryners, when they heard what plentie of meate and drinke the Scottes had sente vnto the campe, came from the sea thither to bee partakers thereof, and so were slayne amongst theyr fellowes: by meanes whereof when Sueno perceyued howe through lacke of maryners he shoulde not be able to conuey away his nauie, hee furnished one shippe throughly with suche as were lefte, and in the same sayled backe into Norway, cursing the tyme that hee set forewarde on this infortunate iourney.

'The other shippes whiche hee lefte behinde him within three dayes after his departure from thence, were tossed so togyther by violence of an East winde, that beatyng and russhyng one agaynst an other they suncke there, and lie in the same place euen vnto these dayes, to the greate daunger of other suche shippes as come on that coaste, for being couered with the floudde when the tide commes, at the

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ebbyng againe of the same, some parte of them appeare aboue water.

'The place where y/e Danish vessels were thus lost, is yet cleped Drownelow sandes. This ouerthrow receiued in maner aforesaid by Sueno, was right displeasent to him and his people, as shoulde appeare in that it was a custome many yeares after, that no Knightes were made in Norway, excepte

they were firste sworne to reuenge the slaughter of theyr countreyemen and frendes thus slayne in Scotland.

'The Scottes hauing wonne so notable a victory, after they had gathered and diuided the spoyle of the fieldes, caused solemne processions to be made in all places of the realme, and thanks to be giuen to almightie God, that had sent them so fayre a day ouer their enimies.

'But whylest the people were thus at theyr processions, woorde was brought that a newe fleete of Danes was arriued at Kingcorne, sent thither by Canute king of England in reuenge of his brother Suenoes ouerthrow.

'To resist these enimies, whiche were already landed, and busie in spoiling the countrey, Makbeth and Banquho were sente with the kings authoritie, who hauing with them a conuenient power, encountred the enimies, slewe parte of them, and chased the other to their shippes. They that escaped and got once to theyr shippes, obtayned of Makbeth for a great summe of golde, that suche of theyr freendes as were slaine at this last bickering/⁹ might be buried in Saint Colmes Inche. In memorie whereof, many olde Sepultures are yet in the sayde Inche, there to be seene grauen with the armes of the Danes, as the maner of burying noble men still is, and heretofore hath bene vsed.

'A peace was also concluded at the same time betwixte the Danes and Scottishmen, ratified as some haue wryten in this wise. That from thence foorth the Danes shoulde neuer come into Scotlande to make any warres agaynst the Scottes by any maner of meanes.

/9 conflict.

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'And these were the warres that Duncane had with forrayne enimies in the seventh yeare of his reygne.

Act I. Scene III. 'Shortly after happened a straunge and vncouth wonder, whiche afterwarde was the cause of much trouble in the realme of Scotlande as ye shall after heare. It fortun'd as Makbeth & Banquho iourneyed towarde Fores, where the king as then lay, they went sporting by the way together without other companie, saue only themselues, passing through the woodes and fieldes, when sodenly in the middes of a launde/¹⁰, there met them .iij. women in straunge & ferly/¹¹ apparell, resembling creatures of an elder worlde, whom when they attentiuely behelde, wondering much at the sight, The first of them spake & sayde: All hayle Makbeth Thane of Glammis (for he had lately entred into that dignitie and office by the death of his father Synel.) The .ij. of them said: Hayle Makbeth Thane of Cawder: but the third sayde: All Hayle Makbeth that hereafter shall be king of Scotland.

'Then Banquho, what maner of women (saith he) are you, that seeme so litle fauourable vnto me, where as to my fellow here, besides highe offices, yee assigne also the kingdome, appointyng foorth nothing for me at all? Yes sayth the firste of them, wee promise greater benefites vnto thee, than vnto him, for he shall reygne in deede, but with an vnluckie ende: neyther shall he leaue any issue behinde him to succede in

his place, where/12 contrarily thou in deede shalt not reygne at all, but of thee those shall be borne whiche shall gouerne the Scottishe kingdome by long order of continuall discent. Herewith the foresayde women vanished immediatly out of theyr sight. This was reputed at the first but some vayne fantastical illusion by Makbeth and Banquho, in so much that Banquho woulde call Makbeth in ieste kyng of Scotland, and Makbeth againe would call him in sporte likewise, the father of many kings. But afterwards the common opinion was, that these women were eyther the weird sisters, that is

/10 lawn. /11 wonderful. /12 whereas.

