HAMLET.

ACT III]

QUEEN. O, speak to me no more! These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears; No more, sweet Hamlet!

HAM. A murderer and a villain! A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe Of your preceding lord;—a vice* of kings! A cutthroat usurp of the empire and the rule, That from a shelf the precious diadem stole, And put it in his pocket!

QUEEN. No more!

HAM. A king of shreds and patches!—

Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings, You heavenly guards!—What would your* gracious figure?

QUEEN. Alas, he's mad!

HAM. Do you not come your tardy son to chide, That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by The important acting of your dread command? O, say!

GHOST. Do not forget: this visitation Is but to whet thy almost blunt purpose. But, look! amazement on thy mother sits: O, step between her and her fighting soul,— Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works,— Speak to her, Hamlet.

HAM. How is it with you, lady?

QUEEN. Alas, how is 't with you, That you do thus bend your eye on vacancy, And with the incorporal air do hold discourse? Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep; And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm, Your bedded hair, like life in extremities, Starts up, and stands on end. O, gentle son, Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper Sprinkle cool patience. Wherefore do you look?

HAM. On him! on him!—Look you, how pale he glares!

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones, Would make them capable.*—Do not look upon me;

(*) First folio, ou.
(1) First folio, omits, do.
(2) First folio, their corporall.
* — a vice of kings. * A "vice" was the buffoon or clown of the older drama.
** — capable;] Susceptible.
* — effects.* For "effects," Mr. Singer reads, effects, quoting in support of his emendation.
” — the young effects.* In me defunct—* &c.
* — ecstasy—* Madness. The quarto, 1603, exhibits this speech of the Queen very differently to the after copies; and the peculiarity is interesting in connexion with the question of her participation in the murder of her first husband:— "Alas, it is the weakness of thy brain, Which makes thy tongue to blazon thy heart's griefs: But as I have a soul, I swear by heaven, I never knew of this most horrid murder: But Hamlet, this is only fantasy. And for my love forget these idle fits."* — do not spread the compost on the weeds. *— The folio has,— "— or the weeds;*" the poet's manuscript probably read, "— or the weeds,"* &c.
* — Forgive me this, my virtue; &c.* Although the modern

1998

Leant with this piteous action you convert My stern effects* then what I have to do Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood. Queen. To whom do you speak this? Ham. Do you see nothing there? Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see. Nor did you nothing hear? Queen. No, nothing but ourselves. Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away! My father, in his habit as he liv'd! Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portier. [Exit Ghost

QUEEN. This is the very coinage of your brain This bodiless creation ecstasy* Is very cunning in.

HAM. Ecstasy! My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time. And makes as healthful music: it is not madness That I have utter'd: bring me to the test. And I the matter will re-word, which madness Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace. Lay not that* flatting unction to your soul. That not your trespass, but my madness speaks. It will but skin and film the unction place. While it rank corruption, mining all within. Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven: Repent what's past: avoid what is to come: And do not spread the compost on the weeds. To make them ranker.*—[Aside.] Forgive me this, my virtue!* For in the fatness of these§ purify times. Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg: Yea, curb* and woe for leave to do him good. Queen. O, Hamlet! thou hast clott my heart in twain. Ham. O, throw away the worse part of it. And live the purer with the other half. Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed. Assume a virtue, if you have it not. That monster, Custom, who all sense doth cast. Of habits' devil, is angel yet in this.—

(*) First folio, ou.
(1) First folio, ranker.
(2) First folio, out.
(4) First folio, ease.

editors uniformly print this as if Hamlet addressed it to his own virtue.
(2) curb—* Row, or truckle; from the French courber.
(3) That monster, Custom, who all sense doth cast.

The reading of the old text is,— "That monster custome, who all sense doth cast.

Or habits' devil, &c.; &c.

Which has been variously modified to,— "— who all sense doth cast.

Or habits evil," &c.; &c.

which has been variously modified to,— "— who all sense doth cast.

Of habits evil," &c.; &c.

"— who all sense doth cast.

Or habit's devil," &c.; &c.

The trivial change we have taken the liberty to make, is reported, at least as good a meaning as any other which has been
HAMLET.

Act III, Scene IV.

That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night:
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And master the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be bless’d,
I’ll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,
[Pointing to Polonius.
I do repent: but heaven hath pleas’d it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.—
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—
One word more, good lady.

QUEEN. What shall I do?

HAM. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the blast* king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call him your mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reccheys kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn’d fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'T were good you let him know.
For who, that’s but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,*
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house’s top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

QUEEN. Be thou assur’d, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

HAM. I must to England; you know that?

