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THE
Oxford and Cambridge Edition
of
SHAKESPEARE'S
HAMLET,
PRINCE OF DENMARK.
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES FOR STUDENTS
AND PREPARATION FOR THE EXAMINATIONS.

BY
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EDITORIAL.

This Edition of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is designed to satisfy the requirements of Candidates for all Public Examinations, and is distinguished from the majority of School Editions by certain special features, the purpose of which may be briefly indicated.

The work consists of three sections, the first containing the necessary introductory matter and sketches of the characters of the play; the second, the text of the Play with brief notes; the third section contains fuller additional notes, grammatical explanations, versification, classical allusions, glossary and examination papers.

The Literary Introduction contains separate sections upon all subjects in connection with the Play, together with sketches of the characters in the Play, upon which Examiners are in the habit of framing questions. The study of this portion of the book may be deferred until a general knowledge of the Play has been acquired by the Student, whilst the paragraphs printed in small type may be omitted altogether by the Candidate for Elementary Examinations.

The Life of Shakespeare has been included, not only because it is likely to be of interest to the general reader, but also because a knowledge of the principal events in the poet’s life is frequently required by Examining bodies in connection with the study of any particular play.

The Marginal and Foot Notes are intended to suffice for the needs of Junior Students, and are printed in conjunction with the text. The Editors have found by experience that such an arrangement conduces to a thorough knowledge and understanding of the text much more readily than when the young Student is expected to turn to the end of the book, in the case of every difficulty that presents itself.

The Additional Notes are intended mainly for Senior Students, and may be studied apart from the text. Junior Students, who desire to attain distinction in any Examination, or such as possess a natural taste for literary subjects, may also refer profitably to this Section.

Shakespearian Grammar has been treated at some length in as simple a manner as is consistent with the subject. Illustrative passages from the Play have been quoted in full in order that the Student may be saved the tedious labour of continually referring back to the text.

Classical Names and Glossary will be referred to as necessity arises during the study of the Play. In the case of these, as in that of the Grammar, illustrative passages are quoted in full. Thus, for the purposes of revision, these Sections may be studied apart from the text.

Examination Papers are given at the end of the book. As these are based upon the model of the papers set at Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations, they should prove specially serviceable where Candidates for such Examinations have to be considered.

The obligation of the Authors to the authorities consulted in the preparation of this Edition has almost always been recorded in the pages of the work.

STANLEY WOOD.
F. MARSHALL.
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NARRATIVE OF SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE.

Birth and Parentage.

In this short account of the Life of William Shakespeare, we shall endeavour to confine ourselves to well-authenticated facts, and shall therefore say nothing about supposed ancestry, especially as the name of Shakespeare seems to have been very common in the Middle Ages in many parts of England. There is, however, good reason for supposing that William Shakespeare's ancestors were farmers. The poet's father, John Shakespeare, appears to have been in early life not only a prosperous man of business in many branches, but a person of importance in the municipal affairs of Stratford. He held for one year "the highest office in the Corporation gift, that of bailiff"; he afterwards became chief alderman. He married Mary Arden, who brought him land and houses, but "was apparently without education"; several extant documents bear her mark, and there is no proof that she could sign her name. William, their third and eldest surviving child, was born at Stratford-on-Avon, in April, 1564. His father was then in prosperous circumstances, and when, in July of that year, the plague raged violently at Stratford, he subscribed liberally to the relief of the victims among the poor. In a few years, however, he fell into debt and difficulties, was obliged to mortgage his wife's property, and gradually lost his interest in municipal affairs.
Childhood and Youth.

In the meantime five children—three boys and two girls younger than William—began to require education. The boys "were entitled to free tuition at the Grammar School of Stratford," where they were taught the rudiments of Latin, grammar, and literature, and to write in Old English characters, as was then the custom in provincial schools. In later life William Shakespeare acquired some knowledge of the French language (of which he made use in the Play of *Henry V*). His time at school was short, as his father's fortunes steadily declined, and at the age of thirteen he was obliged to apply himself to the trade of a butcher, which was then the only means by which his father earned his living.

