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A SELECT COLLECTION OF OLD ENGLISH PLAYS, VOL. VIII

Fourth Edition

Originally published by Robert Dodsley in the Year 1744.

Now first chronologically arranged, revised and enlarged with the Notes of all the Commentators, and new Notes

By

W. CAREW HAZLITT

1874-1876.

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SUMMER'S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT.

EDITION.

A pleasant Comedie, called Summer's last will and Testament. Written by Thomas Nash. Imprinted at London by Simon Stafford, for Water Burre. 1600. 4to.

[COLLIER'S PREFACE.]

[Thomas Nash, son of William Nash, minister, and Margaret his wife, was baptized at Lowestoft, in Suffolk, in November 1567.[1] He was admitted a scholar at St John's College, Cambridge, on the Lady Margaret's foundation, in 1584, and proceeded B.A. in 1585:] the following is a copy of the Register:—

"Tho. Nashe Coll. Joh. Cantab. A.B. ib. 1585." The place, though not the time, of his birth[2] we have under his own authority, for in his "Lenten Stuff," printed in 1599, he informs us that he was born at Lowestoft; and he leads us to conclude that his family was of some note, by adding that his "father sprang from the Nashes of Herefordshire." [3]

It does not appear that Nash ever proceeded Master of Arts at Cambridge, and most of his biographers agree that he left his college about 1587. It is evident, however, that he had got into disgrace, and probably was expelled; for the author of "England to her three Daughters" in "Polimanteia," 1595, speaking of Harvey and Nash, and the pending quarrel between them, uses these terms: "Cambridge make thy two children friends: *thou hast been unkind to the one to wean him before his time*, and too fond upon the other to keep him so long without preferment: the one is ancient and of much reading; the other is young, but full of wit." [4] The cause of his disgrace is reported to have been the share he took in a piece called "Terminus et non Terminus," not now extant; and it is not denied that his partner in this offence was expelled. Most likely, therefore, Nash suffered the same punishment.

If Nash be the author of "An Almond for a Parrot," of which there is little doubt, although his name is not affixed to it, he travelled in Italy; [5] and we find from another of his pieces that he had been in Ireland. Perhaps he went abroad soon after he abandoned Cambridge, and before he settled in London and became an author. His first appearance in this character seems to have been in 1589, and we believe the earliest date of any tract attributed to him relating to Martin Marprelate is also 1589. [6] He was the first, as has been frequently remarked, to attack this enemy of the Church with the keen missiles of wit and satire, throwing aside the lumbering and unserviceable weapons of scholastic controversy. Having set the example in this respect, he had many followers and imitators, and among them John Lily, the dramatic poet, the author of "Pap with a Hatchet."

In London Nash became acquainted with Robert Greene, and their friendship drew him into a long literary contest with Gabriel Harvey, to which Nash owes much of his reputation. It arose out of the posthumous attack of Harvey upon Robert Greene, of which sufficient mention has been made elsewhere. Nash replied on behalf of his dead companion, and reiterated the charge which had given the original offence to Harvey, viz., that his brother was the son of a ropemaker. [7] One piece was humorously dedicated to Richard Litchfield, a barber of Cambridge, and Harvey answered it under the assumed character of the same barber, in a tract called "The Trimmino of Thomas Nash," [8] which also contained a woodcut of a man in fetters. This representation referred to the imprisonment of Nash for an offence he gave by writing a play (not now extant) called "The Isle of Dogs," and to this event Francis Meres alludes in his "Palladia Tamia," 1598, in these terms: "As Actaeon was worried of his own hounds, so is Tom Nash of his 'Isle of Dogs.' Dogs were the death of Euripides; but be not disconsolate, gallant young Juvenal; Linus, the son of Apollo, died the same death. Yet God forbid, that so brave a wit should so basely perish!—Thine are but paper dogs; neither is thy banishment like Ovid's eternally to converse with the barbarous *Getes*. Therefore comfort thyself, sweet Tom, with Cicero's glorious return to Rome, and with the council Aeneas gives to his sea-beaten soldiers." Lib. I. Aeneid.

"Pluck up thine heart, and drive from thence both fear and care away:
To think on this may pleasure be, perhaps, another day."

—*Durato, et temet rebus servato secundis.* (fol. 286.)

This was in part verified in the next year, for when Nash published his "Lenten Stuff," he referred with apparent satisfaction to his past troubles in consequence of his "Isle of Dogs." [9]

So much has been said, especially by Mr D'Israeli in his "Quarrels of Authors," on the subject of this dispute between Nash and Harvey, that it is unnecessary to add anything, excepting that it was carried to such a length, and the pamphlets contained so much scurrility, that it was ordered from authority in 1599 that all the tracts on both sides should be seized and suppressed. [10]

As with Greene, so with Nash, an opinion on his moral conduct and general deportment has been too readily formed from the assertions of his opponents; and because Gabriel Harvey, to answer a particular purpose, states, "You may be in one prison to-day and in another to-morrow," it has been taken for granted, that "after his arrival in London, he was often confined in different jails." No doubt, he and his companions Greene, Marlowe, and Peele, led very disorderly lives, and it is singular that all four died prematurely, the oldest of them probably not being forty years of age. It is certain that Nash was not living at the time when the "Return from Parnassus" was produced, which, though not printed until 1606, was written before the end of the reign of Elizabeth: his ashes are there spoken of as at rest, but the mention of him as dead, nearest to the probable date of that event, is to be found in [Fitzgeoffrey's "Affaniae," 1601, where an epitaph upon him is printed. His name also occurs in] an anonymous poem, under the title of "The Ant and the Nightingale, or Father Hubbard's Tales," 1604, where the following stanza is met with—

"Or if in bitterness thou rail like Nash:
Forgive me, honest soul, that term thy phrase
Railing; for in thy works thou wert not rash,
Nor didst affect in youth thy private praise.
Thou hadst a strife with that Tergemini; [11]
Thou hurt'dst them not till they had injured thee." [12]

The author of a MS. epitaph, in "Bibl. Sloan," Pl. XXI. A. was not so squeamish in the language he employed—

"Here lies Tom Nash, that notable *railer*,
That in his life ne'er paid shoemaker nor tailor."

The following from Thomas Freeman's Epigrams, 1614, is not out of its place—

OF THOMAS NASH.

"Nash, had Lycambes on earth living been
The time thou wast, his death had been all one;
Had he but mov'd thy tartest Muse to spleen
Unto the fork he had as surely gone:
For why? there lived not that man, I think,
Us'd better or more bitter gall in ink."

It is impossible in the present day to attempt anything like a correct list of the productions of Nash, many of which were unquestionably printed without his name: [13] the titles of and quotations from a great number may be found in the various bibliographical miscellanies, easily accessible. When he began to write cannot be ascertained, but it was most likely soon after his return from the Continent, and the dispute between John Penry and the Bishops seems then to have engaged his pen. [14] There is one considerable pamphlet by him, called "Christ's Tears over Jerusalem," printed in 1593, which, like some of the tracts by Greene, is of a repentant and religious character; and it has been said that, though published with his name, it was not in fact his production. There is no sufficient ground for this supposition, and Nash never subsequently disowned the performance: the address "To the Reader" contains an apology to Gabriel Harvey for the attack upon him, in terms that seem to vouch for their own sincerity. "Nothing (says Nash) is there now so much in my vows as to be at peace with all men, and make submissive amends where I most displeas'd; not basely fear-blasted, or constraintively overruled, but purely pacificatory: suppliant for reconciliation and pardon do I sue to the principallest of them 'gainst whom I professed utter enmity; even of Master Doctor Harvey I heartily desire the like, whose fame and reputation (through some precedent injurious provocations and fervent excitements of young heads) I rashly assailed: yet now better advised, and of his perfections more confirmedly persuaded, unfeignedly I entreat of the whole world from my pen his worth may receive no

impeachment. All acknowledgments of abundant scholarship, courteous, well-governed behaviour, and ripe, experienced judgment do I attribute to him."

We have already seen with what malignity Harvey trampled upon the corpse of Greene, and he received this apology of Nash in a corresponding spirit; for instead of accepting it, in his "New Letter of Notable Contents," 1593, he rejects it with scorn: "Riotous vanity (he replies) was wont to root so deeply that it could hardly be unrooted; and where reckless impudency taketh possession, it useth not very hastily to be dispossessed. What say you to a spring of rankest villainy in February, and a harvest of ripest divinity in May? But what should we hereafter talk any more of paradoxes or impossibilities, when he that penned the most desperate and abominable pamphlet of 'Strange News,' and disgorged his stomach of as poisonous rancour as ever was vomited in print, within few months is won, or charmed, or enchanted, (or what metamorphosis should I term it?) to astonish carnal minds with spiritual meditations," &c. Such a reception of well-intended and eloquently-written amends was enough to make Nash repent even his repentance, as far as Gabriel Harvey was concerned.[15]

Of the popularity of Nash as a writer some notion may be formed from a fact he himself mentions in his "Have with you to Saffron Walden," that between 1592, when his "Pierce Penniless, his Supplication to the Devil" was first printed, and 1596 it "passed through the pikes of at least six impressions." How long his reputation as a satirist survived him may be judged from the fact that in 1640 Taylor the Water Poet published a tract, which had for its second title "Tom Nash, his Ghost (the old Martin queller), newly rouz'd:" and in *Mercurius Anti-pragmaticus*, from Oct. 12 to Oct. 19, 1647, is the following passage: "Perhaps you will be angry now, and when you steal forth disguised, in your next intelligence thunder forth threatenings against me, and be as satirical in your language as ever was your predecessor Nash, who compiled a learned treatise in the praise of a red herring."

Only two plays in which Nash had any concern have come down to us: his "Isle of Dogs," before noticed, was probably never printed, or at all events it is not now known to exist. He wrote alone—

(1.) A pleasant Comedy called "Summer's Last Will and Testament." 1600. 4to.

In conjunction with Marlowe he produced—

(2.) "The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage," played by the children of her Majesty's chapel. 1594. 4to.

Phillips, in his "Theatrum Poetarum," also assigned to Nash, "See me, and see me not," a comedy, which may be a different play, and not, as has been generally supposed, "Hans Beer Pot;" because, the name of the author, Dawbridgescourt Belchier, being subscribed to the dedication, such a mistake could not easily be made.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

WILL SUMMER.

VER.

SUMMER.

AUTUMN.

WINTER.

CHRISTMAS, | *Sons to WINTER.*

BACKWINTEB. |

SOL.

SOLSTITIUM.

VERTUMNUS.

ORION.

BACCHUS.

HARVEST.

SATIRES.

NYMPHS.

Three CLOWNS.

Three MAIDS.

HUNTERS.

REAPERS.

SUMMER'S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT.[16]

Enter WILL SUMMER,[17] in his fool's coat but half on, coming out.

Noctem peccatis et fraudibus objice nubem.[18] There is no such fine time to play the knave in as the night. I am a goose or a ghost, at least; for what with turmoil of getting my fool's apparel, and care of being perfect, I am sure I have not yet supp'd to-night. Will Summer's ghost I should be, come to present you with "Summer's Last Will and Testament." Be it so; if my cousin Ned will lend me his chain and his fiddle. Other stately-pac'd Prologues use to attire themselves within: I that have a toy in my head more than ordinary, and use to go without money, without garters, without girdle, without hat-band, without points to my hose, without a knife to my dinner, and make so much use of this word without in everything, will here dress me without. Dick Huntley[19] cries, Begin, begin: and all the whole house, For shame, come away; when I had my things but now brought me out of the laundry. God forgive me, I did not see my Lord before! I'll set a good face on it, as though what I had talk'd idly all this while were my part. So it is, *boni viri*, that one fool presents another; and I, a fool by nature and by art, do speak to you in the person of the idiot of our play-maker. He, like a fop and an ass, must be making himself a public laughingstock, and have no thank for his labour; where other Magisterii, whose invention is far more exquisite, are content to sit still and do nothing. I'll show you what a scurvy Prologue he had made me, in an old vein of similitudes: if you be good fellows, give it the hearing, that you may judge of him thereafter.

THE PROLOGUE.

At a solemn feast of the Triumviri in Rome, it was seen and observed that the birds ceased to sing, and sat solitary on the housetops, by reason of the sight of a painted serpent set openly to view. So fares it with us novices, that here betray our imperfections: we, afraid to look on the imaginary serpent of envy, painted in men's affections, have ceased to tune any music of mirth to your ears this twelvemonth, thinking that, as it is the nature of the serpent to hiss, so childhood and ignorance would play the gosling, contemning and condemning what they understood not. Their censures we weigh not, whose senses are not yet unswaddled. The little minutes will be continually striking, though no man regard them: whelps will bark before they can see, and strive to bite before they have teeth. Politianus speaketh of a beast who, while he is cut on the table, drinketh and represents the motions and voices of a living creature. Such like foolish beasts are we who, whilst we are cut, mocked, and flouted at, in every man's common talk, will notwithstanding proceed to shame ourselves to make sport. No man pleaseth all: we seek to please one. Didymus wrote four thousand books, or (as some say) six-thousand, on the art of grammar. Our author hopes it may be as lawful for him to write a thousand lines of as light a subject. Socrates (whom the oracle pronounced the wisest man of Greece) sometimes danced: Scipio and Laslius, by the sea-side, played at pebble-stone: *Semel insanivimus omnes*. Every man cannot with Archimedes make a heaven of brass, or dig gold out of the iron mines of the law. Such odd trifles as mathematicians' experiments be artificial flies to hang in the air by themselves, dancing balls, an egg-shell that shall climb up to the top of a spear, fiery-breathing gores, *poeta noster* professeth not to make. *Placeat sibi quinque licebit*. What's a fool but his bauble? Deep-reaching wits, here is no deep stream for you to angle in. Moralisers, you that wrest a never-meant meaning out of everything, applying all things to the present time, keep your attention for the common stage; for here are no quips in characters for you to read. Vain glosers, gather what you will; spite, spell backward what thou canst. As the Parthians fight flying away, so will we prate and talk, but stand to nothing that we say.

How say you, my masters? do you not laugh at him for a coxcomb? Why, he hath made a prologue longer than his play: nay, 'tis no play neither, but a show. I'll be sworn the jig of Rowland's godson is a giant in comparison of it. What can be made of Summer's last will and testament! Such another thing as Gyllian of Brentford's[20] will, where she bequeathed a score of farts amongst her friends. Forsooth, because the plague reigns in most places in this latter end of summer,[21] Summer must come in sick;

he must call his officers to account, yield his throne to Autumn, make Winter his executor, with tittle-tattle Tom-boy. God give you good night in Watling Street; I care not what you say now, for I play no more than you hear; and some of that you heard too (by your leave) was *extempore*. He were as good have let me had the best part, for I'll be revenged on him to the uttermost, in this person of Will Summer, which I have put on to play the prologue, and mean not to put it off till the play be done. I'll sit as a chorus, and flout the actors and him at the end of every scene. I know they will not interrupt me, for fear of marring of all; but look to your cues, my masters, for I intend to play the knave in cue, and put you besides all your parts, if you take not the better heed. Actors, you rogues, come away; clear your throats, blow your noses, and wipe your mouths ere you enter, that you may take no occasion to spit or to cough, when you are *non plus*. And this I bar, over and besides, that none of you stroke your beards to make action, play with your cod-piece points, or stand fumbling on your buttons, when you know not how to bestow your fingers. Serve God, and act cleanly. A fit of mirth and an old song first, if you will.

Enter SUMMER, leaning on AUTUMN'S and WINTER'S shoulders, and attended on with a train of Satyrs and Wood-nymphs, singing.[22]

_Fair Summer droops, droop men and beasts therefore,
So fair a summer look for never more:
All good things vanish less than in a day,
Peace, plenty, pleasure, suddenly decay.
Go not yet away, bright soul of the sad year,
The earth is hell when thou, leav'st to appear.

What! shall those flowers that deck'd thy garland erst,
Upon thy grave be wastefully dispersed?
O trees, consume your sap in sorrow's source,
Streams turn to tears your tributary course.
Go not yet hence, bright soul of the sad year,
The earth is hell when thou leav'st to appear.

[The Satyrs and Wood-nymphs go out singing, and leave_
SUMMER and WINTER and AUTUMN on the stage.

WILL SUM. A couple of pretty boys, if they would wash their faces, and were well breech'd[23] in an hour or two. The rest of the green men have reasonable voices, good to sing catches or the great *Jowben* by the fire's side in a winter's evening. But let us hear what Summer can say for himself, why he should not be hiss'd at.

SUM. What pleasure always lasts? no joy endures:
Summer I am; I am not what I was;
Harvest and age have whiten'd my green head;
On Autumn now and Winter I must lean.
Needs must he fall, whom none but foes uphold,
Thus must the happiest man have his black day.
Omnibus una manet nox, et calcanda semel via lethi.[24]
This month have I lain languishing a-bed,
Looking each hour to yield my life and throne;
And died I had indeed unto the earth,
But that Eliza, England's beauteous Queen,
On whom all seasons prosperously attend,
Forbad the execution of my fate,
Until her joyful progress was expir'd.[25]
For her doth Summer live, and linger here,
And wisheth long to live to her content:
But wishes are not had, when they wish well:
I must depart, my death-day is set down;
To these two must I leave my wheaten crown.
So unto unthrifths rich men leave their lands,
Who in an hour consume long labour's gains.
True is it that divinest Sidney sung,
O, he is marr'd, that is for others made.
Come near, my friends, for I am near my end.
In presence of this honourable train,
Who love me, for I patronise their sports,
Mean I to make my final testament:

But first I'll call my officers to 'count,
And of the wealth I gave them to dispose,
Know what is left I may know what to give
Vertumnus, then, that turn'st the year about,
Summon them one by one to answer me.
First, Ver, the Spring, unto whose custody
I have committed more than to the rest;
The choice of all my fragrant meads and flowers,
And what delights soe'er nature affords.

VER. I will, my lord. Ver, lusty Ver, by the name of lusty Ver, come into the court! lose a mark in issues.

Enter VER, _with his train, overlaid with suits of green moss, representing short grass, singing.

The Song.

Spring, the sweet spring, is the year's pleasant king,
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
Cuckow, jug, jug, pu—we, to-wit, to-whoo.

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And hear we aye birds tune this merry lay,
Cuckow, jug, jug, pu—we, to-wit, to-whoo.

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit;
In every street these tunes our ears do greet,
Cuckow, jug, jug, pu—we, to-wit, to-whoo.

Spring, the sweet spring_.

WILL SUM. By my troth, they have voices as clear as crystal: this is a pratty thing, if it be for nothing but to go a-begging with.

SUM. Believe me, Ver, but thou art pleasant bent;
This humour should import a harmless mind.
Know'st thou the reason why I sent for thee?

VER. No, faith, nor care not whether I do or no.
If you will dance a galliard, so it is: if not—

*Falangtado, Falangtado,
To wear the black and yellow,
Falantado, Falantado,
My mates are gone, I'll follow.[26]*

SUM. Nay, stay awhile, we must confer and talk.
Ver, call to mind I am thy sovereign lord,
And what thou hast, of me thou hast and hold'st.
Unto no other end I sent for thee,
But to demand a reckoning at thy hands,
How well or ill thou hast employ'd my wealth.

VER. If that be all, we will not disagree:
A clean trencher and a napkin you shall have presently.

WILL SUM. The truth is, this fellow hath been a tapster in his days.

VER goes in, and fetcheth out the hobby-horse[27] and the morris-dance, who dance about.

SUM. How now? is this the reckoning we shall have?

WIN. My lord, he doth abuse you; brook it not.

AUT. *Summa totalis*, I fear, will prove him but a fool.

VER. About, about! lively, put your horse to it, rein him harder; jerk him with your wand: sit fast, sit fast, man! fool, hold up your ladle there.

WILL SUM. O brave Hall![28] O, well-said, butcher. Now for the credit of Worcestershire. The finest set of morris-dancers that is between this and Streatham. Marry, methinks there is one of them danceth like a clothier's horse, with a woolpack on his back. You, friend with the hobby-horse, go not too fast, for fear of wearing out my lord's tile-stones with your hobnails.

VER. So, so, so; trot the ring twice over, and away. May it please my lord, this is the grand capital sum; but there are certain parcels behind, as you shall see.

SUM. Nay, nay, no more; for this is all too much.

VER. Content yourself; we'll have variety.

Here enter three CLOWNS and three MAIDS, _singing this song, dancing:—

Trip and go, heave and hoe,
Up and down, to and fro;
From the town to the grove,
Two and two let us rove.
A maying, a playing:
Love hath no gainsaying;
So merrily trip and go_.

WILL SUM. Beshrew my heart, of a number of ill legs I never saw worse dancers. How bless'd are you, that the wenches of the parish do not see you!

SUM. Presumptuous Ver, uncivil-nurtur'd boy? Think'st I will be derided thus of thee? Is this th'account and reckoning that thou mak'st?

VER. Troth, my lord, to tell you plain, I can give you no other account; *nam quae habui perdidit*; what I had, I spent on good fellows; in these sports you have seen, which are proper to the spring, and others of like sort (as giving wenches green gowns,[29] making garlands for fencers, and tricking up children gay), have I bestowed all my flowery treasure and flower of my youth.

WILL SUM. A small matter. I know one spent in less than a year eight and fifty pounds in mustard, and another that ran in debt, in the space of four or five year, above fourteen thousand pound in lute-strings and grey-paper.[30]

SUM. O monstrous unthrift! who e'er heard the like?
The sea's vast throat, in so short tract of time,
Devoureth nor consumeth half so much.
How well might'st thou have liv'd within thy bounds.

VER. What, talk you to me of living within my bounds? I tell you none but asses live within their bounds: the silly beasts, if they be put in a pasture, that is eaten bare to the very earth, and where there is nothing to be had but thistles, will rather fall soberly to those thistles and be hunger-starv'd, than they will offer to break their bounds; whereas the lusty courser, if he be in a barren plot, and spy better grass in some pasture near adjoining, breaks over hedge and ditch, and to go, ere he will be pent in, and not have his bellyful. Peradventure, the horses lately sworn to be stolen,[31] carried that youthful mind, who, if they had been asses, would have been yet extant.

WILL SUM. Thus, we may see, the longer we live the more we shall learn:
I ne'er thought honesty an ass till this day.

VER. This world is transitory; it was made of nothing, and it must to nothing: wherefore, if we will do the will of our high Creator, whose will it is that it pass to nothing, we must help to consume it to nothing. Gold is more vile than men: men die in thousands and ten thousands, yea, many times in hundred thousands, in one battle. If then the best husband has been so liberal of his best handiwork, to what end should we make much of a glittering excrement, or doubt to spend at a banquet as many pounds as he spends men at a battle? Methinks I honour *Geta*, the Roman emperor, for a brave-minded fellow; for he commanded a banquet to be made him of all meats under the sun, which were served in after the order of the alphabet, and the clerk of the kitchen, following the last dish, which was two miles off from the foremost, brought him an index of their several names. Neither did he pingle, when it was set on the board, but for the space of three days and three nights never rose from the table.

WILL SUM. O intolerable lying villain, that was never begotten without the consent of a whetstone!

SUM. Ungracious man, how fondly he argueth!

VER. Tell me, I pray, wherefore was gold laid under our feet in the veins of the earth, but that we should contemn it, and tread upon it, and so consequently tread thrift under our feet? It was not known till the iron age, *donec facinus invasit mortales*, as the poet says; and the Scythians always detested it. I will prove it that an unthrift, of any, comes nearest a happy man, in so much as he comes nearest to beggary. Cicero saith, *summum bonum* consists in *omnium rerum vacatione*, that is, the chiefest felicity that may be to rest from all labours. Now who doth so much *vacare à rebus*, who rests so much, who hath so little to do as the beggar? who can sing so merry a note, as he that cannot change a groat?[33] *Cui nil est, nil deest*: he that hath nothing wants nothing. On the other side, it is said of the carl, *Omnia habeo, nec quicquam habeo*: I have all things, yet want everything. *Multi mihi vitio vertunt quia egeo*, saith Marcus Cato in Aulus Gellius; *at ego illis quia nequeunt egere*: many upbraid me, saith he, because I am poor; but I upbraid them, because they cannot live if they be poor.[34] It is a common proverb, *Divesque miserque*, a rich man and a miserable: *nam natura paucis contenta*, none so contented as the poor man. Admit that the chiefest happiness were not rest or ease, but knowledge, as Herillus, Alcidas, and many of Socrates' followers affirm; why *paupertas omnes perdocet artes*, poverty instructs a man in all arts; it makes a man hardy and venturous, and therefore is it called of the poets *paupertas audax*, valiant poverty. It is not so much subject to inordinate desires as wealth or prosperity. *Non habet, unde suum paupertas pascat amorem*:[35] poverty hath not wherewithal to feed lust. All the poets were beggars; all alchemists and all philosophers are beggars. *Omnia mea mecum porto*, quoth Bias, when he had nothing but bread and cheese in a leathern bag, and two or three books in his bosom. Saint Francis, a holy saint, and never had any money. It is madness to doat upon muck. That young man of Athens, Aelianus makes mention of, may be an example to us, who doated so extremely on the image of Fortune, that when he might not enjoy it, he died for sorrow. The earth yields all her fruits together, and why should we not spend them together? I thank heavens on my knees, that have made me an unthrift.[36]

SUM. O vanity itself: O wit ill-spent!

So study thousands not to mend their lives,
But to maintain the sin they most affect,
To be hell's advocates 'gainst their own souls.
Ver, since thou giv'st such praise to beggary,
And hast defended it so valiantly,
This be thy penance: thou shalt ne'er appear
Or come abroad, but Lent shall wait on thee:
His scarcity may countervail thy waste.
Riot may flourish, but finds want at last.
Take him away that knoweth no good way,
And lead him the next way to woe and want. [*Exit VER.*]
Thus in the paths of knowledge many stray,
And from the means of life fetch their decay.

WILL SUM. Heigho. Here is a coil indeed to bring beggars to stocks. I promise you truly I was almost asleep; I thought I had been at a sermon. Well, for this one night's exhortation, I vow, by God's grace, never to be good husband while I live. But what is this to the purpose? "Hur come to Fowl," as the Welshman says, "and hur pay an halfpenny for hur seat, and hur hear the preacher talg, and hur talg very well, by gis[37]; but yet a cannot make her laugh: go to a theatre and hear a Queen's Fice, and he make hur laugh, and laugh hur belly full." So we come hither to laugh and be merry, and we hear a filthy, beggarly oration in the praise of beggary. It is a beggarly poet that writ it; and that makes him so much commend it, because he knows not how to mend himself. Well, rather than he shall have no employment but lick dishes, I will set him a work myself, to write in praise of the art of stooping, and how there never was any famous thresher, porter, brewer, pioneer, or carpenter that had straight back. Repair to my chamber, poor fellow, when the play is done, and thou shalt see what I will say to thee.

SUM. Vertumnus, call Solstitium.

VER. Solstitium, come into the court: without, peace there below! make room for Master Solstitium.

Enter SOLSTITIUM, like an aged hermit, carrying a pair of balances, with an hour-glass in either of them—one hour-glass white, the other black: he is brought in by a number of Shepherds, playing upon recorders.[38]

SOL. All hail to Summer, my dread sovereign lord.

SUM. Welcome, Solstitium: thou art one of them,

To whose good husbandry we have referr'd
Part of those small revenues that we have.
What hast thou gain'd us? what hast thou brought in?

SOL. Alas, my lord! what gave you me to keep
But a few day's-eyes[39] in my prime of youth?
And those I have converted to white hairs;
I never lov'd ambitiously to climb,
Or thrust my hand too far into the fire.
To be in heaven, sure, is a bless'd thing;
But Atlas-like to prop heaven on one's back,
Cannot but be more labour than delight.
Such is the state of men in honour plac'd;
They are gold vessels made for servile uses;
High trees that keep the weather from low houses,
But cannot shield the tempest from themselves.
I love to dwell betwixt the hills and dales;
Neither to be so great to be envied,
Nor yet so poor the world should pity me.
Inter utrumque tene, medio tutissimus ibis[40].

SUM. What dost thou with those balances thou bear'st?

SOL. In them I weigh the day and night alike:
This white glass is the hour-glass of the day,
This black one the just measure of the night.
One more than other holdeth not a grain;
Both serve time's just proportion to maintain.

SUM. I like thy moderation wondrous well;
And this thy balance-weighing, the white glass
And black, with equal poise and steadfast hand,
A pattern is to princes and great men,
How to weigh all estates indifferently;
The spirituality and temporalty alike:
Neither to be too prodigal of smiles,
Nor too severe in frowning without cause.
If you be wise, you monarchs of the earth,
Have two such glasses still before your eyes;
Think as you have a white glass running on,
Good days, friends, favour, and all things at beck,
So this white glass run out (as out it will)
The black comes next; your downfall is at hand.
Take this of me, for somewhat I have tried;
A mighty ebb follows a mighty tide.
But say, Solstitium, hadst thou nought besides?
Nought but day's-eyes and fair looks gave I thee?

SOL. Nothing, my lord, nor aught more did I ask.

SUM. But hadst thou always kept thee in my sight,
Thy good deserts, though silent, would have ask'd.

SOL. Deserts, my lord, of ancient servitors
Are like old sores, which may not be ripp'd up.
Such use these times have got, that none must beg,
But those that have young limbs to lavish fast.

SUM. I grieve no more regard was had of thee:
A little sooner hadst thou spoke to me,
Thou hadst been heard, but now the time is past:
Death waiteth at the door for thee and me.
Let us go measure out our beds in clay;
Nought but good deeds hence shall we bear away.
Be, as thou wert, best steward of my hours,
And so return into thy country bow'rs.

[*Here, SOLSTITIUM goes out with his music, as he comes in.*

WILL SUM. Fie, fie, of honesty, fie! Solstitium is an ass, perdy, this play is a gallimaufry. Fetch me some drink, somebody. What cheer, what cheer, my hearts? Are not you thirsty with listening to this dry sport? What have we to do with scales and hour-glasses, except we were bakers or clock-keepers? I cannot tell how other men are addicted, but it is against my profession to use any scales but such as we play at with a bowl, or keep any hours but dinner or supper. It is a pedantical thing to respect times and seasons: if a man be drinking with good fellows late, he must come home for fear the gates be shut: when I am in my warm bed, I must rise to prayers, because the bell rings. I like no such foolish customs. Actors, bring now a black jack and a rundlet of Rhenish wine, disputing of the antiquity of red noses: let the Prodigal Child[41] come in in his doublet and hose all greasy, his shirt hanging forth, and ne'er a penny in his purse, and talk what a fine thing it is to walk summerly, or sit whistling under a hedge, and keep hogs. Go forward, in grace and virtue to proceed, but let us have no more of these grave matters.

SUM. Vertumnus, will Sol come before us?

VER. Sol, Sol; *ut, re, mi, fa, sol!*[42]
Come to church, while the bell toll.

*Enter SOLSTITIUM very richly attired,
with a noise of musicians before him.*

SUM. Ay, marry, here comes majesty in pomp,
Resplendent Sol, chief planet of the heavens!
He is our servant, looks he ne'er so big.

SOL. My liege, what crav'st thou at thy vassal's hands?

SUM. Hypocrisy, how it can change his shape!
How base is pride from his own dunghill put!
How I have rais'd thee, Sol. I list not tell,
Out of the ocean of adversity,
To sit in height of honour's glorious heaven,
To be the eyesore[43] of aspiring eyes:
To give the day her life from thy bright looks,
And let nought thrive upon the face of earth,
From which thou shalt withdraw thy powerful smiles.
What hast thou done, deserving such high grace?
What industry or meritorious toil
Canst thou produce to prove my gift well-placed?
Some service or some profit I expect:
None is promoted but for some respect.

SOL. My lord, what need these terms betwixt us two?
Upbraiding ill-beseems your bounteous mind:
I do you honour for advancing me.
Why, 'tis a credit for your excellence
To have so great a subject as I am:
This is your glory and magnificence,
That, without stooping of your mightiness,
Or taking any whit from your high state,
You can make one as mighty as yourself.

AUT. O arrogance exceeding all belief!
Summer, my lord, this saucy upstart Jack,
That now doth rule the chariot of the sun,
And makes all stars derive their light from him,
Is a most base, insinuating slave,
The sum[44] of parsimony and disdain;
One that will shine on friends and foes alike,
That under brightest smiles hideth black show'rs
Whose envious breath doth dry up springs and lake
And burns the grass, that beasts can get no food.

WIN. No dunghill hath so vile an excrement,
But with his beams he will thenceforth exhale.

The fens and quagmires tithe to him their filth:
Forth purest mines he sucks a gainful dross.
Green ivy-bushes at the vintner's doors
He withers, and devoureth all their sap.

AUT. Lascivious and intemperate he is:
The wrong of Daphne is a well-known tale.
Each evening he descends to Thetis' lap,
The while men think he bathes him in the sea.
O, but when he returneth whence he came
Down to the west, then dawns his deity,
Then doubled is the swelling of his looks.
He overloads his car with orient gems,
And reins his fiery horses with rich pearl.
He terms himself the god of poetry,
And setteth wanton songs unto the lute.

WIN. Let him not talk, for he hath words at will,
And wit to make the baldest[45] matter good.

SUM. Bad words, bad wit! O, where dwells faith or truth?
Ill usury my favours reap from thee,
Usurping Sol, the hate of heaven and earth.

SOL. If envy unconfuted may accuse,
Then innocence must uncondemned die.
The name of martyrdom offence hath gain'd
When fury stopp'd a froward judge's ears.
Much I'll not say (much speech much folly shows):
What I have done you gave me leave to do.
The excrements you bred whereon I feed;
To rid the earth of their contagious fumes,
With such gross carriage did I load my beam
I burnt no grass, I dried no springs and lakes;
I suck'd no mines, I wither'd no green boughs,
But when to ripen harvest I was forc'd
To make my rays more fervent than I wont.
For Daphne's wrongs and 'scapes in Thetis' lap,
All gods are subject to the like mishap.
Stars daily fall ('tis use is all in all),
And men account the fall but nature's course.
Vaunting my jewels hasting to the west,
Or rising early from the grey-ey'd morn,
What do I vaunt but your large bountyhood,
And show how liberal a lord I serve?
Music and poetry, my two last crimes,
Are those two exercises of delight,
Wherewith long labours I do weary out.
The dying swan is not forbid to sing:
The waves of Hebrus[46] play'd on Orpheus' strings,
When he (sweet music's trophy) was destroy'd.
And as for poetry, words'[47] eloquence
(Dead Phaeton's three sisters' funeral tears
That by the gods were to Electrum turn'd),
Not flint or rock, of icy cinders flam'd,
Deny the force[48] of silver-falling streams.
Envy enjoyeth poetry's unrest;[49]
In vain I plead; well is to me a fault,
And these my words seem the sleight[50] web of art,
And not to have the taste of sounder truth.
Let none but fools be car'd for of the wise:
Knowledge' own children knowledge most despise.

SUM. Thou know'st too much to know to keep the mean:
He that sees all things oft sees not himself.
The Thames is witness of thy tyranny,

Whose waves thou dost exhaust for winter show'rs.
The naked channel 'plains her of thy spite,
That laid'st her entrails unto open sight.[51]
Unprofitably borne to man and beast,
Which like to Nilus yet doth hide his head,
Some few years since[52] thou lett'st o'erflow these walks,
And in the horse-race headlong ran at race,
While in a cloud thou hidd'st thy burning face.
Where was thy care to rid contagious filth,
When some men wet-shod (with his waters) droop'd?[53]
Others that ate the eels his heat cast up
Sicken'd and died by them impoisoned.
Sleptest, or kept'st thou then Admetus' sheep,
Thou drov'st not back these flowings of the deep?

SOL. The winds, not I, have floods and tides in chase.
Diana, whom our fables call the moon,
Only commandeth o'er the raging main:
She leads his wallowing offspring up and down,
She waning, all streams ebb: in the year
She was eclips'd, when that the Thames was bare.

SUM. A bare conjecture, builded on per-haps.[54]
In laying thus the blame upon the moon,
Thou imitat'st subtle Pythagoras
Who, what he would the people should believe,
The same he wrote with blood upon a glass,
And turn'd it opposite 'gainst the new moon,
Whose beams, reflecting on it with full force,
Show'd all those lines to them that stood behind,
Most plainly writ in circle of the moon:
And then he said: not I, but the new moon,
Fair Cynthia, persuades you this and that.
With like collusion shalt thou now blind me;
But for abusing both the moon and me
Long shalt thou be eclipsed by the moon,
And long in darkness live and see no light—
Away with him, his doom hath no reverse!

SOL. What is eclips'd will one day shine again:
Though winter frowns, the spring will ease my pain.
Time from the brow doth wipe out every stain.

[Exit SOL.]

WILL SUM. I think the sun is not so long in passing through the twelve signs, as the son of a fool hath been disputing here about *had I wist*. [55] Out of doubt, the poet is bribed of some that have a mess of cream to eat, before my lord go to bed yet, to hold him half the night with raff-raff of the rumming of Elinor. [56] If I can tell what it means, pray God I may never get breakfast more, when I am hungry. Troth, I am of opinion he is one of those hieroglyphical writers, that by the figures of beasts, plants, and of stones, express the mind, as we do in A B C; or one that writes under hair, as I have heard of a certain notary, Histiaesus, [57] who, following Darius in the Persian wars, and desirous to disclose some secrets of import to his friend Aristagoras, that dwelt afar off, found out this means. He had a servant, that had been long sick of a pain in his eyes, whom, under pretence of curing his malady, he shaved from one side of his head to the other, and with a soft pencil wrote upon his scalp (as on parchment) the discourse of his business, the fellow all the while imagining his master had done nothing but 'noint his head with a feather. After this he kept him secretly in his tent, till his hair was somewhat grown, and then willed him to go to Aristagoras into the country, and bid him shave him as he had done, and he should have perfect remedy. He did so, Aristagoras shaved him with his own hands, read his friend's letter, and when he had done, washed it out, that no man should perceive it else, and sent him home to buy him a nightcap. If I wist there were any such knavery, or Peter Bales's brachygraphy, [58] under Sol's bushy hair, I would have a barber, my host of the Murrion's Head, to be his interpreter, who would whet his razor on his Richmond cap, and give him the terrible cut like himself, but he would come as near as a quart pot to the construction of it. To be sententious, not superfluous, Sol should have been beholding to the barber, and not to the beard-master. [59] Is it pride that is shadowed under this two-legg'd sun, that never came nearer heaven than Dubber's hill? That pride is not my sin,

Sloven's Hall, where I was born, be my record. As for covetousness, intemperance, and exaction, I meet with nothing in a whole year but a cup of wine for such vices to be conversant in. *Pergite porro*, my good children,[60] and multiply the sins of your absurdities, till you come to the full measure of the grand hiss, and you shall hear how we shall purge rheum with censuring your imperfections.

SUM. Vertumnus, call Orion.

VER. Orion, Urion, Arion; My lord thou must look upon. Orion, gentleman dog-keeper, huntsman, come into the court: look you bring all hounds and no bandogs. Peace there, that we may hear their horns blow.

Enter ORION like a hunter, with a horn about his neck, all his men after the same sort hallooing and blowing their horns.

ORION. Sirrah, was't thou that call'd us from our game?
How durst thou (being but a petty god)
Disturb me in the entrance of my sports?

SUM. 'Twas I, Orion, caus'd thee to be call'd.

ORION. 'Tis I, dread lord, that humbly will obey.

SUM. How happ'st thou left'st the heavens to hunt below?
As I remember thou wert Hyrieus'[61] son,
Whom of a huntsman Jove chose for a star,
And thou art call'd the Dog-star, art thou not?

AUT. Please it, your honour, heaven's circumference
Is not enough for him to hunt and range,
But with those venom-breathed curs he leads,
He comes to chase health from our earthly bounds.
Each one of those foul-mouthed, mangy dogs
Governs a day (no dog but hath his day):[62]
And all the days by them so governed
The dog-days hight; infectious fosterers
Of meteors from carrion that arise,
And putrified bodies of dead men,
Are they engender'd to that ugly shape,
Being nought else but [ill-]preserv'd corruption.
'Tis these that, in the entrance of their reign,
The plague and dangerous agues have brought in.
They arre[63] and bark at night against the moon,
For fetching in fresh tides to cleanse the streets,
They vomit flames and blast the ripen'd fruits:
They are death's messengers unto all those
That sicken, while their malice beareth sway.

ORION. A tedious discourse built on no ground.
A silly fancy, Autumn, hast thou told,
Which no philosophy doth warrantise,
No old-received poetry confirms.
I will not grace thee by refuting thee;
Yet in a jest (since thou rail'st so 'gainst dogs)
I'll speak a word or two in their defence.
That creature's best that comes most near to men;
That dogs of all come nearest, thus I prove:
First, they excel us in all outward sense,
Which no one of experience will deny:
They hear, they smell, they see better than we.
To come to speech, they have it questionless,
Although we understand them not so well.
They bark as good old Saxon as may be,
And that in more variety than we.
For they have one voice when they are in chase:
Another when they wrangle for their meat:
Another when we beat them out of doors.
That they have reason, this I will allege;

They choose those things that are most fit for them,
And shun the contrary all that they may.[64]
They know what is for their own diet best,
And seek about for't very carefully.
At sight of any whip they run away,
As runs a thief from noise of hue and cry.
Nor live they on the sweat of others' brows,
But have their trades to get their living with—
Hunting and coneycatching, two fine arts.
Yea, there be of them, as there be of men,
Of every occupation more or less:
Some carriers, and they fetch; some watermen,
And they will dive and swim when you bid them;
Some butchers, and they worry sheep by night;
Some cooks, and they do nothing but turn spits.
Chrysippus holds dogs are logicians,
In that, by study and by canvassing,
They can distinguish 'twixt three several things:
As when he cometh where three broad ways meet,
And of those three hath stay'd at two of them,
By which he guesseth that the game went not,
Without more pause he runneth on the third;
Which, as Chrysippus saith, insinuates
As if he reason'd thus within himself:
Either he went this, that, or yonder way,
But neither that nor yonder, therefore this.
But whether they logicians be or no,
Cynics they are, for they will snarl and bite;
Right courtiers to flatter and to fawn;
Valiant to set upon the[ir] enemies;
Most faithful and most constant to their friends.
Nay, they are wise, as Homer witnesseth
Who, talking of Ulysses' coming home,
Saith all his household but Argus his dog
Had quite forgot him: ay, his deep insight[65]
Nor Pallas' art in altering his shape,
Nor his base weeds, nor absence twenty years,
Could go beyond or any way delude.
That dogs physicians are, thus I infer;
They are ne'er sick, but they know their disease,
And find out means to ease them of their grief;
Special good surgeons to cure dangerous wounds:
For, stricken with a stake into the flesh,
This policy they use to get it out:
They trail one of their feet upon the ground,
And gnaw the flesh about where the wound is
Till it be clean drawn out: and then, because
Ulcers and sores kept foul are hardly cur'd,
They lick and purify it with their tongue,
And well observe Hippocrates' old rule,
The only medicine for the foot is rest:
For if they have the least hurt in their feet,
They bear them up and look they be not stirr'd.
When humours rise, they eat a sovereign herb,
Whereby what cloyes their stomachs they cast up;
And as some writers of experience tell,
They were the first invented vomiting.
Sham'st thou not, Autumn, unadvisedly
To slander such rare creatures as they be?

SUM. We call'd thee not, Orion, to this end,
To tell a story of dogs' qualities.
With all thy hunting how are we enrich'd?
What tribute pay'st thou us for thy high place?

ORION. What tribute should I pay you out of nought?
Hunters do hunt for pleasure, not for gain.
While dog-days last, the harvest safely thrives;
The sun burns hot to finish up fruits' growth;
There is no blood-letting to make men weak.
Physicians in their Catapospia
Or little Elinctoria,
Masticatorium, and Cataplasmata:
Their gargarisms, clysters, and pitch'd-cloths,
Their perfumes, syrups, and their triacles,
Refrain to poison the sick patients,
And dare not minister, till I be out.
Then none will bathe, and so are fewer drown'd.
All lust is perilsome, therefore less us'd!
In brief, the year without me cannot stand.
Summer, I am thy staff and thy right hand.

SUM. A broken staff, a lame right hand I had,
If thou wert all the stay that held me up,
Nihil violentum perpetuum.
No violence that liveth to old age.
Ill-govern'd star, that never bod'st good luck,
I banish thee a twelvemonth and a day
Forth of my presence; come not in my sight,
Nor show thy head so much as in the night.

ORION. I am content: though hunting be not out,
We will go hunt in hell for better hap.
One parting blow, my hearts, unto our friends,
To bid the fields and huntsmen all farewell.
Toss up your bugle-horns unto the stars:
Toil findeth ease, peace follows after wars.
[Exit.

[Here they go out, blowing their horns, and hallooing as they came in.

WILL SUM. Faith, this scene of Orion is right *prandium caninum*, a dog's dinner which, as it is without wine, so here's a coil about dogs without wit. If I had thought the ship of fools[66] would have stay'd to take in fresh water at the Isle of Dogs, I would have furnish'd it with a whole kennel of collections to the purpose. I have had a dog myself, that would dream and talk in his sleep, turn round like Ned fool, and sleep all night in a porridge-pot. Mark but the skirmish between Sixpence and the fox, and it is miraculous how they overcome one another in honourable courtesy. The fox, though he wears a chain, runs as though he were free; mocking us (as it is a crafty beast), because we, having a lord and master to attend on, run about at our pleasures, like masterless men. Young Sixpence, the best page his master hath, plays a little, and retires. I warrant he will not be far out of the way when his master goes to dinner. Learn of him, you diminutive urchins, how to behave yourselves in your vocation: take not up your standings in a nut-tree, when you should be waiting on my lord's trencher. Shoot but a bit at butts; play but a span at points. Whatever you do, *memento mori*—remember to rise betimes in the morning.

SUM. Vertumnus, call Harvest.

VER. Harvest, by west and by north, by south and by east,
Show thyself like a beast.
Goodman Harvest, yeoman, come in and say what you can. Boom for the
scythe and the sickle there.

*Enter HARVEST, _with a scythe on his neck, and all his reapers with sickles, and a great
black bowl with a posset in it, borne before him; they come in singing.*

The Song.

Merry, merry, merry: cheery, cheery, cheery,
Trowl the blade bowl[67] to me;
Hey derry, derry, with a poup and a lerry,
I'll trowl it again to thee:

Hooky, hooky, we have shorn,
And we have bound,
And we have brought Harvest
Home to town_.

SUM. Harvest, the bailiff of my husbandry,
What plenty hast thou heap'd into our barns?
I hope thou hast sped well, thou art so blithe.

HAR. Sped well or ill, sir, I drink to you on the same.
Is your throat clear to help us sing, _Hooky, hooky?

[Here they all sing after him.

Hooky, hooky, we have shorn,
And we have bound;
And we have brought Harvest
Home to town_.

AUT. Thou Corydon, why answer'st not direct?

HAR. Answer? why, friend, I am no tapster, to say, Anon, anon, sir:[68] but leave you to molest me, goodman tawny-leaves, for fear (as the proverb says, leave is light) so I mow off all your leaves with my scythe.

WIN. Mock not and mow[69] not too long; you were best not,[70]
For fear we whet your scythe upon your pate.

SUM. Since thou art so perverse in answering,
Harvest, hear what complaints are brought to me.
Thou art accused by the public voice
For an engrosser of the common store;
A carl that hast no conscience nor remorse,
But dost impoverish the fruitful earth,
To make thy garners rise up to the heavens.
To whom giv'st thou? who feedeth at thy board?
No alms, but [an] unreasonable gain
Digests what thy huge iron teeth devour:
Small beer, coarse bread, the hind's and beggar's cry,
Whilst thou withholdest both the malt and flour,
And giv'st us bran and water (fit for dogs).

HAR. Hooky, hooky! if you were not my lord, I would say you lie. First and foremost, you say I am a grocer. A grocer is a citizen: I am no citizen, therefore no grocer. A hoarder up of grain: that's false; for not so much for my elbows eat wheat every time I lean upon them.[71] A carl: that is as much as to say, a coneycatcher of good fellowship. For that one word you shall pledge me a carouse: eat a spoonful of the curd to allay your choler. My mates and fellows, sing no more *Merry, merry*, but weep out a lamentable *Hooky, hooky*, and let your sickles cry—

*Sick, sick, and very sick,
And side, and for the time;
For Harvest your master is
Abusd without reason or rhyme.*

I have no conscience, I? I'll come nearer to you, and yet I am no scab, nor no louse. Can you make proof wherever I sold away my conscience, or pawned it? Do you know who would buy it, or lend any money upon it? I think I have given you the pose. Blow your nose, Master Constable. But to say that I impoverish the earth, that I rob the man in the moon, that I take a purse on the top of St Paul's steeple; by this straw and thread, I swear you are no gentleman, no proper man, no honest man, to make me sing, *O man in desperation*.[72]

SUM. I must give credit unto what I hear!
For other than I hear detract[73] I nought.

HAR. Ay, ay; nought seek, nought have: An ill-husband is the first step to a knave. You object, I feed none at my board: I am sure, if you were a hog, you would never say so: for, sir reverence of their worships, they feed at my stable-table every day. I keep good hospitality for hens and geese: gleaners are oppressed with heavy burthens of my bounty: They take me and eat me to the very bones, Till there

be nothing left but gravel and stones; And yet I give no alms, but devour all! They say, what a man cannot hear well, you hear with your harvest-ears; but if you heard with your harvest-ears, that is, with the ears of corn which my alms-cart scatters, they would tell you that I am the very poor man's box of pity; that there are more holes of liberality open in Harvest's heart than in a sieve or a dust-box. Suppose you were a craftsman or an artificer, and should come to buy corn of me, you should have bushels of me; not like the baker's loaf, that should weigh but six ounces, but usury for your money, thousands for one. What would you have more? Eat me out of my apparel,[74] if you will, if you suspect me for a miser.

SUM. I credit thee, and think thou wert belied.
But tell me, hast thou a good crop this year?

HAR. Hay, good[75] plenty, which was so sweet and so good, that when I jerted my whip, and said to my horses but *hay*, they would go as they were mad.

SUM. But *hay* alone thou sayst not, but *hay-ree*[76].

HAR. I sing hay-ree, that is, hay and rye; meaning that they shall have hay and rye, their bellyfuls, if they will draw hard. So we say, *Wa hay*, when they go out of the way; meaning that they shall want hay if they will not do as they should do.

SUM. How thrive thy oats, thy barley, and thy wheat?

HAR. My oats grow like a cup of beer that makes the brewer rich; my rye like a cavalier, that wears a huge feather in his cap, but hath no courage in his heart; hath[77] a long stalk, a goodly husk, but nothing so great a kernel as it was wont. My barley, even as many a novice, is cross-bitten,[78] as soon as ever he peeps out of the shell, so was it frost-bitten in the blad, yet pick'd up his crumbs again afterward, and bad "Fill pot, hostess," in spite of a dear year. As for my peas and my vetches, they are famous, and not to be spoken of.

AUT. Ay, ay, such country-button'd caps as you
Do want no fetches[79] to undo great towns.

HAR. Will you make good your words that we want no fetches?

WIN. Ay, that he shall.

HAR. Then fetch us a cloak-bag, to carry away yourself in.

SUM. Plough-swains are blunt, and will taunt bitterly.
Harvest, when all is done, thou art the man:
Thou dost me the best service of them all.
Rest from thy labours, till the year renews,
And let the husbandmen [all] sing thy praise.

HAR. Rest from my labours, and let the husbandmen sing my praise? Nay, we do not mean to rest so: by your leave, we'll have a largess amongst you, ere we part.

ALL. A largess, a largess, a largess!

WILL SUM. Is there no man will give them a hiss for a largess?

HAR. No, that there is not, goodman Lungis.[80] I see charity waxeth cold, and I think this house be her habitation, for it is not very hot: we were as good even put up our pipes and sing *Merry, merry*, for we shall get no money.

[_ Here they all go out singing.

Merry, merry, merry: cheery, cheery, cheery!
Trowl the black bowl to me.
Hey derry, derry, with a poup and a lerry;
I'll trowl it again to thee.

Hooky, hooky, we have shorn
And we have bound,
And we have brought Harvest
Home to town_.

WILL SUM. Well, go thy ways, thou bundle of straw: I'll give thee this gift; thou shalt be a clown while thou liv'st. As lusty as they are, they run on the score with George's wife for their posset; and God

knows who shall pay goodman Yeoman for his wheat sheaf. They may sing well enough—

"Trowl the black bowl to me, Trowl the black bowl to me;"

for a hundred to one but they will all be drunk, ere they go to bed. Yet of a slaving fool, that hath no conceit in anything but in carrying a wand in his hand with commendation, when he runneth by the highway-side, this stripling Harvest hath done reasonable well. O, that somebody had the sense to set his thatched suit on fire, and so lighted him out: if I had but a jet[81] ring on my finger, I might have done with him what I list. I had spoiled him, had I[82] took his apparel prisoner; for, it being made of straw, and the nature of jet to draw straw unto it, I would have nailed him to the pommel of my chair, till the play were done, and then have carried him to my chamber-door, and laid him at the threshold, as a wisp or a piece of mat, to wipe my shoes on every time I come up dirty.

SUM. Vertumnus, call Bacchus.

VER. Bacchus, Baccha, Bacchum: God Bacchus, God fat-back,
Baron of double beer and bottle ale,
Come in and show thy nose that is nothing pale:
Back, back, that[83] God barrel-belly may enter.

Enter BACCHUS riding upon an ass trapped in ivy, himself dressed in vine leaves, and a garland of grapes on his head; his companions having all jacks in their hands, and ivy garlands on their heads; they come singing.

The Song.

Monsieur Mingo for quaffing doth surpass,
In cup, in corn or glass.
God Bacchus, do me right,
And dub me knight
Domingo_.[84]

BAC. Wherefore didst thou call me, Vertumnus? hast any drink to give me? One of you hold my ass, while I light: walk him up and down the hall, till I talk a word or two.

SUM. What, Bacchus; still *animus in patina*: [85] no mind but on the pot?

BAC. Why, Summer, Summer, how wouldst do but for rain? What's a fair house without water coming to it! Let me see how a smith can work, if he have not his trough standing by him. What sets an edge on a knife? the grindstone alone? No, the moist element poured upon it, which grinds out all gaps, sets a point upon it, and scours it as bright as the firmament. So I tell thee, give a soldier wine before he goes to battle; it grinds out all gaps, it makes him forget all scars and wounds, and fight in the thickest of his enemies, as though he were but at foils among his fellows. Give a scholar wine going to his book, or being about to invent; it sets a new point on his wit, it glazeth it, it scours it, it gives him *acumen*. Plato saith, *Vinum esse fomitem quendam, et incitabilem ingenii virtutisque*. Aristotle saith, *Nulla est magna scientia absque mixtura dementia!* There is no excellent knowledge without mixture of madness, and what makes a man more mad in the head than wine? *Qui bene vult [Greek: Pioein] debet ante [Greek: pinein]*: He that will do well must drink well. *Prome, prome, potum prome!* Ho, butler, a fresh pot! *Nunc est libendum, nunc pede libero terra pulsanda*: [86] a pox on him that leaves his drink behind him. *Rendezvous!*

SUM. It is wine's custom to be full of words. I pray thee, Bacchus, give us *vicissitudinem loquendi*.

BAC. A fiddlestick! ne'er tell me I am full of words. *Faecundi calices, quem non fecere disertum; aut bibe* [87] *aut abi*; either take your drink, or you are an infidel.

SUM. I would about thy vintage question thee. How thrive thy vines? hadst thou good store of grapes?

BAC. *Vinum quasi venenum*; Wine is poison to a sick body. A sick body is no sound body; *ergo*, wine is a pure thing, and is poison to all corruption. Try-lill! the hunters whoop to you. I'll stand to it: Alexander was a brave man, and yet an arrant drunkard.

WIN. Fie, drunken sot! forgett'st thou where thou art?
My lord asks thee what vintage thou hast made?

BAC. Our vintage was a vintage, for it did not work upon the advantage:
it came in the vauntguard of Summer.
And winds and storms met it by the way,

And made it cry, alas, and well-a-day!

SUM. That was not well; but all miscarried not?

BAC. Faith, shall I tell no lie? Because you are my countryman, and so forth; and a good fellow is a good fellow, though he have never a penny in his purse.[88] We had but even pot-luck—little to moisten our lips and no more. That same Sol is a pagan and a proselyte: he shined so bright all summer, that he burnt more grapes than his beams were worth, were every beam as big as a weaver's beam. *A fabis abstinendum*; faith, he should have abstained, for what is flesh and blood without his liquor?

AUT. Thou want'st no liquor, nor no flesh and blood.
I pray thee, may I ask without offence,
How many tuns of wine hast in thy paunch?
Methinks that [that is] built like a round church,
Should yet have some of Julius Caesar's wine:
I warrant 'twas not broached this hundred year.

BAC. Hear'st thou, dough-belly! because thou talk'st and talk'st, and dar'st not drink to me a black jack, wilt thou give me leave to broach this little kilderkin of my corpse against thy back? I know thou art but a micher,[89] and dar'st not stand me. *A vous, Monsieur Winter*, a frolic up-se-frieze:[90] cross, ho.' *super naculum*.[91] [*Knocks the jack upon his thumb*].

WIN. Gramercy, Bacchus, as much as though I did. For this time thou must pardon me perforce.

BAC. What, give me the disgrace? go to, I say, I am no Pope to pardon any man. Ran, ran, tara: cold beer makes good blood. St George for England![92] Somewhat is better than nothing. Let me see, hast thou done me justice? why so: thou art a king, though there were no more kings in the cards but the knave. Summer, wilt thou have a demi-culverin, that shall cry *Husty-tusty*, and make thy cup fly fine meal in the element?

SUM. No, keep thy drink, I pray thee, to thyself.

BAC. This Pupilonian in the fool's coat shall have a cast of martins and a whiff. To the health of Captain Rinocerotry! Look to it; let him have weight and measure.

WILL SUM. What an ass is this! I cannot drink so much, though I should burst.

BAC. Fool, do not refuse your moist sustenance: come, come, dog's head in the pot; do what you are born to.

WILL SUM. If you will needs make me a drunkard against my will, so it is; I'll try what burden my belly is of.

BAC. Crouch, crouch on your knees, fool, when you pledge God Bacchus.

[*Here WILL SUMMER drinks, and they sing about him, BACCHUS begins.*]

All. *Monsieur Mingo for quaffing did surpass
In cup, in can, or glass.*

BAC. Ho, well shot, a toucher, a toucher! *For quaffing Toy doth pass, In cup, in can, or glass.*[93]

All. *God Bacchus, do him right,
And dub him knight.*

BAC. Rise up, Sir Robert Toss-pot.
[*Here he dubs WILL SUMMER with the black jack.*]

SUM. No more of this, I hate it to the death.
No such deformer of the soul and sense,
As is this swinish damn'd horn drunkenness.
Bacchus, for thou abusest so earth's fruits,
Imprison'd live in cellars and in vaults.
Let none commit their counsels unto thee;
Thy wrath be fatal to thy dearest friends;
Unarmed run upon thy foemen's swords;
Never fear any plague, before it fall:
Dropsies and watery tympanies haunt thee;

Thy lungs with surfeiting be putrified,
To cause thee have an odious stinking breath;
Slaver and drivel like a child at mouth;
Be poor and beggarly in thy old age;
Let thine own kinsmen laugh when thou complain'st,
And many tears gain nothing but blind scoffs.
This is the guerdon due to drunkenness:
Shame, sickness, misery follow excess.

BAC. Now on my honour, Sim Summer, thou art a bad member, a dunce, a mongrel, to discredit so worshipful an art after this order. Thou hast cursed me, and I will bless thee. Never cap of Nipitaty[94] in London come near thy niggardly habitation! I beseech the gods of good fellowship thou may'st fall into a consumption with drinking small beer! Every day may'st thou eat fish, and let it stick in the midst of thy maw, for want of a cup of wine to swim away in. Venison be *venenum* to thee: and may that vintner have the plague in his house that sells a drop of claret to kill the poison of it! As many wounds may'st thou have as Caesar had in the senate-house, and get no white wine to wash them with; and to conclude, pine away in melancholy and sorrow, before thou hast the fourth part of a dram of my juice to cheer up thy spirits.

SUM. Hale him away, he barketh like a wolf:
It is his drink, not he, that rails on us.

BAC. Nay soft, brother Summer, back with that fool. Here is a snuff in the bottom of the jack, enough[95] to light a man to bed withal: we'll leave no flocks behind us, whatsoever we do.

SUM. Go drag him hence, I say, when I command.

BAC. Since we must needs go, let's go merrily. Farewell, Sir Robert Toss-pot: sing amain *Monsieur Mingo*, whilst I mount up my ass.

[*Here they go out, singing, "Monsieur Mingo," as they came in.*]

WILL SUM. Of all the gods, this Bacchus is the ill-favoured'st mis-shapen god that ever I saw. A pox on him! he hath christened me with a new nickname of Sir Robert Toss-pot that will not part from me this twelvemonth. Ned fool's clothes are so perfumed with the beer he poured on me, that there shall not be a Dutchman within twenty miles, but he'll smell out and claim kindred of him. What a beastly thing it is to bottle up all in a man's belly, when a man must set his guts on a gallon-pot last, only to purchase the alehouse title of *boon companion*. "Carouse; pledge me, and you dare! 'Swounds, I'll drink with thee for all that ever thou art worth!" It is even as two men should strive who should run farthest into the sea for a wager. Methinks these are good household terms, "Will it please you to be here, sir? I commend me to you! Shall I be so bold as trouble you? Saving your tale, I drink to you." And if these were put in practice but a year or two in taverns, wine would soon fall from six-and-twenty pound a tun, and be beggar's money—a penny a quart, and take up his inn with waste beer in the alms-tub. I am a sinner as others: I must not say much of this argument. Every one, when he is whole, can give advice to them that are sick. My masters, you that be good fellows, get you into corners, and sup off your provender closely:[96] report hath a blister on her tongue! open taverns are tell-tales. *Non peccat quicumque potest peccasse negare.*

SUM. I'll call my servants to account, said I?
A bad account; worse servants no man hath.
Quos credis fidos effuge, tutis eris:
The proverb I have prov'd to be too true,
Totidem domi hostes habemus quot servos.
And that wise caution of Democritus,
Servus necessaria possessio, non autem dulcis:
Nowhere fidelity and labour dwells.
How[97] young heads count to build on had I wist.
Conscience but few respect, all hunt for gain:
Except the camel have his provender
Hung at his mouth, he will not travel on.
Tyresias to Narcissus promised
Much prosperous hap and many golden days,
If of his beauty he no knowledge took.
Knowledge breeds pride, pride breedeth discontent:
Black discontent, thou urgest to revenge:
Revenge opes not her ears to poor men's prayers.
That dolt destruction is she without doubt,

That hailes her forth and feedeth her with nought.
 Simplicity and plainness, you I love!
 Hence, double diligence, thou mean'st deceit:
 Those that now serpent-like creep on the ground,
 And seem to eat the dust, they crouch so low—
 If they be disappointed of their prey,
 Most traitorously will trace their nails and sting.
 Yea, such as, like[98] the lapwing, build their nests
 In a man's dung, come up by drudgery,
 Will be the first that, like that foolish bird,
 Will follow him with yelling and false cries.
 Well[99] sung a shepherd, that now sleeps in skies,[100]
 "Dumb swans do love, and not vain chattering pies."
 In mountains, poets say, Echo is hid,
 For her deformity and monstrous shape:
 Those mountains are the houses of great lords,
 Where Stentor, with his hundred voices, sounds
 A hundred trumps at once with rumour fill'd.
 A woman they imagine her to be,
 Because that sex keep nothing close they hear;
 And that's the reason magic writers frame[101]
 There are more witches women, than of men;
 For women generally, for the most part,
 Of secrets more desirous are than men[102],
 Which having got, they have no power to hold.
 In these times had Echo's first fathers liv'd,
 No woman, but a man, she had been feign'd
 (Though women yet will want no news to prate);
 For men (mean men), the scum and dross of all,
 Will talk and babble of they know not what,
 Upbraid, deprave, and taunt they care not whom.
 Surmises pass for sound approved truths;
 Familiarity and conference,
 That were the sinews of societies,
 Are now for underminings only us'd;
 And novel wits, that love none but themselves,
 Think wisdom's height as falsehood slyly couch'd,
 Seeking each other to o'erthrow his mate.
 O friendship! thy old temple is defac'd:
 Embracing envy,[103] guileful courtesy,
 Hath overgrown fraud-wanting honesty.
 Examples live but in the idle schools:
 Sinon bears all the sway in princes' courts.
 Sickness, be thou my soul's physician;
 Bring the apothecary Death with thee.
 In earth is hell, hell true[104] felicity,
 Compared with this world, the den of wolves!

AUT. My lord, you are too passionate without cause.

WIN. Grieve not for that which cannot be recall'd.
 Is it your servant's carelessness you 'plain?
 Tully by one of his own slaves was slain.
 The husbandman close in his bosom nurs'd
 A subtle snake, that after wrought his bane.

AUT. *Servos fideles liberalitas facit;*
 Where on the contrary, *servitutem*—
 Those that attend upon illiberal lords,
 Whose covetise yields nought else but fair looks,
 Even of those fair looks make their gainful use.
 For, as in Ireland and in Denmark both,
 Witches for gold will sell a man a wind[105]
 Which, in the corner of a napkin wrapp'd,
 Shall blow him safe unto what coast he will;

So make ill-servants sale of their lord's wind
Which, wrapp'd up in a piece of parchment,
Blows many a knave forth danger of the law.

SUM. Enough of this: let me go make my will.
Ah! it is made, although I hold my peace:
These two will share betwixt them what I have.
The surest way to get my will perform'd
Is to make my executor my heir;
And he, if all be given him, and none else,
Unfallibly will see it well-perform'd.
Lions will feed though none bid them go to.
Ill-grows the tree affordeth ne'er a graft:
Had I some issue to sit on my throne,
My grief would die, death should not hear me groan;
But when, perforce, these must enjoy my wealth,
Which thank me not, but enter't as a prey,
Bequeath'd it is not, but clean cast away.
Autumn, be thou successor to my seat:
Hold, take my crown:—look, how he grasps for it!
Thou shalt not have it yet—but hold it, too;
Why should I keep what needs I must forego?

WIN. Then, duty laid aside, you do me wrong.
I am more worthy of it far than he:
He hath no skill nor courage for to rule.
A weatherbeaten, bankrupt ass it is
That scatters and consumeth all he hath:
Each one do pluck from him without control.
He is not hot nor cold; a silly soul,
That fain would please each part[106], if so he might.
He and the Spring are scholars' favourites:
What scholars are, what thriftless kind of men,
Yourself be judge; and judge of him by them.
When Cerberus was headlong drawn from hell,
He voided a black poison from his mouth,
Call'd *Aconitum*, whereof ink was made:
That ink, with reeds first laid on dried barks,
Serv'd me awhile to make rude works withal,
Till Hermes, secretary to the gods,
Or Hermes Trismegistus, as some will,
Wearied with graving in blind characters
And figures of familiar beasts and plants,
Invented letters to write lies withal.
In them he penn'd the fables of the gods,
The giants' war, and thousand tales besides.
After each nation got these toys in use[107]
There grew up certain drunken parasites,
Term'd poets, which, for a meal's meat or two,
Would promise monarchs immortality.
They vomited in verse all that they knew;
Feign'd causes and beginnings of the world;
Fetch'd pedigrees of mountains and of floods
From men and women whom the gods transform'd.
If any town or city they pass'd by
Had in compassion (thinking them madmen)
Forborne to whip them, or imprison them,
That city was not built by human hands;
'Twas rais'd by music, like Megara walls:
Apollo, poets' patron, founded it,
Because they found one fitting favour there.
Musaeus, Linus, Homer, Orpheus,
Were of this trade, and thereby won their fame.

WILL SUM. *Fama malum, quo non [aliud] velocius ullum*[108].

WIN. Next them a company of ragged knaves,
Sun-bathing beggars, lazy hedge-creepers,
Sleeping face upwards in the fields all night,
Dream'd strange devices of the sun and moon;
And they, like gipsies, wandering up and down,
Told fortunes, juggled, nicknam'd all the stars,
And were of idiots term'd philosophers.
Such was Pythagoras the silencer;
Prometheus, Thales, Milesius,
Who would all things of water should be made:
Anaximander, Anaxamines,
That positively said the air was God:
Zenocrates, that said there were eight gods;
And Cratoniates and Alcmaeon too,
Who thought the sun and moon and stars were gods.
The poorer sort of them, that could get nought,
Profess'd, like beggarly Franciscan friars,
And the strict order of the Capuchins,
A voluntary, wretched poverty,
Contempt of gold, thin fare, and lying hard.
Yet he that was most vehement in these,
Diogenes, the cynic and the dog,
Was taken coining money in his cell.

WILL SUM. What an old ass was that. Methinks he should have coined carrot-roots rather; for, as for money, he had no use for[t], except it were to melt, and solder up holes in his tub withal.

WIN. It were a whole Olympiad's work to tell
How many devilish, *ergo*, armed arts,
Sprung all as vices of this idleness:
For even as soldiers not employ'd in wars,
But living loosely in a quiet state—
Not having wherewithal to maintain pride,
Nay, scarce to find their bellies any food—
Nought but walk melancholy, and devise,
How they may cozen merchants, fleece young heirs,
Creep into favour by betraying men,
Rob churches, beg waste toys, court city dames,
Who shall undo their husbands for their sakes;
The baser rabble how to cheat and steal,
And yet be free from penalty of death:[109]
So these word-warriors, lazy star-gazers,
Us'd to no labour but to louse themselves,
Had their heads fill'd with cozening fantasies.
They plotted how to make their poverty
Better esteem'd of than high sovereignty.
They thought how they might plant a heaven on earth,
Whereof they would be principal low-gods:[110]
That heaven they called Contemplation:
As much to say as a most pleasant sloth,
Which better I cannot compare than this,
That if a fellow, licensed to beg,
Should all his lifetime go from fair to fair
And buy gape-seed, having no business else.
That contemplation, like an aged weed,
Engender'd thousand sects, and all those sects
Were but as these times, cunning shrouded rogues.
Grammarians some, and wherein differ they
From beggars that profess the pedlar's French?[111]
The poets next, slovenly, tatter'd slaves,
That wander and sell ballads in the streets.
Historiographers others there be,
And they, like lazars, lie[112] by the highway-side,
That for a penny or a halfpenny
Will call each knave a good-fac'd gentleman,

Give honour unto tinkers for good ale,
 Prefer a cobbler 'fore the black prince far,
 If he bestow but blacking on their shoes:
 And as it is the spittle-houses' guise
 Over their gate to write their founders' names,
 Or on the outside of their walls at least,
 In hope by their example others mov'd
 Will be more bountiful and liberal;
 So in the forefront of their chronicles,
 Or *peroratione operis*,
 They learning's benefactors reckon up,
 Who built this college, who gave that free school,
 What king or queen advanced scholars most,
 And in their times what writers flourished.
 Rich men and magistrates, whilst yet they live,
 They flatter palpably, in hope of gain.
 Smooth-tongued orators, the fourth in place—
 Lawyers our commonwealth entitles them—
 Mere swash-bucklers and ruffianly mates,
 That will for twelvecence make a doughty fray,
 Set men for straws together by the ears.
 Sky-measuring mathematicians,
 Gold-breathing alchemists also we have,
 Both which are subtle-witted humourists,
 That get their meals by telling miracles,
 Which they have seen in travelling the skies.
 Vain boasters, liars, makeshifts, they are all;
 Men that, removed from their ink-horn terms,[113]
 Bring forth no action worthy of their bread.
 What should I speak of pale physicians,
 Who as *Fismenus non nasatus* was
 (Upon a wager that his friends had laid)
 Hir'd to live in a privy a whole year,
 So are they hir'd for lucre and for gain,
 All their whole life to smell on excrements.

WILL SUM. Very true, for I have heard it for a proverb many a time and oft, *Hinc os faetidum*; Fah!
 he stinks like a physician.

WIN. Innumerable monstrous practices
 Hath loitering contemplation brought forth more,
 Which were too long particular to recite:
 Suffice they all conduce unto this end,
 To banish labour, nourish slothfulness,
 Pamper up lust, devise new-fangled sins.
 Nay, I will justify, there is no vice
 Which learning and vile knowledge brought not in,
 Or in whose praise some learned have not wrote.
 The art of murder Machiavel hath penn'd;[114]
 Whoredom hath Ovid to uphold her throne,
 And Aretine of late in Italy,
 Whose Cortigiana teacheth[115] bawds their trade.
 Gluttony Epicurus doth defend,
 And books of the art of cookery confirm,
 Of which Platina hath not writ the least.
 Drunkenness of his good behaviour
 Hath testimonial from where he was born;
 That pleasant work *De Arte Bibendi*,
 A drunken Dutchman spew'd out few years since.[116]
 Nor wanteth sloth, although sloth's plague be want,
 His paper pillars for to lean upon.[117]
 The praise of nothing pleads his worthiness.[118]
 Folly Erasmus sets a flourish on:
 For baldness a bald ass I have forgot
 Patch'd up a pamphletary periwig.[119]

Slovenry Grobianus magnifieth:[120]
 Sodomitry a cardinal commends,
 And Aristotle necessary deems.
 In brief, all books, divinity except,
 Are nought but tales of the devil's laws,
 Poison wrapt up in sugar'd words,
 Man's pride, damnation's props, the world's abuse.
 Then censure, good my lord, what bookmen are:
 If they be pestilent members in a state,
 He is unfit to sit at stern of state,
 That favours such as will o'erthrow his state.
 Blest is that government, where no art thrives;
Vox pupuli, vox Dei,
 The vulgar's voice it is the voice of God.
 Yet Tully saith, *Non est concilium in vulgo,*
Non ratio, non discrimen, non differentia,
 The vulgar have no learning, wit, nor sense.
 Themistocles, having spent all his time
 In study of philosophy and arts,
 And noting well the vanity of them,
 Wish'd, with repentance for his folly pass'd,
 Some would teach him th'art of oblivion,
 How to forget the arts that he had learn'd.
 And Cicero, whom we alleged before,
 (As saith Valerius), stepping into old age,
 Despised learning, loathed eloquence.
 Naso, that could speak nothing but pure verse,
 And had more wit than words to utter it,
 And words as choice as ever poet had,
 Cried and exclaim'd in bitter agony,
 When knowledge had corrupted his chaste mind:
Discite, qui sapitis, non haec quae scimus inertes,
Sed trepidas acies et fera bella sequi.[121]
 You that be wise, and ever mean to thrive,
 O, study not these toys we sluggards use,
 But follow arms, and wait on barbarous wars.
 Young men, young boys, beware of schoolmasters;
 They will infect you, mar you, blear your eyes:
 They seek to lay the curse of God on you,
 Namely, confusion of languages,
 Wherewith those that the Tower of Babel built
 Accursed were in the world's infancy.
 Latin, it was the speech of infidels;
 Logic hath nought to say in a true cause;
 Philosophy is curiosity;
 And Socrates was therefore put to death,
 Only for he was a philosopher.
 Abhor, contemn, despise these damned snares.

WILL SUM. Out upon it! who would be a scholar? not I, I promise you: my mind always gave me this learning was such a filthy thing, which made me hate it so as I did. When I should have been at school construing, *Batte, mi fili, mi fili, mi Batte,* I was close under a hedge, or under a barn-wall, playing at span-counter or jack-in-a-box. My master beat me, my father beat me, my mother gave me bread and butter, yet all this would not make me a squitter-book.[122] It was my destiny; I thank her as a most courteous goddess, that she hath not cast me away upon gibridge. O, in what a mighty vein am I now against horn-books! Here, before all this company, I profess myself an open enemy to ink and paper. I'll make it good upon the accidence, body [of me,] that in speech is the devil's paternoster. Nouns and pronouns, I pronounce you as traitors to boys' buttocks; syntaxis and prosodia, you are tormentors of wit, and good for nothing, but to get a schoolmaster twopence a-week. Hang, copies! Fly out, phrase-books! let pens be turn'd to pick-tooths! Bowls, cards, and dice, you are the true liberal sciences! I'll ne'er be a goosequill, gentlemen, while I live.

SUM. Winter, with patience unto my grief
 I have attended thy invective tale.
 So much untruth wit never shadowed:

'Gainst her own bowels thou art's weapons turn'st.
Let none believe thee that will ever thrive.
Words have their course, the wind blows where it lists,
He errs alone in error that persists.
For thou 'gainst Autumn such exceptions tak'st,
I grant his overseer thou shalt be,
His treasurer, protector, and his staff;
He shall do nothing without thy consent:
Provide thou for his weal and his content.

WIN. Thanks, gracious lord; so I'll dispose of him,
As it shall not repent you of your gift.