QUEEN. Alack.

I had forgot ’t is so concluded on.

HAM. There’s letters seal’d: and my two schoolfellows,—
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang’d,—
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work!
For ’t is the sport to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petar: and ’t shall go hard,
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon. O, ’t is most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.—
This man shall set me packing:
I’ll lug the guts into the neighbour room:—
Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.—
Good night, mother.

[Exeunt severally: Hamlet dragging out* the body of Polonius.]

(*) First folio, blawn.

a That aptly is put on.] The passage from "That monster " to "put on" inclusive, is not in the folio.

b And master the devil, or throw him out.] The quarto, 1604 and 1605, present this line, "And either the devil," &c.; the after ones read as above, which, as it affords sense, though destructive to the metre, we retain, not, however, without acknowledging a preference for Malone’s conjecture, "And either say the devil," &c.

c With wondrous potency.] This and what precedes, from "the next more easy" inclusive, is only in the quarto copies.

d A "paddock"—a gib.] A "paddock" is a lad; for "gib," "a col." see note (f), p. 312, Vol. I.

e — conclusions.—] Experiments.

f — directly meet.—] This, as well as the eight preceding lines, are only in the quarto.

h — dragging out—] The folio direction reads, "lagging in."
Re-enter Horatio with Ophelia. 

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark? 
Queen. How now, Ophelia? 
Oph. [Sings.] 
How should I your true love know 
From another one?  
By his cockle hat and staff,  
And his sandal shoon. 
Queen. Alas, sweet lady! what imports this song? 
Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark it! 
[Sings.] He is dead and gone, lady,  
He is dead and gone;  
At his head a grass-green turf,  
At his heels a stone. 
Queen. Nay, but Ophelia,—  
Oph. Pray you, mark it! 
[Sings.] White his shroud as the mountain snow,  
Enter King. 
Queen. Alas, look here, my lord. 
Oph. [Sings.]  
Larded all* with sweet flowers;  
Which bewep to the grave did † go,  
With true-love showers. 
King. How do you, pretty lady? 
Oph. Well, God i' th' world! They say, the owl was a baker's daughter. 
King. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table! 
King. Conceit upon her father. 
Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this: 
[Sings.] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,  
All in the morning betime,  
And I a maid at your window,  
To be your Valentine.

(*) First folio omits, all.  
† Old copies, did not go.

† — with Ophelia.] The quaint direction of the quarto, 1603, is destined consideration from future representatives of this lovely creation, since in all probability it indicates the manner in which the author himself designed it should appear in this his greatest work. — “Enter Ophelia playing on a lute, and her hair down, mapping.” — Enter Ophelia playing on a lute, and her hair down, mapping. 
‡ — dapp'd — To do on, or put on.

1905
In ear and ear. O, my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering-piece,* in many places
Gives me superfluous death. [A noise without.
QUEEN. Alack! what noise is this?
KING. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door:

Enter another Gentleman.

What is the matter?
GENT. Save yourself, my lord!
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O’erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry, Choose we! Laertes shall be king!
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!
QUEEN. How cheerfully on the false tail they cry!
O, this is counter,* you false Danish dogs.

KING. The doors are broke!

[Noise without.

Enter Laertes, armed; Danes following.

LAER. Where is this† king?—Sirs, stand you all without.
DANES. No, let’s come in.
LAER. I pray you, give me leave.
DANES. We will, we will.

[They retire without the door.

LAER. I thank you.—keep the door.—O, thou vile king,
Give me my father!
QUEEN. Calmly, good Laertes.
LAER. That drop of blood that’s calm † proclaims me bastard;
Cries cuckold to my father; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow
Of my true mother!
KING. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;

(*) First folio, insipidities.
(†) First folio, ilk.
— a murdering-piece.— A piece of artillery with several barrels, which discharged a ball of missiles composed of bullets, nails, old iron, and the like.
— this is counter.— To hunt counter is explained at p. 150.
Vol. I. "To follow on a false scent;" it should have been added, "or to pursue the scent." A bound which, instead of going forward, turns and pursues the backward trail, was in the old language of the chase said to hunt counter.
— That treason can but peep to what it would, Acts little of his will.