His Marriage.

At a short distance from Stratford stands a thatched cottage, still known by the name of Anne Hathaway's Cottage, and inhabited by descendants of the Hathaways until 1838. It is said to be only a part of the homestead where Anne's father, Richard Hathaway, died in fairly prosperous circumstances, leaving a farm which had belonged to his family for generations to be carried on by his widow and eldest son. Each daughter was to receive for her marriage portion the modest sum of £6 13s. 4d., which in those days was equal to £53 6s. 8d. at the present time, just an eighth of the present value.

Anne Hathaway became the wife of William Shakespeare when he was little more than eighteen and a half years old, she having attained the more mature age of twenty-six. History says little of their early married life, and that little does not point to happiness. Three children were born to them, two daughters and a son.

Early Life at Stratford.

Although we are told:

"Anne Hathaway, she hath a way,  
To charm all hearts, Anne Hathaway,"

she was not able to keep her young husband out of mischief. In the absence of sufficient means of livelihood, he seems to have amused himself among his farmer kinsfolk, and not content with the orthodox sports common to those born and bred in the country, appears to have taken up with bad companions, and to have been led into poaching transactions, which caused him in the end to leave his home and family for several years. More than once he was known to join with others in stealing deer and rabbits from the park of Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, for which the punishment in those days was three months' imprisonment, and the payment of three times the amount of damage done. Shakespeare bitterly resented the treatment meted out to him, and in revenge composed a ballad on the subject, which he posted up on the gates of Charlecote Park. This, not unnaturally, had the effect of inciting Sir Thomas to further prosecution, and led to Shakespeare's forsaking his home and finding a more congenial occupation in London (1585).
Life in London.

There are various reports of the manner in which Shakespeare first tried to make a living on his arrival in London, but he soon drifted into the profession of an actor, in which he made his earliest reputation. He is said to have begun his career as a writer by adapting and re-writing plays by other authors, which, after being bought by an acting company, passed entirely out of the hands of the original playwright. It was not unusual for the manager to invite thorough revision before producing a new or revived play upon the stage. Love's Labour's Lost, which is commonly supposed to be the first of his dramatic productions, and which may have been composed in 1591, was revised in 1597, and published the following year, when the name of Shakespeare first appeared in print as its author. Its plot, unlike those of most of his plays, does not seem to have been borrowed from any earlier story or romance. Romeo and Juliet (1591-3), his first tragedy, on the contrary, had gone through many adaptations since the Greek romance of "Anthia and Abrocomas" was written in the second century. The story had been told both in prose and verse, and was popular throughout Europe. For the plot of The Merchant of Venice (1594?) he was indebted to a variety of sources, including a collection of Italian novels written in the fourteenth century. Most of Shakespeare's dramatic work was probably done in twenty years, between his twenty-seventh and forty-seventh year, at the rate of an average of two plays a year.

His Patrons.

One patron he had among the nobility, the Earl of Southampton, to whom many of his sonnets are unmistakably addressed, though not by name. Queen Elizabeth showed him some marks of her favour as early as 1594, and after the accession of James I, he was called upon to act before the king. The Tempest, which was probably the latest effort of his genius, was performed to celebrate the marriage of Princess Elizabeth with the Elector Frederick, in 1613.

His Return to Stratford.

In middle life he developed much good sense and ability in practical affairs. With the object of re-establishing the fortunes of his family in the town of Stratford, he returned thither after an absence of nearly eleven years, and although he spent the greater part of his time in London, he never failed to visit his native place at least once a year. In 1597 he purchased, for £60, the largest house in the town, along with two barns and two gardens, repaired the house, which was much dilapidated, and interested himself much in the gardens and orchard. The purchase of this house, "New Place" by name, for a sum now equaling £480, brought to Shakespeare a reputation among his fellow townsmen for wealth and influence, which was further increased when he applied for, through his father, and duly received, the distinction of a coat of arms. Both as actor and dramatist he was now receiving a good income, and in 1599, when the Globe Theatre was built, he acquired a share in its profits also. His average annual income before that date is computed at more than £130, equal to £1,040 at the present time. Afterwards his income, from various sources, became much
larger, and he became the owner of a large landed estate. He appears to have been fond of litigation, in which, however, he was generally successful.