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(as ye would say) y/e Goddesses of destinie, or els some Nymphes or Feiries, endewed with knowledge of prophesie by their Nicromanticall science, bicause euery thing came to passe as they had spoken.

'For shortly after, the Thane of Cawder being condemned at Fores of treason against the king committed, his landes, liuings and offices were giuen of the kings liberalitie vnto Makbeth.

'The same night after, at supper Banquho iested with him and sayde, now Makbeth thou haste obtayned those things which the twoo former sisters prophesied, there re-mayneth onely for thee to purchase/13 that which the third sayd should come to passe.

'Wherevpon Makbeth reuoluing the thing in his minde, began euen then to deuise howe he mighte attayne to the kingdome: but yet hee thought with himselfe that he must tary a time, whiche shoulde aduance him thereto (by the diuine prouidence) as it had come to passe in his former preferment.

Act I. Scene IV. 'But shortely after it chaunced that king Duncane hauing two sonnes by his wife which was the daughter of Sywarde Earle of Northumberland, he made the elder of them cleped/14 Malcolme prince of Cumberlande, as it were thereby to appoint him his successor in the kingdome, immediatly after his deceasse.

'Makbeth sore troubled herewith, for that he sawe by this meanes his hope sore hindered, (where/15 by the olde lawes of the realme, the ordinance was, that if he that shoulde succede were not of able age to take the charge vpon himselfe, he that was nexte of bloud vnto him, shoulde be admitted) he beganne to take counsell howe he might vsurpe the kingdome by force, hauing a iuste quarell so to do (as he tooke the mater,) for that Duncane did what in him lay to defraude him of all maner of title and clayme, whiche hee mighte in tyme to come, pretende vnto the crowne.

'The woordes of the three weird sisters also, (of whome

/13 acquire. /14 called. /15 whereas.

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before ye haue heard) greatly encouraged him herevnto, but specially his wife lay sore vpon him to attempt the thing, as she that was very ambitious brenning/16 in vn-

quenachable desire to beare the name of a Queene.

'At length therefore communicating his purposed intent with his trustie frendes, amongst whom Banquho was the chiefest, vpon confidence of theyr promised ayde, he slewe the king at Enuernes, (or as some say at Botgosuane,) in the .vj. yeare of his reygne.

'Then hauing a companie about him of such as he had made priuie to his enterpryce, he caused himselfe to be proclaymed king, and foorthwith went vnto Scone, where by common consent, he receyued the inuesture/¹⁷ of the kingdome according to the accustomed maner.

'The bodie of Duncane was firste conueyed vnto Elgyne, and there buried in kingly wise, but afterwardes it was remoued and conueyed vnto Colmekill, and there layd in a sepulture/¹⁸ amongst his predecessours in the yeare after the birth of our Sauour .1040.

'Malcolme Cammore and Donald Bane the sonnes of king Duncane, for feare of theyr liues (whiche they might well know y/t Makbeth would seeke to bring to end for his more sure confirmacion in the astate) fled into Cumberland, where Malcolme remained til time that S. Edward y/e sonne of king Etheldred recouered the dominion of England from the Danish power, the whiche Edward receyued Malcolme by way of moste freendly entertaynement, but Donald passed ouer into Ireland, where he was tenderly cherished by the king of that lande.

'Makbeth after the departure thus of Duncanes sonnes vsed great liberalitie towards the nobles of the realme, thereby to winne their fauour, & when he saw that no man went about to trouble him, he set his whole intention/¹⁹ to maintayne iustice, and to punishe all enormities and

/16 burning. /17 investiture.
/18 sepulchre. /19 intent, endeavour.

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abuses, whiche had chaunced through the feeble and slouthfull administration of Duncane.' (pp. 239-245.)

The narrative proceeds to relate the good government of Macbeth and his just laws. Among other acts of retribution recorded is his putting to death for sedition the thane of Ross, who in the play appears in the second and third scenes of the fourth act and in the very last scene of all.