1906

There’s such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will."—Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incensed:—let him go, Ger-
trude;—

Speak, man.
LAER. Where is my father?
KING. Dead.
QUEEN. But not by him.‡
KING. Let him demand his fill.
LAER. How came he dead? I’ll not be juggled with;
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation: to this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I’ll be reveng’d
Most throughly for my father.
KING. Who shall stay you?
LAER. My will, not all the world:
And for my means, I’ll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

KING. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father’s death, is’t* writ in your
revenge,
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,

Winner and loser?
LAER. None but his enemies.
KING. Will you know them, then?
LAER. To his good friends thus wide I’ll spread my arms;
And, like the kind life-rend’ring pelican,†
Repast them with my blood.

KING. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father’s death,
And am most sensible in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce,
As day does to your eye.
DANES. [Without.] Let her come in.
LAER. How now! what noise is that?—

Re-enter Ophelia.

O, heat, dry up my brains! tears seven-times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—

(*) First folio, of.
(†) First folio, Politician.

This is passed by the critics without comment; but we shrewdly suspect it has undergone some deprivation at the hands of transcribers or composers.
‡ But not by him. In the 1663 quarto the dialogue proceeds—

"Laer. Speake, say, where’s my father?
KING. Dead.
LAER. Who hath murdered him? speak, I say, not
He juggled with, for he is murdered.
QUEENE. True, but not by him."
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turn the beam! O, rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
O, heavens! is’t possible, a young maid’s wits
Should be as mortal as an old man’s life?
Nature is fine in love: and, where ’tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.
Oph. [Sings.]

They bore him barefaced on the bier;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;
And on his grave rains many a tear;—

Fare you well, my dove!
Laërt. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade
revenge,
It could not move thus.
Oph. [Sings.]
ACT IV.

Youn must sing, a-down a-down,
An you call him a-down-a.

O, how the wheel* becomes it! It is the false
steward, that stole his master's daughter.

LAER. This nothing's more than matter.

OPH. There's rosemary, that's for remem-
brance;

[Sings.] Pray, love, remember:
and there is pansies,* that's for thoughts.

LAER. A document in madness! thoughts and
remembrance fitted.

OPH. There's fennel for you, and columbines:
—there's rue for you; and here's some for me:
—we may call it herb-grace o' Sundays:—O,
you must wear your rue with a difference.—There's
a daisy:(2)—I would give you some violets, but
they withered all when my father died:—they
say he made a good end,—

[Sings.] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,—

LAER. Thought and affliction, passion, hell
itself,
She turns to fadour and to prettiness.

OPH. [Sings.] And will he not come again?
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead,
Go to thy death-bed,
He never will come again.

His beard as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll:
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away noon:
Gramecy on his soul!

And of all christian souls, I pray God.—God be
with you.

LAER. Do you see this, O God?†

KING. Laertes, I must commune* with your

grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wiest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,

And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

LAER. Let this be so;
His means of death, his obscure burial—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,
No noble rite nor formal ostentation,—
Cry to be heard, as 'were from heaven to earth,
That I must call't* in question.

KING. So you shall;
And where the offense is let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me.

[Exeunt.

SCENE VI. — Another Room in the same.

Enter Horatio and a Servant.(3)

HOR. What are they that would speak with me?
SERS. Sailors, sir; they say, they have letters
for you.

HOR. Let them come in.— [Exit Servant.
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.†

1 SAIL. God bless you, sir.
HOR. Let him bless thee too.
1 SAIL. He shall, sir, an't please him. There's
a letter for you, sir,—it comes from the ambas-
sador that was bound for England,—if your name
be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

HOR. [Reads.] Horatio, when thou shalt have
overlooked this, give these fellows some means to
the king; they have letters for him. Eve we were
two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike
appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too
slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour; in
the grapple I boarded them; on the instant they
got clear of our ship; so I alone became their
prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves
of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am
to do a good turn for them. Let the king have
the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me
with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death.
I have words to speak in thine ear, will make thee
dumb: yet are they much too light for the bore of
the matter. These good fellows will bring the

(*) First folio, Paconies. (†) First folio, you Gods.

* — the wheel — The "wheel" in case is another name for the
burden or refrain of a ballad: it was perhaps the practice on the
old stage for Ophelia to play the "wheel" upon her lute before
these words.

b — I must commune with your griev. — The folio alone reads
"common," which is only the more ancient orthography of the
same word.

1908
ILLUSTRATIVE COMMENTS.

"Julius Caesar," Act V, Sc. 5. Brutus' body. (End of play):

"Oct. Within my sent his bones to-night shall lie,  
    Most like a soldier, order'd honourably."