His Last Years.
In this time of prosperity he brought out several of his best plays. The comedies, *Much Ado About Nothing* (1600), *As You Like It* (1600), and *Twelfth Night* (1601), were followed by *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. *Macbeth* was completed in 1606, and succeeded by *King Lear*, which was played before the Court at Whitehall, on the night of December 26th, 1606. After 1611 he seems to have abandoned dramatic composition, and spent the greater part of his time at Stratford. His health began to fail at the commencement of 1616,

but the actual cause of death is unknown. His only son, Hamnet, had died many years before, but his wife and two daughters, Susannah Hall and Judith Quiney, survived him. He died at the age of fifty-two, and was buried inside the chancel of Stratford Church, with this epitaph inscribed over his grave:

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  "Good Frend, for Jesus' sake forbeare
  To dig the dvest encloased heare,
  Blest be ye man yt spares thes stones,
  And cyrst be he yt moves my bones."
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*For the facts contained in the above account of Shakespeare's life I have relied principally upon the authority of Sidney Lee, to whose "Life of William Shakespeare" (Macmillan) I would refer all students who desire to acquaint themselves with "the net results of trustworthy research respecting Shakespeare's life and writing."—Ed.*
HAMLET,
PRINCE OF DENMARK.

SOURCE OF THE PLOT OF THE PLAY.

Saxo Grammaticus, a Danish writer, a native of Elsinore, about 1208, wrote Historica Danica, a Latin history of Denmark.

The Legend of Amleth or Hamlet appears in the third and fourth books, and is taken from the Icelandic "Saga of Danish Kings."

The earliest edition of Historica Danica was printed in Paris in 1514.

Belleforest, a French writer, published his Histories Tragiques translated from the Italian. The legend of Amleth is contained in the fifth volume issued in 1570, and printed at Paris.

The Hystorie of Hamblet, an English translation of Belleforest's Amleth, of which the earliest known edition was published in 1608.

There are points of difference in the three works, e.g.

In Saxo the councillor hides himself "in the straw on the floor."

In Belleforest he conceals himself under a quilt.

In the Hystorie he places himself behind the "hangings" or "arras," as in Shakespeare's play. We also find the exclamation "a rat—a rat," uttered by Hamlet as he stabs the hidden politician.

The main outlines of the Story in Saxo reproduced in the Play.

(1) Two brothers, Horvendile and Fengo, appointed by Roderick, king of Denmark, over two provinces of his kingdom = Hamlet's father and Hamlet's uncle.

(2) Horvendile won great renown as a Vi-king, and slew Colle, king of Norway, in single combat = the Fortinbras of Norway (father of the Fortinbras of the play), slain by Hamlet's father (Act. I. 1. 86, etc.).
(3) Roderick received a large share of the spoil, and gave Horvendile his daughter Geruth in marriage = Gertrude, the queen in the play.

(4) They have a son Amleth = Hamlet in the play.

(5) Fengon loves Geruth and wins her affection. He murders his brother, marries Geruth, and obtains the rule over both provinces. Compare the murder of Hamlet’s father by his uncle and his marriage to Queen Gertrude.

(6) Amleth feigns madness to save his life, as Hamlet does in the play.

(7) Plots are laid to test if the madness be real or feigned.
   (a) An interview with an unnamed maiden in a wood, from which Amleth escapes through being warned by an unnamed friend. Compare Polonius’ attempt to discover Hamlet’s disposition through Ophelia.
   (b) An interview with his mother, when a certain councillor hides behind the hangings to listen to the conversation. Amleth is suspicious of his presence and pierces the hangings with the cry of “a rat—a rat,” and kills the councillor. Compare the death of Polonius.

