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NEW ILLUSTRATIONS  
OF THE  
LIFE, STUDIES, AND WRITINGS  
OF  
SHAKESPEARE.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO ALL THE EDITIONS.

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OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

The West yet glimmers with some streaks of day. -- MACBETH, Act III. Sc. 3.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

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152

MACBETH.

We are now arrived at another of the plays which are  
esteemed the master-pieces of this great poet, and we shall  
find that the editors and commentators have left more to be  
done by those who venture thus late into the Shakespearian  
field than in respect of the tragedies which have hitherto  
come before us, both in the regulation of the text and in  
ascertaining the true sense of obscure passages. There  
appear to be also allusions to events of the Poet's own time  
which have escaped the observation of preceding commen-  
tators.

In reference to the state of the text of this play, it must be kept in mind that we have two authorities for it, and no more: the folio of 1623 and the folio of 1632. Further, that the numerous corrections (decidedly and unquestionably so) made by the editors of the second folio, and the numerous other deviations from the text of the first folio, shew that the original editors performed their duty in a very imperfect manner, and that therefore there is just room for a bolder conjectural criticism on this play than perhaps on any other; neither can the variations of the second from the first edition be always accepted as improvements or authoritative determinations of the true text.

Having no quarto, nor any certainty of the existence of this play before 1610 when Forman was present at the representation of it, we have not the usual means of arriving at the exact time of its composition. That it belongs to the reign of James the First might be inferred from its very subject, a wild and romantic tale found in the fabulous chronicles of the Scottish nation. The reverence also here

153

offered to the antiquity of the House of Stuart who were fond of deriving themselves from Banquo and Fleance, which, if it could be supported by evidence, would place them, as an ancient race, far in advance of any of the nobility whom King James would find forming his new court at London, was plainly an offering intended especially for the gratification of the King. But the question appears to be put out of doubt, as the commentators have observed, by the vision of the successors to the throne of Scotland ending with,

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

In respect of the actual year in which the play was written, there is such an accumulation of probable circumstances guiding to 1606, to which year Malone and Chalmers agree in assigning it, that any attempt to remove it from that year would probably be ineffectual. To their probabilities I add another, which arises out of a new, but I believe a just, view of the import of a passage in the third scene of the first act --

The Thane of Cawdor lives;  
Why do you dress me in borrowed robes?

or, as it is in the second folio,

Why do you dress me in his borrowed robes?

This passage has hitherto been taken as merely metaphorical; but it seems to me that the Poet really intended that the robes pertaining to the dignity of Thane of Cawdor, to which Macbeth was just elevated, should be produced on the stage by Rosse and Angus; that in fact the ceremony of investiture should take place upon the stage. This could not but be agreeable to the spectators. It is at least more in accordance with the turn of the expression, than to suppose that Macbeth spoke thus in mere metaphor.

154

Now it happened that this ancient ceremony of investiture had lately been gone through by Sir David Murray on his being created Lord Scone. We are told that he "was with the greatest solemnity invested in that honour the 7th of April, 1605, by a special commission, directed to the Earl Dumfermling, the Lord Chancellor, to that effect. The ceremony was. in presence of the earls Angus, Sutherland, Marischal, Linlithgow; the lords Fleming, Drummond, and Thirlestane." This particular investiture in a Scottish dignity probably suggested to Shakespeare the idea of introducing the investiture of Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor. The Earl of Angus we see appears both in the play and in the actual performance of the ceremony; and Sir David Murray, it may also be observed, received the dignity under circumstances not very unlike those in which Macbeth acquired the Thanedom of Cawdor. He had a large share in saving the life of the King at the time of the Gowrie conspiracy, and the King gave him for his reward, first, the barony of Ruthven, which had belonged to the Earl of Gowrie, and next the lands of Scone, of which the Earl of Gowrie had been commendator, and had lost them by his treason.

What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won./\*

The proximate cause of the selection of the story of Macbeth as a subject for his muse, was in all probability, as has been suggested by the commentators, the use made of it at Oxford in the August of 1605 in the compliments and entertainments provided for the King on his visit to the university.

/\* See for the facts respecting Murray, *The Peerage of England*, 8vo. 1779, vol. v. p. 486. For the ceremony of investiture on the creation of nobles, Milles' *Catalogue of Honour*, p. 32. The practice of investiture, and some other ceremonies formerly used at creations, was first laid aside in 1615, at the creation of Lord Hay, the lawyers being of opinion that the delivery of the patent was all that was requisite. (Camden's *Annals of the Reign of James the First*, p. 12.)

155

There is a very particular account of this visit by Sir Isaac Wake, the public orator, which was printed before the close of the year in a volume entitled *Rex Platonius*, and another, not so florid or so complimentary to the university, by a member of the university of Cambridge, which remained in manuscript till the late Mr. Nichols printed it in his work on *The Progresses, &c. of King James the First*, 4to. 1828, vol. i. p. 530--563./\* When the King visited Saint John's College he was encountered by three youths personating the three Wayward Sisters who had the interview with Macbeth and Banquo, with appropriate song or dialogue./†

As though not the passage in which Shakespeare studied the incidents which he has embodied in his drama, yet having such pretension to be regarded as that which suggested to him how capable these incidents were of being wrought into a magnificent tragedy, it seems but a necessary duty in the ample illustration of these plays to present in full the account which Wake gives of this exhibition.

Fabulae ansam dedit antiqua de Regia prosapia historiola apud Scoto-Britannos celebrata, quae narrat tres olim Sybillas occurrisse duobus Scotiae proceribus Macbetho et Banchoni, et illum praedixisse Regem futurum sed Regem nullum geniturum, hunc Regem non futurum, sed Reges geniturum multos. Vaticinii veritatem rerum eventus comprobavit. Banchonis enim e stirpe Potentissimus Jacobus oriundus. Tres adolescentes concinno Sybillarum habitu induti, e collegio prodeuntes, et carmina lepida alternatim canentes, Regi se tres esse illas Sibyllas profitentur, quae Banchoni olim sobolis imperia praedixerant, jamque iterum comparere, ut eadem vaticinii veritate praedicerent Jacobo, se jam et diu Regem futurum Britanniae felicissimum et multorum Regum parentem, ut ex Banchonis stirpe nunquam sit haeres Britannico diademati defuturus.

The choice of this subject for the little play, "*lusiuncula*," at Saint John's was no doubt a happy thought of some one,

/\* It is printed from a copy among Baker's Manuscripts at the British Museum. Harl. 7044, f. 201.

/† The two accounts are not easily reconciled. The verses were by Matthew Gwinne, M.D. the friend of Florio, and the "*Il Candido*" of his books. See the verses in the *Variorum*.

156

and the result seems to have shewn it, for the author proceeds:

Deinde tribus principibus suaves felicitatum triplicitates triplicatis terminum vicibus succinentes, veniamque precantes, quod alumni aedium Divi Johannis (qui praecursor Christi) alumnis AEdis Christi (quo tunc Rex tendebat) praecursoris hac salutatione antevertissent, principes ingeniosa fictiuncula delectatos dimittunt; quos inde universa astantium multitudo, felici praedictionum successui suffragans, votis precibusque ad portam usque civitatis Borialem prosequitur.

Much has been said on the probability that Shakespeare was present when the Earl of Leicester received Queen

Elizabeth with shows and triumphs at Kenilworth. I venture to propound the much higher probability that Shakespeare was at Oxford when the King honoured the university with this visit, -- perhaps that he was even present when the youths of Saint John's performed this their brief dramatic entertainment before the King. The ground of the probability is this, -- that every evening of the King's stay in the university there were plays performed. It is true that they were Latin plays, and that the performers were persons of the university; but on such an occasion the instruction of an accomplished professional actor might be required, and even his aid be wanted, for the more perfect preparation of the piece; and who more likely to be selected for such a purpose than Burbage, who had a near relation of his own name a member of the university, and Shakespeare, who, often passing through Oxford on his way to and from Stratford, and, according to the tradition, often resting there, could not but be personally known to some members of the university. But the account which Wake gives of the fitting-up of the hall of Christ Church, in which the plays were performed, and of the scenes and machinery, which quite astonished the beholders, seems to put it almost beyond a doubt that all this expensive work was not provided at Oxford for that one occasion, but that it was supplied to the

157

university from one of the principal theatres in London, and if so, then no doubt from Shakespeare's./\* Indeed, we learn from the English narrative that London did supply the furniture of these dramatic exhibitions. Inigo Jones devised the machinery; and the wardrobe, it appears incidentally, was brought from some remote place: "It was reported credibly and expected that the plays should be acted again the week following, to give satisfaction to the university, which before could not see them acted; but on Saturday at night I heard of a certain that the apparel was packed up to be sent away, and there was an end."