AUT. On such conditions no crown will I take.
I challenge Winter for my enemy;
A most insatiate, miserable carl,
That to fill up his garners to the brim
Cares not how he endamageth the earth,
What poverty he makes it to endure!
He overbars the crystal streams with ice,
That none but he and his may drink of them:
All for a foul Backwinter he lays up.
Hard craggy ways, and uncouth slippery paths
He frames, that passengers may slide and fall.
Who quaketh not, that heareth but his name?
O, but two sons he hath worse than himself:
Christmas the one, a pinchback, cutthroat churl,
That keeps no open house, as he should do,
Delighteth in no game or fellowship,
Loves no good deeds, and hateth talk;
But sitteth in a corner turning crabs,
Or coughing o'er a warmed pot of ale.
Backwinter th'other, that's his nown[123] sweet boy,
Who like his father taketh in all points.
An elf it is, compact of envious pride,
A miscreant born for a plague to men;
A monster that devoureth all he meets.
Were but his father dead, so he would reign,
Yea, he would go good-near to deal by him
As Nebuchadnezzar's ungracious son,
Foul Merodach[124], by his father dealt:
Who when his sire was turned to an ox
Full greedily snatch'd up his sovereignty,
And thought himself a king without control.
So it fell out, seven years expir'd and gone,
Nebuchadnezzar came to his shape again,
And dispossess'd him of the regiment;[125]
Which my young prince, no little grieving at,
When that his father shortly after died,
Fearing lest he should come from death again,
As he came from an ox to be a man,
Will'd that his body, 'spoiled of coverture,
Should be cast forth into the open fields,
For birds and ravens to devour at will;
Thinking, if they bare, every one of them,
A bill-ful of his flesh into their nests,
He could not rise to trouble him in haste.

WILL SUM. A virtuous son! and I'll lay my life on't he was a cavalier and a good fellow.[126]

WIN. Pleaseth your honour, all he says is false.
For my own part, I love good husbandry,
But hate dishonourable covetise.
Youth ne'er aspires to virtue's perfect growth,
Till the wild oats be sown; and so the earth,

Until his weeds be rotted by my frosts
Is not for any seed or tillage fit.
He must be purged that hath surfeited:
The fields have surfeited with summer fruits;
They must be purg'd, made poor, oppress'd with snow,
Ere they recover their decayed pride.
For overbarring of the streams with ice,
Who locks not poison from his children's taste?
When Winter reigns, the water is so cold,
That it is poison, present death, to those
That wash or bathe their limbs in his cold streams.
The slipp'rier that ways are under us,
The better it makes us to heed our steps,
And look, ere we presume too rashly on.
If that my sons have misbehav'd themselves,
A God's name, let them answer't 'fore my lord.

AUT. Now, I beseech your honour it may be so.

SUM. With all my heart. Vertumnus, go for them.

WILL SUM. This same Harry Baker[127] is such a necessary fellow to go on errands as you shall not find in a country. It is pity but he should have another silver arrow, if it be but for crossing the stage with his cap on.

SUM. To weary out the time, until they come,
Sing me some doleful ditty to the lute,
That may complain my near-approaching death.

_The Song.

Adieu, farewell, earth's bliss;
This world uncertain is.
Fond are life's lustful joys,
Death proves them all but toys.
None from his darts can fly:
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Rich men, trust not in wealth;
Gold cannot buy you health.
Physic himself must fade:
All things to end are made.
The plague full swift goes by.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Beauty is but a flower,
Which wrinkles will devour:
Brightness falls from the air;
Queens have died young and fair.
Dust hath clos'd Helen's eye.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Strength stoops into the grave:
Worms feed on Hector brave.
Swords may not fight with fate:
Earth still holds ope her gate.
Come, come, the hells do cry.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Wit with his wantonness
Tasteth death's bitterness.
Hell's executioner
Hath no ears to hear,

What vain art can reply.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Haste therefore each degree
To welcome destiny:
Heaven is our heritage,
Earth but a player's stage.
Mount we unto the sky.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us_!

SUM. Beshrew me, but thy song hath moved me.

WILL SUM. "Lord, have mercy on us," how lamentable 'tis!

Enter VERTUMNUS, *with* CHRISTMAS *and* BACKWINTER.

VER. I have despatched, my lord; I have brought you them you sent me for.

WILL SUM. What say'st thou? hast thou made a good batch? I pray thee, give me a new loaf![[128]

SUM. Christmas, how chance thou com'st not as the rest,
Accompanied with some music or some song?
A merry carol would have grac'd thee well:
Thy ancestors have us'd it heretofore.

CHRIST. Ay, antiquity was the mother of ignorance: this latter world, that sees but with her spectacles, hath spied a pad in those sports more than they could.

SUM. What, is't against thy conscience for to sing?

CHRIST. No, not to say, by my troth, if I may get a good bargain.

SUM. Why, thou should'st spend, thou should'st not care to get:
Christmas is god of hospitality.

CHRIST. So will he never be of good husbandry. I may say to you, there is many an old god that is now grown out of fashion; so is the god of hospitality.

SUM. What reason canst thou give he should be left?

CHRIST. No other reason, but that gluttony is a sin, and too many dunghills are infectious. A man's belly was not made for a powdering beef-tub; to feed the poor twelve days, and let them starve all the year after, would but stretch out the guts wider than they should be, and so make famine a bigger den in their bellies than he had before. I should kill an ox, and have some such fellow as Milo to come and eat it up at a mouthful; or, like the Sybarites,[129] do nothing all one year but bid guests against the next year. The scraping of trenchers you think would put a man to no charges: it is not a hundred pound a year would serve the scullion in dishclouts. My house stands upon vaults; it will fall, if it be overladen with a multitude. Besides, have you never read of a city that was undermined and destroyed by moles? So, say I, keep hospitality and a whole fair of beggars bid me to dinner every day. What with making legs[130], when they thank me at their going away, and settling their wallets handsomely on their backs, they would shake as many lice on the ground as were able to undermine my house, and undo me utterly. Is it their prayers would build it again, if it were overthrown by this vermin, would it? I pray, who began feasting and gormandis[ing] first, but Sardanapalus, Nero, Heliogabalus, Commodus? tyrants, whoremasters, unthrifths. Some call them emperors, but I respect no crowns but crowns in the purse. Any man may wear a silver crown that hath made a fray in Smithfield, and lost but a piece of his brain-pan; and to tell you plain, your golden crowns are little better in substance, and many times got after the same sort.

SUM. Gross-headed sot! how light he makes of state!

AUT. Who treadeth not on stars, when they are fall'n?
Who talketh not of states, when they are dead?
A fool conceits no further than he sees,
He hath no sense of aught but what he feels.

CHRIST. Ay, ay; such wise men as you come to beg at such fools' doors as we be.

AUT. Thou shutt'st thy door; how should we beg of thee?
No alms but thy sink carries from thy house.

WILL SUM. And I can tell you that's as plentiful alms for the plague as the Sheriff's tub to them of Newgate.

AUT. For feast thou keepest none; cankers thou feed'st.
The worms will curse thy flesh another day,
Because it yieldeth them no fatter prey.

CHRIST. What worms do another day, I care not, but I'll be sworn upon a whole kilderkin of single beer, I will not have a worm-eaten nose, like a pursuivant, while I live. Feasts are but puffing up of the flesh, the purveyors for diseases; travel, cost, time, ill-spent. O, it were a trim thing to send, as the Romans did, round about the world for provision for one banquet. I must rig ships to Samos for peacocks; to Paphos for pigeons; to Austria for oysters; to Phasis for pheasants; to Arabia for phoenixes; to Meander for swans; to the Orcades for geese; to Phrygia for woodcocks; to Malta for cranes; to the Isle of Man for puffins; to Ambracia for goats; to Tartole for lampreys; to Egypt for dates; to Spain for chestnuts—and all for one feast.

WILL SUM. O sir, you need not: you may buy them at London better cheap.

CHRIST. *Liberalitas liberalitate perit*; Love me little, and love me long[131]: our feet must have wherewithal to feed the stones: our backs, walls of wool to keep out the cold that besiegeth our warm blood; our doors must have bars, our doublets must have buttons. Item, for an old sword to scrape the stones before the door with; three halfpence for stitching a wooden tankard that was burst. These water-bearers will empty the conduit and a man's coffers at once. Not a porter that brings a man a letter but will have his penny. I am afraid to keep past one or two servants, lest (hungry knaves) they should rob me; and those I keep (I warrant) I do not pamper up too lusty. I keep them under with red herring and poor John all the year long. I have dammed up all my chimneys for fear (though I burn nothing but small coal) my house should be set on fire with the smoke. I will not dine[132] but once in a dozen year, when there is a great rot of sheep, and I know not what to do with them; I keep open house for all the beggars in some of my out-yards: marry, they must bring bread with them; I am no baker.

WILL SUM. As good men as you, and have thought it no scorn to serve their 'prenticeships on the pillory.

SUM. Winter, is this thy son? Hear'st how he talks?

WIN. I am his father, therefore may not speak,
But otherwise I could excuse his fault.

SUM. Christmas, I tell thee plain, thou art a snudge[133],
And were't not that we love thy father well,
Thou shouldst have felt what 'longs to avarice.
It is the honour of nobility
To keep high-days and solemn festivals;
Then to set their magnificence to view,
To frolic open with their favourites,
And use their neighbours with all courtesy;
When thou in hugger-mugger[134] spend'st thy wealth.
Amend thy manners, breathe thy rusty gold;
Bounty will win thee love, when thou art old.

WILL SUM. Ay, that bounty I would fain meet, to borrow money of; he is fairly bless'd now-a-days, that 'scapes blows when he begs. *Verba dandi et reddendi* go together in the grammar rule: there is no giving but with condition of restoring.

Ah! *benedicite*:

Well is he hath no necessity
Of gold nor of sustenance:
Slow good hap comes by chance;
Flattery best fares;
Arts are but idle wares:
Fair words want giving hands,
The *Lento*[135] begs that hath no lands.
Fie on thee, thou scurvy knave,
That hast nought, and yet goes brave:

A prison be thy deathbed,
Or be hang'd all save the head.

SUM. Back-winter, stand forth.

VER. Stand forth, stand forth: hold up your head; speak out.

BACK-WIN. What should I stand, or whither should I go?

SUM. Autumn accuses thee of sundry crimes,
Which here thou art to clear or to confess.

BACK-WIN. With thee or Autumn have I nought to do,
I would you both were hanged, face to face.

SUM. Is this the reverence that thou ow'st to us?

BACK-WIN. Why not? What art thou? shalt thou always live?

AUT. It is the veriest dog in Christendom.

WIN. That's for he barks at such as knave as thou.

BACK-WIN. Would I could bark the sun out of the sky;
Turn moon and stars to frozen meteors,
And make the ocean a dry land of ice!
With tempest of my breath turn up high trees,
On mountains heap up second mounts of snow
Which, melted into water, might fall down,
As fell the deluge on the former world!
I hate the air, the fire, the spring, the year,
And whatsoe'er brings mankind any good.
O that my looks were lightning to blast fruits!
Would I with thunder presently might die,
So I might speak in thunder to slay men.
Earth, if I cannot injure thee enough,
I'll bite thee with my teeth, I'll scratch thee thus:
I'll beat down the partition with my heels,
That, as a mud-vault, severs hell and thee.
Spirits, come up! 'tis I that knock for you;
One that envies^[136] the world far more than you.
Come up in millions! millions are too few
To execute the malice I intend.

SUM. *O scelus inauditum, O vox damnatorum!*
Not raging Hecuba, whose hollow eyes
Gave suck to fifty sorrows at one time,
That midwife to so many murders was,
Us'd half the execrations that thou dost.

BACK-WIN. More I will use, if more I may prevail.
Back-winter comes but seldom forth abroad,
But when he comes, he pincheth to the proof.
Winter is mild, his son is rough and stern:
Ovid could well write of my tyranny,
When he was banish'd to the frozen zone.

SUM. And banish'd be thou from my fertile bounds.
Winter, imprison him in thy dark cell,
Or with the winds in bellowing caves of brass
Let stern Hippotades^[137] lock him up safe,
Ne'er to peep forth, but when thou, faint and weak,
Want'st him to aid thee in thy regiment.

BACK-WIN. I will peep forth, thy kingdom to supplant.
My father I will quickly freeze to death,
And then sole monarch will I sit, and think,
How I may banish thee as thou dost me.

WIN. I see my downfall written in his brows.
Convey him hence to his assigned hell!
Fathers are given to love their sons too well.

[*Exit* BACK-WINTER.

WILL SUM. No, by my troth, nor mothers neither: I am sure I could never find it. This Back-winter plays a railing part to no purpose: my small learning finds no reason for it, except as a back-winter or an after-winter is more raging, tempestuous, and violent than the beginning of winter; so he brings him in stamping and raging as if he were mad, when his father is a jolly, mild, quiet old man, and stands still and does nothing. The court accepts of your meaning. You might have written in the margin of your play-book—"Let there be a few rushes laid[138] in the place where Back-winter shall tumble, for fear of 'raying[139] his clothes:" or set down, "Enter Back-winter, with his boy bringing a brush after him, to take off the dust, if need require." But you will ne'er have any wardrobe-wit while you live: I pray you, hold the book well;[140] [that] we be not *non plus* in the latter end of the play.

SUM. This is the last stroke my tongue's clock must strike.
My last will, which I will that you perform.
My crown I have dispos'd already of.
Item, I give my wither'd flowers and herbs
Unto dead corses, for to deck them with.
My shady walks to great men's servitors,
Who in their masters' shadows walk secure.
My pleasant open air and fragrant smells
To Croydon and the grounds abutting round.
My heat and warmth to toiling labourers,
My long days to bondmen and prisoners,
My short night[s] to young [un]married souls.
My drought and thirst to drunkards' quenchless throats:
My fruits to Autumn, my adopted heir:
My murmuring springs, musicians of sweet sleep,
To malcontents [who], with their well-tun'd ears,[141]
Channell'd in a sweet falling quatorzain,
Do lull their cares[142] asleep, listening themselves.
And finally, O words, now cleanse your course
Unto Eliza, that most sacred dame,
Whom none but saints and angels ought to name,
All my fair days remaining I bequeath
To wait upon her, till she be return'd.
Autumn, I charge thee, when that I am dead,
Be prest[143] and serviceable at her beck,
Present her with thy goodliest ripen'd fruits;
Unclothe no arbours, where she ever sat,
Touch not a tree thou think'st she may pass by.
And, Winter, with thy writhen, frosty face,
Smooth up thy visage, when thou look'st on her;
Thou never look'st on such bright majesty.
A charmed circle draw about her court,
Wherein warm days may dance, and no cold come:
On seas let winds make war, not vex her rest;
Quiet enclose her bed, thought fly her breast.
Ah, gracious queen! though summer pine away,
Yet let thy flourishing stand at a stay.
First droop this universal's aged frame,
Ere any malady thy strength should tame.
Heaven raise up pillars to uphold thy hand,
Peace may have still his temple in thy land.
Lo! I have said; this is the total sum.
Autumn and Winter, on your faithfulness
For the performance I do firmly build.
Farewell, my friends: Summer bids you farewell!
Archers and bowlers, all my followers,
Adieu, and dwell with desolation:
Silence must be your master's mansion.
Slow marching, thus descend I to the fiends.

Weep, heavens!—mourn, earth! here Summer ends.

[_ Here the Satyrs and wood-nymphs carry him out, singing as he came in.

The Song.

Autumn hath all the summer's fruitful treasure;
Gone is our sport, fled is poor Croydon's pleasure!
Short days, sharp days, long nights come on apace:
Ah! who shall hide us from the winter's face?
Cold doth increase, the sickness will not cease,
And here we lie, God knows, with little ease.
From winter, plague, and pestilence, good Lord, deliver us!

London doth mourn, Lambeth is quite forlorn;
Trades cry, woe worth that ever they were born!
The want of term is town and city's harm.[144]
Close chambers we do want to keep us warm.
Long banished must we live from our friends:
This low-built house will bring us to our ends.
From winter, plague, and pestilence, good Lord, deliver us_!

WILL SUM. How is't, how is't? you that be of the graver sort, do you think these youths worthy of a *plaudite* for praying for the queen, and singing the litany? They are poor fellows, I must needs say, and have bestowed great labour in sewing leaves, and grass, and straw, and moss upon cast suits. You may do well to warm your hands with clapping before you go to bed, and send them to the tavern with merry hearts.

Enter a little BOY with an Epilogue.

Here is a pretty boy comes with an Epilogue to get him audacity. I pray you, sit still a little and hear him say his lesson without book. It is a good boy: be not afraid: turn thy face to my lord. Thou and I will play at pouch to-morrow morning for breakfast. Come and sit on my knee, and I'll dance thee, if thou canst not endure to stand.

THE EPILOGUE.

Ulysses, a dwarf, and the prolocutor for the Grecians, gave me leave, that am a pigmy, to do an embassy to you from the cranes. Gentlemen (for kings are no better), certain humble animals, called our actors, commend them unto you; who, what offence they have committed I know not (except it be in purloining some hours out of Time's treasury, that might have been better employed) but by me (the agent of their imperfections) they humbly crave pardon, if haply some of their terms have trod awry, or their tongues stumbled unwittingly on any man's content. In much corn is some cockle; in a heap of coin here and there a piece of copper: wit hath his dregs as well as wine; words their waste, ink his blots, every speech his parenthesis; poetical fury, as well crabs as sweetings for his summer fruits. *Nemo sapit omnibus horis*. Their folly is deceased; their fear is yet living. Nothing can kill an ass but cold: cold entertainment, discouraging scoffs, authorised disgraces, may kill a whole litter of young asses of them here at once, that hath travelled thus far in impudence, only in hope to sit a-sunning in your smiles. The Romans dedicated a temple to the fever quartan, thinking it some great god, because it shook them so; and another to ill-fortune in Esquiliis, a mountain in Rome, that it should not plague them at cards and dice. Your grace's frowns are to them shaking fevers; your least disfavours the greatest ill-fortune that may betide them. They can build no temples but themselves and their best endeavours, with all prostrate reverence, they here dedicate and offer up wholly to your service. *Sis bonus, O, faelixque tuis*. [145] To make the gods merry, the celestial clown Vulcan tuned his polt foot to the measures of Apollo's lute, and danced a limping galliard in Jove's starry hall: to make you merry, that are gods of art and guides unto heaven, a number of rude Vulcans, unwieldy speakers, hammer-headed clowns (for so it pleaseth them in modesty to name themselves) have set their deformities to view, as it were in a dance here before you. Bear with their wants; lull melancholy asleep with their absurdities, and expect hereafter better fruits of their industry. Little creatures often terrify great beasts: the elephant flieth from a ram: the lion from a cock and from fire; the crocodile from all sea-fish; the whale from the noise of parched bones. Light toys chase great cares: the great fool *Toy* hath marr'd the play. Good night, gentlemen; I go.

[*Let him be carried away.*][146]

WILL SUM. Is't true, jackanapes? do you serve me so? As sure as this coat is too short for me, all the

points of your hose for this are condemned to my pocket, if you and I e'er play at span-counter more. *Valete, spectatores*: pay for this sport with a *plaudite*, and the next time the wind blows from this corner, we will make you ten times as merry.

Barbarus hic ego sum, quia non intelligor ulli.

THE DOWNFALL OF ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON.

EDITION.

The Downfall of Robert Earle of Huntington, afterward called Robin Hood of merrie Sherwodde; with his love to chaste Matilda, the Lord Fitzwaters Daughter, afterwarde his faire Maide Marian. Acted by the Right Honourable the Earle of Notingham, Lord high Admirall of England, his servants. Imprinted at London for William Leake. 1601. 4to. B.L.

INTRODUCTION.

"The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington" and "The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington"[147] were both formerly ascribed to Thomas Heywood, on the always disputable authority of Kirkman the Bookseller. The discovery of the folio account-book of Philip Henslowe, proprietor of the Rose theatre on the Bank-side, enabled Malone to correct the error.[148] The following entries in Henslowe's MSS. contain the evidence upon the subject:—

"Feb. 1597-8.—The first part of Robin Hood by Anthony Mundy.

"The second part of the Downfall of Earl Huntington, sirnamed Robinhood by Anthony Mundy and Henry Chettle."

It is to be observed that what Henslowe mentions as "the second part of the Downfall of Earl Huntington" is in fact the play called on the printed title-page "The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington." Hence we find that Anthony Munday wrote the *first part* or "Downfall" alone, and the *second part* or "Death" in conjunction with Henry Chettle: nevertheless there is a memorandum by Henslowe, by which it seems that Chettle had something to do also with the *first part*. It is in these terms:—

"Lent unto Robarte Shawe the 18 of Novemb. 1598, to lend unto Mr Cheattle upon the mending of The First Part of Robart Hoode, the sum of xs."

The loan here mentioned was perhaps in anticipation of "the mending;" and Malone subsequently met with the following notice: "For mending of Robin Hood for the Corte;" which might be written after the improvements, considered necessary before the performance of the play at Court, had been completed.

Anthony Munday must have been born in 1553, for the monument to him in the Church of St Stephen, Coleman Street, states, that at the time of his death, 10th August 1633, he was eighty years old. From the inscription we likewise learn that he was "a citizen and draper." In 1589 he lived in the city, and dates his translation of "The History of Palmendos" "from my house in Cripplegate." That he carried on

the business of a draper, or had some connection with the trade as late as 1613, may be gathered from the following passage at the close of "The Triumphs of Truth," the city pageant for that year, by Thomas Middleton: "The fire-work being made by Maister Humphrey Nichols, a man excellent in his art; and the whole work and body of the Triumph, with all the proper beauties of the workmanship, most artfully and faithfully performed by John Grinkin; and those *furnished with apparel* and porters by Anthony Munday, Gentleman." The style of "gentleman" was probably given to him with reference to the productions of his pen.

At what date he acquired the title of "poet to the city" does not appear: he wrote the Lord Mayor's Pageant in 1605; but he had certainly earlier been similarly employed, as Ben Jonson introduces him in that capacity in "The Case is Altered," which was written in the end of 1598 or beginning of 1599.[149] He there throws some ridicule upon Don Antonio Balladino (as he calls Munday), and Mr Gifford was of opinion that Middleton meant to censure him in his "Triumphs of Truth," as the impudent "common writer" of city pageants; but this is hardly consistent with the mention Middleton introduces of Munday at the close of that performance. Besides, Dekker wrote the pageant for the year 1612, immediately preceding that for which Middleton was engaged; and that Munday was not in disrepute is obvious from the fact that in 1614, 1615, and 1616, his pen was again in request for the same purpose.

Whatever might have been Munday's previous life, in the year 1582 he was placed in no very enviable situation. He had been mainly instrumental in detecting the Popish Conspiracy in that year, which drew down upon him the bitter animosity of the Jesuits. They charged him in their publications (from which extracts may be seen in Mr A. Chalmers' "Biographical Dictionary," and elsewhere) with having been "first a stage-player and afterwards an apprentice," and after being "hissed from the stage" and residing at Rome, with having returned to his original occupation. Munday himself admits, in the account he published of Edmund Campion and his confederates, that he was "some time the Pope's scholar in the Seminary of Rome," but always stoutly denied that he was a Roman Catholic. Perhaps the most curious tract upon this subject is that entitled, "A breefe and true reporte of the Execution of certaine Traytours at Tiborne the xxviii, and xxx dayes of May 1582. Gathered by A.M. who was there present." He signs the Dedication at length "A. Munday," and mentions that he had been a witness against some of the offenders. The persons he saw executed were, Thomas Foord, John Shert, Robert Johnson, William Filbie, Luke Kirbie, Lawrance Richardson, and Thomas Cottom; and he seems to have been publicly employed to confute them at the foot of the gallows, and to convince the populace that they were traitors and Papists, denying the supremacy of Queen Elizabeth. He there had a long dispute with Kirbie upon matters of fact, and, according to his own showing, was guilty while abroad, at least of a little duplicity. He notices having seen Captain Stukely at Rome, who was killed at the Battle of Alcazar in 1578. In the conclusion he promises his "English Romaine Lyfe" "so soon as it can be printed," in which he purposes to disclose the "Romish and Sathanical juglings," of the Jesuits.

Munday was a very voluminous author in verse and prose, original and translated, and is certainly to be reckoned among the predecessors of Shakespeare in dramatic composition. His earliest work, as far as can be now ascertained, was "The Mirror of Mutability," 1579, when he was in his 26th year: he dedicates it to the Earl of Oxford, and perhaps then belonged to the company of players of that nobleman, to which he had again attached himself on his return from Italy.[150] The Council Registers show that this nobleman had a company of players under his protection in 1575. Munday's "Banquet of Dainty Conceits" was printed in 1588, and we particularise it, because it was unknown to Ames, Herbert, and Ritson. Catalogues and specimens of his other undramatic works may be found in "Bibliographia Poetica," "Censura Literaria," "British Bibliographer,"[151] &c. The earliest praise of Munday is contained in Webbe's "Discourse of English Poetrie," 1586, where his "Sweete Sobs of Sheephardes and Nymphes" is especially pointed out as "very rare poetrie." Francis Meres, in 1598 ("Palladis Tamia," fo. 283, b.), enumerating many of the best dramatic poets of his day, including Shakespeare, Heywood, Chapman, Porter, Lodge, &c., gives Anthony Munday the praise of being "our best plotter," a distinction that excited the spleen of Ben Jonson in his "Case is Altered," more particularly, as he was omitted.

Nearly all the existing information respecting Anthony Munday's dramatic works is derived from Henslowe's papers.[152] At what period he began to write for the stage cannot be ascertained: the earliest date in these MSS. connected with his name is December 1597; but as he was perhaps a member of the Earl of Oxford's theatrical company before he went abroad, and as he was certainly at Rome prior to 1578, it is likely that he was very early the author of theatrical performances. In the old catalogues, and in Langbaine's "Momus Triumphans," 1688, a piece called "Fidele and Fortunatus" is mentioned, and such a play was entered at Stationers' Hall, Nov. 12, 1584. There is little doubt that this is the same production, two copies of which have been discovered, with the running title of "Two Italian Gentlemen," that being the second title to "Fidele and Fortunatus" in the Register. Both copies are without title-pages; but to one of them is prefixed a dedication signed A.M., and we may with tolerable certainty conclude that Anthony Munday was the author or translator of it, and that it was

printed about the date of its entry on the Stationers' Books. It is pretty evident that the play now reprinted from the only known edition in 1601 was written considerably before 1597-8, the year when it is first noticed in the accounts of the proprietor of the Rose. The story is treated with a simplicity bordering upon rudeness, and historical facts are perverted just as suited the purpose of the writer. Whether we consider it as contemporary with, or preceding the productions of the same class by Shakespeare, it is a relic of high interest, and nearly all the sylvan portions of the play, in which Robin Hood and his "merry men" are engaged, are of no ordinary beauty. Some of the serious scenes are also extremely well written, and the blank-verse, interspersed with rhymes, as was usual in our earlier dramas, by no means inharmonious.

The subsequent catalogue of plays which Munday wrote, either alone or in conjunction with others, is derived from the materials supplied by Malone.

1. Mother Redcap, by Anthony Munday and Michael Drayton. December 1597. Not printed.[153]
2. The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington, by Anthony Munday. February 1597-8. Printed in 1601.
3. The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington, by Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle. February 1597-8. Printed in 1601.
4. The Funeral of Richard Cordelion, by Robert Wilson, Henry Chettle, Anthony Munday, and Michael Drayton. May 1598. Not printed.
5. Valentine and Orson, by Richard Hathwaye and Anthony Munday. July 1598. Not printed.
6. Chance Medley, by Robert Wilson, Anthony Munday, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Dekker. August 1598. Not printed.
7. Owen Tudor, by Michael Drayton, Richard Hathwaye, Anthony Munday, and Robert Wilson. January 1599-1600. Not printed.
8. Fair Constance of Rome, by Anthony Munday, Richard Hathwaye, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Dekker. June 1600. Not printed.
9. Fair Constance of Rome, Part II., by the same authors. June 1600. Not printed.
10. The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey,[154] by Anthony Munday, Michael Drayton, Henry Chettle, and Wentworth Smith. November 12, 1601. Not printed.
11. Two Harpies, by Thomas Dekker, Michael Drayton, Thomas Middleton, John Webster, and Anthony Munday. May 1602. Not printed.
12. The Widow's Charm, by Anthony Munday. July 1602. Printed in 1607, as Malone conjectured, under the title of "The Puritan or Widow of Watling Street," and ascribed to Shakespeare.
13. The Set at Tennis, by Anthony Munday. December 1602. Not printed.[155]
14. The first part of the Life of Sir John Oldcastle, by Anthony Munday, Michael Drayton, Robert Wilson, and Richard Hathwaye.

Of the last, two editions were published in 1600, the one with, and the other without, the name of Shakespeare on the title-page; but Mr Malone discovered, from the Registers of the Stationers' Company, that he was not concerned in it. Whether Munday wrote any plays subsequent to the date to which Henslowe's papers extend, is not known.

Such particulars as have come down to us regarding Henry Chettle will be prefixed to "The Death of the Earl of Huntington," the second part of the play now reprinted.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.[156]

SKELTON.

SIR JOHN ELTHAM.

KING RICHARD THE FIRST.

PRINCE JOHN.

ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON.
LITTLE JOHN.
SCARLET.
SCATHLOCK.
FRIAR TUCK.
MUCH, *the Clown*.
LEICESTER.
RICHMOND.
SALISBURY.
CHESTER.
SENTLOE.
FITZWATER.
LACY.
SIR HUGH LACY.
SIR GILBERT BROUGHTON.
BISHOP OF ELY.
PRIOR OF YORK.
JUSTICE WARMAN.
WARMAN'S COUSIN.
RALPH.
Jailor of Nottingham, Sheriff, Messenger, Boy, Colliers, &c.
QUEEN ELINOR.
MATILDA, *Fitzwater's Daughter*.
WARMAN'S WIFE.
OLD WOMAN.

THE DOWNFALL OF ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON.

ACT I, SCENE 1.

Enter SIR JOHN ELTHAM, and knocks at SKELTON'S door.[157]

SIR JOHN. How, Master Skelton; what, at study hard?
[*Opens the door.*]

SKEL. Welcome and wish'd-for honest Sir John Eltham.
I have sent twice, and either time he miss'd
That went to seek you.

ELT. So full well he might:
These two hours it pleased his majesty
To use my service in surveying maps,
Sent over from the good King Ferdinand,
That to the Indies, at Sebastian's suit,
Hath lately sent a Spanish colony.

SKEL. Then 'twill trouble you,
After your great affairs, to take the pain
That I intended to entreat you to,
About rehearsal of our[158] promis'd play.

ELT. Nay, Master Skelton; for the King himself,
As we were parting, bid me take great heed
We fail not of our day: therefore, I pray,
Send for the rest, that now we may rehearse.

SKEL. O, they are ready all, and dress'd to play.
What part play you?

ELT. Why, I play Little John,

And came on purpose with this green suit.

SKEL. Holla, my masters! Little John is come.

[At every door all the players run out, some crying "Where? where?" others, "Welcome, Sir John:" among others the boys and Clown.]

SKEL. Faith, little Tracy, you are somewhat forward:
What, our Maid Marian leaping like a lad?
If you remember, Robin is your love—
Sir Thomas Mantle yonder—not Sir John.

CLOWN. But, master, Sir John is my fellow, for I am
Much the miller's son, am I not?

SKEL. I know ye are, sir;
And, gentlemen, since you are thus prepar'd,
Go in, and bring your dumb-scene on the stage;
And I, as prologue, purpose to express
The ground whereon our history is laid.

[Exeunt. Manent SKELTON and SIR JOHN.]

Trumpets sound. Enter first KING RICHARD, with drum and ancient, giving ELY a purse and sceptre; his mother, and brother JOHN, CHESTER, LEICESTER, LACY, others at the KING'S appointment doing reverence. The KING goes in: presently ELY ascends the chair. CHESTER, JOHN, and the QUEEN part displeasantly. Enter EGBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON, leading MARIAN: follows him WARMAN, and after WARMAN the PRIOR; WARMAN ever flattering and making courtesy, taking gifts of the PRIOR behind and his master before. PRINCE JOHN Enters, offereth to take MARIAN. QUEEN ELINOR enters, offering to pull ROBIN from her; but they enfold each other, and sit down within the curtains. WARMAN with the PRIOR, SIR HUGH LACY, LORD SENTLOE, and SIR GILBERT BROUGHTON fold hands, and drawing the curtains, all (but the PRIOR) enter, and are kindly received by ROBIN HOOD. The curtains are again shut.

SKEL. Sir John, once more, bid your dumb shows come in,
That, as they pass, I may explain them all.

Enter KING RICHARD, &c.[159]

Richard, call'd Coeur de Lion, takes his leave,
Like the Lord's champion, 'gainst the pagan foes,
That spoil Juda and rich Palestine.
The rule of England and his princely seat
He leaves with Ely, then lord chancellor;
To whom the Mother Queen, her son, Prince John,
Chester, and all the peers are sworn.

[Exit RICHARD cum militibus.]

ELY ascends the chair.
Now reverend Ely, like the deputy
Of God's great deputy, ascends the throne;
Which the Queen Mother and ambitious John
Repining at, raised many mutinies:
And how they ended, you anon shall hear.

[Exeunt omnes.]

Enter ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON, leading MARIAN, &c.[160]

This youth that leads yon virgin by the hand
(As doth the sun the morning richly clad)
Is our Earl Robert or your Robin Hood,
That in those days was Earl of Huntington.
The ill-faced miser, bribed in either hand,
Is Warman, once the steward of his house,
Who, Judas-like, betrays his liberal lord
Into the hands of that relentless Prior,
Call'd Gilbert Hood, uncle to Huntington.

Those two, that seek to part these lovely friends,
Are Elinor the queen and John the prince:
She loves Earl Robert, he Maid Marian;
But vainly, for their dear affect is such,
As only death can sunder their true loves.
Long had they lov'd, and now it is agreed,
This day they must be troth-plight, after wed.
At Huntington's fair house a feast is held;
But envy turns it to a house of tears;
For those false guests, conspiring with the Prior,
To whom Earl Robert greatly is in debt,
Mean at the banquet to betray the earl
Unto a heavy writ of outlawry.
The manner and escape you all shall see.

ELT. Which all, good Skelton?

SKEL. Why, all these lookers on;
Whom if we please, the king will sure be pleas'd.
Look to your entrance; get you in, Sir John. [*Exit SIR JOHN.*]
My shift is long, for I play Friar Tuck;
Wherein, if Skelton have but any luck,
He'll thank his hearers oft with many a duck.
For many talk of Robin Hood, that never shot in his bow,
But Skelton writes of Robin Hood what he doth truly know.[161]

Therefore I pray ye,
Contentedly stay ye,
And take no offending,
But sit to the ending,
Likewise I desire
Ye would not admire
My rhyme, so I shift;
For this is my drift,
So mought I well thrive
To make ye all blithe:
But if ye once frown,
Poor Skelton goes down;
His labour and cost,
He thinketh all lost
In tumbling of books
Of marry-go-looks.
The Sheriff with staves,
With catchpoles and knaves,
Are coming, I see:
High time 'tis for me,
To leave off my babble
And fond ribble-rabble.
Therefore with this court'sy
Awhile I will leave ye.[162]

SCENE II.

*Enter, as it were in haste, the PRIOR OF YORK, the
SHERIFF, Justice WARMAN, Steward to ROBIN HOOD.*

PRIOR. Here, Master Warman, there's a hundred crowns
For your good-will and futherance in this.

WAR. I thank you, my Lord Prior. I must away,
To shun suspicion; but be resolute,
And we will take him, have no doubt of it.

PRIOR. But is Lord Sentloe and the other come?

WAR. Lord Sentloe, Sir Hugh Lacy, and Sir Gilbert Broughton
Are there, and as they promis'd you last night,
Will help to take him, when the Sheriff comes.

[Exit WARMAN.

PRIOR. Awhile, farewell, and thanks to them and you.
Come, Master Sheriff, the outlawry is proclaim'd,
Send therefore quickly for more company,
And at the back-gate we will enter in.

SHER. We shall have much ado, I am afraid.

PRIOR. No, they are very merry at a feast;
A feast where Marian, daughter to Lord Lacy,
Is troth-plighted to wasteful Huntington;
And at the feast are my especial friends,
Whom he suspects not. Come, we'll have him, man,
And for your pains here is a hundred marks.

SHER. I thank your lordship: we'll be diligent.

[Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Enter ROBIN HOOD, LITTLE JOHN *following him;*
the one Earl of Huntington, the other his servant,
ROBIN *having his napkin on his shoulder, as if he*
were suddenly raised from dinner.

ROB. H. As I am outlaw'd from my fame and state,
Be this day outlawed from the name of days.
Day luckless, outlaw luckless, both accurs'd!
[Flings away his napkin and hat, and sitteth down.

LIT. JOHN. Do not forget your honourable state,
Nor the true noblesse of your worthy house.

ROB. H. Do not persuade me; vain as vanity
Are all thy comforts: I am comfortless.

LIT. JOHN. Hear me, my lord.

ROB. H. What shall I hear thee say?
Already hast thou said too much to hear:
Already hast thou stabb'd me with thy tongue,
And the wide wound with words will not be clos'd.
Am I not outlaw'd by the Prior of York?
Proclaim'd in court, in city, and in town
A lawless person? this thy tongue reports,
And therefore seek not to make smooth my grief;
For the rough storm thy windy words have rais'd,
Will not be calm'd, till I in grave be laid.

LIT. JOHN. Have patience yet.

ROB. H. Yea, now indeed thou speakest.
Patience hath power to bear a greater cross
Than honour's spoil or any earthly loss.

LIT. JOHN. Do so, my lord.

ROB. H. Ay, now I would begin:
But see, another scene of grief comes in.

Enter MARIAN.[163]

MAR. Why is my lord so sad? wherefore so soon,
So suddenly, arose ye from the board?
Alas, my Robin! what distempering grief
Drinks up the roseate colour of thy cheeks?
Why art thou silent? answer me, my love.

ROB. H. Let him, let him, let him make thee as sad.
He hath a tongue can banish thee from joy,
And chase thy crimson colour from thy cheeks.
Why speak'st thou not? I pray thee, Little John,
Let the short story of my long distress
Be utter'd in a word. What, mean'st thou to protract?
Wilt thou not speak? then, Marian, list to me.
This day thou wert a maid, and now a spouse,
Anon, poor soul, a widow thou must be!
Thy Robin is an outlaw, Marian;
His goods and land must be extended on,
Himself exil'd from thee, thou kept from him
By the long distance of unnumbered miles.

[*She sinks in his arms.*]

Faint'st thou at this? speak to me, Marian:
My old love, newly met, part not so soon;
We have a little time to tarry yet.

MAR. If but a little time, let me not stay
Part we to-day, then will I die to-day!

LIT. JOHN. For shame, my lord! with courage of a man
Bridle this over-grieving passion,
Or else dissemble it to comfort her.

ROB. H. I like thy counsel. Marian, clear these clouds,
And with the sunny beams of thy bright eyes
Drink up these mists of sorrow that arise.

MAR. How can I joy, when thou art banished?

ROB. H. I tell thee, love, my grief is counterfeit;
And I abruptly from the table rose,
The banquet being almost at an end,
Only to drive confused and sad thoughts
[Out of][164] the minds of the invited guests.
For, gentle love, at great or nuptial feasts,
With comic sports or tragic stately plays
We use to recreate the feasted guests,
Which I am sure our kinsfolk do expect.

MAR. Of this, what then? this seems of no effect.

ROB. H. Why, thus of this: as Little John can tell,
I had bespoken quaint comedians;
But great John, John the prince, my liege's brother—
My rival, Marian, he that cross'd our love—
Hath cross'd me in this jest,[165] and at the court
Employs the players should have made us sport.
This was the tidings brought by Little John,
That first disturbed me, and begot this thought
Of sudden rising, which by this, I know,
Hath with amazement troubled all our guests.
Go in, good love: thou as the chorus shalt
Express the meaning of my silent grief,
Which is no more but this: I only mean
(The more to honour our right noble friends)
Myself in person to present some scenes
Of tragic matter, or perchance of mirth,
Even such as first shall jump with my conceit.

MAR. May I be bold thou hast the worst expressed?

LIT. JOHN. Fair mistress, all is true my lord hath said.

ROB. H. It is, it is.

MAR. Speak not so hollow then:
So sigh and sadly speak true-sorrowing men.

ROB. H. Believe me, love, believe me (I beseech),
My first scene tragic is, therefore tragic speech
And accents filling woful action,
I strive to get. I pray thee, sweet,
Go in, and with thy sight appease
The many doubts that may arise. That done,
Be thou their usher, bring them to this place,
And thou shalt see me with a lofty verse
Bewitch the hearers' ears, and tempt their eyes
To gaze upon the action that I use.

MAR. If it be but a play, I'll play my part:
But sure some earnest grief affrights thy[166] heart.

LIT. JOHN. Let me entreat ye, madam, not to fear,
For, by the honesty of Little John,
It's but a tragic scene we have in hand,
Only to fit the humour of the queen,
Who is the chiefest at your troth-plight feast.

MAR. Then will I fetch her highness and the rest.
[Exit.

ROB. H. Ay, that same jealous queen, whose doting age
Envies the choice of my fair Marian,
She hath a hand in this.

LIT. JOHN. Well, what of that?
Now must your honour leave these mourning tunes,
And thus by my areed you shall provide.
Your plate and jewels I will straight pack up,
And toward Nottingham convey them hence.
At Rowford, Sowtham, Wortley, Hothersfield,
Of all your cattle money shall be made;
And I at Mansfield will attend your coming,
Where we'll determine which way's best to take.

ROB. H. Well, be it so; a' God's name, let it be;
And, if I can, Marian shall come with me.

LIT. JOHN. Else care will kill her. Therefore, if you please,
At th'utmost corner of the garden wall,
Soon in the evening wait for Marian;
And as I go I'll tell her of the plan.[167]
Your horses at the Bell shall ready be,
I mean Belsavage;[168] whence as citizens,
That mean[169] to ride for pleasure some small way,
You shall set forth.

ROB. H. Be it as thou dost say.
Farewell awhile:
In spite of grief, thy love compels me smile,
But now our audience comes, we must look sad.[170]

Enter QUEEN ELINOR, MARIAN, SENTLOE, LACY, BROUGHTON,
WARMAN, *Robin's steward. As they meet,* LITTLE JOHN
whispers with MARIAN, *and exit.*

QU. ELIN. How now, my Lord of Huntington?

The mistress of your love, fair Marian,
Tells us your sudden rising from the banquet
Was but a humour which you mean to purge
In some high tragic lines or comic jests.

ROB. H. Sit down, fair queen (the prologue's part is play'd;
Marian hath told ye, what I had her tell):
Sit down, Lord Sentloe, cousin Lacy, sit:
Sir Gilbert Broughton, yea, and Warman, sit:
Though you my steward be, yet for your gathering wit
I give you place: sit down, sit down, I say:
God's pity! sit: it must, it must be so,
For you will sit when I shall stand, I know. [*Sits them all down.*
And, Marian, you may sit among the rest,
I pray ye do, or else rise, stand apart:
These helps shall be beholders of my smart—
You that with ruthless eyes my sorrows see,
And came prepar'd to feast at my sad fall,
Whose envy, greediness, and jealousy
Afford me sorrow endless, comfort small,
Know what you knew before, what you ordain'd
To cross the spousal banquet of my love,
That I am outlaw'd by the Prior of York,
My traitorous uncle and your toothless friend.
Smile you, Queen Elinor? laugh'st thou, Lord Sentloe?
Lacy, look'st thou so blithe at my lament?
Broughton, a smooth brow graceth your stern face;
And you are merry, Warman, at my moan.
The Queen except, I do you all defy!
You are a sort^[171] of fawning sycophants,
That, while the sunshine of my greatness 'dur'd,
Revelled out all my day for your delights;
And now ye see the black night of my woe
O'ershade the beauty of my smiling good,
You to my grief add grief; and are agreed
With that false Prior to reprieve my joys
From execution of all happiness.

WAR. Your honour thinks not ill of me, I hope.

ROB. H. Judas speaks first, with "Master, is it I?"
No, my false steward; your accounts are true;
You have dishonour'd me, I worshipp'd^[172] you.
You from a paltry pen-and-inkhorn clerk,
Bearing a buckram-satchel at your belt,
Unto a justice' place I did prefer;
Where you unjustly have my tenants rack'd,
Wasted my treasure, and increas'd your store.
Your sire contented with a cottage poor,
Your mastership hath halls and mansions built;
Yet are you innocent, as clear from guilt
As is the ravenous mastiff that hath spilt
The blood of a whole flock, yet slyly comes
And couches in his kennel with smear'd chaps.
Out of my house! for yet my house it is,
And follow him, ye catchpole-bribed grooms;
For neither are ye lords nor gentlemen,
That will be hired to wrong a nobleman:
For hired ye were last night, I know it, I,
To be my guests, my faithless guests this day,
That your kind host you trothless might betray.
But hence, and help the Sheriff at the door,
Your worst attempt. Fell traitors, as you be,
Avoid, or I will execute ye all
Ere any execution come at me! [*They run away.*

They run[173] away, so ends the tragedy.
(*Aside*) Marian, by Little John, my mind you know:
If you will, do; if not, why be it so.

[*Offers to go in.*]

QU. ELIN. No words to me, Earl Robert, ere you go?

ROB. H. O, to your highness? yes; adieu, proud queen; Had not you been, thus poor I had not been.
[*Exit.*]

QU. ELIN. Thou wrong'st me, Robert Earl of Huntington,
And were it not for pity of this maid,
I would revenge the words that thou hast said.

MAR. Add not, fair queen, distress unto distress,
But, if you can, for pity make his less.

QU. ELIN. I can and will forget deserving hate,
And give him comfort in this woful state.
Marian, I know Earl Robert's whole desire
Is to have thee with him from hence away;
And though I lov'd him dearly to this day,
Yet since I see he deadlier loveth thee,
Thou shalt have all the furtherance I may.
Tell me, fair girl, and see thou truly tell,
Whether this night, to-morrow, or next day,
There be no 'pointment for to meet thy love?

MAR. There is, this night there is, I will not lie;
And, be it disappointed, I shall die.

QU. ELIN. Alas, poor soul! my son, Prince John, my son,
With several troops hath circuited the court,
This house, the city, that thou canst not 'scape.

MAR. I will away with Death, though he be grim,
If they deny me to go hence with him.

QU. ELIN. Marian,
Thou shalt go with him clad in my attire,
And for a shift I'll put thy garments on.
It is not me my son John doth desire,
But, Marian, it is thee he doteth on.
When thou and I are come into the field,
Or any other place, where Robin stays,
Me in thy clothes the ambush will beset;
Thee in my robes they dare not once approach:
So, while with me a-reasoning they stay,
At pleasure thou with him may'st ride away.

MAR. I am beholding to your majesty,
And of this plot will send my Robin word.

QU. ELIN. Nay, never trouble him, lest it breed suspect:
But get thee in, and shift off thy attire:
My robe is loose, and it will soon be off.
Go, gentle Marian, I will follow thee,
And from betrayers' hands will set thee free.

MAR. I thank your highness, but I will not trust ye:
My Robert shall have knowledge of this shift,
For I conceive already your deep drift.

[*Aside. Exit.*]

QU. ELIN. Now shall I have my will of Huntington
Who, taking me this night for Marian,
Will hurry me away instead of her;
For he dares not stand trifling to confer.

Faith, pretty Marian, I shall meet with you,[174]
And with your lovely sweetheart Robert too:
For when we come unto a baiting-place,
If with like love my love he do not grace,
Of treason capital I will accuse him,
For trait'rous forcing me out of the court,
And guerdon his disdain with guilty death,
That of a prince's love so lightly weighs.

[*Exit.*]

ACT II., SCENE I.

Enter LITTLE JOHN *fighting with the* SHERIFF *and his men; WARMAN* *persuading him.*

LIT. JOHN. Warman, stand off!
Tit-tattle, tell not me what ye can do:
The goods, I say, are mine, and I say true.

WAR. I say the Sheriff must see them, ere they go.

LIT. JOHN. You say so, Warman: Little John says no.

SHER. I say I must, for I am the king's shrieve.

LIT. JOHN. Your must is false; your office I believe.

WATCH. Down with him! down with him!

LIT. JOHN. Ye bark at me like curs, but I will down
With twenty "Stand, and who goes there?"[175] of you,
If ye stand long tempting my patience.
Why, Master Sheriff, think you me a fool?
What justice is there you should search my trunks,
Or stay my goods for that my master owes?

SHER. Here's Justice Warman, steward to your lord,
Suspects some coin, some jewels, or some plate
That 'longs unto your lord, are in your trunks,
And the extent is out for all his goods;
Therefore we ought to see none be convey'd.

WAR. True, Little John; I am the sorrier.

LIT. JOHN. A plague upon ye else, how sore ye weep!
Why, say, thou upstart, that there were some help,
Some little, little help in this distress,
To aid our lord and master comfortless,
Is it thy part, thou screen-fac'd snotty-nose,
To hinder him that gave thee all thou hast?

Enter JUSTICE WARMAN'S [*French*] WIFE *oddly attired.*

WIFE. Who's that, husband? you, you! means he you?

WAR. I, by'r Lady is it, I thank him.

WIFE. Ah, ye knave you! God's pity, husband, why dis no your worship send the kneve to Newgate?

LIT. JOHN. Well, Master Sheriff, shall I pass or no?

SHER. Not without search.

LIT. JOHN. Then here the casket stands:

Any that dares unto it set their hands,
Let him begin.

WIFE. Do, hisband;
You are a majesty: I warrant
There's old knacks, chains, and other toys.

LIT. JOHN. But not for you, good madam beetle-brows.

WIFE. Out upon him! By my truly, Master Justice, and ye do not clap him up, I will sue a bill of remorse, and never come between a pair of sheets with ye. Such a kneve as this! down with him, I pray.

[*Set upon him: he knocks some down.*]

WIFE. Ah, good Lord! come not near, good husband; only charge him, charge him! Ah, good God! help, help!

Enter PRINCE JOHN, *the* BISHOP OF ELY, *the*
PRIOR OF YORK, *with others.* *All stay.*

JOHN. What tumult have we here? who doth resist
The king's writs with such obstinate contempt?

WIFE. This kneve.

WAR. This rebel.

JOHN. How now, Little John,
Have you no more discretion than you show?

ELY. Lay hold, and clap the traitor by the heels.

LIT. JOHN. I am no traitor, my good Lord of Ely
First hear me, then commit me, if you please.

JOHN. Speak, and be brief.

LIT. JOHN. Here is a little box,
Containing all my gettings twenty year,
Which is mine own, and no man's but mine own:
This they would rifle, this I do defend,
And about this we only do contend.

JOHN. You do the fellow wrong: his goods are his.
You only must extend upon the Earl's.

PRIOR. That was, my lord, but now is Robert Hood;
A simple yeoman, as his servants were.

WIFE. Back with that leg, my Lord Prior: there be some that were his servants think foul scorn to be called yeomen.

PRIOR. I cry your worship mercy, Mistress Warman:
The squire, your husband, was his servant once.

LIT. JOHN. A scurvy squire, with reverence of these lords.

WIFE. Does he not speak treason, pray?

ELY. Sirrah, ye are too saucy: get you hence.

WAR. But hear me first, my lords, with patience.
This scoffing, careless fellow, Little John,
Hath loaden hence a horse 'twixt him and Much,
A silly, rude knave—Much, the miller's son.

Enter MUCH, *Clown.*

MUCH. I am here to answer for myself, and have taken you in two lies at once: first, Much is no knave, neither was it a horse Little John and I loaded, but a little curtal of some five handfuls high, sib to the ape's only beast at Paris Garden.[176]

LIT. JOHN. But, Master Warman, you have loaded carts,
And turned my lord's goods to your proper use.
Whoever hath the right, you do the wrong,
And are—

WIFE. What is he, kneve?

LIT. JOHN. Unworthy to be nam'd a man.

MUCH. And I'll be sworn for his wife.

WIFE. Ay, so thou mayest, Much.

MUCH. That she sets new marks of all my old lady's linen (God rest her soul!), and my young lord never had them since.

WIFE. Out, out! I took him them but for to whiten, as God mend me.

ELY. Leave off this idle talk; get ye both hence.

LIT. JOHN. I thank your honours: we are not in love
With being here.
We must seek service that are masterless.

[*Exeunt* MUCH *and* LITTLE JOHN.]

ELY. Lord Prior of York, here's your commission.
You are best make speed, lest in his country houses,
By his appointment, all his herds be sold.

PRIOR. I thank your honour, taking humble leave.
[*Exit.*]

ELY. And, Master Warman, here's your patent sealed
For the High Sherifffwick of Nottingham;
Except the king our master do repeal
This gift of ours.

JOHN. Let him the while possess it.

ELY. A God's name, let him; he hath my good will.
[*Exit.*]

JOHN. Well, Warman, this proud priest I cannot brook.
But to our other matter: send thy wife away.

WAR. Go in, good wife; the prince with me hath private conference.

WIFE. By my troth, ye will anger me: now ye have the pattern, ye should call me nothing but Mistress Sheriff; for I tell you I stand upon my replications. [*Exit.*]

JOHN. Thinkest thou that Marian means
To 'scape this evening hence with Robin Hood?
The horse-boy told me so; and here he comes,
Disguised like a citizen, methinks.
Warman, let's in; I'll fit him presently:
Only for Marian am I now his enemy.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter ROBIN, *like a citizen.*

ROB. H. Earl John[177] and Warman, two good friends of mine:
I think they knew me not, or if they did
I care not what can follow. I am sure
The sharpest end is death, and that will come.
But what of death or sorrow do I dream?
My Marian, my fair life, my beauteous love
Is coming, to give comfort to my grief,
And the sly queen, intending to deceive,

Hath taught us how we should her sleights receive.[178]
But who is this? God's pity! here's Prince John.

JOHN. Good even, sir. This clear evening should portend
Some frost, I think: how judge you, honest friend?

ROB. H. I am not weather-wise; but it may be
We shall have hard frost; for true charity,
Good dealing, faithful friendship, honesty,
Are chill-cold, dead with cold.

JOHN. O good sir, stay,
That frost hath lasted many a bitter day.
Know ye no frozen hearts that are belov'd?

ROB. H. Love is a flame, a fire, that being moved,
Still brighter grows. But say, are you beloved?

JOHN. I would be, if I be not: but pass that.
Are ye a dweller in this city, pray?

ROB. H. I am; and for a gentlewoman stay,
That rides some four or five mile in great haste.

Enter QUEEN *and* MARIAN.[179]

JOHN. I see your labour, sir, is not in waste,
For here come two; are either of these yours?

ROB. H. Both are—one most.[180]

JOHN. Which do you most respect?

ROB. H. The youngest and the fairest I reject.

JOHN. Robin, I'll try you, whether ye say true. [*Aside*.

ROB. H. As you with me, so, John, I'll jest with you. [*Aside*.

QU. ELIN. Marian, let me go first to Robin Hood,
And I will tell him what we do intend.

MAR. Do what your highness please; your will is mine.

JOHN. My mother is with gentle Marian:
O, it doth grieve her to be left behind.

QU. ELIN. Shall we away, my Robin, lest the queen
Betray our purpose? sweet, let us away:
I have great will to go, no heart to stay.

ROB. H. Away with thee? No; get thee far away
From me, foul Marian, fair though thou be nam'd;
For thy bewitching eyes have raised storms,
That have my name and noblesse ever sham'd;
Prince John, my dear friend once, is now for thee
Become an unrelenting enemy.

JOHN. But I'll relent and love thee, if thou leave her.

ROB. H. And Elinor my sovereign, mother-queen,[181]
That yet retains true passion in her breast,
Stands mourning yonder. Hence! I thee detest.
I will submit me to her majesty.
Great princess, if you will but ride with me
A little of my way, I will express
My folly past, and humble pardon beg.

MAR. I grant, Earl Robert, and I thank thee too.

QU. ELIN. She's not the queen; sweet Robin, it is I.

ROB. H. Hence, sorceress! thy beauty I defy.
If thou have any love at all to me,
Bestow it on Prince John; he loveth thee.

[*Exeunt* ROBIN, MARIAN.

JOHN. And I will love thee, Robin, for this deed,
And help thee, too, in thy distressful need.

QU. ELIN. Wilt thou not stay nor speak, proud Huntington?
Ay me! some whirlwind hurries them away.

JOHN. Follow him not, fair love, that from thee flies,
But fly to him that gladly follows thee.
Wilt thou not, girl? turn'st thou away from me?

QU. ELIN. Nay, we shall have it then,
If my quaint son his mother 'gin to court. [*Aside*.

JOHN. Wilt thou not speak, fair Marian, to Prince John,
That loves thee well?

QU. ELIN. Good sir, I know you do.

JOHN. That can maintain thee.

QU. ELIN. Ay, I know you can,
But hitherto I have maintained you.

JOHN. My princely mother!

QU. ELIN. Ay, my princely son.

JOHN. Is Marian then gone hence with Huntington?

QU. ELIN. Ay, she is gone; ill may they either thrive.

JOHN. Mother, they [needs] must go, whom the devil drives;
For your sharp fury and infernal rage,
Your scorn of me, your spite to Marian,
Your overdoating love to Huntington,
Hath cross'd yourself, and me it hath undone.

QU. ELIN. I in mine own deceit have met deceit:
In brief the manner thus I will repeat.
I knew with malice that the Prior of York
Pursued Earl Robert; and I furthered it,
Though God can tell, for love of Huntington.
For thus I thought: when he was in extremes,
Need and my love would win some good regard
From him to me, if I reliev'd his want.
To this end came I to the mock spouse-feast;
To this end made I change for Marian's weed,
That me for her Earl Robert should receive:
But now I see they both of them agreed,
In my deceit I might myself deceive.
Come in with me, come in, and meditate
How to turn love to never-changing hate.

[*Exit*.

JOHN. In by yourself; I pass not for your spells.
Of youth and beauty still you are the foe:
The curse of Rosamond rests on your head,
Fair Rose confounded by your cank'rous hate,[182]
O, that she were not as to me she is,
A mother, whom by nature I must love,
Then I would tell her she were too-too base

To dote thus on a banish'd careless groom:
Then should I tell her that she were too fond
To trust[183] fair Marian to an exile's hand.

Enter a MESSENGER from ELY.

MES. My lord, my Lord of Ely sends for you
About important business of the state.

JOHN. Tell the proud prelate I am not dispos'd
Nor in estate to come at his command.

[Smites him; he bleeds.

Begone with that; or tarry, and take this!
'Zwounds! are ye list'ning for an after-errand?

[Exit MESSENGER.

I'll follow with revengeful, murd'rous hate
The banish'd, beggar'd, bankrupt Huntington.

Enter SIMON, Earl of Leicester.

LEI. How now, Prince John? body of me! I muse
What mad moods toss ye in this busy time
To wound the messenger that Ely sent,
By our consents? i'faith, ye did not well.

JOHN. Leicester, I meant it, Ely, not his man:
His servant's head but bleeds, he headless shall
From all the issues of his traitor-neck
Pour streams of blood, till he be bloodless left.
By earth, it shall—by heaven, it shall be so!
Leicester, it shall, though all the world say no.

LEI. It shall, it shall! but how shall it be done?
Not with a stormy tempest of sharp words,
But slow, still speeches and effecting deeds.
Here comes old Lacy and his brother Hugh!
One is our friend, and the other is not true.

Enter LORD LACY, SIR HUGH, and his Boy.

LACY. Hence, traitor, as thou art! by God's bless'd mother!
I'll lop thy legs off, though thou be my brother,
If with thy flattering tongue thou seek to hide
Thy traitorous purpose. Ah, poor Huntington!
How in one hour have villains thee undone!

HUGH. If you will not believe what I have sworn,
Conceit your worst. My Lord of Ely knows
That what I say is true.

LACY. Still facest thou?
Draw, boy, and quickly see that thou defend thee.

LEI. Patience, Lord Lacy! get you gone, Sir Hugh;
Provoke him not, for he hath told you true:
You know it, that I know the Prior of York,
Together with my good lord chancellor,
Corrupted you, Lord Sentloe, Broughton, Warman,
To feast with Robert on his day of fall.

HUGH. They lie that say it: I defy ye all.

JOHN. Now, by the rood, thou liest. Warman himself,
That creeping Judas, joy'd, and told it me.

LACY. Let me, my lords, revenge me of this wretch,
By whom my daughter and her love were lost.

JOHN. For her, let me revenge: with bitter cost,

Shall Sir Hugh Lacy and his fellows buy
Fair Marian's loss, lost by their treachery;
And thus I pay it.

[Stabs him; he falls; Boy runs in.]

LEI. Sure payment, John.

LACY. There let the villain lie.
For this old Lacy honours thee, Prince John:
One treacherous soul is sent to answer wrong.

Enter ELY, CHESTER, Officers, Hugh Lacy's Boy.

BOY. Here, here, my lord! look, where my master lies.

ELY. What murd'rous hand hath kill'd this gentle knight,
Good Sir Hugh Lacy, steward of my lands?

JOHN. Ely, he died by this princely hand.

ELY. Unprincely deed! Death asketh death, you know.
Arrest him, officers.

JOHN. O sir, I will obey.
You will take bail, I hope.

CHES. 'Tis more, sir, than he may.

LEI. Chester, he may by law, and therefore shall.

ELY. Who are his bail?

LEI. I.

LACY. And I.

ELY. You are confederates.

JOHN. Holy Lord, you lie.

CHES. Be reverend, Prince John: my Lord of Ely,
You know, is Regent for his majesty,

JOHN. But here are letters from his majesty,
Sent out of Joppa, in the Holy Land,
To you, to these, to me, to all the state,
Containing a repeal of that large grant,
And free authority to take the seal
Into the hands of three lords temporal
And the Lord Archbishop of Roan, he sent.
And he shall yield it, or as Lacy lies,
Desertfully, for pride and treason stabb'd,
He shall ere long lie. Those, that intend as I,
Follow this steely ensign, lift on high.

[Lifts up his drawn sword. Exit, cum LEICESTER and LACY.]

ELY. A thousand thousand ensigns of sharp steel,
And feather'd arrows from the bow of death,
Against proud John wrong'd Ely will employ.
My Lord of Chester, let me have your aid,
To lay the pride of haught,[184] usurping John.

CHES. Some other course than war let us bethink:
If it may be, let not uncivil broils
Our civil hands defile.

ELY. God knows that I
For quiet of the realm would aught forbear:
But give me leave, my noble lord, to fear,

When one I dearly lov'd is murdered
Under the colour of a little wrong
Done to the wasteful Earl of Huntington;
Whom John, I know, doth hate unto the death,
Only for love he bears to Lacy's daughter.

CHES. My lord, it's plain this quarrel is but pick'd
For an inducement to a greater ill;
But we will call the council of estate,
At which the Mother Queen shall present be:
Thither by summons shall Prince John be call'd,
Leicester, and Lacy, who, it seems,
Favour some factious purpose of the prince.

ELY. You have advised well, my Lord of Chester;
And as you counsel, so do I conclude.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Enter ROBIN HOOD *and* MATILDA *at one door; LITTLE JOHN and MUCH the Miller's son at another door.*

MUCH. Luck, I beseech thee, marry and amen!
Blessing betide them! (it be them indeed)
Ah, for my good lord and my little lady![185]

ROB. H. What, Much and John! well-met in this ill time.

LIT. JOHN. In this good time, my lord, for, being met,
The world shall not depart us till we die.[186]

MAT. Say'st thou me so, John? as I am true maid,
If I live long, well shall thy love be paid.

MUCH. Well, there be on us, simple though we stand here, have as much love in them as Little John.

MAT. Much, I confess thou lov'st me very much,
And I will more reward it than with words.

MUCH. Nay, I know that; but we miller's children love the cog a little, and the fair speaking.

ROB. H. And is it possible that Warman's spite
Should stretch so far, that he doth hunt the lives
Of bonny Scarlet and his brother Scathlock.

MUCH. O, ay, sir: Warman came but yesterday to take charge of the jail at Nottingham, and this day he says he will hang the two outlaws. He means to set them at liberty!

MAT. Such liberty God send the peevish wretch,
In his most need.

ROB. H. Now, by my honour's hope,
Yet buried in the low dust of disgrace,
He is to blame. Say, John, where must they die?

LIT. JOHN. Yonder's their mother's house, and here the tree
Whereon, poor men, they must forego their lives:
And yonder comes a lazy losel friar,
That is appointed for their confessor;
Who, when we brought your money to their mothers,
Was wishing her to patience for their deaths.

Enter FRIAR TUCK *and* RALPH, *Warman's man.*

RAL. I am timorous, sir, that the prigioners are passed from the jail.

FRIAR. Soft, sirrah! by my order I protest
Ye are too forward: 'tis no game, no jest,
We go about.

ROB. H. Matilda, walk afore
To Widow Scarlet's house; look, where it stands.
Much, man your lady: Little John and I
Will come unto you thither presently.

MUCH. Come, madam; my lord has 'pointed the properer man to go before ye.

MAT. Be careful, Robin, in this time of fear.

[*Exeunt* MUCH, MATILDA.]

FRIAR. Now, by the relics of the holy mass,
A pretty girl, a very bonny lass.

ROB. H. Friar, how like you her?

FRIAR. Marry, by my hood,
I like her well, and wish her nought but good.

RAL. Ye protract, Master Friar. I obsecrate ye with all courtesy, omitting compliment, you would vouch or deign to proceed.

FRIAR. Deign, vouch, protract, compliment, obsecrate?
Why, goodman Tricks, who taught you thus to prate?
Your name, your name? Were you never christen'd?

RAL. My nomination Radulph is, or Ralph: Vulgars corruptly use to call me Rafe.

FRIAR. O foul corruption of base palliardize,[187]
When idiots, witless, travail to be wise.
Age barbarous, times impious, men vicious!

Able to upraise,
Men dead many days,
That wanted to praise
The rhymes and the lays
Of poets laureate:
Whose verse did decorate,
And their lines 'lustrate
Both prince and potentate.
These from their graves
See asses and knaves,
Base idiot slaves,
With boastings and braves
Offer to upfly
To the heavens high,
With vain foolery
And rude ribaldry.
Some of them write
Of beastly delight,
Suffering their lines
To flatter these times
With pandarism base,
And lust do uncase
From the placket to the pap:
God send them ill-hap!
Some like quaint pedants,
Good wit's true recreants,
Ye cannot beseech
From pure Priscian speech.
Divers as nice,
Like this odd vice,
Are word-makers daily.
Others in courtesy,

Whenever they meet ye,
With new fashions greet ye:
Changing each congee,
Sometime beneath knee,
With, "Good sir, pardon me,"
And much more foolery,
Paltry and foppery,
Dissembling knavery:
Hands sometime kissing,
But honesty missing.
God give no blessing
To such base counterfeiting.

LIT. JOHN. Stop, Master Skelton! whither will you run?

FRIAR. God's pity! Sir John Eltham, Little John,
I had forgot myself. But to our play.
Come, goodman Fashions, let us go our way,
Unto this hanging business. Would, for me,
Some rescue or reprieve might set them free.

[*Exeunt* FRIAR, RALPH.]

ROB. H. Heard'st thou not, Little John, the friar's speech,
Wishing for rescue or a quick reprieve?

LIT. JOHN. He seems like a good fellow, my good lord.

ROB. H. He's a good fellow, John, upon my word.
Lend me thy horn, and get thee in to Much,
And when I blow this horn, come both, and help me.

LIT. JOHN. Take heed, my lord: that villain Warman knows you,
And ten to one he hath a writ against you.

ROB. H. Fear not.
Below the bridge a poor blind man doth dwell,
With him I will change my habit, and disguise:
Only be ready when I call for ye;
For I will save their lives, if it may be.

LIT. JOHN. I will do what you would immediately.

Enter WARMAN, SCARLET, and SCATHLOCK, bound;
FRIAR TUCK as their confessor; officers with halberts.

WAR. Master Friar, be brief; delay no time.
Scarlet and Scathlock, never hope for life:
Here is the place of execution,
And you must answer law for what is done.

SCAR. Well, if there be no remedy, we must:
Though it ill-seemeth, Warman, thou should'st be
So bloody to pursue our lives thus cruelly.

SCATH. Our mother sav'd thee fro the gallows, Warman:
His father did prefer thee to thy lord.
One mother had we both, and both our fathers
To thee and to thy father were kind friends.

FRIAR. Good fellows, here you see his kindness ends:
What he was once he doth not now consider.
You must consider of your many sins:
This day in death your happiness begins.

SCAR. If you account it happiness, good Friar,
To bear us company I you desire:
The more the merrier; we are honest men.

WAR. Ye were first outlaws, then ye proved thieves,
And now all carelessly ye scoff at death.
Both of your fathers were good, honest men;
Your mother lives, their widow, in good fame;
But you are scapethrifts, unthrifts, villains, knaves,
And as ye lived by shifts, shall die with shame.

SCATH. Warman, good words, for all your bitter deeds:
Ill-speech to wretched men is more than needs.

Enter RALPH, running.

RAL. Sir, retire ye, for it hath thus succeeded: the carnifex or executor, riding on an ill-curtal, hath titubated or stumbled, and is now crippled, with broken or fractured tibiards, and, sending you tidings of success, saith yourself must be his deputy.

WAR. Ill-luck! but, sirrah, you shall serve the turn:
The cords that bind them you shall hang them in.

RAL. How are you, sir, of me opinionated? not to possess your seneschalship or shrievalty, not to be Earl of Nottingham, will Ralph be nominated by the base, scandalous vociferation of a hangman!

Enter ROBIN HOOD, like an old man.

ROB. H. Where is the Shrieve, kind friends, I you beseech?
With his good worship let me have some speech.

FRIAR. There is the Sheriff, father: this is he.

ROB. H. Friar, good alms and many blessings! thank thee.
Sir, you are welcome to this troublous shire:
Of this day's execution did I hear.
Scarlet and Scathlock murder'd my young son:
Me have they robb'd and helplessly undone.
Revenge I would, but I am old and dry:
Wherefore, sweet master, for saint Charity,
Since they are bound, deliver them to me,
That for my son's blood I reveng'd may be.

SCAR. This old man lies: we ne'er did him such wrong.

ROB. H. I do not lie: you wot it too-too well.
The deed was such as you may shame to tell;
But I with all entreats might not prevail
With your stern, stubborn minds, bent all to blood.
Shall I have such revenge then, Master Sheriff,
That with my son's loss may suffice myself?

[ROBIN *whispers with them.*

WAR. Do, father, what thou wilt, for they must die.

FRIAR. I never heard them touch'd with blood till now.

WAR. Notorious villains! and they made their brags,
The Earl of Huntington would save their lives:
But he is down the wind, as all such shall,
That revel, waste and spend, and take no care.

ROB. H. My horn once winded, I'll unbind my belt, Whereat the swords and bucklers are fast-tied. [*To SCARLET and SCATHLOCK.*

SCATH. Thanks to your honour. [*Aside.*] Father, we confess,
And were our arms unbound, we would upheave
Our sinful hands with sorrowing hearts to heaven.

ROB. H. I will unbind you, with the sheriff's leave.

WAR. Do: help him, Ralph: go to them, Master Friar.

ROB. H. And as ye blew your horns at my son's death,

So will I sound your knell with my best breath:

[*Sounds his horn.*]

And here's a blade, that hangeth at my belt,
Shall make ye feel in death what my son felt.

Enter LITTLE JOHN *and* MUCH.[188] *Fight: the* FRIAR, *making as if he helped the* SHERIFF, *knocks down his men, crying, Keep the king's peace!*

RAL. O, they must be hanged, father.

ROB. H. Thy master and thyself supply their rooms.
Warman, approach me not! tempt not my wrath,
For if thou do, thou diest remediless.

WAR. It is the outlaw'd Earl of Huntington!
Down with him, Friar! O, thou dost mistake![189]
Fly, Ralph, we die else! let us raise the shire.

[SHERIFF *runs away, and his men.*]

FRIAR. Farewell. Earl Robert, as I am true friar,
I had rather be thy clerk than serve the Prior.

ROB. H. A jolly fellow. Scarlet, know'st thou him?

SCAR. He is of York, and of St Mary's cloister,
There where your greedy uncle is Lord Prior.

MUCH. O, murrain on ye! have you two 'scap'd hanging?[190]
Hark ye, my lord: these two fellows kept at Barnsdale
Seven year to my knowledge, and no man[191]—

ROB. H. Here is no biding, masters: get ye in,
Take a short blessing at your mother's hands.
Much, bear them company; make Matilda merry:
John and myself will follow presently.
John, on a sudden thus I am resolv'd—
To keep in Sherwood till the king's return,
And being outlaw'd, lead an outlaw's life.
(Seven years these brethren, being yeomen's sons,
Lived and 'scap'd the malice of their foes.)[192]
How think'st thou, Little John, of my intent?

LIT. JOHN. I like your honour's purpose exceeding well.

ROB. H. Nay, no more honour, I pray thee, Little John;
Henceforth I will be called Robin Hood.
Matilda shall be my maid Marian.
Come, John, friends all, for now begins the game;
And after our deserts so grow our fame!

[*_Exeunt.*]

ACT III., SCENE I.

Enter PRINCE JOHN, *and his Lords, with Soldiers.*

JOHN. Now is this comet shot into the sea,
Or lies like slime upon the sullen earth.
Come, he is dead, else should we hear of him.

SAL. I know not what to think herein, my lord.

FITZ. Ely is not the man I took him for:

I am afraid we shall have worse than he.

JOHN. Why, good Fitzwater, whence doth spring your fear.

FITZ. Him for his pride we justly have suppress'd;
But prouder climbers are about to rise.

SAL. Name them, Fitzwater: know you any such?

JOHN. Fitzwater means not anything, I know;
For if he did, his tongue would tell his heart.

FITZ. An argument of my free heart, my lord.
That lets the world be witness of my thought.
When I was taught, true dealing kept the school;
Deeds were sworn partners with protesting words;
We said and did; these say and never mean.
This upstart protestation of no proof—
This, "I beseech you, sir, accept my love;
Command me, use me; O, you are to blame,
That do neglect, my everlasting zeal,
My dear, my kind affect;" when (God can tell)
A sudden puff of wind, a lightning flash,
A bubble on the stream doth longer 'dure,
Than doth the purpose of their promise bide.
A shame upon this peevish, apish age,
These crouching, hypocrite, dissembling times!
Well, well, God rid the patrons of these crimes
Out of this land: I have an inward fear,
This ill, well-seeming sin will be bought dear.

SAL. My Lord Fitzwater is inspired, I think.

JOHN. Ay, with some devil: let the old fool dote.

Enter QUEEN MOTHER, CHESTER, SHERIFF of Kent, *Soldiers.*

QU. MO. From the pursuing of the hateful priest
And bootless search of Ely are we come.

JOHN. And welcome is your sacred majesty;
And, Chester, welcome too against your will.

CHES. Unwilling men come not without constraint;
But uncompell'd comes Chester to this place,
Telling thee, John, that thou art much to blame,
To chase hence Ely, chancellor to the king;
To set thy footsteps on the cloth of state,
And seat thy body in thy brother's throne.

SAL. Who should succeed the brother but the brother?

CHES. If one were dead, one should succeed the other.

QU. MO. My son is king, my son then ought to reign.

FITZ. One son is king; the state allows not twain.

SAL. The subjects many years the king have miss'd.

CHES. But subjects must not choose what king they list.

QU. MO. Richard hath conquer'd kingdoms in the east.

FITZ. A sign he will not lose this in the west.

SAL. By Salisbury's honour, I will follow John.

CHES. So Chester will, to shun commotion.

QU. MO. Why, John shall be but Richard's deputy.

FITZ. To that Fitzwater gladly doth agree.
And look to't, lady, mind King Richard's love;
As you will answer't, do the king no wrong.

QU. MO. Well-said, old Conscience, you keep still one song.

JOHN. In your contentious humours, noble lords,
Peers and upholders of the English state,
John silent stood, as one that did await
What sentence ye determin'd for my life:
But since you are agreed that I shall bear
The weighty burthen of this kingdom's state,
Till the return of Richard our dread king,
I do accept the charge, and thank ye all,
That think me worthy of so great a place.

ALL. We all confirm you Richard's deputy.

SAL. Now shall I plague proud Chester.

QU. MO. Sit you sure, Fitzwater.

CHES. For peace I yield to wrong.

JOHN. Now, old man, for your daughter.

FITZ. To see wrong rule, my eyes run streams of water.

[A noise within.

Enter COLLIERS, crying, A monster!

COL. A monster! a monster! bring her out, Robin: a monster! a monster!

SAL. Peace, gaping fellow! know'st thou where thou art?

1ST COL. Why, I am in Kent, within a mile of Dover.
'Sblood, where I am! peace, and a gaping fellow!
For all your dagger, wert not for your ging,[193]
I would knock my whipstock on your addle-head.
Come, out with the monster, Robin.

WITHIN. I come, I come. Help me, she scratches!

1ST COL. I'll gee her the lash. Come out, ye bearded witch.

[Bring forth ELY, with a yard in his hand and linen cloth, dressed like a woman.

ELY. Good fellows, let me go! there's gold to drink,
I am a man, though in woman's weeds.
Yonder's Prince John: I pray ye, let me go.