(8) Fengon desiring to get rid of Amleth sends him to Britain with two of his servants. These servants are entrusted with secret letters desiring the King of Britain to slay Amleth. On the voyage Amleth reads the letters, and alters them so that the servants are hanged by the King of Britain. Compare Hamlet’s voyage to Britain, his substitution for the letters and his escape.

(9) The conclusion is different from that in the play. In the story Amleth returns to find his own funeral feast being celebrated. Still feigning madness he sets fire to the castle, kills the king, reveals the reason for his having feigned madness, and ascends the throne.

(10) Horatio, in the story, is represented by an unnamed friend. Ophelia by an unnamed maiden loving Amleth, and loved by him.

But all the names are different except Amleth (= Hamlet) and Geruth (= Gertrude).

How far was Shakespeare indebted to these sources?

The only one of the above sources available to Shakespeare was Belleforest’s Histories Tragiques. But the legend was well-known, and appears to have been embodied in previous plays (see page v.), from which Shakespeare may have gathered materials for the framework of his plot.

But the characters and all that makes the greatness of the play of Hamlet are Shakespeare’s own.
PREVIOUS PLAYS.

1587 and 1589. We have an allusion to a previous play in Robert Greene's *Menaphon*, printed 1587 (according to Dyce), but of which the earliest known copy is dated 1589. In the preface written by Thomas Nash, there is the following passage. "Yet English Seneca read by candlelight yeeldes manie good sentences, as 'Bloud is a beggar,' and so forth: and if you intreate him faire on a frostie morning, he will affoord you whole Hamlets, I should say handfulls of tragical speaches."

The preceding part of the preface is an attack upon translators.

1594. June 9th. In the diary of Henslowe, a theatrical manager of the day, there is an entry of the performance of a play styled *Hamlet*, at the theatre of Newington Butts.

1596. Thomas Lodge, in his *Wits Miserie*, describes "a devil Hate-Vertue," or "sorrow for another man's good success," who "looks as pale as the Vizard of ye Ghost, which cried so miserally at ye Theator like an oister wife, 'Hamlet revenge.'"

Many critics are inclined to consider this play as the work of Thomas Kyd. Kyd was one of the Lord Chamberlain's players.

The principal arguments in favour of Kyd's authorship are:

1. That he had written a play entitled *The Spanish Tragedy*, the style of which corresponds to the descriptions given above of the Play referred to by Greene, Henslowe and Lodge.

2. That Kyd's knowledge of French would enable him to use Belleforest's *Histories Tragiques* in the original.

EARLY EDITIONS OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAY
OF HAMLET.

1602. July 26th. James Roberts, the printer, entered upon the register of the Stationers' Company "A booke, The revenge of Hamlett, Prince of Denmarke, as yt was latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberlayne his servantes."

1603. The First Quarto (*Q₁*). Entered on the register of the Stationers' Company with this title:—"The Tragical Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, By William Shakespeare. As it hath been diverse times acted by his Highnesse servantes in the cittie of London; as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where."

1604. The Second Quarto (*Q₂*). An enlarged edition with the title:—"The Tragical Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, By William Shakespeare. Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect coppie."
The names of the printers of Q₁ and Q₂ are as follows:

Q₁. For Nicholas Ling and John Trundell.
Q₂. By James Roberts for Nicholas Ling.

Thus it would appear that the editions of 1602—1604, were printed by James Roberts (see p. vii.).

Q₁ (The First Quarto) consists of 32 pages, 2,143 lines.
Q₂ (The Second Quarto) consists of 50 pages, 3,719 lines.

1605. The Third Quarto (Q₃).
1611. The Fourth Quarto (Q₄).
The Fifth Quarto (Q₅) undated, but published in Shakespeare's lifetime, and evidently printed from Q₁ (1611).
1637. The Sixth Quarto (Q₆).
1623. The First Folio (F₁), an edition of the collected plays, containing Hamlet as the seventh play, which is generally regarded as the play modified for stage purposes, and as it was acted under Shakespeare's direction.