Mr. Malone has suggested what might by possibility have called the attention of the Poet to this story as proper for the stage. It is a passage in Buchanan. "It is remarkable," he says, "that Buchanan has pointed out Macbeth's history as a subject for the stage. 'Multa hic fabulose quidam nostrorum affingunt; sed, quia theatris aut Milesiis fabulis sunt aptiora quam historiæ, ea omitto.' But there was no translation of Buchanan's work till after our author's death." It is evident, however, that Mr. Malone has mistaken the purport of Buchanan's remark.

When the Poet had determined to take this wild historic

fable as the subject of a tragedy, he would naturally have recourse to Hollinshead, to whom he had so often gone in the earlier periods of his dramatic life for his English histories, and he would there find enough to render it wholly unnecessary for him to go to any more recondite source, and nothing would remain for him to do but to embody the facts as he

/\* The edition of the *Rex Platonicus* which I have used is the *Fifth*, so popular a tract written in Latin might become in those days. It is in 12mo., Oxon. 1635. The performance at St. John's is described p. 29, 30; the account of the fitting-up the hall of Christ Church at pp. 76, 77. The three plays which were performed on the three evenings which the king spent at Oxford were *Vertumnus*, *Ajax Flagellifer*, and *Annus Recurrens*.

158

there found them in dialogue, and to introduce other facts, which things being as related by the historian, it was within the legitimate range of a dramatist's art to invent. He had also to give *character* to some of the persons of the history; but of this he seems to have done less in the present play than in most others.

This play has also more the air of being a draft, if not unfinished, yet requiring to be retouched and written more in full by its author, than any other of his greater works. Full of incident as it is, it is still one of the shortest of the plays. Like *The Tempest* in this respect, we feel that it would be better if it were longer. We want more of the subdued and calm. There are also more passages than in other plays which seem to be carried beyond the just limits which part the true sublime from the inflated or the obscure, -- passages which we may suppose to have been in the mind of Jonson when he said of the soaring genius of Shakespeare, "*sufflaminandus est*." What might not *Macbeth* have been had the Poet been induced to sit down with the play, as it now is, before him, and to direct upon it the full force of his judgment and fine taste, removing here and there a too luxuriant expression, and giving us here and there a breadth of verdure on which the mind might find a momentary repose, and refresh itself amidst the multitude of exciting incidents which come in too rapid a succession upon us! What is most to be regretted when we look on the noble volume which contains what Shakespeare has bequeathed to his countrymen and the world is that he has in no instance given us a work which he had kept by him the nine years, working upon it and polishing it till he had wrought it up to his own standard of perfection. One play at least thus finished by his own hand, and delivered to the world inscribed by himself, -- This is my work, -- the Poet might have vouchsafed us. It would not have

159

been so exquisitely finished as *Comus*, because he had not in youth been submitted as Milton was to the influence of the perfection of the ancient drama, but we cannot doubt that it would have been a noble and delightful composition, superior as a whole to any which we now possess. Of the Tragedies perhaps *Othello* has received the most attention from its author.

At the same time there can hardly be a doubt that there are very serious corruptions in the text of *Macbeth*, for which the author cannot be held responsible, except indeed we take the ground that he ought not to have scattered such precious leaves to the wind.

It is of Shakespeare himself improving Shakespeare that I speak, for any efforts by any other hand have but disfigured and debased what he had left us. Who more worthy, if any, to make the attempt than Dryden or Davenant? both great poets, and both living before the Genius of the age of Shakespeare and Spenser had wholly lost his influence. They jointly practised on *The Tempest*, but when we look at the result we see that there is a circle in which none should walk but the great master spirit himself. The same may be said of Davenant's alterations of *Macbeth*. The chief of them is to make the witches occupy a larger space in the play, probably that there might be more music. The effect of this is that the just balance of the several parts is not only disturbed, but destroyed. It has also this other unfortunate effect, that the mind is too much drawn off from the *results* to the previous *preparations*.

The connection of the story with the family which had become seated on the English throne, the lustre which it cast upon the family when looked at as a genealogist not over solicitous about his authorities would contemplate it, and the striking character of the incidents themselves, ap-

160

pear to have kept the story very much in the eye of the public in the interval between the first performance of this play and the close of the theatres, when a fatal doom was impending over one of the princes, who in innocence and mirth had been greeted by the wayward sisters at the gate of Saint John's. It is alluded to in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*; and Heywood tells the story at large, but with some remarkable variations, in his *Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels*. In particular he makes the witches

three virgins wond'rous fair  
As well in habit as in features rare.

and he represents Banquo as dying at a banquet, not killed by Macbeth. Very inartificially he calls him "Banquo-Stuart." Macbeth also in Heywood is slain by Malcolm.

Beside the main subject of the midnight murder of a King sleeping in the house of one of his nobles, and surrounded by his guards, the death and the appearance of the ghost of Banquo, and the whole machinery and prophecy of the wayward sisters, with the interior view of a castle in which is a conscience-stricken monarch reduced to the extremity of a siege, the Poet seems to have intended to concentrate in this play many of the more thrilling incidents of physical and metaphysical action. The midnight shriek of women; sleep, with its stranger accidents, such as laughing, talking, walking, as produced by potions, as disturbed by dreams, as full of wicked thoughts; the hard beating of the heart; the parched state of the mouth in an hour of desperate guilt; the rousing of the hair at a dismal treatise; physiognomy; men of manly hearts moved to tears; the wild thoughts which haunt the mind of guilt, as in the air-drawn dagger, and the fancy that sleep was slain and the slayer should know its comforts no more; death in some of its stranger varieties, the soldier

161

dying of wounds not bound up, the spent swimmer, the *pilot* wrecked on his way *home*, the horrible mode of Macdonnell's death, the massacre of a mother and her children, the hired assassins perpetrating their work on the belated travellers, these are but a portion of the terrible circumstances attendant on the main events of this tragic tale.

He goes for similar circumstances to the elements, and to the habits of animals about which superstitions had gathered, -- the flitting of the bat, the flight of the crow to the rooky wood, the fights of the owl and the falcon, and of the owl and the wren, the scream of the owl, the chirping of the cricket, the croak of the prophetic raven, and the bark of the wolf, the horses devouring one another, the pitchy darkness of night, the murky darkness of a lurid day, a storm rattling in the battlements of an ancient fortress, -- we have all this before we have passed the bounds of nature and entered the regions of metaphysical agency.

There we have the spirits which tend on mortal thoughts, the revelations by magot-pies, the moving of stones, the speaking of trees, and lamentings heard in the air, and almost the whole of the mythology of the wayward sisters, -- their withered and wild attire, their intercourse with their Queen, their congregating in the hour of storms on heaths which the lightning has scathed, the strange instruments employed by them, the mode of their operations, and their



compelling the world invisible to disclose the secrets of futurity.

Much has been written, and especially by Mr. Douce (*Illustrations of Shakespeare*, vol. i. p. 382) on the introduction of Hecate among the witches. It is of a piece with the introduction of Titania among the fairies. But, whatever incongruity there may be in having thus blended beings of two distinct origins, the incongruity did not originate with

162

Shakespeare. We have it in Golding's Ovid, a book which he used. It is in Book VII., where the poet is speaking of Medea:

She went me to an altar, which was dedicate of old  
To Perseys' daughter Hecate (*of whom the witches hold*  
*As of their goddess*), standing in a thick and secret wood,  
So close it could not well be spied.

The parenthesis is an addition of Golding's. This is the third time in which we are sent to the Seventh Book of the Metamorphoses in an orderly perusal of the plays of Shakespeare. We have in it the germ of Prospero's "Elves of hills," &c., and there we have Medea gathering the enchanted herbs. Mr. Skottowe suggests that some of the ingredients of the witches' cauldron are also borrowed from the cauldron of Medea.

There is no just pretence for supplanting the word "wayward" and substituting "weird." "Weird" may be the more proper -- the more scientific term; it may come nearer to the etymological root -- it may be a derivative of some ancient root of *word*, as *fatum* of *for*, and "wayward" may suggest an erroneous origin and a wrong meaning, since we have the word "wayward" in a certain well-known sense; but, notwithstanding this, an editor ought not to think himself at liberty to print "weird," the author having written "wayward," to the manifest injury of the verse, though the facts just named would form a very proper subject for a note, in which we were to be informed who and what the wayward sisters were, and, if that be thought necessary, why they were so designated. Shakespeare is by no means peculiar in writing "wayward." Heywood, in his *The late Witches of Lancashire*, has

You look like one of the Scottish wayward sisters.