QU. MO. What rude companions have we yonder, Salisbury?

1ST COL. Shall we take his money?

2D COL. No, no; this is the thief that robbed Master Michaels, and came in like a woman in labour, I warrant ye.

SAL. Who have ye here, honest colliers?

2D COL. A monster, a monster! a woman with a beard, a man in a petticoat. A monster, a monster!

SAL. What, my good Lord of Ely, is it you?—Ely is taken, here's the chancellor!

1ST COL. Pray God we be not hanged for this trick.

QU. MO. What, my good lord!

ELY. Ay, ay, ambitious lady.

JOHN. Who? My lord chancellor?

ELY. Ay, you proud usurper.

SAL. What, is your surplice turned to a smock?

ELY. Peace, Salisbury, thou changing weather-cock.

CHES. Alas, my lord! I grieve to see this sight.

ELY. Chester, it will be day for this dark night.

FITZ. Ely, thou wert the foe to Huntington:
Robin, thou knew'st, was my adopted son.
O Ely, thou to him wert too-too cruel!
With him fled hence Matilda, my fair jewel.
For their wrong, Ely, and thy haughty pride,
I help'd Earl John; but now I see thee low,
At thy distress my heart is full of woe.

QU. MO. Needs must I see Fitzwater's overthrow.
John, I affect him not, he loves not thee:
Remove him, John, lest thou removed be.

JOHN. Mother, let me alone; by one and one
I will not leave one that envies our good.
My Lord of Salisbury, give these honest colliers
For taking Ely each a hundred marks.

SAL. Come, fellows; go with me.

COL. Thank ye, [i'] faith. Farewell, monster.

[*Exeunt* SALISBURY, *with* COLLIERS.

JOHN. Sheriff of Kent, take Ely to your charge.
From shrieve to shrieve send him to Nottingham,
Where Warman, by our patent, is high shrieve.
There, as a traitor, let him be close-kept.
And to his trial we will follow straight.

ELY. A traitor, John?

JOHN. Do not expostulate:
You at your trial shall have time to prate.

[*Exeunt cum* ELY.

FITZ. God, for thy pity, what a time is here!

JOHN. Right gracious mother, would yourself and Chester
Would but withdraw you for a little space,
While I confer with my good Lord Fitzwater?

QUEEN. My Lord of Chester, will you walk aside?

CHES. Whither your highness please, thither I will.

[*Exeunt* CHESTER *and* QUEEN.

JOHN. Soldiers, attend the person of our mother.

[*Exeunt* SOLDIERS.

Noble Fitzwater, now we are alone,
What oft I have desir'd I will entreat,
Touching Matilda, fled with Huntington.

FITZ. Of her what would you touch? Touching her flight,
She is fled hence with Robert, her true knight.

JOHN. Robert is outlaw'd, and Matilda free;
Why through his fault should she exiled be?

She is your comfort, your old[194] age's bliss;
Why should your age so great a comfort miss?
She is all England's beauty, all her pride;
In foreign lands why should that beauty bide?
Call her again, Fitzwater, call again
Guiltless Matilda, beauty's sovereign.

FITZ. I grant, Prince John, Matilda was my joy,
And the fair sun that kept old Winter's frost
From griping dead the marrow of my bones;
And she is gone; yet where she is, God wot:
Aged Fitzwater truly guesseth not.
But where she is, there is kind Huntington;
With my fair daughter is my noble son.
If he may never be recall'd again,
To call Matilda back it is in vain.

JOHN. Living with him, she lives in vicious state,
For Huntington is excommunicate;
And till his debts be paid, by Rome's decree
It is agreed absolv'd he cannot be;
And that can never be: so ne'er a[195] wife,
But a loathed[196] adulterous beggar's life,
Must fair Matilda live. This you may amend,
And win Prince John your ever-during friend.

FITZ. As how? as how?

JOHN. Call her from him: bring her to England's court,
Where, like fair Phoebe, she may sit as queen
Over the sacred, honourable maids
That do attend the royal queen, my mother.
There shall she live a prince's Cynthia,
And John will be her true Endymion.

FITZ. By this construction she should be the moon,
And you would be the man within the moon!

JOHN. A pleasant exposition, good Fitzwater:
But if it so fell out that I fell in,
You of my full joys should be chief partaker.

FITZ. John, I defy thee! by my honour's hope,
I will not bear this base indignity!
Take to thy tools! think'st thou a nobleman
Will be a pander to his proper[197] child?
For what intend'st thou else, seeing I know
Earl Chepstow's daughter is thy married wife.
Come, if thou be a right Plantaganet,
Draw and defend thee. O our Lady, help
True English lords from such a tyrant lord!
What, dost thou think I jest? Nay, by the rood,
I'll lose my life, or purge thy lustful blood.

JOHN. What, my old ruffian, lie at your ward?[198]
Have at your froward bosom, old Fitzwater.

[*Fight: JOHN falls.*]

Enter QUEEN, CHESTER, SALISBURY, *hastily.*

FITZ. O, that thou wert not royal Richard's brother,
Thou shouldst here die in presence of thy mother.

[*JOHN rises: all compass* FITZWATER; FITZWATER *chafes.*
What, is he up? Nay, lords, then give us leave.

CHES. What means this rage, Fitzwater?

QUEEN. Lay hands upon the Bedlam, trait'rous wretch!

JOHN. Nay, hale him hence! and hear you, old Fitzwater:
See that you stay not five days in the realm.
For if you do, you die remediless.

FITZ. Speak, lords: do you confirm what he hath said?

ALL. He is our prince, and he must be obey'd.

FITZ. Hearken, Earl John! but one word will I say.

JOHN. I will not hear thee; neither will I stay. Thou know'st thy time. [*Exit* JOHN.]

FITZ. Will not your highness hear?

QUEEN. No: thy Matilda robb'd me of my dear. [*Exit* QUEEN.]

FITZ. I aided thee in battle, Salisbury.

SAL. Prince John is mov'd; I dare not stay with thee.
[*Exit* SALISBURY.[199]]

FITZ. 'Gainst thee and Ely, Chester, was I foe,
And dost thou stay to aggravate my woe?

CHES. No, good Fitzwater; Chester doth lament
Thy wrong, thy sudden banishment.
Whence grew the quarrel 'twixt the prince and thee?

FITZ. Chester, the devil tempted old Fitzwater
To be a pander to his only daughter;
And my great heart, impatient, forc'd my hand,
In my true honour's right to challenge him.
Alas the while! wrong will not be reprov'd.

CHES. Farewell, Fitzwater: wheresoe'er thou be, By letters, I beseech thee, send to me. [*Exit* CHESTER.]

FITZ. Chester, I will, I will.
Heavens turn to good this woe, this wrong, this ill.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Enter SCATHLOCK and SCARLET, winding their horns, at several doors. To them enter ROBIN HOOD, MATILDA, all in green, SCATHLOCK'S MOTHER, MUCH, LITTLE JOHN: all the men with bows and arrows.

ROB. H. Widow, I wish thee homeward now to wend,
Lest Warman's malice work thee any wrong.

WID. Master, I will; and mickle good attend
On thee, thy love, and all these yeomen strong.

MAT. Forget not, widow, what you promis'd me.

MUCH. O, ay, mistress; for God's sake let's have Jenny.

WID. You shall have Jenny sent you with all speed.
Sons, farewell, and, by your mother's reed,
Love well your master: blessing ever fall
On him, your mistress, and these yeomen tall.

[*Exit.*]

MUCH. God be with you, mother: have much mind, I pray, on Much your son, and your daughter Jenny.

ROB. H. Wind once more, jolly huntsmen, all your horns;
Whose shrill sound, with the echoing wood's assist,
Shall ring a sad knell for the fearful deer,
Before our feathered shafts, death's winged darts,
Bring sudden summons for their fatal ends.

SCAR. It's full seven years since we were outlaw'd first,
And wealthy Sherwood was our heritage:
For all those years we reigned uncontroll'd,
From Barnsdale shrogs to Nottingham's red cliffs;
At Blithe and Tickhill were we welcome guests.
Good George-a-Greene at Bradford was our friend,
And wanton Wakefield's Pinner[200] lov'd us well.
At Barnsley dwells a potter tough and strong,
That never brook'd we brethren should have wrong.
The nuns of Farnsfield (pretty nuns they be)
Gave napkins, shirts, and bands to him and me.
Bateman of Kendal gave us Kendal green,
And Sharpe of Leeds sharp arrows for us made:
At Rotheram dwelt our bowyer, God him bless;
Jackson he hight, his bows did never miss.
This for our good—our scathe let Scathlock tell,
In merry Mansfield how it once befell.

SCATH. In merry Mansfield, on a wrestling day,
Prizes there were, and yeomen came to play;
My brother Scarlet and myself were twain.
Many resisted, but it was in vain,
For of them all we won the mastery,
And the gilt wreaths were given to him and me.
There by Sir Doncaster of Hothersfield
We were bewray'd, beset, and forc'd to yield,
And so borne bound from thence to Nottingham,
Where we lay doom'd to death till Warman came.

ROB. H. Of that enough. What cheer, my dearest love?

MUCH. O, good cheer anon, sir; she shall have venison her bellyful.

MAT. Matilda is as joyful of thy good
As joy can make her: how fares Robin Hood?

ROB. H. Well, my Matilda, and if thou agree,
Nothing but mirth shall wait on thee and me.

MAT. O God, how full of perfect mirth were I
To see thy grief turn'd to true jollity!

ROB. H. Give me thy hand; now God's curse on me light,
If I forsake not grief, in griefs despite.
Much, make a cry, and, yeomen, stand ye round:
I charge ye never more let woful sound
Be heard among ye; but whatever fall,
Laugh grief to scorn, and so make sorrow small,
Much, make a cry, and loudly: Little John.

MUCH. O God, O God! help, help, help! I am undone, I am undone!

LIT. JOHN. Why, how now, Much? Peace, peace, you roaring slave.

MUCH. My master bad me cry, and I will cry till he bid me leave.
Help, help, help! Ay, marry will I.

ROB. H. Peace, Much. Read on the articles, good John.

LIT. JOHN. First, no man must presume to call our master
By name of Earl, Lord, Baron, Knight, or Squire;
But simply by the name of Robin Hood.

ROB. H. Say, yeomen, to this order will ye yield?

ALL. We yield to serve our master, Robin Hood.

LIT. JOHN. Next, 'tis agreed, if thereto she agree,
That fair Matilda henceforth change her name,
And while it is the chance of Robin Hood
To live in Sherwood a poor outlaw's life,
She by Maid Marian's name be only call'd.

MAT. I am contented; read on, Little John:
Henceforth let me be nam'd Maid Marian.

LIT. JOHN. Thirdly, no yeoman, following Robin Hood
In Sherwood, shall [ab]use widow, wife, or maid;
But by true labour lustful thoughts expel.

ROB. H. How like ye this?

ALL. Master, we like it well.

MUCH. But I cry no to it. What shall I do with Jenny then?

SCAR. Peace, Much: go forward with the orders, fellow John.

LIT. JOHN. Fourthly, no passenger with whom ye meet
Shall ye let pass, till he with Robin feast;
Except a post, a carrier, or such folk
As use with food to serve the market towns.

ALL. An order which we gladly will observe.

LIT. JOHN. Fifthly, you never shall the poor man wrong,
Nor spare a priest, a usurer, or a clerk.

MUCH. Nor a fair wench, meet we her in the dark!

LIT. JOHN. Lastly, you shall defend with all your power
Maids, widows, orphans, and distressed men.

ALL. All these we vow to keep as we are men.

ROB. H. Then wend ye to the greenwood merrily,
And let the light roes bootless from ye run.
Marian and I, as sovereigns of your toils,
Will wait within our bower your bent bows' spoils.

MUCH. I will among them, master.

[Exeunt winding their horns.]

ROB. H. Marian, thou seest, though courtly pleasures want,
Yet country sport in Sherwood is not scant:
For the soul-ravishing, delicious sound
Of instrumental music we have found
The winged quiristers with divers notes
Sent from their quaint recording[201] pretty throats,
On every branch that compasseth our bow'r,
Without command contenting us each hour.
For arras hangings and rich tapestry
We have sweet nature's best embroidery.
For thy steel glass, wherein thou wont'st to look,
Thy crystal eyes gaze in a crystal brook.
At court a flower or two did deck thy head,
Now with whole garlands is it circled.
For what in wealth we want, we have in flowers,
And what we lose in halls, we find in bowers.

MAR. Marian hath all, sweet Robert, having thee,
And guesses thee as rich in having me.

ROB. H. I am indeed;
For, having thee, what comfort can I need?

MAR. Go in, go in.
To part such true love, Robin, it were sin.

[Exeunt.]

Enter PRIOR, SIR DONCASTER, FRIAR TUCK.

PRIOR. To take his body, by the blessed rood,
'Twould do me more than any other good.

DON. O, 'tis an unthrift, still the churchmen's foe;
An ill-end will betide him, that I know.
'Twas he that urged the king to 'sess the clergy,
When to the holy land he took his journey;
And he it is that rescued those two thieves,
Scarlet and Scathlock, that so many griefs
To churchmen did: and now, they say,
He keeps in Sherwood, and himself doth play
The lawless reaver:[202] hear you, my Lord Prior,
He must be taken, or it will be wrong.

TUCK. Ay, ay, soon said;
But ere he be, many will lie dead,
Except it be by sleight.

DON. Ay, there, there, Friar.

TUCK. Give me, my lord, your execution.
The widow Scarlet's daughter, lovely Jenny,
Loves, and is belov'd of Much, the miller's son.
If I can get the girl to go with me,
Disguis'd in habit like a pedlar's mort,[203]
I'll serve this execution, on my life,
And single out a time alone to take
Robin, that often careless walks alone.
Why, answer not; remember what I said:
Yonder, I see, comes Jenny, that fair maid.
If we agree, then back me soon with aid.

Enter JENNY *with a fardel.*

PRIOR. Tuck, if thou do it—

DON. Pray, you do not talk:
As we were strangers let us careless walk.

JEN. Now to the green wood wend I, God me speed.

TUCK. Amen, fair maid, and send thee, in thy need,
Much, that is born to do thee much good deed.

JEN. Are you there, Friar? nay then, i'faith, we have it.

TUCK. What, wench? my love?

JEN. Ay, gi't me when I crave it.

TUCK. Unask'd I offer; prythee, sweet girl, take it.

JEN. Gifts stink with proffer: foh! Friar, I forsake it.

TUCK. I will be kind.

JEN. Will not your kindness kill her?

TUCK. With love?

JEN. You cog.

TUCK. Tut, girl, I am no miller:
Hear in your ear.

DON. The Friar courts her. [*Standing behind.*

PRIOR. Tush, let them alone;
He is our Lady's Chaplain, but serves Joan.

DON. Then, from the Friar's fault, perchance, it may be
The proverb grew, Joan's taken for my lady.

PRIOR. Peace, good Sir Doncaster, list to the end.

JEN. But mean ye faith and troth? shall I go wi' ye?

TUCK. Upon my faith, I do intend good faith.

JEN. And shall I have the pins and laces too,
If I bear a pedlar's pack with you?

TUCK. As I am holy Friar, Jenny, thou shalt.

JEN. Well, there's my hand; see, Friar, you do not halt.

TUCK. Go but before into the miry mead,
And keep the path that doth to Farnsfield lead;
I'll into Southwell and buy all the knacks,
That shall fit both of us for pedlar's packs.

JEN. Who be they two that yonder walk, I pray?

TUCK. Jenny, I know not: be they what they may,
Scare not for them; prythee, do not stay,
But make some speed, that we were gone away.

JEN. Well, Friar, I trust you that we go to Sherwood.

TUCK. Ay, by my beads, and unto Robin Hood.

JEN. Make speed, good Friar.

TUCK. Jenny, do not fear. [*Exit JENNY.*
Lord Prior, now you hear,
As much as I. Get me two pedlar's packs,
Points, laces, looking-glasses, pins and knacks;
And let Sir Doncaster with some wight lads
Follow us close; and, ere these forty hours,
Upon my life Earl Robert shall be ours.

PRIOR. Thou shalt have anything, my dearest Friar;
And in amends I'll make thee my sub-prior.
Come, good Sir Doncaster, and if we thrive,
We'll frolic with the nuns of Leeds, believe.[204]

[*Exeunt.*

Enter FITZWATER, like an old man.

FITZ. Well did he write, and mickle did he know,
That said this world's felicity was woe,
Which greater states can hardly undergo.
Whilom Fitzwater, in fair England's court,
Possess'd felicity and happy state,
And in his hall blithe fortune kept her sport,
Which glee one hour of woe did ruinate.
Fitzwater once had castles, towns, and towers,
Fair gardens, orchards, and delightful bowers;
But now nor garden, orchard, town, nor tower,

Hath poor Fitzwater left within his power.
Only wide walks are left me in the world,
Which these stiff limbs will hardly let me tread;
And when I sleep, heaven's glorious canopy
Me and my mossy couch doth overspread.
Of this injurious John cannot bereave me;
The air and earth he (while I live) must leave me;
But from the English air and earth, poor man,
His tyranny hath ruthless thee exiled.
Yet e'er I leave it, I'll do what I can
To see Matilda, my fair luckless child.

[*Curtains open*.—ROBIN HOOD *sleeps on a green bank,*
and MARIAN *strewing flowers on him.*

And in good time, see where my comfort stands,
And by her lies dejected Huntington.
Look how my flow'r holds flowers in her hands,
And flings those sweets upon my sleeping son.
I'll close mine eyes as if I wanted sight,
That I may see the end of their delight.
[*Goes knocking with his staff.*

MAR. What aged man art thou? or by what chance
Cam'st thou thus far into the wayless wood?

FITZ. Widow or wife, or maiden if thou be,
Lend me thy hand; thou seest I cannot see:
Blessing betide thee, little feel'st thou want;
With me, good child, food is both hard and scant.
These smooth even veins assure me he is kind,
Whate'er he be, my girl, that thee doth find.
I, poor and old, am reft of all earth's good,
And desperately am crept into this wood
To seek the poor man's patron, Robin Hood.

MAR. And thou art welcome: welcome, aged man,
Ay, ten times welcome to Maid Marian.
Sit down, old father, sit, and call me daughter.
O God, how like he looks to old Fitzwater!
[*Runs in.*

FITZ. Is my Matilda call'd Maid Marian?
I wonder why her name is changed thus.

[MARIAN *brings wine, meat.*

MAR. Here's wine to cheer thy heart; drink, aged man:
There's ven'son and a knife, here's manchet[205] fine:
Drink, good old man, I pray you, drink more wine.
My Robin stirs; I must sing him asleep.

ROB. H. Nay, you have wak'd me, Marian, with your talk.
What man is that's come within our walk?

MAR. An aged man, a silly, sightless man,
Near pin'd with hunger: see, how fast he eats.

ROB. H. Much good may't do him: never is good meat
Ill-spent on such a stomach. Father, profane[206]
To Robin Hood thou art a welcome man.

FITZ. I thank you, master. Are you Robin Hood?

ROB. H. Father, I am.

FITZ. God give your soul much good
For this good meat Maid Marian hath given me.

But hear me, master; can you tell me news,
Where fair Matilda is, Fitzwater's daughter?

ROB. H. Why, here she is; this Marian is she.

FITZ. Why did she change her name?

ROB. H. What's that to thee?

FITZ. Yes, I could weep for grief that it is so,
But that my tears are all dried up with woe.

ROB. H. Why, she is called Maid Marian, honest friend,
Because she lives a spotless maiden life;
And shall, till Robin's outlaw life have end,
That he may lawfully take her to wife;
Which, if King Richard come, will not be long,
For in his hand is power to right our wrong.

FITZ. If it be thus, I joy in her name's change:
So pure love in these times is very strange.

MAR. Robin, I think it is my aged father. [*Aside.*

ROB. H. Tell me, old man, tell me in courtesy,
Are you no other than you seem to be?

FITZ. I am a wretched aged man, you see,
If you will do me aught for charity:
Further than this, sweet, do not question me.

ROB. H. You shall have your desire. But what be these?

Enter FRIAR TUCK *and* JENNY_, like pedlars, singing.

What lack ye? what lack ye?
What is it you will buy?
Any points, pins or laces,
Any laces, points or pins?
Fine gloves, fine glasses,
Any busks or masks?
Or any other pretty things?
Come, cheap for love, or buy for money.
Any coney, coney-skins?
For laces, points or pins?
Fair maids, come choose or buy.
I have pretty poking-sticks,[207]
And many other tricks,
Come, choose for love, or buy for money_.

ROB. H. Pedlar, I prythee set thy pack down here:
Marian shall buy, if thou be not too dear.

TUCK. Jenny, unto thy mistress show thy pack.
Master, for you I have a pretty knack,
From far I brought, please you see to the same.

[*Exeunt* ROBIN HOOD, MARIAN, *and* FITZWATER.

Enter SIR DONCASTER *and others, weaponed.*[208]

FRIAR. Sir Doncaster, are not we pedlar-like?

DON. Yes, passing fit; and yonder is the bower.
I doubt not we shall have him in our power.

FRIAR. You and your company were best stand close.

DON. What shall the watchword be to bring us forth?

FRIAR. Take it, I pray, though it be much more worth:
When I speak that aloud, be sure I serve
The execution presently on him.

DON. Friar, look to't.

FRIAR. Now, Jenny, to your song. [*Sings.*

Enter MARIAN, ROBIN.

MAR. Pedlar, what pretty toys have you to sell?

FRIAR. Jenny, unto your mistress show your ware.

MAR. Come in, good woman. [*Exeunt.*

FRIAR. Master, look here,
And God give ear,
So mote I the[209],
To her and me,
If ever we,
Robin, to thee,
That art so free.
Mean treachery.

ROB. H. On, pedlar, to thy pack;
If thou love me, my love thou shalt not lack.

FRIAR. Master, in brief,
There is a thief,
That seeks your grief.
God send relief
To you in need.
For a foul deed,
If not with speed
You take good heed,
There is decreed.
In yonder brake
There lies a snake,
That means to take
Out of this wood
The yeoman good,
Call'd Robin Hood.

ROB. H. Pedlar, I prythee be more plain.
What brake? what snake? what trap? what train?

FRIAR. Robin, I am a holy friar,
Sent by the Prior,
Who did me hire,
For to conspire
Thy endless woe
And overthrow:
But thou shalt know,
I am the man
Whom Little John
From Nottingham
Desir'd to be
A clerk to thee;
For he to me
Said thou wert free,
And I did see
Thy honesty,
From gallow-tree
When thou didst free
Scathlock and Scarlet certainly[210].

ROB. H. Why, then, it seems that thou art Friar Tuck.

FRIAR. Master, I am.

ROB. H. I pray thee, Friar, say,
What treachery is meant to me this day?

FRIAR. First wind your horn; then draw your sword.

[ROBIN HOOD winds his horn.]

For I have given a friar's word,
To take your body prisoner,
And yield you to Sir Doncaster,
The envious priest of Hothersfield,
Whose power your bushy wood doth shield;
But I will die ere you shall yield.

Enter LITTLE JOHN, &c.

And sith your yeomen do appear,
I'll give the watchword without fear.
Take it, I pray thee, though it be more worth.

Rush in SIR DONCASTER *with his crew.*

DON. Smite down! lay hold on outlaw'd Huntington!

LIT. JOHN. Soft, hot-spurr'd priest, 'tis not so quickly done.

DON. Now, out alas! the friar and the maid
Have to false thieves Sir Doncaster betray'd.

[Exeunt omnes.][211]

ACT IV., SCENE 1.

Enter JOHN *crowned*, QUEEN ELINOR, CHESTER, SALISBURY,
LORD PRIOR. *Sit down all.* WARMAN *stands.*

JOHN. As God's vicegerent, John ascends this throne,
His head impal'd with England's diadem,[212]
And in his hand the awful rod of rule,
Giving the humble place of excellence,
And to the low earth casting down the proud.

QUEEN. Such upright rule is in each realm allow'd.

JOHN. Chester, you once were Ely's open friend,
And yet are doubtful whether he deserve
A public trial for his private wrongs.

CHES. I still am doubtful whether it be fit
To punish private faults with public shame
In such a person as Lord Ely is.

PRIOR. Yes, honourable Chester, more it fits
To make apparent sins of mighty men,
And on their persons sharply to correct
A little fault, a very small defect,
Than on the poor to practise chastisement:
For if a poor man die, or suffer shame,
Only the poor and vile respect the same;
But if the mighty fall, fear then besets
The proud heart of the mighty ones, his mates:
They think the world is garnished with nets,
And traps ordained to entrap their states;

Which fear in them begets a fear of ill,
And makes them good, contrary to their will.

JOHN. Your lordship hath said right. Lord Salisbury,
Is not your mind as ours concerning Ely?

SAL. I judge him worthy of reproof and shame.

JOHN. Warman, bring forth your prisoner, Ely, the chancellor;
And with him bring the seal that he detains.
Warman, why goest thou not?

WAR. Be good to me, my lord.

JOHN. What hast thou done?

WAR. Speak for me, my Lord Prior:
All my good lords entreat his grace for me.
Ely, my lord—

JOHN. Why, where is Ely, Warman?

WAR. Fled to-day: this misty morning he is fled away.

JOHN. O Judas! whom nor friend nor foe may trust,
Think'st thou with tears and plaints to answer this?
Do I not know thy heart? do I not know
That bribes have purchas'd Ely this escape?
Never make antic faces, never bend
With feigned humblesse thy still crouching knee,
But with fix'd eyes unto thy doom attend.
Villain! I'll plague thee for abusing me.
Go hence; and henceforth never set thy foot
In house or field thou didst this day possess.
Mark what I say: advise thee to look to't,
Or else, be sure, thou diest remediless.
Nor from those houses see that thou receive
So much as shall sustain thee for an hour,
But as thou art, go where thou canst; get friends,
And he that feeds thee be mine enemy.

WAR. O my good lord!

JOHN. Thou thy good lord betrayedst,
And all the world for money thou wilt sell.

WAR. What says the queen?

QUEEN. Why, thus I say:
Betray thy master, thou wilt all betray.

WAR. My Lords of Chester and of Salisbury!

BOTH. Speak not to us: all traitors we defy.

WAR. Good my Lord Prior!

PRIOR. Alas! what can I do?

WAR. Then I defy the world! yet I desire
Your grace would read this supplication.

[JOHN *reads*.

JOHN. I thought as much: but, Warman, dost thou think
There is one moving line to mercy here?
I tell thee, no; therefore away, away!
A shameful death follows thy longer stay.

WAR. O poor, poor man!

Of miserable miserablest wretch I am. [*Exit.*]

JOHN. Confusion be thy guide! a baser slave
Earth cannot bear: plagues follow him, I crave.
Can any tell me if my Lord of York
Be able to sit up?

QUEEN. The Archbishop's grace
Was reasonable well even now, good son.

SAL. And he desir'd me that I should desire
Your majesty to send unto his grace,
If any matter did import his presence.

JOHN. We will ourselves step in and visit him.
Mother and my good lords, will you attend us?

PRIOR. I gladly will attend your majesty.

JOHN. Now, good lord, help us! When I said good lords,
I meant not you, Lord Prior: lord I know you are,
But good, God knows, you never mean to be.

[*Exeunt* JOHN, QUEEN, CHESTER, SALISBURY.]

PRIOR. John is incens'd; and very much, I doubt,
That villain Warman hath accused me
About the 'scape of Ely. Well, suppose he have,
What's that to me? I am a clergyman,
And all his power, if he all extend,
Cannot prevail against my holy order.
But the Archbishop's grace is now his friend,
And may, perchance, attempt to do me ill.

Enter a SERVING-MAN.

What news with you, sir?

SERV.-MAN. Even heavy news, my lord; for the lightning's[213] fire,
Falling in manner of a firedrake[214]
Upon a barn of yours, hath burnt six barns,
And not a strike of corn reserv'd from dust.
No hand could save it, yet ten thousand hands
Labour'd their best, though none for love of you;
For every tongue with bitter cursing bann'd
Your lordship, as the viper of the land.

PRIOR. What meant the villains?

SERV.-MAN. Thus and thus they cried:
Upon this churl, this hoarder-up of corn,
This spoiler of the Earl of Huntington,
This lust-defiled, merciless, false prior,
Heaven raineth vengeance down in shape of fire.
Old wives, that scarce could with their crutches creep,
And little babes, that newly learn'd to speak,
Men masterless, that thorough want did weep,
All in one voice, with a confused cry,
In execrations bann'd you bitterly:
Plague follow plague, they cry: he hath undone
The good Lord Robert, Earl of Huntington.
And then—

PRIOR.[215] What then, thou villain? Get thee from my sight!
They that wish plagues, plagues will upon them light.

Enter another SERVANT.

PRIOR. What are your tidings?

SERV. The convent of St Mary's are agreed,
And have elected in your lordship's place
Old father Jerome, who is stall'd Lord Prior
By the new Archbishop.

PRIOR. Of York, thou mean'st?
A vengeance on him! he is my hope's foe.

Enter a HERALD.

HER. Gilbert de Hood, late Prior of Saint Mary's,
Our sovereign John commandeth thee by me,
That presently thou leave this blessed land,
Defiled with the burthen of thy sin.
All thy goods temporal and spiritual,
With free consent of Hubert Lord [of] York,
Primate of England and thy ordinary,
He hath suspended, and vowed by heaven
To hang thee up, if thou depart not hence
Without delaying or more question.
And that he hath good reason for the same,
He sends this writing 'firm'd with Warman's hand,
And comes himself; whose presence if thou stay,
I fear this sun will see thy dying day.

PRIOR. O, Warman hath betray'd me! woe is me!

Enter JOHN, QUEEN, CHESTER, SALISBURY.

JOHN. Hence with that Prior! sirrah, do not speak:
My eyes are full of wrath, my heart of wreak.[216]
Let Leicester come: his haught heart, I am sure,
Will check the kingly course we undertake.

[Exeunt cum PRIOR.

Enter LEICESTER, drum and ancient.

JOHN. Welcome from war, thrice noble Earl of Leicester,
Unto our court: welcome, most valiant earl.

LEI. Your court in England, and King Richard gone!
A king in England, and the king from home!
This sight and salutations are so strange,
That what I should I know not how to speak.

JOHN. What would you say? speak boldly, we entreat.

LEI. It is not fear, but wonder, bars my speech.
I muse to see a mother and a queen,
Two peers so great as Salisbury and Chester,
Sit and support proud usurpation,
And see King Richard's crown worn by Earl John.

QUEEN. He sits as viceroy and a[s] substitute.

CHES. He must and shall resign, when Richard comes.

SAL. Chester, he will, without your must and shall.

LEI. Whether he will or no, he shall resign.

JOHN. You know your own will, Leicester, but not mine.

LEI. Tell me among ye, where is reverend Ely,
Left by our dread king as his deputy?

JOHN. Banish'd he is, as proud usurpers should.

LEI. Pride then, belike, was enemy to pride:

Ambition in yourself his state envied.
Where is Fitzwater, that old honour'd lord?

JOHN. Dishonour'd and exil'd, as Ely is.

LEI. Exil'd he may be, but dishonour'd never!
He was a fearless soldier and a virtuous scholar.
But where is Huntington, that noble youth?

CHES. Undone by riot.

LEI. Ah! the greater ruth.

JOHN. Leicester, you question more than doth become you.
On to the purpose, why you come to us.

LEI. I come to Ely and to all the state,
Sent by the king, who three times sent before
To have his ransom brought to Austria:
And if you be elected deputy,
Do as you ought, and send the ransom-money.

JOHN. Leicester, you see I am no deputy;
And Richard's ransom if you do require,
Thus we make answer: Richard is a king,
In Cyprus, Acon, Acre, and rich Palestine.
To get those kingdoms England lent him men,
And many a million of her substance spent,
The very entrails of her womb were rent:
No plough but paid a share, no needy hand,
But from his poor estate of penury
Unto his voyage offer'd more than mites,
And more, poor souls, than they had might to spare.
Yet were they joyful; for still flying news—
And lying I perceive them now to be—
Came of King Richard's glorious victories,
His conquest of the Soldan,[217] and such tales
As blew them up with hope, when he return'd,
He would have scatter'd gold about the streets.

LEI. Do princes fight for gold? O leaden thought!
Your father knew that honour was the aim
Kings level at. By sweet St John, I swear,
You urge me so, that I cannot forbear.
What do you tell of money lent the king,
When first he went into this holy war,
As if he had extorted from the poor,
When you, the queen, and all that hear me speak,
Know with what zeal the people gave their goods.
Old wives took silver buckles from their belts;
Young maids the gilt pins that tuck'd up their trains;
Children their pretty whistles from their necks,
And every man what he did most esteem,
Crying to soldiers, "Wear these gifts of ours."
This proves that Richard had no need to wrong,
Or force the people, that with willing hearts
Gave more than was desir'd. And where you say,
You [do] guess Richard's victories but lies,
I swear he wan rich Cyprus with his sword;
And thence, more glorious than the guide of Greece,
That brought so huge a fleet to Tenedos,
He sail'd along the Mediterran sea,
Where on a sunbright morning he did meet
The warlike Soldan's[218] well-prepared fleet.
O, still, methinks, I see King Richard stand
In his gilt armour stain'd with Pagan's blood,
Upon a galley's prow, like war's fierce god,

And on his crest a crucifix of gold!
O, that day's honour can be never told!
Six times six several brigantines he boarded,
And in the greedy waves flung wounded Turks;
And three times thrice the winged galley's banks
(Wherein the Soldan's son was admiral)
In his own person royal Richard smooth'd,
And left no heathen hand to be upheav'd
Against the Christian soldiers.

JOHN. Leicester, so?
Did he all this?

LEI. Ay, by God he did,
And more than this: nay, jest [not] at it, John;
I swear he did, by Leicester's faith he did,
And made the green sea red with Pagan blood,
Leading to Joppa glorious victory,
And following fear, that fled unto the foe.

JOHN. All this he did! perchance all this was so!

LEI. Holy God, help me! soldiers, come away!
This carpet-knight[219] sits carping at our scars,
And jests at those most glorious, well-fought wars.

JOHN. Leicester, you are too hot: stay; go not yet.
Methinks, if Richard won those victories,
The wealthy kingdoms he hath conquered
May, better than poor England, pay his ransom.
He left this realm, as a young orphan-maid,
To Ely, the step-father of this state,
That stripp'd the virgin to her very skin;
And, Leicester, had not John more careful been
Than Richard,
At this hour England had not England been.
Therefore, good warlike lord, take this in brief;
We wish King Richard well, but can send no relief.

LEI. O, let not my heart break with inward grief!

JOHN. Yes, let it, Leicester: it is not amiss,
That twenty such hearts break as your heart is.

LEI. Are you a mother? were you England's queen?
Were Henry, Richard, Geoffery, your sons?
All sons but Richard—sun of all those sons
And can you let this little meteor,
This *ignis fatuus*, this same wandering fire,
This goblin of the night, this brand, this spark,
Seem through a lanthorn greater than he is?
By heaven, you do not well: by earth, you do not?
Chester, nor you, nor you, Earl Salisbury;
Ye do not, no, ye do not what ye should.

QUEEN. Were this bear loose, how he would tear our maws.

CHES. Pale death and vengeance dwell within his jaws.

SAL. But we can muzzle him, and bind his paws:
If King John say we shall, we will indeed.

JOHN. Do, if you can.

LEI. It's well thou hast some fear.
No, curs! ye have no teeth to bait this bear.[220]
I will not bid mine ensign-bearer wave
My tattered colours in this worthless air,

Which your vile breaths vilely contaminate.
Bearer,[221] thou'st been my ancient-bearer long,
And borne up Leicester's bear in foreign lands;
Yet now resign these colours to my hands,
For I am full of grief and full of rage.
John, look upon me: thus did Richard take
The coward Austria's colours in his hand,
And thus he cast them under Acon walls,
And thus he trod them underneath his feet.
Rich colours, how I wrong ye by this wrong!
But I will right ye. Bear[er], take them again,
And keep them ever, ever them maintain:
We shall have use for them, I hope, ere long.

JOHN. Dar'st thou attempt this proudly in our sight?

LEI. What is't a subject dares, that I dare not?

SAL. Dare subjects dare, their sovereign being by?

LEI. O God, that my true sovereign were nigh!

QUEEN. Leicester, he is.

LEI. Madam, by God, you lie.

CHES. Unmanner'd man.

LEI. A plague of reverence,
Where no regard is had of excellence. [*Sound drum.*
But you will quite[222] me now: I hear your drums:
Your principality hath stirr'd up men,
And now you think to muzzle up this bear.
Still they come nearer, but are not the near.

JOHN. What drums are these?

SAL. I think, some friends of yours
Prepare a power to resist this wrong.

LEI. Let them prepare, for Leicester is prepar'd,
And thus he wooes his willing men to fight.
Soldiers,[223] ye see King Richard's open wrong;
Richard, that led ye to the glorious East,
And made ye tread upon the blessed land,
Where he, that brought all Christians blessedness,
Was born, lived, wrought his miracles, and died,
From death arose, and then to heaven ascended;
Whose true religious faith ye have defended.
Ye fought, and Richard taught ye how to fight
Against profane men, following Mahomet;
But, if ye note, they did their kings their right:
These more than heathen sacrilegious men,
Professing Christ, banish Christ's champion hence,
Their lawful lord, their home-born sovereign,
With petty quarrels and with slight pretence.

Enter RICHMOND, Soldiers.

O, let me be as short as time is short,
For the arm'd foe is now within our sight.
Remember how 'gainst ten one man did fight,
So hundreds against thousands have borne head!
You are the men that ever conquered:
If multitudes oppress ye that ye die,
Let's sell our lives, and leave them valiantly.
Courage! upon them! till we cannot stand.

JOHN. Richmond is yonder.

QUEEN. Ay, and, son, I think,
The king is not far off.

CHES. Now heaven forbend!

LEI. Why smite ye not, but stand thus cowardly?

RICH. If Richmond hurt good Leicester, let him die.

LEI. Richmond! O, pardon mine offending eye,
That took thee for a foe: welcome, dear friend!
Where is my sovereign Richard? Thou and he
Were both in Austria. Richmond, comfort me,
And tell me where he is, and how he fares.
O, for his ransom, many thousand cares
Have me afflicted.

RICH. Leicester, he is come to London,
And will himself to faithless Austria,
Like a true king, his promis'd ransom bear.

LEI. At London, say'st thou, Richmond? is he there?
Farewell: I will not stay to tell my wrongs
To these pale-colour'd, heartless, guilty lords.
Richmond, you shall go with me: do not stay,
And I will tell you wonders by the way.

RICH. The king did doubt you had some injury,
And therefore sent this power to rescue ye.

LEI. I thank his grace. Madam, adieu, adieu.
I'll to your son, and leave your shade with you.

[*Exeunt.*]

JOHN. Hark how he mocks me, calling me your shade.
Chester and Salisbury, shall we gather power,
And keep what we have got?

CHES. And in an hour
Be taken, judg'd, and 'headed with disgrace.
Salisbury, what say you?

SAL. My lord, I bid your excellence adieu.
I to King Richard will submit my knee:
I have good hope his grace will pardon me.

CHES. And, Salisbury, I'll go along with thee.
Farewell, Queen Mother; fare you well, Lord John.

JOHN. Mother, stay you.

QUEEN. Not I, son, by Saint Anne.

JOHN. Will you not stay?

QUEEN. Go with me: I will do the best I may
To beg my son's forgiveness of my son. [*Exit.*]

JOHN. Go by yourself. By heaven, 'twas 'long of you
I rose to fall so soon. Leicester and Richmond's crew,
They come to take me: now too late I rue
My proud attempt. Like falling Phaeton,
I perish from my guiding of the sun.

Enter again LEICESTER *and* RICHMOND.[224]

LEI. I will go back, i' faith, once more and see,

Whether this mock king and the Mother Queen—
And who—Here's neither queen nor lord!
What, king of crickets, is there none but you?
Come off, [this crown: this sceptre, off!][225]
This crown, this sceptre are King Richard's right:
Bear thou them, Richmond, thou art his true knight.
You would not send his ransom, gentle John;
He's come to fetch it now. Come, wily fox,
Now you are stripp'd out of the lion's case,
What, dare you look the lion in the face?
The English lion, that in Austria
With his strong hand pull'd out a lion's heart.
Good Richmond, tell it me; for God's sake, do:
O, it does me good to hear his glories told.

RICH. Leicester, I saw King Richard with his fist
Strike dead the son of Austrian Leopold,
And then I saw him, by the duke's command,
Compass'd and taken by a troop of men,
Who led King Richard to a lion's den.
Opening the door, and in a paved court,
The cowards left King Richard weaponless:
Anon comes forth the fire-eyed dreadful beast,
And with a heart-amazing voice he roar'd,
Opening (like hell) his iron-toothed jaws,
And stretching out his fierce death-threatening paws.
I tell thee, Leicester, and I smile thereat
(Though then, God knows, I had no power to smile),
I stood by treacherous Austria all the while,
Who in a gallery with iron grates
Stay'd to behold King Richard made a prey.

LEI. What was't thou smiledst at in Austria?

RICH. Leicester, he shook—so help me God, he shook—
With very terror at the lion's look.

LEI. Ah, coward! but go on, what Richard did.

RICH. Richard about his right hand wound a scarf
(God quite her for it) given him by a maid:
With endless good may that good deed be paid!
And thrust that arm down the devouring throat
Of the fierce lion, and withdrawing it,
Drew out the strong heart of the monstrous beast,
And left the senseless body on the ground.

LEI. O royal Richard: Richmond, look on John:
Does he not quake in hearing this discourse?
Come, we will leave him, Richmond: let us go.
John, make suit
For grace, that is your [only] means, you know.

[*Exeunt.*]

JOHN. A mischief on that Leicester! is he gone?
'Twere best go too, lest in some mad fit
He turn again, and lead me prisoner.
Southward I dare not fly: fain, fain I would
To Scotland bend my course; but all the woods
Are full of outlaws, that in Kendal green
Follow the outlaw'd Earl of Huntington.
Well, I will clothe myself in such a suit,
And by that means as well 'scape all pursuit,
As pass the danger-threatening Huntington;
For, having many outlaws, they'll think me
By my attire one of their mates to be.

[*Exit.*

SCENE 2.

Enter SCARLET, LITTLE JOHN, *and* FRIAR TUCK.

FRIAR. Scarlet and John, so God me save,
No mind unto my beads I have:
I think it be a luckless day,
For I can neither sing nor say;
Nor have I any power to look
On portace or on matin book.

SCAR. What is the reason, tell us, Friar?

FRIAR. And would ye have me be no liar?

LIT. JOHN. No. God defend that you should lie:
A churchman be a liar?—fie!

FRIAR. Then, by this hallow'd crucifix,
The holy water and the pix,
It greatly at my stomach sticks,
That all this day we had no gues', [226]
And have of meat so many a mess.

MUCH *brings out* ELY, *like a countryman with a basket.*

MUCH. Well, and ye be but a market, ye are but a market-man.

ELY. I am sure, sir, I do you no hurt, do I?

SCAR. We shall have company, no doubt:
My fellow Much hath found one out.

FRIAR. A fox, a fox! as I am friar,
Much is well worthy of good hire.

LIT. JOHN. Say, Friar, soothly, know'st thou him!

FRIAR. It is a wolf in a sheep's skin.
Go, call our master, Little John;
A glad man will he be anon.
It's Ely, man, the chancellor. [*Aside.*]

LIT. JOHN. God's pity! look unto him, Friar.
[*Aside. Exit* LITTLE JOHN.

MUCH. What, ha' ye eggs to sell, old fellow?

ELY. Ay, sir, some few; and those my need constrains me bear to
Mansfield, that I may sell them there to buy me bread.

SCAR. Alas, good man! I prythee, where dost dwell?

ELY. I dwell in Oxon, sir.

SCAR. I know the town.

MUCH. Alas, poor fellow! if thou dwell with oxen, it's strange they do not gore thee with their horns.

ELY. Masters, I tell ye truly where I dwell,
And whither I am going; let me go.
Your master would be much displeas'd, I know,
If he should hear you hinder poor men thus.

FRIAR. Father, one word with you, before we part.

MUCH. Scarlet, the Friar will make us have anger all.
Farewell; and bear me witness, though I stay'd him,
I stay'd him not. An old fellow and a market man! [*Exit*.

FRIAR. Whoop! in your riddles, Much? then we shall ha't.

SCAR. What dost thou, Friar? prythee, let him go.

FRIAR. I prythee, Scarlet, let us two alone.

[*Exit* SCAR.

ELY. Friar, I see thou know'st me: let me go,
And many a good turn I to thee will owe.

FRIAR. My master's service bids me answer no,
Yet love of holy churchmen wills it so.
Well, good my lord, I will do what I may
To let your holiness escape away.

Enter ROBIN HOOD *and* LITTLE JOHN.[227]

Here comes my master: if he question you,
Answer him like a plain man, and you may pass.

ELY. Thanks, Friar.

FRIAR. O, my lord thinks me an ass.

ROB. H. Friar, what honest man is there with thee?

FRIAR. A silly man, good master. I will speak for you:
Stand you aloof, for fear they note your face. [*To* ELY.

Master, in plain,
It were but in vain,
Long to detain
With toys or with babbles,
With fond, feigned fables;
But him that you see
In so mean degree
Is the Lord Ely,
That help'd to exile you,
That oft did revile you.
Though in his fall
His train be but small,
And no man at all
Will give him the wall,
Nor lord doth him call,
Yet he did ride,
On jennets pied,
And knights by his side
Did foot it each tide.
O, see the fall of pride.[228]

ROB. H. Friar, enough. [*Aside*.

FRIAR. I pray, sir, let him go,
He is a very simple man in show:
He dwells at Oxon, and to us doth say,
To Mansfield market he doth take his way.

LIT. JOHN. Friar, this is not Mansfield market-day.

ROB. H. What would he sell?

FRIAR. Eggs, sir, as he says.

ROB. H. Scarlet, go thy ways:
Take in this old man, fill his skin with venison,

And after give him money for his eggs.

ELY. No, sir, I thank you, I have promis'd them
To Master Bailey's wife, of Mansfield, all.

ROB. H. Nay, sir, you do me wrong:
No Bailey nor his wife shall have an egg.
Scarlet, I say, take his eggs, and give him money.

ELY. Pray, sir.

FRIAR. Tush, let him have your eggs.

ELY. Faith, I have none.

FRIAR. God's pity, then, he will find you some.[229]

SCAR. Here are no eggs, nor anything but hay.
Yes, by the mass, here's somewhat like a seal!

ROB. H. O God!
My prince's seal! fair England's royal seal!
Tell me, thou man of death, thou wicked man,
How cam'st thou by this seal? wilt thou not speak?
Bring burning irons! I will make him speak.
For I do know the poor distressed lord,
The king's vicegerent, learned, reverend Ely,
Flying the fury of ambitious John,
Is murder'd by this peasant. Speak, vile man,
Where thou hast done thrice honourable Ely!

ELY. Why dost thou grace Ely with styles of grace,
Who thee with all his power sought to disgrace?

ROB. H. Belike, his wisdom saw some fault in me.

ELY. No, I assure thee, honourable earl;
It was his envy, no defect of thine,
And the persuasions of the Prior of York,
Which Ely now repents. See, Huntington,
Ely himself, and pity him, good son.

ROB. H. Alas, for woe! alack, that so great state
The malice of this world should ruinate!
Come in, great lord, sit down and take thy ease,
Receive the seal, and pardon my offence.
With me you shall be safe, and if you please,
Till Richard come, from all men's violence.
Aged Fitzwater, banished by John,
And his fair daughter shall converse with you:
I and my men that me attend upon
Shall give you all that is to honour due.
Will you accept my service, noble lord?

ELY. Thy kindness drives me to such inward shame,
That, for my life, I no reply can frame.
Go; I will follow. Blessed may'st thou be,
That thus reliev'st thy foes in misery!

[*Exeunt.*]

LIT. JOHN. Skelton, a word or two beside the play.

FRIAR. Now, Sir John Eltham, what is't you would say?

LIT. JOHN. Methinks, I see no jests of Robin Hood,
No merry morrices of Friar Tuck,
No pleasant skippings up and down the wood,
No hunting-songs, no coursing of the buck.

Pray God this play of ours may have good luck,
And the king's majesty mislike it not.

FRIAR. And if he do, what can we do to that?
I promis'd him a play of Robin Hood,
His honourable life in merry Sherwood.
His majesty himself survey'd the plot,
And bad me boldly write it; it was good.
For merry jests they have been shown before,
As how the friar fell into the well
For love of Jenny, that fair bonny belle;
How Greenleaf robb'd the Shrieve of Nottingham,
And other mirthful matter full of game.[230]
Our play expresses noble Robert's wrong;
His mild forgetting treacherous injury:
The abbot's malice, rak'd in cinders long,
Breaks out at last with Robin's tragedy.
If these, that hear the history rehears'd,
Condemn my play, when it begins to spring,
I'll let it wither, while it is a bud,
And never show the flower to the king.

LIT. JOHN. One thing beside: you fall into your vein
Of ribble-rabble rhymes Skeltonical,
So oft, and stand so long, that you offend.

FRIAR. It is a fault I hardly can amend.
O, how I champ my tongue to talk these terms!
I do forget oftentimes my friar's part;
But pull me by the sleeve when I exceed,
And you shall see me mend that fault indeed.

Wherefore, still sit you,
Doth Skelton entreat you
While he *facetè*
Will briefly repeat ye
The history all
And tale tragical,
By whose treachery
And base injury
Robin the good,
Call'd Robin Hood,
Died in Sherwood.
Which till you see,
Be ruled by me:
Sit patiently,
And give a plaudite,
If anything please ye.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V., SCENE 1.

Enter WARMAN.

WAR. Banish'd from all, of all I am bereft!
No more than what I wear unto me left.
O wretched, wretched grief, desertful fall!
Striving to get all, I am reft of all.
Yet if I could awhile myself relieve,
Till Ely be in some place settled,

A double restitution should I get,
And these sharp sorrows, that have joy suppress'd,
Should turn to joy with double interest.

Enter a GENTLEMAN, Warman's Cousin.

And in good time, here comes my cousin Warman,
Whom I have often pleasur'd in my time.
His house at Bingham I bestow'd on him,
And therefore doubt not, he will give me house-room.
Good even, cousin.

COU. O cousin Warman, what good news with you?

WAR. Whither so far a-foot walk you in Sherwood?

COU. I came from Rotherham; and by hither Farnsfield
My horse did tire, and I walk'd home a-foot.

WAR. I do beseech you, cousin, at some friend's,
Or at your own house, for a week or two
Give me some succour.

COU. Ha! succour, say you? No, sir:
I heard at Mansfield how the matter stands;
How you have justly lost your goods and lands,
And that the prince's indignation
Will fall on any that relieves your state.
Away from me! your treacheries I hate.
You, when your noble master was undone,
(That honourable-minded Huntington),
Who forwarder than you all to distraint?
And, as a wolf that chaseth on the plain
The harmless hind, so wolf-like you pursued
Him and his servants. Vile ingratitude,
Damn'd Judasism,[231] false wrong, abhorred treachery,
Impious wickedness, wicked impiety!
Out, out upon thee! foh, I spit at thee!

WAR. Good cousin.

COU. Away! I'll spurn thee if thou follow me.

[Exit.

WAR. O just heaven, how thou plagu'st iniquity!
All that he has my hand on him bestowed.
My master gave me all I ever owed,
My master I abus'd in his distress;
In mine my kinsman leaves me comfortless.

Enter JAILER of Nottingham, leading a dog.

Here comes another; one that yesterday
Was at my service, came when I did call,
And him I made jailer of Nottingham.
Perchance some pity dwells within the man;
Jailer, well met; dost thou not know me, man?

JAI. Yes, thou art Warman; every knave knows thee.

WAR. Thou know'st I was thy master yesterday.

JAI. Ay, but 'tis not as it was: farewell; go by.

WAR. Good George, relieve my bitter misery.

JAI. By this flesh and blood, I will not.
No, if I do, the devil take me quick.
I have no money, beggar: balk the way!

WAR. I do not ask thee money.

JAI. Wouldst ha' meat?

WAR. Would God I had a little bread to eat.

JAI. Soft, let me feel my bag. O, here is meat,
That I put up at Retford for my dog:
I care not greatly if I give thee[232] this.

WAR. I prythee, do.

JAI.[233] Yet let me search my conscience for it first:
My dog's my servant, faithful, trusty, true;
But Warman was a traitor to his lord,
A reprobate, a rascal and a Jew,
Worser than dogs, of men to be abhorr'd!
Starve, therefore, Warman; dog, receive thy due.
Follow me not, lest I belabour you,
You half-fac'd goat, you thick-cheek'd chittyface;
You Judas-villain! you that have undone
The honourable Robert Earl of Huntington. [*Exit.*

WAR. Worse than a dog the villain me respects,
His dog he feeds, me in my need rejects.
What shall I do? yonder I see a shed,
A little cottage, where a woman dwells,
Whose husband I from death delivered:
If she deny me, then I faint and die.
Ho! goodwife Thompson!

WOM. What a noise is there?
A foul shame on ye! is it you that knock'd?

WAR. What, do you know me then?

WOM. Whoop! who knows not you?
The beggar'd, banish'd Shrieve of Nottingham,
You that betray'd your master: is't not you?
Yes, a shame on you! and forsooth ye come,
To have some succour here, because you sav'd
My unthrift husband from the gallow-tree.
A pox upon you both! would both for me
Were hang'd together. But soft, let me see;
The man looks faint: feel'st thou indeed distress?

WAR. O, do not mock me in my heaviness.

WOM. Indeed, I do not. Well, I have within
A caudle made, I will go fetch it him. [*Exit.*

WAR. O blessed woman! comfortable word!
Be quiet, entrails, you shall be reliev'd.

Enter WOMAN.[234]

WOM. Here, Warman, put this hempen caudle o'er thy head.
See downward yonder is thy master's walk;
And like a Judas, on some rotten tree,
Hang up this rotten trunk of misery,
That goers-by thy wretched end may see.
Stirr'st thou not, villain? get thee from my door;
A plague upon thee, haste and hang thyself.
Run, rogue, away! 'tis thou that hast undone
Thy noble master, Earl of Huntington.
[*Exit.*

WAR. Good counsel and good comfort, by my faith.

Three doctors are of one opinion,
That Warman must make speed to hang himself.
The last hath given a caudle comfortable,
That to recure my griefs is strong and able:
I'll take her medicine, and I'll choose this way,
Wherein, she saith, my master hath his walk;
There will I offer life for treachery,
And hang, a wonder to all goers-by.
But soft! what sound harmonious is this?
What birds are these, that sing so cheerfully,
As if they did salute the flowering spring?
Fitter it were with tunes more dolefully
They shriek'd out sorrow, than thus cheerly sing.
I will go seek sad desperation's cell;
This is not it, for here are green-leav'd trees.
Ah, for one winter-bitten bared bough,
Whereon a wretched life a wretch would lese.
O, here is one! Thrice-blessed be this tree,
If a man cursed may a blessing give.

Enter OLD FITZWATER.

But out, alas! yonder comes one to me
To hinder death, when I detest to live.

FITZ. What woful voice hear I within this wood?
What wretch is there complains of wretchedness?

WAR. A man, old man, bereav'd of all earth's good,
And desperately seeks death in this distress.

FITZ. Seek not for that which will be here too soon,
At least, if thou be guilty of ill-deeds.
Where art thou, son? come, and nearer sit:
Hear wholesome counsel 'gainst unhallow'd thoughts.

WAR. The man is blind. Muffle the eye of day,
Ye gloomy clouds (and darker than my deeds,
That darker be than pitchy sable night)
Muster together on these high-topp'd trees,
That not a spark of light thorough their sprays
May hinder what I mean to execute.

FITZ. What dost thou mutter? Hear me woful man.

Enter MARIAN *with meat*.

MAR. Good morrow, father.

FITZ. Welcome, lovely maid;
And in good time, I trust, you hither come.
Look if you see not a distressful man,
That to himself intendeth violence:
One such even now was here, and is not far.
Seek, I beseech you; save him, if you may.

MAR. Alas! here is, here is a man enrag'd,
Fastening a halter on a wither'd bough,
And stares upon me with such frighted looks,
As I am fearful of his sharp aspect.

FITZ. What mean'st thou, wretch? say, what is't thou wilt do?

WAR. As Judas did, so I intend to do,
For I have done already as he did:
His master he betray'd, so I have mine.
Fair mistress, look not on me with your blessed eyne:
From them, as from some excellence divine,

Sparkles sharp judgment, and commands with speed.
Fair, fare you well: foul fortune is my fate;
As all betrayers, I die desperate.

FITZ. Soft, ho! Go, Marian, call in Robin Hood:
'Tis Warman, woman, that was once his steward.

MAR. Alas! although it be, yet save his life!
I will send help unto you presently. [*Exit.*]

FITZ. Nay, Warman, stay; thou shalt have thy will.

WAR. Art thou a blind man, and canst see my shame?
To hinder treachers God restoreth sight,
And giveth infants tongues to cry aloud
A woful woe against the treacherous.

Enter MUCH, running.

MUCH. Hold, hold, hold! I hear say my fellow Warman is about to hang himself, and make I some speed to save him a labour. O good master, Justice Shrieve, have you execution in hand, and is there such a murrain among thieves and hangmen, that you play two parts in one? For old acquaintance, I will play one part. The knot under the ear, the knitting to the tree: Good Master Warman, leave that work for me.

WAR. Despatch me, Much, and I will pray for thee.

MUCH. Nay, keep your prayers, nobody sees us. [*He takes the rope, and offers to climb.*]

FITZ. Down, sirrah, down! whither, a knave's name, climb you?

MUCH. A plague on ye for a blind sinksanke! [235] would I were your match. You are much blind, i'faith, can hit so right.

Enter LITTLE JOHN.

LIT. JOHN. What, Master Warman, are ye come to yield
A true account for your false stewardship?

Enter SCARLET and SCATHLOCK.

SCATH. Much, if thou mean'st to get a hundred pound,
Present us to the Shrieve of Nottingham.

MUCH. Mass, I think there was such proclamation.
Come, my small fellow John,
You shall have half, and therefore bring in one.

LIT. JOHN. No, my big fellow, honest Master Much,
Take all unto yourself: I'll be no half.

MUCH. Then stand: you shall be the two thieves, and I'll be the presenter. O Master Shrieve of Nottingham, When ears unto my tidings came, [236] (I'll speak in prose, I miss this verse vilely) that Scathlock and Scarlet were arrested by Robin Hood, my master, and Little John, my fellow, and Much, his servant, and taken from you, Master Shrieve, being well forward in the hanging way, wherein ye now are (and God keep ye in the same), and also that you, Master Shrieve, would give any man in town, city, or country a hundred pound of lawful arrant [237] money of England, that would bring the same two thieves, being these two; now I, the said Much, challenge of you the said Shrieve, bringing them, the same money.

SCAR. Faith, he cannot pay thee, Much.

MUCH. Ay, but while this end is in my hand, and that about his neck, he is bound to it.

Enter ROBIN, ELY, MARIAN.

WAR. Mock on, mock on: make me your jesting game.
I do deserve much more than this small shame.

ROB. H. Disconsolate and poor dejected man,

Cast from thy neck that shameful sign of death,
And live for me, if thou amend thy life,
As much in favour as thou ever didst.

WAR. O, worse than any death,
When a man wrong'd his wronger pitieth!

ELY. Warman, be comforted, rise and amend:
On my word, Robin Hood will be thy friend.

ROB. H. I will indeed: go in, heart-broken man.
Father Fitzwater, pray lead him in.
Kind Marian, with sweet comforts comfort him,
And my tall yeomen, as you me affect,
Upbraid him not with his forepassed life.
Warman, go in; go in and comfort thee.

WAR. O, God requite your honour's courtesy.

MAR. Scathlock or Scarlet, help us, some of ye.

[*Exeunt* WARMAN, MARIAN, FITZWATER, SCATHLOCK, SCARLET, MUCH.

Enter FRIAR TUCK *in his truss, without his weed.*

FRIAR. Jesu benedicite!

Pity on pity,
Mercy on mercy,
Misery on misery!
O, such a sight,
As by this light,
Doth me affright?

ROB. H. Tell us the matter, prythee, holy Friar.

FRIAR. Sir Doncaster the priest and the proud Prior
Are stripp'd and wounded in the way to Bawtrej,
And if there go not speedy remedy,
They'll die, they'll die in this extremity.

ROB. H. Alas! direct us to that wretched place:
I love mine uncle, though he hateth me.

FRIAR. My weed I cast to keep them from the cold,
And Jenny, gentle girl, tore all her smock
The bloody issue of their wounds to stop.

ROB. H. Will you go with us, my good Lord of Ely?

ELY. I will, and ever praise thy perfect charity.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter PRINCE JOHN *solus, in green: with bow and arrows.*

JOHN. Why, this is somewhat like: now may I sing,
As did the Wakefield Pinder in his note—

*At Michaelmas cometh my covenant out,
My master gives me my fee:
Then, Robin, I'll wear thy Kendal green,
And wend to the greenwood with thee.[238]*

But for a name now: John it must not be,
Already Little John on him attends:
Greenleaf? Nay, surely there's such a one already:
Well, I'll be Woodnet, hap what happen may.

Enter SCATHLOCK.

Here comes a green coat (good luck be my guide)
Some sudden shift might help me to provide.

SCATH. What, fellow William, did you meet our master?

JOHN. I did not meet him yet, my honest friend.

SCATH. My honest friend! why, what a term is here?
My name is Scathlock, man, and if thou be
No other than thy garments show to me,
Thou art my fellow, though I know thee not.
What is thy name? When wert thou entertain'd?

JOHN. My name is Woodnet; and this very day
My noble master, Earl of Huntington,
Did give me both my fee and livery.

SCATH. Your noble master, Earl of Huntington!
I'll lay a crown you are a counterfeit,
And that, you know, lacks money of a noble.
Did you receive your livery and fee,
And never heard our orders read unto you?
What was the oath was given you by the Friar?

JOHN. Who?—Friar Tuck?

SCATH. Ay, do not play the liar,
For he comes here himself to shrive.

Enter FRIAR TUCK.

JOHN. Scathlock, farewell; I will away.

SCATH. See you this arrow? it says nay.
Through both your sides shall fly this feather,
If presently you come not hither.

FRIAR. Now heaven's true liberality
Fall ever for his charity
Upon the head of Robin Hood,
That to his very foes doth good.
Lord God! how he laments the Prior,
And bathes his wounds against the fire.
Fair Marian, God requite it her,
Doth even as much for Doncaster,
Whom newly she hath lain in bed,
To rest his weary, wounded head.

SCATH. Ho! Friar Tuck, know you this mate?

FRIAR. What's he?

SCATH. He says my master late
Gave him his fee and livery.

FRIAR. It is a leasing, credit me.
How chance, sir, then you were not sworn?

JOHN. What mean this groom and lozel friar,
So strictly matters to inquire?
Had I a sword and buckler here,
You should aby these questions dear.

FRIAR. Say'st thou me so, lad? lend him thine,
For in this bush here lieth mine.
Now will I try this new-come guest.

SCATH. I am his first man, Friar Tuck,
And if I fail, and have no luck,

Then thou with him shalt have a pluck.

FRIAR. Be it so, Scathlock. Hold thee, lad,
No better weapons can be had:
The dew doth them a little rust;
But, hear ye, they are tools of trust.[239]

JOHN. Gramercy, Friar, for this gift,
And if thou come unto my shrift,
I'll make thee call those fellows fools
That on their foes bestow such tools.

SCATH. Come, let's to't.

[Fight, and the FRIAR looks on.]

FRIAR. The youth is deliver[240] and light,
He presseth Scathlock with his might:
Now, by my beads, to do him right,
I think he be some tried knight.

SCATH. Stay, let us breathe!

JOHN. I will not stay;
If you leave, Friar, come away.

SCATH. I prythee, Friar, hold him play.

FRIAR. Friar Tuck will do the best he may.

[Fight.]

Enter MARIAN.

MAR. Why, what a noise of swords is here!
Fellows, and fight our bower so near?

SCATH. Mistress, he is no man of yours,
That fights so fast with Friar Tuck;
But, on my word, he is a man
As good for strength as any can.

MAR. Indeed, he's more than common men can be;
In his high heart there dwells the blood of kings.
Go call my Robin, Scathlock: *[Aside]* 'tis Prince John.

SCATH. Mistress, I will: I pray [thee] part the fray. *[Exit.]*

MAR. I prythee go, I will do what I may.
Friar, I charge thee hold thy hand.

FRIAR. Nay, younker, to your tackling stand.
What, all amort,[241] will you not fight?

JOHN. I yield, unconquer'd by thy might,
But by Matilda's glorious sight.

FRIAR. Mistress, he knows you: what is he?

JOHN. Like to amazing wonder she appears,
And from her eye flies love unto my heart,
Attended by suspicious thoughts and fears
That numb the vigour of each outward part.
Only my sight hath all satiety
And fulness of delight, viewing her deity.

MAR. But I have no delight in you, Prince John.

FRIAR. Is this Prince John?
Give me thy hand, thou art a proper man:

And for this morning's work, by saints above,
Be ever sure of Friar Tuck's true love.

JOHN. Be not offended that I touch thy shrine;
Make this hand happy: let it fold in thine.

Enter ROBIN HOOD, FITZWATER, ELY, WARMAN.

ROB. H. What saucy woodman, Marian, stands so near?

JOHN. A woodman, Robin, that would strike your deer
With all his heart. Nay, never look so strange,
You see this fickle world is full of change:
John is a ranger, man, compell'd to range.

FITZ. You are young, wild lord, and well may travel bear.

JOHN. What, my old friend Fitzwater, are you there?
And you, Lord Ely? and old best-betruss'd?[242]
Then I perceive that to this gear we must.
A mess of my good friends! which of you four
Will purchase thanks by yielding to the king
The body of the rash, rebellious John?
Will you, Fitzwater?

FITZ. No, John, I defy[243]
To stain my old hands in thy youthful blood.

JOHN. You will, Lord Ely; I am sure you will.

ELY. Be sure, young man, my age means thee no ill.

JOHN. O, you will have the praise, brave Robin Hood.
The lusty outlaw, lord of this large wood:
He'll lead a king's son prisoner to a king,
And bid the brother smite the brother dead.

ROB. H. My purpose you have much misconstrued:
Prince John, I would not for the wide world's wealth
Incense his majesty, but do my best
To mitigate his wrath, if he be mov'd.

JOHN. Will none of you? then, here's one I dare say,
That from his childhood knows how to betray:
Warman, will you not help to hinder all you may?

WAR. With what I have been, twit me not, my lord:
My old sins at my soul I do detest.

JOHN. Then, that he came this way Prince John was blest.
Forgive me, Ely; pardon me, Fitzwater:
And Robin, to thy hands myself I yield.

ROB. H. And as my heart from hurt I will thee shield.

Enter MUCH, *running*.

MUCH. Master, fly! hide ye, mistress! we all shall be taken.

ROB. H. Why, what's the matter?

MUCH. The king! the king! and twelve and twenty score of horses.

ROB. H. Peace, fool! we have no cause from him to fly.

Enter SCARLET, LITTLE JOHN.

LIT. JOHN. Scarlet and I were hunting on the plain;
To us came royal Richard from his train,
For a great train of his is hard at hand,

And questioned us if we serv'd Robin Hood?
I said we did; and then his majesty,
Putting this massy chain about my neck,
Said what I shame to say, but joy'd to hear.
Let Scarlet tell it, it befits not me.

SCAR. Quoth our good king, Thy name is Little John,
And thou hast long time serv'd Earl Huntington:
Because thou left'st him not in misery,
A hundred marks I give thee yearly fee,
And from henceforth thou shalt a squire be.

MUCH. O lord, what luck had I to run away!
I should have been made a knight or a lady, sure.

SCAR. Go, said the king, and to your master say,
Richard is come to call him to the court,
And with his kingly presence chase the clouds
Of grief and sorrow, that in misty shades
Have veil'd the honour of Earl Huntington.

ROB. H. Now God preserve him! hie you back again,
And guide him, lest in bypaths he mistake.
Much, fetch a richer garment for my father;
Good Friar Tuck, I prythee rouse thy wits:
Warman, visit mine uncle and Sir Doncaster,
See if they can come forth to grace our show.
God's pity, Marian, let your Jenny wait.
Thanks, my lord chancellor, you are well prepar'd;
And, good Prince John, since you are all in green,
Disdain not to attend on Robin Hood:
Frolic, I pray; I trust to do ye good.

Enter PRIOR and SIR DONCASTER.[244]

Welcome, good uncle, welcome, Sir Doncaster.
Say, will ye sit; I fear ye cannot stand.

PRIOR. Yes, very well.

ROB. H. Why, cheerly, cheerly then.
The trumpet sounds, the king is now at hand:
Lords, yeomen, maids, in decent order stand.

The trumpets sound the while ROBIN HOOD places them. Enter first, bareheaded, LITTLE JOHN and SCARLET; likewise CHESTER and LEICESTER, bearing the sword and sceptre; the KING follows, crowned, clad in green; after him QUEEN MOTHER; after her SALISBURY and RICHMOND. SCARLET and SCATHLOCK turn to ROBIN HOOD, who with all his company kneel down and cry—

ALL. God save King Richard! Lord preserve your grace!

KING. Thanks all; but chiefly, Huntington, to thee.
Arise, poor earl; stand up, my late-lost son.
And on thy shoulders let me rest my arms,
That have been toiled long with heathen wars.
True pillar of my state, right lord indeed,
Whose honour shineth in the den of need,
I am even full of joy and full of woe,
To see thee, glad; but sad to see thee so.

ROB. H. O, that I could pour out my soul in prayers,
And praises for this kingly courtesy!
Do not, dread lord, grieve at my low estate:
Never so rich, never so fortunate,
Was Huntington as now himself he finds;
And to approve it, may it please your grace,
But to accept such presents at the hand

Of your poor servant as he hath prepar'd.
You shall perceive the Emperor of the East,
Whom you contended with at Babylon,
Had not such presents to present you with.

KING. Art thou so rich? swift,[245] let me see thy gifts.

ROB. H. First, take again this jewel you had lost,
Aged Fitzwater, banished by John.

KING. A gem indeed! no prince hath such a one.
Good, good old man, as welcome unto me
As cool fresh air in heat's extremity.

FITZ. And I as glad to kiss my sovereign's hand,
As the wreck'd swimmer, when he feels the land.

QUEEN. Welcome, Fitzwater, I am glad to see you.

FITZ. I thank your grace: but let me hug these twain,
Leicester and Richmond, Christ's sworn champions,
That follow'd Richard in his holy war.

RICH. Noble Fitzwater, thanks, and welcome both.

LEI. O God, how glad I am to see this lord!
I cannot speak, but welcome at a word.

ROB. H. Next, take good Ely in your royal hands,
Who fled from death and most uncivil bonds.

KING. Robin, thy gifts exceed. Morton, my chancellor!
In this man giv'st thou holiness and honour.

ELY. Indeed he gives me, and he gave me life,
Preserving me from fierce pursuing foes.
When I, to blame, had wrought him many woes.
With me he likewise did preserve this seal,
Which I surrender to your majesty.

KING. Keep it, good Ely, keep it still for me.

ROB. H. The next fair jewel that I will present
Is richer than both these; yet in the foil,
My gracious lord, it hath a foul default
Which if you pardon, boldly I protest,
It will in value far exceed the rest.

JOHN. That's me he means; i'faith, my turn is next.
He calls me foil: i'faith, I fear a foil.
Well, 'tis a mad lord, this same Huntington. [*Aside*.

ROB. H. Here is Prince John, your brother, whose revolt
And folly in your absence, let me crave,
With his submission may be buried;
For he is now no more the man he was,
But dutiful in all respects to you.

KING. Pray God it prove so. Well, good Huntington,
For thy sake pardon'd is our brother John,
And welcome to us in all hearty love.

ROB. H. This last I give, as tenants do their lands,
With a surrender to receive again
The same into their own possession;
No Marian, but Fitzwater's chaste Matilda:
The precious jewel, that poor Huntington
Doth in this world hold as his best esteem.
Although with one hand I surrender her,

I hold the other, as one looking still
Richard return her: so I hope he will.

KING. Else God forbid. Receive thy Marian back,
And never may your love be separate,
But flourish fairly to the utmost date.

ROB. H. Now please my king to enter Robin's bower,
And take such homely welcome as he finds,
It shall be reckon'd as my happiness.

KING. With all my heart. Then, as combined friends,
Go we together: here all quarrel ends.

[Exeunt.]

Manent SIR JOHN ELTHAM *and* SKELTON.

SIR JOHN. Then, Skelton, here I see you will conclude.

SKEL. And reason good: have we not held too long?

SIR JOHN. No, in good sadness, I dare gage my life,
His highness will accept it very kindly:
But, I assure you, he expects withal
To see the other matters tragical,
That follow in the process of the story.
Wherein are many a sad accident,
Able to make the stoutest mind relent:
I need not name the points, you know them all!
From Marian's eye shall not one tear be shed?
Skelton, i' faith, 'tis not the fashion.
The king must grieve, the queen must take it ill:
Ely must mourn, aged Fitzwater weep,
Prince John, the lords, his yeomen must lament,
And wring their woful hands for Robin's woe.
Then must the sick man, fainting by degrees,
Speak hollow words, and yield his Marian,
Chaste maid Matilda, to her father's hands;
And give her, with King Richard's full consent,
His lands, his goods, late seiz'd on by the Prior,
Now by the Prior's treason made the king's.
Skelton, there are a many other things,
That ask long time to tell them lineally;
But ten times longer will the action be.

SKEL. Sir John, i' faith, I know not what to do,
And I confess that all you say is true.
Will you do one thing for me? Crave the king
To see two parts: say, 'tis a pretty thing.
I know you can do much; if you excuse me,
While Skelton lives, Sir John, be bold to use me.

SIR JOHN. I will persuade the king; but how can you
Persuade all these beholders to content?

SKEL. Stay, Sir John Eltham: what to them I say,
Deliver to the king from me, I pray.
Well-judging hearers, for a while suspend
Your censures of this play's unfinish'd end,
And Skelton promises for this offence
The second part shall presently be penn'd.
There shall you see, as late my friend did note,
King Richard's revels at Earl Robert's bower;
The purpos'd mirth and the performed moan;
The death of Robin and his murderers.
For interest of your stay, this will I add:

King Richard's voyage back to Austria,
The swift-returned tidings of his death,
The manner of his royal funeral.[246]
Then John shall be a lawful crowned king,
But to Matilda bear unlawful love.
Aged Fitzwater's final banishment;
His piteous end, of power tears to move
From marble pillars. The catastrophe
Shall show you fair Matilda's tragedy,
Who (shunning John's pursuit) became a nun,
At Dunmow[247] Abbey, where she constantly
Chose death to save her spotless chastity.
Take but my word, and if I fail in this,
Then let my pains be baffled with a hiss.

FINIS.

EDITION.

The Death of Robert Earle of Huntington. Otherwise called Robin Hood of merrie Sherwodde: with the lamentable Tragedie of chaste Matilda, his faire maid Marian, poysoned at Dunmowe by King Iohn. Acted by the Right Honourable the Earle of Notingham, Lord high Admirall of England, his seruants. Imprinted at London, for William Leake 1601. 4to. B.L.

INTRODUCTION.

Henry Chettle, who certainly joined Anthony Munday in writing "The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington,"[248] if he did not also assist in penning "The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington," was a very prolific dramatic author. Malone erroneously states that he was the writer of, or was concerned in, thirty plays; according to information which he himself furnishes, forty-two are, either wholly or in part, to be assigned to Chettle. The titles of only twenty-five are inserted in the "Biographia Dramatica." The proof of his connection with the historical play now reprinted has been already supplied,[249] and it is derived from the same source as nearly all the rest of the intelligence regarding his works—the MSS. of Henslowe.

Of the incidents of the life of Henry Chettle absolutely nothing is known: we are ignorant of the times and places of his birth and death, and of the manner in which he obtained his education. It has been conjectured that he either was, or had been, a printer, but the point is very doubtful.[250] In a tract by him, called "England's Mourning Garment," on the death of Queen Elizabeth, he speaks of himself as having been "young almost thirty years ago," and as having been a witness of what passed at that period in the Court. If Ritson's conjecture [had been] well-founded, he [might have been admitted as] an author as early as 1578;[251] but the poetical tract assigned to him [under that date was the work of some other writer with the same initials, whose name is not known.]

The first account we have of Chettle in connection with the stage is under date of April 1599,[252]

when, according to Henslowe, he was engaged with Dekker in writing a play called "Troilus and Cressida;" but there is good reason to infer, that if in 1603 he were "young almost thirty years ago," he had written for the theatre before 1599. Besides, in his "Kind Hartes Dreame," produced about three months after the death of his friend Robert Greene, on September 3d, 1592, he speaks generally of his connection with the dramatic poets of that day, as if it were not newly formed. Malone supposed that Shakespeare, with whom Chettle had then recently become acquainted, was alluded to in the same tract. In "England's Mourning Garment" Chettle addresses a stanza to "silver-tongued Melicert," [whom some critics have supposed to be Shakespeare. But this is mere conjecture.]