Act III. Scenes I, II, III. 'These and the like commendable lawes, Makbeth caused to be put as then in vse, gouerning the realme for the space of tenne yeares in equall iustice. But this was but a counterfayte zeale of equitie shewed by him, partely against his naturall inclination to purchase thereby the fauour of the people.

'Shortly after, he beganne to shewe what he was, in steede of equitie practising crueltie. For the pricke of conscience (as it chaunceth euer in tyrantes, and suche as attayne to any astate by vnrightuous meanes) caused him euer to feare, least he should be serued of the same cuppe, as he had ministred to his predecessour.

'The woordes also of the three weird sisters, wold not out

of his mind, which as they promised him the kingdome, so lykewise did they promise it at the same time, vnto the posteritie of Banquho. He willed therefore the same Banquho with his sonne named Fleaunce, to come to a supper that he had prepared for them, which was in deede, as he had deuised, present death at the handes of certaine murderers, whome he hyred to execute that deede, appoynting them to meete with the same Banquho and his sonne without the palayce as they returned to theyr lodgings, and there to slea them, so that he woulde not haue his house slaundered, but that in time to come he might cleare himselfe, if any thing were layde to his charge vpon any suspition that might arise.

'It chaunced yet, by the benefite of the darke night, that though the father were slaine, the son yet by the helpe of almightie God reseruing him to better fortune, escaped that

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daunger, & afterwarde hauing some inckling by the admonition of some frendes which he had in the courte, howe his life was sought no lesse then his fathers, who was slayne not by chaunce medley (as by the handling of the mater Makbeth would haue had it to appeare,) but euen vpon a prepensed/20 deuise, wherevpon to auoyde further perill he fledde into Wales.' (p. 246.)

Holinshed at some length now traces the descent of the royal family of Scotland from Banquo. The following summary will be sufficient for our purpose. Fleance, who had fled into Wales, had by the daughter of the prince of that country a son Walter, who ultimately returned to Scotland in the suite of Queen Margaret and became Lord Steward. Walter's son Alane went to the Holy Land in the first crusade with Godfrey of Boulogne and Robert Duke of Normandy. Alane Steward had issue Alexander, the founder of the Abbey of Paisley. Alexander had several sons, one of whom, Walter, distinguished himself at the battle of Largs and became the ancestor of the earls of Lennox and Darnley: another, John, was the father of Walter Steward, who 'married Mariorie Bruce daughter to king Robert Bruce, by whom he had issue king Robert the second of that name.' (p. 247.) After this digression the chronicler proceeds: --

Act IV. Scenes I, II, III. 'But to returne vnto Makbeth, in continuing the history, and to beginne where I left, ye shal vnderstand, that after the contriued slaughter of Banquho, nothing prospered with the foresayde Makbeth; for in maner euery man began to doubt his owne life, and durst vnneth/21 appeare in the kings presence, & euen as there were many that stode in feare of him, so likewise stode he in feare of many, in such sorte that he began to make those away by one surmised cauillation/21 or other, whom he thought most able to worke him any displeasure.

'At length he found suche sweetnesse by putting his nobles

/20 preconceived, predetermined. /21 See note 2.

/22 imaginary quibble.

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thus to death, that his earnest thyrst after bloud in this behalfe, might in nowise be satisfied: for ye must consider he wanne double profite (as he thought) hereby: for firste they were ridde out of the way whome he feared, and then agayne his coffers were enriched by their goodes, whiche were forfeyted to his vse, whereby he might the better mainteyne a garde of armed men about him to defend his person from iniurie of them whom he had in any suspition.

'Further to the ende he might the more sickerly/²³ oppresse his subiectes with all tyranlike wrongs, hee buylded a strong Castell on the top of an high hill cleped Dunsinnane situate in Gowry, ten myles from Perth, on such a proude height, that standing there aloft, a man might behold welneare all the countreys of Angus, Fife, Stermond, & Ernedale, as it were lying vnderneath him. This castell then being founded on the top of that high hill, put the realme to great charges/²⁴ before it was fynished, for al the stuffe necessarie to the building, could not be brought vp without much toyle and businesse.