163

It would be wholly unsuitable to a work which professed

to illustrate the writings of Shakespeare only, to enter at large into this branch of the popular superstitions of northern Europe: it is in itself a subject for a volume, and a very curious work it would undoubtedly be, in which the notions which have prevailed respecting the beings going under the generic name of witches were classified and compared, and each species traced to its origin, just as such a work would be on the fairy-mythology of which we have so much in Shakespeare. But the margins of an edition of Shakespeare are not the place for the results of such curious and learned inquiry. It is sufficient to point out, as the commentators have already done, that Shakespeare found in Hollinshead, and might have found elsewhere, or that he learned it from the exhibition at Saint John's, that there was a story in the romance history of Scotland of the three prophetesses, sybils, witches, or, as he calls them, the wayward sisters, meeting the two thanes, and predicting the great things to happen to them, and then to shew that this was in consistency with the popular belief.

One question, however, arises, of some moment to the right understanding of this play, which the commentators appear to have left undetermined; and this is -- What was the number of the wayward sisters? Were they three only; or was the number unlimited? and has Shakespeare introduced us to more than three, besides Hecate, the Queen or mother of all?

Now, the facts are these: -- The play opens with three witches only. At their interview with Macbeth and Banquo there are three only. In the fifth scene of the third act when Hecate is first introduced, there are only three. At the opening of the fourth act, we find the three around their cauldron, when after a while occurs this stage-direction -- "Enter Hecate, and the other three witches." What other

164

three? We have had no witches so far, except the three to whom Hecate enters: and when Macbeth enters, and he calls upon them to shew him his destiny, it is manifest that it is the same three witches whom we have had from the beginning who declare his fortune to him, and no other; so that if three strange witches enter with Hecate they are mutes, and, moreover, have nothing to do. On the whole I have no doubt that there has been all along an error in the stage-direction, and that, as the Poet left it, it ought to be no more than this -- "Enter Hecate."

No doubt there was no limit to the number of persons called witches. Every parish in Scotland might have had one or more than one. But the wayward sisters, who are the witches of this play, were only three; corresponding to

the fates of another mythology. Mr. Hole regards them as the Northern Parcae, and finds them in Scandinavian mythology, known by the names of Urda, Valdandi, and Skulda, who presided over the past, the present, and the future. (See his *Arthur; or, The Northern Enchantment*, 8vo. 1789. p. xi. and 7.)

In the regulation of this play, it appears to me that this is far from being the only instance in which the stage-directions, including under the term the name prefixed to certain speeches, are grievously corrupted.

In the remarks upon particular passages to which we now proceed several instances will occur. The criticism may sometimes be thought bold. I only say, Strike, but hear me! or, rather peruse the scenes in the light in which I shall place them. It is a point quite notorious that the stage-directions throughout the folios are very carelessly given, and have often been silently corrected by the later editors. So carelessly have they been given, that we have sometimes the actor's name instead of that of the character.

165

With these observations premised, I begin the miscellaneous remarks with proposing a new regulation of the opening scene in the play.

ACT I. SC. 1.

FIRST WITCH. -- Where shall we three meet again?

In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH. -- When the hurly-burly's done,  
When the battle's lost and won.

THIRD WITCH. -- That will be ere th' set of sun.

FIRST WITCH. -- Where the place?

SECOND WITCH. -- Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH. -- There to meet Macbeth./\*

FIRST WITCH. -- I come, Gray-malkin.

SECOND WITCH. -- Paddock calls.

THIRD WITCH. -- Anon.

ALL. -- Fair is foul and foul is fair.

Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Now we have the three times three of the witches at Saint John's; and we may perceive also a correspondence with the --

Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,  
And thrice again to make up nine.

I. 2. SOLDIER.

Of KERNES and GALLOW-GLASSES is supplied.

Enough it may be thought has been said on these Kernes and Gallow-glasses, but the two following quotations seem to give a clearer account of them than we find at present in the notes:

Coyne and liveri is this; there will come a Kerne or Galliglas, whiche be the Irish soldiers, to lie in the churl's house; whiles he is there he will be master of the house, he will not only have meat, but money also allowed him, and at his departure the best things he shall see in the churl's house, be it linnen, cloth, a shirt, mantle, or such like. Thus is the churl eaten up, so that if dearth fall in the country where he dwelleth, he should be the first starved, not being master of his own.

*A Letter sent by J. B., gentleman, unto his very friend Master R. C., es-*

/\* "There to meet with Macbeth," in the original copies.

166

*quire, wherein is contained a large discourse of the peopling and inhabiting the cuntry called Ardes, and other adjacent, in the North of Ireland, & taken in hand by Sir Thomas Smith, &c. 1572.*

In latter times, as Ware, *Antiq.* c. 12, p. 57, judiciously remarks, their foot [speaking of the Scots of the Milesian race, the ancient inhabitants of Ireland] were of two sorts, the heavy and light-armed; the first were called *Galloglachs*, armed with a helmet and coat of mail, bound with iron rings, and wore a long sword. They fought also with a most keen axe, after the manner of the Gauls, mentioned by Marcellinus: their light-armed infantry called *Keherns*, fought with bearded javelins, and short daggers, named *skeyns*. -- *Dissertation on the Antient History of Ireland.* Dublin, 1753, 8vo. p. 70.

I. 2. SOLDIER.

But all's too weak.

It should be "But all-to-weak," an old idiom expiring in the time of Shakespeare; that is, *Fortune* was *all-to-weak*, a connection which is lost in the present reading.

I. 3. FIRST WITCH.

AROINT THEE, witch!

The difficulty here has been to find any parallel uses of this word. Yet such are to be found, though they are rare. There is a volume intitled, *A brife accompt of moost wonder-fulle and villanous rebellyon of the traytour Perkin, Perkun, or Peterkin Warbeck, Wabbeck, or Osbeck, against the royall grace King Henry the Seventhe.* By Johanne Berchyl, Doctor of Physicke. The author relates that an officer of the Duchess of Burgundy bringing Perkin some information that was unpleasant, he rose in a fury and said, "*Araunte thee, thou crokeing bird of eville, thou hast an ill-favoured vysage, and beest moste unwelcume to my syte, therforre gette thee gone.*" I owe this to *The Monthly Mirror* for October, 1810. Authorities for *Aroint* are so rare, that any ought to be brought to light. I never saw Berchyl's book, which

must be one of great rarity.

167

I. 3. SECOND WITCH.  
I'll give thee a wind.

Shakespeare adheres to the Scandinavian notion.

Some say the sorcerers near the North Sea use to sell the wind to sailors in glasses, and it is so ever more among them that they will laugh as much at those that believe it not, as we would be [do] to hear one tell it. -- Harington's *Notes on the xxxviiiith Book of Orlando Furioso*.

For practice of witchcraft and sorcery, they [the Laplanders] pass all nations in the world. Though for the enchanting of ships that sail along their coasts (as I have heard it reported) and their giving of winds, good to their friends and contrary to other whom they mean to hurt, by tying of certain knots upon a rope (somewhat like to the tale of Eolus his wind-bag) is a very fable, devised (as may seem) by themselves, to terrify sailors from coming near their coast. -- *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, by Giles Fletcher, 1591, p. 77 b.

The way in which they proceeded is thus described by Heywood --

The Finnes and Laplands are acquainted well  
With such like spirits, and winds to merchants sell,  
Making their covenant, when and how they please  
They may with prosperous weather cross the seas.  
As thus: they in a handkerchief fast tie  
Three knots: unloose the first, and by and by  
You find a gentle gale blow from the shore;  
Open the second, it increaseth more,  
To fill your sails. When you the third untie  
Th' intemperate gusts grow vehement and high.

HIERARCHY OF THE BLESSED ANGELS, 1635, p. 506.

Lastly, Howell, in one of his letters, says, "In some of the Northern Countries 'tis as ordinary to buy and sell winds as it is to do wines in other parts, and hereof I could instance in some examples of my own knowledge," -- *Letters*, 1647. Part iii. p. 23.

The "shipman's card," which occurs in the subsequent speech of the First Witch, is not the card of the mariner's compass, but what we now call a chart. Thus in Hackluyt's *Virginia Richly Valued*, 1609, "John Danesco said that he had seen the *sea-card*, and that from the place where they were the coast ran east and west unto Rio de las Palmas, and

168

from Rio de las Palmas to Nueva Espanna from North to South," p. 164. In Sir Henry Mainwaring's *Seaman's Dictionary*, 1670, "a *card* or *sea-card*" is said to be "a geographical

description of coasts, with the true distances, heights, and courses, or winds, laid down in it: not describing any inland, which belongs to maps." p. 20.