"Antony and Cleopatra," Act IV, Sc. 9. Death of Enoobarbus:

"1 Sold. The hand of death hath taught him. Hark, the drums  
    Temporarily wake the sleepers. Let us hear him  
    To the court of guards: he is of note: our hour  
    Is fully out."

"2 Sold. Come on then,  
    He may recover yet.  
    [Exeunt with body."

"Antony and Cleopatra," Act IV, Sc. 12. The dying Antony:

"Take me up,  
    I have led you oft; carry me now, good friends,  
    And have my thanks for all.  
    [Exeunt with Antony."

These instances from Shakespeare alone, and they could easily be multiplied, will suffice to bring into view one of the inconveniences to which the elder dramatists were subject through the paucity of actors; and, at the same time, by exhibiting the mode in which they endeavoured to obviate the difficulty, may afford a key to many passages and incidents that before appeared anomalous.

ACT IV.

(1) SCENE V.—They say, the owl was a baker's daughter. This alludes to a tradition still current in some parts of England: "Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were baking, and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough into the oven to bake for him; but was reprimanded by her daughter, who, insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately afterwards began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon the baker's daughter cried out, 'Heugh, heugh, heugh,' which owl-like noise probably induced our Saviour, for her wickedness, to transform her into that bird."

(2) SCENE V.—There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;  
    And there's pansies, that's for thoughts.  
    There's fennel for you, and columbines—there's rue for you; —&c. &c.] There is method in poor Ophelia's distribution. She presents to each the herb regularly appropriate to his age or disposition. To Laertes, whom in her distraction she probably confounds with her lover, she gives "rosemary" as an emblem of his faithful remembrance:

"Rosemary is for remembrance;  
    Between us date and night,  
    Wishing that I might always have  
    Your presence in my sight."

A Handfull of Pleasant Delights, &c. 1584.

And "pansies," to denote love's "thoughts" or troubles:

"I pray what flowers are these?  
    The pansies this;  
    O, that's for lovers' thought."

—All's Well, Act II. Sc. 1.

For the King she has "fennel," signifying flattery and test; and "columbines," which marked ingratitude; while for the Queen and for herself she reserves the herb of sorrow, "rue," which she reminds her Majesty may be worn by her "with a difference," i.e. not as an emblem of grief alone, but to indicate contrition,—"some of them smil'd and said, Rue was called Herbe grace, which though they scorned in their youth, they might wear in their age, and that it was never too late to say Misereor."—GRENZE'S Quip for an Upright Courtier.

(3) SCENE VI.—Enter Horatio and a Servant. In the quarto, 1603, at this period of the action there is a scene between the Queen and Horatio, not a vestige of which is retained in the after copies. Like every other part of that curious edition, it is grievously deformed by misprints and mal-arrangement of the verse; but, as exhibiting the poet's earliest conception of the Queen's character, is much too precious to be lost.

"Enter Horatio and the Queen.

Hor. Madame, your sonne is safe arriv'd in Denmarke,  
    This letter I even now receiv'd of him.  
    Whereas he writes how he escap't the danger,  
    And subtle treason that the king had plotted,  
    Being cross'd by the contrivance of the windes.  
    He found the Packet sent to the king of England,  
    Wherein he saw himselfe betray'd to death,  
    As at his next conference with your grace,  
    He will relate the circumstance at full.  
    Queen. Then I perceive there's treason in his bookes  
    That seem'd to sugar o'er his villanie:  
    But I will sooke and please him for a time,  
    For murderous minde is always jealous,  
    But know not you Horatio where he is?  
    Hor. Yes, Madame, and he hath appoynted me  
    To meet him on the east side of the Cittie  
    To morrow morning.  
    Queen. O fairest, good Horatio, and wittall, commend me  
    A mothers care to him, bid him a while  
    Be wary of his presence, lest that he  
    Fail in that he goes about.  
    Hor. Madame, never make doubt of that:  
    I think not this the news be come to court:  
    He is arriv'd, observe the king, and you shall  
    Quickly finde, Hamlet being here,  
    Things fell not to his minde.  
    Queen. But what became of Gilderslaves and Rosencroft?  
    Hor. He being set ashore, they went for England,  
    And in the Parget there writ down that doone  
    To be perform'd on them poynted for him:  
    And by great chance he dide his father's Scale,  
    So all was done without discoverie.  
    Queen. Thanks be to heaven for blessing of the prince,  
    Horatio once again I take my leave,  
    With thousand mothers blessings to my sonne,  
    Horat. Madam adoe."