'But Makbeth beeing once determined to haue the worke go forwarde, caused the Thanes of eche shire within the Realme, to come and helpe towards that building, eche man hys course about.

'At the last when the turne fell vnto Makduffe Thane of Fife to buylde his part, he sent workmen with all needfull prouision, and commaunded them to shew suche diligence in euery behalfe, that no occasion might bee giuen for the king to finde fault with him, in that he came not himselfe as other had done, which he refused to do for doubt least the king bearing him (as he partly vnderstoode) no great good will, woulde lay violent handes vpon him, as he had done vpon dyuerse other.

'Shortly after, Makbeth comming to behold howe the worke went forwarde, and bycause hee found not Makduffe there, he was sore offended, and sayde, I perceyue this man

/23 safely. /24 expense.

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will neuer obey my commaundements, till he be rydden with a snaffle, but I shal prouide well ynough for him. Neither could he afterwards abide to looke vpon the sayde Makduffe, eyther for that he thought his puissance ouer great, either els for that he had learned of certain wysardes, in whose wordes he put great confidence, (for that the prophecie had happened so right, whiche the three Fayries or weird sisters had declared vnto him) how that he ought to take heede of Makduffe, who in tymes to come should seeke to destroy him.

'And surely herevpon had he put Makduffe to death, but that a certaine witch whom he had in great trust, had told that he should neuer be slain with man borne of any woman, nor vanquished till the wood of Bemane, came to the Castell of Dunsinnane.

'By this prophecie Makbeth put all feare out of his heart, supposing hee might doe what hee would, without any feare

to be punished for the same, for by the one prophesie he beleueed it was vnpossible for any man to vanquish him, and by the other vnpossible to slea him.

'This vaine hope caused him to doe manye outragious things, to the grieuous oppression of his subiects.

'At length Makduffe to auoyde perill of lyfe, purposed with himselfe to passe into Englande, to procure Malcolme Canmore to clayme the crowne of Scotlande. But this was not so secretly deuised by Makduffe, but that Makbeth had knowledge giuen him thereof, for kings (as is sayde,) haue sharpe sight like vnto Linx, and long eares like vnto Midas. For Makbeth had in euery noble mans house, one slie fellow or other in fee with him, to reueale all that was sayd or done within the same, by which slight he oppressed the moste parte of the Nobles of hys Realme.

'Immediately then, being aduertised whereabout Makduffe went, he came hastily wyth a great power into Fife, and forthwith besieged the Castell where Makduffe dwelled, trusting to haue found him therin.

'They that kept the house, without any resistance opened

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the gates, and suffred him to enter, mistrusting none euill. But neuerthelesse Makbeth most cruelly caused the wife and children of Makduffe, with all other whom he found in that castell, to be slaine.

'Also he confiscate the goodes of Makduffe, proclaymed him traytor, and confined him out of al the partes of his realme, but Makduffe was alreadie escaped out of daunger and gotten into England vnto Malcolme Canmore, to trie what purchas he might make by meanes of his support to reuenge the slaughter so cruelly executed on his wife, his children, and other friends.

'At his comming vnto Malcolme, he declared into what great miserie the estate of Scotlande was brought, by the detestable cruelties exercysed by the tyranne Makbeth, hauing committed many horrible slaughters and murthers, both as well of the nobles as commons, for the which he was hated right mortally of all his liege people, desiring nothing more than to be deliuered of that intollerable and moste heauie yoke of thraldome, whiche they susteyned at suche a caytifes handes.

'Malcolme hearing Makduffes words which he vttred in right lamentable sort, for pure compassion and very ruth that pearced his sorowfull hart, bewayling the miserable state of his country, he fetched a deepe sigh, which Makduffe perceyuing, began to fall most earnestly in hande wyth him, to enterprise/25 the deliuering of the Scottishe people out of the hands of so cruell and bloudie a tyrant, as Makbeth by too many plaine experiments did shew himselfe to be, which was an easie matter for him to bring to passe, considering not only the good tytle he had, but also the earnest desire of the people to haue some occasion ministred, whereby they might be reuenged of those notable iniuries, which they dayly susteyned by the outragious crueltie of Makbeths misgouernance.

'Though Malcolme was right sorowfull for the oppression of his Countreyemen the Scottes, in maner as Makduffe had

/25 attempt.