I. 3. FIRST WITCH.

I will drain him dry as hay.

Exhaust the moisture from his body. This it was believed it was in the power of the witches to do, as may be seen in any of the narratives of cases of witchcraft.

I. 3. BANQUO.

Live you? or are you ought  
That man may question? You seem to understand me,  
By each at once her choppy finger laying  
Upon her skinny lips.

Dr. Johnson is the only commentator who has attempted to explain the "question" of Banquo. He understands it thus: -- Are ye any beings with which man is permitted to hold converse, or of whom it is lawful to *ask questions*? To me it appears to mean -- Are you beings capable of hearing questions put to you, and of returning answers? And with this meaning what Banquo next says is more congruous.

You should be women,  
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret  
That you are so.

I. 3. BANQUO.

My noble partner  
You greet with present grace, and great prediction  
Of noble having, and of royal hope.

There is here a skilful reference to the thrice repeated "Hail" of the witches. "Thane of Glamis" he was; that is the "present grace:" but "Thane of Cawdor" was only

169

predicted; this is the "noble having:" the prospect of royalty is only "hope," "of royal hope."

I. 3. ROSSE.

As thick as TALE  
Came post with post.

Many worse emendations of the original text have been admitted into the modern editions than that of Rowe, who substituted "hail" for "tale," which I have no doubt is the true reading. The defences of "tale" appear to me weak: while

"hail" is the common stock-comparison of our popular language, which has subjects of comparison for every thing, for that which comes in rapid succession, and is used by some of our best authors, as by Googe and Stowe, and among the poets by Harington and Sylvester. It was probably "Hail" with the article "the" prefixed, originally written "t' hail." The very next word is misprinted "can," for "came," shewing that the manuscript was blurred in this place.

I. 3. ANGUS.

We are sent

To give thee, from our royal master, thanks;  
Only to herald thee into his sight,  
Not pay thee.

It appears that we ought to read "we are *not* sent."

I. 3. MACBETH.

Do you not hope your issue shall be kings,  
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me,  
Promised no less to them.

The delivery of predictions of this kind was not peculiar to the wayward sisters of Scotland, nor was an attention to them wholly extinct in the time when Shakespeare wrote. Aubrey relates that a prophet or bard in Caermarthenshire

170

predicted of the first Vaughan who was made a peer, that he would live to be a lord, and that his son would be a lord after him. It was in an interview with Mr. Vaughan; and he, like Macbeth, was desirous to know further, but the prophet could say no more. Aubrey received his information from one of his family, and has preserved it in his *Remains of Gentilism*, a manuscript full of most curious matter in the Lansdowne Library at the British Museum.

I. 3. MACBETH.

If good, why do I yield to that SUGGESTION  
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,  
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,  
Against the use of nature? Present fears  
Are less than horrible imaginings:  
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,  
Shakes so my single state of man, that function  
Is smother'd in surmise; and nothing is  
But what is not.

It must have been the necessity which the Poet felt of being rapid in the production of the events, when so much

was to be crowded into five acts, that induced him to represent Macbeth as thus early seeing no other way for the fulfilment of the prophetic word than that he should embrue his hands in the blood of Duncan. The conception, the very thought of such a course, should have been reserved at least till after Duncan had settled the succession in his sons. Suggestion is a theological word, one of the three "procurators or tempters" of Sin, Delight and Consent being the others. Thus writes John Johnes, M.D., in his *Arte and Science of preserving bodie and soul in health, wisdom, and Catholic religion*, 1579, a very curious volume, never I think quoted. The latter part of the speech is hastily composed. "Fantastical" means the creation of fancy. "Whose murder," the idea of murder conceived in the mind. "Function" seems

171

to be action or power of action which is lost in "surmise," thought. "And nothing is but what is not," he is so lost to all sensible objects, and rapt in his own thoughts, and especially in that which is but, after all, a thought, an unsubstantial existence, a nothing, that he is engrossed by it.

I. 3. MACBETH.

Come what come may,  
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

We feel the meaning of this, and perhaps every reader of Shakespeare feels it alike. It is a conventional expression. We need not therefore be solicitous to scan every element of the general idea, to weigh the particular force and effect of every word. Alas for much of our finest poetry if we are to deal with it thus! The phrase is used by good writers. As by Bishop Hacket in his *Life of Archbishop Williams*, "Time and long day will mitigate sad accidents: 'tis a slow medicine, but a sure one." -- Part ii. p. 20. Marlowe places at the end of his *Doctor Faustus* a line which contains a sentiment resembling this:

Terminat hora diem, terminat author opus.

Dr. Johnson once proposed to change the text, and read

Time! on! the hour runs through the roughest day.

A sad proof of the want of a just apprehension of his author's manner.

I. 4. DUNCAN.

Sons, KINSMEN, thanes.



Perhaps the reading of the second folio should have been preferred: "Sons, kinsman, thanes," meaning Macbeth: but compare Act v. Sc. 7, "My thanes and kinsmen."

172

I. 4. DUNCAN.

From hence to Inverness,  
And bind us further to you.

It may seem hypercritical to remark that the original copies have "Envernes:" and yet a nice ear will perceive that the absolute melody of Shakespeare's verse is better preserved by the old reading than the new. In a picture by a great master the least touch of an inferior hand is perceived.

I. 4. MACBETH.

The rest is labour, which is not used for you.

The word "rest" is printed with a capital letter in the original edition, thus leaving no doubt in this somewhat ambiguous line that the Poet's intention was to make Macbeth use a complimentary expression similar to what he had before said. The rest which is not spent in the king's service is like severe labour.

I. 5. LADY MACBETH.

Thou'dst have, great Glamis,  
That which cries, *Thus thou must do, if thou have it;*  
*And that which rather thou dost fear to do,*  
*Than wishest should be undone.*

I give this passage as it is printed in the Variorum, and by Mr. Knight virtually, though he uses the guillemets instead of the Italic letter. All wrong in my opinion. "Thus thou must do" seems to me all that answers to "that which cries:" that is, Duncan must be taken off. The line halts, and I have no doubt that Shakespeare wrote,

That which cries "Thus thou must do" if thou wouldst have it. #

In the folio the arrangement of the lines is different, and favours this view: --

Thouldst have, great Glamis, that which cries  
Thus thou must do, if thou [wouldst] have it.

173

There should be a pause at "that" in the third line, the mind supplying "is a thing." "What he must do," the murder, to secure the fulfilment of the witches' prediction, is a something, which, according to his character as previously drawn by her, he would rather have done than do it. Perhaps there is a little want of art in making both the Thane and his lady fall at once into the intention of perpetrating a deed so atrocious.

I. 5.

ATTENDANT. -- The king comes here to-night.

LADY MACBETH. -- Thou'rt mad to say it:

Is not thy master with him? who, wer't so,

Would have inform'd for preparation.

Here is a stroke of nature. Lady Macbeth had been meditating on what she considered the nearest way to the honour which was offered to them, and, when she hears that the king was about to put himself into her power, she speaks in reference to the ideas which had passed through her own mind. It then occurs to her that she might have disclosed too much: and she seeks to divert the mind of the attendant from any too strict scrutiny of the meaning of what she had uttered, by explaining it as having no other meaning than as referring to the want of sufficient notice to make preparation for the reception of so illustrious a guest.

I. 5. LADY MACBETH.

The raven himself is hoarse

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan

Under my battlements.

The word "my" is purposely used by the Poet to let the audience into the spirit of the character intended for the wife of the Thane; *nihil non arrogat*; the castle is *her's*, not Macbeth's, nor theirs jointly. It prepares for that over-

174

bearing of the milder and gentler spirit of the Thane which follows.

The annotation on "the raven himself is hoarse" might have been spared. There are probably few readers who do not understand it in its plain and I should say obvious sense, that even the raven which croaks the fatal entrance has more than its usual hoarseness. Nothing is more common than to speak of the raven croaking ominously. Thus Drayton, when he describes the entrance of Edward the Second into Berkeley Castle, says:

The ominous raven with a dismal cheer  
Through his hoarse beak of following horror tells;  
Begetting strange imaginary fear,  
With heavy echoes like to passing-bells.  
BARONS' WARS, v. 42.

There are other passages in this book which remind us of Shakespeare: how beautiful is the expression of the idea in the two lines which follow as part of the visions of the poor king.

Next came the vision of his bloody reign  
*Masking along* with Lancaster's stern ghost. -- v. 44.