Francis Meres, in his often-quoted "Palladis Tamia" (1598), includes Chettle in a long list of other writers for the stage, as "one of the best for comedy;" but in earlier works upon the poetry and literature of England, such as Webbe's "Discourse" in 1586, and Puttenham's "Art of English Poesie" in 1589, he is not mentioned.

Henslowe's list of plays, with the authors' names attached, as [edited by Mr Collier], begins [in February 1591-2;] and there the first mention of Chettle is in February 1597-8: between that date and March 1602-3, a period of little more than five years, he wrote, or assisted in writing, all the dramatic performances with which his name is associated; a fact of itself sufficient to show, if Henslowe be accurate, that in many of them his share must have been very inconsiderable, perhaps only amounting to a few alterations. They are the following, exclusive of those pieces already enumerated,[253] in which he was concerned with Munday:—

1. The Valiant Welchman, by Michael Drayton and Henry Chettle, February 1597-8. Printed in 1615. [254]
2. Earl Goodwin and his Three Sons, Part I., by Michael Drayton, Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, and Robert Wilson, March 1598. Not printed.
3. Earl Goodwin, Part II., by the same authors, and under the same date in Henslowe's papers. Not printed.
4. Piers of Exton, by the same authors, same date. Not printed.
5. Black Batman of the North, Part I., by Henry Chettle, April 1598. Not printed.
6. Black Batman of the North, Part II., by Henry Chettle and Robert Wilson. Same date. Not printed.
7. The Play of a Woman, by Henry Chettle, July 1598. Not printed.[255]
8. The Conquest of Brute with the first finding of the Bath, by John Day, Henry Chettle, and John Singer. Same date. Not printed.
9. Hot Anger soon Cold, by Henry Porter, Henry Chettle, and Ben Jonson, August 1598. Not printed.
10. Catiline's Conspiracy, by Robert Wilson and Henry Chettle. Same date. Not printed.
11. 'Tis no Deceit to Deceive the Deceiver, by Henry Chettle, September 1598. Not printed.
12. Aeneas' Revenge, with the Tragedy of Polyphemus, by Henry Chettle, February 1598-9. Not printed.
13. Agamemnon, by Henry Chettle and Thomas Dekker, June 1599. Not printed. Malone thought that this was the same play as "Troilus and Cressida" before mentioned.
14. The Stepmother's Tragedy, by Henry Chettle, August 1599. Not printed.
15. Patient Grissel, by Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle, and William Haughton, December 1599. Printed in 1603.
16. The Arcadian Virgin, by Henry Chettle and William Haughton. Same date. Not printed.
17. Damon and Pithias, by Henry Chettle, January 1599-1600. Not printed.[256]
18. The Seven Wise Masters, by Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, William Haughton, and John Day, March 1599-1600. Not printed.
19. The Golden Ass and Cupid and Psyche, by Thomas Dekker, John Day, and Henry Chettle, April 1600. Not printed.

20. The Wooing of Death, by Henry Chettle. Same date. Not printed.
21. The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green, by Henry Chettle and John Day. Same date. Printed in 1659.
22. All is not Gold that Glisters, by Samuel Rowley and Henry Chettle, March 1600. Not printed.
23. Sebastian, King of Portugal, by Henry Chettle and Thomas Dekker, April 1601. Not printed.
24. Cardinal Wolsey, Part I., by Henry Chettle, August 1601. Not printed.
25. Cardinal Wolsey, Part II., by Henry Chettle, May 1602. Not printed.
26. The Orphan's Tragedy, by Henry Chettle, September 1601. Not printed.
27. Too Good to be True, by Henry Chettle, Richard Hathwaye, and Wentworth Smith, November 1601. Not printed.
28. Love Parts Friendship, by Henry Chettle and Wentworth Smith, May 1602. Not printed.
29. Tobyas, by Henry Chettle. Same date. Not printed.
30. Jephtha, by Henry Chettle. Same date. Not printed.
31. A Danish Tragedy, by Henry Chettle. Same date. Not printed.
32. Femelanco, by Henry Chettle and —— Robinson, September 1602. Not printed.
33. Lady Jane, Part I., by Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, Thomas Haywood, Wentworth Smith, and John Webster, November 1602. Not printed.
34. Lady Jane, Part II., by the same authors, Smith excepted. Same date. Not printed.
35. The London Florentine, Part I., by Thomas Heywood and Henry Chettle, December 1602. Not printed.
36. The London Florentine, Part II., by the same authors. Same date. Not printed.
37. The Tragedy of Hoffman, by Henry Chettle. Same date. Printed in 1631.
38. Jane Shore, by Henry Chettle and John Day, March 1602-3. Not printed.

Among the scattered notices in Henslowe's papers is an entry, dated September 3d, 1599, of 40s. advanced to Chettle, Jonson, Dekker, "and other gentlemen," on account of a tragedy they were engaged upon called "Robert the Second, King of Scots."

The interest of the "second part" of "Robert Earl of Huntington," on the whole, is stronger than that of the first part, and some powerful, though not always tasteful, writing gives effect to the situations. The death of Robin Hood takes place as early as the end of the first act, and attention is afterwards directed to the two, otherwise unconnected, plots of the fate of Lady Bruce and her little son, and of the love of King John for Matilda. Robert Davenport's Tragedy of "King John and Matilda," printed in 1655, goes precisely over the same ground, and with many decided marks of imitation, especially in the conduct of the story. Davenport's production is inferior in most respects to the earlier work of Chettle and Munday.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.[257]

KING RICHARD THE FIRST.
 PRINCE JOHN, *afterwards King*.
 ROBERT, *Earl of Huntington*.
 LITTLE JOHN.
 SCATHLOCK.
 SCARLET.
 FRIAR TUCK.
 MUCH, *the Clown*.

BISHOP OF ELY.
CHESTER.
SALISBURY.
LEICESTER.
RICHMOND.
FITZWATER.
YOUNG FITZWATER.
WINCHESTER.
BRUCE.
YOUNG BRUCE.
BOY, *son of Lady Bruce.*
OXFORD.
HUBERT.
MOWBRAY.
BONVILLE.
PRIOR OF YORK.
JUSTICE WARMAN.
SIR DONCASTER.
MONK OF BURY.
WILL BRAND.
Masks, Messengers, Soldiers, &c.
QUEEN MOTHER.
QUEEN.
MATILDA.
LADY BRUCE.
ABBESS OF DUNMOW.

THE DEATH OF ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON.

ACT I, SCENE I.

Enter FRIAR TUCK.[258]

FRIAR. Holla, holla, holla! follow, follow, follow!
[Like noise within.]

Now, benedicite!
What foul absurdity,
Folly and foolery
Had like to follow me!
I and my mates,
Like addle-pates,
Inviting great states
To see our last play,
Are hunting the hay,
With "Ho! that way
The goodly hart ran,"
With "Follow, Little John!
Much, play the man!"
And I, like a sot,
Have wholly forgot
The course of our plot
But, cross-bow, lie down,
Come on, friar's gown,
Hood, cover my crown,
And with a low beck

Prevent a sharp check.

Blithe sit ye all, and wink at our rude cry:
Mind, where we left in Sherwood merrily
The king, his train Robin, his yeomen tall,
Gone to the wood to see the fat deer fall.
We left maid Marian busy in the bower,
And pretty Jenny looking every hour
For their returning from the hunting-game,
And therefore seek to set each thing in frame.
Warman all woful for his sin we left:
Sir Doncaster, whose villanies and theft
You never heard of, but too soon ye shall,
Housed[259] with the Prior, shame them both befall!
They two will make our mirth be short and small.
But lest I bring ye sorrow ere the time,
Pardon I beg of your well-judging eyne,
And take in part bad prologue and rude play.
The hunters halloo! Tuck must needs away.
Therefore down, weed;

Bow, do the deed
To make the stag bleed;
And if my hand speed,
Hey for a cry,
With a throat strain'd high,
And a loud yall
At the beast's fall

Enter KING, ELY, FITZWATER, SALISBURY, CHESTER,
PRINCE JOHN, LITTLE JOHN, SCATHLOCK.

KING. Where is our mother?[260]

JOHN. Mounted in a stand:
Six fallow deer have died by her hand.

FITZ. Three stags I slew.

ELY. Two bucks by me fell down.

CHES. As many died by me.

SAL. But I had three.

JOHN. Scathlock, where's Much?

SCATH. When last I saw him, may it please your grace,
He and the Friar footed it apace.

JOHN. Scathlock, no grace—your fellow and plain John.

LIT. JOHN. I warrant you, Much will be here anon.

JOHN. Think'st thou, Little John, that he must Jenny wed?

LIT. JOHN. No doubt he must.

JOHN. Then to adorn his head,
We shall have horns good store.

KING. God, for thy grace,
How could I miss the stag I had in chase?
Twice did I hit him in the very neck,
When back my arrows flew, as they had smit
On some sure armour. Where is Robin Hood
And the wight[261] Scarlet? Seek them, Little John.

[*Exit* LITTLE JOHN.

I'll have that stag, before I dine, to-day.

Enter MUCH.

MUCH. O, the Friar, the Friar, the Friar!

KING. Why, how now, Much?

MUCH. Cry ye mercy, Master King:[262] marry, this is the matter. Scarlet is following the stag you hit, and has almost lodged him: now, the Friar has the best bow but yours in all the field; which and Scarlet had, he would have him straight.

KING. Where is thy master?

MUCH. Nay, I cannot tell, nor the Friar neither.

SCATH. I hear them halloo far off in the wood.

KING. Come, Much, can'st lead us where as Scarlet is?

MUCH. Never fear you: follow me.

[Exeunt hallooing.

SCENE II.

Enter SIR DONCASTER, PRIOR.

DON. You were resolv'd to have him poisoned,
Or kill'd, or made away, you car'd not how:
What devil makes you doubtful now to do't?

PRIOR. Why, Doncaster, his kindness in our needs.

DON. A plague upon his kindness! let him die.
I never temper'd poison in my life,
But I employ'd it. By th'mass, and I lose this,
For ever look to lose my company.

PRIOR. But will you give it him?

DON. That cannot be.
The queen, Earl Chester, and Earl Salisbury,
If they once see me, I am a dead man:
Or did they hear my name, I'll lay my life,
They all would hunt me for my life.

PRIOR. What hast thou done to them?

DON. Faith, some odd toys,
That made me fly the south: but pass we them.
Here is the poison; will you give it Robin?

PRIOR. Now, by this gold, I will.

DON. Or, as I said,
For ever I'll defy your company.

PRIOR. Well, he shall die, and in his jollity:
And in my head I have a policy
To make him die disgrac'd.

DON. O, tell it, Prior!

PRIOR. I will, but not as now;
[Call the FRIAR within.
We'll seek a place: the woods have many ears,
And some, methinks, are calling for the Friar.[263]

Enter LITTLE JOHN *and* SCATHLOCK, *calling the*
FRIAR, *as before.*

LIT. JOHN. The Friar! the Friar!

SCATH. Why, where's this Friar?

Enter FRIAR TUCK.

FRIAR. Here, sir: what is your desire?

Enter ROBIN HOOD *and* WARMAN.[264]

ROB. H. Why, Friar, what a murrain dost thou mean?
The king calls for thee; for a mighty stag
(That hath a copper-ring about his neck
With letters on it, which he would have read)
Hath Scarlet kill'd. I pray thee, go thy way.

FRIAR. Master, I will: no longer will I stay.

[*Exit* FRIAR TUCK, LITTLE JOHN, *and* SCATHLOCK.

ROB. H. Good uncle, be more careful of your health,
And yours, Sir Doncaster; your wounds are green.

BOTH. Through your great kindness we are comforted.

ROB. H. And, Warman, I advise you to more mirth.
Shun solitary walks, keep company:
Forget your fault; I have forgiv'n the fault,
Good Warman, be more blithe; and at this time
A little help my Marian and her maid.
Much shall come to you straight: a little now
We must all strive to do the best we may.

[*Exit winding.*[265]

WAR. On you and her I'll wait until my dying day.

[WARMAN *is going out*; DONCASTER *pulls him.*

DON. Warman, a word. My good Lord Prior and I
Are full of grief to see thy misery.

WAR. My misery, Sir Doncaster? why, I thank God,
I never was in better state than now.

PRIOR. Why, what a servile slavish mind hast thou!
Art thou a man, and canst be such a beast,
Ass-like to bear the burthen of thy wrongs?

WAR. What wrong have I? is't wrong to be reliev'd?

DON. Reliev'd, say'st thou? why, shallow-witted fool,
Dost thou not see Robin's ambitious pride,
And how he climbs by pitying, and aspires
By humble looks, good deeds, and such fond toys,
To be a monarch reigning over us,
As if we were the vassals to his will?

WAR. I am his vassal, and I will be still.

PRIOR. Warman, thou art a fool. I do confess,
Were these good deeds done in sincerity—
Pity of mine, thine[266] or this knight's distress,
Without vain brags—it were true charity:
But to relieve our fainting bodies' wants,
And grieve our souls with quips and bitter 'braids,
Is good turns overturn'd: no thanks we owe
To any whatsoever helps us so.

WAR. Neither himself nor any that he keeps
Ever upbraided me, since I came last.

DON. O God, have mercy on thee, silly ass!
Doth he not say to every guest that comes,
This same is Warman, that was once my steward?

WAR. And what of that?

PRIOR. Is't not as much to say,
Why, here he stands that once did me betray?

DON. Did he not bring a troop to grace himself,
Like captives waiting on a conqueror's chair,
And calling of them out by one and one,
Presented them, like fairings, to the king?[267]

PRIOR. O, ay: there was a rare invention.
A plague upon the fool!
I hate him worse for that than all the rest.

WAR. Why should you hate him? why should you—or you—
Envy this noble lord thus, as you do?

DON. Nay rather, why dost thou not join in hate
With us, that lately liv'd, like us, in wealthy state?
Remember this, remember, foolish man,
How thou hast been the Shrieve of Nottingham.

PRIOR. Cry to thy thoughts, let this thought never cease—
"I have been justice of my sovereign's peace,
Lord of fair livings; men with cap and knee
In liveries waited hourly on me."

DON. And when thou think'st thou hast been such and such,
Think then what 'tis to be a mate to Much?
To run when Robin bids, come at his call,
Be Mistress Marian's man.

PRIOR. Nay, think withal—

WAR. What shall I think, but think upon my need,
When men fed dogs, and me they would not feed?
When I despair'd through want, and sought to die,
My piteous master, of his charity,
Forgave my fault, reliev'd and saved me.
This do I think upon; and you should think
(If you had hope of soul's salvation)—
First, Prior, that he is of thy flesh and blood,
That thou art uncle unto Robin Hood;
That by extortion thou didst get his lands—
God and I know how it came to thy hands:
How thou pursued'st him in his misery,
And how heaven plagued thy heart's extremity.
Think, Doncaster, when, hired by this Prior,
Thou cam'st to take my master with the Friar,
And wert thyself ta'en; how he set thee free,
Gave thee an hundred pound to comfort thee.
And both bethink ye, how but yesterday
Wounded and naked in the field you lay;
How with his own hand he did raise your heads,
Pour'd balm into your wounds, your bodies fed,
Watch'd when ye slept, wept when he saw your woe—

DON. Stay, Warman, stay! I grant that he did so;
And you, turn'd honest, have forsworn the villain?

WAR. Even from my soul I villany defy.

PRIOR. A blessed hour; a fit time now to die.

DON. And you shall, conscience.

[*Stabs him, WARMAN falls.*]

WAR. O, forgive me, God,
And save my master from their bloody hands!

PRIOR. What, hast thou made him sure?

DON. It's dead—sure he is dead, if that be sure?

PRIOR. Then let us thrust the dagger in his hand,
And when the next comes, cry he kill'd himself.

DON. That must be now: yonder comes Robin Hood.
No life in him?

PRIOR. No, no, not any life.
Three mortal wounds have let in piercing air,
And at their gaps his life is clean let out.

Enter ROBIN HOOD.

ROB. H. Who is it, uncle, that you so bemoan?

PRIOR. Warman, good nephew, whom Sir Doncaster and I
Found freshly bleeding, as he now doth lie.
You were scarce gone, when he did stab himself.

ROB. H. O God!
He in his own hand holds his own heart's hurt:
I dreaded, too, much his distressed look.
Belike the wretch despair'd, and slew himself.

DON. Nay, that's most sure: yet he had little reason,
Considering how well you used him.

ROB. H. Well, I am sorry, but must not be sad,
Because the king is coming to my bower.
Help me, I pray thee, to remove his body,
Lest he should come and see him murdered.
Some time anon he shall be buried.

[*Exeunt* ROBIN HOOD *and* SIR DONCASTER *with the body.*][268]

PRIOR. Good! all is good! this is as I desire:
Now for a face of pure hypocrisy.
Sweet murder, clothe thee in religious weeds,
Reign in my bosom, that with help of thee
I may effect this Robin's tragedy.

Enter ROBIN HOOD *and* SIR DONCASTER.

DON. Nay, nay, you must not take this thing so heavily.

ROB. H. A body's loss, Sir Doncaster, is much;
But a soul's too is more to be bemoan'd.

PRIOR. Truly I wonder at your virtuous mind.
O God, to one so kind who'd be unkind!
Let go this grief: now must you put on joy,
And for the many favours I have found,
So much exceeding all conceit of mine,
Unto your cheer I'll add a precious drink,
Of colour rich and red, sent me from Rome,
There's in it moly,[269] Syrian balsamum,
Gold's rich elixir; O, 'tis precious!

ROB. H. Where is it, uncle?

PRIOR. As yesterday
Sir Doncaster and I rid on our way,
Thieves did beset us, bound us, as you saw,
And among other things did take from me
This rich confection: but regardlessly,
As common drink, they cast into a bush
The bottle, which this day Sir Doncaster
Fetch'd, and hath left it in the inner lodging.
I tell you, nephew (I do love you well).
A pint of this ransom'd the Sophy's son
When he was taken in Natolia.
I meant, indeed, to give it my liege lord,
In hope to have his favour; but to you
I put myself: be my good friend,
And, in your own restoring me restore.

ROB. H. Uncle, I will; you need urge that no more.
But what's the virtue of this precious drink?

PRIOR. It keeps fresh youth, restores diseased sight,
Helps nature's weakness, smooths the scars of wounds,
And cools the entrails with a balmy breath,
When they, by thirst or travail, boil with heat.

ROB. H. Uncle, I thank you: pray you, let me have
A cup prepared 'gainst the king comes in,
To cool his heat: myself will give it him.

PRIOR. And when he drinks, be bold to say, he drinks
A richer draught than that dissolved pearl,
Which Cleopatra drank to Antony.

ROB. H. I have much business: let it be your charge
To make this rich draught ready for the king,
And I will quit it; pray ye, do not fail.

[*Exit.*]

PRIOR. I warrant you, good nephew.

DON. Better and better still!
We thought before but to have poison'd him,
And now shall Robin Hood destroy the king.
Even when the king, the queen, the prince, the lords,
Joy in his virtues, this supposed vice
Will turn to sharp hate their exceeding love.

PRIOR. Ha, ha, ha! I cannot choose but laugh,
To see my cousin cozen'd in this sort.
Fail him, quoth you; nay, hang me if I do.
But, Doncaster, art sure the poisons are well-mix'd?

DON. Tut, tut! let me alone for the poisoning:
I have already turn'd o'er four or five,
That anger'd[270] me. But tell me, Prior,
Wherefore so deadly dost thou hate thy cousin?

PRIOR. Shall I be plain? because, if he were dead,
I should be made the Earl of Huntington.

DON. A pretty cause; but thou a churchman art.

PRIOR. Tut, man, if that would fall,
I'll have a dispensation, and turn temporal.
But tell me, Doncaster, why dost thou hate him?

DON. By the mass, I cannot tell. O yes, now I ha't:

I hate thy cousin Earl of Huntington,
Because so many love him as there do,
And I myself am loved of so few.
Nay, I have other reasons for my hate:
He is a fool, and will be reconcil'd
To any foe he hath: he is too mild,
Too honest for this world, fitter for heaven.
He will not kill these greedy cormorants,
Nor strip base peasants of the wealth they have!
He does abuse a thief's name and an outlaw's,
And is, indeed, no outlaw nor no thief:
He is unworthy of such reverend names.
Besides, he keeps a paltry whimling[271] girl,
And will not bed, forsooth, before he bride.
I'll stand to't, he abuses maidenhead;
That will not take it, being offered,
Hinders the commonwealth of able men.
Another thing I hate him for again:
He says his prayers, fasts eves, gives alms, does good:
For these and such like crimes swears Doncaster
To work the speedy death of Robin Hood.

PRIOR. Well-said, i' faith. Hark, hark! the
king returns;
To do this deed my heart like fuel burns.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Wind horns. Enter KING, QUEEN, JOHN, FITZWATER,
ELY, CHESTER, SALISBURY, LEICESTER, LITTLE JOHN,
FRIAR TUCK, SCARLET, SCATHLOCK, and MUCH: FRIAR
TUCK carrying a stag's head, dancing.*

KING. Gramercy, Friar, for thy glee,
Thou greatly hast contented me:
What with thy sporting and thy game,
I swear, I highly pleased am.

FRIAR. It was my master's whole desire
That maiden, yeoman, swain, and friar,
Their arts and wits should all apply
For pleasure of your majesty.

QUEEN. Son Richard, look, I pray you, on the ring,
That was about the neck of the last stag.

CHES. Was his name Scarlet, that shot off his neck?

JOHN. Chester, it was this honest fellow Scarlet:
This is the fellow, and a yeoman bold
As ever cours'd the swift hart on the mould.

KING. Friar, here's somewhat 'graved upon the ring;
I pray thee read it: meanwhile, list to me.

[*This while most compassing the FRIAR about the ring.*]

Scarlet and Scathlock, you bold brethren,
Twelvepence a day I give each for his fee;
And henceforth see ye live like honest men.

BOTH. We will, my liege, else let us die the death.

MUCH. A boon, a boon, upon my knee,
Good King Richard, I beg of thee!
For indeed, sir, the troth is, Much is my father, and he is one of your
tenants, in King's Mill at Wakefield, all on a green:—
O there dwelleth a jolly pinder,

At Wakefield, all on a green.[272]
Now I would have you, if you will do so much for me, to set me forward
in the way of marriage to Jenny: the mill would not be cast away upon us.

KING. Much, be thou ever master of that mill:
I give it thee for thine inheritance.

MUCH. Thanks, precious prince of courtesy. I'll to Jenny, and tell her of my lands, i'faith. [*Exit.*]

JOHN. Here, Friar, here; here it begins.

FRIAR (*reads*). "When Harold Harefoot reigned king,
About my neck he put this ring."

KING. In Harold's time? more than a hundred year
Hath this ring been about this new-slain deer!
I am sorry now it died; but let the same
Head, ring and all, be sent to Nottingham,
And in the castle kept for monument.[273]

FITZ. My liege, I heard an old tale long ago,
That Harold, being Godwin's son of Kent,[274]
When he had got fair England's government,
Hunted for pleasure once within this wood,
And singled out a fair and stately stag,
Which foot to foot the king in running caught:
And sure this was the stag.

KING. It was, no doubt.

CHES. But some, my lord, affirm
That Julius Caesar, many years before,
Took such a stag, and such a poesy writ.

KING. It should not be in Julius Caesar's time.
There was no English used in this land
Until the Saxons came; and this is writ
In Saxon characters.

JOHN. Well, 'twas a goodly beast.

Enter ROBIN HOOD.

KING. How now, Earl Robert?

FRIAR. A forfeit, a forfeit, my liege lord!
My master's laws are on record!
The court-roll here your grace may see.

KING. I pray thee, Friar, read it me.[275]

FRIAR. One shall suffice, and this is he.
No man, that cometh in this wood
To feast or dwell with Robin Hood,
Shall call him earl, lord, knight, or squire:
He no such titles doth desire,
But Robin Hood, plain Robin Hood,
That honest yeoman stout and good,
On pain of forfeiting a mark,
That must be paid to me his clerk.
My liege, my liege, this law you broke,
Almost in the last word you spoke:
That crime may not acquitted be,
Till Friar Tuck receive his fee.

KING. There's more than twenty marks, mad Friar.
[*Casts him purse.*]

FRIAR. If thus you pay the clerk his hire,

Oft may you forfeit, I desire.
You are a perfect penitent,
And well you do your wrong repent:
For this your highness' liberal gift
I here absolve you without shrift.

KING. Gramercies, Friar. Now, Robin Hood,
Sith Robin Hood it needs must be,
I was about to ask before,
If thou didst see the great stag's fall.

ROB. H. I did, my lord, I saw it all;
But missing this same prating friar,
And hearing you so much desire
To have the losel's company,
I went to seek Small-Honesty.

FRIAR. But you found Much, when you found me.

ROB. H. Ay, Much my man; but not a jot
Of honesty in thee, God wot.

QUEEN. Robin, you do abuse the Friar.

FRIAR. Madam, I dare not call him liar:
He may be bold with me, he knows.
How now, Prince John, how goes, how goes
This woodman's life with you to-day?
My fellow Woodnet you would be.

JOHN. I am thy fellow, thou dost see;
And to be plain, as God me save,
So well I like thee, merry knave,
That I thy company must have:
Nay, and I will.

FRIAR. Nay, and you shall.

ROB. H. My lord, you need not fear at all,
But you shall have his company:
He will be bold, I warrant you.

KING. Know you, where-e'er a spring is nigh?
Fain would I drink, I am right dry.

ROB. H. I have a drink within my bower
Of pleasant taste and sovereign power:
My reverend uncle gives it me,
To give unto your majesty.

KING. I would be loth, indeed, being in heat
To drink cold water. Let us to thy bower.

ROB. H. Run, Friar, before,
And bid my uncle be in readiness.

FRIAR. Gone in a trice[276] on such good business.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE III.[277]

Enter MARIAN, with a white apron.

MAR. What, Much! What, Jenny! Much, I say!

MUCH. What's the matter, mistress?

MAR. I pray thee, see the fueller
Suffer the cook to want no wood.
Good Lord, where is this idle girl?
Why, Jenny!

JENNY (*within*). I come, forsooth.

MAR. I pray thee, bring the flowers forth.

MUCH. I'll go send her, mistress, and help the cooks, if they have any need.

MAR. Despatch, good Much. What, Jen, I say!

Enter JENNY.

MUCH. Hie ye, hie ye! she calls for life. [*Exit* MUCH.]

MAR. Indeed, indeed, you do me wrong,
To let me cry, and call so long.

JEN. Forsooth, I straw'd[278] the dining bowers,
And smooth'd the walks with herbs and flowers.
The yeomen's tables I have spread,
Dress'd salts, laid trenchers, set on bread.
Nay, all is well, I warrant you.

MAR. You are not well, I promise you,
Your 'foresleeves are not pinn'd; fie, fie!
And all your head-gear stands awry.
Give me the flowers. Go in, for shame,
And quickly see you mend the same.

[*Exit* JENNY.]

Enter SIR DONCASTER, PRIOR. MARIAN *strewing flowers*.

DON. How busy Mistress Marian is!
She thinks this is her day of bliss.

PRIOR. But it shall be the wofull'st day
That ever chanc'd her, if I may.

MAR. Why are you two thus in the air?
Your wounds are green. Good coz, have care.

PRIOR. Thanks for your kindness, gentle maid:
My cousin Robert us hath prayed
To help him in his business.

Enter FRIAR.

FRIAR. Sir Doncaster, Sir Doncaster!

DON. Holla!

FRIAR. I pray you, did you see the Prior?

PRIOR. Why, here I am. What wouldst thou. Friar?

FRIAR. The king is heated in the chase,
And posteth hitherward apace.
He told my master he was dry,
And he desires ye presently
To send the drink whereof ye spake.

PRIOR. Come, it is here: haste let us make.

[*Exeunt* DONCASTER, PRIOR, *and* FRIAR.]

_Horns blow.

Enter KING, QUEEN, JOHN, SCARLET, SCATHLOCK,
ELY, FITZWATER, SALISBURY, CHESTER.

MARIAN *kneels down*.

MAR. Most gracious sovereign, welcome once again:
Welcome to you and all your princely train.

KING. Thanks, lovely hostess; we are homely guests.
Where's Robin Hood? he promis'd me some drink.

MAR. Your handmaid, Robin, will not then be long:
The Friar, indeed, came running to his uncle,
Who, with Sir Doncaster, were here with me,
And all together went for such a drink.

KING. Well, in a better time it could not come,
For I am very hot and passing dry.

Enter ROBIN HOOD, *with a cup, a towel, leading*
DONCASTER: TUCK *and* MUCH *pulling the* PRIOR.

ROB. H. Traitor! I'll draw thee out before the king.

FRIAR. Come, murderous Prior.

MUCH. Come, ye dog's face.

KING. Why, how now, Robin? Where's the drink you bring?

ROB. H. Lay hold on these!
Far be it I should bring your majesty
The drink these two prepared for your taste.

KING. Why, Robin Hood? be brief and answer me.
I am amazed at thy troubled looks.

ROB. H. Long will not my ill-looks amaze your grace;
I shortly look never to look again.

MAR. Never to look! What, will it still be night?
If thou look never, day can never be.
What ails my Robin? Wherefore dost thou faint?

ROB. H. Because I cannot stand: yet now I can.
[KING *and* MARIAN *support him*.
Thanks to my king, and thanks to Marian.

KING. Robin, be brief, and tell us what hath chanc'd.

ROB. H. I must be brief, for I am sure of death,
Before a long tale can be half-way told.

FITZ. Of death, my son! bright sun of all my joy!
Death cannot have the power of[279] virtuous life.

ROB. H. Not o'er[280] the virtues, but the life it can.

KING. What, dost thou speak of death? how shouldst thou die?

ROB. H. By poison and the Prior's treachery.

QUEEN. Why, take this sovereign powder at my hands:
Take it, and live in spite of poison's power.

DON. Ay, set him forward. Powders, quoth ye? hah!
I am a fool, then, if a little dust,
The shaving of a horn, a Bezoar stone,[281]
Or any antidote have power to stay
The execution of my heart's resolve.
Tut, tut! you labour, lovely queen, in vain,

And on a thankless groom your toil bestow.
Now hath your foe reveng'd you of your foe:
Robin shall die, if all the world said no.[282]

MAR. How the wolf howls! Fly, like a tender kid,
Into thy shepherd's bosom. Shield me, love!
Canst thou not, Robin? Where shall I be hid?
O God! these ravens will seize upon thy dove.

ROB. H. They cannot hurt thee; pray thee, do not fear:
Base curs will couch, the lion being near.

QUEEN. How works my powder?

ROB. H. Very well, fair queen.

KING. Dost thou feel any ease?

ROB. H. I shall, I trust, anon:
Sleep falls upon mine eyes. O, I must sleep,
And they that love me, do not waken me.

MAR. Sleep in my lap, and I will sing to thee.

JOHN. He should not sleep.

ROB. H. I must, for I must die;
While I live, therefore, let me have some rest.

FITZ. Ay, let him rest: the poison urges sleep.
When he awakes, there is no hope of life.

DON. Of life! Now, by the little time I have to live,
He cannot live one hour for your lives.

KING. Villain! what art thou?

DON. Why, I am a knight.

CHES. Thou wert indeed. If it so please your grace,
I will describe my knowledge of this wretch.

KING. Do, Chester.

CHES. This Doncaster, for so the felon hight,
Was by the king, your father, made a knight,
And well in arms he did himself behave.
Many a bitter storm the wind of rage
Blasted this realm within those woful days,
When the unnatural fights continued
Between your kingly father and his sons.
This cutthroat, knighted in that time of woe,
Seized on a beauteous nun at Berkhamstead,
As we were marching toward Winchester,
After proud Lincoln was compell'd to yield.
He took this virgin straying in the field—
For all the nuns and every covent[283] fled
The dangers that attended on our troops:
For those sad times too oft did testify,
War's rage hath no regard to piety—
She humbly pray'd him, for the love of heaven,
To guide her to her father's, two miles thence:
He swore he would, and very well he might,
For to the camp he was a forager.
Upon the way they came into a wood,
Wherein, in brief, he stripp'd this tender maid:
Whose lust, when she in vain had long withstood,
Being by strength and torments overlaid,
He did a sacrilegious deed of rape,

And left her bathed in her own tears and blood.
When she reviv'd, she to her father's got,
And got her father to make just complaint
Unto your mother, being then in camp.

QUEEN. Is this the villain, Chester, that defil'd
Sir Eustace Stutville's chaste and beauteous child?

DON. Ay, madam, this is he
That made a wench dance naked in a wood;
And, for she did deny what I desired,
I scourg'd her for her pride, till her fair skin
With stripes was checquer'd like a vintner's grate.[284]
And what was this? A mighty matter, sure!
I have a thousand more than she defil'd,
And cut the squeaking throats of some of them—
I grieve I did not hers.

QUEEN. Punish him, Richard.
A fairer virgin never saw the sun;
A chaster maid was never sworn a nun.

KING. How 'scaped the villain punishment that time?

FITZ. I rent his spurs off, and disgraded him.

CHES. And then he rail'd upon the Queen and me.
Being committed, he his keeper slew,
And to your father fled, who pardon'd him.

RICH. God give his soul a pardon for that sin.

SAL. O, had I heard his name or seen his face,
I had defended Robin from this chance!
Ah, villain! shut those gloomy lights of thine.
Remember'st thou a little son of mine,
Whose nurse at Wilton first thou ravishedst,
And slew'st two maids that did attend on them?

DON. I grant I dash'd the brains out of a brat—
Thine if he were, I care not: had he been
The first-born comfort of a royal king,
And should have yall'd, when Doncaster cried peace,
I would have done by him as then I did.

KING. Soon shall the world be rid of such a wretch.
Let him be hang'd alive in the highway
That joineth to the tower.[285]

DON. Alive or dead (I reck not how I die),
You, them, and these I desperately defy.

ELY. Repent, or never look to be absolv'd;
But die accurs'd, as thou deservest well.

DON. Then give me my desert: curse, one by one!

ELY. First I accurse thee; and if thou persist,
Unto damnation leave thee, wretched man.

DON. What do I care for your damnation?
Am I not doomed to death? what more damnation
Can there ensue your loud and yelling cries?

PRIOR. Yes, devil! hear thy fellow-spirit speak—
Who would repent; O, fain he would repent!—
After this body's bitter punishment,
There is an ever-during endless woe,
A quenchless fire, an unconsuming pain,

Which desperate souls and bodies must endure.

DON. Can you preach this, yet set me on, Sir Prior,
To run into this endless, quenchless fire?

PRIOR. High heavens, show mercy to my many ills!
Never had this been done, but like a fiend
Thou temptedst me with ceaseless devilish thoughts.
Therefore I curse with bitterness of soul
The hour wherein I saw thy baleful eyes.
My eyes I curse for looking on those eyes!
My ears I curse for hearkening to thy tongue!
I curse thy tongue for tempting of mine ears!
Each part I curse, that we call thine or mine;
Thine for enticing mine, mine following thine!

DON. A holy prayer. What collect have we next?

[*This time* ROBIN *stirs*.

FITZ. My Marian wanteth words, such is her woe;
But old Fitzwater, for his girl and him,
Begs nothing but world's plague for such a foe,
Which causeless harm'd a virtuous nobleman,
A pitier of his griefs, when he felt grief.
Therefore, bethink thee of thy hateful deed,
Thou faithless Prior, and thou this ruthless thief.

PRIOR. Will no man curse me, giving so much cause?
Then, Doncaster, ourselves ourselves accurse,
And let no good betide to thee or me!

[*All the Yeomen, FRIAR, MUCH, JENNY cry*.

ALL. Amen, amen! accursed may he be
For murdering Robin, flower of courtesy.

[ROBIN *sits up*.

ROB. H. O, ring not such a peal for Robin's death!
Let sweet forgiveness be my passing bell.
Art thou there, Marian? then fly forth, my breath:
To die within thy arms contents me well.

PRIOR. Keep in, keep in a little while thy soul,
Till I have pour'd my soul forth at thy feet.

ROB. H. I slept not, uncle; I your grief did hear,
Let him forgive thy soul that bought it dear:
Your body's deed I in my death forgive,
And humbly beg the king that you may live.
Stand to your clergy, uncle;[286] save your life,
And lead a better life than you have done.

PRIOR. O, gentle nephew! O, my brother's son,
Thou dying glory of old Huntington!
Wishest thou life to such a murderous foe?
I will not live, since thou must life forego.
O, happy Warman! blessed in thy end;
Now too-too late thy truth I do commend.
O, nephew, nephew! Doncaster and I
Murder'd poor Warman, for he did deny
To join with us in this black tragedy.

ROB. H. Alas, poor Warman! Friar, Little John,
I told ye both where Warman's body lay,
And of his burial I'll dispose anon.

KING. Is there no law, Lord Ely, to convict
This Prior, that confesses murders thus?

ELY. He is a hallow'd man, and must be tried
And punish'd by the censure of the church.

PRIOR. The church therein doth err: God doth allow
No canon to preserve a murderer's life.
Richard! King Richard! in thy grandsire's days
A law was made, the clergy sworn thereto,
That whatsoever churchman did commit
Treason or murder, or false felony,
Should like a secular be punished.
Treason we did, for sure we did intend
King Richard's poisoning, sovereign of this land.
Murder we did, in working Warman's end
And my dear nephew's by this fatal hand:
And theft we did, for we have robb'd the king,
The state, the nobles, commons, and his men,
Of a true peer, firm pillar, liberal lord.
Fitzwater we have robbed of a kind son,
And Marian's love-joys we have quite undone.

DON. Whoop! what a coil is here with your confession!

PRIOR. I ask but judgment for my foul transgression.

KING. Thy own mouth hath condemn'd thee.
Hence with him!
Hang this man dead, then see him buried;
But let the other hang alive in chains.

DON. I thank you, sir.

[*Exeunt Yeomen, FRIAR, Prisoners, MUCH.*]

JOHN. Myself will go, my lord,
And see sharp justice done upon these slaves.

ROB. H. O, go not hence, Prince John! a word or two,
Before I die, I fain would say to you.

KING. Robin, we see what we are sad to see—
Death, like a champion, treading down thy life:
Yet in thy end, somewhat to comfort thee,
We freely give to thy betrothed wife,
Beauteous and chaste Matilda, all those lands,
Fallen by thy folly to the Prior's hands,
And by his fault now forfeited to me.
Earl Huntington, she shall thy countess be:
And thy wight yeomen, they shall wend with me
Against the faithless enemies of Christ.

ROB. H. Bring forth a bier, and cover it with green;
That on my deathbed I may here sit down.

[*A bier is brought in. He sits.*]

At Robin's burial let no black be seen,
Let no hand give for him a mourning gown;
For in his death his king hath given him life
By this large gift, given to his maiden wife.
Chaste maid Matilda, countess of account,
Chase with thy bright eyes all these clouds of woe
From these fair cheeks; I pray thee, sweet, do so:
Think it is bootless folly to complain
For that which never can be had again.
Queen Elinor, you once were Matilda's foe;
Prince John, you long sought her unlawful love:

Let dying Robin Hood entreat you both
To change those passions: madam, turn your hate
To princely love: Prince John, convert your love
To virtuous passion, chaste and moderate.
O, that your gracious right hands would enfold
Matilda's right hand, prison'd in my palm,
And swear to do what Robin Hood desires!

QUEEN. I swear I will: I will a mother be
To fair Matilda's life and chastity.

JOHN. When John solicits chaste Matilda's ears
With lawless suits, as he hath often done,
Or offers to the altars of her eyes
Lascivious poems, stuff'd with vanities,
He craves to see but short and sour days:
His death be like to Robin's he desires;
His perjured body prove a poison'd prey
For cowed monks and barefoot begging friars.

ROB. H. Enough, enough! Fitzwater, take your child.
My dying frost, which no sun's heat can thaw,
Closes the powers of all my outward parts:
My freezing blood runs back unto my heart,
Where it assists death, which it would resist:
Only my love a little hinders death,
For he beholds her eyes, and cannot smite:
Then go not yet, Matilda, stay awhile.
Friar, make speed, and list my latest will.

MAT. O, let me look for ever in thy eyes,
And lay my warm breath to thy bloodless lips,
If my sight can restrain death's tyrannies,
Or keep life's breath within thy bosom lock'd.

ROB. H. Away, away!
Forbear, my love; all this is but delay.

FITZ. Come, maiden daughter, from my maiden son,
And give him leave to do what must be done.

ROB. H. First, I bequeath my soul to all souls Sav'our,
And will my body to be buried
At Wakefield, underneath the abbey wall;
And in this order make my funeral.
When I am dead, stretch me upon this bier!
My beads and primer shall my pillow be;
On this side be my bow, my good shafts here;
Upon my breast the cross, and underneath
My trusty sword, thus fasten'd in the sheath.
Let Warman's body at my feet be laid,
Poor Warman, that in my defence did die.
For holy dirges sing me woodmen's songs,
As ye to Wakefield walk with voices shrill.
This for myself. My goods and plate I give
Among my yeomen: them I do bestow
Upon my sovereign Richard. This is all.
My liege, farewell! my love, farewell, farewell!
Farewell, fair Queen, Prince John, and noble lords!
Father Fitzwater, heartily adieu!
Adieu, my yeomen tall. Matilda, close mine eyes.
Friar, farewell! farewell to all!

MAT. O, must my hands with envious death conspire
To shut the morning gates of my life's light!

FITZ. It is a duty and thy love's desire!

I'll help thee, girl, to close up Robin's sight.[287]

KING. Laments are bootless, tears cannot restore
Lost life, Matilda; therefore weep no more:
And since our mirth is turned into moan,
Our merry sport to tragic funeral,
We will prepare our power for Austria,
After Earl Robert's timeless burial.
Fall to your wood-songs, therefore, yeomen bold.
And deck his hearse with flowers, that loved you dear:
Dispose his goods as he hath them dispos'd.
Fitzwater and Matilda, bide you here.
See you the body unto Wakefield borne:
A little we will bear ye company,
But all of us at London 'point to meet:
Thither, Fitzwater, bring Earl Robin's men;
And, Friar, see you come along with them.

FRIAR. Ah, my liege lord! the Friar faints,
And hath no words to make complaints:
But since he must forsake this place,
He will await, and thanks your grace.

_Song.

Weep, weep, ye woodmen, wail,
Your hands with sorrow wring;
Your master Robin Hood lies dead,
Therefore sigh as you sing.

Here lie his primer and his beads,
His bent bow and his arrows keen,
His good sword and his holy cross:
Now cast on flowers fresh and green;

And as they fall, shed tears and say,
Wella, wella-day! wella, wella-day:
Thus cast ye flowers and sing,
And on to Wakefield take your way_.

[Exeunt.

FRIAR. Here doth the Friar leave with grievance;
Robin is dead, that graced his entrance,
And being dead, he craves his audience
With this short play they would have patience.[288]

Enter CHESTER.

CHES. Nay, Friar, at the request of thy kind friend,
Let not thy play too soon be at an end.
Though Robin Hood be dead, his yeomen gone,
And that thou think'st there now remains not one
To act another scene or two for thee,
Yet know full well, to please this company,
We mean to end Matilda's tragedy.

FRIAR. Off then, I wish you, with your Kendal green;
Let not sad grief in fresh array be seen.
Matilda's story is replete with tears,
Wrongs, desolations, ruins, deadly fears.
In, and attire ye. Though I tired be,
Yet will I tell my mistress' tragedy.
Apollo's masterdom[289] I invoke,
To whom henceforth my deeds I dedicate;
That of his godhead, 'bove all gods divine,
With his rich spirit he would lighten mine:

That I may sing true lays of trothless deeds,
Which to conceive my heart through sorrow bleeds,
Cheer thee, sad soul, and in a lofty line
Thunder out wrong, compass'd in cloudy tears:

[*Enter in black.*][290]

Show to the eyes, fill the beholders' ears,
With all the lively acts of lustful rage,
Restrain'd by modest tears and chastity's intreats:
And let King John, that ill-part[291] personage,
By suits, devices, practices, and threats,
And when he sees all serveth to no end,
Of chaste Matilda let him make an end.

CHO. We are all fitted, Friar: shall we begin?

FRIAR. Well art thou suited: would my order would
Permit me habit equal to my heart!

CHO. If you remember, John did take an oath
Never again to seek Matilda's love.

FRIAR. O, what is he, that's sworn affection's slave,
That will not violate all laws, all oaths?
And, being mighty, what will he omit
To compass his intents, though ne'er so ill?—
You must suppose King Richard now is dead,
And John, resistless, is fair England's lord
Who, striving to forget Matilda's love,
Takes to his wife the beauteous Isabel,
Betroth'd to Hugh le Brun, Earl of North-March:[292]
And picking quarrels under show of kin,
Wholly divorces his first queen away.
But yet Matilda still-still troubles him,
And being in the court, so oft he courts her,
That by her noble father, old Fitzwater,
She is remov'd from his lust-tempting eye.
But tides restrain'd o'erswell their bounds with rage:
Her absence adds more fuel to his fire.
In sleep he sees her, and his waking thoughts
Study by day to compass his desire.

CHO. Friar, since now you speak of visions,
It was received by tradition
From those that were right near unto King John,
Of three strange visions that to him appear'd;
And, as I guess, I told you what they were.

FRIAR. With them I will begin. Draw but that veil,
And there King John sits sleeping in his chair.

[*Draw the curtain: the king sits sleeping, his sword by his side. Enter Austria, before whom cometh Ambition, and bringing him before the chair, King John in sleep maketh signs to avoid, and holdeth his own crown fast with both his hands.*

FRIAR. Ambition, that had ever waited on King John,
Now brings him Austria, easy to be ta'en,
Being wholly tam'd by Richard's warlike hand.
And bids him add that dukedom to his crown:
But he puts by Ambition, and contemns
All other kingdoms but the English crown,
Which he holds fast, as if he would not loose[293].

[*Enter Constance, leading Young Arthur: both offer to take the crown; but with his foot he overturneth them: to them cometh Insurrection, led by the F.K. and L.[294] menacing him, and leads the child again to the chair; but he only layeth hand on his sword, and with his foot*

overthroweth the child, whom they take up as dead; and, Insurrection flying, they mournfully bear in the body.

FRIAR. The lady and the child that did ascend,
Striving in vain to take the crown from John,
Were Constance and her son the Duke of Britain,
Heir to the elder brother of the king:
Yet he sleeps on, and with a little spurn
The mother and the prince doth overturn.
Again, when Insurrection them assists,
Stirr'd by the French king and the wronged earl,
Whose troth-pledge wife King John had ta'en to wife,
He only claps his hand upon his sword,
Mocketh their threatenings, and in their attempts
The harmless prince receives recureless death,
Whom they too late with bootless tears lament.

[Enter Queen with two Children, borne after her: she ascends, and seeing no motion, she fetcheth her children one by one; but seeing yet no motion, she descendeth, wringing her hands, and departeth. Enter Matilda in a mourning veil, reading on a book, at whose coming he starteth, and sitteth upright; as she passeth by, he smiles, and folds his arms as if he did embrace her: being gone, he starts suddenly, and speaks.]

KING. Matilda! stay, Matilda, do but speak!
Who's there? Entreat Matilda to come back.

Enter BONVILLE[295].

BON. Who would you have, my lord?

KING. Why, my Lord Bonville, I would have Matilda,
That but even now pass'd by toward the door.

BON. I saw her not, my lord.

KING. Hadst thou a lover's eye,
A gnat, a mote, a shadow thou wouldst spy.
Come, follow me; she cannot be so far,
But I shall overtake her: come away!

[Exeunt.]

FRIAR. The last appearance shadow'd the fair queen
And her two children, at whose sight King John
Shewed neither sign nor show of passion:
But when the sun came masked in a cloud,
And veiled beauty, join'd with chastity,
Appeared in Matilda's lovely shape,
He starts, he clasps, he wakes, he calls, he seeks
The shadow of that substance he affects.
To her he sues, but she his suit rejects;
To him she sues, but he her suit neglects:
He sues to be her love; she doth despise:
She sues to live a maid, which he denies.
What follows of this wilfull will and shall,
This no and nay, this quenchless, bootless fire,
This cold affection and this hot desire,
The act itself shall tell; and the poor friar
Your partial favours humbly doth require.

[Exit.]

ACT II., SCENE I.

KING. Now I perceive this only was a dream.
Divine Matilda's angel did appear,
Deck'd like a vestal ready for heaven's quire,
And to this earthly trunk will not come near.
Well, let her go: I must, i' faith, I must,
And so I will. Kings' thoughts should be divine;
So are Matilda's, so henceforth shall mine.

OLD AUB. So doing, peace shall wait upon your crown,
And blessing upon blessing shall befall.

KING. It's true, my lord: I know full well there shall.

SAL. Your people will wax proud of such a king,
That of himself is king, lord of his thoughts;
Which by assertion of philosophers
Is held to be the greatest empery.

KING. And they said wisely, noble Aubery.

SAL. Then will Fitzwater, with his gallant troop[297],
Again keep triumph[298] in the English court;
Then will Matilda—

KING. Matilda! what of her?

SAL. Like a bright star adorn the lovely train
Of beauteous ladies which attend the queen,
Whose only beauty equalleth them all.

KING. Like an old fool, whose dim eyes, wanting sight,
Compar'st the sun to common candle light?

SAL. Pardon, my liege, I do confess her fair[299]
Exceeds all these as far as day doth night.

KING. Grossly alluded: night by moon, by stars
By wandering fires, exhaled meteors,
By artificial lights, by eyes of beasts,
And little glow-worms glimpsing in the dark,
Hath somewhere brightness, lightness; and sometime
Under each horizon in all parts clear:
But they at no time nowhere can be said
To be less dark than dungeon darkness is:
Pitch-colour'd, ebon-fac'd, blacker than black,
While her fair eyes give beauty to bright day.

SAL. To hear the queen thus prais'd works my content.

KING. The queen!
O, had I such a thought, I would repent. [*To himself.*]

SAL. Further, my lord—

KING. What, shall we further wade?
I fear I shall be tired with this jade.

SAL. The commonwealth will flourish and increase.

KING. Good Salisbury,[300] of those things now hold your peace,
And take the pains to fetch in Isabel.
I have strange tidings sent me out of France,
Which she will take, I know, in as good part,
As I accept her praise. Fetch her, I say.

[*Exit SALISBURY.*]

What, is the old fool gone? now go thy way.
What think'st thou of him, Hubert? tell me, man.

HUB. As of a good old gentleman, my lord,
That speaks but what he thinks, and thinks you think
As he doth; and, I warrant you,
Will not conceal those praises from the queen
Which, as he deems, you utter'd in her praise.

KING. I would have them believe it so, indeed;
But I protest 'tis no part of my creed. [*Aside.*]

HUB. I'faith, your grace did Salisbury's years great wrong,
To curtail his good work, that seem'd so long:
He, peradventure, would have brought in more,
After his preface, to rich plenty's store.
Perchance he would have show'd Dame Vanity,
That in your court is suffered hourly;
And bade you punish ruffians with long hair,
New fashions, and such toys. A special care
Has that good man: he turns the statute-book;
About his hall and chambers if you look,
The moral virtues in fair effigy
Are lively painted: moral philosophy
Has not a sentence, be it great or small,
But it is painted on his honour's wall.

Enter QUEEN *and* SALISBURY.

KING. Peace, peace! he comes: now let's be silent all.

SAL. I tell you, I was proud of his good words.

QUEEN. God hold them, Salisbury, for it's often seen,
A reconciled foe small good affords.

SAL. O, forbear! trust me.
I gage my honour he doth hold you dear.

KING. How cheer you, Isabel? The earl your spouse
Hath sent defiance to the king your husband,
And, like a tried tall soldier, fled his holds
In Marchland, where he knows, despite of him
And all the men that he therein can raise,
King John could have sent dogs enou' to tear
Their ill-arm'd bodies piecemeal, ere his bands
Should with base blood have stain'd their noble hands.
And whither is this worshipful good earl
(This first love, old love, new love, if you will)
Gone, thinks your ladyship? forsooth, good man,
To Normandy; and there he stirs up coals,
And urgeth strong aid for confederates
Who, as he says, are treacherously disposed.

QUEEN. If he do so, the greater is his sin.
Poor man. I have no interest in him.

KING. But he hath had in you, as it should seem,
Else would he not make sonnets of your brow,
Your eye, your lip, your hand, your thigh.
A plague upon him! how came he so nigh?
Nay, now you have the curs'd quean's counterfeit:
Through rage you shake, because you cannot rave.
But answer me: why should the bedlam slave
Entitle a whole poem to your kiss,
Calling it cherry, ruby, this and this?
I tell you, I am jealous of your love,
Which makes me break into this passion.
Here's the kind noble Aubery de Vere
Knows what I speak is true.

My lord, my lord! I do appeal to you,
Are these things to be borne?

SAL. No, by the rood:
These love-rhymes are the tokens of small good.

HUB. Why, my good lord, was never poetry
Offer'd unto a lady's patronage?

SAL. Yes, but not taken[301].

HUB. Yes, and taken too.
Though moody[302] slaves, whose balladising rhymes
With words unpolish'd show their brutish thoughts,
Naming their maukins[303] in each lustful line,
Let no celestial beauty look awry,
When well-writ poems, couching her rich praise,
Are offer'd to her unstain'd, virtuous eye:
For poetry's high-sprighted sons will raise
True beauty to all wish'd eternity.
Therefore, my lord, your age is much to blame
To think a taken poem lady's shame.

SAL. You see the king, that's better read than you,
And far more wrong'd than I, takes it not well.

KING. Yes, but I do: I think not Isabel
The worse for any writing of Le Brun's.[304]

SAL. Will you ha' the truth, my lord, I think so too;
And though I be an old man, by my sword,
My arm shall justify my constant word.

QUEEN. After a long storm in a troublous sea,
The pilot is no gladder of a calm,
Than Isabel to see the vexed looks
Of her lov'd lord chang'd into sweet aspects.

KING. I will not tell thee what a world of foes
For thy love (dear love) rise against my life.
Matilda's love, few swords will fight for thee. [*To himself.*]
I will not number up the many woes
That shall be multiplied: strife upon strife
Will follow; but to shun ensuing ills,
I'll take such pledges as shall please me ask
Of each proud baron dwelling in the realm.
Bruce, kinsman and the deputy to March,
Hath a high-minded lady to his wife,
An able son for arms, and a less boy,
That is the comfort of his father's life.
Madam, I know you love the lady well,
And of her wealth you may be bold to build[305],
By sending you four hundred white milch kine,
And ten like-colour'd bulls to serve that herd;
So fair, that every cow did Iö seem,
And every bull Europa's ravisher.
To friend myself with such a subject's truth,
Thus I command: you and Earl Salisbury
Shall, with what speed conveniently ye may,
Hie ye to Guildford: there the lady lies,
And her sons too, as I am told by spies.
All that she hath, I know, she calleth yours;
All that she hath I gladly would call mine,
If she abuse ye; if she use ye well,
For ever be what she retains her own.
Only go by, as queens in progress do,
And send me word how she receiveth you.

QUEEN. Well, I avouch, she will, before I go:
Far be it John should prove Lord Bruce's foe.
Come, noble Salisbury, I long to be at Guildford.

SAL. In such a business, madam, so do I.

[*Exeunt.*]

KING. Go on, good stales[306]: now Guildford is mine own! [*Aside.*]
Hubert, I charge you take an hundred horse,
And follow unto Guildford castle-gates.
The queen pretend you come to tend upon,
Sent carefully from us: when you are in,
Boldly demand the lady for her sons,
For pledges of her husband's faith and hers:
Whom when ye have, upon the castle seize,
And keep it to our use, until we come.
Meanwhile let me alone with Hugh your son,
To work a wonder, if no prodigy;
But whatsoe'er, it shall attempted be.

HUB. Even that which to your majesty
May seem contentful, thereto I agree.

KING. Go then to Guildford, and a victor be, [*Exit HUBERT.*]
Mowbray, our masque: are you and Chester ready?

MOW. We will before your grace, I warrant you.

KING. How think'st of it, Mowbray?

MOW. As on a masque: but for our torch-bearers,
Hell cannot make so mad a crew as I.

KING. Faith, who is chief?

MOW. Will Brand, my lord;
But then your grace must curb his cruelty:
The rein once got, he's apt for villainy.

KING. I know the villain is both rough and grim;
But as a tie-dog I will muzzle him.
I'll bring him up to fawn upon my friends.
And worry dead my foes. But to our masque.
I mean this night to revel at the feast,
Where fair Matilda graceth every guest;
And if my hidden courtesy she grace,
Old Baynard's Castle, good Fitzwater's place,
John will make rich with royal England's wealth:
But if she do not, not those scatter'd bands,
Dropping from Austria and the Holy Land,
That boast so much of glorious victories,
Shall stop the inundations of those woes,
That like a deluge I will bring on them.
I know the crew is there; banish all fears:
If wrong'd, they shall be ours: if welcome, theirs.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*Enter FITZWATER and his son: OLD BRUCE and
YOUNG BRUCE, and call forth MATILDA*[307].

FITZ. Why, how now, votary! still at your book?
Ever in mourning weeds? For shame, for shame!

With better entertainment cheer our friends.
Now, by the bless'd cross, you are much to blame
To cross our mirth thus: you are much to blame,
I say. Good lord! hath never woe enough
Of welladay? Indeed, indeed,
Some sorrow fits, but this is more than need.

MAT. Good father, pardon me:
You saw I sat the supper and the banquet;
You know I cannot dance; discourse I shun,
By reason that my wit, but small before,
Comes far behind the ripe wits of our age.

YOUNG B. You'll be too ripe for marriage,
If you delay by day and day thus long.
There is the noble Wigmore, Lord of the March
That lies on Wye, Lug[308], and the Severn streams:
His son is like the sun's sire's Ganymede,
And for your love hath sent a lord to plead.
His absence I did purpose to excuse,

Enter LEICESTER.

But Leicester is the man for him that sues.

FITZ. My cousin Bruce hath been your broker, Leicester;
At least hath broke the matter to my girl.

LEI. O, for a barber at the time of need,
Or one of these that dresses periwigs,
To deck my grey head with a youthful hair!
But I must to't. Matilda, thus it is!
Say, can you love me? I am Wigmore's son.

MAT. My cousin said he look'd like Ganymede;
But you, but you—

LEI. But I, but I, you say,
Am rather like old Chremes in a play[309];
But that's a nice objection: I am he,
But by attorneyship made deputy.

MAT. He's never like to speed well all his life,
That by attorney sues to win a wife:
But grant you are, whom you seem nothing like,
Young Wigmore, the heir to this noble lord—
He for his son hath sent us ne'er a word.

OLD B. If you grant love, when [that] his son doth woo,
Then in your jointure he'll send, say, and do.

YOUNG B. And for a doer, cousin, take my word:
Look for a good egg, he was a good bird;
Cock o' the game, i' faith, [O,] never fear.

MAT. Ay, but I fear the match will fall out ill,
Because he says his son is named Will.

FITZ. And why, good daughter? hath some palmister,
Some augur, or some dreaming calculator
(For such, I know, you often hearken to),
Been prating 'gainst the name? go to, go to;
Do not believe them. Leicester, fall to woo.

MAT. I must believe my father; and 'tis you
That, if I ought misdidd, reprov'd me still,
And chiding said, "You're wedded to your will."

FITZ. God, for thy mercy! have ye catch'd me there?
Wigmore is William, woman. Leicester, speak:
Thou art the simplest wooer in the world.

LEI. You have put me out, and she hath took me down;
You with your talk, she with her ready tongue.
You told me I should find her mild and still,
And scarce a word came from her in an hour:
Then did I think I should have all the talk,
Unhinder'd by your willingness to help,
Unanswer'd, till I had no more to say;
And then—

YOUNG B. What, then?
She with a courtly court'sy saying Nay!

MAT. Your friend's attorney might have gone his way
With as great credit as did that orator
Which, handling an oration some three hours,
Ill for the matter, worse than bad for phrase,
Having said *dixi*, look'd, and found not one
To praise or dispraise his oration;
For, wearied with his talk, they all were gone.

FITZ. Now, by my troth, if any troth I have,
I am as merry at Matilda's mirth,
As I was glad to see her first day's birth.
For till this hour, so help me halidom,[310]
Since the too timely death of Huntington,
Not a blithe word had passage through her lips.

LEI. See, what a pleasing humour wooers bring.

YOUNG B. O, but ye leave too soon.

LEI. Yet she avers
I stand too long: shall I choose yours or hers?

MAT. Either forbear, I pray ye, for a while.

Enter RICHMOND.[311]

Welcome, Lord Richmond.

RICH. What, doth Matilda smile,
That still like silence solitary sat?
Then off with widow's weeds, and teach your feet
(That have forgot for want of exercise,
And by the means your sorrow had no mean)
To tread a measure for a gallant crew
Of courtly masquers landed at the stairs;
Before whom, unentreated, I am come,
And have prevented, I believe, their page,
Who with his torch is enter'd.

FITZ. Richmond, thanks,
If you have aught to say about the masquers.
Beseech the gentlemen to enter in,
For they are welcome guests to old Fitzwater.

[Exit Messenger.

Son, son, I pray you fetch the ladies in:
We have been talking here about a match,
And left our noble friends in discontent.

RICH. Nay, by my faith we had much merriment,
Yet thought it long you neither came nor sent.

[MATILDA faints, and sits down.

FITZ. How now, Matilda? pray thee, cheer thee, girl.

MAT. I thought it was a lightening before death,[312]
Too sudden to be certain. Good pleasure, stay.

Enter Ladies.

Wilt thou not, wanton? churl, then go thy way.

RICH. What, chang'd so soon? so soon fallen to your dumps?
Cheerly! the masque comes in.

[Enter the Masque.]

MAT. O[313] God, this veil
And look fit not this sport. I'll leave it.

LEI. Nay,
For your love William's sake, fair maiden, stay!

*[Dance: Masquers take each a lady, JOHN
MATILDA, but [she] refusing, father.[314]
They sit down apart.*

FITZ. This is no courtship, daughter, be not nice,
You both abuse him and disparage us.
His fellows had the ladies they did choose,
And, well, you know here's no more maids than Maud:[315]
Yourself are all our store. I pray you, rise,
Or, by my faith, I say you do us wrong.

MAT. I will do what you will. Lead, lead your dance.

KING. You know me by my speech.

MAT. Ay, my liege, ay. O, that temptation's tongue
Hath[316] nowhere to be plac'd but in your head!

KING. Well, say I have her tongue, had I not need,
When you have both her eyes, nay, all her shape,
Able to tempt even Job himself to rape?

MAT. Good my lord, leave, or I will leave the place.

[Dance again; and in the first course MATILDA flings from him: JOHN follows.

FITZ. Dance out your galliard: God's dear holy-bread!
Y'are too forgetful. Dance, or, by my troth,
You'll move my patience more than I will speak.

[She unwilling, JOHN roughly pulls her.

Nay, soft, unmanner'd sir: you are too rough:
Her joints are weak, your arms are strong and tough.
If ye come here for sport, you welcome be;
If not, better your room than such bad company.

[JOHN threatens him by signs.

Dost threaten me? then will I see thy face.

KING. And so thou shalt. Look on me, rebel lord!
Thou that wert late a factious ringleader,
And in the open field gav'st me fierce fight:
Art thou again gathering another head,
That with such rudeness thou dost entertain
The gentle coming of thy sovereign?

FITZ. My dread lord, hear me, and forgive this fault,
What I have erst done, long since you forgave:
If I did lead the barons in the field,
The barons chose me, when they could not choose
But make some leader, you were so misled.

When better thoughts enter'd your royal breast,
We then obey'd you as our sovereign head.

KING. You did even what you list, and so do still:
I am the king, but you must have your will.
The plain truth is, we are not come in sport,
Though for our coming this was our best cloak;
For if we never come, till you do send,
We must not be your guest, while banquets last.
Contentious brawls you hourly send to us;
But we may send and send, and you return—
This lord is sick, that pained with the gout,
He rid from home. You think I find not out
Your close confederacies: yes, I do, no doubt.

LEI. If there be here a close confederate,
God's vengeance light upon him with my hate!

KING. No, you are open, Leicester; that I know.

CHES. I, by the Lord, my lord, your open foe.

LEI. By thy lord's Lord and mine, proud Ralph of Chester,
Thou durst not say so, wert thou from the king.

MOW. Yes, but he dares and shall.

RICH. Mowbray, if you stand by,
He dares perchance; else will the dastard fly.

CHES. My own sword shall maintain my tongue's true speech;
For it is not frequented to such lies,
As wrangling Leicester and proud Richmond use:
It cannot set out, like a thundering drum
Or roaring cannon, stuff'd with nought but brags,
The multitudes of seas dyed red with blood,[317]
And famous cities into cinders turn'd
By their two armed arms.

KING. Ay, Chester;
And then they show us rags, torn off belike
From poor decayed ladies' petticoats;
For neither bill, nor feather'd shot, nor pike
Make half nor any of those rents they have.
These, patch'd together, fasten'd unto staves,
They will not stick to swear have been advanc'd
Against the Sophy, Soldan, and the Turk.

LEI. Do not maintain proud Chester, my life's liege:
Your words I must put up; his if I bear—

KING.[318] Yes, you shall bear them, bear, and yet not bite:
We have you muzzled now. Remember once
You brav'd us with your bombard boasting words.
Come (briefly), Leicester, Richmond, both Fitzwaters, Bruce,
Deliver up your swords immediately;
And either yield your bodies to our hands,
Or give such pledges as we shall accept
Unto our steward Winchester with speed.

LEI. I will not leave my arms, nor break my word,
Except I be provok'd: your liege-man I am sworn;
That oath is pledge enough. If you mislike—

KING. Thou hear'st me say I do.

LEI. And I reply:
That pledge refus'd, I have no more for you.

RICH. And Richmond says as noble Leicester saith.
Already have we plighted fame and faith
Which, being scorn'd, returns to us again,
And by the king's own mouth we are discharged.

KING. Fitzwater, what say you?

FITZ. What pledge desires my liege?

KING. I ask your stubborn daughter.

YOUNG B. That were a gage
To be engaged.

FITZ. Peace, thou headstrong boy!
Pardon me, sovereign; all my power is yours;
My goods you may command, my life you may:
My children too, I know, with both their lives
Will readily adventure death's worst wrongs,
To do such service as true subjects should;
But honourable fame; true chastity—

KING. Make no exceptions: yield her up to me,
Or look for ever for my enmity.

FITZ. Nay, then, Fitzwater tells your majesty,
You do him wrong; and well will let you wit,
He will defend his honour to the death.

KING. And, Bruce, you are no otherwise disposed:
You will not give your sons to me for pledge.

BRUCE. I have but one, being my lesser boy,
Who is at Guildford: for my other son—

KING. He braves me with the rest.
Well, it is night, and there's no sun to swear by,
But God's[319] son, and by him I here protest
A miserable storm this night to raise
That shall not cease, while England giveth rest
To such vile traitors. Bruce, I'll begin with you;
I will, i' faith, as true as God is true.

[*Exit KING, cum suis.*]

LEI. Then shall a storm be rais'd against a storm,
And tempest be with tempest beaten back.

FITZ. But this firm island, like the sea, will toss.
And many goodly buildings go to wrack;
Many a widow weep her dying son,
And many a mother to her weeping babes
Cry out uncomfortably, "Children, peace,
Your crying unto me is all in vain,
Dead is my husband, your poor father slain!"

YOUNG B. We cannot help it, uncle.

RICH. No, you see
Entreats and humble suits have now no power,
But lust and wrath the kingdom do devour.

BRUCE. Me he did menace first, and much I fear
He will to Guildford, and besiege my wife.

FITZ. O, hie to save her! Richmond, ride with him.

RICH. Let us away, Bruce, lest we come too late,
And with us take some score of men well-arm'd.

[*Exeunt* RICHMOND and BRUCE.

FITZ. Do: Leicester and myself will keep the city,
Till we are furnish'd with an able army.
Your nephew Bruce shall take an hundred men,[320]
And post to Hertford Castle with your sister.
Sith wrong doth[321] wake us, we will keep such watch,
As for his life he shall not hurt us bring.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT III., SCENE I.

Enter QUEEN, BRUCE'S LADY, HUBERT, SALISBURY.

QUEEN. Be comforted, good madam, do not fear,
But give your son as pledge unto the king:
Yourself at court may keep him company.

LADY B. I am betray'd! alas, I am betray'd!
And little thought your highness had been bent
So much against me for my many loves,
As to prepare an entrance for my foe.

QUEEN. As I shall live in heaven, I did not know
Of Hubert's coming. But lament not this:
Your son, you say, is gone; what fear you then?

LADY B. O madam, murder, mischief, wrongs of men
I fear, I fear—what is't I do not fear,
Sith hope is so far off, despair so near?

SAL. Answer me, good Hubert, I pray thee, Hubert, do:
What think you of this matter? may I on your word
Persuade the woman that all things are well?

HUB. You may persuade her if you can, my lord;
For I protest I know no other thing,
But that the king would have him for a pledge
Of the Lord Bruce's faith.

SAL. And reason, too.
Now, by my honour, Hubert, I protest
It is good reason: Bruce, I tell you plain,
Is no sound cloak to keep John from the rain.[322]
I will go to her.

HUB. Do, good simple earl.
If not by threats nor my entreats she yield,
Thy brain is barren of invention,
Dried up with care; and never will she yield
Her son to thee, that having power want'st wit.

LADY B. I overhear thee, Hubert.

SAL. So do I, Dame Bruce;
But stir no coals: the man is well belov'd,
And merits more than so.

LADY B. But I will answer.
Hubert, thou fatal keeper of poor babes,
That are appointed hostages for John,[323]
Had I a son here, as I have not one,

(For yesterday I sent him into Wales),
Think'st thou I would be so degenerate,
So far from kind, to give him unto thee?
I would not, I protest: thou know'st my mind.

SAL. Lady, you fear more than you need to do;
Indeed you do—in very deed you do.
Hubert is wrong'd about the thing you mean—
About young Arthur: O, I thought 'twas so:
Indeed the honest, good, kind gentleman
Did all he might for safeguard of the child.

QUEEN. Believe me, Madam Bruce, the man is wrong'd.

LADY B. But he wrongs me to keep my castle thus,
Disarming my true servants, arming his.
Now more of outrage comes! what shall I do?

Enter the KING, MOWBRAY, WINCHESTER, CHESTER.

KING. O, this is well! Hubert, where's Bruce's son?

LADY B. Where thou shalt never see him, John.

KING. Lady, we will have talk with you anon.
Where is he, Hubert?

HUB. Hid or fled, my lord:
We can by no means get her to confess.

SAL. Welcome to Guildford, Salisbury's liefest lord.[324]

KING. You scarce give welcome, ere I bid you go;
For you, my lord, the queen and Winchester
Shall march to Hertford. Sweet Isabel,
And if thou love me, play the amazon.
Matilda, that hath long bewitch'd mine eye,
Is, as I hear by spials, now in Hertford Castle:
Besiege her there; for now her haughty father
Ruffians it up and down, and all the brood
Of viperous traitors whet their poison'd teeth,
That they may feed on us that foster them.
Go forward, and go with you victory!
Which to assure my powers shall follow you.

SAL. Did I not tell you this? then trust me next.
Nay, he is chang'd, and cares no more for her
Than I do, madam.

KING. Begone, I say, begone!
Your speed rich victory attendeth on:
But your delay
May give your foes the happy glorious day.

QUEEN. One boon, my liege, and part.

KING. Be brief.

QUEEN. Show that poor lady pity, I beseech.

[Exeunt.]

KING. I will indeed. Come, lady, let us in.
You have a son; go in and bring him me,
And for the queen's sake I will favour ye.

LADY B. I have no son. Come, come; come in and search, And if you find him, wretched may I be.
[Exit.]

KING. Chester and Hubert, see you keep good watch.

Not far off do I hear a warlike sound:
Bruce, on my life! look to't, while I go in
To seek this boy, for needs we must have him.
Come with us, Mowbray.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Enter BRUCE, RICHMOND, *Soldiers.*

RICH. The castle-gates are shut. What ho! what ho!
You that are servants to the Lady Bruce,
Arise, make entrance for your lord and friends.

Enter, or above, HUBERT, CHESTER.[325]

HUB. We will make issue, ere ye enter here.
Who have we there? Richmond and Bruce, is't you?
What, up so soon? are ye so early here?
In you, i' faith, the proverb's verified,
Y'are early up, and yet are ne'er the near.

RICH. The worse, our fortune. Bruce, let us go hence;
We have no power to fight, nor make defence.

CHES. What, Richmond, will you prove a runaway?

RICH. From thee, good Chester I now the Lord defend!
Bruce, we will stay and fight.

BRUCE. 'Tis to no end:
We have but twenty men, and they be tired.
But ere we do retire, tell me, Lord Hubert,
Where are my wife and son?

HUB. Your wife is here; your son we cannot find.

BRUCE. Let son and wife, high heavens, your comfort find!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.[326]

Enter KING, MOWBRAY, LADY BRUCE.

CHES. Bruce hath been here, my lord.

KING. Ay, let him go.
We have good pledges: though we see but one,
The other we are sure will come anon.

MOW. I do advise you, for your own discharge,
Deliver up your son unto the king.

KING. Nay, let her choose. Come hither, Mowbray.

[*The KING and MOWBRAY whisper.*]

HUB. The king is angry: Lady Bruce, advise you.

LADY B. What! be advis'd by thee
To have my loving, kind, and pretty boy
Given to an unkind killer of sweet boys?

CHES. Madam, go to; take counsel of your friends.

I warrant you the king will use him well.

LADY B. Ay, as he us'd his nephew Arthur, Chester.
God bless my child from being used so!

MOW. Sir Hubert, what, are all the people voided,
The horses and the cattle turned forth?

HUB. Mowbray, they be.

MOW. Then will I do the king's commandment.

LADY B. What will he do? good Lord! what will he do?
Mowbray, I pray you, what is't you will do?

MOW. Why, fire the castle.

LADY B. The castle, Mowbray? tarry, tarry, man!
Hold me not, Chester! gentle Mowbray, stay!
Good Hubert, let me go!

MOW. You must not go:
The king is mov'd, and will not hear you speak.

LADY B. But he shall hear me! pity me, King John!
Call Mowbray back: hear me, for pity's sake!
Regard the Lady Bruce's woful cry!

KING. What dost thou ask?

LADY B. First call back Mowbray.

KING. Stay, Mowbray. Now, be brief.

LADY B. I have some linen garments, jewels, 'tires,
Pack'd in a hamper here within the lodge:
O, let me save it from consuming fire!

KING. And is this all?

LADY B. It's all the little all I here have left.

KING. Away! set fire! linen and trash!

LADY B. Once more hear me! there's a precious gem,
You have not any richer in all the realm:
If fire do blemish it, art never more
To his true colour can the same restore.

KING. Fetch it.
Two of ye help her with her hamper hither.

LADY B. Nay, nay, one will suffice: the jewel if I save, Is all I ask. [*Exit with CHESTER.*]

KING. We shall her jewel have.

HUB. She is very fearful I should keep her son.

LADY B. [*Within.*] Ye do, ye do!

KING. Alas! good Lady, hark: Chester and she are chiding.

Enter CHESTER and she, leading the boy.

LADY B. Let go his hand! Is this a paw, think you,
To hold a tender hand in? fie, for shame!
A nobleman so churlish! Look, I pray,
His arms are gristless.[327]

KING. How now, Lady Bruce!
Doth Chester hurt the jewel of your joy?

Now, by my troth, it is a pretty boy!

LADY B. Ay, knew your majesty as much as I,
You would say more.

KING. Well, he and you of us no wrong shall have,
But stay in Windsor Castle with Sir Walter Blunt,
And honourably be us'd; provided still
Your husband and your son obey our will.

LADY B. For this great mercy, if they disobey,
Myself will chide them. Fortune follow John,
And on his foes fall swift destruction!

KING. Come! let us now after the queen and Salisbury.

[Exeunt omnes.]

SCENE IV.

Enter the QUEEN, SALISBURY, Soldiers.

QUEEN. Now are ye, worthy and resolved men,
Come to the cage where the unclean birds bide,
That tire[328] on all the fair flight in the realm.
Summon this castle, or (to keep my words)
This cage of night-hid owls, light-flying birds.

[Offer to summon.]

Enter YOUNG BRUCE, MATILDA, Soldiers.

SAL. Stay, drum! thou need'st not summon willing men,
Or rather wilful, for such methinks they be.

QUEEN. See ye yon baggage, muffled in black weeds:
Those clouds fold in the comet that portends
Sad desolation to this royal realm.
For ever seek to mask her light, good friends:
Let us disrobe her of each little beam,
And then your Phoebus will one Phoebe have,
That while they live shall lend your land true light,
Give joy unto your day, rest to your night.
Assail them, stay not.