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declared, yet doubting whether he were come as one that ment vnfaynedly as hee spake, or else as sent from Makbeth to betray him, he thought to haue some further triall, and therevpon dissembling his minde at the first, he answered as followeth.

'I am truly right sorie for the miserie chaunced to my Countrey of Scotlande, but though I haue neuer so great affection to relieue y/e same, yet by reason of certaine incurable vyces, whiche raigne in me, I am nothing meete thereto: First suche immoderate lust and voluptuous sensualitie (the abhominable fountaine of all vyces) foloweth me, that if I were made king of Scots, I shoulde seeke to deflower your Maydes and matrones in such wise, that mine intemperancie shoulde bee more importable vnto you, than the bloudie tyrannic of Makbeth now is.

'Hereunto Makduffe answered: this surely is a very euill fault, for many noble Princes and Kings haue lost both lyues and Kingdomes for the same, neuerthelesse there are women ynowe in Scotlande, and therefore follow my counsell, make thy selfe king, and I shall conuey the matter so wisely, that thou shalt be so satisfied at thy pleasure in suche secrete wise, that no man shall be aware therof.

'Then saide Malcolme, I am also the moste auaritious creature on the earth, so that if I were king, I should seeke so many wayes to get lands and goodes, that I woulde slea the most part of all the nobles of Scotland by surmised accusations, to the end I might enioy their lands, goods, and possessions, & therefore to shew you what mischief may ensue on you through mine vnsatiablen couetise,^{/26} I will rehearse vnto you a fable.

'There was a Foxe hauing a sore place on him ouerset^{/27} with a swarme of flies that continually sucked out hir bloud, and when one that came by and saw this maner demaunded whether she woulde haue the flies dryuen besyde hir, she answered no: For if these flies that are alreadie full, and

^{/26} covetousness. ^{/27} overcome, oppressed.

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by reason thereof sucke not very egerly, should be chased away, other that are emptie and felly^{/28} an hungred, shoulde light in theyr places, and suck out the residue of my bloud farre more to my griuance than these, which now being satisfied doe not much annoy me. Therefore sayth Malcolme, suffer me to remaine where I am, least if I attaine to the regiment of your realme, mine inquenchant auarice may proue such, that ye would thinke the displeasures which now grieue you, should seeme easie in respect of the vnmeasurable outrage, whiche might ensue through my comming amongst you.

'Makduffe to this made answeere, how it was a farre worse fault than the other, for auarice is the roote of all mischiefe,

and for that crime the most part of our kings haue bene slain & brought to their finall ende. Yet notwithstanding follow my counsel, and take vpon thee the crowne, there is golde and riches inough in Scotlande to satisfie thy greedie desire.

'Then sayde Malcolme againe, I am furthermore inclined to dissimulation, telling of leasings/²⁹ and all other kinds of deceyt, so that I naturally reioyce in nothing so muche as to betray and deceyue suche, as put any trust or confidence in my wordes. Then sith there is nothing that more becommeth a prince than constancie, veritie, truth, and iustice, with the other laudable fellowship of those faire and noble vertues which are comprehended onely in soothfastnesse/³⁰, & that lying vtterly ouerthroweth y/e same, you see how vnable I am to gouerne any prouince or region: and therefore sith you haue remedies to cloke and hide al the rest of my other vices, I pray you find shift to cloke this vice amongst the residue.

'Then sayd Makduffe: this yet is the worst of all, and there I leaue thee, and therefore say, oh ye vnhappy & miserable Scottishmen, which are thus scourged with so many and sundrie calamities, eche one aboue other. Ye haue one

/28 fiercely. /29 lies. /30 truthfulness.

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cursed and wicked tyrant that nowe raignes ouer you, without any right or tytle, oppressing you with his most bloudie crueltie: This other that hath the right to the crowne, is so replete with the inconstant behauiour and manifest vices of English men, that he is nothing worthie to enioy it: for by his owne confession he is not onely auaritious, and giuen to vnsatiable lust, but so false a traytour withall, that no trust is to be had to any worde he speaketh. Aduer Scotlande, for now I account my selfe a banished man for euer without comfort or consolation; and with those words the teares trickled down his cheekes right abundantly.