But Drayton abounds, perhaps as much as any poet not in the very heaven of heavens, with vivid and forcible expressions like this. He is too much neglected./\*

/\* The two lines are quoted from the octavo edition of the Barons' Wars, without date, but probably of about 1609. In the folio, it is changed to

*Marching along* with Lancaster's stern ghost,

not for the better; and this is the reading of the later editions. The other lines are also changed thus:

The ominous raven often doth he hear,  
Whose croaking him of following horror tells, &c.

175

I. 5. LADY MACBETH.  
Thy letters have transported me beyond  
This ignorant present, and I feel now  
The future in the instant.

The second line halts; and should I think be completed thus:

And I feel [e'en] now

rather than by the introduction of the word "time." Nothing is more plain than that in considering the text of this play great licence is to be given to an editor. Thus, in a line which almost immediately follows, is

Your face, my Thane, is as book where men  
May read strange matters.

Can any one doubt that Shakespeare wrote "is as a book."

I. 6. BANQUO.  
The temple-haunting martlet.

The old copies have " barlet," which has been thus properly made to give way to "martlet." The change is justified by a comparison with a passage in *The Merchant of Venice* --

But like the martlet  
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,  
Even in the force and road of casualty. -- ii. 9.

But it may be further justified by comparison with the following passage in Braithwaite's *Survey of History*, 1638, p. 272. "As the martin will not build but in fair houses, so this man will not live but in the ruins of honour." Shakespeare was we see choice in his epithet, and exact in his natural history; "*temple-haunting*." This passage when looked at in the original copies, shews of itself how carelessly the original editors performed their duties, at least in the first act of this tragedy.

176

I. 6. BANQUO.

Buttress, nor COIGNE of VANTAGE.

It is remarkable that this compound rarely occurs. Dr. Johnson's explanation of it is surely erroneous. In the *Porta Linguarum Trilinguis*, an advantage is described "a something added to a building, as a jutting." The following passage in the *Pacata Hibernia*, contains something which approaches the nearest of any thing I have found to the word in question. Carew, the author, in describing Blarney Castle: "It is four piles joined in one, seated upon a main rock so as to be free from mining, the walls eighteen feet thick, and *flanked at each corner to the best advantage*." Shakespeare's French reading, perhaps, supplied him with it.

I. 6. DUNCAN.

The love that follows us, sometime is our trouble,  
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you  
How you shall bid "God yield us" for your pains,  
And thank us for your trouble.

The following passage in Palsgrave's French and English Dictionary would at once have determined a point about which the commentators are at variance: "We use 'God yelde you' by manner of thanking a person," p. 411 b. The passage is obscure, but not corrupted. It may be paraphrased thus: The affection which urges us to desire the society of our friends is sometimes the occasion of trouble

to them; but still we feel grateful for the affection which is manifested. So you are to regard this visit; and with this view of it you will be disposed to thank us for the trouble which we occasion you.

I. 7. MACBETH.

If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well  
It were done quickly: If the assassination

177

Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,  
With his surcease, success; that but this blow  
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,  
We'd jump the life to come.

Thus is the reading of the text of the old copies corrected by the modern editors, and, in the main, no doubt successfully. I also agree in the main with Johnson's paraphrase; but he leaves it a little doubtful whether he justly apprehended the force of the "But here," where "but" is certainly used in the sense of "only," and perhaps the better regulation would be

Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
But here upon this bank and shoal of Time;  
We'd jump the life to come.

If the blow ended the matter for this world, we would care nothing for the world to come. One can scarcely believe that Mr. Knight reports correctly the opinion of Tieck, who proposes to bring back the "school" of the old copies, and, as Mr. Knight represents the matter, argues upon it in a manner little worthy of his high reputation.

"Time" should be printed with a capital letter. The "bank and shoal of Time" is a favourite image, almost trite; the isthmus between the two eternities.

"Here," as the thoughts proceed, has reference to the preceding "Here," meaning in this present world, while we are on this isthmus of Time:

But in these cases  
We still have judgment here, that we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
To plague the inventor.

In this world we have judgment executed upon us. We teach others to do as we have done. The full form would

require "So," before "that." Here the Second Folio has accidentally lost a line, the passage standing thus:

Which being taught, return  
To plague th'ingredience of our poison'd chalice  
To our own lips.

This is worth observing, as an answer to those who profess to decry all departure from the old copies.

That "surcease " may be equivalent to *cessation* is evident from *Romeo and Juliet*, Act iv. Sc. 1.

No pulse  
Shall keep his natural progress, but surcease to beat.

And that "jump" is used for *disregard*, may be proved from *Cymbeline*, Act v. Sc. 4.

Or jump the after-enquiry.

I. 7. MACBETH.

I have no spur  
To prick the sides of my intent, but only  
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself  
And falls on the other.

I do not perceive any difficulty here, when we consider that the image in the Poet's mind was that of a horseman gallantly mounting into his seat. The words "spur" and "vault" plainly shew what was in the Poet's mind. Macbeth says that it is no instigation from without, only the working of ambition within; the purposes of which are often defeated, as a person mounting a horse may take too high a leap, and so, instead of seating himself in the saddle, fall on the other side of the horse. The word "oft" seems lost before "o'erleaps," and the word "side" is wanting to make the sense complete.

I. 7. MACBETH.

I dare do all which may become a man;  
Who dares do more is none.

This reading, which is merely conjectural, which has not

the slightest show of authority from the only copies through which we receive any information respecting the true text as

it flowed from the pen of Shakespeare, has so established itself in public opinion, and has received such extravagant praise from Dr. Johnson, that he will be thought a rash man who shall attempt to disturb the opinion, and to shew that it is not really what the Poet wrote or intended.

The original is this:

Who dares no more is none.

In the first place, the substitution of "do" for "no" is most violent. It was *no* in the First Folio, and *no* was allowed to remain by the editor of the Second. In the second place, if, indeed, Shakespeare meant to express the sentiment, which the line as *amended* implies, he has written feebly and imperfectly, and left his sense in some, perhaps not inconsiderable, obscurity.

It will be admitted that some change in the text as delivered to us is required; that it cannot stand as it appears in the original editions. The question is, not whether it shall be restored, but *how* it shall be restored? and I now venture to propose, I believe for the first time, that the second of the two lines shall be given to Lady Macbeth, retaining the exact text of the old copies.

The passage will then stand thus:

MACBETH. -- We will proceed no further in this business:  
He hath honoured me of late, and I have bought  
Golden opinions from all sorts of people;  
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,  
Not cast aside so soon.

LADY MACBETH. -- Was the hope drunk  
Wherein you drest yourself? Hath it slept since?  
And wakes it now to look so green and pale  
At what it did so freely? From this time  
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard

180

To be the same in thine own act and valour  
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that  
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,  
And live a coward in thine own esteem,  
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"  
Like the poor cat i' th' adage?

MACBETH. -- Prithee, peace!  
I dare do all that may become a man.

LADY MACBETH. -- Who dares no more is none. What was it, then,/\*  
That made you break this enterprise to me?  
When you durst do it then you were a man;  
And to be more than what you were, you would  
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place

Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:  
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now  
Does unmake you.

Thus much is sufficient to shew the propriety of the proposed regulation. But this is not the only part of the instigation-scene in which passages appear to me to be given to the wrong speaker. It is manifest, on a little consideration of the state of Macbeth's mind, that he could not have used the words given to him,

Will it not be received  
When we have marked with blood, &c.

If he had given utterance to any thing like this, he would have said "Will it be received," &c. while the words suit exactly with the state of mind and the objects of the unrelenting lady. Again, with less confidence, the last couplet of the scene appears to me to belong to Lady Macbeth, and not to her husband.

/\* The original copies read "What beast was't then." I regard the word "beast" as an intruder, and that it has got in thus: a copyist had written "wast" by mistake twice. The first being but imperfectly effaced or cancelled, it would be easily read "beast," the only word like it that could occur. This criticism has nothing to do with the more important points in the regulation of this passage.

181

The passage, regulated according to this view of it, will then stand thus:

LADY MACBETH. -- (*In continuation of what she before said.*)

I have given suck, and know  
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:  
I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums  
And dashed the brains out, had I but so sworn  
As you have done to this.

MACBETH. -- If we should fail!

LADY MACBETH. --

We fail!

But screw your courage to the sticking place,  
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep,  
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey  
Soundly invite him, his two Chamberlains  
Will I with wine and wassel so convince,  
That memory, the warder of the brain,  
Shall be a fume; and the receipt of reason  
A limbeck only. When in swinish sleep  
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,  
What cannot you and I perform upon



Th'unguarded Duncan? What not put upon  
His spungy officers, who shall bear the guilt  
Of our great quell.