SAL. Stay, and assay them first!
I say to you, fair queen, this fact is foul.
Let not provoking words whet dull-edg'd swords,
But try if we can blunt sharp blades with words.
Fitzwater's nephew, Bruce, I see thee there,
And tell thee it is shame for such a boy
To lead a many able men to fight.
And, modest-looking maid, I see you too:
An unfit sight to view virginity
Guarded with other soldiers than good prayers.
But you will say the king occasions it:
Say what you will, no king but would take cause
Of just offence.
Yield you, young Bruce, your mother is in hold.
Yield you, young maid, your father is in hold.

MAT. Will the queen keep me from the lustful king,
Then will I yield.

QUEEN. A plague upon this counterfeiting quean.

MAT. God's blessed mercy! will you still be mad,

And wrong a noble virgin with vile speech?

SAL. Let me alone. Matilda, maiden fair,
Thou virgin spouse, true Huntington's just heir,
Wilt thou come hither? and I do protest,
The queen and I, to mitigate this war,
Will do what thou wouldst have.

MAT. I come.

BRUCE. You shall not go. Sound, drums, to war!
Alack, alack, for woe!
Well, God for us! sith it will needs be so.

[Alarum, fight, stay.]

SAL. What stay you for?

BRUCE. Matilda's cries do stay us.

MAT. Salisbury, I come in hope of thy defence.

BRUCE. First will I die, ere you shall yield yourself
To any coward lord that serves the king.

SAL. Coward, proud boy! Thou find'st me no such beast,
And thou shalt rue in earnest this rude jest.

*[Fight again. MATILDA taken, led by the hair
by two Soldiers.]*

SAL. Rude hands! how hale you virtuous honour forth!
You do not well: away!
Now, by my faith, ye do not well, I say.
Take her, fair queen, use her as she deserves:
She's fair, she's noble, chaste, and debonair.
I must, according to due course of war,
See that our soldiers scatter not too far,
Lest, what care won, our negligence may lose.

[Exit.]

QUEEN. Is this the Helen, this the paragon,
That makes the English Ilion[329] flame so fast?

MAT. I am not she; you see I am not she:
I am not ravish'd yet, as Helen was.
I know not what will come of John's desire,
That rages like the sea, that burns like fire.

QUEEN. Plain John, proud Joan! I'll tear your painted face.
Thus, thus I'll use you. *[Scratches her.]*

Enter SALISBURY.

MAT. Do, do what you will.

SAL. How goes this gear? ha! foul fall so foul deed![330]
Poor chaste child of Fitzwater, dost thou bleed?
By God's bless'd mother! this is more than need;
And more, I tell you true, than I would bear,
Were not the danger of the camp so near.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MES. My lord, the foes have gathered head:
Lord Bruce, the father, joineth with the son.

SAL. Why, here's the matter: we must spend our time
To keep your nails from scratching innocence,
Which should have been bestow'd for our defence.

What shall we now do? Help me, holy God!
The foe is come, and we are out of rank.

[*Skirmish: QUEEN taken, MATILDA rescued.*

Enter OLD BRUCE *wounded, led by his Son, and* LEICESTER.

BRUCE. Is the field ours?

YOUNG B. Ay, thanks to noble Leicester.

BRUCE. Give God thanks, son: be careful to thy mother;
Commend me to Fitzwater; love thy brother,
If either arms or prayers may him recover.

LEI. How cheers old Bruce?

YOUNG B. His soul to joy is fled,
His grief is in my bosom buried.

LEI. His life was dearly bought; for my eyes saw
A shambles of dead men about his feet,
Sent by his sword into eternal shade.
With honour bury him. Cease tears, good Bruce.

YOUNG B. Tears help not, I confess, yet must I weep.
Soldiers, your help to bear him to my tent.

[*Exeunt cum* BRUCE.

Enter QUEEN *and* MATILDA.

MAT. Be comforted, great queen: forget my wrongs.
It was my fortune, and no fault of yours.

QUEEN. Is she thus mild? or doth she mock my chance?

LEI. Queen Isabel,[331] are you a prisoner?
See what it is to be a soldier.
But what foul hand hath harm'd Matilda's fair?[332]
Speak, honourable maid, who tore thy hair?
Did Salisbury or the queen this violence?

MAT. Ungentle grooms first took and tore me thus,
From whom old Salisbury, chastising their wrong,
Most kindly brought me to this gentle queen;
Who laid her soft hand on my bleeding cheeks,
Gave kisses to my lips, wept for my woe;
And was devising how to send me back,
Even when your last alarum frightened us,
And by her kindness fell into your hands.

LEI. Which kindness we return: Madam, be free.
Soldiers, conduct the queen whither she please.

QUEEN. Farewell, Matilda; if I live, believe
I will remember this. O, how I grieve
That I should wrong so innocent a maid!
Come, lady, old Fitzwater is not far:
He'll weep to see these scars, full well I know.

MAT. Would I were from this woful world of war!
Sure I will 'scape, and to some nunnery go.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Enter KING, SALISBURY, HUBERT.

KING. Had you her, then, had you her in your power?

SAL. Ay, marry had we: we had taken her.

KING. O, had she been in mine, not all earth's power
From my power should have freed her!

SAL. You are a king, and high are princes' thoughts:
It may be, with your sight you could have chas'd
A host of armed men; it may be so:
But we, your subjects, did the best we could.
Yet Bruce the father, backing Bruce the son,
Scatter'd our troops, brought rescue to Matilda,
And took your peerless queen their prisoner.

KING. On all the race of Bruces for this wrong
I will have vengeance! Hubert, call in Brand. [*Exit* HUBERT.
My Lord of Salisbury, give us leave awhile
To be alone.

SAL. I will, my liege. Be you comforted;
The queen will be recovered, do not fear,
As well as e'er she was.

KING. Salisbury, forbear, I pray.

SAL. Yet for the wrong she did unto Matilda, I fear, I fear— [*Exit*.

KING. The father and the son did rescue her;
The mother and the son shall rue the deed.
So it shall be; I am resolv'd thereon.
Matilda, my soul's food, those have bereft,
And these of body's food I will bereave.

Enter HUBERT [*with*] BRAND.

KING. Will Brand.

BRAND. Your majesty. [*Make legs*.

KING. Less of your court'sy. Hubert, stand aside.
Post speedily to Windsor; take this ring;
Bid Blunt deliver Bruce's wife and child
Into your hands, and ask him for the key
Of the dark tower o'er the dungeon vault:
In that see you shut up the dam and brat.
Pretend to Blunt that you have left them meat,
Will serve some se'ennight; and unto him say,
It is my will you bring the key away.
And hear you, sir, I charge you on your life,
You do not leave a bit of bread with them.

BRAND. I warrant you; let me alone.

KING. Come back again with all the speed you may.

[*Exit* BRAND.

HUB. Some cruel task is pointed for that slave,
Which he will execute as cruelly. [*Aside*.]

KING. No ruth, no pity shall have harbour here,
Till fair Matilda be within these arms.

Enter SALISBURY *with the* QUEEN.

SAL. Comfort, my lord; comfort, my gracious lord;
Your love is come again!

KING. Ah, Salisbury! where?

SAL. Here, my dread sovereign.

KING. Thou liest; she is not there.

SAL. Under correction you wrong my age.
Say, I beseech you, is not this the queen?

KING. I cry you mercy, Salisbury; 'tis indeed.
Where is Matilda?

QUEEN. Where virtue, chastity, and innocence remain,
There is Matilda.

KING. How comes she, pray, to be so chaste, so fair:
So virtuous in your eye?

QUEEN. She freed me from my foes, and never urg'd
My great abuse when she was prisoner.

KING. What did you to her!

QUEEN. Rail'd upon her first,
Then tare her hair, and rent her tender cheeks.

KING. O heaven! was not the day dark at that foul deed?
Could the sun see without a red eclipse
The purple tears fall from those tyrant wounds?
Out, Ethiop, gipsy, thick-lipped blackamoor!
Wolf, tigress! worse than either of them both!

SAL. Are you advis'd, my lord?

KING. Out, doting earl!
Couldst thou endure to see such violence?

SAL. I tell you plain, my lord, I brook'd it not.
But stay'd the tempest.

KING. Rend my love's cheeks! that matchless effigy
Of wonder-working nature's chiefest work:
Tear her rich hair! to which gold wires,
Sun's rays, and best of best compares
(In their most pride) have no comparison.
Abuse her name! Matilda's sacred name!
O barbarous outrage, rudeness merciless!

QUEEN. I told you, Salisbury, you mistook the king.

SAL. I did indeed. My liege lord, give me leave
To leave the camp.

KING. Away, old fool! and take with thee that trull;
For if she stay—

SAL. Come, lady, come away,
Tempt not his rage. Ruin wrath always brings:
Lust being lord, there is no trust in kings.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter MOWBRAY.

MOW. To arms, King John! Fitzwater's field is pitch'd
About some mile hence on a champain[333] plain.
Chester hath drawn our soldiers in array:
The wings already have begun the fight.

KING. Thither we will with wings of vengeance fly,

And win Matilda, or lose victory!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV., SCENE I.

Enter LADY BRUCE *and her* BOY *with* BRAND.

LADY B. Why did my keeper put us in thy hands?
Wherein have we offended Blunt or thee?

BRAND. You need not make these words:
You must remove your lodging; this is all.
Be not afeard: come, come, here is the door.

LADY B. O God, how dark it is!

BRAND. Go in, go in; it's higher up the stairs.

LADY B. My trembling heart forbids me to go in.
O, if thou have compassion, tell me true,
What my poor boy and I must trust unto?

BRAND. I tell thee true, compassion is my foe;
Yet have I had of thee compassion.
Take in thy child: as I have faith or troth,
Thou and thy boy shall be but prisoners,
And I must daily bring you meat and drink.

LADY B. Well, thou hast sworn, and God so give thee light,
As in this dark place thou rememb'rest us.
Poor heart, thou laugh'st, and hast not wit to think
Upon the many fears that me afflict.
I will not in. Help us, assist us, Blunt!
We shall be murdered in a dungeon!

BRAND. Cry without cause? I'll have ye in, i' faith.

LADY B. O, let my boy and I but dine with Blunt,
And then I will with patience go in.

BRAND. Will ye or nill ye, zounds! ye must go in,
And never dine.

LADY B. What say'st thou I never dine!

BRAND. No—not with Blunt, I mean. Go in, I say;
Or by this hand ye get no meat to-day.

LADY B. My child is hungry: when shall he have meat?

BRAND. Why, and ye would go in, immediately.

LADY B. I will go in; but very much I doubt,
Nor I nor my poor boy shall e'er come out.

[*Exeunt. He seems to lock a door.*

BRAND. Ne'er, while ye live, i' faith! now are they sure.
Cry, till their hearts ache, no man can them hear.
A miserable death is famishment;
But what care I? The king commanded me.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Alarum within: excursions: enter FITZWATER, BRUCE.

FITZ. Now doth fair fortune offer hope of speed;
But howsoe'er we speed, good cousin Bruce,
March with three hundred bows and pikes to Windsor,
Spreading a rumour that the day is ours,
As ours it shall be with the help of heaven.
Blunt loves our part far better than the king's,
And will, I gage my life, upon the news
Surrender up the castle to our use.
By this means shall you help us to a hold,
Howe'er it chance: set free your lady mother,
That lives in prison there with your young brother.

BRUCE. Away, good uncle, to the battle go!
But that a certain good ensues, I know,
For all the world I would not leave you so.

FITZ. Away, away!
God send thee Windsor: us this happy day.

Alarum still. Enter HUBERT *and* MATILDA.[334]

HUB. You cannot hide yourself, Matilda; no disguise
Will serve the turn: now must you to the king,
And all these wars will with your presence cease.
Yield you to him, he soon will yield to peace.

MAT. They say thou took'st some pity of a child,
The king appointing thee to sear his eyes;
Men do report thee to be just of word,
And a dear lover of my lord the king.
If thou didst that, if thou be one of these,
Pity Matilda, prostrate at thy feet.

HUB. I sav'd young Arthur's eyes, and pity thee;
My word is just, which I have given the king;
The king I love, and thee I know he loves:
Compare these, then how can I pleasure thee?

MAT. By letting me escape to Dunmow Abbey,
Where I will end my life a votary.

HUB. And the king die with doting on thy love?

MAT. No, no; this fire of lust would be soon laid,
If once he knew me sworn a holy maid.

HUB. Thy tears and love of virtue have the power
To make me at an instant true and false:
True to distressed beauty and rare chastity;
False to King John, that holds the sight of thee
Dearer than England or earth's empery.
Go, happy soul, that in so ill an age
Hast such fair beauty for thy heritage:
Yet go not so alone. Dost hear, tall soldier?

[Call a Soldier.

I know thee honest: guide this gentle maid
To Dunmow Abbey: she is one I know.
I will excuse thee, and content thee well;
My signet take, that ye may pass unsearch'd.

MAT. Kind Hubert, many prayers for this good deed
Shall on my beads be daily numbered.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter LEICESTER, RICHMOND, FITZWATER.

LEI. O treble heat of honour, toil, and rage!
How cheers Earl Richmond? Fitzwater, speak, old man.
We are now near together: answer me.

FITZ. Leicester, the more our woe,
The likelier to be taken by the foe.

RICH. O, let not such a thought abuse thy age!
We'll never yield us to the tyrant's rage.

LEI. But if my girl be yielded—
If she be!

FITZ. Ay, ay—
There's no man but shall have his time to die.

LEI. Now is our hour, which they shall dearly by.

Enter KING, HUBERT, CHESTER, MOWBRAY.

RICH. Leicester, we'll stand like three battalions:
What says our noble general thereto?

FITZ. Why, I say, do:
[And] while I can, I'll keep my place with you.

KING. How now, my bugbear, will you now submit?

LEI. To death, but not to thee.

KING. Richmond, nor you?

RICH. Earl Richmond will not yield.

KING. Methinks, Fitzwater, you should have more wit.

FITZ. If it be wit to live, I have no will;
And so in this my will o'errules my wit.

KING. Alarum then! with weapons will we scourge
Your desperate will, and teach ye to have wit.

[*Fight: drive back the KING.*

KING. Of high heroic spirits be they all.
We will withdraw a little, and confer,
For they are circled round, and cannot 'scape.

[*Withdraw.*

RICH. O that we three who, in the sun's arise
Were, like the three Triumviri[335] of Rome,
Guides of an host, able to vanquish Rome,
Are now alone, enclos'd with enemies!

FITZ. The glory of the world hath no more stay,
But as it comes, it fleets, and fades away.

LEI. Courage, and let us die! they come again:
It's Lord Hubert alone. Hubert, what news?[336]

Enter HUBERT.

HUB. This day's fierce slaughter, John our king laments,
And to you three, great leaders of an host,
That now have not a man at all to lead,
You worthy captains without companies—

LEI. Fitzwater! Richmond! by the blessed sun,
Lord Hubert mocks us.

HUB. By the moon, I do not; and put the blessed to't,
It is as good an oath as you have sworn.
My heart grieves that so great hearts as yours be
Should put your fortunes on a sort[337] of slaves,
That bring base fear within them to the field.
But to the matter—sith your state is such,
That without mercy you are sure of death
(Which I am sure, and well his highness knows,
You do not fear at all), yet he gives grant,
On just conditions you shall save your lives.

FITZ. On no condition will I save my life,
Except Matilda be return'd again,
Unblemish'd, unabus'd; and then I yield.

HUB. She now is where she never will return.

FITZ. Never? O God! is my Matilda dead?

HUB. Dead to the world; dead to this woe she is.
She lives at Dunmow, and is vow'd a nun.

FITZ. Do not delude me, Hubert, gentle son.

HUB. By all the faith and honour of my kin,
By my unstain'd allegiance to the king.
By my own word, that hath reproveless been,
She is at Dunmow.

FITZ. O, how came she there?

HUB. When all these fields were walks for rage and fear:
This howling like a head of hungry wolves,[338]
That, scudding as a herd of frightened deer:
When dust, arising like a coal-black fog,
From friend divided friend, join'd foe to foe,
Yet neither those nor these could either know;
Till here and there, through large wide-mouthed wounds,
Proud life, even in the glory of his heat
Losing possession, belch'd forth streams of blood,
Whose spouts in falling made ten thousand drops,
And with that purple shower the dust allay'd—
At such a time met I the trembling maid;
Seeming a dove from all her fellows parted—
Seen, known, and taken; unseen and unknown
To any other that did know us both,
At her entreats I sent her safely guided
To Dunmow Abbey; and the guide return'd
Assures me she was gladly receiv'd,
Pitied, and in his sight did take her oath.

FITZ. Hubert, for this thy honourable deed
I and my house will reverence thy name.

HUB. Yet, I beseech you, hide it from the king;
At least that I convey'd her to the place.

Enter KING, MOWBRAY, CHESTER.

FITZ. Hubert, I will.

KING. What, stand they still on terms?

LEI. On honourable terms, on terms of right.
Our lives without our liberty we scorn.

KING. You shall have life and liberty, I swear.

LEI. Then Leicester bows his knee to his liege lord,
And humbly begs his highness to beware
Of wronging innocence, as he hath done.

RICH. The like Richmond desires, and yields his sword.

KING. I do embrace ye both, and hold myself
Richer by a whole realm in having you.

FITZ. Much is my wrong; yet I submit with these,
Begging free leave to live a private life.

KING. Old brands of malice in thy bosom rest:
Thou shalt have leave to leave me, never doubt.
Fitzwater, see thou ship thee straight for France,
And never set thy foot on English shore,
Till I repeal thee. Go, go hence in peace.

LEI. Why doth your highness wrong Fitzwater thus?

KING. I right his wrong; he's weary of the land.

RICH. Not of the land, but of a public life.

KING. Content ye, lords: in such quick times as these
We must not keep a drone among our bees.

FITZ. I am as glad to go as you to send:
Yet I beseech this favour of your grace,
That I may see Matilda, ere I part.

KING. Matilda! see Matilda, if thou canst,
Before sunset: stay not another day.

FITZ[339]. The abbey-walls, that shroud my happy child,
Appear within her hapless father's sight.
Farewell, my sovereign, Leicester, Richmond, lords:
Farewell to all; grief gives no way to words.

KING. Fitzwater, stay: lords, give us leave awhile.
Hubert, go you before unto the abbess,
And signify our coming. Let her bring
Matilda to her father. (*Exit HUBERT.*) Come, old man;
Be not too froward, and we shall be friends.
About this girl our mortal jars began,
And, if thou wilt, here all our quarrel ends.

FITZ. Reserve my honour and my daughter's fame,
And no poor subject that your grace commands
Shall willinger submit, obey, and serve.

KING. Do then but this. Persuade thy beauteous child
To leave the nunnery and return to court,
And I protest from henceforth to forswear
All such conceits of lust as I have borne.

FITZ. I will, my lord, do all that I may do;
But give me leave in this to doubt of you.

KING. This small thing grant, and ask me anything;
Or else die in exile, loath'd of the king.

FITZ. You shall perceive I will do what I may.

Enter on the wall, ABBESS, MATILDA. Re-enter HUBERT.

HUB. Matilda is afraid to leave the house;
But lo, on yonder battlement she stands,

But in no case will come within your hands.

KING. What! will my lady-abbess war[340] with us?
Speak, lady; wherefore shut you up your gates?

ABB. Have we not reason, when an host of men
Hunt and pursue religious chastity?
King John, bethink thee what thou tak'st in hand
On pain of interdiction of thy land.
Murderers and felons may have sanctuary,
And shall not honourable maids distress'd,
Religious virgins, holy nuns profess'd,
Have that small privilege? Now, out upon thee, out!
Holy Saint Catherine, shield my virginity!
I never stood in such extremity.

HUB. My lord, the abbess lies, I warrant you;
For I have heard there is a monk of Bury,
That once a week comes thither to make merry.

KING. Content thee, Hubert; that same monk and she,
And the worst come, my instruments shall be.
Good lady-abbess, fear no violence;
There's not one here shall offer you offence.

FITZ. Daughter, all this while tears my speech have stay'd.
My lord the king, lords, all draw near, I pray,
And hear a poor man's parting from his child.
Matilda, still my unstain'd honour's joy,
Fair ornament of old Fitzwater's coat,[341]
Born to rich fortunes, did not this ill-age
Bereave thee of thy birthright's heritage,
Thou see'st our sovereign—lord of both our lives,
A long besieger of thy chastity—
Hath scatter'd all our forces, slain our friends,
Razed our castles, left us ne'er a house
Wherein to hide us from his wrathful eye:
Yet God provides; France is appointed me,
And thou find'st house-room in this nunnery.
Here, if the king should dote as he hath done,
It's sacrilege to tempt a holy nun:
But I have hope he will not; yet my fear
So drowns my hope, as I am forc'd to stay,
And leave abruptly what I more would say.

MAT. O, go not yet, my griev'd heart's comforter!
I am as valiant to resist desire
As ever thou wert worthy in the field.
John may attempt, but if Matilda yield,
O, then—

FITZ. Ay, then, Matilda, thou dost lose
The former glory of thy chaste resolves.
These seven years hast thou bid[342] a martyr's pains,
Resisting in thyself lust-growing fire,
For, being mortal, sure thou hast desire;
And five sad winters have their full course run,
Since thou didst bury noble Huntington.
In these years many months and many days
Have been consum'd thy virtues to consume.
Gifts have been heralds; panders did presume
To tempt thy chaste ears with their unchaste tongues:
All in effect working to no effect;
For I was still the watchman of thy tower,
The keeper of foul worms from my fair flower.
But now no more, no more Fitzwater may

Defend his poor lamb from the lion's prey—
Thy order and thy holy prayers may.
To help thee thou hast privilege by law;
Therefore be resolute, and nobly die!
Abhor base lust, defend thy chastity.

KING. Despatch, Fitzwater: hinder not thy child:
Many preferments do on her await.

FITZ. Ay, girl, I know thou shalt be offer'd wealth,
Which is a shrewd enticement in sad want,
Great honours to lift up thy low estate,
And glorious titles to eternise thee.
All these do but gild over ugly shame;
Such wealth, my child, foreruns releaseless need,
Such honour ever proves dishonourate.
For titles, none comes near a virtuous name:
O, keep it ever, as thou hast done yet!
And though these dark times should forget thy praise,
An age will come that shall eternise it.
Bid me farewell, and speak it in a word.

MAT. Farewell, dear father.

FITZ. O, farewell, sweet child.
My liege, farewell: Leicester, Richmond, Hubert,
Chester and Mowbray, friends and foes, farewell.
Matilda, see thou keep thy spotless fame,
And live eternis'd, else die soon with shame.

[*Exit.*

MAT. Amen, amen: father, adieu, adieu!
Grief dwells with me, sweet comfort follow you!

ABB. Come, daughter, come. This is a woful sight,
When good endeavours are oppress'd by might.

[*Exeunt from above ABBESS, MATILDA.*

KING. Ah, Hubert! seest thou not the sun go down,
Cloudy and dark? Matilda, stay! one word.
She shakes her head, and scornfully says nay.

RICH. How cheer'st thou, Leicester?

LEI. Mad, man, at my state,
That cannot raise true honour ruinate.

Enter MESSENGER.

KING. I will not be disdain'd. I vow to see
Quick vengeance on this girl for scorning me.

MES. Young Bruce, my lord, hath gotten Windsor Castle,
Slain Blunt your constable, and those that kept it;
And finding in a tower his mother dead,
With his young brother starv'd and famished,
That every one may see the rueful sight,
In the thick wall he a wide window makes;
And as he found them, so he lets them be,
A spectacle to every comer-by,
That heaven and earth your tyrant shame may see.
All people cursing, crying fie upon,
The tyrant, merciless, inhuman John.

KING. Chester and Mowbray, march away to Windsor:
Suppress that traitor Bruce. What, if his dam
In wilful fury would receive no meat,

Nor suffer her young child any to eat,
Is it our fault? haste ye with speed away,
And we will follow. Go; begone, I pray.

[*Exeunt* CHESTER, MOWBRAY.

HUB. O black and woful deed! O piteous thing,
When slaves attend the fierce thoughts of a king.

LEI. My lord, shall we go too?

KING. Leicester and Richmond, ay, I pray ye, do.

LEI. Get I my bear and ragged staff once more
Rais'd in the field, for these wrongs some shall roar.

[*Exeunt* RICHMOND, LEICESTER.

KING. Fetch in the monk of Bury, that I talk'd of,
[*Exeunt* HUBERT *for the* MONK.
And bid Will Brand, my instrument of death,
Come likewise in. Convert to raging hate

Enter MONK, HUBERT, BRAND.

My long-resisted love! welcome, good monk.

MONK. Thanks to my liege.

KING. Thou hast been long in suit
To be installed abbot of your house,
And in your favour many friends have stirr'd.
Now is the hour that you shall be preferr'd
Upon condition—and the matter small.
Short shrift to make, good honest confessor,
I love a fair nun, now in Dunmow Abbey:
The abbess loves you, and you pleasure her;
Now, if between you two this pretty lady
Could be persuaded to affect a king,
Your suit is granted, and on Dunmow Abbey
I will bestow a hundred marks a year.

MONK. A holy nun! a young nun! and a lady!
Dear wear, my lord; yet bid you well as may be.
Strike hands; a bargain: she shall be your own,
Or if she will not—

KING. Nay, if she do refuse,
I'll send a death's man with you; this is he.
If she be wilful, leave her to his hands,
And on her own head be her hasted end.

MONK. The matter shall be done.

KING. Sirrah, what poisons have you ready?

BRAND. Store, store.

KING. Wait on the monk, then, and ere we take horse,
I'll give you such instructions as you need.
Hubert, repair[343] to Windsor with our host.

[*Exeunt* KING, MONK, *and* BRAND.

HUB. Your tyrannies have lost my love almost,
And yet I cannot choose but love eternally
This wanton king, replete with cruelty.
O, how are all his princely virtues stain'd
With lust abhorred and lascivious heat
Which, kindling first to fire, now in a flame,

Shows to the whole world clearly his foul shame.
To quench this flame full many a tide of tears,
Like overflowing-full seas, have been spent;
And many a dry land drunk with human blood;
Yet nothing helps his passions violent:
Rather they add oil to his raging fire,
Heat to his heat, desire to his desire.
Somewhat, I fear, is now a-managing,
For that prodigious bloody stigmatic[344]
Is never call'd unto his kingly sight,
But like a comet he portendeth still
Some innovation or some monstrous act,
Cruel, unkindly, horrid, full of hate;
As that vile deed at Windsor done of late.
Gentle Matilda, somewhat I mistrust;
Yet thee I need not fear, such is his love.
Again, the place doth give thee warrantise;
Yet I remember when his highness said,
The lustful monk of Bury should him aid.
Ay, so it is: if she have any ill,
Through the lewd shaveling will her shame be wrought.
If it so chance, Matilda's guiltless wrong
Will with the loss of many a life be bought.
But Hubert will be still his dread lord's friend,
However he deserves, his master serve;
Though he neglect, him will I not neglect:
Whoever fails him, I will John affect;
For though kings fault[345] in many a foul offence,
Subjects must sue, not mend with violence.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Enter OXFORD, QUEEN.

OX. Now, by my faith, you are to blame, madam,
Ever tormenting, ever vexing you:
Cease of these fretting humours: pray ye, do.
Grief will not mend it; nought can pleasure you
But patient suffering; nor, by your grace's leave,
Have you such cause to make such hue and cry
After a husband; you have not in good sooth.
Yearly a child! this payment is not bad.
Content, fair queen, and do not think it strange,
That kings do sometimes seek delight in change:
For now and then, I tell you, poor men range.
Sit down a little, I will make you smile.
Though I be now like to the snowy Alps,
I was as hot as Aetna in my youth;
All fire, i' faith, true heart of oak, right steel—
A ruffian, lady. Often for my sport
I to a lodge of mine did make resort,
To view my dear, I said; dear God can tell,
It was my keeper's wife whom I lov'd well.
My countess (God be with her) was a shrow,
As women be, your majesty doth know;
And some odd pick-thank put it in her head,
All was not well: but such a life I led,
And the poor keeper and his smooth-fac'd wife,
That, will I, nill I, there she might not bide.
But for the people I did well provide;
And by God's mother, for my lady's spite,
I trick'd her in her kind, I serv'd her right.

Were she at London, I the country kept;
Come thither, I at London would sojourn;
Came she to court, from court I straightway stepp'd;
Return, I to the court would back return.
So this way, that way, every way she went,
I still was retrograde, sail'd[346] opposite:
Till at the last, by mildness and submission,
We met, kiss'd, joined, and here left all suspicion.

QUEEN. Now out upon you, Vere: I would have thought
The world had not contain'd a chaster man.

OX. Now, by my fay, I will be sworn I am.
In all I tell you I confess no ill,
But that I curb'd a froward woman's will:
Yet had my keeper's wife been of my mind,
There had been cause some fault with us to find;
But I protest her noes and nays were such,
That for my life she ever kept go much.[347]

QUEEN. You would take nay, but our King John says no;
No nay, no answer will suffice his turn:
He, for he cannot tempt true chastity,
Fills all the land with hostile cruelty.
Is it not shame, he that should punish sin,
Defend the righteous, help the innocent,
Carves with his sword the purpose of his will
Upon the guarders of the virtuous,
And hunts admired, spotless maidenhead
With all the darts of desolation,
Because she scorneth to be dissolute?
Me that he leaves, I do not murmur at;
That he loves her, doth no whit me perplex,
If she did love him, or myself did hate:
But this alone is it that doth me vex:
He leaves me that loves him, and her pursues,
That loathes him and loves me. How can I choose
But sadly grieve, and mourn in my green youth,
When nor of her nor me he taketh ruth?

OX. Ha' done, good queen: for God's good love, ha' done:
This raging humour will no doubt be stay'd.
Virtuous Matilda is profess'd a nun;
Within a mile (at Dunmow) lives the maid.
God will not suffer anything so vile;
He will not, sure, that he should her defile.

QUEEN. No church nor chapel, abbey, nunnery,
Are privileg'd from his intemperance.
But leave we him, and let us, I entreat,
Go visit fair Matilda: much I am
In debt unto the maid.

OX. You are indeed;
You wrong'd her, when with blows you made her bleed.
But if you please to visit her, fair dame,
Our coach is ready: we will soon be there.

QUEEN. Thanks, Oxford; and with us I mean to bear
The beauteous garland sent me out of Spain,
Which I will offer in the abbey chapel,
As witness of Matilda's chastity;
Whom, while I live, I ever vow to love,
In recompense of rash and causeless wrong.

ACT V., SCENE I.

Enter BRAND solus; with cup, bottle of poison.

BRAND. Good, by this hand! exceeding, passing good!
The dog no sooner drank it, but yugh! yugh! quoth he:
So grins me with his teeth, lies down and dies:
Yugh! quoth I: by God's blood, go thy ways.
Of all thy line and generation,
Was never dog so worshipp'd as thou art,
For, ere thou died'st, thou wert an officer,
I lie not, by these[348] nails: a squire's place;
For the vile cur became a countess's taster:
So died the dog. Now in our next account
The countess comes; let's see, a countess and a nun:
Why so, why so!
What, would she have the whole world quite undone?
We'll mete[349] her for that trick. What, not a king?
Hanging's too good for her. I am but a plain knave.
And yet should any of these "no forsooths,"
These pray-aways, these trip-and-goes, these tits,
Deny me, now by these—
A plague upon this bottle and this cup,
I cannot act mine oath! but to't again—
By these ten ends of flesh and blood[350] I swear,
First with this hand, wound thus about her hair,

And with this dagger lustily lambeak'd[351]—
I would, i' faith, ay, by my villainy,
I would.—But here, but here she comes,
Led by two doctors in sweet lechery.
If they speed, with my poison I go by;
If not, have at you, maid: then step in I.

Enter MATILDA, between the MONK and the ABBESS.[352]

MONK. And as I said, fair maid, you have done well,
In your distress, to seek this holy place.
But tell me truly, how do you expel
The rage of lust-arising heat in you?

MAT. By prayer, by fasting, by considering
The shame of ill, and meed of doing well.

ABB. But daughter, daughter, tell me in my ear,
Have you no fleshly fightings now and then? [*Whisper.*]

BRAND. Fleshly, quoth you, a maid of three-score years?
And fleshly fightings sticking in her teeth?
Well, wench, thou'rt match'd, i' faith. [*Aside.*]

ABB. You do confess the king has tempted you,
And thinking now and then on gifts and state,
A glowing heat hath proudly puff'd you up:
But, thanks to God, his grace hath done you good.

MONK. Who? the king's grace?

MAT. No; God's grace, holy monk.

MONK. The king's grace would fain do you good, fair maid.

MAT. Ill-good: he means my fame to violate.

ABB. Well, let that be.

BRAND. Good bawd, good mother B.[353]

How fain you would that that good deed should be! [*Aside.*]

ABB. I was about to say somewhat upon a thing:
O, thus it is.

We maids that all the day are occupied
In labour and chaste, hallow'd exercise,
Are nothing so much tempted, while day lasts,
As we are tried and proved in the night.
Tell me, Matilda, had you, since you came,
No dreams, no visions, nothing worth the note?

MAT. No, I thank God.

ABB. Truly you will, you will,
Except you take good heed, and bless yourself;
For if I lie but on my back awhile
I am, past recovery, sure of a bad dream.
You see yon reverend monk: now, God he knows,
I love him dearer for his holiness,
And I believe the devil knows it too;
For the foul fiend comes to me many a night,
As like the monk, as if he were the man—
Many a hundred nights the nuns have seen,
Pray, cry, make crosses, do they what they can—
Once gotten in, then do I fall to work,
My holy-water bucket being near-hand,
I whisper secret spells, and conjure him,
That the foul fiend hath no more power to stand:
He down, as I can quickly get him laid,
I bless myself, and like a holy maid,
Turn on my right side, where I sleep all night
Without more dreams or troubling of the sprite.

BRAND. An abbess? By the cross of my good blade,[354]
An excellent mother to bring up a maid!
For me, I mean, and my good master John;
But never any for an honest man. [*Coughs.*
Now, fie upon that word of honesty,
Passing my throat't had almost choked me:
'Sblood, I'll forswear it for this trick. [*Aside.*]

MONK. We trifle time. Fair maid, it's thus in brief:
This abbey by your means may have relief;
An hundred marks a year. Answer, I pray,
What will you do herein?

MAT. Even all I may.

ABB. It's charitably spoken, my fair child:
A little thing of yours, a little help,
Will serve the turn: learn but to bear—to bear
The burden of this world, and it will do.

BRAND. Well, go thy ways: is this no bawd, think you? [*Aside.*]

MAT. Madam, the heavy burden of the world
Hath long oppress'd me.

ABB. But not press'd you right;
Now shall you bear a burden far more light.

MAT. What burden-bearing? whereto tends this talk?

MONK. To you, to us, this abbey, and King John.

MAT. O God, forbend he should be thought upon!

MONK. Lady, make short: the king must lie with you.

MAT. With me? with me?
[*First turns to the MONK, then to the ABBESS.*]

ABB. Sweet, never look so strange:
He shall come closely,[355] nobody shall see.

MAT. How can he come, but One hath eyes to see?

MONK. Your chamber-windows shall be shadowed.

MAT. But no veil from my conscience shadows me.

ABB. And all the nuns sent quietly to bed.

MAT. But they will rise, and by my blushing red
Quickly give guess of my lost maidenhead.

BRAND. She goes, i' faith: by God, she is their own! [*Aside.*]

MONK. Be not so nice, the sin is venial,
Considering you yield for charity;
And by your fall the nunnery shall rise.

ABB. Regard good counsel, daughter: pray, be wise.

MONK. Come, here's a stir! will't do, wench? will it do?

ABB. Say ay, say ay; forget the sound of no:
Or else say no, and take it:[356] wilt thou so?

MAT. Do you intend thus lewdly as you speak?

BRAND.[357] Ay, by Gog's blood, do they; and, moppet, you were best
To take their proffers, lest, if they forsake you,
I play the devil's part—step in, and take you.

MAT. Some holy water! help me, blessed nuns!
Two damned spirits, in religious weeds,
Attempt to tempt my spotless chastity;
And a third devil, gaping for my soul,
With horrid starings ghastly frighteth me.

ABB. You may
Call while you will; but, maid, list what we say,
Or be assur'd this is your dying day.

MAT. In his name that did suffer for my sin,
And by this blessed sign, I conjure you.

[*Draws a crucifix.*]

Depart, foul fiends, and cease to trouble me.

BRAND. 'Zounds, she thinks us devils! Hear you, conjuror,
Except you use that trick to conjure down
The standing spirit of my lord the king,
That your good mother there, the Abbess, uses
To conjure down the spirit of the monk,
Not all your crosses have the power to bless
Your body from a sharp and speedy death.

MAT. Are ye not fiends, but mortal bodies, then?
[*Feels them all.*]

BRAND. Maid, maid, catch lower when you feel young men.
'Sblood, I was never taken for the devil till now.

MAT. O, where shall chastity have true defence,
When churchmen lay this siege to innocence?
Where shall a maid have certain sanctuary,
When Lady Lust rules all the nunnery?
Now fie upon ye both, false seeming saints,

Incarnate devils, devilish hypocrites!
A cowed monk, an aged veiled nun,
Become false panders, and with lustful speech
Essay the chaste ears of true maidenhead!
Now fie upon this age! Would I were dead!

MONK. Come, leave her, lady: she shall have her wish.

ABB. Speed her, I pray thee: should the baggage live,
She'll slander all the chaste nuns in the land.

[*Exeunt* MONK, ABBESS.

BRAND. Well, well, go; get you two unto your conjuring:
Let me alone to lay her on God's ground.

MAT. Why dost thou stay?

BRAND. Why, maid, because I must:
I have a message to you from the king.

MAT. And thou art welcome to his humble maid.
I thought thee to be grim and fierce at first,
But now thou hast a sweet aspect, mild looks.
Art thou not come to kill me from the king?

BRAND. Yes.

MAT. And thou art welcome; even the welcom'st man
That ever came unto a woful maid.
Be brief, good fellow: I have in the world
No goods to give, no will at all to make;
But God's will and the king's on me be done!
A little money, kept to give in alms,
I have about me: deathsman, take it all;
Thou art the last poor almsman I shall see.
Come, come, despatch! What weapon will death wear,
When he assails me? Is it knife or sword,
A strangling cord, or sudden flaming fire?

BRAND. Neither, thou manly maid. Look here, look here:
A cup of poison. Wherefore dost thou smile?

MAT. O God! in this the king is merciful:
My dear-lov'd Huntington by poison died.
Good fellow, tell the king I thank his grace,
And do forgive his causeless cruelty.
I do forgive thee too, but do advise
Thou leave this bloody course, and seek to save
Thy soul immortal, closed in thy breast:

[*He gives it her.*

Be brief, I pray you. Now, to King John's health
A full carouse:[358] and, God, remember not
The curse he gave himself at Robin's death,
Wishing by poison he might end his life,
If ever he solicited my love.
Farewell, good fellow. Now thy medicine works.
And with the labour I am forc'd to rest.

BRAND. 'Zounds! she cares not: she makes death a jest.

MAT. The guiltless fear not death. Farewell, good friend; I pray thee, be no trouble in my end. [*He stands staring and quaking.*

Enter OXFORD, QUEEN, ABBESS, *Attendants.*

OX. And say you, Lady Abbess, that there came
One from the king unto her? what was he?

ABB. Yonder he stands: I know not what he is.

[*Still he stands staring.*]

QUEEN. Jesus have mercy! Oxford, come not nigh him.

OX. Not nigh him, madam? yes: keep you away.

ABB. Come in, good queen; I do not mean to stay. [*Exit ABBESS.*]

QUEEN. Nor I to stir before I see the end.[359]

OX. Why star'st thou thus? speak, fellow: answer me.
Who art thou?

BRAND. A bloody villain and a murderer!
A hundred have I slain with mine own hands.
'Twas I that starv'd the Lady Bruce to death
And her young son at Windsor Castle late:
'Tis I have slain Matilda, blessed maid,
And now will hurry to damnation's mouth,
Forc'd by the gnawing worm of conscience. [*Runs in.*]

OX. Hold him, for God's sake! stay the desperate wretch.

MAT. O, some good pitying man compassionate
That wretched man, so woful desperate:
Save him, for God's sake! he hath set me free
From much world's woe, much wrong, much misery.

QUEEN. I hear thy tongue, true perfect charity!
Chaste maid, fair maid, look up and speak to me.

MAT. Who's here? My gracious sovereign Isabel!
I will take strength and kneel.

QUEEN. Matilda, sit;
I'll kneel to thee. Forgive me, gentle girl,
My most ungentle wrongs.

MAT. Fair, beauteous queen,
I give God thanks I do not think on wrongs.

OX. How now, Fitzwater's child! How dost thou, girl?

MAT. Well, my good Lord of Oxford; pretty well:
A little travail[360] more, and I shall rest,
For I am almost at my journey's end.
O that my head were rais'd a little up,
My drowsy head, whose dim decaying lights
Assure me it is almost time to sleep.

[*Raise her head.*]

I thank your highness; I have now some ease.
Be witness, I beseech your majesty,
That I forgive the king with all my heart;
With all the little of my living heart,
That gives me leave to say I can forgive;
And I beseech high heaven he long may live
A happy king, a king belov'd and fear'd.
Oxford, for God's sake, to my father write
The latest commendations of his child;
And say Matilda kept his honour's charge,
Dying a spotless maiden undefil'd.
Bid him be glad, for I am gone to joy,
I, that did turn his weal to bitter woe.
The king and he will quickly now grow friends,
And by their friendship much content will grow.
Sink, earth to earth; fade, flower ordain'd to fade,
But pass forth, soul, unto the shrine of peace;

Beg there atonement may be quickly made.
Fair queen, kind Oxford, all good you attend.
Fly forth, lay soul, heaven's King be there thy friend.

[*Dies.*

OX. O pity-moving sight![361] age pitiless!
Are these the messages King John doth send?
Keep in, my tears, for shame! your conduits keep,
Sad woe-beholding eyes: no, will ye not?
Why, then, a God's name, weep. [*Sit.*

QUEEN. I cannot weep for ruth.[362] Here, here! take in
The blessed body of this noble maid:
In milk-white clothing let the same be laid
Upon an open bier, that all may see
King John's untimely lust and cruelty.

[*Exeunt with the body.*

OX. Ay, be it so; yourself, if so you please,
Will I attend upon, and both us wait
On chaste Matilda's body, which with speed
To Windsor Castle we will hence convey.
There is another spectacle of ruth,
Old Bruce's famish'd lady and her son.

QUEEN. There is the king besieging of young Bruce:
His lords are there who, when they see this sight,
I know will have small heart for John to fight.

OX. But where's the murderer, ha? is not he stay'd?

SER.[363] Borne with a violent rage he climb'd a tree,
And none of us could hinder his intent;
But getting to the top-boughs, fast he tied
His garters to his neck and a weak branch;
Which being unable to sustain his weight,
Down to the ground he fell, where bones and flesh
Lie pash'd[364] together in a pool of blood.

OX. Alas for woe! but this is just heaven's doom
On those that live by blood: in blood they die.
Make[365] an example of it, honest friends:
Do well, take pains, beware of cruelty.
Come, madam, come: to Windsor let us go,
And there to Bruce's grief add greater woe.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter BRUCE upon the walls.

BRUCE. Will not my bitter bannings[366] and sad plaints,
My just and execrable execrations,
My tears, my prayers, my pity-moving moans
Prevail, thou glorious bright lamp of the day,
To cause thee keep an obit for their souls,
And dwell one month with the Antipodes?
Bright sun, retire; gild not this vault of death
With thy illustrate rays: retire, retire,
And yield black night thy empery awhile—
A little while, till as my tears be spent,
My blood be likewise shed in raining drops
By the tempestuous rage of tyrant John.

Learn of thy love, the morning: she hath wept
Shower upon shower of silver-dewy tears;
High trees, low plants, and pretty little flowers
Witness her woe: on them her grief appears,
And as she drips on them, they do not let,
By drop and drop, their mother earth to wet.
See these hard stones, how fast small rivulets
Issue from them, though they seem issueless,
And wet-eyed woe on everything is view'd,
Save in thy face, that smil'st at my distress.
O, do not drink these tears thus greedily,
Yet let the morning's mourning garment dwell
Upon the sad earth. Wilt thou not, thou churl?
Then surfeit with thy exhalations speedily;
For all earth's venomous infecting worms
Have belch'd their several poisons on the fields,
Mixing their simples in thy compound draught.
Well, Phoebus, well, drink on, I say, drink on;
But when thou dost ungorge thee, grant me this,
Thou pour thy poisons on the head of John.

*Drum. Enter CHESTER, MOWBRAY, Soldiers, at
one door:[367] LEICESTER, RICHMOND, at another:
Soldiers.*

BRUCE. How now, my lords! were ye last night so pleased
With the beholding of that property[368]
Which John and other murderers have wrought
Upon my starved mother and her son,
That you are come again? Shall I again
Set open shop, show my dead ware, dear-bought
Of a relentless merchant, that doth trade
On the red sea, swoll'n mighty with the blood
Of noble, virtuous, harmless innocents?
Whose coal-black vessel is of ebony,
Their shrouds and tackle (wrought and woven by wrong)
Stretch'd with no other gale of wind but grief,
Whose sighs with full blasts beateth on her shrouds;
The master murder is, the pilot shame,
The mariners, rape, theft and perjury;
The burden, tyrannous oppression,
Which hourly he in England doth unlade.
Say, shall I open shop and show my wares?

LEI. No, good Lord Bruce, we have enough of that.

Drum. Enter KING, HUBERT, Soldiers.

KING. To Windsor welcome, Hubert. Soft, methinks
Bruce and our lords are at a parley now?

BRUCE. Chester and Mowbray, you are John's sworn friends;
Will you see more? speak, answer me, my lords.
I am no niggard, you shall have your fill.

BOTH. We have too much, and surfeit with the woe.

BRUCE. Are you all full? there comes a ravening kite,
That both at quick, at dead, at all will smite.
He shall, he must; ay, and by'r Lady, may
Command me to give over holiday,
And set wide open what you would not see.

KING. Why stand ye, lords, and see this traitor perch'd
Upon our castle's battlements so proud?
Come down, young Bruce, set ope the castle-gates;
Unto thy sov'reign let thy knee be bow'd,

And mercy shall be given to thee and thine.

BRUCE. O miserable thing!
Comes mercy from the mouth of John our king?
Why then, belike, hell will be pitiful.
I will not ope the gates—the gate I will;
The gate where thy shame and my sorrow sits.
See my dead mother and her famish'd son!

[*Opens a casement, showing the dead bodies within.*]

Open thy tyrant's eyes, for to the world
I will lay open thy fell cruelties.

KING. We heard, indeed, thy mother and her son
In prison died by wilful famishment.

BRUCE. Sin doubled upon sin! Slander'st thou the dead?
Unwilling willingness it shall appear,
By then I have produc'd, as I will do,
The just presumptions 'gainst your unjust act.

KING. Assail the castle, lords! alarum, drums!
And drown this screech-owl's cries with your deep sounds.

LEI. I tell thee, drummer, if thy drum thou smite,
By heav'n, I'll send thy soul to hell's dark night.
Hence with thy drum! God's passion, get thee hence!
Begone, I say; move not my patience.

[*Exit drum.*]

KING. Are you advised, Leicester, what you do?

LEI. I am advised; for, my sovereign, know,
There's not a lord here will lift up his arm
Against the person of yon noble youth,
Till you have heard the circumstantial truth,
By good presumptions, touching this foul deed.
Therefore, go on, young Bruce; proceed, refer[369]
The allegation that puts in this doubt,
Whether thy mother, through her wilfulness,
Famish'd herself and her sweet son, or no.

BRUCE. Unlikely supposition: nature first denies
That any mother, when her youngling cries,
If she have means, is so unnatural
To let it faint and starve. But we will prove
She had no means, except this moanful mean,
This torture of herself. Come forth, come forth,
Sir William Blunt, whom slander says I slew:
Come, tell the king and lords what you know true.

Enter SIR WILLIAM BLUNT [on the walls.][370]

KING. Thou hast betray'd our castle.

BLUNT. No: God can tell,
It was surpris'd by politic report,
And affirmation that your grace was slain.

RICH. Go on, Sir William Blunt:
Pass briefly to the lady's famishment.

BLUNT. About some ten days since there came one Brand,
Bringing a signet from my lord the king,
And this commission, signed with his hand,
[*Lords look, and read the thing.*]
Commanding me, as the contents express,
That I should presently deliver up

The Lady Bruce and her young son to him.

MOW. What time o' day was this?

BLUNT. It was, Lord Mowbray, somewhat past eleven,
For we were even then sitting down to dine.

LEI. But did ye dine?

BLUNT. The lady and her son did not.
Brand would not stay.

BRUCE. No, Leicester, no; for here is no such sign
Of any meat's digestion.

RICH. But, by the way, tell us, I pray you, Blunt,
While she remain'd with you, was she distraught
With grief, or any other passions violent?

BLUNT. She now and then would weep, and often pray
For reconcilment 'twixt the king and lords.

CHES. How to her son did she affected stand?

BLUNT. Affection could not any more affect;
Nor might a mother show more mother's love.

MOW. How to my lord the king?

BLUNT. O my Lord God!
I never knew a subject love king more.
She never would blin[371] telling, how his grace
Sav'd her young son from soldiers and from fire;
How fair he spake, gave her her son to keep:
And then, poor lady, she would kiss her boy,
Pray for the king so hearty earnestly,
That in pure zeal she wept most bitterly.

KING. I weep for her, and do by heaven protest,
I honour'd Bruce's wife, howe'er that slave
Rudely effected what I rashly will'd.
Yet when he came again, and I bethought
What bitter penance I had put them to
For my conceiv'd displeasure 'gainst old Bruce,
I had the villain post and bear them meat:
Which he excus'd, protesting pity mov'd him
To leave wine, bread, and other powder'd meat,[372]
More than they twain could in a fortnight eat.

BLUNT. Indeed, this can I witness with the king,
Which argues in that point his innocence:
Brand did bear in a month's provision,
But lock'd it, like a villain, far from them;
And lock'd them in a place, where no man's ear
Might hear their lamentable woful moans;
For all the issue, both of vent and light,
Came from a loover[373] at the tower's top,
Till now Lord Bruce made open this wide gap.

BRUCE. Had I not reason, think you, to make wide
The window, that should let so much woe forth?
Where sits my mother, martyr'd by herself,
Hoping to save her child from martyrdom?
Where stands my brother, martyr'd by himself,
Because he would not taste his mother's blood?
For thus I gather this:—my mother's teeth and chin
Are bloody with the savage cookery
Which her soft heart, through pity of her son,

Respectless made her practise on herself;
And her right hand, with offering it the child,
Is with her own pure blood stain'd and defil'd.
My little brother's lips and chin alone
Are tainted with the blood; but his even teeth,
Like orient pearl or snow-white ivory,
Have not one touch of blood, one little spot:
Which is an argument the boy would not
Once stir his lips to taste that bloody food
Our cruel-gentle mother minister'd:
But as it seem'd (for see his pretty palm
Is bloody too) he cast it on the ground,
For on this side the blessed relics lie,
By famine's rage divided from this shrine.
Sad woful mother in Jerusalem!
Who, when thy son and thou didst faint for food,
Buried his sweet flesh in thy hungry womb,
How merciless wert thou, if we compare
Thy fact and this! For my poor lady mother
Did kill herself to save my dying brother;
And thou, ungentle son of Miriam,
Why didst thou beg life when thy mother lack'd?
My little brother George did nobly act
A more courageous part: he would not eat,
Nor beg to live. It seem'd he did not cry:
Few tears stand on his cheek, smooth is each eye;
But when he saw my mother bent to die,
He died with her. O childish valiancy—

KING. Good Bruce, have done. My heart cannot contain
The grief it holds: my eyes must show'r down rain.

LEI. Which showers are even as good
As rain in harvest, or a swelling flood
When neighbouring meadows lack the mower's scythe.

A march for burial, with drum and fife. Enter OXFORD. MATILDA borne with nuns, one carrying a white pendant—these words written in gold: "Amoris Castitatis et Honoris Honos." The QUEEN following the bier, carrying a garland of flowers. Set it in the midst of the stage.

RICH. List, Leicester: hear'st thou not a mournful march?

LEI. Yes, Richmond, and it seemeth old De Vere.

OX. Lords, by your leave, is not our sovereign here?

KING. Yes, good old Aubrey.

OX. Ah, my gracious lord!
That you so much your high state should neglect!
Ah! God in heaven forgive this bloody deed!
Young Bruce, young Bruce, I weep
Thy mother and thy brother's wrong;
Yet to afflict thee more, more grief I bring.

BRUCE. O honourable Aubery de Vere,
Let sorrow in a sable suit appear:
Do not misshape her garment like delight;
If it be grief, why cloth'st thou her in white?

OX. I cannot tell thee yet: I must sit down.
Attend, young Bruce, and listen to the queen;
She'll not be tongue-tied: we shall have a stir
Anon, I fear, would make a man half-sick.

QUEEN. Are you here, lecher? O intemperate king!
Wilt thou not see me? Come, come, show your face,

Your grace's graceless, king's unkingly face.
What, mute? hands folded, eyes fix'd on the earth?
Whose turn is next now to be murdered?
The famish'd Bruces are on yonder side,
On this, another I will name anon;
One for whose head this garland I do bear,
And this fair, milk-white, spotless pendant too.
Look up, King John! see, yonder sits thy shame;
Yonder it lies! what, must I tell her name?
It is Matilda, poisoned by thee.

KING. Matilda! O that foul swift-footed slave,
That kills, ere one have time to bid him save!
Fair, gentle girl, ungently made away.

BRUCE. My banish'd uncle's daughter, art thou there?
Then I defy all hope, and swear—

LEI. Stay, Bruce, and listen well what oath to swear.
Louis the Dolphin, pitying our estate,
Is by the Christian king his father sent
With aid to help us, and is landed too.
Lords, that will fly the den of cruelty,
And fight to free yourselves from tyranny[374]—
Bruce, keep that castle to the only use
Of our elected king, Louis of France.

OX. God's passion! do not so: King John is here!
Lords, whisper not with Leicester? Leicester, fie!
Stir not again regardless mutiny.
Speak to them, Hugh:[375] I know thou lov'st the king.
Madam, go to them; nay do, for God's sake, do!
Down with your stomach,[376] for if he go down,
You must down too, and be no longer queen:
Advise you; go, entreat them speedily.
My sovereign, wherefore sit you sighing there?
The lords are all about to follow Louis:
Up and entreat them, else they will away.

KING. Good Oxford, let them go. Why should they stay?

OX. What, are ye desperate? That must not be.
Hear me, my lords.

[All stand in council.]

KING. This pendant let me see.
Amoris Castitatis et Honoris Honos.
She was, indeed, of love the honour once,[377]
When she was lov'd of virtuous Huntington:
Of chastity the honour all her life;
To impure thoughts she never could be won:
And she of honour was the honour too.
By birth and life[378] she honour honoured.
Bring in two tapers lighted: quick, despatch!

LEI. Remember, Bruce, thy charge. Come, lords, away!

ALL *but* OXFORD *and* HUBERT. Away! we will away.

[Bring in two white tapers.]

OX. Hark, Leicester, but one word: a little stay.
Help me, good Hubert! help me, gentle queen!

[Again confer.][379]

KING. How dim these tapers burn! they give no light.

Here were two beauteous lamps, that could have taught
The sun to shine by day, the moon by night;
But they are dim, too, clean extinguished.
Away with these, sith those fair lights be dead!

OX. And, as I say—hark, Bruce, unto our talk—
Think you it is for love of England Louis comes?
Nay. France is not so kind; I would it were.
Advise yourselves. Hark, dost thou hear me, Bruce?

BRUCE. Oxford, I do.

OX. Can noble English hearts bear the French yoke?
No, Leicester: Richmond, think on Louis' sire,
That left you and your king in Palestine.

QUEEN. And think, beside, you know not Louis's nature,
Who may be as bad as John, or, rather, worse
Than he.

HUB. And look, my lords, upon his silent woe;
His soul is at the door of death, I know.
See how he seeks to suck, if he could draw
Poison from dead Matilda's ashy lips.
I will be sworn his very heart-string nips.
A vengeance on that slave, that cursed Brand!
I'll kill him, if I live, with this right hand.

OX. Thou canst not, Hubert; he hath kill'd himself—
But to our matter. Leicester, pray thee speak.
Young Bruce, for God's sake, let us know thy mind.

BRUCE. I would be loth to be a stranger's slave:
For England's love, I would no French king have.

LEI. Well, Oxford, if I be deceiv'd in John again,
It's 'long of you, Lord Hubert, and the queen.
Yield up the castle, Bruce: we'll once more try
King John's proceedings. Oxford, tell him so.

[OXFORD *goes to the KING, does his duty,
and talks with him.*

BRUCE. I will come down. But first farewell, dear mother, [*Kiss her.*
Farewell, poor little George, my pretty brother!
Now will I shut my shambles in again:
Farewell, farewell! [*Closes the casement.*
In everlasting bliss your sweet souls dwell.

Ox. But you must mend, i' faith; in faith you must[380].

LEI. My lord, once more your subjects do submit,
Beseeching you to think how things have pass'd;
And let some comfort shine on us, your friends,
Through the bright splendour of your virtuous life.

KING. I thank you all; and, Leicester, I protest,
I will be better than I yet have been.

BRUCE. Of Windsor Castle here the keys I yield.

KING. Thanks, Bruce: forgive me, and I pray thee see
Thy mother and thy brother buried

[BRUCE *offers to kiss MATILDA.*

In Windsor Castle church. Do, kiss her cheek:
Weep thou on that, on this side I will weep.

QUEEN. Chaste virgin, thus I crown thee with these flowers.

KING. Let us go on to Dunmow with this maid:
Among the hallow'd nuns let her be laid.
Unto her tomb a monthly pilgrimage
Doth King John vow, in penance for this wrong.

Go forward, maids; on with Matilda's hearse,
And on her tomb see you engrave this verse.

"Within this marble monument doth lie
Matilda, martyr'd for her chastity."

[*Exeunt.*]

EPILOGUS.

Thus is Matilda's story shown in act,
And rough-hewn out by an uncunning hand:
Being of the most material points compact,
That with the certain'st state of truth do stand.

FINIS.

CONTENTION BETWEEN LIBERALITY AND PRODIGALITY.

EDITION

A Pleasant Comedie, shewing the contention betweene Liberalitie and Prodigalitie. As it was playd before her Maiestie. London Printed by Simon Stafford for George Vincent, and are to be sold at the signs of the Hand in hand in Wood-street over against S. Michaels Church. 1602. 4to.

The copy of this play in the Garrick collection appears to be the only one known, and from that source it is now for the first time reprinted. Mr Collier (*Hist Engl. Dram. Poetr.*, ii, 318) points out that there is internal evidence, from the allusion to the 43d year of Queen Elizabeth, that the production was performed before her Majesty in 1600; and it seems likely that it was a revival of a more ancient piece. The writer just quoted remarks that a play, called "Prodigality," was exhibited at Court in 1568 (*ibid.* note). Philips, author of the "*Theatrum Poetarum*," in assigning it to Greene, followed either some tradition of the time or his own whim; but he is not a trustworthy authority; and his article on Greene is assuredly as puerile and absurd a performance as could be imagined.

In the prologue, the writer refers to *childish years*, presumably his own, and perhaps the "Contention" was a youthful effort. Moreover, from the (not very appropriate) introduction of Latin terms here and there, it is allowable to suspect that the author was preparing to graduate in arts, if he had not done so.

THE PROLOGUE.

The proverb is, *How many men, so many minds,*
Which maketh proof how hard a thing it is,
Of sundry minds to please the sundry kinds.
In which respect I have inferred this,
That where men's minds appear so different,
No play, no part, can all alike content.

The grave Divine calls for Divinity:
The civil student for Philosophy:
The courtier craves some rare sound history:
The baser sort, for knacks of pleasantry.
So every sort desireth specially,
What thing may best content his fantasy.

But none of these our barren toy affords.
To pulpits we refer Divinity:
And matters of estate to Council boards.
As for the quirks of sage Philosophy,
Or points of squirrliting scurrility,
The one we shun, for childish years too rare,
Th'other unfit for such as present are.

But this we bring is but to serve the time,
A poor device to pass the day withal:
To loftier points of skill we dare not climb,
Lest (perking over-high) with shame we fall.
Such as doth best beseem such as we be,
Such we present, and crave your courtesy.

That courtesy, that gentleness of yours,
Which wonted is to pardon faults of ours:
Which granted, we have all that we require:
Your only favour, only our desire.

THE END OF THE PROLOGUE.

THE SPEAKERS.

THE PROLOGUE.

VANITY, *Fortune's chief servant.*

PRODIGALITY, *suitor for Money.*

POSTILION, *his servant.*

HOST.

TENACITY, *suitor for Money.*

DANDALINE, *the hostess.*

TOM TOSS.

DICK DICER.

FORTUNE.

MASTER MONEY, *her son.*

VIRTUE.

EQUITY.

LIBERALITY, *chief steward to Virtue.*

CAPTAIN WELL-DONE.

COURTIER.

LAME SOLDIER.

CONSTABLES, *with Hue and Cry.*

TIPSTAVES.

SHERIFF.

CLERK.

CRIER.

JUDGE.

THE CONTENTION BETWEEN LIBERALITY AND PRODIGALITY.

SCENE I.

Enter VANITY solus, all in feathers.

In words to make description of my name,
My nature or conditions, were but vain;
Sith this attire so plainly shows the same,
As showed cannot be in words more plain.
For lo, thus roundabout in feathers dight,
Doth plainly figure mine inconstancy:
As feathers, light of mind; of wit as light,
Subjected still to mutability,
And for to paint me forth more properly,
Behold each feather decked gorgeously
With colours strange in such variety,
As plainly pictures perfect vanity.
And so I am, to put you out of doubt,
Even vanity wholly; within, without:
In head, in heart: in all parts roundabout:
But whence I come, and why I hither come,
And upon whom I daily do attend,
In brief, to show you in a little sum,
My special meaning is, and so an end.
I came from Fortune, my most sovereign dame,
Amongst whose chiefest servants I am one:
Fortune, that earthly goddess great of name,
To whom all suits I do prefer alone.
She, minding in this place forthwith t'appear,
In her most gorgeous pomp and princely port,
Sends me to see all things in presence here,
Prepar'd and furnish'd in the bravest sort.
Here will she mount this stately sumptuous throne,
As she is wont to hear each man's desire:
And whoso wins her favour by his moan,
May have of her the thing he doth require.
And yet another dame there is, her enemy,
'Twixt whom remains continual emulation:
Virtue who, in respect of Fortune's sovereignty,
Is held, God wot, of simple reputation;
Yet hither comes (poor soul) in her degree,
This other seat half-forced to supply:
But 'twixt their state what difference will be,
Yourselves shall judge and witness, when you see.
Therefore I must go deck up handsomely,
What best beseems Dame Fortune's dignity.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Enter PRODIGALITY, POSTILION, and HOST.

PROD. Postilion, stay, thou drugg'st on like an ass.
Lo, here's an inn, which I cannot well pass:

Here will we bait, and rest ourselves awhile.

POST. Why, sir, you have to go but six small mile;
The way is fair, the moon shines very bright.
Best now go on, and then rest for all night.

PROD. Tush, Postil, fair or foul, or far or near,
My weary bones must needs be rested here.

POST. 'Tis but a paltry inn, there's no good cheer;
Yet shall you pay for all things passing dear.

PROD. I care not for all that: I love mine ease.

POST. Well, sir, a God's name, then do what you please.

PROD. Knock, then, at the gate.

POST. Ho, who's at home? hostler, chamberlain, tapster?
Ho! take in gentlemen. Knave, slave, host, hostess, ho!

[*Rip, rap, rip, rap.*]

What, is there none that answers? *Tout a la mort?*
Sir, you must make entrance at some other port:
For here's no passage.

PROD. No? let me come; I'll knock a little harder. Here must I in; for sure I will no farder. [*Rip, rap, rap, rap.*] Ho! who dwells here? [*Rip, rap, rap.*] I'll call on the women another while. Ho! butter-wench, dairy-maid, nurse, laundress, cook, host, hostess, anybody, ho!

HOST. Who's there?

PROD. Up, sir, with a horse night-cap! what, are ye all in a drunken dream! can ye not hear?

POST. Not a word more! he is fast asleep again,
I fear. What, ho?

HOST. How now?

PROD. How now? now the devil take thee!
Can calling, nor knocking, nor nothing, awake thee?

HOST. Now, sir, what lack ye?

PROD. Lodging.

HOST. What are you?

PROD. Gentlemen. Seest thou not?

HOST. Whence come ye?

PROD. What skills that? open the gate.

HOST. Nay, soft a while, I am not wont so late
To take in guests. I like ye not: away.

PROD. Nay, stay awhile, mine host; I pray thee, stay,
Open the gate, I pray thee heartily,
And what we take we will pay thee royally.

HOST. And would ye have lodging then?

PROD. Yea, rather than my life.

HOST. Then stay a while; I'll first go ask my wife.

PROD. Nay, nay, send her rather to me:
If she be a pretty wench, we shall soon agree.

POST. Now a bots[381] on him and his wife both for me! [*Aside.*]

HOST. Then you would have lodgings belike, sir?

PROD. Yea, I pray thee come quickly.

HOST. What's your name, and please you?

PROD. Prodigality.

HOST. And will you indeed spend lustily?

PROD. Yea, that I will.

HOST. And take that ye find patiently?

PROD. What else?

HOST. And pay what I ask willingly?

PROD. Yea, all reckonings unreasonably.

HOST. Well, go too; for this once I am content to receive ye: come on, sir, I daresay you are almost weary.

PROP. Thou may'st swear it.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Enter VIRTUE and EQUITY.

VIR. O most unhappy state of reckless humane kind!
O dangerous race of man, unwitty, fond and blind!
O wretched worldlings, subject to all misery,
When fortune is the prop of your prosperity!
Can you so soon forget, that you have learn'd of yore
The grave divine precepts, the sacred wholesome lore,
That wise philosophers with painful industry
Have^[382] written and pronounc'd for man's felicity?
Whilome [it] hath been taught, that Fortune's hold is tickle;
She bears a double face, disguised, false and fickle,
Full fraughted with all sleights, she playeth on the pack;
On whom she smileth most, she turneth most to wrack.
The time hath been, when Virtue had^[383] the sovereignty
Of greatest price, and plac'd in chiefest dignity;
But topsy-turvy now the world is turn'd about:
Proud Fortune is preferr'd, poor Virtue clean thrust out.
Man's sense so dulled is, so all things come to pass,
Above the massy gold t'esteem the brittle glass.

EQ. Madam, have patience, Dame Virtue must sustain,
Until the heavenly powers do otherwise ordain.

VIR. Equity, for my part, I envy not her state,
Nor yet mislike the meanness of my simple rate.
But what the heavens assign, that do I still think best:
My fame was never yet by Fortune's frown opprest:
Here, therefore, will I rest in this my homely bower,
With patience to abide the storms of every shower.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter TENACITY and VANITY [severally, and not seeing each other at first.][384]]

TEN. By Gog's bores, these old stumps are stark tired.

Chave here roundabout for life conquered,
Where any posting nags were to be hired,
And can get none, would they were all vired! [385]
Cham come too late for Money, I hold a penny,
Suitors to Fortune there are so many;
And all for Money, chill gage a round sum:
Money is gone, before Tenacity come.
Then am I dress'd even to my utter shame:
A fool return'd, like as a fool I came.
Cham sure have come vorty miles and twenty,
With all these bags you see and wallets empty:
But when have sued to Vortune vine and dainty,
Ich hope to vill them up with money plenty:
But here is one, of whom ich will conquer,
Whilk way che might attain to my desire.
God speed, my zon.

VAN. What, father Crust, whither post you so fast?

TEN. Nay, bur lady, zon, ich can make no haste,
Vor che may say to thee, cham tired clean.

VAN. More shame for you, to keep your ass so lean!
But whither go you now?

TEN. To a goodly lady, whom they call her Vortune.

VAN. And wherefore?

TEN. For money, zon, but ich veer che come too late.

VAN. Indeed, it seemeth by thy beggar's state,
Thou hast need of money; but let me hear,
How or by whom think'st thou to get this gear?

TEN. Chill speak her vair, chill make low cursy.

VAN. That's somewhat; but how wilt thou come at her?

TEN. Bur lady, zon, zest true; there lies the matter:
Chill make some friend.

VAN. Whom?

TEN. Some man of hers, that near her doth attend.

VAN. Who is that?

TEN. Ich know not; chud that [386] inqueer of thee:
And therefore, if thou knowest, tell it me.

VAN. What, in such haste, forsooth, so suddenly:
And so good cheap, without reward or fee?

TEN. Poor men, dear zon, must crave of courtesy:
Get I once money, thou shalt rewarded be.

VAN. Go to, then, I'll tell thee: his name is Vanity.

TEN. And where is a?

VAN. No more ado: ask but for Vanity.
Reward him well, he'll help thee to money.

TEN. But where?

VAN. Why, here in this place: this is Lady Fortune's palace.

TEN. Is this? Ah, goodly Lord, how gay it is!
Now hope I sure of money not to miss.

So law, my zon, ich will go rest myself a while,
And come again. [*Exit.*]

VAN. Do so. Now sure this coistrel makes me smile,
To see his greedy gaping thus for gain,
First hardly got, then kept with harder pain,
As you ere long by proof shall see full plain.

TEN. This is mine old inn; here chill knock. Holla, ho!

HOST. What roister have we there, that rappeth so?

POST. How now, sirrah, what lack you?

TEN. Lodging.

POST. Lodging? there is none: all is full.

TEN. How so?

POST. Ta'en up by gentlemen long ago.

TEN. Let me yet have some room for mine ass.

POST. *Asinus super asinum, volitate ad furtas!*

HOST. Who is that thou pratest therewithal?

POST. Look forth and see: a lubber, fat, great and tall,
Upon a tired ass, bare, short and small.

HOST. Ho, ho! 'tis Tenacity, my old acquaintance.
And to my wife of near alliance.
Father Tenacity!

TEN. Mine host, God speed!
How do you? Take in, ostler.

OSTLER. Anon, sir.

HOST. Chamberlain, wait upon my kindred here.

CHAM. I will, sir.

SCENE V.

Enter MONEY and VANITY.

The Song.

MON. *As light as a fly,
In pleasant jollity:
With mirth and melody,
Sing Money, Money, Money!
Money the minion, the spring of all joy;
Money, the medicine that heals each annoy;
Money, the jewel that man keeps in store;
Money, the idol that women adore!
That Money am I, the fountain of bliss,
Whereof whoso tasteth, doth never amiss.
Money, money, money!
Sing Money, Money, Money!*

VAN. What, Money, sing you so lustily?

MON. I have none other cause: who would not sing merrily,
Being, as I am, in such felicity:
The God of this world, so mighty of power,

As makes men, and mars men, and all in an hour?
Yea, where I am, is all prosperity,
And where I want, is nought but misery.

VAN. Money saith reason; for so doth it fare,
Money makes masteries, old proverbs declare.
But, Money, of Fortune, our sovereign dame,
What news?

MONEY. Marry, sir, of purpose I hither came,
To let thee know she will forthwith be here:
And lo! already, see, she doth appear.

VAN. 'Tis true; now must I show my diligence.
Down, ladies, stoop: do your reverence.

SCENE VI.

Enter FORTUNE, _in her chariot drawn with Kings.

The Song.

Reverence, do reverence; fair dames, do reverence
Unto this goddess great, do humble reverence:
Do humble reverence.

Fortune, of-worldly state the governess:
Fortune, of man's delight the mistress:
Fortune, of earthly bliss the patroness:
Fortune, the spring of joy and happiness.
Lo, this is she, with twinkling of her eye,
That misers[387] can advance to dignity,
And princes turn to misers' misery.
Reverence, due reverence_.

FOR. Report hath spread, that Virtue here in place
Arrived is, her silly court to hold;
And therefore I am come with faster pace,
T'encounter her, whose countenance is so bold.
I doubt not but by this my pompous shew,
By vestures wrought with gold so gorgeously:
By reverence done to me of high and low:
By all these ornaments of bravery,
By this my train, that now attends me so:
By kings, that hale my chariot to and fro,
Fortune is known the queen of all renown:
That makes, that mars; sets up and throws adown.
Well is it known, what contrary effects
'Twixt Fortune and dame Virtue hath been wrought:
How still I her contemn, she me rejects;
I her despise, she setteth me at nought:
So, as great wars are grown for sovereignty,
And strife as great 'twixt us for victory.
Now is the time of trial to be had,
The place appointed eke in presence here.
So as the truth to all sorts, good and bad,
More clear than light shall presently appear.
It shall be seen, what Fortune's power can do,
When Virtue shall be forc'd to yield thereto.
It shall be seen, when Virtue cannot bide,
But shrink for shame, her silly face to hide.
Then Fortune shall advance herself before,
All harms to help, all losses to restore.
But why do I myself thus long restrain

From executing this I do intend?
Time posts away, and words they be but vain;
For deeds (indeed) our quarrel now must end.
Therefore in place I will no longer stay
But to my stately throne myself convey.

Reverence, due reverence, &c.

ACT II, SCENE I.

Enter LIBERALITY.

How seldom is it seen, that Virtue is regarded,
Or men of virtuous sort for virtuous deeds rewarded!
So wouls the world to pamper those that nought deserve,
Whiles such as merit best, without relief do starve.
Great imperfections are in some of greatest skill,
That colours can discern [not], white from black, good from ill.
O blind affects of men, how are you led awry,
To leave assured good, to like frail Vanity!
If some of Virtue's train, for prince and country's good,
To show their faithful hearts, shall hazard life and blood,
And guerdonless depart, without their due reward,
Small is th'encouragement, the example very hard.
Where any well deserve, and are rewarded well,
Where prince and people both in safety sure do dwell,
Where he that truly serves, hath nothing for his pain,
More hearts are lost, than pecks of gold can ransom home again.
Let states therefore, that wish to maintain stately dignity,
Seek to acquaint themselves with Liberality;
For that is it which wins the subjects' faithful love,
Which faithful love all harms from them and theirs remove.
Liberality am I, Virtue's steward here,
Who for the virtuous sort do nothing hold too dear.
But few to Virtue seek: all sorts to Fortune fly,
There seeking to maintain their chief prosperity.
But whoso marks the end, shall be enforc'd to say:
O Fortune, thou art blind! let Virtue lead the way.
But who comes here? It seemeth, old Tenacity.
I must away; for contraries cannot agree.

[Exit.

SCENE II.

Enter TENACITY.

TEN. Well, since che see there is none other boot,
Chill now take pains to go the rest afoot;
For Brock mine ass is saddle-pinch'd vull sore,
And so am I even here—chill say no more.
But yet I must my business well apply,
For which ich came, that is, to get money.
Chwas told that this is Lady Vortune's place:
Chill go boldly to her, that's a vlat case;
Vor, if che speed not now at this first glance,
Cham zure to be dash'd quite out of countenance
By certain lusty gallon lads hereby,
Seeking Vortune's favour as well as I.

O, knew I where to find Mast. Fanity,
Vortune's servant! Of mine honesty,
Look where he comes in time as fine and trim,
As if che held him all this while by the chin.

SCENE III.

VANITY *and* TENACITY.

VAN. 'Tis he indeed: what say you to him?

TEN. Marry, sir, cham now come for money.

VAN. For money, man? what, still so hastily?

TEN. Yea[388], by gis, sir, 'tis high time, che vore ye;
Cham aveard another will ha' 't afore me.

VAN. Why so? who is it thou fearest? tell me.

TEN. Marry, sir, they call him Mast. Prodigality.

VAN. Prodigality, is it true? young, wasteful, roisting Prodigality,
To encounter old, sparing, covetous, niggard Tenacity?
Sure, such a match as needs must yield us sport:
Therefore, until the time that Prodigality resort,
I'll entertain this crust with some device— [*aside*.
Well, father, to be sped of money with a trice,
What will you give me?

TEN. Cha vore thee, son, do rid me quickly hence,
Chill give thee a vair piece of three-halfpence.

VAN. Indeed?

TEN. Here's my hand.

VAN. Now, sir, in sooth you offer so bountifully,
As needs you must be us'd accordingly.
But tell me, know you him that cometh here?

TEN. Cock's bores, 'tis Prodigality; 'tis he I did fear.
Cham afraid che may go whistle now for money.

VAN. Tush, man, be of good cheer, I warrant thee;
He speedeth best, that best rewardeth me.

SCENE IV.

Enter PRODIGALITY, VANITY, TENACITY, HOST, FORTUNE, *and* MONEY.

HOST. Sir, now your reckoning is made even:
I'll trust no more.

PROD. No?

HOST. No, sure.

PROD. Set cock-on-hoop then; by some means, good or bad,
There is no remedy, but money must be had.
By the body of an ox, behold here this ass,
Will be my familiar, wheresoever I pass.
Why, goodman Crust, tell me, is there no nay,
But where I go, you must forestal my way?