'At the last when hee was readie to depart, Malcolme tooke him by the sleeue, and sayde, Be of good comfort Makduffe, for I haue none of these vices before remembred, but haue iested with thee in this maner, only to proue thy mind: for diuerse tymes heretofore, hath Makbeth sought by this maner of meanes to bring me into his handes, but the more slow I haue shewed my self to condescend to thy motion and request, the more diligence shall I vse in accomplishing the same.

'Incontinently hereupon they embraced eche other, and promising to bee faythfull the one to the other, they fell in consultation, howe they might best prouide for al their businesse, to bring the same to good effect.

'Soone after Makduffe repaying to the borders of Scotlande, addressed his letters with secrete dispatch vnto the nobles of the realme, declaring howe Malcolme was confederate wyth him, to come hastily into Scotlande to clayme the crowne, and therefore he requyred them, sith he was right inheritor thereto, to assist him with their powers to recouer the same out of the hands of the wrongfull vsurper.

'In the meane time, Malcolme purchased such fauour at king Edwards handes, that old Sywarde Earle of Northumberlande, was appoynted with ten thousande men to go with him into Scotland, to support him in this enterprise, for recouerie of his right.

Act V. Scenes II, III. 'After these newes were spred

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abrode in Scotland, the nobles drew into two seuerall factions, the one taking part with Makbeth, and the other with Malcolme.

'Hereupon ensued oftentimes sundrie bickerings, and diuerse light skirmishes, for those that were of Malcolmes side, woulde not ieoparde to ioyne with theyr enimies in a pight/³¹ field, tyll his comming out of England to their support. But after that Makbeth perceiued his enimies power to encrease, by suche ayde as came to them forth of England with his aduersarie Malcolme, he reculed/³² backe into Fife, there purposing to abide in campe fortified, at the Castell of Dunsinane, and to fight with his enimies, if they ment to pursue him, howbeit some of his friends aduysed him, that it should be best for him, eyther to make some agreement with Malcolme, or else to flee with all speed into the Iles, and to take his treasure with him, to the ende he might wage/³³ sundrie great Princes of the realme to take his part, and retayne straungers, in whom he might better trust than in his owne subiectes, which stale dayly from him: but he had suche confidence in his prophecies, that he beleeued he shoulde neuer be vanquished, till Byrnane wood were brought to Dunsinnane, nor yet to be slaine with anye man, that should be or was borne of any woman.

Act V. Scene IV. 'Malcolme folowing hastily after Makbeth, came the night before the battaile vnto Byrnane wood, and when his armie had rested a while there to refreshe them, hee commaunded euerye man to get a bough of some tree or other of that wood in his hand, as bigge as he might beare, and to march forth therewith in such wise, that on the next morow they might come closely and without sight in thys manner within viewe of hys enimies.

Act V. Scenes V, VI, VII, VIII. 'On the morow when Makbeth beheld them comming in this sort, hee first marueyled what the matter ment, but in the end remembered himselfe, that the prophecie which he had hearde long before

/31 pitched. /32 retreated, retired. /33 hire.

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that time, of the comming of Byrnane wood to Dunsinnane Castell, was likely to bee now fulfilled. Neuerthelesse, he brought his men in order of battell, and exhorted them to doe valiantly, howbeit his enimies had scarcely cast from them their boughes, when Makbeth perceiuing their numbers betook him streight to flight, whom Makduffe pursued with great hatred euen till he came vnto Lunfannain, where Makbeth perceiuing that Makduffe was hard at his back, leapt beside his horse, saying, thou traytor, what meaneth it that

thou shouldest thus in vaine follow me that am not appoynted to be slaine by any creature that is borne of a woman, come on therefore, and receyue thy rewarde which thou hast deserued for thy paynes, and therewithall he lyfted vp his sworde thinking to haue slaine him. But Makduffe quickly auoyding from his horse, ere he came at him, answered (with his naked sworde in his hande) saying: it is true Makbeth, and now shall thine insatiablie crueltie haue an ende, for I am euen he that thy wysards haue tolde the of, who was neuer borne of my mother, but ripped out of hir wombe: therewithall he stept vnto him, & slue him in the place. Then cutting his heade from the shoulders, hee set it vpon a poll, and brought it vnto Malcolme. This was the end of Makbeth, after he had raigned .xviij. yeares ouer the Scottishmen.