MACBETH. -- (*Aside.*) Bring forth men-children only;  
For thy undaunted metal should compose  
Nothing but males.

LADY MACBETH. -- Will it not be received  
When we have marked with blood those sleepy two  
Of his own chamber, and used their very daggers,  
That they have done't. Who dares receive it other,  
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar  
Upon his death.

MACBETH. -- I am settled, and bend up  
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.

LADY MACBETH. -- Away, and mock the time with fairest show,  
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

Macbeth was to go in to Duncan in accordance with the  
message brought by the lady.

<>I. 2. BANQUO<>

This diamond he greets your wife withal

182

By the name of "most kind hostess;" and shut up  
In measureless content.

Thus, in all the editions. The commentators are endeavouring to make sense of that which has no sense. "To shut up," says Mr. Steevens, is "to conclude," and he produces authorities, to which Mr. Malone makes an addition. Then comes Mr. Boswell, who "rather supposes it means enclosed in content, content with every thing around him;" all thinking that Duncan is some way or other "shut up." Now, see the reading of the Second Folio,

This diamond he greets your wife withal  
By the name of "most kind hostess;" and shut it up  
In measureless content.

Undoubtedly the jewel in its case. That jewels were inclosed in cases is a point which needs not a word of note to prove.

II. 1. MACBETH.

thus with his stealthy pace,  
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design  
Moves like a ghost.

Tarquin seems to have haunted the imagination of Shake-

speare from his early days, when he chose the rape of Lucretia as the subject of a poem. He appears in the plays several times, and often unexpectedly, and certainly never less propitiously than here, whether we read with the modern editors *strides*, or with the former editors, *sides*. It would a little improve the passage, if for the second "with," we read "or," the two motions of the murderer, *stealthy* and *hasty*.

II. 2. LADY MACBETH.

The attempt and not the deed  
Confounds us.

This is usually printed with a comma after "attempt."

183

This is wrong. An unsuccessful attempt would produce to them infinite mischief -- an attempt without the deed.

II. 2. MACBETH.

No; this my hand will rather  
The multitudinous seas incarnardine,  
Making the green one, red.

"Incarnardine," or "incarnadine" in one copy, is found in Sylvester. Describing the phoenix, he says,

Her wings and train of feathers mixed fine  
Of orient azure and incarnadine.

An affected reading of the last clause has found too much favour. It has no countenance from the original editions, where the passage stands thus:

Making the Green one, Red.

On this second scene of the second act, which is one of wild and terrific grandeur, I offer the following somewhat bold observations, seeing in it, as it appears to me, that there has been some disturbance of the several short speeches or ejaculations, in the assignment of them to the speakers, since it proceeded from the hands of the Poet; also, that there are other things which require a different regulation from that which we find in the original copies, or in the Variorum.

In applying, however, to this scene the principle that there are errors in the stage-directions in this play, we must not forget that the very nature of such a scene as this requires that, which in a more tranquil scene would be contra-

dictory, or at least incoherent, and that we are to expect expressions which would not be heard in calmer moments. But it seems to me that any agitation of spirit, or any incoherence of ideas as the natural consequence, cannot demand

184

that the lady, when she has answered the inquiry of her guilty husband,

Did'st thou not hear a noise?

by saying

I heard the owl scream, and the crickets cry:

should then take up the husband's question, and address him

Did not you speak?

but that this is also an inquiry of the conscience-stricken thane, whom every noise appals, and who would have every sound translated to him. He was not satisfied with her first explanation. The sounds had been no screaming of the owl, no crying of the cricket; articulate sounds had fallen upon his ear, and he wished and vainly hoped that it was from her lips, and not from those of another, that they had proceeded. The few words which constitute that dialogue of monosyllables which follows, would then require to be thus distributed. He asks

Did not you speak?

To which she replies

When? Now?

Both words spoken with an interrogative inflection. At what time do you mean that I spoke? Is it now?

As I descended.

Then was the time that the articulate sounds were heard which he now wishes to have explained, and the words should stand without a note of interrogation. The

Aye

of the lady then possesses an effect, which, as the scene stands at present, it wants.

Hark!

he exclaims again. Another noise is heard. The distempered mind of Macbeth connects it with the sounds he had heard, or thought he had heard, in the second chamber, and he is about to relate what he had heard there. But, when he has inquired

Who lies i' th' second chamber?

and has been answered

Donaldbain,

the Poet, to mark how his mind is distraught, and to read more solemnly this his great lesson against blood-guiltiness, represents him as casting his eyes down upon those hands stained with the blood of the "issue of mighty kings," and diverted from his purpose, he remarks

This is a sorry sight.

But this interruption, though highly proper, and, indeed, a most natural and striking incident, draws off the mind from the connection between the question,

Who lies i' th' second chamber?

and what next follows, and prevents it from perceiving so clearly as it was to be desired, that the persons talking in their sleep who were overheard by Macbeth, as he returned from the murder which was committed over-head, lay in that second chamber.

*There's* one did laugh in his sleep, and one cried murder!

*There*, that is, in the second chamber, where lay the son of the murdered king.

I pass over the words heard by Macbeth from the sleeping attendants of Donaldbain, and come to the more striking

part, and where there is again room for suspecting that the present critical text ought to be differently regulated. The old copies here may be considered neutral, and the subject open to any inquirers. Not in the chamber of Donaldbain,

where only he heard the words "Murder!" "God bless me!" and "Amen," which actually proceeded from persons sleeping there, who happened at that moment to be talking in their sleep, but from one of those "airy tongues which syllable men's names on desert shores," he heard the voice which said

Sleep no more: Macbeth doth murder Sleep.

These words were, like "the air-drawn dagger" which "marshalled his way," the mere coinage of his distempered brain, the impression of his own mind given to the inarticulate sounds produced by the wind of that dreadful night as it swept along his battlements. But the question is, what words did the Poet mean to represent him as supposing that he had heard. In the Variorum text there are several lines marked, by being printed in the italic letter, as if they were words heard by Macbeth. To me it appears that the airy voice said no more than this:

Sleep no more: Macbeth doth murder Sleep!

or, as it is afterwards,

Glamis doth murder Sleep.

and that there the mark of quotation ended should be placed. What follows is a comment of his own:

The innocent Sleep.

The voice had first presented sleep in a prosopopoeia. It was a cherub, one of the "young and rosy cherubim" of

187

heaven. Macbeth invests it with its proper attributes. First it is

The innocent Sleep;

the most simple, harmless, inoffensive thing in nature: Sleep, that never did wrong to any; the purest picture and symbol of a confiding innocence. But other attributes present themselves: from its innocence he passes to its usefulness:

Sleep, that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care;  
The death of each day's life; sore labour's bath;  
Balm of hurt minds; great Nature's second course,

Chief nourisher in life's feast --

and he would have gone on still expatiating on the gentle and valuable qualities of the cherub Sleep whom he had basely murdered; but Lady Macbeth interrupts him, and asks with unaffected surprise,

What do you mean?

He proceeds in the same distempered strain, not so much answering her question, as continuing to give expression to the feeling of horror at the thought which had fixed itself in his mind, that he had committed a defeat on the useful and the innocent Sleep; and he repeats what the voice appeared to him to have said, with the additional circumstance that the voice seemed to pervade the apartments of his spacious castle, like the limbs of the great giant which lay in the Castle of Otranto, and that it would enter other ears than his, and lead to the discovery of his crime.

Still it cried, "Sleep no more," to all the house;  
"Glamis hath murdered Sleep."

And he comes at length to the horrible conviction that a

188

punishment which bore relation to the nature of the offence, would soon fall upon him,

And therefore Cawdor  
Shall sleep no more: Macbeth shall sleep no more.

In this scene, we have, perhaps, as highly wrought a tragical effect as is to be found in the whole range of the ancient or modern drama. I have ventured to suggest what are very material alterations, but I have not changed a single word of text. All the alterations are in those matters which the state of the original copies plainly shews to lie open to the taste and judgment of any commentator.

#### II. 3. PORTER.

Here's a farmer that hang'd himself on the expectation of plenty.

There is a story of such an event in the small tract of Peacham, entitled *The Truth of our Times revealed out of one Man's Experience*, 1638, p. 113. The farmer had hoarded hay when it was five pounds ten shillings per load, and when it unexpectedly fell to forty and thirty shillings, he hung himself through disappointment and vexation, but was cut

down by his son before he was quite dead. No doubt such stories are of all ages.

III. 1. MACBETH.

It is concluded. -- Banquo, thy soul's flight,  
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night.