TEN. By Gog's flesh and his flounders, sir, che hope the Queen's highway is free for euery man! for thee as me, for me as thee, for poor Tenacity as for proud Prodigality! chill go, in the Queen's peace, about my business.

PROD. This way?

TEN. Yea.

PROD. To whom?

TEN. To Vortune my mistress.

PROD. Wherefore?

TEN. That's no matter to you.

PROD. No matter, sir? but, by your crustship, ere you go,
'Tis a plain case, Prodigality will know:
And therefore be round; come off, and tell me quickly.

TEN. And thou'dst so vain know, che go for money.

PROD. Out upon thee, villain, traitor, thief, pickpurse!
Thou penurious knave, caterpillar, and what's worse?
Hast thou heard me say, that for money I went,
And couldst thou creep so closely my purpose to prevent?
By the life I live, thou shalt die the death.
Where shall I first begin? above or beneath?
Say thy prayers, slave—

VAN. How now, my friends, what needs this variance?
Money comes not by force, money comes by chance;
And sith at one instant you both seek for money,
Appeal both to Fortune, and then shall you try,
Whether either or neither may hit to have money.

PROD. Gentleman, you say well: I know not your name;
But indeed for that purpose to Fortune I came:
For furtherance whereof if I might obtain
Your friendly help, I would quit your pain.

TEN. I am your old acquaintance, sir, remember me.

VAN. Thee, quoth a? for thy large offers I may not forget thee.
You be both my friends, and therefore indifferently
I will commend you both to Fortune's courtesy.
[To FOR.] Lady most bright, renowned goddess fair,
Unto thy stately throne here do repair
Two suitors of two several qualities,
And qualities, indeed, that be mere contraries.
That one is called wasteful Prodigality:
This^[389] one cleped covetous Tenacity.
Both at once unto your royal majesty
Most humbly make their suits for money.

FOR. Let's hear what they can say.

PROD. Divine goddess, behold, with all humility
For money I appeal unto thy deity;
Which, in high honour of thy majesty,
I mean to spend abroad most plentifully.

TEN. Sweet mistress, grant to poor Tenacity
The keeping of this golden darling money:
Chill vow to thee, so long as life shall dure,
Under strong lock and key chill keep him vast and sure.

VAN. Nay, pleaseth then your pleasant fantasy
To hear them plead in musical harmony?

FOR. It liketh me.

PROD. None better.

TEN. Well, though my singing be but homely,
Chill sing and spring[390] too, ere chud loose money.

VAN. Well, to it, a God's name; let saying go than;[391]
And each sing for himself the best he can.

The Song.

PROD. *The princely heart, that freely spends,
Relieves full many a thousand more,
He getteth praise, he gaineth friends,
And people's love procures therefore.
But pinching fist, that spareth all,
Of due relief the needy robs:
Nought can be caught, where nought doth fall,
There comes no good of greedy cobs.
This issue therefore do I make:
The best deserver draw the stake.*

TEN. Whilst thou dost spend with friend and foe,
At home che hold the plough by th' tail:
Che dig, che delve, che zet, che zow,
Che mow, che reap, che ply my flail.
A pair of dice is thy delight,
Thou liv'st for most part by the spoil:
I truly labour day and night
To get my living by my toil.
Chill therefore sure this issue make:
The best deserver draw the stake_.

VAN. Hallo! *satis disputatum.*

TEN. Nay, by my father's soul, friend, now chave once begun,
Let him to't, che pass not when che done.

PROD. Lo, Lady, you have heard our reasons both express'd,
And thereby are resolv'd, I hope, who merits best.

FOR. Dame Fortune dealeth not by merit, but by chance:
He hath it but by hap, whom Fortune doth advance;
And of his hap as he hath small assurance:
So in his hap likewise is small continuance.
Therefore at a venture, my dear son Money,
I do commit you unto Prodigality.

TEN. To Prodigality? Ah, poor Money, I pity thee;
Continual unrest must be thy destiny:
Each day, each hour, yea, every minute tost,
Like to a tennis-ball, from pillar to post.

MONEY. I am, where I like.

TEN. [To VAN.] And is there, then, no other remedy?
Must poor Tenacity put up the injury?

VAN. Your time is not yet come.

TEN. When will it come, trow ye?

VAN. At the next turning water, happily.

TEN. And che wist that, chud the more quietly depart,
And keep therewhile a hungry hoping heart.
How sayest thou, vriend Fanity?

VAN. No doubt, but 'tis best.

TEN. Then vaward to all at once. [*Exit.*]

PROD. Good night and good rest.

And now will I likewise with my sweet Money
Go hunt abroad for some good company.
Vanity, for thy pains I will not grease thy fist
Peltingly[392] with two or three crowns; but, when thou list,
Come boldly unto Prodigality's chest,
And take what thou wilt; it's ever open.

VAN. I thank you, sir; 'tis honourably spoken.

PROD. Yet, ere I go, with song of joyfulness
Let me to Fortune show my thankfulness.

_The Song.

Verse to _ FORTUNE.

_Thou that dost guide the world by thy direction,
Thou that dost conquer states to thy subjection,
Thou that dost keep each king in thy correction,
Thou that preservest all in thy protection,
For all thy gifts unto thy majesty
I yield both thanks and praise immortally:
To mighty Fortune, &c.

Verse to _ MONEY.

_Sweet Money, the minion that sails with all winds,
Sweet Money, the minstrel that makes merry all minds,
Sweet Money, that gables of bondage unbinds,
Sweet Money, that maintains all sports of all kinds,
This is that sweet Money, that rules like a king,
And makes me all praises of Money to sing

[*Exeunt*_]

ACT III., SCENE I.

Enter DANDALINE, *the hostess.*

DAN. Now, i'faith, ye little peevish harlotry,[393]
I'll one day make you spit your meat more handsomely.
By my truth, truly had I not come in the rather,
She had laid me to the fire the loin of veal and capon both together,
Not weighing (like an unwitty girlish mother),
That the one would ask more roasting than the other;
So that either the veal had been left stark raw,
Or else the capon burnt, and so not worth a straw.
And that had been pity: for I assure you at a word,
A better bird, a fairer bird, a finer bird:
A sweeter bird, a younger bird, a tenderer bird:
A daintier bird, a crisper bird, a more delicate bird:
Was there never set upon any gentleman's board.
But I lack my guests, that should pay for this gear:
And sure my mind gives me, I should find them here,
Two of mine acquaintance, familiar grown,
The third to me yet a gentleman unknown,
More than by hearsay, that he is fresh and lusty,

Full of money, and by name Prodigality.
Now, sir, to link him sure to his hostess Dandaline,
Dandaline must provide to have all things very fine.
And therefore already it is *definitum*,
The gentleman shall want nothing may please his *appetitum*.
And because most meats unsauced are motives to drouth,
He shall have a lemon to moisten his mouth,
A lemon I mean; no lemon I trow;
Take heed, my fair maids, you take me not so.
For though I go not as grave as my grandmother,
Yet I have honesty as well as another.
But hush, now shall I hear some news.

[*Manet.*

SCENE II.

Enter TOM TOSS, DICK DICER.[394]

DICER. Fellow Tomkin, I think this world is made of flint;
There's neither money, nor wares worth money, in't.

TOSS. Hold thy peace, Dick, it cannot still keep at this stint:
We are now lighted upon such a mint,
As (follow it well) I dare warrant thee,
Thy turn shall be served in every degree.

DAND. Dick boy, mine own boy, how dost thou? what cheer?

DICER. What, Dandeline, mine hostess, what make you here?

DAND. I came of purpose to inquire for thee.

DICER. And I came of purpose to seek Prodigality.

DAND. What, he you told me of? indeed, is it he?

DICER. Ay, of my fidelity.

DAND. A good boy, of mine honesty.
But when come ye?

DICER. As soon as I can find him.

DAND. Seek him, good Dick, and find him speedily:
For this, I assure ye, your supper is ready.

DICER. Go home before, make all things very fine.

DAND. I will. Farewell.

DICER. Farewell.

DAND. Farewell to Tomkin, too?

TOSS. Farewell, sweet Dandaline.

DAND. But, hear ye? bring him.

DICER. Who?

DAND. Tush, a God's name, you know who!
I mean the gentleman.

DICER. Go to, go to. [DANDALINE *exit.*
Tom, now to the purpose where first we began.

TOSS. Cast care away, Dick; I'll make thee a man.

DICER. A gospel in thy mouth, Tom, for it never went worse.
Master Money hath left me never a penny in my purse.

TOSS. 'Twill be better, Dick, shalt see, very shortly.

DICER. I pray thee, tell me is this brave Prodigality,
So full of money as he is said to be?

TOSS. Full, quotha? he is too full, I promise thee.

DICER. And will he lash it out so lustily?

TOSS. Exceedingly, unreasonably, unmeasureably.

DICER. Then may such mates as we, that be so bare,
Hope some way or other to catch a share.

TOM. Assure thyself that; but whist, he cometh here:
Let's entertain him with familiar cheer.

DICER. In order, then, bravely.

[*Retire.*]

SCENE III.

Enter PRODIGALITY, *with* MONEY.

PROD. How is't, my sweet Money, shall we be lusty now?

MON. Be as lusty as you will. I'll be as lusty as you.

PROD. Who lacks money, ho! who lacks money?
But ask and have: money, money, money!

DICER. Sir, here be they that care not for your money,
So much as for your merry company.

PROD. And company is it I seek assuredly.

TOSS. Then here be companions to fit your fantasy,
And at all assays to answer your desire:
To go, to run, to stay, to do, as you require.

PROD. What can I wish more? well then, I pray,
What sports, what pastimes, shall we first assay?

TOSS. Marry, first, sir, we both pray you heartily,
To take a poor supper with us here hard by,
Where we will determine by common consent,
What pastimes are fittest for us to frequent.

PROD. I grant.

DICER. Then, if you please, with some sweet roisting harmony
Let us begin the utas[395] of our jollity.

PROD. Thou hitt'st my hand pat. Money, what say'st thou?

MON. I say that I like it: go to it, I pray you.

PROD. Shall I begin?

MON. Yea.

PROD. Then surely shall it be,
To thee, for thee, and in honour of thee.

_The Song.

Sweet Money, the minion that sails with all winds,
Sweet Money, the minstrel, that makes merry minds.
Flitozolaknops_[396]

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter LIBERALITY.

LIB. The more a man with virtuous dealing doth himself inure,
The less with worldly business he is molested sure;
Which maketh proof that, as turmoils still toss the worldly mind:
So minds exempt from worldly toil desired quiet find.
And chiefly, where the life is led in virtuous exercise,
There is no toil, but ease and contentation to the wise.
But what account, how slight regard, is had of virtue here,
By actions on this worldly stage most plainly doth appear.
Men see without most just desert of virtue nought is got,
To Fortune therefore fly they still, that giveth all by lot;
And finding Fortune's gifts so pleasant, sweet, and savoury,
They build thereon, as if they should endure perpetually.
But this is sure, and that most sure, that Fortune is unsure,
Herself most frail, her gifts as frail, subject to every shower:
And in the end, who buildeth most upon her surety,
Shall find himself cast headlong down to depth of misery.
Then having felt the crafty sleights of Fortune's fickle train,
Is forc'd to seek by virtue's aid to be relieved again.
This is the end; run how he list, this man of force must do,
Unless his life be clean cut off, this man must come unto:
In time, therefore, man might do well to care for his estate,
Lest, letted by extremity, repentance come too late.

SCENE V.

Enter to LIBERALITY CAPTAIN WELL-DONE.

CAP. W. Sir, I beseech you, speak a good word for me to the prince,
That by her letters I may be commended to some province,
Where service is to be had, either there to die with fame,
Or else to get me somewhat, whereon to live without shame;
For beg I cannot, and steal I may not, the truth is so;
But need doth make, the proverb say'th, th'old wife to trot for woe.
Yet whom stark need doth pinch, at length the devil drives to go:
Therefore, I beseech you, pity his extremity,
That would not make this suit without necessity.

LIB. Who be you, my friend?

CAP. W. By birth a gentleman, by profession a soldier,
Who, though I say it, in all our sovereign's war,
With hazard of my blood and life have gone as far,
As haply some others, whose fortunes have been better:
But I in service yet could never be a getter,
Ne can I impute it but to mine own destiny:
For well I know the prince is full of liberality.

LIB. What is your name, sir?

CAP. W. My name is Well-done.

LIB. Are you Captain Well-done?

CAP. W. Though unworthy, sir, I bear that name.

LIB. Give me your hand, Captain Well-done, for your fame
In feats of arms and service of your country
I have heard oft; you have deserved greatly;
Therefore think this that, as you merit much,
So the consideration thereof shall be such,
As duly doth pertain to your desert.
Trust me, the prince herself, unmoved of my part,
Your dutiful service hath specially regarded,
And expressly commands that it be well rewarded
Wherefore you shall not need to seek service abroad:
I exhort you at home still to make your abode:
That if in this realm occasions of wars be offered,
You and others your like may be employed.

CAP. W. My duty binds me to obey.

LIB. Then for this time you shall not need to stay.
As for your cause, I will remember it,
And see it holpen too, as shall be fit.

[*Exit* WELL-DONE.

LIB. Truly, if I should not have care of this man's necessity,
I should both swerve from virtue and from honesty.

SCENE VI.

Enter to LIBERALITY *a* COURTIER.

COUR. Sir, I humbly beseech you help to prefer my suit.

LIB. What is it?

COUR. There is an office fall'n, which I would gladly execute.

LIB. Who be you?

COUR. A servant here in court.

LIB. Do you serve the prince?

COUR. No, and please you.

LIB. Whom then?

COUR. A nobleman near about her majesty.

LIB. In what degree?

COUR. Forsooth, sir, as his secretary.

LIB. How long have you served?

COUR. A year or twain.

LIB. And would you so soon be preferred?
In sooth, my friend, I would be glad, as I may,
To do you any good: but this I say:
Who seeks by virtue preferment to attain,
In virtuous proceeding must take more pain,
Than can be well taken in a year or twain.
For time gives experience of every man's deeds,
And each man by merit accordingly speeds.
Go forward, my friend, in virtue with diligence,
And time, for your service, shall yield you recompence.

Your lord and master is very honourable,
And him in your suits you shall find favourable:
And as for my part, as erst I did say,
I never will hinder, where further I may.
Let this for this time be your answer.

COUR. Sir, with my boldness, I beseech you to bear.

LIB. God be with you. [*Exit* COURTIER.
Some men deserve, and yet do want their due;
Some men, again, on small deserts do sue,
It therefore standeth princes' officers in hand,
The state of every man rightly to understand,
That so by balance of equality
Each man may have his hire^[397] accordingly.
Well, since dame Virtue unto me doth charge of many things refer,
I must go do that best beseems a faithful officer.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV., SCENE I.

Enter MONEY.

MON. *Liberty, liberty!* now I cry *liberty!*
Catch me again, when you can, Prodigality!
Never was there poor soul so cruelly handled.
I was at the first, like a cockney^[398] dandled,
Strok'd on the head, kiss'd and well cherished,
And so thought surely I should have continued:
But now, how my case is altered suddenly!
You would not believe, unless you saw it apparently.
I'faith, since ye saw me, I have been turmoiled
From post to pillar: see how I am spoiled.
The villains among them provided the roast;
But Money was forced to pay for the cost
Both of their feasting and of their chamber cheer.
Yea, in every place they have fleec'd me so near:
He a fleece, and she a fleece, that nothing could I keep,
But glad to run away like a new-shorn sheep.
And though I have been pinched very near,
I am glad to see you in good health, every one here:
And now I have escaped the traitorous treachery
Of such a thriftless, roisting company,
To my mother in haste again I will get me,
And keep at home safely: from thence let them fet me.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Enter VANITY *and* MONEY.

VAN. What, Master Money, how goeth the world with you?

MON. Look but upon me, thou may'st quickly judge how.

VAN. Why, where the vengeance, where the devil hast thou been?
Among brambles or briars? or spirits, sure, I ween.

MON. Both ween it and wot it! I have pass'd a wilderness

Of most mischievous and miserable distress;
Sharp brambles, sharp briars, and terrible scratchers,
Bears, wolves, apes, lions, most ravening snatchers,
Thorns, thistles, and nettles, most horrible stingers,
Ravens, gripes and griphons. O vengeable wringers,
Yea through my whole passage such damnable sights,
As I cannot but judge them most damnable sprites.

VAN. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

MON. Laugh ye, my friend? It is no laughing toy.

VAN. But who did guide you in this labyrinth of joy?

MON. Who, sir? your minion, sir; Prodigality,
The captain elected of all roisting knavery;
He will be hang'd, I warrant him, shortly.

VAN. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

MON. Yet go to, laugh on!

VAN. Are you not a cuck—cuck-cold?

MON. I may be indeed; my clothes be but thin,
And therefore I will even go get me in,
That Fortune, my mother, may clothe me anew. [*Exit.*

VAN. Do so, you had need so, I may say to you.
Now, sure, it is a world of worlds to see,
How all the world inclines to Vanity;
Men seek at first—that is but Vanity,
And lose at last—that was but Vanity,
And yet continue still to follow Vanity,
As though it were a thing of certainty.
And I, that bear the name of Vanity,
And see the world's exceeding Vanity,
In following so the tracks of Vanity,
Do triumph still amid my empery,
And laugh at their simplicity,
That will be so misled by Vanity.
But who is this? O, I know him, a scholar of our train,
'Tis Hob-a-Clunch, that comes for money again.

SCENE III.

Enter to VANITY, TENACITY, FORTUNE, and MONEY.

TEN. God speed, Master Fanity.

VAN. Wocum,[399] Master Tenacity.

TEN. Sur, cham come once again vor money.

VAN. So me thinks.

TEN. Shall be sped now at length, trow ye?

VAN. I cannot tell ye, 'tis hard to say;
Peradventure yea, peradventure nay.

TEN. How so, man?

VAN. I fear me you will spend him too fast away.

TEN. Ho, ho, ho, ho! dost thou veer that, friend Fanity?
Shalt not need, man, chill keep him safe, che warrant thee.

O, that chad him in my clutches, shouldst see, I trow,
Whether chud keep him vast and safe, or no.
I pray thee, good sweet Master Fanity,
Speak one good word for poor Tenacity.

VAN. And dost thou indeed so well love money?

TEN. Do my wife's bees at home, think'st thou, love honey?

VAN. What wouldst thou do with it?

TEN. [*Hesitating.*] Chud, chud, chud, chud—

VAN. *Chud, chud!* what *chud*?

TEN. Chud—do no harm at all.

VAN. No, nor much good, I think, to great nor small.
But well, put case, I procure thee to speed,
You will remember your promise that I shall be fee'd.

TEN. God's vast, man, yea, chill do it, chill do it.

VAN. Stand there a while, and wait. [*To FORTUNE.*] Bright goddess, behold here again Tenacity,
That humbly makes his suit to have money.

MON. For Money? ho, there! Money finds himself well:
Money now hath no liking from Fortune to dwell.

VAN. *In vanum laboraverunt*, come.

TEN. Now, good soot', honey, vair golden mustress,
Let poor Tenacity taste of thy goodness:
Thee che honour, thee che serve, thee che reverence,
And in thy help che put my whole confidence.

FOR. Money, you must go to him, there is no remedy.

MON. Yea, and be us'd as before with Prodigality!

TEN. Let Prodigality go to the gallows-tree!
Why, man, he and I are clean contrary.
I chill coll thee, chill cuss thee.

MON, So did he.

TEN. Chill save thee, chill spare thee, chill keep thee from wasting.

MON. So did not he.
Go to then, seeing that my mother's will is such,
To put it in adventure I may not grutch.

TEN. O my sweeting, my darling, my chewel, my joy,
My pleasure, my treasure, mine own pretty boy.

MON. How now? what mean you by this, Tenacity.

TEN. O, forbid me not to kiss my sweet Money.
Varewell, Vortune; and, Vortune, che thank thee alway.
Come on, surrah, chill make you vast, bum vay.

MON. What, with ropes? what needs that?

TEN. Vor vear of robbing by the highway. *La, mi, fa, sol, fa; sol, mi, fa, re, mi.*

[*Exit TENACITY, and goeth to the inn for his ass.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter PRODIGALITY, DICK DICER, VANITY, *and*
[*to them afterwards*] TOM TOSS.

PROD. O monstrous, vile, filthy luck! see, in the twinkling of an eye,
Scarce knowing which way, I have quite lost my Money.

DICK. Out of all doubt, Prodigality, he is not gone yonder way.

PROD. Then seek some other course, make here no stay.
He must be found out, there is no remedy.
Thou know'st in what pickle we stand without Money.

DICK. Why, sure, Prodigality, it can be no other,
But he is returned to Fortune his mother.

PROD. Thinkest thou so?
Thou, Fortune, hearest thou? by fair means, I advise thee,
Restore my Money to me again: deal plainly and wisely;
Or by this sharp-edged sword, shalt see me play a proud part,
For I will have him again, in spite of thy heart.

VAN. Whom have we there, that keepeth such a coil.

PROD. Even he that will not put up such a foil.

VAN. What's the matter?

PROD. Vanity, to that dame thy mistress commend me,
Tell her—tell her, it doth not a little offend me,
To have my money in such great despite,
Taken so from me without any right.
What though it were once her own proper gift?
Yet given, 'tis mine own, there is no other shift.
Therefore charge her, in the name of Prodigality,
That he be restor'd to me incontinently,
Lest she repent it—

VAN. These be sore and cruel threat'nings, marry.
Is your haste so great, that by no means you may tarry?

PROD. I will not tarry, and therefore make haste.

VAN. Soft, sir, a little, there is no time pass'd.
You may tarry, you must tarry, for aught as I know:
Nay, then you shall tarry, whether you will or no.

[*Exit.*]

DICER. 'Zwounds, sir, he mocks you.

PROD. Gibe not with me, you whoreson rascal slave!
For money I come, and money will I have.
Sirrah Vanity, Vanity! What, Vanity!
Speak and be hang'd, Vanity! What, will't not be?

DICER. What a prodigious knave, what a slave is this? [*Aside.*]

PROD. Fortune, fine Fortune, you minion, if ye be wise,
Bethink ye betimes, take better advice:
Restore unto me my money quietly,
Else look for wars: Vanity, Fortune, Vanity!

DICER. Sir, you see it booteth not.

PROD. It is but my ill-luck.
Now the devil and his dam give them both suck!
What may we do? what counsel giv'st thou, Dick?

DICER. Marry, sir, be rul'd by me; I'll show you a trick,
How you may have him quickly.

PROD. As how?

DICER. Scale the walls: in at the window; by force fet him.

PROD. None better, in faith; fetch a ladder, and I will set him.
Fortune, thou injurious dame, thou shalt not by this villany
Have cause to triumph over Prodigality.
Why speak'st thou not? why speak'st thou not, I say?
Thy silence doth but breed thine own hurt and decay.

DICER. Here is a ladder.

PROD. Set it to.

[Here PRODIGALITY scaleth; FORTUNE claps a halter about his neck; he breaketh the halter, and falls.]

PROD. 'Swounds! help, Dick: help quickly, or I am chok'd!

DICER. God-a-mercy, good halter, or else you had been yok'd!

PROD. O thou vile, ill-favoured, crow-trodden, pye-pecked ront!
Thou abominable, blind foul-filth,[400] is this thy wont:
First, maliciously to spoil men of their good,
And then by subtle sleights thus to seek their blood?
I abhor thee—I defy thee, wheresoever I go;
I do proclaim myself thy mortal foe.

[Enter TOM TOSS.][401]

TOM TOSS. News, Prodigality, news!

DICER. Good, and God will?

PROD. What news, Tom?

TOSS. I have met with Money.

PROD. Where?

TOSS. Marry, sir, he is going into a strange country
With an old chuff, called Tenacity.

PROD. Tenacity? is that tinker's budget so full of audacity?

TOSS. 'Tis true.

PROD. May we not overtake him?

TOSS. Yes, easily with good horses.

PROD. Let's go then, for God's sake; we'll catch him in a trap.

DICER *and* TOSS. Go; we will go with you, whatever shall hap.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE V.

Enter VANITY.[402]

VAN. O rotten rope, that thou must be so brittle!
Hadst thou but happened to have held a little,
I had taught my princocks against another time
So to presume Dame Fortune's bower to climb.
To make such a 'scape, his hap was very good:
Well, he 'scaped fair, I swear by the rood:
But will you have me say my fantasy,
Quod differtur, non aufertur; for assuredly

The gentleman will never hold himself quiet,
Till once more he come to taste of this diet.
Mark the end.

FOR. Vanity! [*From a window.*]

VAN. Madam.

FOR. Is this roister gone?

VAN. Yea, madam, he is gone.

FOR. Then get thee anon,
And cause my attendants to come away,
For here as now I will no longer stay,
But prosecute this foe of mine so fast
By mischiefs all I may, that at the last
He shall arrive unto a wretched end,
And with repentance learn how to offend
A goddess of my state and dignity.

VAN. Lady, to do your will I hasten willingly.
[VANITY *exit.*]

FORTUNE *comes down.*

FOR. Dame Fortune's power, her most exceeding might,
Is known by this as an undoubted thing:
Since here most plainly hath appear'd in sight,
How all the world doth hang upon her wing,
How high and low, of all states and degrees,
Do rise and fall again, as she decrees.
Then let not Virtue think it scorn to yield
To Fortune, chief of power, chief sovereignty:
Sith Fortune here by proof hath won the field,
Subdu'd her foes, and got the victory:
For as she list to favour, else to frown,
She hoisteth up, or headlong hurleth down.

[*Enter VANITY again.*][403]

VAN. Madam, here are your vassals ready prest,
To do the thing that Fortune liketh best.

FOR. Well, then, come on to witness this our victory;
Depart we hence with sound of fame triumphantly.

[*Cries of Reverence, due reverence!*]

ACT V., SCENE I.

Enter PRODIGALITY, MONEY, TOSS, DICER.

PROD. [*to MONEY.*] Come on, my bulchin;[404] come on, my fat ox:[405]
Come, porkling, come on; come, pretty twattox.[406]
Why, will it not be? yet faster, a cur'sy![407]
This gentleman of late is waxen so pursy,
As at every land's-end he seeketh to rest him.
How think ye? hath not Tenacity trimly dress'd him?

MON. Prodigality, if thou lovest me, let us here stay:
For sure I can do no more than I may.
I am out of breath, as weary as a dog.

[*He falls down upon his elbow.*]

TOSS. A luskish lubber, as fat as a hog!

PROD. Come up, gentle Money; we may not here stay.

MON. I must needs, Prodigality, there is no nay;
For if I should stir me one inch from the ground,
I think I shall die, sure, or fall in a sound.[408]

PROD. Then must you be drawn.

MON. Drawn or hang'd, all is one:
For I cannot stir me; my breath is clean gone.

PROD. How like ye this *grossum corpus*, so mightily grown?

TOSS. I like him the better, that he is your own.

DICER. A more monstrous beast, a beast more unwieldy,
Since first I was born, yet[409] never beheld I.

PROD. Indeed, the whoreson is waxen somewhat too fat;
But we will find medicines to remedy that.

TOSS. Sir, let me but have him a little in cure,
To put my poor practice of physic in ure,
And I dare warrant ye, with a purgation or twain,
I'll quickly rid him out of all this pain.

PROD. I think a glister were better.

DICER. Nay, rather a suppository.

TOSS. Nay, then, what say you to letting of blood?

DICER. I think that some of these should do him good.
Ask the physician.

MON. Prodigality?

PROD. Ho!

MON. I am sick.

PROD. Where, man?

MON. Faith, here, in my belly.
It swells, I assure ye, out of all measure.

PROD. Take heed it grow not to a timpany.

MON. And if it do, what is the danger then?

PROD. A consumption.

MON. A consumption? marry, God forbid, man.

TOSS. What think you now of Tenacity?
Was he your friend or your foe?

MON. Ah, that wretch Tenacity hath brought me to all this woe.
'Twas he, indeed, that sought to destroy me,
In that he would never use or employ[410] me:
But, Prodigality, sweet Prodigality,
Help to provide some present remedy:
Let me not be thus miserably spilt;
Ease me of this, and use me as thou wilt.
Yet had I rather live in state bare and thin,
Than in this monstrous plight that now I am in:
So fatty, so foggy, so out of all measure,

That in myself I take no kind of pleasure.

PROD. Why, rise up then quickly, and let us be gone.

MON. Friends, you must help me, I cannot rise alone.

DICER. Come on, my sweet Money, we must have a mean
To turn this foggy fat to a finer lean.

MON. The sooner the better.

TOSS. Nay, Money, doubt not, but by sweat or by vomit
I warrant thee, boy, shortly thou shalt be rid from it.

PROD. Rid, quotha? if shaving, or boxing, or scouring,
Or 'nointing, or scraping, or purging, or blood-letting,
Or rubbing, or paring, or chafing, or fretting,
Or ought else will rid it, he shall want no ridding. [*Aside.*
Come on, Money, let's be jogging!

Exeunt.

SCENE II.

PRODIGALITY, DICER, &c., *to whom enter* CONSTABLE, *making hue and cry,* and HOST.
[411]

CON. Thieves, neighbours, thieves! come forth, beset the country.

PROD. Hark! list a while, what might this clamour be?

DICER. 'Zwounds, we are undone, Prodigality;
The constables come after with hue and cry.

TOSS. O Cerberus, what shall we do?

PROD. Stand back, lie close, and let them pass by.

[*They retire.*

CON. Thieves, thieves! O vile, O detestable deed!
Thieves, neighbours! come forth, away, abroad with speed.
Where dwell these constables?

HOST. Why? what's the matter, friend, I pray?

CON. Why, thieves, man, I tell thee, come away.

HOST. Thieves, i'faith? Wife! my scull, my jack, my brown bill.

CON. Come away quickly.

HOST. Dick, Tom, Will, ye whoresons, make ye all ready, and haste; But let me hear, how stands the case? [*Follows* CONSTABLE.[412]

CON. Marry, sir, here-by. Not far from this place,
A plain simple man, riding on his ass,
Meaning home to his country in God's peace to pass,
By certain roisters, most furious and mad,
Is spoiled and robbed of all that he had.
And yet not contented, when they had his money,
But the villains have also murdered him most cruelly.

HOST. Good God, for his mercy!

CON. It was my hap to come then present[ly] by him,
And found him dead, with twenty wounds upon him.

HOST. But what became of them?

CON. They fled this way.

HOST. Then, neighbour, let us here no longer stay,
But hence and lay the country roundabout:
They shall be quickly found, I have no doubt.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Enter VIRTUE and EQUITY, with other attendants.

VIR. My lords, you see how far this worldly state perverted is;
From good declin'd, inclined still to follow things amiss:
You see but very few that make of Virtue any price:
You see all sorts with hungry wills run headlong into vice.

EQ. We see it oft, we sorrow much, and heartily lament,
That of himself man should not have a better government.

VER. The very beasts that be devoid of reason, dull and dumb,
By nature learn to shun those things whereof their hurt may come.
If man were then but as a beast, only by nature taught,
He would also by nature learn to shun what things are nought.
But man with reason is endued: he reason hath for stay;
Which reason should restrain his will from going much astray.

EQ. Madam, 'tis true:
Where reason rules, there is the golden mean.

VER. But most men stoop to stubborn will,
Which conquereth reason clean.

EQ. And will again to fancy yields,
Which twain be special guides,
That train a man to tread ill paths,
Where ease and pleasure bides.

VER. No ease, no pleasure, can be good, that is not got with pains.

EQ. That is the cause from Virtue's love
Man's fancy still refrains.

VER. And pains, I think, they feel likewise,
That unto vice do bend.

EQ. They feel, no doubt: but yet such pains
Come not before the end.

VIR. I grieve for man, that man should be of ill attempts so[413] fain.

EQ. Grieve not for that: evil tasted once, turns him to good again.

VIR. Then will I take a cheerful mind,
Unpleasant thoughts expel,
And cares for man commit to them,
That in the heavens do dwell.

EQ. Do so, dear madam, I beseech you most heartily,
And recreate yourself, before you go hence, with some sweet melody.

_The Song.

If pleasure be the only thing,
That man doth seek so much:
Chief pleasures rest, where virtue rules:
No pleasure[s] can be such.

Though Virtue's ways be very strait,
Her rocks be hard to climb:
Yet such as do aspire thereto,
Enjoy all joys in time.

Plain is the passage unto vice,
The gaps lie wide to ill:
To them that wade through lewdness' lake
The ice is broken still.

This therefore is the difference,
The passage first seems hard
To Virtue's train; but then most sweet
At length is their reward.

To those again, that follow vice,
The way is fair and plain;
But fading pleasures in the end
Are bought with lasting[414] pain.

If pleasure be the only thing, &c_.

SCENE IV.

Enter VIRTUE, EQUITY, LIBERALITY, MONEY, *and the* SHERIFF.

VIR. Now, my lords, I see no cause but that depart we may.

EQ. Madam, to that shall like you best we willingly obey.

LIB. Yet,[415] lady, stay awhile, and hear of strange adventures.

VIR. Of what adventures tell you? let us know.

LIB. Master Sheriff, of that is happened do you make show.

SHER. Then, may it please you, the effect is this:
There is a certain roister, named Prodigality,
That long about this town hath ruffled in great jollity!
A man long suspected of very lewd behaviour,
Yet standing ever so high in Fortune's favour,
As never till now he could be bewrayed
Of any offence, that to him might be laid:
Now wanting (belike) his wonted bravery,
He thought to supply it by murther and robbery.

EQ. By murther and robbery?

SHER. Yea, sure.

VIR. How?

SHER. This gallant, I tell you, with other lewd franions,
Such as himself, unthrifty companions,
In most cruel sort, by the highway-side,
Assaulted a countryman as he homewards did ride:
Robbed him, and spoiled him of all that they might,
And lastly bereav'd him of his life outright.

VIR. O horrible fact!

SHER. The country hereupon rais'd hue and cry straightway:
He is apprehended, his fellows fled away.
I supplying, though unworthy, for this year
The place of an officer, and sheriff of the shire,
To my prince's use, have seized on his money,
And bring you the same, according to my duty:

Praying the party may have the law with speed,
That others may be terrified from so foul a deed.

VIR. So horrible a fact can hardly plead for favour:
Therefore go you, Equity, examine more diligently
The manner of this outrageous robbery:
And as the same by examination shall appear,
Due justice may be done in presence here.

EQ. It shall be done, madam.

SHER. Then, madam, I pray you, appoint some officer to take the money,
That I may return again with Equity.

VIR. Let it be delivered to my steward Liberality.

[*Exeunt.*]

LIB. What, Money? how come you to be so fat and foggy?

MON. Surely, sir, by the old chuff, that miser Tenacity.

LIB. How so?

MON. He would never let me abroad to go,
But lock'd me up in coffers, or in bags bound me fast,
That, like a boar in a sty, he fed me at last,
Thus Tenacity did spoil me for want of exercise:
But Prodigality, clean contrariwise,
Did toss me and fleece me, so bare and so thin,
That he left nothing on me but very bone and skin.

LIB. Well, Money, will you bide with him that can devise
To rid you and keep you from these extremities?

MON. Who is that?

LIB. Even myself, Liberality.

MON. Sir, I like you well, and therefore willingly
I am contented with you to remain,
So as you protect me from the other twain.

LIB. I warrant thee.
First, from thy bands I'll set thee free,
And after thy sickness cured shall be.

MON. Thanks and obedience I yield and vow to Liberality.

[*Exit MONEY.*]

Enter CAPTAIN WELL-DONE [and other SUITORS.]

CAP. W. My lord, according to your appointment and will,
I come to attend your pleasure.

LIB. Have you brought your bill?[416]

CAP. W. Yea, my lord.

LIB. Give it me.
I'll be your mean unto the prince, that it may despatched be:
The while take here these hundred crowns, to relieve ye.

CAP. W. God save the queen, and God save Liberality!

2D SUITOR. Sir, I have long served the prince at great expense, And long have I been promised a recompense: I beseech you consider of me.

LIB. What, do you serve without fee?

2D SUITOR. Yea, truly, sir.

LIB. Hold, pray for the queen. [*Gives him money.*]

2D SUITOR. It shall be my prayer day and night truly: God save the queen, and God save Liberty!

3D SUITOR. Now, good my lord, vouchsafe of your charity
To cast here aside your faithful eye
Upon a poor soldier, naked and needy,
That in the queen's wars was maimed, as you see.

LIB. Where have you served?

3D SUITOR. In France, in Flanders; but in Ireland most.

LIB. Under whom?

3D SUITOR. Under Captain Well-done.

CAP. W. He was my soldier indeed, sir, until he lost his leg.

LIB. Hold, pray for the queen. [*Gives him money.*]

3D SUITOR. God save the queen, and God save Liberty!

SCENE V.

Enter TIPSTAVES, LIBERALITY, SHERIFF, CLERKS,
CRIER, PRODIGALITY, [*to whom*] *the* JUDGE.

TIP. Room, my masters, give place, stand by:
Sir Equity hath sent me to let you understand,
That hither he will resort out of hand,
To sit upon the arraignment of Prodigality.

LIB. In good time.

TIP. Behold, he comes.

LIB. Now, Equity, how falls the matter out?

EQ. That Prodigality is guilty of the fact, no doubt.
And therefore for furtherance of justice effectually,
My lord the judge comes to sit upon him presently:
Wherein we crave your assistance.

LIB. I'll wait upon you.

TIP. Room, my masters, room for my lord: stand by.

The JUDGE *placed, and the* CLERKS *under him.*

JUDGE. Call for the prisoner.

CLERK. Make an oyes, Crier.

CRIER. Oyes, oyes, oyes!

CLERK. Sheriff of Middlesex.

CRIER. Sheriff of Middlesex.

CLERK. Bring forth the prisoner.

CRIER. Bring forth the prisoner.

CLERK. Prodigality.

CRIER. Prodigality.

CLERK. Pain of the peril shall fall thereon.

CRIER. Pain of the peril shall fall thereon.

SHER. Here, sir.

CLERK. Prodigality, hold up thy hand. [*He holds it up.*
Thou art indicted here by the name of Prodigality,
For that thou, the fourth day of February,
In the three and forty year of the prosperous reign
Of Elizabeth, our dread sovereign,
By the grace of God, of England, France, and Ireland queen,
Defender of the faith, &c.,
Together with the other malefactors yet unknown,
At Highgate,[417] in the county of Middlesex, aforesaid,
Didst feloniously take from one Tenacity,
Of the parish of Pancridge,[418] yeoman, in the said county,
One thousand pounds of gold and silver sterling.
And also, how thyself, the said Prodigality,
With a sword, price twenty shillings, then and there cruelly
Didst give the said Tenacity upon the head
One mortal wound, whereof he is now dead,
Contrary to the queen's peace, her crown, and dignity.

JUDGE. How say'st thou, Prodigality, to this robbery,
Felony, and murther? art thou guilty
Or not guilty?

PROD. My lord, I beseech you
Grant me counsel to plead my cause.

JUDGE. That may not be; it standeth not with our laws.

PROD. Then, good my lord, let me some respite take.

JUDGE. Neither may that be; thus doth the indictment lie,
Thou art accus'd of murther and of robbery,
To which thou must now answer presently,
Whether thou be thereof guilty or not guilty.

PROD. Well, since there is no other remedy,
And that my fact falls out so apparently,
I will confess that indeed I am guilty,
Most humbly appealing to the prince's mercy.

JUDGE. Then what canst thou say for thyself, Prodigality,
That according to the law thou shouldst not die?

PROD. Nothing, my lord; but still appeal to the prince's mercy.

JUDGE. Then hearken to thy judgment: thou,
Prodigality, by that name hast been
Indicted and arraigned here of a robbery,
Murther, and felony, against the laws committed
By thee: the indictment whereof being read unto thee
Here, thou confessest thyself to be guilty therein:
Whereupon I judge thee to be had from hence
To the place thou cam'st fro, and from thence to
The place of execution, there to be hanged,
Till thou be dead. God have mercy on thee!

PROD. My lord, I most humbly beseech you to hear me.

JUDGE. Say on.

PROD. I confess I have run a wanton wicked race,
Which now hath brought me to this woful wretched case:
I am heartily sorry, and with tears do lament

My former lewd and vile misgovernment.
I find the brittle stay of trustless Fortune's state.
My heart now thirsteth after Virtue all too late:
Yet, good my lord, of pity condescend
To be a mean for him that meaneth to amend.
The prince is merciful, of whose great mercy
Full many have largely tasted already;
Which makes me appeal thereto more boldly.

JUDGE. Prodigality, I not mislike your wailful disposition;
And therefore for you to the prince there shall be made petition,
That though your punishment be not fully remitted,
Yet in some part it may be qualified.

PROD. God save your life!

VIRTUE, EQUITY, LIBERALITY, JUDGE, *and all come down before the QUEEN, and, after
reverence made, VIRTUE speaketh*

THE EPILOGUE.

*Most mighty queen, yonder I sat in place,
Presenting show of chiefest dignity;
Here prostrate, lo, before your princely grace
I show myself, such as I ought to be,
Your humble vassal, subject to your will,
With fear and love your grace to reverence still.*

FINIS.

GRIM THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

EDITION.

*Grim the Collier of Croyden; or, The Devil and his Dame: with the Devil and Saint Dunston. By I.T.
London. Printed in the year [1662]. 12mo.*

INTRODUCTION

The initial letters J.T. are placed before this play as those belonging to the author of it. What his name was, or what his condition, are alike unknown. It was printed in 12mo, 1662, with two others, "Thorny Abby; or, The London Maid," and "The Marriage Broker," in a volume entitled "Gratiae Theatrales; or, A Choice Ternary of English Plays." Chetwood says it was printed in 1599, and Whincop, in the year 1606. [419] I cannot but suspect the fidelity of both these writers in this particular.[420]

PROLOGUE

You're welcome; but our plot I dare not tell ye,
For fear I fright a lady with great belly:
Or should a scold be 'mong you, I dare say
She'd make more work than the devil in the play.
Heard you not never how an actor's wife,
Whom he (fond fool) lov'd dearly as his life,
Coming in's way did chance to get a jape,[421]
As he was 'tired in his devil's shape;
And how equivocal a generation
Was then begot, and brought forth thereupon?
Let it not fright you; this I dare to say,
Here is no lecherous devil in our play.
He will not rumple Peg, nor Joan, nor Nan,
But has enough at home to do with Marian,
Whom he so little pleases, she in scorn
Does teach his devilship to wind the horn;
But if your children cry when Robin comes,
You may to still them buy here pears or plums.
Then sit you quiet all who are come in,
St Dunstan will soon enter and begin.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

ST DUNSTAN, *Abbot of Glastonbury.*
MORGAN, *Earl of London.*
LACY, *Earl of Kent.*
HONOREA, *Morgan's daughter.*
MARIAN, *her Waiting-maid.*
NAN, *Marian's maid.*
MUSGRAVE, *a young Gentleman.*
CAPTAIN CLINTON.
MILES FORREST, *a Gentleman.*
RALPH HARVEY, *an Apothecary.*
GRIM, *the Collier of Croydon.*
PARSON SHORTHOSE.
CLACK, *a Miller.*
JOAN, *a Country Maid.*
PLUTO, |
MINOS, |
AEACUS | *Devils.*
RHADAMANTHUS, |
BELPHEGOR, |
AKERCOCK, *or Robin Goodfellow,* |
MALBECCO'S _Ghost, Officers, Attendants, &c.

The Stage is England_.

GRIM[422] THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

ACT I., SCENE I.

*A place being provided for the devil's consistory, enter
ST DUNSTAN, with his beads, book, and crosier-staff, &c.*

ST. DUN. Envy, that always waits on virtue's train,
And tears the graves of quiet sleeping souls,
Hath brought me after many hundred years
To show myself again upon the earth.
Know then (who list) that I am English born,
My name is Dunstan; whilst I liv'd with men,
Chief primate of the holy English church.
I was begotten in West Saxony:[423]
My father's name was Heorstan, my mother's Cinifred.
Endowed with my merit's legacy,
I flourish'd in the reign of seven great kings:
The first was Athelstane, whose niece Elfleda
Malicious tongues reported I defiled:
Next him came Edmond, then Edred, and Edwy.
And after him reign'd Edgar, a great prince.
But full of many crimes, which I restrain'd:
Edward his son, and lastly Ethelred.
With all these kings was I in high esteem,
And kept both them and all the land in awe:
And, had I liv'd, the Danes had never boasted
Their then beginning conquest of this land.
Yet some accuse me for a conjuror,
By reason of those many miracles
Which heaven for holy life endowed me with;
But whoso looks into the "Golden Legend"[424]
(That sacred register of holy saints)
Shall find me by the pope canonised,
And happily the cause of this report
Might rise by reason of a vision
Which I beheld in great King Edgar's days,
Being that time Abbot of Glastonbury,
Which (for it was a matter of some worth)
I did make known to few until this day:
But now I purpose that the world shall see
How much those slanderers have wronged me:
Nor will I trouble you with courts and kings;
Or drive a feigned battle out of breath;
Or keep a coil myself upon the stage;
But think you see me in my secret cell,
Arm'd with my portass,[425] bidding of my beads.
But on a sudden I'm o'ercome with sleep!
If aught ensue, watch you, for Dunstan[426] dreams.

*[He layeth him down to sleep; lightning and thunder;
the curtains drawn on a sudden; PLUTO, MINOS, AEACUS,
RHADAMANTHUS, set in counsel; before them MALBECCO'S
ghost guarded with furies.*

PLU. You ever-dreaded judges of black hell,
Grim Minos, Aeacus, and Rhadamanth,
Lords of Cocytus, Styx, and Phlegethon,
Princes of darkness, Pluto's ministers,
Know that the greatness of his present cause
Hath made ourselves in person sit as judge,
To hear th'arraignment of Malbecco's ghost.
Stand forth, thou ghastly pattern of despair,
And to this powerful synod tell thy tale,
That we may hear if thou canst justly say
Thou wert not author of thy own decay.

MAL.[427] Infernal Jove, great prince of Tartary,
With humble reverence poor Malbecco speaks,

Still trembling with the fatal memory
Of his so late concluded tragedy.
I was (with thanks to your great bounty) bred
A wealthy lord, whilst that I liv'd on earth;
And so might have continu'd to this day,
Had not that plague of mankind fall'n on me:
For I (poor man) join'd woe unto my name
By choosing out a woman for my wife.
A wife! a curse ordained for the world.
Fair Helena! fair she was indeed,
But foully stain'd with inward wickedness.
I kept her bravely, and I lov'd her dear;
But that dear love did cost my life and all.
To reckon up a thousand of her pranks,
Her pride, her wasteful spending, her unkindness,
Her false dissembling, seeming sanctity,
Her scolding, pouting, prating, meddling,
And twenty hundred more of the same stamp,
Were but to heap[428] an endless catalogue
Of what the world is plagu'd with every day.
But for the main of that I have to tell,
It chanced thus—Late in a rainy night,
A crew of gallants came unto my house,
And (will I, nill I) would forsooth be lodg'd.
I brought them in, and made them all good cheer
(Such as I had in store), and lodg'd them soft.
Amongst them one, ycleped[429] Paridell
(The falsest thief that ever trod on ground),
Robb'd me, and with him stole away my wife.
I (for I lov'd her dear) pursu'd the thief,
And after many days in travel spent,
Found her amongst a crew of satyrs wild,
Kissing and colling[430] all the livelong night.
I spake her fair, and pray'd her to return;
But she in scorn commands me to be gone,
And glad I was to fly, to save my life.
But when I backward came unto my house,
I find it spoil'd, and all my treasure gone.
Desp'rate and mad, I ran I knew not whither,
Calling and crying out on heaven and fate,
Till, seeing none to pity my distress,
I threw myself down headlong on a rock,
And so concluded all my ills at once.
Now, judge you, justice benchers, if my wife
Were not the instrument to end my life.

PLU. Can it be possible (you lords of hell)
Malbecco's tale of women should be true?
Is marriage now become so great a curse,
That whilom was the comfort of the world?

MIN. Women, it seems, have lost their native shame,
As no man better may complain than I;
Though not of any whom I made my wife,
But of my daughter, who procured my fall.

AEAC. 'Tis strange what complaints are brought us every day
Of men made miserable by marriage;
So that, amongst a thousand, scarcely ten
Have not some grievous actions 'gainst their wives.

RHA. My lord, if Rhadamanth might counsel you,
Your grace should send some one into the world,
That might make proof if it be true or no.

PLU. And wisely hast thou counseled, Rhadamanth,

Call in Belphegor to me presently;
[*One of the furies goes for BELPHEGOR.*
He is the fittest that I know in hell
To undertake a task of such import;
For he is patient, mild, and pitiful—
Humours but ill agreeing with our kingdom.

Enter BELPHEGOR.

And here he comes. Belphegor, so it is,
We in our awful synod have decreed
(Upon occasion to ourselves best known)
That thou from hence shall go into the world,
And take upon thee the shape of a man,
In which estate thou shalt be married.
Choose thee a wife that best may please thyself,
And live with her a twelvemonth and a day.
Thou shalt be subject unto human chance,
So far as common wit cannot relieve thee;
Thou shalt of us receive ten thousand pounds,
Sufficient stock to use for thy increase:
But whatsoever happens in that time,
Look not from us for succour or relief.
This shalt thou do, and when the time's expired,
Bring word to us what thou hast seen and done.

BEL. With all my heart, my lord, I am content,
So I may have my servant Akercock
To wait on[431] me, as if he were my man,
That he may witness likewise what is done.

PLU. We are contented, he shall go with thee.

MIN. But what meantime decrees your majesty
Of poor Malbecco?

PLU. He shall rest with us,
Until Belphegor do return again;
And as he finds, so will we give his doom.
Come, let us go and set our spyal[432] forth,
Who for a time must make experiment,
If hell be not on earth as well as here.

[*Exeunt.*

[*It thunders and lightens; the devils go forth; DUNSTAN, rising, runneth about the stage, laying about him with his staff.*

ST DUN. Satan, avaunt! thou art man's enemy:
Thou shalt not live amongst us so unseen,
So to betray us to the prince of darkness.
Satan, avaunt! I do conjure thee hence.—
What, dream'st thou, Dunstan? yea, I dream'd indeed.
Must then the devil come into the world?
Such is, belike, the infernal king's decree;
Well, be it so; for Dunstan is content.
Mark well the process of the devil's disguise,
Who happily may learn you to be wise.
Women, beware, and make your bargains well,
The devil, to choose a wife, is come from hell.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

MOR. My Lord of Kent, your honour knows my mind,
That ever has, and still does honour you,
Accounting it my daughter's happiness
(Amidst her other infelicities),
That you vouchsafe to love her as you do.
How gladly I would grant your lordship's suit
The heavens can witness, which with ruthless ears
Have often heard my yet unpitied plaints;
And could I find some means for her recovery,
None but yourself should have her to your wife.

LACY. My Lord of London, now long time it is,
Since Lacy first was suitor to your daughter,
The fairest Honorea, in whose eyes
Honour itself in love's sweet bosom lies.
What shall we say, or seem to strive with heaven,
Who speechless sent her first into the world?
In vain it is for us to think to loose
That which by nature's self we see is bound.
Her beauty, with her other virtues join'd,
Are gifts sufficient, though she want a tongue:
And some will count it virtue in a woman
Still to be bound to unoffending silence;
Though I could wish with half of all my lands,
That she could speak: but since it may not be,
'Twere vain to imprison beauty with her speech.

FOR. Have you not heard, my lords, the wondrous fame
Of holy Dunstan, Abbot of Glastonbury?
What miracles he hath achiev'd of late;
And how the rood of Dovercourt[433] did speak,
Confirming his opinion to be true:
And how the holy consistory fell,
With all the monks that were assembled there,
Saving one beam, whereon this Dunstan sat;
And other more such miracles as these.
They say he is of such religious life,
That angels often use to talk with him,
And tell to him the secrets of the heavens.
No question, if your honours would but try,
He could procure my lady for to speak.

MOR. Believe me, Forrest, thou hast well advis'd,
For I have heard of late much talk of him.

LACY. Is not that Dunstan he who check'd the king
About his privy dealing with the nun,
And made him to do penance for the fault?

MOR. The same is he; for whom I straight will send.
Miles Forrest shall in post to Glastonbury,
And gently pray the abbot for my sake
To come to London. Sure, I hope the heavens
Have ordain'd Dunstan to do Morgan good.

LACY. Let us despatch him thither presently;
For I myself will stay for his return,
And see some end or other, ere I go.

MOR. Come, then, Lord Lacy: Forrest, come away.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III.

Enter BELPHEGOR, *attired like a physician*;
AKERCOCK, *his man, in a tawny coat.*

BEL. Now is Belphegor, an incarnate devil,
Come to the earth to seek him out a dame:
Hell be my speed! and so, I hope, it will.
In lovely London are we here arrived;
Where, as I hear, the earl hath a fair daughter
So full of virtue and soft modesty,
That yet she never gave a man foul word.

AKER. Marry, indeed, they say she cannot speak.

BEL. For this cause have I taken this disguise,
And will profess me a physician,
Come up on purpose for to cure the lady:
Marry, no may^[434] shall bind me but herself,
And she I do intend shall be my wife.

AKER. But, master, tell me one thing by the way:
Do you not mean that I shall marry too?

BEL. No, Akercock, thou shalt be still unwed;
For if they be as bad as is reported,
One wife will be enough to tire us both.

AKER. O, then you mean that I shall now and then
Have, as it were, a course at base^[435] with her.

BEL. Not so, not so, that's one of marriage's plagues
Which I must seek to shun amongst the rest,
And live in sweet contentment with my wife,
That when I back again return to hell,
All women may be bound to reverence me
For saving of their credits, as I will.
But who comes here?

Enter CAPTAIN CLINTON.

CLIN. This needs must tickle Musgrave to the quick,
And stretch his heart-strings farther by an inch,
That Lacy must be married to his love:
And by that match my market is near marr'd
For Mariana, whom I most affect;
But I must cast about by some device
To help myself, and to prevent the earl.

BEL. This fellow fitly comes to meet with me,
Who seems to be acquainted with the earl. [*Aside.*]
Good fortune guide you, sir!

CLIN. As much to you.

BEL. Might I entreat a favour at your hands?

CLIN. What's that?

BEL. I am a stranger here in England, sir,
Brought from my native home upon report,
That the earl's daughter wants the use of speech;
I have been practised in such cures ere now,
And willingly would try my skill on her.
Let me request you so to favour me,
As to direct me to her father's house.

CLIN. With all my heart, and welcome shall you be

To that good earl, who mourns his daughter's want:
But they have for a holy abbot sent,
Who can, men say, do many miracles,
In hope that he will work this wondrous cure.

BEL. Whate'er he be, I know 'tis past his skill;
Nor any in the world, besides myself,
Did ever sound the depth of that device.

Enter MUSGRAVE.

CLIN. Musgrave, well met: I needs must speak with you.

MUS. I came to seek you.

CLIN. Tarry you a while.
[To BEL.] Shall I entreat you, sir, to walk before
With this same gentleman? I'll overtake you.

[Exeunt BELPHEGOR and AKERCOCK.]

This is the news: the Earl of Kent is come,
And in all haste the marriage must be made.
Your lady weeps, and knows not what to do;
But hopes that you will work some means or other
To stop the cross-proceedings of the earl.

MUS. Alas, poor Clinton! what can Musgrave do?
Unless I should by stealth convey her thence,
On which a thousand dangers do depend.

CLIN. Well, to be brief, because I cannot stay,
Thus stands the case: if you will promise me
To work your cousin Marian to be mine,
I'll so devise that you shall purchase^[436] her;
And therefore, tell me if you like the match?

MUS. With all my heart, sir; yea, and thank you, too.

CLIN. Then say no more, but leave the rest to me,
For I have plotted how it shall be done.
I must go follow yon fair gentleman,
On whom I build my hopes. Musgrave, adieu.

MUS. Clinton, farewell; I'll wish thee good success.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II., SCENE I.

Enter MORGAN, LACY, DUNSTAN, FORREST, HONOREA, MARIAN.

MOR. Thou holy man, to whom the higher powers
Have given the gift of cures beyond conceit,
Welcome thou art unto Earl Morgan's house:
The house of sorrow yet, unless by thee
Our joys may spring anew; which if they do,
Reward and praise shall both attend on thee.

LACY. And we will ever reverence thy name,
Making the chronicles to speak thy praise:
So Honorea may but have her speech.

DUN. My lords, you know the hallow'd gift of tongues
Comes from the selfsame power that gives us breath:

He binds and looseth them at his dispose;
And in his name will Dunstan undertake
To work this cure upon fair Honorea.
Hang there, my harp, my solitary muse,
Companion of my contemplation.

[He hangs his harp on the wall.]

And, lady, kneel with me upon the earth,
That both our prayers may ascend to heaven.

*[They kneel down. Then enters CLINTON, with
BELPHEGOR, terming himself CASTILIANO, and
AKERCOCK, as ROBIN GOODFELLOW.]*

CLIN. So shall you do the lady a good turn,
And bind both him and me to you for ever. *[Aside.]*

BEL. I have determin'd what I mean to do. *[Aside.]*

CLIN. Here be the earls, and with them is the friar. *[Aside.]*

BEL. What, is he praying? *[Aside.]*

CLIN. So methinks he is;
But I'll disturb him. *[Aside.]* By your leave, my lords,
Here is a stranger from beyond the seas
Will undertake to cure your lordship's daughter.

MOR. The holy abbot is about the cure.

BEL. Yea, but, my lord, he'll never finish it.

MOR. How canst thou tell? What countryman art thou?

BEL. I am by birth, my lord, a Spaniard born,
And by descent came of a noble house;
Though, for the love I bare^[437] to secret arts,
I never car'd to seek for vain estate,
Yet by my skill I have increas'd my wealth.
My name Castiliano, and my birth
No baser than the best blood of Castile.
Hearing your daughter's strange infirmity,
Join'd with such matchless beauty and rare virtue,
I cross'd the seas on purpose for her good.

DUN. Fond man, presuming on thy weaker skill,
That think'st by art to overrule the heavens!
Thou know'st not what it is thou undertak'st.
No, no, my lord, your daughter must be cur'd
By fasting, prayer, and religious works;
Myself for her will sing a solemn mass,
And give her three sips of the holy chalice;
And turn my beads with aves and with creeds:
And thus, my lord, your daughter must be help'd.

CAS. 'Zounds, what a prating keeps the bald-pate friar!
My lord, my lord, here's church-work for an age?
Tush! I will cure her in a minute's space,
That she shall speak as plain as you or I.

[DUNSTAN' harp sounds on the wall.]

FOR. Hark, hark, my lord! the holy abbot's harp
Sounds by itself so hanging on the wall!

DUN. Unhallowed man, that scorn'st the sacred rede,^[438]
Hark how the testimony of my truth
Sounds heavenly music with an angel's hand,
To testify Dunstan's integrity,

And prove thy active boast of no effect.

CAS. Tush, sir, that music was to welcome me!
The harp hath got another master now;
I warrant you, 'twill never tune you more.

DUN. Who should be master of my harp but I?

CAS. Try, then, what service it will do for you.

[He tries to play, but cannot.]

DUN. Thou art some sorcerer or necromancer,
Who by thy spells dost hold these holy strings.

CAS. Cannot your holiness unbind the bonds?
Then, I perceive, my skill is most of force.
You see, my lord, the abbot is but weak;
I am the man must do your daughter good.

MOR. What wilt thou ask for to work thy cure?

CAS. That without which I will not do the cure:
Herself to be my wife, for which intent
I came from Spain. Then, if she shall be mine,
Say so, or keep her else for ever dumb.

MOR. The Earl of Kent, mine honourable friend,
Hath to my daughter been a suitor long,
And much it would displease both her and him
To be prevented of their wished love.
Ask what thou wilt beside, and I will grant it.

CAS. Alas, my lord! what should the crazy earl
Do with so young a virgin as your daughter?
I dare stand to her choice 'twixt him and me.

LACY. And I will pawn mine earldom with my love,
And lose them both, if I lose Honorea.

CAS. A match, my lords! We'll stand unto the choice.

MOR. I am contented, if the earl be pleased.

LACY. I were not worthy of her, did I doubt.

CAS. Then there it goes. Fetch me a bowl of wine:
This is the match, my lord, before I work—
If she refuse the earl, she must be mine.

MOR. It is.

[One brings him a cup of wine: he strains the juice of the herb into it.]

CAS. Now shall your lordships see a Spaniard's skill,
Who from the plains of new America[439]
Can find out sacred simples of esteem
To bind and unbind nature's strongest powers.
This herb, which mortal men have seldom found,
Can I with ease procure me, when I list,
And by this juice shall Honorea speak.
Here, lady, drink the freedom of thy heart,
And may it teach thee long to call me love!

[She drinks.]

Now, lovely Honorea, thou art free,
Let thy celestial voice make choice of me.

HON. Base alien! mercenary fugitive!
Presumptuous Spaniard! that with shameless pride
Dar'st ask an English lady for thy wife,

I scorn my slave should honour thee so much:
And, for myself, I like myself the worse,
That thou dar'st hope the gaining of my love.
Go, get thee gone, the shame of my esteem,
And seek some drudge that may be like thyself!
But as for you, good Earl of Kent,
Methinks your lordship, being of these years,
Should be past dreaming of a second wife.
Fie, fie, my lord! 'tis lust in doting age:
I will not patronise so foul a sin.
An old man dote on youth? 'tis monstrous.
Go home, go home, and rest your weary head!
'Twere pity such a brow should learn to bud.
And lastly unto you, my lord and father,
Your love to me is too much overseen,
That in your care and counsel should devise
To tie your daughter's choice to two such grooms.
You may elect for me, but I'll dispose,
And fit myself far better than both those;
And so I will conclude; you[r], as you please.
[Exit HONOREA in a chafe.]

AKER. Call you this making of a woman speak?
I think they all wish she were dumb again.

CAS. How now, my lord? what, are you in a muse?

LACY. I would to God her tongue were tied again.

CAS. Ay, marry, sir, but that's another thing,
The devil cannot tie a woman's tongue:[440]
I would the friar could do that with his beads.
But 'tis no matter: you, my lord, have promis'd,
If she refuse the earl, she should be mine.

MOR. Win her, and wear her, man, with all my heart!

CAS. O, I'll haunt her till I make her stoop.
Come, come, my lord, this was to try her voice;
Let's in and court her; one of us shall speed.

AKER. Happy man[441] be his dole that misseth her, say I.

DUN. My weaker senses cannot apprehend
The means this stranger us'd to make her speak:
There is some secret mystery therein,
Conceal'd from Dunstan, which the heavens reveal,
That I may scourge this bold, blaspheming man,
Who holds religious works of little worth!

[Exeunt; manent CLINTON and FORREST.]

FOR. Now, Captain Clinton, what think you of me?

CLIN. Methinks as yet the jest holds pretty well.
The one hath taught her to deny himself:
The other woo'd so long, he cannot speed.

FOR. This news will please young Musgrave.

CLIN. Marry will it,
And I will hasten to acquaint him with them:
Come, let's away.

[Exeunt.]

Enter PARSON SHORTHOSE and GRIM the Collier.

GRIM. No, Master Parson, grief hath made my heart and me a pair of balance, as heavy as lead.

Every night I dream I am a town top, and that I am whipped up and down with the scourge-stick of love and the metal of affection; and when I wake,[442] I find myself stark naked, and as cold as a stone. Now judge how I am tumbled and tossed; poor Grim the collier hath wished himself burnt up amongst his coals.

SHO. O Grim! be wise, dream not of love,
Thy sorrows cannot fancy move:
If Jug love thee, love her again;
If not, thy kindness then refrain.

GRIM. I am not skilled in your rhyming. Master Parson; but that which is bred in the flesh will never come out of the bone. I have seen as much as another man; my travel should teach me. There's never a day in the week but I carry coals from Croydon to London; and now, when I rise in the morning to harness my horses, and load my cart, methinks I have a tailor sewing stitches in my heart: when I am driving my cart, my heart that wanders one way, my eyes they leer another, my feet they lead me, I know not whither, but now and then into a slough over head and ears; so that poor Grim, that before was over shoes in love, is now over head and ears in dirt and mire.

SHO. Well, Grim, my counsel shall suffice
To help thee; but in any wise
Be rul'd by me, and thou shalt see,
As thou lov'st her, she shall love thee.

GRIM. A lard![443] but do you think that will be so? I should laugh till I tickle to see that day, and forswear sleep all the next night after. O Master Parson, I am so haltered in affection, that I may tell you in secret, [since] here's nobody else hears me, I take no care how I fill my sacks. Every time I come to London, my coals are found faulty; I have been five times pilloried, my coals given to the poor, and my sacks burnt before my face. It were a shame to speak this, but truth will come to light. O Joan! thou hast thrown the coal-dust of thy love into my eyes, and stricken me quite blind.

SHO. Now, afore God, the collier chooseth well;
For beauty Jug doth bear away the bell,
And I love her: then, collier, thou must miss,
For Parson Shorthose vows, Jug shall be his. [*Aside.*]
But hear'st thou, Grim, I have that in my head,
To plot that how thou shalt the maiden wed.

GRIM. But are you sure you have that in your head? O, for a hammer to knock that out! one blow at your pate would lay all open to me, and make me as wise as you.

SHO. Think'st thou I do so often look
For nothing on my learned book,
As that I cannot work the feat?
I warrant I'll the miller cheat,
And make Jug thine, in spite of him.
Will this content thee, neighbour Grim?

GRIM. Content me! ay, and so highly, that if you do this feat for me, you hire me to you as one hireth an ox or an ass: to use, to ride, to spur, or anything; yours to demand, miserable Grim! Joan's handmaid! for so I have called myself ever since last May-day, when she gave me her hand to kiss.

SHO. Well, let's away; and in all haste
About it, ere the day be pass'd;
And ever after, if thou hast her,
Acknowledge me to be thy master.

GRIM. I wool, sir: come, let's away, the best drink in Croydon's yours;
I have it for you, even a dozen of jugs, to Jug's health.

[*Exeunt both.*]

Enter EARL MORGAN, EARL LACY, MARIAN.

MOR. My Lord of Kent, the latter motion
Doth bind me to you in a higher degree
Than all those many favours gone before:
And now the issue of my help relies
Only on Mariana's gentleness,

Who, if she will, in such a common good,
Put to her helping-hand, the match is made.

LACY. You need not make a doubt of Marian,
Whose love unto her lady were enough,
Besides her cousin's and her own consent,
To move her to a greater thing than this.

MAR. My lords, if aught there be in Marian,
That may or pleasure you or profit her,
Ye shall not need to doubt of my consent.

MOR. Gramercy, Marian; and indeed the thing
Is in itself a matter of no moment,
If it be weigh'd aright, and therefore this:
Thou know'st the bargain 'twixt me and the doctor,
Concerning marriage with my only daughter,
Whom I determined that my Lord of Kent
Should have espoused: but I see her mind
Is only set upon thy cousin Musgrave,
And in her marriage to use constraint
Were bootless; therefore thus we have devised.
Lord Lacy is content to lose his part,
And to resign his title to young Musgrave;
But now the doctor will not yield his right.
Thus we determine to beguile his hopes:
Thou shalt this night be brought unto his bed
Instead of her, and he shall marry thee:
Musgrave shall have my daughter, she her will;
And so shall all things sort[444] to our content.

LACY. And this thou shalt be sure of, Marian,
The doctor's wealth will keep thee royally:
Besides, thou shalt be ever near thy friends,
That will not see thee wrong'd by any man.
Say then, wilt thou resolve to marry him?

MAR. My lords, you know I am but young:
The doctor's fit for one of riper years:
Yet, in regard of Honorea's good,
My cousin's profit, and all your contents,
I yield myself to be the doctor's wife.

MOR. 'Tis kindly spoken, gentle Marian.

Enter CASTILIANO.

But here the doctor comes.

LACY. Then I'll away,
Lest he suspect aught by my being here. [*Exit.*]

MOR. Do, and let me alone to close with him.

CAS. May he ne'er speak that makes a woman speak!
She talks now sure for all the time that's pass'd:
Her tongue is like a scarecrow in a tree,
That clatters still with every puff of wind.
I have so haunted her from place to place:
About the hall, from thence into the parlour,
Up to the chamber, down into the garden,
And still she rails, and chafes, and scolds,
As if it were the sessions-day in hell.
Yet will I haunt her with an open mouth,
And never leave her till I force her love me.

MOR. Now, master doctor; what, a match or no?

CAS. A match, quoth you? I think the devil himself
Cannot match her; for, if he could, I should. [*Aside.*]

MOR. Well, be content: 'tis I must work the mean
To make her yield, whether she will or no.
My Lord of Kent is gone hence in a chafe,
And now I purpose that she shall be yours,
Yet to herself unknown; for she shall think
That Musgrave is the man, but it shall be you:
Seem you still discontented, and no more.
Go, Mariana, call thy mistress hither.
Now, when she comes, dissemble what you know,
And go away, as if you car'd not for her;
So will she the sooner be brought into it.

[*Exit* MARIAN.

CAS. My lord, I thank you for your honest care,
And, as I may, will study to requite it.

Enter HONOREA *and* MARIAN.

But here your daughter comes. No, no, my lord,
'Tis not her[445] favour I regard, nor her;
Your promise 'tis I challenge, which I'll have:
It was my bargain, no man else should have her.
Not that I love her, but I'll not be wrong'd
By any one, my lord; and so I leave you.

[*Exit* CASTILIANO.

MOR. He's passing cunning to deceive himself:
But all the better for the after-sport.

HON. Sir, did you send for me?

MOR. Honorea, for thee;
And this it is. Howe'er unworthily
I have bestowed my love so long upon thee,
That wilt so manifestly contradict me,
Yet, that thou may'st perceive how I esteem thee,
I make thyself the guardian of thy love,
That thine own fancy may make choice for thee.
I have persuaded with my Lord of Kent
To leave to love thee: now the peevish doctor
Swears that his int'rest he will ne'er resign;
Therefore we must by policy deceive him.
He shall suppose he lieth this night with thee,
But Mariana shall supply thy room;
And thou with Musgrave in another chamber
Shall secretly be lodg'd. When this is done,
'Twill be too late to call that back again:
So shalt thou have thy mind, and he a wife.

HON. But wilt thou, Mariana, yield to this?

MAR. For your sake, lady, I will undertake it.

HON. Gramercy, Marian, and my noble father;
Now I acknowledge that indeed you love me.

MOR. Well, no more words, but be you both prepar'd:
The night draweth on, and I have sent in secret
For Musgrave, that he may be brought unseen,
To hide suspicion from their jealous eyes.

HON. I warrant you. Come, Marian, let us go.

[*Exeunt* HONOREA *and* MARIAN.

MOR. And then my Lord of Kent shall be my son.
Should I go wed my daughter to a boy?
No, no; young girls must have their will restrain'd;
For if the rule be theirs, all runs to nought.

[*Exit.*]

Enter CLACK *the Miller, with* JOAN.

CLACK. Be not Jug, as a man would say, finer than fivepence, or more proud than a peacock; that is, to seem to scorn to call in at Clack's mill as you pass over the bridge. There be as good wenches as you be glad to pay me toll.

JOAN. Like enough, Clack; I had as live[446] they as I, and a great deal rather too. You, that take toll of so many maids, shall never toll me after you. O God! what a dangerous thing it is but to peep once into love! I was never so haunted with my harvest-work as I am with love's passions.

CLACK. Ay, but Joan, bear old proverbs in your memory; soft and fair; now, sir, if you make too much haste to fall foul, ay, and that upon a foul one too, there fades the flower of all Croydon. Tell me but this: is not Clack the miller as good a name as Grim the collier?

JOAN. Alas! I know no difference in names
To make a maid or choose or to refuse.

CLACK. You were best to say, no, nor in men neither. Well, I'll be sworn I have; but I have no reason to tell you so much, that care so little for me [*aside*]: yet hark.

[CLACK *speaketh in her ear.*]

Enter GRIM *and* PARSON SHORTHOSE.

GRIM. O Master Parson, there he stands like a scarecrow, to drive me away from her that sticks as close to my heart as my shirt to my back, or my hose to my heel. O Master Parson Shorthose, Grim is but a man as another man is: colliers have but lives, as other men have. All is gone if she go from me: Grim is nobody without her. My heart is in my mouth; my mouth is in my hand; my hand threatens vengeance against the miller, as it were a beadle with a whip in his hand, triumphing o'er a beggar's back!

SHO. Be silent, Grim; stand close, and see;
So shall we know how all things be.

GRIM. In wisdom I am appeased; but in anger I broil, as it were a rasher upon the coals.

JOAN. I'll not despise the trades ye either have;
Yet Grim the collier may, if he be wise,
Live even as merry as the day is long;
For, in my judgment, in his mean estate
Consists as much content as in more wealth.

GRIM. O Master Parson, write down this sweet saying of her in Grim's commendations. She hath made my heart leap like a hobby-horse! O Joan, this speech of thine will I carry with me even to my grave.

SHO. Be silent, then.

CLACK. Well, then, I perceive you mean to lead your life in a coalpit, like one of the devil's drudges, and have your face look like the outward side of an old iron pot or a blacking-box.

GRIM. He calleth my trade into question, I cannot forbear him.

SHO. Nay, then you spoil all: neighbour Grim,
I warrant you, she will answer him.

JOAN. What I intend, I am not bound to show
To thee, nor any other but my mother,
To whom in duty I submit myself:
Yet this I tell thee, though my birth be mean,
My honest virtuous life shall help to mend it;
And if I marry any in all this life,
He shall say boldly he hath an honest wife.

GRIM. O, that it were my fortune to light upon her, on condition my horses were dead, and my cart broken, and I bound to carry coals, as long as I live, from Croydon to London on my bare shoulders! Master Parson, the flesh is frail, he shall tempt her no longer. She is but weak, and he is the stronger. I'll upon him. Miller, thou art my neighbour, and therein charity holds my hands; but methinks you, having a water-gap of your own, you may do as other millers do, grind your grist at home, knock your cogs into your own mill; you shall not cog with her.

She doth descry thee;
And I defy thee
To a mortal fight;
And so, miller, good night.
And now, sweet Joan,
Be it openly known
Thou art my own.

CLACK. Well, Grim, since thou art so collier-like choleric—

GRIM. Miller, I will not be mealy-mouth'd.

CLACK. I'll give thee the fewer words now, because the next time we meet, I'll pay thee all in dry blows. Carry coals[447] at a collier's hands! if I do, let my mill be drowned up in water, and I hanged in the roof.

JOAN. And if thou lov'st me, Grim, forbear him now.

GRIM. If I love thee! dost thou doubt of that? nay, rip me up, and look into my heart, and thou shalt see thy own face pictured there as plainly as in the proudest looking-glass in all Croydon. If I love thee! then, tears, gush out, and show my love.

CLACK. What, Master Parson, are you there? You remember you promised to win Joan for my own wearing?

SHO. I warrant thee, Clack, but now begone;
Leave me to work that here alone.

CLACK. Well, farewell, Master Shorthose; be true when you are trusted.
[Exit CLACK.]

SHO. She shall be neither his nor thine,
For I intend to make her mine.

GRIM. If I love thee, Joan! Those very words are a purgation to me. You shall see desperation in my face, and death marching in my very countenance. If I love!

SHO. What, Grim, hath grief drown'd thee at last?
Are all thy joys overcast?
Is Joan in place, and thou so sad!
Her presence, man, should make thee glad.

JOAN. Good Master Parson, 'twas no fault of mine;
He takes occasion, where there none was given.
I will not blab unto the world, my love
I owe to him, and shall do whilst I live. [Aside]

GRIM. Well, Joan, without all ifs or ands, e-persese, a-persese, or tittle-tattles in the world, I do love thee; and so much that, in thy absence I cry, when I see thee, and rejoice with my very heart, when I cannot behold thee.

SHO. No doubt, no doubt, thou lov'st her well,
But listen now to what I tell:
Since ye are both so well agreed,
I wish you make more haste and speed.
To-morrow is Holy-rood day,
When all a-nutting take their way;
Within the wood a close doth stand,
Encompass'd round on either hand
With trees and bushes; there will I
Despatch your marriage presently.

GRIM. O Master Parson, your devising pate hath blessed me for ever.
Joan, we'll have that so: the shorter the work the sweeter.

JOAN. And if my mother give but her consent,
My absence shall in no case hinder it.

GRIM. She, quotha? she is mine already; we'll to her presently. Master Parson, 'tis a match; we'll meet you. Now, miller, do I go beyond you? I have stripped him of the wench, as a cook would strip an eel out of her skin, or a pudding out of the case thereof. Now I talk of a pudding, O, 'tis my only food, I am an old dog at it. Come, Joan, let us away, I'll pudding you.

SHO. Well, if my fortune luckily ensue,
As you shall cosen him, I'll cosen you.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter CASTILIANO at one door with MARIAN, EARL LACY at another door with HONOREA.

CAS. Come, lovely Honoreia, bright as day.
As came Alcmena from her sacred bed
With Jupiter, shap'd like Amphitryon,
So show my love.

HON. My love! whom have we here? Sweet
Musgrave! but, alas, I am betrayed!