'In the beginning of his raigne he accomplished many worthie actes, right profitable to the common wealth, (as ye haue heard) but afterwarde by illusion of the diuell, he defamed the same with most terrible crueltie.

'He was slaine in the yeare of the incarnation 1057. and in the .xvj. yeare of king Edwardes raigne ouer the English men.

'Malcolme Cammore thus recouering the realme (as ye haue hearde) by support of king Edward, in the .xvj. yeare of the same Edwards raign, he was crowned at Scone the .xxv. day of April, in the yeare of our Lorde. 1057.

'Immediately after his coronation, he called a Parliament at Forfair, in the which he rewarded them with landes and

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liuings that had assisted him agaynst Makbeth, aduauncing them to fees and offices as he saw cause, and commaunded that specially those that bare the surname of any office or landes, shoulde haue and enioye the same.

'He created many Earles, Lordes, Barons, and Knightes.

'Many of them that before were Thaners, were at this time made Earles, as Fife, Menteth, Atholl, Leuenox, Murray, Cathnes, Rosse, and Angus. These were the first Earles that haue beene heard of amongst the Scottishe men, (as theyr hystories make mention.)' (pp. 248--252.)

To these quotations from the History of Scotland may be added one from Holinshed's History of England, which furnished the dramatist with the incident of the death of young Siward. We shall then have before us all the materials out of which the play was constructed. Young Siward, or Siward's son, is called by John Brompton, the abbot of Jervaulx, Osbernus Bulax. (Twysden's Decem Scriptorum, col. 946.)

'About the thirteenth yeare of King Edwardes raigne (as some write,) or rather about the nineteenth or twentieth yere as should appeare by the Scottishe Writers, Siward the noble Earle of Northumberlande with a great power of Horsemenne went into Scotland, and in battell put to flight Mackbeth that had vsurped the Crowne of Scotland, and that done, placed Malcolme surnamed Camoyr, the son of Duncane, sometime King of Scotlande, in the gouernement of that Realme, who afterward slew the sayd Macbeth, and then

raigned in quiet. Some of our Englishe writers say, that this Malcolme was K. of Cumberlande, but other reporte him to be sonne to the K. of Cumberland. But heere is to be noted, that if Mackbeth raigned till the yere .1061. and was then slayne by Malcolme, Earle Siwarde was not at that battaile, for as our writers do testifie, he died in the yere .1055. whiche was in the yeare next after (as the same writers affirme) that hee vanquished Mackbeth in fight, & slew many thousands of Scottes, & all those Normans which as ye haue heard, were withdrawen into Scotlande, when they were

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driuen out of England. It is recorded also, that in the foresaid battaile, in which Earle Siwarde vanquished the Scottes, one of Siwards sonnes chaunced to be slayne, whereof, though the father had good cause to be sorowfull, yet when he heard that he dyed of a wound which hee had receyued in fighting stoutely in the forepart of his body, and that with his face towarde the enimie, hee greatly reioyced thereat, to heare that he died so manfully. But here is to be noted, y/t not now, but a little before, (as Henry Hunt. saith,) ye Earle Siward, wente into Scotlande himselfe in person, hee sent his sonne with an army to conquere y/e land, whose hap was ther to be slaine: and when his father heard y/e newes, he demaunded whether he receiued the wound wherof he died, in y/e fore parte of the body, or in the hinder part: and when it was tolde him y/t he receyued it in the foreparte, I reioyce (saith he) euen with all my harte, for I woulde not wishe eyther to my sonne nor to my selfe, any other kind of death.' (p. 275.)