Negotiations of this kind with assassins is now a thing so much unknown to us that this scene loses something of its effect from the incredulity with which we peruse it. But in the age of Elizabeth such negotiations were not very uncommon. An instance had recently occurred in the neighbourhood of Stratford. Lodowick Grevile, who dwelt at Sesoncote, in Gloucestershire, and at Milcote, in Warwick-

189

shire, coveting the estate of one Webb, his tenant, at Drayton, plotted to murder him, and get the estate by a forged will. For this purpose Webb was invited to Grevile's house, there to keep Christmas, when Grevile engaged two of his servants to strangle him in his bed. Grevile gave out that the man was ill: a clergyman was sent for to write his will, one of the murderers was put in the bed, who, counterfeiting the voice of the dying man, gave directions for the will, in which every thing was left to Grevile, except an annuity to an attorney at Banbury. The man was buried. Some time after one of the murderers, being in his cups at Stratford, said that he could hang his master. This expression was related to the other murderer, who acquainted his master with it. Grevile advised that to prevent further babbling he should be made away with. Grevile accordingly sent them out one night on some pretended business, when the babbler was murdered by his companion, and the body cast into a pit. The body floated, and was found. Inquiry was made who was last in the dead man's company. His companion was taken up; he confessed and impeached his master; they were arraigned in Westminster Hall on November 6, 1589. Grevile stood mute and was pressed to death on the 14th of November following, on which day the partner of his guilt was executed. This is the story as related in Dugdale's Warwickshire. The circumstance must have been well known to Shakespeare, as the Greviles were at this time patrons of the living of Stratford.

III. 2. LADY MACBETH.

Nought's had, all's spent,  
Where our desire is got without content:  
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,  
Than, by destruction, dwell in doubtful joy.

That these reflections belong to Macbeth, and not to the

190

lady, I entertain scarcely the shadow of a doubt. When the servant has been dismissed to summon the thane to his lady's presence, Macbeth enters unexpectedly to the lady, muttering to himself the words before us, unconscious of her presence. Lady Macbeth hears what he says, and breaks in upon him with the following question --

How now, my Lord? why do you keep alone?  
Of sorryest fancies your companions making,  
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died  
With them they think on.

Perhaps for "safer" we should read "better."  
What follows is said by Macbeth more than half aside.  
At least it is not said dialogue-wise with the lady, who knew nothing of his intentions respecting Banquo.

III. 2. MACBETH.

ere, to black Hecate's summons,  
The SHARD-BORNE beetle, with his drowsy hums,  
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done  
A deed of dreadful note.

The question upon this is, whether "born" is "*natus*" or "*latus*." There is no doubt that the habits of the *Scarabaeus stercorarius* were known in the time of Shakespeare; but when we compare with the passage before us the following lines in *Anthony and Cleopatra*

They are his *shards*, and he their beetle;

where Pompey is the beetle, and Caesar and Anthony the two shard wings by which he raises himself, we see plainly what Shakespeare meant by *shards*, namely, the dry, husky, outward cover of the beetle's wings.

As there are great authorities for the other explanation, I

191

shall observe that when Shakespeare speaks of the "sharded beetle" in *Cymbeline*,

And often to our comfort shall we find  
The *sharded beetle* in a safer hold  
Than is the full-winged eagle. -- iii. 3.



it is clear that "sharded" is used in opposition to "full-winged."

III. 4.

MACBETH. --                   There's blood upon thy face.

MURDERER. -- 'Tis Banquo's then.

MACBETH. -- 'Tis better thee without, than he within.

Is he dispatched?

Anything, almost, is to be preferred to the common explanation that Macbeth addresses the last sentence to the murderer, and is to be understood as saying that it is better the blood of Banquo should be on the face of his murderer, than in the body of Banquo himself. I would submit as the Poet's intention, that Macbeth goes to the door, and there sees the murderer with the evidence of the crime upon him: and with that infirmity of purpose which belongs to him, that occasional rising of the milk of human kindness, he is deeply shocked at the sight, especially contrasting it with the gaiety of the banquet; he retires from the door, meditates, and then, feeling the importance to him of having got quit of Banquo, he utters the expression aside

'Tis better thee without, than he within:

that, horrible as it is, thus in the midst of the feast, to behold the assassin of his friend just without the door, it is still better than that Banquo himself should be alive and within the hall a guest at this entertainment. He thus recovers himself, and then goes to the door again to ask if the deed had been done effectually, "Is he dispatched?"

192

In what follows, we cannot suppose that Macbeth speaks so as to be heard by the murderer, much less speaks to him, revealing the secret purpose and thoughts of his mind. They are *aside* speeches.

III. 4. ROSSE.

His absence, Sir,  
Lays blame upon his promise. -- Please it your highness  
To grace us with your royal company?

It is during this speech of Rosse that the ghost first becomes visible to Macbeth. He had been about to take his seat according to the invitation of Lenox; but now, full of horror, instead of doing so he starts back, which leads to the invitation of Rosse.

III. 4. ENTER GHOST.

I cannot but incline to the opinion of those who think that the Ghosts of both the eminent persons who had been sent to their account by Macbeth's hand or orders appear at the banquet. If we must support the integrity of the stage-directions in this scene, when we have so much evidence that the stage-directions in other parts of the play are corrupted, we must at least change "Enter Ghost" for "Re-enter Ghost," if one and the same Ghost is intended. But I have so little faith in the accuracy with which the stage-directions in this play have come down to us, that I can believe that in the prior direction about the Ghost, "Enter the Ghost of Banquo, and sits in Macbeth's place," "Banquo" has got in by mistake, superseding "Duncan:" in other words, that the first Ghost is the Ghost of Duncan, and not of Banquo.

In questions like these, we must be content with probabilities. The chief probability lies here; that the figure pre-

193

sent to the mind's eye of Macbeth was that of a person who had been buried:

If charnel-houses and our graves must send  
Those that we bury back, our monuments  
Shall be the maws of kites.

Now Banquo was then so recently dead that there had been no interment of him; while Duncan had been honourably entombed,

carried to Icolmkill,  
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,  
And guardian of their bones.

Then that on the second appearance of a ghost we have the ghost of Banquo, appears probable from this circumstance, that it is the ghost of a soldier, not of a peaceable person such as Duncan was --

or, be alive again,  
And dare me to the desert with thy sword,

is like what would occur to the mind of Macbeth encountering in this manner one whom he had so often seen in the field.

It is quite clear from the account which Forman gives of this play in 1610, that a ghost of Banquo did appear, as the

Play was originally performed, but I cannot go the length of Mr. Dyce in affirming that the words of Forman are conclusive against the appearance of any other ghost. I think it more in Shakespeare's manner to bring in *both*, than to make one ghost appear, depart without apparent reason, and re-appear for no particular purpose. Richard is appalled by the ghosts of all whom he had murdered. Again, Macbeth seems to speak of more than one when he says

You make me strange  
Even to the disposition that I owe,  
When now I think you can behold such sights,

194

And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,  
When mine is blenched with fear.

Rosse then asks, "What sights, my Lord?" It might undoubtedly be but the seeing twice the same figure; but the construction would rather lead us to believe that Rosse understood Macbeth to speak of more objects than one.

Lastly, when Macbeth afterwards says,

I am in blood  
Stept in so far, that should I wade no more  
Returning were as tedious as go o'er;

it seems as if the visions he had just witnessed had brought both his great victims to his remembrance, and placed them in the light of his countenance.

Probabilities, as I said before, in a case like this, are all we are to expect, and the preceding view of the passage seems to me to shew how the probabilities lie.

#### III. 4. MACBETH.

Or, be alive again,  
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;  
If trembling I inhabit, then protest me  
The baby of a girl.

If the comma is put after "inhabit," as it is in the old copies, and not after "then," there seems to be little difficulty in admitting that we have a just and proper reading; "If I remain at home," or possibly "If I remain inactive." Capel says that in the passage in *Hamlet*, "I think this inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation," Inhibition is put for "not acting, ceasing to exhibit." So if "inhibit" be preferred, the text in other respects might be justified.

IV. 1. THIRD WITCH.  
HARPER cries: 'tis time, 'tis time.

The authentic copies read *Harpier*, which is the better word.

195

IV. 1. FIRST WITCH.  
Toad, that under the cold stone  
Days and nights hast thirty-one  
Swelter'd venom sleeping got.

Shakespeare speaks elsewhere of the toad ugly and venomous. The question is whether he is right in his natural history, or has only adopted the vulgar notion on this point. There is a paper by Dr. Davy in the Philosophical Transactions of 1826, in which it is shewn that the toad *is* venomous, and moreover that "sweltered venom" is peculiarly proper, the poison lying diffused over the body immediately under the skin. This is the second instance in this play of Shakespeare's minute exactness in his natural history.