CAS. Thou art my love.

LACY. No, mine.

HON. Nor yours, nor yours;
But Musgrave's love. O Musgrave! where art thou?

LACY. Be not displeas'd, my dear; give me thy hand.

HON. My hand, false earl! nor hand nor heart of mine!
Couldst thou thus cunningly deceive my hopes?
And could my father give consent thereto?
Well, neither he nor thou shalt force my love.

CAS. 'Tis I, fair Honoreia, am thy love:
Forsake the worthless earl, give me thy hand.

MAR. Whose hand would you have, sir? this hand is mine,
And mine is yours: then keep you to your own:
Yet are you mine, sir, and I mean to keep you.
What! do you think to shake me off so soon?
No, gentle husband, now 'tis too-too late;
You should have look'd, before you came to bed.

Enter ROBIN GOODFELLOW[448] with his master's gown.

ROB. Many good-morrrows to my gentle master
And my new mistress; God give you both joy!
What say you to your gown, sir, this cold morning?

CAS. Robin, I am undone, and cast away!

ROB. How, master, cast away upon a wife?

CAS. Yea, Robin, cast away upon a wife.

ROB. Cast her away then, master, can you not?

MAR. No, sir, he cannot, nor he shall not do it.

ROB. Why, how know you? I am sure you are not she.

MAR. Yes, sir, I am your mistress, as it falls.

ROB. As it falls, quoth ye? marry, a foul fall is it.

MAR. Base rascal, dost thou say that I am foul?

ROB. No, it was foul play for him to fall upon you.

MAR. How know you that he fell? were you so nigh?

[She giveth ROBIN a box on the ear.]

ROB. Mass, it should seem it was he that fell, if any,
For you (methinks) are of a mounting nature:
What, at my ears at first? a good beginning.

LACY. My dear delight, why dost thou stain thy cheeks,
Those rosy beds, with this unseemly dew?
Shake off those tears, that now untimely fall,
And smile on me, that am thy summer's joy.

HON. Hapless am I to lose so sweet a prison,
Thus to obtain a weary liberty.
Happy had I been so to have remain'd,
Of which estate I ne'er should have complain'd.

ROB. Whoop, whoo! more marriages! and all of a sort. Happy are they, I see, that live without them:
if this be the beginning, what will be the ending?

Enter EARL MORGAN and DUNSTAN.

MOR. Look, Dunstan, where they be; displeas'd, no doubt,
Try, if thou canst work reconciliation.

CAS. My lord, I challenge you of breach of promise,
And claim your daughter here to be my wife.

LACY. Your claim is nought, sir; she is mine already.

HON. Your claim is nought, sir; I am none of yours.

MAR. Your claim is here, sir; Marian is yours.
What, husband, newly married and inconstant!
'Greed we so well together all this night,
And must we now fall out? for shame, for shame!
A man of your years, and be so unstay'd!
Come, come away, there may no other be;
I will have you, therefore you shall have me.

ROB. This is the bravest country in the world,
Where men get wives, whether they will or no:
I trow ere long some wench will challenge me.

CAS. O, is not this a goodly consequence?
I must have her, because she will have me!

DUN. Ladies and gentlemen, hear Dunstan speak.
Marriage, no doubt, is ordain'd by providence;
Is sacred, not to be by vain affect
Turn'd to the idle humours of men's brains.
Besides, for you, my lady Honorea,
Your duty binds you to obey your father,
Who better knows what fits you than yourself;
And 'twere in you great folly to neglect
The earl's great love, whereof you are unworthy,
Should you but seem offended with the match.
Therefore submit yourself to make amends,
For 'tis your fault; so may you all be friends.

MOR. And, daughter, you must think what I have done

Was for your good, to wed you to the earl,
Who will maintain and love you royally:
For what had Musgrave but his idle shape?
A shadow to the substance you must build on.

ROB. She will build substance on him, I trow;
Who keeps a shrew against her will, had better let her go. [*Aside.*]

MAR. Madam, conceal your grief, and seem content;
For, as it is, you must be rul'd per force:
Dissemble, till convenient time may serve
To think on this despite and Musgrave's love. [*Aside.*]

LACY. Tell me, my dear, wilt thou at length be pleas'd?

HON. As good be pleas'd, my lord, as not be eas'd;
Yet though my former love did move me much,
Think not amiss, the same love may be yours.

CAS. What! is it a match? nay then, since you agree,
I cannot mend myself, for aught I see;
And therefore 'tis as good to be content.
Come, lady, 'tis your lot to be my dame.
Lordings, adieu; God send you all good speed!
Some have their wives for pleasure, some for need.

LACY. Adieu, Castiliano: are we friends?

CAS. Yes, yes, my lord, there is no remedy.

ROB. No remedy, my masters, for a wife?
A note for young beginners: mark it well.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter FORREST, CAPTAIN CLINTON, HARVEY.

FOR. Now, gallants, what imagine you of this?
Our noses are all slit; for Mariana,
The Spanish doctor hath her to his wife,
And Musgrave's hopes are dead for Honorea,
For she is married to the Earl of Kent.
'Twill be good sport to see them when they rise.
If so they be not gotten up already.

CLIN. I say the devil go with them all for me.
The Spanish doctor marry Marian!
I think that slave was born to cross me still.
Had it not been last day before the earl,
Upon my conscience, I had crack'd his crown,
When first he ask'd the lady for his wife;
Now he hath got her too, whom I desir'd.
Why, he'll away with her ere long to Spain,
And keep her there to dispossess our hopes.

FOR. No, I can comfort you for that suppose:[449]
For yesterday he hir'd a dwelling-house,
And here he means to tarry all this year;
So long at least, whate'er he doth hereafter.

CLIN. A sudden plotform[450] comes into my mind,
And this it is. Miles Forrest, thou and I
Are partly well acquainted with the doctor.
Ralph Harvey shall along with us to him;
Him we'll prefer for his apothecary?
Now, sir, when Ralph and he are once acquainted,
His wife may often come unto his house,
Either to see his garden, or such like:

For, doubt not, women will have means enough,
If they be willing, as I hope she will.
There may we meet her, and let each one plead:
He that speeds best, why let him carry it.

FOR. I needs must laugh to think how all we three,
In the contriving of this feat, agree:
But, having got her, every man will strive
How each may other of her love deprive.

CLIN. Tut, Forrest! love admits these friendly strifes;
But say, how like you of my late device?

FOR. Surpassing well, but let's about it straight,
Lest he before our coming be provided.

CLIN. Agreed.

[_Exeunt.

Enter_ MUSGRAVE *and* MARIAN.

MUS. Tush, cousin! tell not me; but this device
Was long ago concluded 'twixt you two,
Which divers reasons move me to imagine:
And therefore these are toys to blind my eyes,
To make me think she only loved me,
And yet is married to another man.

MAR. Why, cousin Musgrave, are your eyes so blind
You cannot see the truth of that report?
Did you not know my lord was always bent,
Whatever came, to wed her to the earl?
And have you not, besides, heard the device
He us'd to marry her against her will?
Betray'd, poor soul, unto Earl Lacy's bed,
She thought she held young Musgrave in her arms!
Her morning tears might testify her thoughts;
Yet thou shalt see she loves thee more than him,
And thou shalt taste the sweets of her delights.
Meantime, my house shall be thy mansion
And thy abode, for thither will she come:
Use thou that opportunity, and try
Whether she lov'd thee, or did but dissemble.

MUS. If she continue kind to me hereafter,
I shall imagine well of her and you.

Enter CASTILIANO.

CAS. Now, dame, in talk! what gentleman is this?

MAR. My cousin Musgrave, husband, comes to see you.

CAS. Musgrave, now, on my faith, heartily welcome.
Give me thy hand, my cousin and my friend,
My partner in the loss of Honorea;
We two must needs be friends: our fortune's like:
Marry, yet I am richer by a shrew.

MAR. 'Tis better to be a shrew, sir, than a sheep;[451]
You have no cause, I hope, yet to complain?

CAS. No, dame; for yet you know 'tis honeymoon.
What! we have scarcely settled our acquaintance.

MUS. I doubt not, cousin, but ye shall agree,
For she is mild enough, if she be pleas'd.

CAS. So is the devil, they say[452] [*aside*]: yea, cousin, yea,
My dear and I, I doubt not, shall agree.

Enter ROBIN GOODFELLOW.

ROB. Sir, here be two or three gentlemen at the door
Would gladly speak a word with your worship.

Enter CLINTON, FORREST, HARVEY.

[CAS.] They need no bidding, methinks: they can come alone!

CLIN. God save you, Signior Castiliano.

CAS. O captain, *come sta?*[453] welcome all, my friends!

FOR. Sir, we are come to bid God give you joy,
And see your house.

MAR. Welcome, gentlemen:
'Tis kindly done to come to see us here.

ROB. This kindness makes me fear my master's head:
Such hotspurs must have game, howe'er they get it.

CLIN. We have a suit to you, Castiliano.

CAS. What is it, sir? if it lies in me, 'tis done.

CLIN. Nay, but a trifle, sir, and that is:
This same young man, by trade apothecary,
Is willing to retain unto your cures.

CAS. Marry, with all my heart, and welcome too.
What may I call your name, my honest friend?

HAR. Ralph Harvey, sir; your neighbour here hard by.
The Golden Lion is my dwelling-place,
Where what you please shall be with care perform'd.

CAS. Gramercies, Harvey! welcome, all my friends!
Let's in, and handsel our new mansion-house
With a carousing round of Spanish wine.
Come, cousin Musgrave, you shall be my guest;
My dame, I trow, will welcome you herself.

MAR. No, boy, Lord Lacy's wife shall welcome thee.

ROB. So now the game begins, here's some cheer toward;
I must be skinker[454] then: let me alone;
They all shall want, ere Robin shall have none.

[*Exeunt omnes nisi* CLINTON *and* HARVEY.]

CLIN. Sirrah Ralph Harvey, now the entry is made,
Thou only hast access without suspect.[455]
Be not forgetful of thy agent here;
Remember Clinton was the man that did it.

HAR. Why, captain, now you talk in jealousy.
Do not misconstrue my true-meaning heart.

CLIN. Ralph, I believe thee, and rely on thee.
Do not too long absent thee from the doctor:
Go in, carouse, and taint his Spanish brain;
I'll follow, and my Marian's health maintain.

HAR. Captain, you well advise me; I'll go in,
And for myself my love-suits I'll begin.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III., SCENE I.

Enter ROBIN GOODFELLOW *with his head broken.*

ROB. The devil himself take all such dames for me!
'Zounds, I had rather be in hell than here.
Nay, let him be his own man, if he list,
Robin means not to stay to be us'd thus.
The very first day, in her angry spleen,
Her nimble hand began to greet my ears
With such unkind salutes as I ne'er felt;
And since that time there hath not pass'd an hour,
Wherein she hath not either rail'd upon me,
Or laid her anger's load upon my limbs.
Even now (for no occasion in the world,
But as it pleas'd her ladyship to take it)
She gat me up a staff, and breaks my head.
But I'll no longer serve so curs'd a dame;
I'll run as far first as my legs will bear me.
What shall I do? to hell I dare not go,
Until my master's twelve months be expir'd,
And here to stay with Mistress Marian—
Better to be so long in purgatory.
Now, farewell, master! but, shrewd dame, fare-ill!
I'll leave you, though the devil is with you still.

[Exit ROBIN.

Enter MARIAN *alone, chafing.*

MAR. My heart still pants within; I am so chaf'd!
The rascal slave, my man, that sneaking rogue,
Had like to have undone us all for ever!
My cousin Musgrave is with Honorea,
Set in an arbour in the summer-garden;
And he, forsooth, must needs go in for herbs,
And told me further, that his master bad him:
But I laid hold upon my younker's pate,
And made the blood run down about his ears.
I trow, he shall ask me leave ere he go.
Now is my cousin master of his love,
The lady at one time reveng'd and pleas'd.
So speed they all that marry maids perforce!

Enter CASTILIANO.

But here my husband comes.

CAS. What, dame, alone?

MAR. Yes, sir, this once—for want of company.

CAS. Why, where's my lady and my cousin Musgrave?

MAR. You may go look them both for aught I know.

CAS. What, are you angry, dame?

MAR. Yea, so it seems.

CAS. What is the cause, I prythee?

MAR. Why would you know?

CAS. That I might ease it, if it lay in me.

MAR. O, but it belongs not to your trade.

CAS. You know not that.

MAR. I know you love to prate, and so I leave you.

[*Exit* MARIAN.

CAS. Well, go thy way: oft have I raked hell
To get a wife, yet never found her like.
Why this it is to marry with a shrew.
Yet if it be, as I presume it is,
There's but one thing offends both her and me;
And I am glad, if that be it offends her.
'Tis so, no doubt; I read it in her brow.
Lord Lacy shall with all my heart enjoy
Fair Honorea: Marian is mine;
Who, though she be a shrew, yet is she honest.
So is not Honorea, for even now,
Walking within my garden all alone,
She came with Musgrave, stealing closely by,
And follows him, that seeks to fly from her.
I spied this all unseen, and left them there.
But sure my dame hath some conceit thereof,
And therefore she is thus angry, honest soul!
Well, I'll straight hence unto my Lord of Kent,
And warn him watch his wife from these close meetings.
Well, Marian, thou liv'st yet free from blame.
Let ladies go; thou art the devil's dame.

[*Exit* CASTILIANO.

Enter the DEVIL, *like* MUSGRAVE, *with* HONOREA.

MUS. No, lady; let thy modest, virtuous life
Be always joined with thy comely shape,
For lust eclipseth nature's ornament.

HON. Young heady boy, think'st thou thou shalt recall
Thy long-made love, which thou so oft hast sworn,
Making my maiden thoughts to doat on thee?

MUS. With patience hear me, and, if what I say
Shall jump with reason,[456] then you'll pardon me.
The time hath been when my soul's liberty
Vow'd servitude unto that heavenly face,
Whilst both had equal liberty of choice;
But since the holy bond of marriage
Hath left me single, you a wedded wife,
Let me not be the third unlawfully
To do Earl Lacy so foul injury.
But now at last—

HON. I would that last
Might be thy last, thou monster of all men!

MUS. Hear me with patience.

HON. Cease: I'll hear no more!
'Tis my affection, and not reason, speaks:
Then, Musgrave, turn the hardness of thy heart,
And now at least incline thy love to mine.

MUS. Nay, now I see thou wilt not be reclaim'd.
Go and bestow this hot love on the earl;
Let not these loose affects thus scandalise
Your fair report. Go home, and learn to live
As chaste as Lucrece, madam. So I leave you.

[*She pulleth him back.*

HON. O, stay a little while, and hear my tongue

Speak my heart's words, which cannot choose but tell thee,
I hate the earl, only because I love thee. [*Exit* MUSGRAVE.
Musgrave, return! hear, Honorea speaks!
Disdain hath left him wings to fly from me!
Sweet love, lend me thy wings to overtake him,
For I can stay him with kind dalliance!
All this is but the blindness of my fancy.
Recall thyself: let not thy honour bleed
With the foul wounds of infamy and shame.
My proper home shall call me home again,
Where my dear lord bewails, as much as I,
His too much love to her that loves not him.
Let none hereafter fix her maiden love
Too firm on any, lest she feel with me
Musgrave's revolt and his inconstancy.
[Exit.

Enter FORREST, *with* MARIAN.

FOR. Tut, I'll remember thee, and straight return:
But here's the doctor.

MAR. Where? Forrest, farewell!
I would not have him see me for a world.

FOR. Why? he is not here. Well, now I see you fear him.

MAR. Marry, beshrew thee for thy false alarm!
I fear him? no, I neither fear nor love him.

FOR. But where's my lady? She is gone home before,
And I must follow after. Marian, farewell.

MAR. I shall expect your coming.

FOR. Presently;
And nearest thou, Marian? nay, it shall be so—

[He whispers in her ear.

MAR. O Lord, sir, you are wed, I warrant you:
We'll laugh, be merry, and, it may be, kiss;
But if you look for more, you aim amiss.

FOR. Go to, go to! we'll talk of this anon.

[Exit FORREST.

MAR. Well, go thy way, for the true-heartedst man
That liveth, and as full of honesty,
And yet as wanton as a pretty lamb.
He'll come again, for he hath lov'd me long,
And so have many more besides himself;
But I was coy and proud, as maids are wont,
Meaning to match beyond my mean estate:
Yet I have favour'd youths and youthful sports,
Although I durst not venture on the main;
But now it will not be so soon espied.
Maids cannot, but a wife a fault may hide.

Enter NAN.

What, Nan!

NAN. Anon, forsooth.

MAR. Come hither, maid.
Here, take my keys, and fetch the galley-pot;
Bring a fair napkin and some fruit-dishes.

Despatch, and make all ready presently;
Miles Forrest will come straight to drink with me.

NAN. I will, forsooth. [*Exit* NAN.]

MAR. Why am I young, but to enjoy my years?
Why am I fair, but that I should be lov'd?
And why should I be lov'd, and not love others?
Tut, she is a fool that her affection smothers:
'Twas not for love I was the doctor's wife,
Nor did he love me, when he first was mine.
Tush, tush, this *wife* is but an idle name!
I purpose now to try another game.
Art thou return'd so soon? O, 'tis well done.

Enter NAN *with the banquet.*

And hear'st thou, Nan? when Forrest shall return,
If any happen to inquire for me,
Whether't be Captain Clinton or Ralph Harvey,
Call presently, and say, thy master's come;
So I'll send Forrest o'er the garden pale.

NAN. I will, forsooth.

MAR. Meantime, stay thou and make our banquet ready.
I'll to my closet, and be here again,
Before Miles Forrest shall come visit me.

[*Exit* MARIAN.]

NAN. I wonder what my mistress is about?
Somewhat she would not have my master know:
Whate'er it be, 'tis nothing unto me;
She's my good mistress, and I'll keep her counsel.
I have oft seen her kiss behind his back,
And laugh and toy, when he did little think it.
O, what a winking eye the wanton hath
To cosen him, even when he looks upon her!
But what have I to do with what she doth?
I'll taste her junkets since I am alone:
That which is good for them cannot hurt me.
Ay, marry, this is sweet! a cup of wine
Will not be hurtful for digestion.

[*She drinks.*]

Enter CASTILIANO.

CAS. I would I had been wiser once to-day;
I went on purpose to my Lord of Kent
To give him some good counsel for his wife,
And he, poor heart, no sooner heard my news,
But turns me up his whites, and falls flat down:
There I was fain to rub and chafe his veins,
And much ado we had to get him live.
But for all that he is extremely sick,
And I am come in all the haste I may
For cordials to keep the earl alive.
But how now? What, a banquet! What means this?

NAN. Alas! my master is come home himself.
Mistress, mistress! my master is come home!

CAS. Peace, you young strumpet, or I'll stop your speech!

[*He stops her mouth.*]

Come hither, maid: tell me, and tell me true,
What means this banquet? what's your mistress doing?
Why call'dst thou out, when as thou saw'st me coming?

Tell me, or else I'll hang thee by the heels,
And whip thee naked. Come on, what's the matter?

NAN. Forsooth, I cannot tell.

CAS. Can you not tell? come on, I'll make you tell me.

NAN. O master! I will tell you.

CAS. Then say on.

NAN. Nothing, in truth, forsooth, but that she means
To have a gentleman come drink with her.

CAS. What gentleman?

NAN. Forsooth, 'tis Master Forrest, as I think.

CAS. Forrest? nay then I know how the game goeth:
Whoever loseth, I am sure to win
By their great kindness, though't be but the horns.

Enter FORREST at one door, MARIAN at another.

But here comes he and she. Come hither, maid:
Upon thy life, give not a word, a look,
That she may know aught of my being here.
Stand still, and do whate'er she bids thee do.
Go, get thee gone; but if thou dost betray me,
I'll cut thy throat: look to it, for I will do it.
I'll stand here close to see the end of this,
And see what rakes she keeps, when I'm abroad.

[CASTILIANO *conceals himself.*]

MAR. 'Tis kindly done, Miles, to return so soon,
And so I take it. Nan, is our banquet ready?
Welcome, my love! I see you'll keep your word.

NAN. 'Twere better for you both he had not kept it. [*Aside.*]

FOR. Yea, Mariana, else I were unworthy.
I did but bring my lady to the door,
And there I left her full of melancholy,
And discontented.

MAR. Why, 'twas kindly done.
Come, come sit down, and let us laugh awhile:
Maid, fill some wine.

NAN. Alas! my breech makes buttons,
And so would theirs, knew they as much as I.
He may change the sweetmeats, and put
Purging comfits in the dishes.

MAR. Here's to my lady and my cousin Musgrave.

FOR. I pray, remember gentle master doctor
And good Earl Lacy too, among the rest.

CAS. O sir, we find you kind—we thank you for it:
The time may come when we may cry you quit. [*Aside.*]

NAN. Master, shall I steal you a cup of wine? [*Aside*

CAS. Away, you baggage! hold your peace, you wretch! [*Aside.*]

FOR. But I had rather walk into your orchard,
And see your gallery so much commended;
To view the workmanship he brought from Spain.
Wherein's describ'd the banquet of the gods.

MAR. Ay, there's one piece exceeding lively done;[458]
Where Mars and Venus lie within a net,
Enclos'd by Vulcan, and he looking on.

CAS. Better and better yet: 'twill mend anon.

MAR. Another of Diana with her nymphs,
Bathing their naked bodies in the streams;
Where fond Acteon, for his eyes' offence,
Is turn'd into a hart's shape, horns and all:
And this the doctor hangs right o'er his bed.

FOR. Those horns may fall and light upon his head.

CAS. And if they do, worse luck. What remedy? [*Aside.*]

FOR. Nay, Marian, we'll not leave these sights unseen;
And then we'll see your orchard and your fruit,
For now there hang queen apples on the trees,
And one of them is[459] worth a score of these.

MAR. Well, you shall see them, lest you lose your longing.
[*Exeunt MARIAN and FORREST.*]

CAS. Nay, if ye fall a longing for green fruit,
Child-bearing is not far off, I am sure.
Why, this is excellent: I feel the buds!
My head groweth hard: my horns will shortly spring!
Now, who may lead the cuckold's dance but I,
That am become the headman of the parish?
O, this it is to have an honest wife,
Of whom so much I boasted once to-day.
Come hither, minx! you know your mistress' mind,
And you keep secret all her villanies:
Tell me, you were best, where was this plot devised?
How did these villains know I was abroad?

NAN. Indeed, forsooth, I know[460] not when it was.
My mistress call'd me from my work of late,
And bad me lay a napkin: so I did,
And made this banquet ready; but in truth
I knew not what she did intend to do.

CAS. No, no, you did not watch against I came,
To give her warning to despatch her knaves!
You cried not out when as you saw me come!
All this is nothing; but I'll trounce you all.

NAN. In truth, good master!

Enter MARIAN, FORREST.

CAS. Peace, stay! they come.
Whimper not; and you do, I'll use you worse.
Behold that wicked strumpet with that knave!
O, that I had a pistol for their sakes,
That at one shot I might despatch them both!
But I must stand close yet, and see the rest.
[*He conceals himself again.*]

MAR. How lik'st thou, Miles, my orchard and my house?

FOR. Well; thou art seated to thy heart's content,
A pleasant orchard and a house well-furnish'd:
There nothing wants; but in the gallery
The painter shows his art exceedingly.

MAR. Yet is there one thing goeth beyond all these:

Contented life, that giveth the heart his ease,
And that I want. [*One knocketh at the door.*]

FOR. Sweet love, adieu. [*Exit FORREST.*]

MAR. Farewell, sweetheart. Who is that at the door?

Enter CLINTON.

CLIN. A friend.

MAR. Come near: what, captain, is it you?

CLIN. Even I, fair Marian, watching carefully
The blessed step of opportunity.

MAR. Good, good! how fortune gluts me with excess!
Still they that have enough shall meet with more.

CLIN. But where's the doctor?

MAR. Ministering abroad
Physic to some sick patients he retains.

CLIN. Let him abroad, I'll minister at home
Such physic shall content my Marian.

CAS. O monstrous! now the world must see my shame.
This head must bear whatever likes[461] my dame. [*Aside.*]

MAR. I have no malady requires a cure.

CLIN. Why, then, must I assume a sick man's part
And all my sickness lieth at my heart?
'Tis the heart-burning that torments me so.

MAR. There is no cure for fire but to be quenched.

CLIN. Thou hast prescribed a sovereign remedy.

CAS. O, who the devil made her a physician? [*Aside.*]

CLIN. Let's not obscure what love doth manifest;
Nor let a stranger's bed make thee seem strange
To him that ever lov'd and honour'd thee.

MAR. A captain made a captive by loose love
And gadding fancy! fie, 'twere monstrous shame
That Cupid's bow should blemish Mars's name:
Take up thy arms, recall thy drooping thoughts,
And lead thy troops into the spacious fields.

CAS. She counsels others well, if she would take it. [*Aside.*]

CLIN. Thou counselest the blind to lead the blind.
Can I lead them that cannot guide myself?
Thou, Marian, must release my captive heart.

MAR. With all my heart I grant thee free release.

CLIN. Thou art obscure too much: but tell me, love,
Shall I obtain my long-desired love?

MAR. Captain, there is yet somewhat in thy mind
Thou wouldst reveal, but wantest utterance.
Thou better knowest to front the braving foe,
Than plead love-suits.

CLIN. I grant 'tis even so;
Extremity of passions still are dumb,
No tongue can tell love's chief perfections:

Persuade thyself my love-sick thoughts are thine;
Thou only may'st those drooping thoughts refine.

MAR. Since at my hands thou seek'st a remedy,
I'll ease thy grief, and cure thy malady.
No drug the doctor hath shall be too dear;
His antidote shall fly to do thee good.
Come in, and let thy eye make choice for thee,
That thou may'st know how dear thou art to me.

[*Exeunt* CLINTON, MARIAN.]

CAS. Is this obedience? now the devil go with them!
And yet I dare not; O, she's mankind grown![462]
O miserable men that must live so,
And damned strumpet,[463] author of this woe!

Enter CLINTON, MARIAN.

But peace! be still! they come. O shameless shame!
Well may the world call thee the devil's dame.

MAR. Captain, thy skill hath pleased me so well,
That I have vow'd my service to Bellona.

CAS. Her service to Bellona! turn'd stark ruffian!
She'll be call'd Cavaliero Marian. [*Aside.*]

CLIN. And I will train thee up in feats of arms,
And teach thee all the orders of the field;
That whilst we, like to Mars and Venus, jest,
The doctor's head may get a gallant crest.

CAS. I can no longer linger my disgrace,
Nor hide my shame from their detested sight.
How now, thou whore, dishonour to my bed!
Disdain to womanhood, shame of thy sex!
Insatiate monster! corrosive of my soul!
What makes this captain revelling in my house?
My house! nay, in my bed! You'll prove a soldier!
Follow Bellona, turn a martialist!
I'll try if thou hast learn'd to ward my blows.

MAR. Why, how now, man! is this your madding month?
What, sir! will you forbid me in good sort
To entertain my friends?

CAS. Your friends, you whore!
They are no friends of mine, nor come they here.
Clinton, avaunt, my house is for no such.

MAR. Alas, good sir! are you grown so suspicious,
Thus on no proofs to nourish jealousy?
I cannot kiss a man but you'll be angry.
In spite of you, or whoso else saith nay,
My friends are welcome, as they come this way:
If you mislike it, mend it as you may.
What, do you think to pin up Marian,
As you were wont to do your Spanish girls?
No, sir, I'll be half mistress of myself;
The other half is yours, if you deserve it.

CLIN. What madness mov'd thee be displeas'd with me,
That always us'd thee with so kind regard?
Did I not at thy first arrival here
Conduct thee to the Earl of London's house?

MAR. Did I not, being unsolicited,
Bestow my first pure maiden love on thee?

CLIN. Did I not grace thee there in all the court,
And bear thee out against the daring abbot?

MAR. Did I not forsake many young gallant courtiers,
Enamoured with thy aged gravity,
Who, now being weary of me, wouldst disgrace me?

CAS. If there be any conscience left on earth,
How can I but believe these protestations?

CLIN. Have I not always been thy nearest friend?

MAR. Have I not always been thy dearest wife?

CLIN. How much will all the world in this condemn thee?

MAR. At first I little fear'd what now I find,
And grieve too late.

CAS. Content thee, gentle dame.
The nature of our countrymen is such,
That, if we see another kiss our wives,
We cannot brook it: but I will be pleas'd;
For, will I, nill I,[464] so methinks I must.
And, gentle captain, be not you offended;
I was too hot at first, but now repent it.
I prythee, gentle dame, forgive me this,
And drown all jealousy in this sweet kiss.

CLIN. This shows your wisdom: on, I'll follow you.

MAR. [*Aside.*] Well, doctor, henceforth never reckon[465] it scorn
At my sweet Clinton's hands to take the horn.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV., SCENE I.

Enter ROBIN GOODFELLOW,[466] *in a suit of leather, close to his body; his face and hands coloured russet-colour, with a flail.*

ROB. The doctor's self would scarce know Robin now.
Curs'd Marian may go seek another man,
For I intend to dwell no longer with her,
Since that the bastinado drove me thence.
These silken girls are all too fine for me:
My master shall report of those in hell,
Whilst I go range amongst the country-maids,
To see, if homespun lasses milder be
Than my curs'd dame and Lacy's wanton wife.
Thus therefore will I live betwixt two shapes;
When as I list, in this transform'd disguise,
I'll fright the country-people as they pass;
And sometimes turn me to some other form,
And so delude them with fantastic shows.
But woe betide the silly dairymaids,
For I shall fleet their cream-bowls night by night.
And slice the bacon-flitches as they hang.
Well, here in Croydon will I first begin
To frolic it among the country lobs.
This day, they say, is call'd Holyrood-day,
And all the youth are now a-nutting gone.

Here are a crew of younkens in this wood,
Well-sorted, for each lad hath got his lass.
Marry, indeed, there is a tricky[467] girl,
That three or four would fain be doing with,
But that a wily priest among the rest
Intends to bear her sheer away from all.
The miller, and my brother Grim the collier
Appointed here to scuffle for her love.
I am on Grim's side; for long time ago
The devil call'd the collier like to like:[468]

Enter GRIM, CLACK, PARSON SHORTHOSE, JOAN, with a bag of nuts.

But here the miller and the collier come,
With Parson Makebate and their tricky girl.

GRIM. Parson, persuade me no more. I come,
Jug, to your custody; Jug, hold the nut-bag.

CLACK. Nay, I will give you nuts to crack.

GRIM. Crack in thy throat and hauster[469] too.

SHO. Neighbours, I wish you both agree:
Let me be judge, be rul'd by me.

GRIM. Master Parson, remember what *Pueriles*[470] saith, *Ne accesseris ad concilio*, &c. I tell you I found this written in the bottom of one of my empty sacks. Never persuade men that be execrable. I have vowed it, and I will perform it. The quarrel is great, and I have taken it upon my own shoulders.

CLACK. Ay, that thou shalt, ere I have done; for I will lay it on, i'faith.

GRIM. If you lay it in, I must bear it out, this is all. If you strike, I must stand to anything, although it be the biggest blow that you can lay upon me.

JOAN. Ye both have oftentimes sworn that ye love me;
Let me overrule you in this angry mood.
Neighbours and old acquaintance, and fall out!

ROB. Why, that is, because thou wilt not let them fall in.

GRIM. I say, my heart bleedeth when thou speaketh, and therefore do not provoke me. Yet, miller, as I am monstrous angry, so I have a wonderful great mind to be repeas'd. Let's think what harm cometh by this same fighting; if we should hurt one another, how can we help it? Again, Clack, do but here forswear Joan's company, and I'll be thine instead of her, to use in all your businesses from Croydon to London; yours, Gilbert Grim, the chief collier for the king's majesty's own mouth.

CLACK. O Grim, do I smell you? I'll make you forswear her before we two part; and therefore come on to this gear. Collier, I will lay on load, and when it is done, let who will take it off again.

JOAN. Yet once more hear me speak: leave off for shame,
If not for love; and let not others laugh
To see your follies; let me overrule you.

SHO. Ay, let them fight, I care not: I
Meantime away with Joan will fly;
And whilst they two are at it here,
We two will sport ourselves elsewhere.

ROB. There's a stone priest! he loveth a wench, indeed:
He careth not though both of them do bleed;
But Robin Goodfellow will conjure you,
And mar your match, and bang you soundly too.
I like this country-girl's condition well;
She's faithful, and a lover but to one:
Robin stands here to right both Grim and her.

GRIM. Master Parson, look you to my love.
Miller, here I stand

With my heart and my hand
In sweet Jug's right
With thee to fight.

CLACK. Come, let us to it then.

[*They fight: ROBIN beateth the miller
with a flail, and felleth him.*]

ROB. Now, miller, miller dustipoll
I'll clapper-claw your jobbernole.

SHO. Come, Jug, let's leave these senseless blocks,
Giving each other blows and knocks.

JOAN. I love my Grim too well to leave him so.

SHO. You shall not choose: come, let's away.

[*SHORTHOSE pulleth JUG after him: ROBIN beateth the priest with his flail.*]

ROB. Nay then, sir priest, I'll make you stay.

CLACK. Nay, this is nothing, Grim; we'll not part so.
I thought to have borne it off with my back sword ward,
And I receiv'd it upon my bare costard.[471]

[*They fight again.*]

ROB. What, miller, are you up again?
Nay, then, my flail shall never lin,[472]
Until I force one of us twain
Betake him to his heels amain.

[*ROBIN beats the miller again.*]

CLACK. Hold thy hands, Grim! thou hast murder'd me.

GRIM. Thou liest, it is in mine own offence I do it. Get thee gone then:
I had rather have thy room than thy company.

CLACK. Marry, with all my heart. O, the collier playeth the devil with me.

ROB. No, it is the devil playeth the collier with thee. [*Aside.*]

SHO. My bones are sore; I prythee, Joan,
Let's quickly from this place be gone.
Nay, come away, I love thee so,
Without thee I will never go.

ROB. What, priest, still at your lechery?

[*ROBIN beats the priest.*]

I'll thrash you for your knavery.
If any ask who beat thee so,
Tell them 'twas Robin Goodfellow.

[*SHORTHOSE runneth away.*]

GRIM. O miller, art thou gone? I am glad of it. I smelt my own infirmity every stroke I struck at him.
Now, Joan, I dare boldly swear thou art my own; for I have won thee in the plain field. Now Master
Parson shall even strike it up; two or three words of his mouth will make her gammer Grim all the days
of her life after.

ROB. Here is two well-favoured slaves!
Grim and I may curse all good faces,
And not hurt our own.

JOAN. What, my love, how dost thou?

GRIM. Even as a conqueror may do. Jug, for thy sake I have made the miller a poor cripple all the
days of his life, good for nothing else but to be carried into the 'spital-house.

ROB. Ay, there is one lie, for thou didst never hurt him. [*Aside.*]

JOAN. I am glad thou 'scapedst, my love, and wast not hurt.

GRIM. Who? I hurt? Joan, thou knowest me not yet: thou mayest do better hereafter. I gave him five mortal wounds the first five strokes I made at him.

ROB. There are five lies clapt into one, for brevity's sake. [*Aside.*]

GRIM. And presently, upon the fifth blow, I made a dangerous thrust at him, and violently overthrew him, horse and foot, and there he lay.

ROB. Nay, there you lie. The collier is excellent
To be companion to the devil himself. [*Aside.*]

GRIM. But where's Master Parson?

JOAN. He was well bang'd, and knew not who 'twas did it,
And would have had me gone away with him.
Here lieth his nut-bag, and the miller's too:
They had no leisure to take them away.

GRIM. The better for us, Joan; there is good cracking work: it will increase household stuff. Come, let's after the parson; we will comfort him, and he shall couple us. I'll have Pounceby the painter score upon our painted cloth[473] at home all the whole story of our going a-nutting this Holyrood-day; and he shall paint me up triumphing over the miller.

[*Exeunt GRIM and JOAN.*]

ROB. So let the collier now go boast at home
How he hath beat the miller from his love.
I like this modest country maid so well,
That I believe I must report in hell
Better of women than my master can.
Well, till my time's expir'd, I'll keep this quarter,
And night by night attend their merry meetings.

[*Exit ROBIN.*]

Enter DUNSTAN with EARL LACY sick.

DUN. Let not your sickness add more feebleness
Unto your weaken'd age; but give me leave
To cure thy vain suspicious malady.
Thy eyes shall witness how thou art deceiv'd,
Misprizing thy fair lady's chastity:
For whilst we two stand closely here unseen,
We shall espy them presently approach.

LACY. O, show me this, thou blessed man of God,
And thou shalt then make young my withered age.

DUN. Mark the beginning; for here Musgrave cometh.

Enter MUSGRAVE.

MUS. O thrice unhappy and unfortunate,
That, having fit occasion proffer'd thee
Of conference with beauteous Honorea,
Thou overslipp'd it, and o'erslipp'dst thyself.
Never since wedlock tied her to the earl,
Have I saluted her; although report
Is blaz'd abroad of her inconstancy.
This is her evening walk, and here will I
Attend her coming forth, and greet her fairly.

LACY. See, Dunstan, how their youth doth blind our age!
Thou dost deceive thyself and bringest me
To see my proper shame and infamy.

Enter HONOREA.

But here she comes: my hope, my fear, my love.

DUN. Here comes the unstain'd honour of thy bed.
Thy ears shall hear her virtuous, chaste replies,
And make thy heart confess thou dost her wrong.

HON. Now modest love hath banish'd wanton thoughts,
And alter'd me from that I was before,
To that chaste life I ought to entertain.
My heart is tied to that strict form of life,
That I joy only to be Lacy's wife.

LACY. God fill thy mind with these chaste, virtuous thoughts!

MUS. O, now I see her, I am half asham'd
Of so long absence, of neglect of speech.
My dearest lady, patroness of beauty,
Let thy poor servant make his true excuse!

HON. Musgrave, I easily take your excuse,
Accusing my fond self for what is pass'd.

MUS. Long time we wanted opportunity;
But now the forelock of well-wishing time
Hath bless'd us both, that here without suspect
We may renew the tenor of our loves.

LACY. O Dunstan, how she smiles to hear him speak!

HON. No, child of fortune and inconstancy,
Thou shalt not train me, or induce my love
To loose desires or dishonoured thoughts.
'Tis God's own work that struck a deep remorse
Into my tainted heart for my pass'd folly.

MUS. O, thou confound'st me! Speak as thou wert won't,
Like Love herself, my lovely Honorea.

HON. Why, how now, Musgrave! what esteem'st thou me,
That thou provokest me, that first denied me?
I will not yield you reasons why I may not,
More than your own. You told me why you would not.

MUS. By heavens, by thee, my saint, my happiness!
No torture shall control my heart in this,
To teach my tongue deny to call thee love.

HON. Well, in regard that in my maiden-days
I lov'd thee well, now let me counsel thee.
Reclaim these idle humours; know thyself;
Remember me, and think upon my lord;
And let these thoughts bring forth those chaste effects,
Which may declare thy change unto the world:
And this assure thee—whilst I breathe this air,
Earl Lacy's honour I will ne'er impair.

[Exit HONOREA.]

DUN. Now your eyes see that which your heart believ'd not.

LACY. 'Tis a miracle beyond the reach
Of my capacity! I could weep for joy,
Would but my tears express how much I love her!
Men may surmise amiss in jealousy,
Of those that live in untouch'd honesty.

MUS. Is she departed? and do I conceive
This height of grief, and do no violence

Unto myself? Said she I denied her?
Far be it from my heart to think that thought.
All ye that, as I do, have felt this smart,
Ye know how burthensome 'tis at my heart.
Hereafter never will I prosecute
This former motion, my unlawful suit;
But, since she is Earl Lacy's virtuous wife,
I'll live a private, pensive, single life.

[*Exit MUSGRAVE.*]

DUN. God doth dispose all at his blessed will;
And he hath chang'd their minds from bad to good,
That we, which see't, may learn to mend ourselves.

LACY. I'll reconcile myself to Musgrave's love:
I will recant my false suspicion,
And humbly make my true submission.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter MARIAN, chafing.

MAR. Say'st thou thou'lt make the house too hot for me?
I'll soon abroad, and cool me in the air.
I'll teach him never scorn to drink his health
Whom I do love. He thinks to overcrow me
With words and blows; but he is in the wrong,
Begin he when he dares! O, he's too hot
And angry to live long with Marian.
But I'll not long be subject to his rage:
Here 'tis shall rid him of his hateful life,
And bless me with the style of widowhood.
'Twas Harvey's work to temper it so well:
The strongest poison that he could devise.

Enter CLINTON.

I have been too long subject to the slave;
But now I'll cast off that detested yoke.

CLIN. Musgrave, I see, is reconcil'd to th'earl;
For now I met him walking with Lord Lacy.
Sure, this is Marian's plot, and there she stands.
What, love, alone!

MAR. Ay, captain, much disturb'd
About the frantic doctor's jealousy;
Who, though he seem'd content when thou wast there,
He after fell reviling thee and me;
Robb'd me of all my jewels; locks his plate
In his own trunk; and let's me only live
To bear the idle title of his wife.

CLIN. Fair Marian, by a soldier's loyal faith,
If my employment any way may help
To set thee free from this captivity,
Use me in any sort: command my sword;
I'll do't, as soon as thou shalt speak the word.

MAR. Now, by my true love, which I wish to thee,
I conjure thee with resolution
To slay that monster! Do not fail to do it!
For, if thou dost, I would I had not spoke it.

CLIN. Now try me; and, when next we hap to meet,
The doctor lies stone dead at Clinton's feet.

MAR. Nay, now I see thou lov'st me.

CLIN. Say no more.
If thou dost loathe him, he shall die therefore.

MAR. To-morrow morning will he early rise
To see Earl Lacy: meet him in the cloister,
And make that place revenge his sanctuary.
This night will I break open all the trunks,
Rifle his caskets, rob him of his gold;
And all the doctor's treasure shall be thine.
If thou miscarry, yet this drink shall do it.

Enter CASTILIANO.

CAS. My wife's impatience hath left me alone,
And made my servant run, I know not whither.

MAR. Peace! here is our eyesore. Clinton, leave us now.

CLIN. Nay, now occasion smiles, and I will do it.
[CLINTON *draweth his sword.*]

MAR. Put up thy sword; be it thy morning's work:
Farewell to-night; but fail me not to-morrow.

CLIN. Farewell, my love. No rest shall close these eyes, Until the morning peep; and then he dies.
[*Exit* CLINTON.]

CAS. [*Soliloq.*] Now I remember, I have quite outrun
My time prefix'd to dwell upon the earth:
Yet Akercock is absent: where is he?
O, I am glad I am so well near rid
Of my earth's plague and my lascivious dame.

MAR. Hath he discover'd my intendment,
That he presages his ensuing death?
I must break off these fearful meditations.

CAS. How shall I give my verdict up to Pluto
Of all these accidents?

MAR. Why, how now, man?

CAS. What, my dear dame! my reconciled spouse!
Upon my soul, my love to thee is more
Now at this present than 'twas e'er before.

MAR. He hath descried me sure, he sootheth me so! [*Aside.*]

CAS. I love thee now, because I now must leave thee.
This was the day of my nativity,
And therefore, sweet wife, let us revel it.

MAR. Nay, I have little cause to joy at all.

CAS. Thou Grossest still my mirth with discontents!
If ever heretofore I have displeas'd thee,
Sweet dame, I crave thy pardon now for all.
This is my birthday, girl, I must rejoice:
Ask what thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

MAR. Should I but ask to lead a quiet life,
You hardly would grant this unto your wife;
Much less a thing that were of more import.

CAS. Ask anything, and try if I'll deny thee.

MAR. O my poor Musgrave, how hast thou been wrong'd,
And my fair lady!

CAS. Use no preambles,

But tell me plainly.

MAR. Nay, remember them,
And join their slander to that love you owe me,
And then old Lacy's jealousy.

CAS. What then?

MAR. Nay, now I see you will not understand me.

CAS. Thou art too dark; speak plainly, and 'tis done.

MAR. Then doom the earl, and bless poor Musgrave's eyes
With Honorea's love; for this in thy hands lies.

CAS. How should I doom him?

MAR. How else, but to death?

CAS. As if his life or death lay in my hands?

MAR. He is thy patient, is he not?

CAS. He is.

MAR. Then in thy hands lie both his life and death.
Sweet love, let Marian beg it at thy hand:
Why should the grey-beard live to cross us all?
Nay, now I see thee frown: thou wilt not do it.

CAS. Fie, fie, dame! you are too suspicious.
Here is my hand, that thou may'st know I love thee;
I'll poison him this night before I sleep.

MAR. Thou dost but flatter me!

CAS. Tush! I have sworn it.

MAR. And wilt thou do it?

CAS. He is sure to die.

MAR. I'll kiss thy lips for speaking that kind word:
But do it, and I'll hang about thy neck,
And curl thy hair, and sleep betwixt thy arms,
And teach thee pleasures which thou never knew'st.

CAS. Promise no more, and trouble me no more:
The longer I stay here, he lives the longer.
I must go to him now, and now I'll do it.
Go home and hasten supper 'gainst I come:
We will carouse to his departing soul.

MAR. I will, dear husband; but remember me: [*Aside.*] When thou hast poison'd him, I'll poison thee.
[*Exit* MARIAN.]

CAS. O wonderful, how women can dissemble!
Now she can kiss me, hang about my neck,
And soothe me with smooth smiles and lewd entreaties.
Well, I have promis'd her to kill the earl;
And yet, I hope ye will not think I'll do it.[474]
Yet I will sound the depth of their device,
And see the issue of their bloody drift.
I'll give the earl, unknown to any man,
A sleepy potion, which shall make him seem
As if he were stark dead, for certain hours:
But in my absence no man shall report
That for my dame's sake I did any hurt.

[*Exit.*]

ACT V., SCENE I.

Enter GRIM, with JOAN.

GRIM. Nay, but, Joan, have a care! bear a brain[475] for all at once. 'Tis not one hour's pleasure that I suspect more than your mother's good, countenance. If she be asleep, we may be bold under correction; if she be awake, I may go my ways, and nobody ask me, *Grim, whither goest thou?* Nay, I tell you, I am so well beloved in our town, that not the worst dog in the street will hurt my little finger.

JOAN. Why speak you this? You need not fear my mother,
For she was fast asleep four hours ago.

GRIM. Is she, sure? Did you hear her snort in her dead sleep? Why then,
Joan, I have an hour's mirth for thee.

JOAN. And I a mess of cream for thee.

GRIM. Why, there is one for another then: fetch it, Joan; we will eat and kiss, and be as merry as your cricket. [*Exit JOAN for the cream.*] Art thou gone for it? Well, go thy ways for the kindest lass that ever poor collier met withal? I mean for to make short work with her, and marry her presently. I'll single her out, i'faith, till I make her bear double, and give the world to understand we will have a young Grim between us.

Enter JOAN with the cream.

JOAN. Look here, my love, 'tis sweeten'd for thy mouth.

GRIM. You have put none of your love-powder in it, to make me enamourable of you, have you, Joan? I have a simple pate, to expect you! [*One knocketh at the door.*] Joan, hark, my brains beat, my head works, and my mind giveth me: some lovers of yours come sneaking hither now; I like it not, 'tis suspicious.

[*One knocketh again.*

JOAN. You need not fear it; for there is none alive
Shall bear the least part of my heart from thee.

GRIM. Say'st thou so? hold there still, and whoe'er he be, open door to him.

She openeth the door. Enter SHORTHOSE, and ROBIN after him.

JOAN. What, Master Parson, are you come so late?
You are welcome; here's none but Grim and I.

SHO. Joan, I'll no more a-nutting go,
I was so beaten to and fro;
And yet who it was, I do not know.

GRIM. What, Master Parson, are you come so late to say eveningsong to your parishioners? I have heard of your knavery. I give you a fair warning; touch her no lower than her girdle, and no higher than her chin: I keep her lips and her hips for my own use. I do; and so welcome.

ROBIN. This two hours have I dogg'd the parson round about all Croydon, doubting some such thing.
[*Aside.*]

SHO. No, Grim, I here forswear to touch
Thy Joan, or any other such:
Love hath been so cudgell'd out of me,
I'll go no more to wood with thee.

ROB. 'Twas Robin beat this holy mind into him.
I think more cudgelling would make him more honest. [*Aside.*]

GRIM. You speak like an honest man and a good parson, and that is more.
Here's Joan's benevolation for us, a mess of cream and so forth. Here is your place, Master Parson. Stand on the t'other side of the table, Joan.
Eat hard to-night, that thou may marry us the better to-morrow.

ROB. What, is my brother Grim so good a fellow.

[*They fall to the cream.*]

I love a mess of cream as well as they;

I think it were best I stepp'd in and made one. [*Aside.*]

Ho, ho, ho,[476] my masters! No good fellowship!

Is Robin Goodfellow a bugbear grown,

[ROBIN *falleth to eat.*]

That he is not worthy to be bid sit down?

GRIM. O Lord, save us! sure, he is some country-devil; he hath got a russet coat upon his face.

[GRIM and SHORTHOSE *retire to the back of the stage.*]

SHO. Now, *benedicite!* who is this?

I take him for some fiend, i-wis;[477]

O, for some holy-water here

Of this same place this spirit to clear!

ROB. Nay, fear not, Grim, come fall unto your cream:

Tut, I am thy friend; why dost not come and eat?

GRIM. I, sir? truly, master devil, I am well here, I thank you.

ROB. I'll have thee come, I say. Why, tremblest thou?

GRIM. No, sir, not I; 'tis a palsy I have still. Truly, sir, I have no great acquaintance with you.

ROB. Thou shalt have better, man, ere I depart.

GRIM. I will not, and if I can choose.

ROB. Nay, come away, and bring your love with you.

GRIM. Joan! you were best go to him, Joan.

ROB. What, shall I fetch thee, man? The cream is sweet.

GRIM. No, sir, I am coming: much good do't you. I had need of a long spoon, now I go to eat with the devil.[478]

ROB. The parson's penance shall be thus to fast.

Come, tell me, Grim, dost thou not know me, man?

GRIM. No, truly, sir; I am a poor man fetcheth my living out of the fire; your worship may be a gentleman devil, for aught I know.

ROB. Some men call me Robin Goodfellow.

GRIM. O Lord, sir! Master Robert Goodfellow, you are very welcome, sir.

ROB. This half year have I liv'd about this town,

Helping poor servants to despatch their work,

To brew and bake, and other husbandry.

Tut, fear not, maid; if Grim be merry,

I will make up the match between ye.

GRIM. There will be a match in the devil's name!

ROB. Well, now the night is almost spent,

Since your affections all are bent

To marriage and to constant love,

Grim, Robin doth thy choice approve;

And there's the priest shall marry you:

Go to it, and make no more ado:

Sirrah, sir priest, go get you gone,

And join both her and him anon;

But ne'er hereafter let me take you

With wanton love-tricks, lest I make you

Example to all stone-priests ever,

To deal with other men's loves never.

SHO. *Valete vos*, and God bless me,
And rid me from his company!
Come, Grim, I'll join you hand in hand,
In sacred wedlock's holy band.
I will no more a-nutting go,
That journey caused all this woe.

GRIM. Come, let's to hand in hand quickly. Master Robert, you were ever one of the honestest merry devils that ever I saw.

JOAN. Sweet Grim, and if thou lovest me, let's away.

GRIM. Nay, now, Joan, I spy a hole in your coat: if you cannot endure the devil, you'll never love the collier. Why, we two are sworn brothers. You shall see me talk with him even as familiarly as if I should parbreak[479] my mind and my whole stomach upon thee.

JOAN. I prythee, do not, Grim.

GRIM. Who? not I? O Lord, Master Robert Goodfellow, I have a poor cottage at home, whither Joan and I will jog us merrily. We will make you no stranger, if you come thither. You shall be used as devilishly as you would wish, i'faith. There is never a time my cart cometh from London, but the collier bringeth a goose in his sack, and that, with the giblets thereof, is at your service.

ROB. This is more kindness, Grim, than I expected.

GRIM. Nay, sir, if you come home, you shall find it true, I warrant you. All my whole family shall be at your devilship's pleasure, except my poor Joan here, and she is my own proper nightgear.

ROB. Gramercies, but away in haste;
The night is almost spent and pass'd.

GRIM. God be with you, sir; I'll make as much haste about it as may be; for, and that were once done, I would begin a new piece of work with you, Joan.

[Exeunt all but ROBIN.]

ROB. Now joy betide this merry morn,
And keep Grim's forehead from the horn:
For Robin bids his last adieu
To Grim and all the rest of you.

[Exit ROBIN.]

Enter CLINTON alone.

CLIN. Bright Lucifer, go couch thee in the clouds,
And let this morning prove as dark as night!
That I unseen may bring to happy end
The doctor's murder, which I do intend.
'Tis early yet: he is not so soon stirring.
But stir he ne'er so soon, so soon he dies.
I'll walk along before the palace gate;
Then shall I know how near it is to-day,
He shall have no means to escape away.

[Exit CLINTON.]

Enter CASTILIANO.

CAS. My trunk's broke open, and my jewels gone!
My gold and treasure stol'n: my house despoil'd
Of all my furniture, and nothing left?
No, not my wife, for she is stol'n away:
But she hath pepper'd me, I feel it work—
My teeth are loosen'd, and my belly swell'd;
My entrails burn with such distemper'd heat,
That well I know my dame hath poison'd me:
When she spoke fairest, then she did this act.
When I have spoken all I can imagine,
I cannot utter half that she intends;

She makes as little poisoning of a man,
As to carouse; I feel that this is true.

Enter CLINTON.

Nay, now I know too much of womankind.
'Zounds, here's the captain: what should he make here
With his sword drawn? there's yet more villany.

CLIN. The morning is far spent; but yet he comes not.
I wonder Marian sends him not abroad.
Well, doctor, linger time, and linger life;
For long thou shalt not breathe upon the earth.

CAS. No, no, I will not live amongst ye long:
Is it for me thou wait'st, thou bloody wretch?
Her poison hath prevented thee in murder.

Enter EARL MORGAN, ST DUNSTAN *with* HONOREA
fainting, and MARIAN.

Now here be they suppose Earl Lacy dead.
See how this lady grieveth for that she wisheth.

DUN. My Lord of London, by his sudden death,
And all the signs before his late departure,
'Tis very probable that he is poison'd.

MAR. Do you but doubt it? credit me, my lord,
I heard him say that drink should be his last:
I heard my husband speak it, and he did it.

CAS. There is my old friend, she always speaks for me.
O shameless creature, was't not thy device?

MOR. Let not extremity of grief o'erwhelm thee,
My dearest Honorea; for his death shall be
Surely reveng'd with all severity
Upon the doctor, and that suddenly.

CLIN. What fortune's this, that all these come this way
To hinder me, and save thy life to-day?

HON. My gracious lord, this doleful accident
Hath robb'd me of my joy: and, royal earl,
Though in thy life thou didst suspect my love,
My grief and tears suspicions shall remove.

MAR. Madam, to you and to your father's love
I owe as much and more than my own life.
Had I ten husbands should agree to do it,
My gracious lord, you presently should know it.

CAS. Ay, there's a girl! think you I did not well,
To live with such a wife, to come from hell.

MAR. Look, look, my lord, there stands the murderer!

CAS. How am I round beset on every side!
First, that same captain here stands to kill me;
My dame she hath already poisoned me;
Earl Morgan he doth threaten present death;
The Countess Honorea, in revenge
Of Lacy, is extremely incens'd 'gainst me.
All threaten—none shall do it; for my date
Is now expired, and I must back to hell.
And now, my servant, wheresoe'er thou be,
Come quickly, Akercock, and follow me.
Lordings, adieu, and my curs'd wife, farewell,

If me ye seek, come follow me to hell.

[The ground opens, and they both fall[480] down into it.]

MOR. The earth that opened now is clos'd again.

DUN. It is God's judgment for his grievous sins.

CLIN. Was there a quagmire, that he sank so soon?

HON. O miracle! now may we justly say,
Heavens have reveng'd my husband's death this day.

MOR. Alas, poor Marian! we have wrong'd thee much
To cause thee match thyself to any such.

MAR. Nay, let him go, and sink into the ground;
For such as he are better lost than found.
Now, Honorea, we are freed from blame,
And both enrich'd with happy widow's name[481].

Enter EARL LACY, with FORREST and MUSGRAVE.

LACY. O, lead me quickly to that mourning train,
Which weep for me, who am reviv'd again.

HON. Marian, I shed some tears of perfect grief.
[She falleth into a swoon.]

MOR. Do not my eyes deceive me? liveth my son?

LACY. My lord and father, both alive and well,
Recover'd of my weakness. Where's my wife?

MAR. Here is my lady, your beloved wife,
Half dead to hear of your untimely end.

LACY. Look on me, Honorea; see thy lord:
I am not dead, but live to love thee still.

DUN. 'Tis God disposeth all things, as he will:
He raiseth those the wicked wish to fall.

CLIN. 'Zounds, I still watch on this enclosed ground;
For if he rise again, I'll murder him.

HON. My lord, my tongue's not able to report
Those joys my heart conceives to see thee live.

DUN. Give God the glory: he recovered thee,
And wrought this judgment on that cursed man,
That set debate and strife among ye all.

MOR. My lord, our eyes have seen a miracle,
Which after ages ever shall admire.
The Spanish doctor, standing here before us,
Is sunk into the bowels of the earth,
Ending his vile life by a viler death.

LACY. But, gentle Marian, I bewail thy loss,
That wert maid, wife, and widow, all so soon.

MAR. 'Tis your recovery that joys me more,
Than grief can touch me for the doctor's death.
He never lov'd me whilst he liv'd with me,
Therefore the less I mourn his tragedy.

MOR. Henceforth we'll strictlier look to strangers' lives,
How they shall marry any English wives.
Now all men shall record this fatal day;

Lacy revived, the doctor sunk in clay.

[*The trumpets sound, exeunt omnes nisi* DUNSTAN.

DUN. Now is Earl Lacy's house fill'd full of joy,
He and his lady wholly reconcil'd,
Their jars all ended: those, that were like men
Transformed, turn'd unto their shapes again.
And, gentlemen, before we make an end,
A little longer yet your patience lend,
That in your friendly censures you may see
What the infernal synod do decree;
And after judge, if we deserve to name
This play of ours, *The devil and his dame*.

[*Exit.*

It thunders and lightneth. Enter PLUTO, MINOS,
AEACUS, RHADAMANTHUS, *with Fury bringing in*
MALBECCO'S *Ghost.*

PLU. Minos, is this the day he should return,
And bring us tidings of his twelvemonth spent!

Enter BELPHEGOR, *like a devil, with horns*
on his head, and AKERCOCK.

MIN. It is, great king, and here Belphegor comes.

PLU. His visage is more ghastly than 'twas wont.
What ornaments are those upon his head?

BEL. Hell, I salute thee! now I feel myself
Rid of a thousand torments. O vile earth,
Worse for us devils than hell itself for men!
Dread Pluto, hear thy subject's just complaint

[BELPHEGOR *kneeleth* to PLUTO.

Proceeding from the anguish of my soul.
O, never send me more into the earth!
For there dwells dread and horror more than here.

PLU. Stand forth, Belphegor, and report the truth
Of all things have betide thee in the world.

BEL. When first, great king, I came into the earth,
I chose a wife both young and beautiful,
The only daughter to a noble earl;
But when the night came that I should her bed,
I found another laid there in her stead:
And in the morning when I found the change,
Though I denied her, I was forc'd to take her.
With her I liv'd in such a mild estate,
Us'd her still kindly, lov'd her tenderly;
Which she requited with such light regard,
So loose demeanour, and dishonest life,
That she was each man's whore, that was my wife.
No hours but gallants flock'd unto my house,
Such as she fancied for her loathsome lust,
With whom, before my face, she did not spare
To play the strumpet. Yea, and more than this,
She made my house a stew for all resorts,
Herself a bawd to others' filthiness:
Which, if I once began but to reprove,
O, then, her tongue was worse than all the rest!
No ears with patience would endure to hear her,
Nor would she ever cease, till I submit[ted]:
And then she'd speak me fair, but wish me dead.
A hundred drifts she laid to cut me off,

Still drawing me to dangers of my life.
And now, my twelvemonth being near expir'd,
She poison'd me; and least that means should fail,
She entic'd a captain to've murdered me.
In brief, whatever tongue can tell of ill,
All that may well be spoken of my dame.

AKER. Poor AkercocK was fain to fly her sight,
For never an hour but she laid on me;
Her tongue and fist walked all so nimbly.

PLU. Doth then, Belphegor, this report of thine
Against all women hold in general?

BEL. Not so, great prince: for, as 'mongst other creatures,
Under that sex are mingled good and bad.
There are some women virtuous, chaste, and true;
And to all those the devil will give their due.
But, O, my dame, born for a scourge[482] to man!
For no mortality [I] would endure that,
Which she a thousand times hath offered me.

PLU. But what new shapes are those upon thy head?

BEL. These are the ancient arms of cuckoldry,
And these my dame hath kindly left to me;
For which Belphegor shall be here derided,
Unless your great infernal majesty
Do solemnly proclaim, no devil shall scorn
Hereafter still to wear the goodly horn.

PLU. This for thy service I will grant thee freely:
All devils shall, as thou dost, like horns wear,
And none shall scorn Belphegor's arms to bear.
And now, Malbecco, hear thy latest doom.
Since that thy first reports are justified
By after-proofs, and women's looseness known,
One plague more will I send upon the earth!
Thou shalt assume a light and fiery shape,
And so for ever live within the world;
Dive into women's thoughts, into men's hearts;
Raise up false rumours and suspicious fears;
Put strange inventions into each man's mind;
And for these actions they shall always call thee
By no name else but fearful Jealousy.
Go, Jealousy, begone; thou hast thy charge;
Go, range about the world that is so large.
And now, for joy Belphegor is return'd,
The furies shall their tortures cast away,
And all hell o'er we'll make it holiday.

[It thundereth and lightneth. Exeunt omnes.]

FINIS.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Cooper's "Athenae Cantabrig," ii. 306.

[2] Nash seems to have boasted of his birth earlier than the date of his "Lenten Stuff," for G. Harvey, in his "Four Letters," &c., 1592, says: "I have enquired what special cause the pennyless gentleman

hath to brag of his birth, which giveth the woeful poverty good leave, even with his Stentor's voice, and in his rattling terms, to revive the pitiful history of Lazarillo de Thormes."

[3] Not of Hertfordshire, a mistake originally made by Shiel in his "Lives of the Poets," thence copied into Berkenhout's "Biographia Literaria," and subsequently into the last edition of the "Biographia Dramatica." [It is copied also by the editor of a reprint of Nash and Marlowe's "Dido," 1825.]

[4] Sig. Q 4.

[5] "For coming from Venice the last summer, and taking Bergamo in my way homeward to England, it was my hap, sojourning there some four or five days, to light in fellowship with that famous *Francattip* Harlequin, who, perceiving me to be an Englishman by my habit and speech, asked me many particulars of the order and manner of our plays, which he termed by the name of representations. Amongst other talk he enquired of me if I knew any such *Parabolano* here in London as Signior *Chiarlatano* Kempino. 'Very well,' quoth I, 'and have been often in his company.' He hearing me say so began to embrace me anew, and offered me all the courtesy he could for his sake, saying although he knew him not, yet for the report he had heard of his pleasance, he could not but be in love with his perfections being absent."

Many of Nash's works furnish evidence that he was well acquainted with Italian poets and writers. Some allusions and translations are pointed out in the notes to the present reprint of "Summer's Last Will and Testament."

[6] It is called "A counter-cuff to Martin junior," &c.

[7] It may be doubted whether Greene and Nash did not contribute to bring the occupation of a *ropemaker* into discredit. Marston, in his "*Parasitaster*," printed in 1606, for some reason or other, speaks of it in terms of great contempt.

"Then must you sit there thrust and contemned, bareheaded to a grogram scribe, ready to start up at the door creaking, prest to get in, with your leave sir, to some surly groom, *the third son of a ropemaker*."

[8] There is a MS. poem in the Brit. Mus. (Bibl. Sloan. 1489) entitled "The Trimming of Tom Nash," written in metre-ballad verse, but it does not relate to our author, though written probably not very long after 1600, and though the title is evidently borrowed from the tract by Gabriel Harvey. Near the opening it contains some notices of romances and works of the time, which may be worth quoting—

"And he as many authors read
As ere Don Quixote had.
And some of them could say by heart
To make the hearers glad.

"The valiant deeds of Knight o'th' Sun
And Rosicleer so tall;
And Palmerin of England too
And Amadis of Gaul.

"Bevis of Hampton he had read
And Guy of Warwick stout;
Huon of Bordeaux, though so long,
Yet he had read him out.

"The Hundred Tales and Scoggin's Jests
And Arthur of the Round Table,
The twelve Wise men of Gotham too
And Ballads innumerable."

[9] It is unnecessary to quote the passage, as the whole tract is reprinted both in the old and new editions of the "Harleian Miscellany." In his "Almond for a Parrot," Nash adverts to the ticklishness of the times, and to the necessity of being extremely guarded in what he might write. "If thou (Kemp) will not accept of it in regard of the envy of some citizens that cannot away with arguments, I'll prefer it (the book) to the soul of Dick Tarlton, who I know will entertain it with thanks, imitating herein that merry man Rabelais, who dedicated most of his works to the soul of the old Queen of Navarre, many years after her death, for that she was a maintainer of mirth in her life. Marry, God send us more of her

making, and then some of us should not live so discontented as we do, for nowadays a man cannot have a bout with a ballader, or write *Midas habet aures asininas*, in great Roman letters, but he shall be in danger of a further displeasure."

Nash's "Isle of Dogs" was doubtless a satire upon the age, which "touched too near" some persons in authority. In the last act of "The Return from Parnassus" the Isle of Dogs is frequently spoken of, and once as if it were a place of refuge. *Ingenioso* says: "To be brief, *Academico*, writs are out for me to apprehend me for my plays, and now I am bound for *the Isle of Dogs*."

[10] Sir J. Harington has an epigram upon the paper war between Harvey and Nash.

TO DOCTOR HARVEY OF CAMBRIDGE.

"The proverb says, who fights with dirty foes
Must needs be soil'd, admit they win or lose:
Then think it doth a Doctor's credit dash
To make himself antagonist to Nash."

—B. II., *Epigr.* 36.

[11] *Tergimini* means the three Harveys, for Gabriel took up the cudgels for himself and his two brothers.

[12] The death of Nash is spoken of in the address to a tract, which is the more curious, as it forms a second part to "Pierce Penniless." It has been assigned to Decker, under the title of "News from Hell;" [and it was reprinted under the title of "A Knight's Conjuring." This issue is included in the Percy Society's series.]

[13] [See the list, however, in "Ath. Cantab.," ii. 307-9, and in Hazlitt's "Handbook," in v.]

[14] In 1589 Nash wrote the address prefixed to Robert Greene's "Menaphon," which contains notices of various preceding and contemporary poets, and which has been admired by all but Mr Malone, for the general purity of its style and the justness of its criticism. As Nash was born in November 1567, he was only in his twenty-second year when it was published.

[15] Parts of "Pierce Penniless, his Supplication to the Devil," are written by Nash in a similar strain of bitter grief for past errors, especially a poem inserted near the commencement. [As to Nash's withdrawal of his apology, see Hazlitt in v.]

"Why is't damnation to despair and die
When life is my true happiness' disease?
My soul! my soul! thy safety makes me fly
The faulty means that might my pain appease.
Divines and dying men may talk of hell,
But in my heart her several torments dwell.

"Ah, worthless wit, to train me to this woe!
Deceitful arts that nourish discontent.
Ill thrive the folly that bewitch'd me so,
Vain thoughts, adieu, for now I will repent.
And yet my wants persuade me to proceed,
Since none takes pity of a scholar's need."

The last two lines of the first stanza are given to the Father in "The Yorkshire Tragedy," attributed to Shakespeare.

[16] This play (if it do not more properly come under the class of *shews*, as Nash himself calls it) was not printed until 1600; but internal evidence proves that it was written, and probably performed, as early as the autumn of 1592. Various decisive marks of time are pointed out in notes in the course of the play, the principal of which are, the great drought, the progress of Queen Elizabeth to Oxford, and the breaking out of the plague. The piece was presented at Croydon, at the residence of some nobleman, who is mentioned in many places. The theatres in London were closed at this date in consequence of the mortality. (See Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, in. 299, note). In the prologue we are told that the representation was not on a *common stage*.

[17] The subsequent account of Will Sommers, or Summer, King Henry the Eighth's celebrated fool, is from the pen of Robert Armin, an author and actor, who himself often played the clown's part in the time of Shakespeare. It is in his "Nest of Ninnies, *simply of themselves, without compound*," 1608, 4to—

"Will Sommers born in Shropshire, as some say,
 Was brought to Greenwich on a holiday,
 Presented to the King; which Fool disdain'd
 To shake him by the hand, or else asham'd:
 Howe'er it was, as ancient people say,
 With much ado was won to it that day.
 Lean he was, hollow-eyed, as all report.
 And stoop he did too; yet in all the court,
 Few men were more belov'd than was this Fool,
 Whose merry prate kept with the King much rule.
 When he was sad, the King and he would rhyme;
 Thus Will exiled sadness many a time.
 I could describe him as I did the rest,
 But in my mind I do not think it best:
 My reason this—howe'er I do descry him,
 So many knew him, that I may belie him;
 Therefore, to please all people, one by one,
 I hold it best to let that pains alone.
 Only thus much: he was a poor man's friend,
 And help'd the widow often in the end.
 The King would ever grant what he did crave,
 For well he knew Will no exacting knave;
 But wish'd the King to do good deeds great store,
 Which caus'd the court to love him more and more."

Some few of the personal particulars, here omitted, Nash supplies in the course of this play. [In 1676 a pamphlet was printed, purporting falsely to be] "A pleasant History of the Life and death of Will Summers; how he came first to be known at court, and by what means he got to be King Henry the Eighth's 'Jester.'" It was reprinted by Harding in 1794, with an engraving from an old portrait, supposed to be Will Summer; but if it be authentic, it does not at all support Armin's description of him, that he was "lean and hollow-eyed." Many of the jests are copied from the French and Italian; and [almost all] of them have been assigned also to Scoggin and Tarlton. One or two of these are introduced into S. Rowley's "When you see me you know me," a historical comedy, first printed in 1605, in which Will Summer plays a prominent part.

[18] Hor. Lib. i. Epist. 16, l. 62.

[19] Dick Huntley was, perhaps, the book-holder or prompter who is subsequently mentioned, and whom Will Summer, in the licence of his character, calls by his name. Perhaps his "cousin Ned" was another of the actors. Harry Baker is spoken of in the scene, where Vertumnus is despatched for Christmas and Backwinter.

[20] [The tract here referred to is Robert Copland's poem, called "Jyl of Breyntford's Testament." See Hazlitt's "Handbook," p. 122.] Julian of Brentford, or, as she is here called, Gyllian of Braynford, seems to have been an old woman who had the reputation of possessing supernatural power. In Henslowe's MSS., a play by Thomas Downton and Samuel Ridley, called "Friar Fox and Gillian of Brentford," is mentioned under date of February 1598-9, but it was acted, as appears by the same authority, as early as 5th January 1592. She is noticed in "Westward Hoe!" 1607, where Clare says: "O Master Linstock, 'tis no walking will serve my turn: have me to bed, good, sweet Mistress Honeysuckle. I doubt that *old hag Gillian of BraineFord* has bewitched me." Sig. G 4.

Julian of Brentford's will had been spoken of before by Nash in his epistle "to the Gentlemen Students of both Universities," prefixed to Greene's "Menaphoii," in 1589. "But so farre discrepant is the idle vsage of our unexperienced and illiterated Punies from this prescription, that a tale of Joane a Brainfords Will, and the vnlucky frumenty, will be as soone entertained into their Libraries as the best Poeme that euer Tasso eternisht."

[21] Camden, in his "Annals of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth," thus speaks of the ravages of the plague in 1592-3, "For this whole year the sickness raged violently in London, Saturn passing through the extreme parts of Cancer and the head of Leo, as it did in the year 1563; in so much, that when the year came about, there died of the sickness and other diseases in the city and suburbs, 17,890 persons, besides William Roe, Mayor, and three Aldermen; so that Bartholomew Fair was not kept, and Michaelmas term was held at St Alban's, twenty miles from London."

[22] Vertumnus enters at the same time, [but his name is not mentioned in the old 4to at the opening of the scene. He acts the part of a messenger, and, as appears afterwards, was provided with a silver

arrow.

[23] Well-flogged.

[24] Hor. lib. i. car. 28—

"Sed omnibus una manet nox,
Et calcanda semel via leti."

[25] "The Queen in her summer progress passed through Oxford, and stayed there several days, where she was agreeably entertained with elegant speeches, plays, and disputations, and received a splendid treat from the Lord Buckhurst, Chancellor of the University."—*Camden's "Annals of Elizabeth."* Her progress is again alluded to in that part of the play where Summer makes his will—

"And finally, O words, now cleanse your course,
Unto Eliza, that most sacred dame,
Whom none but saints and angels ought to name,
All my fair days remaining I bequeath,
To wait upon her, *till she be return'd,*" &c.

[26] The following passage in Gabriel Harvey's "New Letter of Notable Contents, 1593," speaking of Nash, confirms the conjecture that *Falantado* or *Falanta* was the burden of a song or ballad at the time:—"Let him be the *Falanta* down-diddle of rhyme, the hayhoholiday of prose, the welladay of new writers, and the cutthroat of his adversaries."

[27] The hobby-horse was a basket-horse used in morris-dances and May games. See note 37 to Greene's "Tu Quoque."

[28] [Hall, the taborer, mentioned in "Old Meg of Herefordshire," 1609. See the reprint in "Miscellanea Antiqua Anglicana," 1816.]

[29] A vulgar colloquialism for laying a girl on the grass.

[30] He ran in debt to this amount to usurers, who advanced him money by giving him *lute-strings and grey paper*; which he was obliged to sell at an enormous loss. There is a very apposite passage in Nash's "Christ's Tears over Jerusalem," 1593, where he is referring to the resort of spendthrifts and prodigals to usurers for supplies: In the first instance, they obtain what they desire, "but at the second time of their coming, it is doubtful to say whether they shall have money or no: the world grows hard, and we are all mortal: let them make him any assurance before a judge, and they shall have some hundred pounds (*per consequence*) in silks and velvets. The third time if they come, they have baser commodities: the fourth time *lute-strings and grey paper*; and then, I pray pardon me, I am not for you: pay me that you owe me, and you shall have anything."

So also in Greene's and Lodge's "Looking Glass for London and England," 1594, a gentleman thus addresses a usurer, in hopes of inducing him to relent: "I pray you, sir, consider that my loss was great by the commodity I took up: you know, sir, I borrowed of you forty pounds, whereof I had ten pounds in money, and thirty pounds in *lute-strings*, which when I came to sell again, I could get but five pounds for them."

[31] Some case of horse-stealing, which had lately taken place, and which had attracted public attention.

[32] See Collier's "Bibliogr. Catal.," ii. 512. Extr. from Stat. Reg., i. 184, and a woodcut in his "Book of Roxburghe Ballads," 1847, p. 103.

[33] The title of an old ballad. Compare Collier's "Extr. from Stationers' Registers," i. 7, 19, and Rimbault's "Book of Songs and Ballads," p. 83.

[34] The words of Aulus Gellius are these: "Neque mihi," inquit. "aedificatio, neque vasum, neque vestimentum ullum est manupreciosum, neque preciosus servus, neque ancilla est: si quid est," inquit, "quod utar, utor: si non est, egeo: suum cuique per me uti atque frui licet." Tum deinde addit: "Vitio vertunt, quia multa egeo; at ego illis quia nequeunt egere."—Noct. Attic., lib. xiii. c. 23.

[35] Ovid "Rem. Am." l. 749.

[36] Nash seems, from various parts of his works, to have been well read in what are called, though not very properly in English, the burlesque poets of Italy. This praise of poverty in the reply of Ver to the accusation of Summer is one proof of his acquaintance with them. See "Capitolo sopra l'epiteto della poverta, à Messer Carlo Capponi," by Matteo Francesi in the Rime Piacevoli del Berni, Copetta,

"In somma ella non ha si del bestiale,
Com' altri stima, perche la natura
Del poco si contenta, e si prevale," &c.

[37] [Jesus.]

[38] Sir J. Hawkins, in his "Hist. Music," iv. 479, contends that the *recorder* was the same instrument as that we now term a *flageolet*. Some have maintained that it is the *flute*. [See Dyce's "Glossary" to his second edit. of *Shakespeare*, in v.]

[39] Chaucer [if at least he had anything to do with the poem,] translates *day's-eye*, or *daisy*, into *margarete* in French, in the following stanza from his "Flower and the Leaf"—

"Whereto they enclined everichon
With great reverence and that full humbly,
And at the lust there began anon
A lady for to sing right womanly
A bargaret in praising the *day's-eye*,
For as, methought, among her notes swete,
She said, *Si douce est la margarete*."