It is unnecessary to point out the deviations made in the drama from the original story as told by Holinshed. It is sufficient to give the sources of Shakespeare's information. Their historical value may deserve a brief discussion. Holinshed's narrative is entirely taken from the twelfth book of the *Scotorum Historiæ* of Hector Boece, or Boyce (1465--1536), the first Principal of Kings' College, Aberdeen, a work in which history is largely mixed with fable. It was translated into Scotch by John Bellenden, archdeacon of Moray, and there is reason to think that Holinshed consulted this translation. The name Macbeth itself may even have been taken from Bellenden, as a rendering of the 'Maccabæus' of Boece, and from the same source may have been derived the translation of 'solatrum amentiale' by 'mekilwort.' Be this as it may, Holinshed is Shakespeare's authority, Hector Boece is Holinshed's, and Boece follows Fordun, adding to him, however, very freely. With the exception of Duncan's murder, in which Macbeth was concerned either as principal or accessory, and the character of Lady Macbeth, there is hardly

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any point in which the drama coincides with the real history. The rebellion of Macdonwald and the invasion of Sueno during the reign of Duncan are fables; Banquo and Fleance the ancestors of the Stuarts are the inventions of the chronicler. Lady Macbeth, whose name was Gruoch, was the grand-

daughter of Kenneth IV., who was slain at the battle of Monivaird by Malcolm II. Her first husband, Gilcomgain, the maormor of Moray, was burnt in his castle with fifty of his friends. Her only brother was slain by Malcolm's orders. There were reasons therefore why she should cherish vengeance against Duncan, the grandson of Malcolm. She took as her second husband Macbeth, the maormor of Ross, who during the minority of her son Lulach, became maormor of Moray. The rebellion of Torfin, Earl of Caithness, another grandson of Malcolm's, appears to have been the original of the revolt of Macdonwald, and Duncan was on his way to punish it when he fell a victim to treachery at Bothgowan near Elgin, in the territory of Gruoch and Macbeth. Macbeth on his side had motives for revenge. His father Finlegh, or Finley, maormor of Ross, had been slain in a conflict with Malcolm II. in 1020. In Wyntown's Cronykil of Scotland an entirely different version is given. Duncan is there the uncle of Macbeth who is thane of Cromarty, and Gruoch is Duncan's wife, who after the murder of her husband marries Macbeth. Malcolm is the illegitimate son of Duncan by a miller's daughter, and a supernatural parentage is invented for Macbeth himself. It is in Wyntown that we first meet with the weird sisters, who however only manifest themselves to Macbeth and spur his ambition in a dream. According to the same chronicler, the absence of Macduff from the feast was one of the causes which provoked Macbeth against him. It is worth observing that there is nothing of this kind in the narrative of Holinshed. The battle of Dunsinnan did not decide the fate of Macbeth. He was defeated there in the year 1054, but it was not till two years afterwards that he met with his death at Lumphanan by the hands of Macduff, Dec. 5, 1056. (Chalmers, Caledonia, i. 404--410.)

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In Wyntown the avenging hand is not that of Macduff but of a nameless knight. Through this maze of tradition and fable it is difficult to thread one's way. The single point upon which historians agree is that the reign of Macbeth was one of remarkable prosperity and vigorous government.

With regard to Duncan, we may add a few details of his real history as told by Mr. Robertson (Scotland under her Early Kings, vol. i. chap. 5). He was the son of Bethoc or Beatrice, daughter of Malcolm, and Crinan, Abbot of Dunkeld. In 1030 he succeeded his grandfather. He laid siege to Durham in 1040, but was repulsed with severe loss, and his attempt to reduce Thorfin to subjection was attended with the same disastrous consequences. 'The double failure in Northumberland and Moray hastening the catastrophe of the youthful king, he was assassinated "in the Smith's bothy," near Elgin, not far from the scene of his latest battle, the Mormaor Macbeth being the undoubted author of his death.'

Mr. Robertson adds in a note: -- 'Slain "a duce suo," writes Marianus. Tighernach adds *immatura etate*, contrary to all modern ideas of Duncan. Marianus was born in 1028, Tighernach was his senior; their authority, therefore, at this period as contemporaries, is very great. Bothgowanan means "the Smith's bothy," and under this word may lurk some long-

forgotten tradition of the real circumstances of Duncan's murder. The vision of a weary fugitive, a deserted king, rises before the mind's eye, recalling "Beaton's Mill" and the fate of James the Third.'

Our references to other plays of Shakespeare are made to the Globe Edition, except in the case of the Notes to The Merchant of Venice and Richard II., separately edited for the present series.

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