IV. 1. ALL THE WITCHES.  
Shew his eyes, and grieve his heart:  
Come like shadows, so depart.

We have here another proof of the want of attention in preparing the stage-directions of this play, to which we have already had so much occasion to advert. The spectacle which follows is described as "A show of Eight Kings, and Banquo last, with a glass in his hand." This implies that Banquo holds the glass, while it is distinctly said --

And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass,  
Which shews me many more; and some I see  
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry:  
Horrible sight! Now, I see, 'tis true;  
For the blood-boltered Banquo smiles upon me  
And points at them for his.

This incongruity was perceived by the middle-period editors, and the stage-direction is altered thus: -- "Eight Kings appear, and pass over the stage in order; the last with a glass in his hand; Banquo following." If as close an adherence to the old copies as might be were desired, the

196

incongruity would be effectually removed by reading the

direction thus: -- "A show of Eight Kings, and Banquo; the last King with a glass in his hand."

Shows like this were among the deceptions practised by the professors of the art of magic in Shakespeare's own time.

Only I have sometimes, not without amazement, thought of the representation which a celebrated magician made unto Catherine de Medicis, the French Queen, whose impious curiosity led her to desire of him a magical exhibition of all the kings that had hitherto reigned in France, and yet were to reign. The shapes of all the kings, even unto the husband of the queen, successively shewed themselves in the enchanted circle in which the conjuror made his invocations; and they took as many turns as there had been years in their government. The kings that were to come did thus in like manner successively come upon the stage, namely Francis II., Charles IX., Henry III., Henry IV.; which being done, then two cardinals, Richelieu and Mazarine, in red hats, became visible in the spectacle. But after these cardinals there entered wolves, bears, tigers, and lions to consummate the entertainment. (*Magnalia Christi Americana*, by Cotton Mather, D.D. fol. 1702. Book II. p. 29.)

Shakespeare has shewn his art in not suffering more than eight kings to appear in the procession, the rest being shewn only on the mirror.

IV. 1. MACBETH.

Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!

This is finely imagined. Macbeth does not compare what he saw to Banquo, but to the fearful image of Banquo which he had lately beheld.

IV. 1. MACBETH.

What! will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?

That is, says Mr. Steevens, "the dissolution of nature," and no one beside seems to have bestowed a thought upon the passage. The passage quoted from *The Valiant Welshman* is nothing to the purpose, the "cracks of Jove" there spoken of meaning the thunder. Yet it may be right.

197

We may perceive here, what could not fail to be a most acceptable prediction to King James, as he looked on his two sons, the hope of his royal house, Henry and Charles -- an interminable line -- *nepotes nepotum*: -- but it has been ordered far otherwise.

IV. 3. MACDUFF.

He has no children.

Not, I fear, Macbeth has no children, and therefore cannot have a father's feelings; but, He has no children, and there-

fore my vengeance cannot have its full retributive action. The thought was unworthy of Shakespeare, and it is to be classed with a still more heinous offence of the same kind, where Hamlet will not execute his intended vengeance on his uncle when he finds him at prayer. It is that inexplicable outbreak of ferocity on which we have before had occasion to observe.

V. 1. DOCTOR.

Yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

How different is the spirit of this passage from that we have just noticed! Shakespeare was afraid lest the audience should go away from so impressive a scene as this, with the persuasion that sleep-walking was *always* to be taken as a sign of a burthened conscience. This gentle and kind-hearted man therefore throws in this expression as a protection of the persons subject to it.

V. 1. LADY MACBETH.

I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried.

Query if it ought not to be "Duncan?" The mind of the lady seems to have been intent, almost entirely, on the death of Duncan.

198

V. 3. MACBETH.

Then fly, false thanes,  
And mingle with the English epicures.

It may be doubted whether Shakespeare had any thought of comparing the fare of the Scottish nation with that of the English, the sumptuous feasting of the English being a common topic of reproach. Thus Ariosto --

While Ronald here is cheered with great excess,  
(As ever in the English land is found,)  
I mean to tell how that fair lady sped, &c. -- Canto VIII. St. 24.

V. 3. MACBETH.

My WAY of life  
Is fallen into the SEAR, the yellow leaf.

The *sear-month* is August in the proverb "Good to cut briars in the sere-month," preserved by Aubrey in his MS. treatise on the Remains of Gentilism in England; and this is favourable to the change proposed by some of the commentators of way into May. Of *sere-leaves* there are many

instances. Sandys compares the roofs of some houses he saw when abroad "to a grove of flourishing trees that have only seere and perished crowns." *Travels*, p. 93. Hacket affords a better illustration. When Archbishop Williams was in the Tower, he says, "Yet, to give his honest followers their due, the greatest part of them shrunk not, but did their best service that they could afford to their forlorn master, like sear-leaves that hang upon an oak in January; though the tree can give them no sap they are loath to leave it." Part II. p. 127. The meaning of Macbeth is quite evident.

V. 3. MACBETH.

What rhubarb, SENNA, or what purgative drug  
Would scour these English hence?

The first folio has *cyme*, the second correctly *caeny*, which

199

represents the pronunciation of the name of the drug now called *senna* in our author's time, and is still the pronunciation of it by the common people. Thus in *The Treasurie of Hidden Secrets*, 1627, "Take *seene* of Alexandria one ounce," &c. The line has lost something of its melody by the substitution of *senna* for the softer word *caeny*, which ought to have been retained. We may go on altering our language if we please, but let us not throw on our dead poets the reproach of having written inharmoniously, when only we have ourselves, through conceit, thought proper to abrogate very good and serviceable terms.

V. 3. MACBETH.

I will not be afraid of death and bane  
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.

Fortresses, and perhaps kingdoms, have been lost and won by the effect of old prophecies even in our time. The fortress of Bhurtpore was taken by Lord Combermere, the defence of it being paralysed by an old prophecy that it could never be taken till the waters of its ditch should be swallowed by an alligator. The prediction was supposed by the orientals to be fulfilled in Lord Combermere, out of whose name they made *Compare*, which in the language of that part of India signifies an alligator.

V. 5.

SEYTON. -- The Queen, my lord, is dead.

MACBETH. -- She should have died hereafter;

There would have been a time for such a word. --

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,  
To the last syllable of recorded time;  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!  
Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,

200

And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

The Commentators afford very little assistance to the understanding of this passage, which on a superficial view exhibits, though somewhat obscurely, striking and affecting images. I have often looked at it with despair of being able to trace the coherence which we expect, notwithstanding the distracted state of the mind of Macbeth, and have regarded it, not as a passage which has come down to us corrupted, but as one of those thrown off by this free spirit, in which he trusted to a certain *general effect*, without being solicitous about the inquiries of a too cold criticism. But having found in a contemporary writer the word *foules* used for *crowds*, it occurred to me that for *fools* we might read *foules* in this sense of *crowds*, and this led to what may perhaps have been the real intention of the Poet.

Macbeth, when he hears of the death of his lady, thinks first of the unseasonableness of the time; sometime "here-after" would have been the time for such a piece of intelligence as this: this introduces the idea of the disposition there is in man to *procrastinate* in every thing; we are for ever saying "to-morrow," and this though we see men dying around us, every "yesterday" having conducted crowds of human beings to the grave. This introduces more general ideas of the vanity of man, who "walketh in a vain show, and is disquieted in vain," a passage of Scripture which seems to have been in the Poet's mind when he wrote what follows; as is also another beautiful expression of that inexhaustible treasury of beautiful moral and divine sentiment, "we spend our years as a tale that is told." Shakespeare's intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures is observable in all his plays, shewn sometimes in a broad and palpa-

201

ble allusion or adaptation, and sometimes, as here, in passages of which the germ only is in that book. At the same time there is something in the passage partaking of the



desperation of the thane's position, and perhaps intended to shew what thoughts possess a mind like his, burthened with heavy guilt, and having some reason to think retribution near at hand.

The word *foule* for *crowd* occurs in Archibold's *Evangelical Fruit of the Seraphical Franciscan Order*, 1628, MS. Harl. 3888, "The *foule* of people past over him in time of sermon," f. 81.

V. 7. MACDUFF.

I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's PEARL.

This is an expression for which it is not easy to account. There is as strange a use of the same word in Sylvester's *Du Bartas* --

These parasites are even the *pearls* and rings  
(Pearls, said I, perils) in the ears of kings.  
For, O, what mischief but their wiles can work! -- P. 554.

The notes upon the passage are nothing to the purpose. It is possible that Shakespeare might allude to this passage of Sylvester.