[40] Nash seems often to have quoted from memory, and here he has either coupled parts of two lines, so as to make one, or he has invented a beginning to the ending of Ovid's "Metam.," ii. 137. [The author seems merely to have introduced scraps of Latin, without much regard to their juxtaposition.]

[41] [A common subject at shows.]

[42] [A *jeu-de-mots* on the scale in music and the Latin word *sol*.]

[43] [Some play on words is here probably meant. *Eyesore* quasi *eye-soar*.]

[44] It may be doubtful whether this is the right word. Old copy, *sonne*.

[45] [Old copy, *baddest*.]

[46] [Old copy, *Heber*.]

[47] The quarto reads—

"And as for poetry, *woods* eloquence."

It is no doubt a misprint for *words' eloquence*, or the eloquence of words.

[48] [Old copy, *source*. The emendation was suggested by Collier.]

[49] [Former edits.—"Envy envieth not outcries unrest." And so the 4to.]

[50] [Old copy, *slight*.]

[51] On this subject Camden tells us: "There was both this summer (1592) and the last so great a drought all England over, that the fields were burnt, and the fountains dried up, and a great many beasts perish'd everywhere for want of water. The Thames likewise, the noblest river of all Britain, and which has as full and large a tide as any in Europe (for it flows twice a day above sixty miles from the mouth of it, and receives an increase from the mixture of many other streams and rivers with it), was, however, sunk to that degree (to the wonder of all men) on the 5th September, that a man might ride over it near London Bridge, so shallow was the channel."

[52] There seems to be no account of this flood, unless it was that which occurred in the autumn of 1579. See Stow's "Annals," edit. 1615, fol. 686, and Collier's "Extr. from Stat. Reg.," ii. 105. There was also a great partial flood in 1571; but it is not mentioned as having affected the Thames.

[53] i.e., Persons who had drunk the Thames water fell ill.

[54] Guesses.

[55] *Had I wist* is *had I thought*; and the words are often met with as the reproof of imprudence. So afterwards again in this play—

"Young heads count to build on *had I wist*."

[56] Skelton wrote a humorous doggerel piece called the "Tunning of Elinor Rummin," which is here alluded to.

[57] This anecdote is from Aulus Gellius, "Noct. Attic.," lib. xvii. c. 9—

"Asiam tunc tenebat imperio rex Darius: is Histiaeus, cum in Persia apud Darium esset, Aristagorae cuiusdam res quasdam occultas nuntiare furtivo scripto volebat: comminiscitur opertum hoc literarum admirandum. Servo suo diu oculos aegros habenti capillum ex capite omni, tanquam medendi gratia, deradit, caputque ejus leve in literarum formas compungit: his literis, quae voluerat, perscripsit: hominem postea, quoad capillus adoleret, domo continuit: ubi id factum est, ire ad Aristagoram jubet; et cum ad eum, inquit, veneris, mandasse me dicito, ut caput tuum, sicut nuper egomet feci, deradat. Servus ut imperatum erat, ad Aristagoram venit, mandatumque domini affert: atque ille id non esse frustra ratus, quod erat mandatum, fecit: ita literae perlatae sunt."

Herodotus "Terps," c. 35, tells the story somewhat differently. The following is Mr Beloe's translation of it:—

"Whilst he was in this perplexity, a messenger arrived from Histiaeus at Susa, who brought with him an express command to revolt, the particulars of which were impressed in legible characters upon his skull. Histiaeus was desirous to communicate his intentions to Aristagoras; but as the ways were strictly guarded, he could devise no other method. He therefore took one of the most faithful of his slaves, and inscribed what we have mentioned upon his skull, being first shaved; he detained the man till his hair was again grown, when he sent him to Miletus, desiring him to be as expeditious as possible: Aristagoras being requested to examine his skull, he discovered the characters which commanded him to commence a revolt. To this measure Histiaeus was induced by the vexation he experienced from his captivity at Susa."

It is pretty evident that Nash took Aulus Gellius as his authority, from the insertion of the circumstance of the defective sight of the servant, which certainly is important, as giving Histiaeus an excuse for shaving his head.

[58] Peter Bales, who is here immortalised, has also received honourable mention in Holinshed's Chronicle. He was supposed by Evelyn to be the inventor of shorthand, but that art was discovered some years earlier by Dr Timothy Bright, who is better known as the author of "A Treatise of Melancholy," which was first published in 1586. Bales was born in 1547, and many of the incidents of his life have come down to us; for while the lives of poets and philosophers are left in obscurity, the important achievements of a writing-master are detailed by contemporaries with laborious accuracy. Mr D'Israeli, in his "Curiosities of Literature," has not scrupled to devote many pages to Bales's contests for superiority with a rival penman of the name of Johnson. Bales was the improver of Dr Bright's system, and, according to his own account in his "Writing Schoolmaster," he was able to keep pace with a moderate speaker. He seems to have been engaged in public life, by acting as secretary where caligraphy was required; and he was at length accused of being concerned in the plot of Lord Essex; but he was afterwards vindicated, and punished his accuser. The greatest performance, that in which his exalted fame may most securely rest, was the writing of the Lord's Prayer, Creed, Decalogue, with two Latin prayers, in the compass of a penny. Brachygraphy had arrived at considerable perfection soon after 1600, and in Webster's "Devil's Law Case," there is a trial scene, in which the following is part of the dialogue—

SANITONELLA. Do you hear, officers?
You must take special care that you let in
No *brachygraphy* men to take notes.

1st OFFICER. No, sir.

SANITONELLA. By no means:
We cannot have a cause of any fame,
But you must have some scurvy pamphlets and lewd ballads
Engendered of it presently.

In Heywood's "Pleasant Dialogues and Dramas," 1637, he complains that some persons by stenography had drawn the plot of his play, and put it into print; but he adds (which certainly does not tell much in favour of the perfection of the art as then practised) that it was "scarce one word true."

[59] In the margin opposite "Sol should have been beholding to the barber, and not to the beard-master," the words "*Imberbis Apollo*, a beardless poet," are inserted in the margin.

[60] From what is said here, and in other parts of the play, we may conclude that it was performed either by the children of St Paul's, of the Queen's Chapel, or of the Revels. Afterwards Will Summer,

addressing the performers, says to them: "Learn of him, you *diminutive urchins*, how to behave yourselves in your vocations," &c. The epilogue is spoken by a little boy, who sits on Will Summer's knee, and who, after it is delivered, is carried out.

[61] [See Keightley's "Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy," p. 411, edit. 1854.]

[62] [In allusion to the proverb.]

[63] *Arre* is meant to indicate the snarling of a dog.

[64] So Machiavelli, in his complete poem, "Dell' Asino d'Oro," makes the Hog, who is maintaining the superiority of the brute creation to man, say of beasts in general—

"Questa san meglio usar color che sanno
Senz' altra disciplina per se stesso
Seguir lor bene et evitar lor danno."—Cap. viii.

[65] [Old copy, *I, and his deep insight*.]

[66] An allusion to Sebastian Brandt's "Ship of Fools," translated by Alexander Barclay.

[67] So in "the second three-man's song," prefixed to Dekker's "Shoemaker's Holiday," 1600, though in one case the bowl was *black*, in the other *brown*—

"*Trowl the bowl*, the jolly *nut-brown* bowl;
And here, kind mate, to thee!
Let's sing a dirge for Saint Hugh's soul,
And drown it merrily_."

It seems probable that this was a harvest-home song, usually sung by reapers in the country: the chorus or burden, "Hooky, hooky," &c. is still heard in some parts of the kingdom, with this variation—

"Hooky, hooky, we have shorn,
And bound what we did reap,
And we have brought the harvest home,
To make bread good and cheap."

Which is an improvement, inasmuch as harvests are not brought home *to town*.

[68] Shakespeare has sufficiently shown this in the character of Francis, the drawer, in "Henry IV. Part I."

[69] [A play on the double meaning of the word].

[70] In the original copy this negative is by some accident thrust into the next line, so as to destroy at once the metre and the meaning. It is still too much in the first line.

[71] This expression must allude to the dress of Harvest, which has many ears of wheat about it in various parts. Will Summer, after Harvest goes out, calls him, on this account, "a bundle of straw," and speaks of his "thatched suit."

[72] A line from a well-known ballad of the time.

[73] [Old copy, *attract*.]

[74] In allusion to the ears of corn, straw, &c., with which he was dressed.

[75] Old copy, *God's*.

[76] The exclamations of a carter to his horse. In "John Bon and Mast. Person" (Hazlitt's "Popular Poetry," iv. 16), it is *haight, ree*.

[77] Old copy, *had*.

[78] i.e., Cheated.

[79] A play upon the similarity of sound between *vetches* and *fetches*. In the old copy, to render it the more obvious, they are spelt alike.

[80] Mr Todd found this word in Baret's "Alveary," 1580, as well as in Cotgrave; but he quotes no authority for the signification he attaches to it—viz., a *lubber*. Nash could have furnished him with a

quotation: it means an idle lazy fellow.

[81] Alluding to the attraction of straw by jet. See this point discussed in Sir Thos. Brown's "Vulgar Errors," b. ii. c. 4.

[82] [Old copy, *I had*.]

[83] [Old copy, *there*.]

[84] This song is quoted, and a long dissertation inserted upon it, in the notes to "Henry IV. Part II." act v. sc. ii., where Silence gives the two last lines in drinking with Falstaff. *To do a man right* was a technical expression in the art of drinking. It was the challenge to pledge. None of the commentators on Shakespeare are able to explain at all satisfactorily what connection there is between *Domingo* and a drinking song. Perhaps we should read Domingo as two words, i.e., *Do* [mine] *Mingo*.

[85] [Old copy, *patinis*.]

[86] Horace, lib. i. car. 37—

"Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero
Pulsanda tellus."

[87] [Old copy, *epi*.]

[88] [A line out of a ballad.]

[89] Micher, in this place, signifies what we now call a flincher: in general, it means a truant—one who lurks and hides himself out of the way. See Mr Gifford's short note on Massinger's "Guardian," act iii. sc. v., and Mr Steevens' long note on Shakespeare's "Henry IV. Part I." act ii. sc. 4.

[90] [Friesland beer. See "Popular Antiquities of Great Britain," vol. ii. p. 259.]

[91] [See Hazlitt's "Proverbs," 1869, p. 271.] Properly *super ungulum*, referring to knocking the jack on the thumb-nail, to show that the drinker had drained it. Ben Jonson uses it in his "Case is Altered:" "I confess Cupid's carouse; he plays *super nagulum* with my liquor of life."—Act iv. sc. 3.—*Collier*.

[92] This was the common cry of the English soldiers in attacking an enemy: we meet with it in Marlowe's "Edward II." where Warwick exclaims—

"Alarum to the fight!
St George for England, and the Baron's right!"

So also in Rowley's "When you see me, you know me," 1605: "King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table that were buried in armour are alive again, crying *St George for England!* and mean shortly to conquer Rome."

[93] From the insertion of *Toy* in this song instead of *Mingo*, as it stands on the entrance of Bacchus and his companions, we are led to infer that the name of the actor who played the part of Will Summer was *Toy*: if not, there is no meaning in the change. Again, at the end of the piece, the epilogue says in express terms: "The great fool Toy hath marred the play," to which Will Summers replies, "Is't true, Jackanapes? Do you serve me so?" &c. Excepting by supposing that there was an actor of this name, it is not very easy to explain the following expressions by Gabriel Harvey, as applied to Greene, in his "Four Letters and Certain Sonnets, 1592," the year when Nash's "Summer's Last Will and Testament" was performed: "They wrong him much with their epitaphs and solemn devices, that entitle him not at the least *the second Toy* of London, the stale of Paul's," &c.

[94] *Nipitaty* seems to have been a cant term for a certain wine. Thus Gabriel Harvey, in "Pierce's Supererogation," 1593, speaks of "the *Nipitaty* of the nappiest grape;" and afterwards he says, "*Nipitaty* will not be tied to a post," in reference to the unconfined tongues of man who drink it.—*Collier*.

[95] A passage quoted in Note 6 to "Gammer Gurton's Needle," from Nash's "Pierce Penniless," is precisely in point, both in explaining the word, and knocking the cup, can, or jack on the thumb-nail, previously performed by Bacchus.

[96] Closely is secretly: a very common application of the word in our old writers. It is found in "Albumazar"—

"I'll entertain him here: meanwhile steal you
Closely into the room;"

and in many other places.

[97] Old copy, *Hope*.

[98] Old copy, *as this, like*.

[99] Old copy, *Will*.

[100] The "shepherd that now sleeps in skies" is Sir Philip Sidney, and the line, with a slight inversion for the sake of the rhyme, is taken from a sonnet in "Astrophel and Stella," appended to the "Arcadia"—

"Because I breathe not love to every one,
Nor do I use set colours for to wear,
Nor nourish special locks of vowed hair,
Nor give each speech a full point of a groan,
The courtly nymphs, acquainted with the moan
Of them who in their lips love's standard bear,
'What he?' say they of me, 'now I dare swear
He cannot love: no, no; let him alone.'
And think so still, so Stella know my mind:
Profess, indeed, I do not Cupid's art;
But you, fair maids, at length this true shall find,
That his right badge is but worn in the heart.
Dumb swans, not chattering pies, do lovers prove:
They love indeed who quake to say they love."

—P. 537, edit. 1598.

It may be worth a remark that the two last lines are quoted with a difference in "England's Parnassus," 1600, p. 191—

"Dumb swans, not chattering pies, do lovers prove;
They love indeed who *dare not say* they love."

In the quarto copy of Nash's play the word *swains* is misprinted for *swans*. The introduction to the passage would have afforded Mr Malone another instance, had he wanted one, that shepherd and poet were used almost as synonymes by Shakespeare's contemporaries.

[101] Perhaps we ought to read *feign* instead of *frame*; but *frame* is very intelligible, and it has therefore not been altered.

[102] The quarto gives this line thus—

"Of secrets more desirous *or* than men,"

which is decidedly an error of the press.

[103] [Old copy, every.]

[104] [Old copy, true hell.]

[105] See act i. sc. 3 of "Macbeth"—

2D WITCH. I'll give thee a wind.

1ST WITCH. Thou art kind.

3D WITCH. And I another.

From the passage in Nash's play, it seems that Irish and Danish witches could sell winds: Macbeth's witches were Scottish.

[106] [Old copy, *party*.]

[107] [Old copy, *Form'd*.]

[108] As usual, Nash has here misquoted, or the printer has omitted a word. Virgil's line is—

"*Fama malum, quo non aliud velocius ullum.*"

—"Aeneid," iv. 174.

Gabriel Harvey, replying in 1597, in his "Trimming of Thomas Nash, Gentleman" (written in the name of Richard Litchfield, the barber-surgeon of Trinity College, Cambridge), also alludes to this commonplace: "The virtuous riches wherewith (as broad-spread fame reporteth) you are endued, though *fama malum* (as saith the poet) which I confirm," &c. Perhaps this was because Nash had previously employed it, or it might be supposed that the barber would have been unacquainted with it.

[109] A soldier of this sort, or one pretending to be a soldier, is a character often met with in our old comedies, such as Lieutenant Maweworm and Ancient Hautboy in "A Mad World, my Masters," Captain Face in "Ram-Alley," &c.

[110] [*Dii minores.*]

[111] Pedlar's French was another name for the cant language used by vagabonds. What pedlars were may be judged from the following description of them in "The Pedlar's Prophecy," a comedy printed in 1595, but obviously written either very early in the reign of Elizabeth, or perhaps even in that of her sister—

"I never knew honest man of this occupation.
But either he was a dycer, a drunkard, a maker of shift,
A picker, or cut-purse, a raiser of simulation,
Or such a one as run away with another man's wife."

[112] [Old copy, *by.*]

[113] *Ink-horn* is a very common epithet of contempt for pedantic and affected expressions. The following, from Churchyard's "Choice," sig. E e 1., sets it in its true light—

"As *Ynkehorne* termes smell of the schoole sometyme."

It went out of use with the disuse of ink-horns. It would be very easy to multiply instances where the word is employed in our old writers. It most frequently occurs in Wilson's "Rhetoric," where is inserted an epistle composed of *ink-horn terms*; "suche a letter as Wylliam Sommer himself could not make a better for that purpose. Some will thinke, and swere it too, that there never was any suche thing written: well, I will not force any man to beleve it, but I will saie thus much, and abyde by it too, the like have been made heretofore, and praised above the moone." It opens thus—

"Ponderying, expending, and revolutyng with myself, your urgent affabilitee, and ingenious capacitee, for mundaine affaires, I cannot but celebrate and extolle your magnificall dexteritee above all other; for how could you have adopted such illustrate, prerogative, and dominicall superioritee, if the fecunditee of your inginie had not been so fertile and wonderfull pregnant?"—Fo. 86. edit. 1553. Wilson elsewhere calls them "*ink-pot terms*."

[114] [The popular idea at that time, and long afterwards, of Machiavelli, arising from a misconception of his drift in "Il Principe." See an article on this subject in Macaulay's "Essays."]

[115] [Old copy, *toucheth*, which may, of course, be right; but the more probable word is that here substituted.]

[116] [The "Ebrietatis Encomium."]

[117] [Perhaps the "Image of Idleness," of which there was an edition in 1581. See Hazlitt's "Handbook," p. 291, and *ibid.* Suppl.]

[118] Nash alludes to a celebrated burlesque poem by Francisco Copetta, entitled (in the old collection of productions of the kind, made in 1548, and many times afterwards reprinted), "Capitolo nel quale si lodano le Noncovelle." Some of the thoughts in Rochester's well-known piece seem taken from it. A notion of the whole may be formed from the following translation of four of the *terze rime*—

"*Nothing* is brother to primaeval matter,
'Bout which philosophers their brains may batter
To find it out, but still their hopes they flatter.

"Its virtue is most wondrously display'd,
For in the Bible, we all know, 'tis said,
God out of *nothing* the creation made.

"Yet *nothing* has nor head, tail, back, nor shoulder,
And tho' than the great *Dixit* it is older,
Its strength is such, that all things first shall moulder.

"The rank of *nothing* we from this may see:
The mighty Roman once declared that he
Caesar or *nothing* was resolv'd to be."

[But after all, had not Nash more probably in his recollection Sir Edward Dyer's "Praise of Nothing," a prose tract printed in 1585?]

[119] [See Hazlitt's "Handbook," v. Fleming.]

[120] [Alluding to the "Grobianus et Grobiana" of Dedekindus.]

[121] Ovid's lines are these—

"Discite, qui sapitis, non quae nos scimus inertes,
Sed trepidas acies, et fera castra sequi."

—"Amorum," lib. iii. el. 8.

[122] The author of "The World's Folly," 1615, uses *squitter-wit* in the same sense that Nash employs *squitter-book*: "The *primum mobile*, which gives motion to these over-turning wheels of wickedness, are those mercenary *squitter-wits*, miscalled poets."

In "The Two Italian Gentlemen," the word *squitterbe-book*, or *squitter-book*, is found, and with precisely the same signification which Nash gives it—

"I would mete with the scalde *squitterbe-booke* for this geare."

[123] His *nown*, instead of his *own*, was not an uncommon corruption. So Udall—"Holde by his yea and nay, be his *nowne* white sonne."

[124] [Old copy, *Fuilverodach*.]

[125] *Regiment* has been so frequently used in the course of these volumes, in the sense of government or rule, that it is hardly worth a note.

[126] This is, of course, spoken ironically, and of old, the expression *good fellow* bore a double signification, which answered the purpose of Will Summer. Thus, in Lord Brooke's "Caelica," sonnet 30

—
"Good fellows, whom men commonly doe call. Those that do live at warre with truth and shame."

Again, in Heywood's "Edward IV. Part I.," sig. E 4—

"KING EDWARD. Why, dost thou not love a *good fellow*?"

"HOBS. No, *good fellows* be *thieves*."

[127] Henry Baker was therefore the name of the actor who performed the part of Vertumnus.

[128] The joke here consists in the similarity of sound between *despatch* and *batch*, Will Summers mistaking, or pretending to mistake, in consequence.

[129] [Old copy, *Sybalites*.]

[130] This is still, as it was formerly, the mode of describing the awkward bowing of the lower class. In the "Death of Robert Earl of Huntington," 1601, when Will Brand, a vulgar assassin, is introduced to the king, the stage direction to the actor in the margin is, "*Make Legs*."

[131] A proverb in [Heywood's "Epigrams," 1562. See Hazlitt's "Proverbs," 1869, p. 270. Old copy, *love me a little*.]

[132] [Old copy, *deny*.]

[133] The meaning of the word *snudge* is easily guessed in this place, but it is completely explained by T. Wilson, in his "Rhetoric," 1553, when he is speaking of a figure he calls *diminution*, or moderating the censure applied to vices by assimilating them to the nearest virtues: thus he would call "a *snudge* or *pynche-penny* a good husband, a thrifty man" (fo. 67). Elsewhere he remarks: "Some riche *snudges*, having great wealth, go with their hose out at heels, their shoes out at toes, and their cotes out at both elbowes; for who can tell if such men are worth a grote when their apparel is so homely, and all their behavior so base?" (fo. 86.) The word is found in Todd's Johnson, where Coles is cited to show that

snudge means "one who hides himself in a house to do mischief." No examples of the employment of the word by any of our writers are subjoined.

[134] Mr Steevens, in a note to "Hamlet," act iv. sc. 5, says that he thinks Shakespeare took the expression of *hugger-mugger* there used from North's Plutarch, but it was in such common use at the time that twenty authors could be easily quoted who employ it: it is found in Ascham, Sir J. Harington, Greene, Nash, Dekker, Tourneur, Ford, &c. In "The Merry Devil of Edmonton" also is the following line —

"But you will to this gear in *hugger-mugger*."

[135] It is not easy to guess why Nash employed this Italian word instead of an English one. *Lento* means lazy, and though an adjective, it is used here substantively; the meaning, of course, is that the idle fellow who has no lands begs.

[136] i.e., Hates. See note to "Merchant of Venice," act v. sc. 1.

[137] [Old copy, *Hipporlatos*. The emendation was suggested by Collier.]

[138] The reader is referred to "Romeo and Juliet," act i. sc. 4, respecting the strewing of rushes on floors instead of carpets. Though nothing be said upon the subject, it is evident that Back-winter makes a resistance before he is forced out, and falls down in the struggle.

[139] [Soiling: a common word in our early writers. Old copy, *wraying*.]

[140] *I pray you, hold the book well*, was doubtless addressed to the prompter, or as he is called in the following passage, from the Induction to Ben Jonson's "Cynthia's Revels," 1601, the *book-holder*: one of the children of Queen Elizabeth's chapel is speaking of the poet. "We are not so officiously befriended by him as to have his presence in the 'tiring house to *prompt* us aloud, stampe at the *booke-holder*, sweare for our properties, curse the poor tire-man, raile the musicke out of tune, and sweat for every veniall trespasse we commit, as some author would."

[141] [Old copy, *cares*. The word *murmuring* is, by an apparent error, repeated in the 4to from the preceding line.]

[142] [Old copy, *ears*.]

[143] Ready.

[144] This line fixes the date when "Summer's Last Will and Testament" was performed very exactly—viz., during Michaelmas Term, 1593; for Camden informs us in his "Annals," that in consequence of the plague, Michaelmas Term, instead of being held in London, as usual, was held at St Albans.

[145] "Deus, Deus, ille, Menalca!
Sis bonus o felixque tuis."
—Virgil "Ecl." v. 64.

[146] These words, which are clearly a stage direction, and which show how mere a child delivered the Epilogue, in the old copy are made part of the text.

[147] Malone originally supposed the plays to be by Heywood, and so treated them. In the last edit. of Shakespeare by Boswell (iii. 99) the mistake is allowed to remain, and in a note also "The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington" is quoted as Heywood's production.

[148] Ritson, in his "Robin Hood," I. li. et seq., gives some quotations from them, as by Munday and Chettle.

[149] Mr Gifford fell into an error (Ben Jonson, vi. 320) in stating that "The Case is Altered" "should have stood at the head of Jonson's works, had chronology only been consulted." In the "Life of Ben Jonson," he refers to Henslowe's papers to prove that "Every Man in his Humour" was written in 1596, and in "The Case is Altered," Ben Jonson expressly quotes Meres' "Palladia Tamia," which was not published until 1598. Nash's "Lenten Stuff," affords evidence that "the witty play of 'The Case is Altered'" was popular in 1599.

[150] On the title-page of his translation of "Palmerin of England," the third part of which bears date in 1602, he is called "one of the Messengers of her Majesty's Chamber;" but how, and at what date he obtained this "small court appointment," we are without information. Perhaps it was given to him as a reward for his services in 1582.

[151] Munday did not always publish under his own name, and according to Ritson, whose authority

has often been quoted on this point, translated "The Orator, written in French by Alexander Silvayn," under the name of Lazarus Piot, from the dedication to which it may be inferred that he had been in the army. "A ballad made by Ant. Munday, of the encouragement of an English soldier to his fellow mates," was licenced to John Charlewood, in 1579.

[152] [See the more copious memoir of Munday by Mr Collier, prefixed to the Shakespeare Society's edit. of his "John-a-Kent," &c., 1851.]

[153] That is, no printed copy has yet been discovered, although it may have passed through the press.

[154] In Henslowe's MSS. this play is also called, "The First part of Cardinal Wolsey."

[155] In 1620 was printed "The World toss'd at Tennis, by Thomas Middleton and William Rowley." Perhaps it is the same play, and Munday had a share in the authorship of it. [This is not at all probable.]

[156] There is no list of characters prefixed to the old copy.

[157] This forms the Induction to the play, which purports to have been written to be performed before Henry VIII., by Sir Thomas Mantle, who performed Robin Hood, by Sir John Eltham, who played the part of Little John, by Skelton, who acted Friar Tuck, by "Little Tracy," as he is called, who supported the character of Maid Marian, and others, whose names are not mentioned. The whole is only supposed to be a rehearsal prior to the representation of the piece before the king, and in the course of it Skelton and Sir John Eltham have various critical and explanatory interlocutions. Skelton, it will be observed, also undertakes the duty of interpreting the otherwise "inexplicable dumb-show." The old copy is not divided into acts and scenes.

[158] [Old copy, *your*.]

[159] [In the old copy this direction is unnecessarily repeated in detail.]

[160] [The direction inserted on p. 107 is repeated in full in the 4to.]

[161] This is in some sort a parody upon the well-known proverb, which is thus given by Ray—

"Many talk of Robin Hood, that never shot in his bow,
And many talk of Little John, that never did him know."

It is also found in Camden's "Remains," by Philpot, 1636, p. 302, though the two lines, obviously connected in sense, are there separated. [See also Hazlitt's "Proverbs," 1869, p. 276.]

[162] This sort of verse, from the frequent use of it made by Skelton in his poems, acquired the name of *Skeltonic* or *Skeltonical*. According to the manner in which the poet's character is drawn, he could not avoid falling into the use of it, even out of its place, in the course of the play; and of this a singular instance is given after the capture and discovery of Ely, when Sir John Eltham, in one of the interlocutions, complains of Skelton that in performing the part of Friar Tuck he fell—

"Into the vein
Of ribble-rabble rhimes Skeltonical."

In 1589 was published a tract with the following curious title—

"A Skeltonical salutation,
Or condigne gratulation,
And just vexation
Of the Spanish nation;
That in bravado
Spent many a crusado
In setting forth an Armado
England to invado."

The whole piece is in this kind of verse. A copy of it is in the British Museum.

Puttenham, speaking of poetry of this sort, says: "Such were the rimes of Skelton (usurping the name of Poet Laureat), being in deede but a rude, rayling rimer, and all his doings ridiculous; he used both short distances and short measures, pleasing onely to the popular eare; in our courtly maker we banish them utterly."—*Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, p. 69.

[163] Matilda is here, and elsewhere, called Marian, before in fact she takes that name; and after she

has assumed it, in the course of the play she is frequently called Matilda.

[164] [Old copy, *Into*.]

[165] Jest is used in the same sense in "The Spanish Tragedy," act i., where the king exclaims—

"But where is old Hieronimo, our marshal?
He promis'd us, in honour of our guest,
To grace our banquet with some pompous *jest*."

Dr Farmer, in reference to the line in "Richard II., act i. sc. 3—

"As gentle and as jocund as to *jest*,"

quotes the above passage from "The Spanish Tragedy" to show that to *jest*, "in old language, means to play a part in a mask."

[166] [Old copy, *my*.]

[167] [Old copy, *place*.]

[168] Ritson has the following note upon this sign: "That is, the inn so called, upon Ludgate Hill. The modern sign, which, however, seems to have been the same 200 years ago, is *a bell and a wild man*; but the original is supposed to have been *a beautiful Indian*, and the inscription, *La belle Sauvage*. Some, indeed, assert that the inn once belonged to a Lady *Arabella Sauvage*; and others that its name originally, the *belle and Sauvage*, arose (like the *George and Blue Boar*) from the junction of two inns with those respective signs. *Non nostrum est tantas componere lites*." "Robin Hood," I. p. liv.

[169] [Old copy, *meant*.]

[170] Little John's *exit* is marked here in the old copy, but it does not take place till afterwards: he first whispers Marian, as we are told immediately, *John* in the original standing for Little John.

[171] i.e., A collection or company, and not, as we now use the word, a *kind* "of fawning sycophants."

[172] i.e., Made a Justice of Peace of him, entitling him to the style of *Worship*.

[173] [Old copy, *ran*.]

[174] i.e., "I shall *be even* with you." So Pisaro in Haughton's "Englishmen for my Money," says of his three daughters—

"Well, I shall find a tune *to meet* with them."—Sig. E 2.

[175] Alluding to the challenges of the officers who are aiding and assisting the Sheriff.

[176] Paris Garden (or as it is printed in the old copy, *Parish* Garden), was a place where bears were baited and other animals kept. Curtal was a common term for a small horse, and that which Banks owned, and which acquired so much celebrity for its sagaciousness, is so called by Webster—

"And some there are
Will keep a *curtal* to show juggling tricks,
And give out 'tis a spirit."

—"Vittoria Corombona," [Webster's Works, by Hazlitt, ii. 47.]

Sib is related to; and perhaps *the ape's only least at Paris Garden*, may apply to Banks's pony. Dekker, in his "Villanies Discovered," 1620, mentions in terms "Bankes his Curtal."

[177] In the course of the play John is sometimes called *Earl* John, and sometimes *Prince* John, as it seems, indifferently.

[178] [Old copy, *deceive*.]

[179] It must be recollected that the Queen and Marian have exchanged dresses.

[180] [Old copy, *must*.]

[181] [Old copy, *sovereign's mother, queen*.]

[182] [Old copy, *cankers*]

[183] [Old copy, *thrust*.]

[184] *Haught* is frequently used for *haughty*, when the poet wants to abridge it of a syllable: thus Shakespeare, in "Richard III." act ii. sc. 3—

"And the queen's sons and brothers *haught* and proud."

He has also "the *haught* Northumberland" and "the *haught* Protector."

Kyd in "Cornelia," act iv., also has this line—

"Pompey, the second Mars, whose *haught* renown."

[185] [Old copy, *Ah, my good Lord, for, etc.*]

[186] i.e., Shall not *separate* us till we die. See Gifford's note to "The Renegado."—Massinger's Works, ii. 136.

[187] *Palliard* is to be found in Dryden's "Hind and Panther:" *palliardize* is not in very common use among our old writers. Dekker, in his "Bellman of London," 1616, sig. D 2, gives a description of a *Palliard*. Tuck's exclamation looks as if it were quoted.

[188] In the old copy, Scarlet and Scathlock are also mentioned as entering at this juncture, but they were on the stage before.

[189] The *mistake* to which Warman alludes is, that Friar Tuck takes part with Robin Hood, instead of assisting the Sheriff against him.

[190] This incident, with some variations, is related in the old ballad of "Robin Hood rescuing the Widow's *three* sons from the Sheriff, when going to be executed." See Ritson's "Robin Hood," ii. 151.

[191] The old copy has a blank here; but whether it was so in the original MS., whether a line has dropped out by accident, or whether it was meant that Much should be suddenly interrupted by Robin Hood, must be matter of conjecture.

[192] So printed in the old copy, as if part of some poetical narrative.

[193] i.e., *Gang*. So written by Milton, Jonson, and many of our best authors.

[194] [Old copy, *all your*.]

[195] [Old copy, *never wife*.]

[196] [Old copy, *in a loath'd*.]

[197] [Own, from the Latin *proprius*.]

[198] *To lie at the ward* was, and is still, a term in fencing; thus Fairfax, translating the fight between Tancred and Argantes in the 6th book of Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered," says—

"Close *at his surest ward* each champion *lieth*."

—"Godfrey of Bulloigne," 1600.

[199] The *exit* of Salisbury is not marked, but it of course takes place here.

[200] It seems singular that the author of this play should confound two such persons as the Shoemaker of Bradford, who made all comers "vail their staves," and George-a-Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield; yet such is the case in the text. The exploits of both are celebrated in the play of "The Pinner of Wakefield" (in Dyce's editions of Greene's Works), which seems to have been popular. Nevertheless Henslowe in his MSS. speaks of George-a-Greene as one dramatic piece, and of "The Pinner of Wakefield" as another, as if they were two distinct heroes. See "Malone's Shakespeare," by Boswell, iii. 300. Munday also makes Scathlock and Scarlet two separate persons. [Munday does not confound the Pinder of Wakefield with the Bradford hero, for he expressly distinguishes between them; but he errs in giving the latter the name of George-a-Greene.]

[201] *To record*, as applied to birds, is synonymous to the verb to *sing*: thus in "The Spanish Tragedy," act ii.—

"Hark, madam, how the *birds record* by night."

Shakespeare so employs the word in his "Two Gentlemen of Verona," act v. sc. 4, and in the notes upon the passage more than sufficient instances are collected.

[202] The 4to reads "the lawless *Renner*" [the *n* being misprinted for *u*].

[203] *Mort* was the old cant word for a *wench*, and was synonymous with *doxy*, which is still sometimes in use. An explanation, for such as require it, may be found in Dekker's "Bellman of London," ed. 1616, sig. N.

[204] Mr Todd, in his "Dictionary," thus explains the word *belive*: "Speedily, quickly; it is still common in Westmoreland for *presently*, which sense, implying a little delay, like our expression of *by and by*, was formerly the general acceptation of the word." Spenser uses it not unfrequently—

"Perdie, Sir Knight," said then the enchanter *b'live*,
"That shall I shortly purchase to your bond."

—"Faerie Queene," b. ii. c. iii. st. 18.

[205] *Manchet* is fine white bread: *panis candidior et purior*.

[206] It seems agreed by the commentators on the word *proface* (which Shakespeare uses in "Henry IV. Part II.," act v. sc. 3), that it means in fact what Robin Hood has already said: "Much good may it do you." It is disputed whether it be derived from the French or the Italian; Mr Todd gives *prouface* as the etymology, and Malone *pro vi faccia*, but in fact they are one and the same. It occurs in "The Widow's Tears," act iv. sc. 1, where Ero is eating and drinking in the tomb. [Compare Dyce's "Shakespeare," 1868, Gloss, in v.]

[207] The 4to terms them *poting* sticks, and so sometimes they were called, instead of *poking* sticks. They were used to plait and set ruffs.

[208] The old copy here repeats, in part, the preceding stage direction, viz., *Enter Friar like a pedlar, and Jenny*, which must be an error, as they are already on the stage; in fact, only Sir Doncaster and his armed followers enter. The *exit* of Robin Hood, with Marian and Fitzwater, is not noticed.

[209] i.e., Thrive.

[210] The rhyme is made out by reading *certainly*, but the old copy, [which is printed as prose.] has it *certain*.

[211] This stage direction, like many others, is not marked.

[212] So in "Henry VI. Part III." act iii. sc. 3: "Did I *impale* him with the regal crown?" This use of the word is common.

[213] [Old copy, *light*.]

[214] See Mr Steevens' note on "Henry VIII.," act v. sc. 3.

[215] These two lines clearly belong to the Prior, though the old copy omits his name before them.

[216] i.e., Vengeance.

[217] [Old copy, *Souldans*.]

[218] In the old copy *soldiour's*.

[219] See Mr Gifford's note (6) to "The Maid of Honour," Massinger's Works, iii. 47, for an explanation of the origin and use of this expression of contempt. See also Malone's remarks upon the passage in "Twelfth Night," act iii. sc. 4: "He is a knight dubb'd with an unhatch'd rapier and on *carpet* consideration."

[220] On the standard by which Leicester was attended on his entrance, no doubt the crest of that family, viz., a bear and ragged staff, was represented. To this the queen refers when she exclaims—

"Were this *bear* loose, how he would tear our maws."

[221] [Old copy, *Bear, thou hast*. Leicester was accompanied by his ancient, whose entrance is marked above.]

[222] *Quite* is frequently used for *requite*: as in Massinger's "Old Law," act ii. sc. 2—

"In troth, Eugenia, I have cause to weep too;
But when I visit, I come comfortably,
And look to be so *quited*."

[223] Although the old copy mentions no more at the beginning of this interview than *Enter Leicester, drum and ancient*, yet according to this speech he must either have been more numerously attended, or some of his followers came upon the stage during his dispute with the king and queen.

[224] The return of Leicester and Richmond, after their *exit* just before, is not mentioned in the 4to.

[225] [Old copy, *Come off, off.*]

[226] *Guests* were often formerly spelt *guess*, whether it were or were not necessary for the rhyme.

[227] The stage direction in the original is only *Enter Robin*.

[228] This must have been spoken aside to Robin Hood.

[229] [Old copy, *soon.*]

[230] [This passage appears to point to some antecedent drama not at present known.]

[231] The 4to has it *Damn'd Judaism*, but the allusion is to the treachery of Judas. The jailer of Nottingham afterwards calls Warman Judas.

[232] [Old copy, *him.*]

[233] In the old copy this is made a part of what Warman speaks, which is a mistake, as is evident from the context.

[234] Her *exit* and re-entrance are not marked in the old copy. Perhaps she only speaks from a window.

[235] ["A term of contempt," says Halliwell in v.; but does it not refer strictly to a card-sharper?]

[236] He blunders. Of course he means "when tidings came to his ears." He does not make much better of his prose.

[237] Current.

[238] This is from the old ballad, "The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield, with Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John," with variations—

"At Michaelmas next my cov'nant comes out
When every man gathers his fee;
Then I'll take my blue blade all in my hand,
And plod to the greenwood with thee."

—Ritson's "Robin Hood," ii. 18.

[239] It is evident that Friar Tuck here gives John a sword.

[240] [Light, active. See Nares, edit. 1859, in v.]

[241] The origin of *amort* is French, and sometimes it is written *Tout-a-la-mort*, as in "The Contention between Liberality and Prodigality," 1602, sig. B, as pointed out in a note to "Ram Alley."

[242] [Query, best hanged? He refers to the ex-sheriff.]

[243] *Defy* is here used in the sense of *refuse*, which was not uncommon: thus in the "Death of Robert Earl of Huntington," we have this passage, "Or, as I said, for ever I *defy* your company." In the "Four 'Prentices of London," act i. sc. 1, the old Earl of Boulogne says—

"Vain pleasures I abhor, all things *defy*,
That teach not to despair, or how to die."

Other instances are collected in a note to the words, "I do *defy* thy conjuration," from "Romeo and Juliet," act v. sc. 3.

[244] Their entrance is not marked in the original.

[245] [Old copy, *sweet.*]

[246] It will be seen from the introduction to this play, that Munday and others, according to Henslowe, wrote a separate play under the title of "The Funeral of Richard Cordelion." [The latter drama was not written till some months after this and the ensuing piece, and was intended as a sort of sequel to the plays on the history of Robin Hood.]

[247] Misprinted *Dumwod* in the old copy.

[248] Two lines in the Epilogue might be quoted to show that only one author was concerned in it—

"Thus is Matilda's story shown in act,
And rough-hewn out by *an* uncunning hand."

But probably the assertion is not to be taken strictly; or if it be, it will not prove that Chettle had no hand, earlier or later, in the authorship. Mr Gifford in his Introduction to Ford's Works, vol. i. xvi., remarks very truly, that we are not to suppose from the combination of names of authors "that they were always simultaneously employed in the production of the same play;" and Munday, who was perhaps an elder poet than Chettle, may have himself originally written both parts of "The Earl of Huntington," the connection of Chettle with them being subsequent, in making alterations or adapting them to the prevailing taste.

[249] See "The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington," *Introd.* pp. 95, 96, ante.

[250] See "Restituta," ii. 367 (note).

[251] "Bibl. Poet." 159. [But see Hazlitt's "Handbook," v. C. II.]

[252] [Henslowe's "Diary," 1845, p. 147. See also Collier's "Memoirs of the Actors in Shakespeare's Plays," p. 111.]

[253] Introduction to "Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington," pp. 101, 102.

[254] With the letters R.A. on the title-page. [But surely it is very doubtful whether the play printed in 1615 (and again in 1663) is the same as that mentioned by Henslowe.]

[255] [Unless it be the drama printed in 1604 under the title of the "Wit of a Woman."]

[256] [Possibly a revival, with alterations, of Edwardes' play.]

[257] There is no list of characters prefixed to the old 4to.

[258] i.e., Skelton, who is supposed by the author to have acted the part of Friar Tuck, and who, when first he comes on the stage, is without his gown and hood.

[259] [Old copy, *Hurt*. The two are inside plotting together. See *infra*.]

[260] [The Queen Mother.]

[261] *Wight* means *active*, or (sometimes) *clever*. It may be matter of conjecture whether "*white* boy," "*white* poet," "*white* villain," &c., so often found in old dramatists, have not this origin.

[262] It is very obvious that Much begins his answer at "Cry ye mercy, Master King," but his name is omitted in the old 4to.

[263] The old copy adds here *Exeunt*, and a new scene is marked; but this is a mistake, as Robin Hood just afterwards converses with the Prior, Sir Doncaster, and Warman, without any new entrance on their part. They retire to the back of the stage.

[264] Warman is not mentioned, but we find him on the stage just afterwards, and he probably enters with Robin Hood. The entrance of Friar Tuck is also omitted.

[265] i.e., Winding his horn.

[266] The 4to, reads "Pity of *mind*, thine," &c.

[267] See the last scene of the first part of this play.

[268] The 4to merely reads *exit*.

[269] "And yet more medicinal is it than that *Moly*
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave."
—Milton's "Comus."

There are several kinds of moly, and one of them distinguished among horticulturists as Homer's moly. Sir T. Brown thus quaintly renders two lines in the "Odyssey" relating to it—

"The gods it *Moly* call whose root to dig away
Is dangerous unto man, but gods they all things may."

[270] [Displeased.]

[271] [Old copy, *whindling*. See Halliwell, *v. Whimlen*. There is also *windilling*; but the word is one of those terms of contempt used by early writers rather loosely.]

[272] These two lines are taken, with a slight change, from the ballad of "The Jolly Finder of Wakefield." See Ritson's "Robin Hood," ii. 16—

"In Wakefield there lives a jolly pinder,
In Wakefield all on a green," &c.

[273] [Old copy, *monuments*.]

[274] Ritson ("Notes and Illustrations to Robin Hood," i. 62) observes correctly that Fitzwater confounds one man with another, and that Harold Harefoot was the son and successor of Canute the Great.

[275] [Old copy, *them*.]

[276] "*In a trice*" is the usual expression. See a variety of instances collected by Mr Todd in his Dictionary, but none of them have it "*with a trice*," as in this place. The old copy prints the ordinary abbreviation for *with*, which may have been misread by the printer. [*With* is no doubt wrong, and has been altered.]

[277] The scenes are marked, though incorrectly, in the old copy thus far; but the rest of the play is only divided by the *exits* or entrances of the characters.

[278] Jenny, a country wench, uses the old word *straw'd*; but when the author speaks afterwards in the stage direction, he describes Marian as "*strewing* flowers." Shakespeare has *o'er-strawed* in "Venus and Adonis," perhaps for the sake of the rhyme.

[279] [i.e., Over.]

[280] [Old copy, *of*.]

[281] Formerly considered an antidote for poison. Sir Thomas Brown was not prepared to contradict it: he says, that "Lapis Lasuli hath in it a purgative faculty, we know: that *Bezoar is antidotal*, Lapis Judaicus diuretical, Coral antipileptical, we will not deny."—"Vulgar Errors," edit. 1658, p. 104. He also (p. 205) calls it the *Bezoar nut*, "for, being broken, it discovereth a kernel of a leguminous smell and taste, bitter, like a lupine, and will swell and sprout if set in the ground." Harts-horn shavings were also considered a preservative against poison.

[282] [From what follows presently it may be inferred that the king temporarily retires, although his exit or withdrawal is not marked.]

[283] The old word for *convent*: Covent-Garden, therefore, is still properly called.

[284] The *grate* of a vintner was no doubt what is often termed in old writers the *red lattice*, *lettice*, or *chequers*, painted at the doors of vintners, and still preserved at almost every public-house. See note 24 to "The Miseries of Enforced Marriage."

[285] The 4to reads—

"In the highway
That joineth to the *power*."

[286] Robin Hood advises his uncle to insist upon his plea of *privilegium clericale*, or benefit of clergy

—
"Stand to your clergy, uncle; save your life."

"Originally the law was held that no man should be admitted to the privilege of clergy, but such as had the *habitum et tonsuram clericalem*. But in process of time a much wider and more comprehensive criterion was established; every one that could read (a mark of great learning in those days of

ignorance and her sister superstition) being accounted a clerk or *clericus*, and allowed the benefit of clerkship, though neither initiated in holy orders, nor trimmed with the clerical tonsure."—Blackstone's "Com.," iv. b. iv, ch. 28. We have already seen that the king and nobles in this play called in the aid of Friar Tuck to read the inscription on the stag's collar, though the king could ascertain that it was in Saxon characters.

[287] This account of the death of Robin Hood varies from all the popular narratives and ballads. The MS. Sloan, 715, nu. 7, f. 157, agrees with the ballad in Ritson, ii. 183, that he was treacherously bled to death by the Prioress of Kirksley.

[288] The first act has already occupied too much space, but it was difficult to divide it: in fact, as Friar Tuck says, it is a "short play," complete in itself. What follows is an induction to the rest of the story, the Friar continuing on the stage after the others have gone out.

[289] The 4to. reads thus—

"Apollo's *master doone* I invoke,"

but probably we ought to read—

"Apollo's *masterdom* I invoke,"

and the text has been altered accordingly. *Masterdom* means *power, rule*; to invoke Apollo's masterdom is therefore to invoke Apollo's power to assist the Friar in his undertaking.

[290] *Enter in black* is the whole of the stage direction, and those who enter are afterwards designated by the letters *Cho*. Perhaps the principal performers arrive attired in black, and are mentioned as *Chorus*, one speaking for the rest. *Cho*. may, however, be a misprint for *Chester*, who was sent in to "attire him."

[291] [In the new edit. of Nares the present passage is cited for *ill-part*, which is queried to mean *ill-conditioned*. Perhaps it is equivalent to *malapert*.]

[292] [Old copy, *de Brun*.] "John married Isabel, the daughter and heiress of the Earl of Angoulesme, who was before affianced to *Hugh le Brun*, Earl of March (a peer of great estate and excellence in France), by the consent of King Richard, in whose custody she then was." —Daniel's "History of England."

[293] [Old copy, *lose*.]

[294] *Led by the F.K. and L.* means, as afterwards appears, the *French king*, and *Lord Hugh le Brun*, Earl of North March.

[295] The entrance of Bonville is omitted in the 4to.

[296] These *Lords*, as we afterwards find, are old Aubrey de Vere, Hubert, and Mowbray.

[297] [Old copy, *troops*.]

[298] [Old copy, *triumphs*.]

[299] Lodge was in the habit of using the adjective for the substantive, especially *fair* for *fairness*; one example is enough—

"Some, well I wot, and of that sum full many,
Wisht or my *faire* or their desire were lesse."
—*Scilla's Metamorphosis*, 1589.

See also note to "The Wounds of Civil War" (vol. vii. p. 118).

Shakespeare may be cited in many places besides the following—

"My decayed *fair*
A sunny look of his would soon repair."
—*Comedy of Errors*, act ii. sc. 1.

See Steevens's note on the above passage.

[300] The King calls him in the old copy *good Oxford*, but Oxford is not present, and from what follows we see that the command was given to Salisbury. The same mistake is again made by Hubert in this scene. Salisbury must be pronounced *Sal'sb'ry*.

[301] [Accepted.]

[302] [Old copy, *muddy*.]

[303] [A very unusual phrase, which seems to be used here in the sense of *masculine passions or properties*.]

[304] In the old copy it stands thus—

"Yes, but I do: I think not Isabel, Lord,
The worse for any writing of Bruness."

[In the MS. both Lord and Le were probably abbreviated into L., and hence the misprint, as well as misplacement, in the first line.]

[305] [i.e., You may count on her wealth as yours. We now say to build *on*, but to build *of* was formerly not unusual.]

[306] See the notes of Dr Johnson, Steevens, and other commentators on the words in the "Comedy of Errors," act ii. sc. 1—"Poor I am but his *stale*." [See also Dyce's "Shakespeare Glossary," 1868, in v.]

[307] The stage directions are often given very confusedly, and (taken by themselves) unintelligibly, in the old copy, of which this instance may serve as a specimen: it stands thus in the 4to—"Enter Fitzwater and his son Bruce, and call forth his daughter."

[308] [A feeder of the Wye. Lewis's "Book of English Rivers," 1855, p. 212.]

[309] Alluding most likely to the "Andria" of Terence, which had been translated [thrice] before this play was acted; the first time [in 1497, again about 1510, and the third time] by Maurice Kiffin in 1588. [The former two versions were anonymous. See Hazlitt's "Handbook," p. 605.]

[310] *Holidom* or *halidom*, according to Minsheu (Dict. 1617), is "an old word used by old country-women, by manner of swearing by my *halidome*; of the Saxon word *haligdome*, *ex halig, sanctum*, and *dome, dominium aut judicium*." Shakespeare puts it into the mouth of the host in the "Two Gentlemen of Verona," act iv. sc. 2.

[311] The entrance of Richmond clearly takes place here, but in the 4to he is said to come in with Leicester.

[312] [See Hazlitt's "Proverbs," p. 22.]

[313] [In the 4to and former editions this and the following nine words are given to Richmond.]

[314] Meaning that her father Fitzwater [takes her, she having declined to pair off with the king.] The whole account of the mask is confused in the old copy, and it is not easy to make it much more intelligible in the reprint.

[315] [The proverb is: "There are more maids than Malkin." See Hazlitt's "Proverbs," p. 392.]

[316] [Old copy, *Had*.]

[317] This line will remind the reader of Shakespeare's "multitudinous seas incarnardine," in "Macbeth," act ii. sc. 1.

[318] This answer unquestionably belongs to the king, and is not, as the 4to gives it, a part of what Leicester says. It opens with an allusion to the crest of Leicester, similar to that noticed in the "Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington."

[319] [Old copy, *by God's*.]

[320] [Old copy, *armed men*.]

[321] [Old copy, *shall*.]

[322] [An allusion to the proverb.]

[323] This and other passages refer probably to the old play of "King John," printed in 1591, [or to Shakespeare's own play which, though not printed till 1623, must have been familiar to the public, and more especially to dramatic authors.]

[324] In this line; in the old copy, *Salisbury* is made to call himself *Oxford*.

[325] The 4to reads *Enter or above Hugh, Winchester. Enter or above* means, that they may either enter on the stage, or stand above on the battlements, as may suit the theatre. With regard to the names *Hugh* and *Winchester*, they are both wrong; they ought to be *Hubert* and *Chester*, who have been left by the king to *keep good watch*. When, too, afterwards Chester asks—

"What, Richmond, will you prove a runaway?"—

the answer in the old copy is—

"From thee, good *Winchester*? now, the Lord defend!"

It ought to be—

"From thee, good *Chester*? now the Lord defend!"

And it is clear that the measure requires it. The names throughout are very incorrectly given, and probably the printer composed from a copy in which some alterations had been made in the *dramatis personae*, but incompletely. Hence the perpetual confusion of *Salisbury* and *Oxford*.

[326] The scene changes from the outside to the inside of the castle.

[327] [Without muscle, though muscle and bristle are strictly distinct.]

[328] To *tire* is a term in falconry: from the Fr. *tirer*, in reference to birds of prey tearing what they take to pieces.

[329] The 4to prints *Ilinus*.

[330] [Old copy, *a deed*.]

[331] The 4to has it *Elinor*, but it ought to be *Isabel*. The previous entrance of the Queen and Matilda is not marked.

[332] [*Fairness*, in which sense the word has already occurred in this piece.]

[333] [i.e., Champion.]

[334] Matilda's name is omitted in the old copy, but the errors of this kind are too numerous to be always pointed out.

[335] [Old copy, *Triumvirates*.]

[336] Nothing can more clearly show the desperate confusion of names in this play than this line, which in the 4to stands—

"It's Lord *Hugh Burgh* alone: *Hughberr*, what newes?"

In many places Hubert is only called *Hugh*.

[337] Company or collection.

[338] *Head of hungry wolves* is the reading of the original copy: a "*herd*" of hungry wolves would scarcely be proper, but it may have been so written. [*Head* may be right, and we have not altered it, as the word is occasionally used to signify a gathering or force.]

[339] In the old copy the four following lines are given to King John.

[340] [Old copy, *warres*.]

[341] [Escutcheon.]

[342] [Abided.]

[343] [Old copy, *prepare*.]

[344] This word is found in "Henry VI., Part II." act v. sc. 1, where young Clifford applies it to Richard. Malone observes in a note, that, according to Bullokar's "English Expositor," 1616, *stugmatick* originally and properly signified "a person who has been *branded* with a hot iron for some crime." The name of the man to whom Hubert here applies the word, is *Brand*.

Webster, in his "Vittoria Corombona," applies the term metaphorically:—

"The god of melancholy turn thy gall to poison,
And let the *stigmatic* wrinkles in thy face.
Like to the boisterous wares in a rough tide,
One still overtake another."

[345] [Are faulty.]

[346] [Old copy, *seld.*]

[347] [The printer has made havoc with the sense here, which can only be guessed at from the context. Perhaps for *go* we should read *God*, in allusion to the woman's protestations. Yet even then the passage reads but lamely.]

[348] [*These* may be right; but perhaps the author wrote *his*. By his—i.e., God's—nails, is a very common oath.]

[349] [i.e., Mete or measure out a reward to her.]

[350] [To swear by the fingers, or the *ten commandments*, as they were often called, was a frequent oath.]

[351] [Old copy, *lamback'd.*]

[352] The 4to says, *between the monk and the nun.*

[353] [Query, *mother Bawd*; or is some celebrated procuress of the time when this play was written and acted meant here?]

[354] To swear by the cross of the sword was a very common practice, and many instances are to be found in D.O.P. See also notes to "Hamlet," act i. sc. 5.

[355] i.e., Secretly, a very common application of the word in our old writers.

[356] [In allusion to the proverb, "Maids say nay, and take."]

[357] Here, according to what follows, Brand steps forward and addresses Matilda. Hitherto he has spoken *aside*.

[358] See Mr Gilford's note on the words *rouse* and *carouse* in his Massinger, i. 239. It would perhaps be difficult, and certainly needless, to add anything to it.

[359] "Nor I to stir before I see the end,"

belongs to the queen, unquestionably, but the 4to gives it to the Abbess, who has already gone out.

[360] [Labour, pain.]

[361] The reading of the old copy is—

"Oh *pity*, *mourning* sight! age pitiless!"

Pity-moving in a common epithet, and we find it afterwards in this play used by young Bruce—

"My tears, my prayers, my *pity-moving* moans."

[362] [Old copy, *wrath.*]

[363] This servant entered probably just before Oxford's question, but his entrance is not marked.

[364] To *pash*, signifies to crush or dash to pieces. So in the "Virgin Martyr," act ii. sc. 2—

"With Jove's artillery, shot down at once,
To *pash* your gods in pieces."

See Mr Gifford's note upon this passage, and Reed's note on the same word in "Troilus and Cressida," act ii. sc. 3.

[365] The 4^o has it—

"*May* an example of it, honest friends;"

but *make* is certainly the true reading.

[366] *Bannings* are *cursings*. Hundreds of examples might be added to those collected by Steevens in a note to "King Lear," act ii. sc. 3. It is a singular coincidence that *ban*, signifying a *curse*, and *ban*, a public notice of *marriage*, should have the same origin.

[367] The words, *at one door*, are necessary to make the stage direction intelligible, but they are not found in the original.

[368] [Here used apparently in the unusual sense of *scene*.]

[369] This line is quoted by Steevens in a note to "Measure for Measure," act v. sc. 1, to prove that the meaning of *refel* is *refute*.

[370] Sir William Blunt's entrance is not marked in the old copy.

[371] To *blin* is to *cease*, and in this sense it is met with in Spenser and other poets. Mr Todd informs us that it is still in use in the north of England. Ben Jonson, in his "Sad Shepherd," converts the verb into a substantive, "withouten *blin*."

[372] *Powder'd* is the old word for salted: it is in this sense Shakespeare makes Falstaff use it, when he says: "If you embowel me to-day, I'll give you leave to *powder* me and eat me to-morrow."

[373] i.e., *l'ouvert* or opening—

"Ne lightned was with window nor with *lover*,
But with continuall candle-light."

—Spenser's "Faerie Queene," b. vi. c. x.

[374] The sense is incomplete here: perhaps a line has been lost, or Leicester suddenly recollects that Bruce has possession of Windsor Castle, and warns him not to relinquish it.

[375] An abridgment of *Hubert*, apparently for the sake of the metre.

[376] [i.e., Spleen, indignation.]

[377] In this line there is, in the old copy, a curious and obvious misprint: it stands in the 4^o—

"She was indeed of *London* the honour once."

Instead of—

"She was indeed of *love* the honour once."

The king is translating and commenting on the motto on the pendant, as is quite evident from the manner in which he proceeds. Besides, the measure requires a word of one syllable.

[378] [Old copy, *in life*.]

[379] The lords again *stand in council* as before, while the king fills up the interval to the audience.

[380] This is probably addressed to the king, with whom Oxford has been talking.

[381] [Pox].

[382] [Old copy, *had*.]

[383] [Old copy, *hath*.]

[384] [The inn, mentioned in the former scene, must be supposed to remain, as Tenacity presently goes up to it, and knocks at the gate.]

[385] [Fired?]

[386] [Old copy, *than*.]

[387] [Wretches.]

[388] [Old copy, *Yoo*.]

[389] [Old copy. *That*.]

[390] [Dance.]

[391] [Then.]

[392] [Paltrily.]

[393] A term of contempt for a woman. The hostess has entered the kitchen of the inn in the cook's absence, and finds matters not quite satisfactory.

[394] Old copy adds, *and Dandelyne*; but it is evident from the close of the preceding scene, that the Hostess does not quit the stage.

[395] See Halliwell in v.; but the explanation there given hardly suits the present context, where the word appears to be used in the sense of *a term, a period*.

[396] Apparently part of the song; its meaning is not clear.

[397] [Reward].

[398] [Pet.]

[399] [Welcome.]

[400] [This is one of the elegant terms which are exchanged between Gammer Gurton and Mother Chat.]

[401] [Although Tom is marked in the old copy as entering at the commencement of the scene, he does not really come in till now.]

[402] [Old copy adds, *and Fortune*; but Fortune does not enter now: she is in her castle, and presently calls to Vanity from a window.]

[403] [Although it appears from what immediately follows that Vanity had assembled Fortune's vassals, we are not necessarily to conclude that the latter enter here. They would rather wait outside.]

[404] [Bull-calf.]

[405] [Orig. reads, *fat fatox*.]

[406] [This seems merely a word coined for the sake of the rhyme.]

[407] [Of courtesy.]

[408] [Swoon.]

[409] [Old copy, *net*.]

[410] [Old copy, *to employ*.]

[411] [In the old copy this direction is given (very imperfectly) thus: *The constables make hue and cry*.]

[412] [In the old copy this passage is thus exhibited—

HOST. Where dwell these constables?

CON. Why? what's the matter, friend, I pray?

HOST. Why, thieves, man, I tell thee, come away.
Thieves, i' faith, wife, my scull, my Iacke, my browne bill.

CON. Come away quickly.

HOST. Dick, Tom, Will, ye hoorsons, make ye all ready and haste.
But let me heare, how stands the case? [*A pace after*.]

Where the confusion in the distribution of the speeches seems tolerably evident. The constable made hue and cry, in order to raise the country, and make a levy of such persons as were bound to assist.

[413] [Old copy, *to*.]

[414] [Old copy, *fasting*.]

[415] [Old copy, *Yes*.]

[416] [Petition.]

[417] [Then, probably, as it certainly was later on, a favourite haunt of footpads.]

[418] [Pancras.]

[419] [No edition except that of 1662 has yet come to light.]

[420] Nobody who reads this play can doubt that it is much older than 1662, the date borne by the earliest known edition of it. It has every indication of antiquity, and the title not the least of these. "Grim, the Collier of Croydon," is a person who plays a prominent character in the humorous portion of Edwards's "Damon and Pithias," which was printed in 1571, and acted several years earlier. The Grim of the present play is obviously the same person as the Grim of "Damon and Pithias," and in both he is said to be "Collier for the king's own Majesty's mouth." Chetwood may therefore be right when he states that it was printed in 1599; but perhaps that was not the first edition, and the play was probably acted before "Damon and Pithias" had gone quite out of memory. In the office-book of the Master of the Revels, under date of 1576, we find a dramatic entertainment entered, called "The Historie of the Colyer," acted by the Earl of Leicester's men; but it was doubtless Ulpian Fulwell's "Like will to Like, quod the Devil to the Colier," printed in 1568. The structure, phraseology, versification, and language of "Grim, the Collier of Croydon," are sufficient to show that it was written before 1600: another instance to prove how much the arrangement of the plays made by Mr Reed was calculated to mislead. Some slight separate proofs of the age of this piece are pointed out in the new notes; but the general evidence is much more convincing. The versification is interlarded with rhymes like nearly all our earlier plays, and the blank verse is such as was written before Marlowe's improvements had generally been adopted. When the play was reprinted in 1662, some parts of it were perhaps a little modernised. The introduction of Malbecco and Paridell into it, from Spenser's "Faerie Queene," may be some guide as to the period when the comedy was first produced.—*Collier*. [The play has now, for the first time, been placed in its true chronological rank.]

[421] See note to "Gammer Gurton's Needle" [iii. 245].

[422] The story of this play is taken in part from Machiavel's "Belphegor."—*Pegge*.

The excellent translation of this humorous old story by Mr T. Roscoe ("Italian Novelists," ii. 272) will enable the reader to compare the play with it. He will find that in many parts the original has been abandoned, and the catastrophe, if not entirely different, is brought about by different means. The "Biographia Dramatica" informs us that Dekker's "If it be not Good the Devil is in it" is also chiefly taken from the same novel; but this is an error arising out of a hint by Langbaine. Dekker's play is the famous history of Friar Rush in many of its incidents.—*Collier*.

[423] [He was *born* at or near Glastonbury in 925. See Wright's "Biog. Brit. Lit.," Anglo-Saxon period, p. 443, et seq.]

[424] "Legenda Aurea, or the Golden Legend," translated out of the French, and printed by Caxton in folio, 1483.

[425] In the old copy it is printed *Tortass*, but it means *portass*, *portesse*, or *portace*, the breviary of the Roman Catholic Church. Thus, in Greene's "Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay"—

"I'll take my *portace* forth, and wed you here."

Spenser uses the word, "Faerie Queene," b. i. c. iv.—

"And in his hand his *portesse* still he bare
That much was worne," &c.

See also note to "New Custom" [iii. 24].—*Collier*.

[426] [Old copy and former edits., *Dunston's*.]

[427] See the story of Malbecco in Spenser's "Faerie Queene," b. iii. c. ix., &c.

[428] The old copy has it *reap*, but probably we ought to read *heap*; to *reap an endless catalogue* is hardly sense.—*Collier*.

[429] *Cleped* is *called, named*. So in Milton's "L'Allegro," i. 11—

"But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In heaven *yclep'd* Euphrosyne."

[430] *Colling* is embracing round the neck. *Dare Brachia cervici*, as Baret explains it in his "Alvearie," voce *colle*. The word is frequently to be found in ancient writers. So in Erasmus' "Praise of Follie," 1549, sig. B 2: "For els, what is it in younge babes that we dooe kysse go, we doe *colle* so; we do cheryshe so, that a very enemye is moved to spare and succour this age." In "Wily Beguiled," 1606: "I'll clasp thee, and clip thee; *coll thee*, and kiss thee, till I be better than nought, and worse than nothing." In "The Witch," by Middleton—

"When hundred leagues in aire we feast and sing,
Daunce, kysse, and *coll*, use everything."

And in Breton's "Woorkes of a Young Wit," 1577, p. 37—

"Then for God's sake, let young folkes *coll* and kisse,
When oldest folkes will thinke it not amisse."

[431] Old copy, *upon*.

[432] So in Ben Jonson's "Catiline," act iv. sc. 3—

"I have those eyes and ears shall still keep guard
And *spial* on thee, as they've ever done,
And thou not feel it."

And in Ascham's "Report and Discourse of the State of Germany," p. 31: "He went into France secretly, and was there with Shirtly as a common launce knight, and named hymselfe Captaine Paul, lest the Emperours *spials* should get out hys doynge."

[433] In the county of Essex, the mother-church of Harwich. "In the same yeare of our Lord 1582 there was an Idoll named *The Roode of Dovercourt*, whereunto was much and great resort of people. For at that time there was a great rumour blown abroad amongst the ignorant sort, that the power of *The Idoll of Dovercourt* was so great that no man had power to shut the church doore where he stood, and therefore they let the church dore, both night and day, continually stand open, for the more credit unto the blinde rumour."—Fox's "Martyrs," ii. 302. This is the account given by Fox of this celebrated image; who adds that four men, determining to destroy it, travelled ten miles from Dedham, where they resided, took away the Rood and burnt it, for which act three of them afterwards suffered death.

[434] Old copy, *way*.—*Pegge*.

[435] A play on the double meaning of the word, an old game and the act of kissing.

[436] [Obtain.]

[437] [Old copy, and former edits., *bear*.]

[438] See note to "Gammer Gurton's Needle" [ii. 202].

[439] In 1662, when this play was either first printed or reprinted, it would have been absurd to talk of *America* as *new* or newly discovered.—*Collier*.

[440] [This passage reminds us of No. 60 in "A C. Mery Talys," Hazlitt's "Jest Books," i. 87.]

[441] See note to "Damon and Pithias" [iv. 21].

[442] Old copy, *work*.—*Pegge*.

[443] i.e., O Lord.

[444] i.e., So happen in the issue. So in Ben Jonson's "New Inn," act iv. sc. 4—

"You knew well
It could not *sort* with any reputation
Of mine."

And in Massinger's "Maid of Honour," act ii. sc. 1—

"All *sorts* to my wishes."

[445] Old copy, *for*.—*Pegge*.

[446] i.e., *As lief they as I*. So in "Eastward Hoe:" "I'd as *live* as anything I could see his farewell."—*Collier*.

[447] It is observed by Dr Warburton (note on "Romeo and Juliet," act i. sc. 1), that to *carry coals* was a phrase formerly in use to signify *bearing of injuries*; and Dr Percy has given several instances in proof of it. To those may be added the following from Ben Jonson's "Every Man out of his Humour," act v. sc. 3: "Take heed, Sir Puntarvolo, what you do; *he'll bear no coals*, I can tell you, o' my word."

[448] i.e., Akercocck, as he is called in the preceding scenes. See a later note to this play [p. 442 *infra*].—*Collier*.

[449] *Suppose* is here used in the sense of *conjecture* or *apprehension*. Gascoigne translated a comedy of Ariosto, and called it "The Supposes." The employment of the verb for the substantive in the present instance is an evidence of the antiquity of this play. The following parallel is from Gascoigne's Prologue: "The verye name wherof may peradventure driue into euerie of your heades, a sundrie *Suppose*, to *suppose* the meaning of our *supposes*."—*Collier*.

[450] i.e., Plot or contrivance. Tarlton produced a piece called "The Plat-form of the Seven Deadly Sins;" and in "Sir J. Oldcastle," by Drayton and others, first printed in 1600, it is used with the same meaning as in the text, viz., a contrivance for giving effect to the conspiracy.

"There is the *plat-form*, and their hands, my lord,
Each severally subscribed to the same."

—*Collier*.

[451] [A common proverb.]

[452] [The ordinary proverb is, "The devil is *good* when he is pleased."]

[453] The Italian for *How do you do?*

[454] *Skinker* was a *tapster* or *drawer*. Prince Henry, in "The First Part of Henry IV." act ii. sc. 4, speaks of an *undersinker*, meaning an *underdrawer*. Mr Steevens says it is derived from the Dutch word *schenken*, which signifies to fill a cup or glass. So in G. Fletcher's "Russe Commonwealth," 1591, p. 13, speaking of a town built on the south side of Moscow by Basilius the emperor, for a garrison of soldiers, "to whom he gave priviledge to drinke mead and beer, at the drye or prohibited times, when other Russes may drinke nothing but water, and for that cause called this newe citie by the name of Naloi, that is, *skinck*, or *poure in*." Again, in Marston's "Sophonisba," iii. 2—

"Ore whelme me not with sweets, let me not drink,
Till my breast burst, O Jove, thy nectar *skinke*."

And in Ben Jonson's "Poetaster," act iv. sc. 5—

"ALB. I'll ply the table with nectar, and make 'em friends.

"HER. Heaven is like to have but a lame *skinker*."

And in his "Bartholomew Fair," act ii. sc. 2: "Froth your cans well i' the filling, at length, rogue, and jog your bottles o' the buttock, sirrah; then *skink* out the first glass ever, and drink with all companies."

[455] Suspicion.

[456] [Be in accord with reason.]

[457] [Old copy, *call'st*.]

[458] Similar to this description is one in Marlowe's "Edward II.," act i.

[459] Old copy, *are*.

[460] [Old copy, *knew*.]

[461] See note to "Cornelia" [v. 188].

[462] In Shakespeare's "Coriolanus," Sicinius asks Volumnia, "Are you mankind?" On which Dr Johnson remarks that "*a mankind woman* is a woman with the roughness of a man; and, in an aggravated sense, a woman *ferocious, violent, and eager to shed blood*." Mr Upton says *mankind* means *wicked*. See his "Remarks on Ben Jonson," p. 92. The word is frequently used to signify *masculine*. So in [Beaumont and Fletcher's] "Love's Cure; or, The Martial Maid," act iv. sc. 2—

"From me all *mankind* women learn to woo."

In Dekker's "Satiromastix"—

"My wife's a woman; yet
'Tis more than I know yet, that know not her;
If she should prove *mankind*, 'twere rare; fie! fie!"

And in Massinger's "City Madam," act ii. sc. 1—

"You brach,
Are you turn'd *mankind*?"

[463] [Old copy, *strumpets*.]

[464] Whether I will or not. This mode of expression is often found in contemporary writers. So in Dekker's "Bel-man of London," sig. F 3: "Can by no meanes bee brought to remember this new friend, yet *will hee, nill he*, to the taverne he sweares to have him."

It may be worth remark that it is also found in "Damon and Pithias," from which the character of Grim is taken.

[465] [Old copy, *reake*.]

[466] Sometimes called *Pucke*, alias *Hobgoblin*. In the creed of ancient superstition he was a kind of merry sprite, whose character and achievements are recorded in a ballad printed in Dr Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry." [See "Popular Antiquities of Great Britain," iii. 39, et seq.]

[467] Pretty or clever. So in Warner's "Albion's England," b. vi. c. 31, edit. 1601—

"There was a *tricksie* girl, I wot, albeit clad in gray."

The word is also used in Shakespeare's "Tempest," act v. sc. 1. See Mr Steevens's note thereon.

[468] This is one of the most common, and one of the oldest, proverbs in English. Ulpian Fulwell[']s play upon it has been printed in our third volume.] It is often met with in our old writers, and among others, in a translation from the French, printed in 1595, called, "A pleasant Satyre or Poesie, wherein is discovered the Catholicon of Spain," &c., the running title being "A Satyre Menippized." It is to be found on pp. 54 and 185. Having mentioned this tract, we may quote, as a curiosity, the following lines, which probably are the original of a passage for which "Hudibras" is usually cited as the authority—

"Oft he that doth abide
Is cause of his own paine;
But he that flieth in good tide
Perhaps may fight againe."

—*Collier*.

[469] [A word unnoticed by Nares and Halliwell. The latter cites *haust*, high, doubtless from the French *haut*. So *hauster* may be the comparative, and signify higher.]

[470] Till now printed *Puzzles* as if because it had puzzled Dodsley and Reed to make out the true word. In the old copy it stands *Puriles*; and although it may seem a little out of character for Grim to quote Latin, yet he does so in common with the farmer in Peele's "Edward I.," and from the very same great authority. "'Tis an old saying, I remember I read it in Cato's '*Pueriles*' that *Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator*," &c.—*Collier*. [The work referred to in the text was called "Pueriles Confabulatiunculae; or, Children's Talke," of which no early edition is at present known. But it is mentioned in "Pappe with an Hatchet" (1589), and in the inventory of the stock of John Foster, the York bookseller (1616).]

[471] Head. See note to "Gammer Gurton's Needle" [iii. 242].

[472] Shall never cease, stop, or leave of. So in Ben Jonson's "Staple of News," Intermean after 4th act—

"He'll never *lin* till he be a gallop."

Mr Whalley proposes to read *blin*. "The word," says he, "is Saxon, and the substantive *blin*, derived from *blinnan*, occurs in the 'Sad Shepherd.' Yet the word occurs in Drayton in the sense of stopping or staying, as it is used here by our poet—

"'Quoth Puck, my liege, I'll never *lin*,

Hut I will thorough thick and thin.'

"—'Court of Fairy.' So that an emendation may be unnecessary, and *lin*, the same as *leave*, might have been in common use."

The latter conjecture is certainly right, many instances maybe produced. As in "The Return from Parnassus," act iv. sc. 3—

"Fond world, that ne'er think'st on that aged man,
That Ariosto's old swift-paced man,
Whose name is Time, who never *lins* to run,
Loaden with bundles of decayed names."

In "A Chast Mayd in Cheapside," by Middleton: "You'll never *lin* 'till I make your tutor whip you; you know how I serv'd you once at the free schoole in Paul's Church Yard." And in, "More Dissemblers besides Women," by the same, act iii. sc. I: "You nev'r *lin* railing on me, from one week's end to another." [*Lin* is common enough in the old romances.]

[473] See [Dyce's "Middleton," iii. 97, and] Note 20 to the "Match at Midnight."—*Collier*.

[474] This must have been addressed to the audience, and may be adduced as some slight evidence of the antiquity of the play, as in later times dramatists were not guilty of this impropriety. The old morality of "The Disobedient Child" has several instances of the kind; thus, the son says to the spectators—

"See ye not, my maysters, my fathers advyse?
Have you the lyke at any time harde?"

Again, the Man-cook—

"Maysters, this woman did take such assaye,
And then in those dayes so applied her booke."

—*Collier* [ii. 276, 284].

[475] See Note 25 to "Ram Alley."—*Collier*. [In "Romeo and Juliet," i. 3, the Nurse says, "Nay, I do bear a brain," i.e., I do bear in mind, or recollect (Dyce's edit. 1868, vi. 398). Reed's explanation, adopted by Dyce, seems hardly satisfactory.]

[476] See note to "Gammer Gorton's Needle," iii. 205. Query, if the passages there quoted may not refer to this very character of Akercock and his dress, as described in act i. sc. 1.—*Collier*. [Probably not, as this play can hardly have been in existence go early, and the character and costume of Robin Goodfellow were well understood, even before "Gammer Gurton's Needle" was written.]

[477] So in "The Return from Parnassus," act v. sc. 4—

"I'll make thee run this lousy case, *I wis*."

And again in Massinger's "City Madam," act iv. sc. 4—

"Tis more comely, *I wis*, than their other whim-whams."

[478] "He had need of a long spoon that eats with the devil," is a proverbial phrase. See [Hazlitt's "Proverbs," 1869, p. 176.] So Stephano, in the "Tempest," act ii. sc. 2, alluding to this proverb, says, "This is a devil, and no monster: I will leave him; I have no *long spoon*." See also "Comedy of Errors," act iv. sc. 3, and Chaucer's "Squier's Tale," v. 10916—

"Therefore behoveth him a *ful long spon*e,
That shall ete with a fiend."

[479] [To vomit. One of the jests of Scogin relates how that celebrated individual "told his wife he had *parbraked* a crow"—a story which occurs in the "Knight of the Tour-Landry" (Wright's edit., p. 96). See also Fry's "Bibl. Memoranda," 1816, p. 337. A note in edition 1825 says:] This is a word which I apprehend is very seldom found in writers subsequent to the year 1600. It is used by Skelton, and sometimes by Spenser. See Todd's "Johnson's Dict."

[480] [Old copy, *He falls*; but Akercock evidently disappears simultaneously.]

[481] [Old copy, *names*.]

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