The text of the play is now a combination of Q₂ and F₁.

Q₁ alone gives—
(1) The passage on Julius Caesar (I. i 112-125).
(2) Hamlet's speech on drunkenness (I. iv 17-38).
(3) Hamlet's remarks on the sealed letters, and his determination to thwart the bearers, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (III. iv. 202-211).
(4) The soliloquy (IV. iv. 32-66).
(5) The urging on of Laertes to take action by Claudius (IV. vii. 113-125).
(6) The main part of the conversation with Osric (V. ii. 81-184).

Q₂ omits the passage referring to child-actors (II. ii. 339-352), which is found in F₁.

In the preface to the First Folio (1623) reference is made to "stolen and surreptitious copies."

Q₁ seems to have been one of these pirated editions, and may have been produced from notes taken during the representation of the play.

It differs materially from Q₂, the authorised edition.

(1) In Names. The Players are not King and Queen, but Duke and Duchess. Polonius is "Corambis," Reynaldo "Montano," and Gonzago "Albertus."

(2) In Characters. The madness of Hamlet is more marked. The guilt of the King is put forward more strongly.

The Queen is innocent of her husband's murder.

In addition many proper names are spelt incorrectly, e.g., Plato for Plautus. Certain speeches are assigned to different characters. Prose passages are written in verse, and the metre is faulty.
Many theories have been put forward as regards this Quarto.
(1) That it is the text of a play, not written by Shakespeare.
(2) That it is a pirated edition of Shakespeare’s play.
(3) That it is Shakespeare’s own work, which he improved upon in the form of the Second Quarto.

The Cambridge editors give as their view “That there was an old play on the story of Hamlet, some portions of which are still preserved in the quarto of 1603 (Q1); that about the year 1603 Shakespeare took this and began to remodel it for the stage as he had done with other plays; that the quarto of 1603 (Q1) represents the play after it had been retouched by him to a certain extent, but before his alterations were complete; and that in the quarto of 1604 we have for the first time the Hamlet of Shakespeare.”

DATE OF THE PLAY.

We have two means of arriving at a probable date when any particular play was written.

I. External evidence.
   (a) Date of entry on the Register of the Stationers’ Company.
   (b) Is the Play included in the Folios or Quartos?
   (c) Are there any allusions to the Play by contemporaneous writers?

II. Internal evidence.
   (a) Are there any allusions in the Play to contemporaneous events?
   (b) An examination of the language and metre of the Play,

For the date of Hamlet we have the following evidence:

1. External.
   Not before 1598, for there is no mention of Hamlet in the list of Shakespeare’s plays given by Francis Meres in his Palladis Tamia or Wil’s Treasury, published in 1598.
   Not later than 1602, if Q1 refer to Shakespeare’s Hamlet (see p. vii.), and certainly not later than 1604, the date of Q2, the first authorised edition of the play.

2. Internal.
   The players in Act II. Sc. 2 are “the tragedians of the city,” and two causes are assigned why they are travelling:
      (1) “An inhibition” by reason of the “late innovation.”
      (2) Another company, an “aiery of children” had ousted them from popular favour.
   The use made of the stage by the Earl of Essex to present a play representing the deposition of a monarch had resulted in the inhibition of the Chamberlain’s company in 1601.
   So it is most probable that Shakespeare made his first sketch of the play in 1601,
ANACHRONISMS.

An Anachronism = an error in dating. So when a writer assigns an event to a date to which it cannot belong, he is said to commit an anachronism.

The date of the action of the Play is not defined, but it is represented as being during the period of the Danish invasions of England.

Consequently the following must be anachronisms:—

1. The use of cannon. Firearms were not in use till the fourteenth century.
2. Switzers, as the King's body-guard. Shakespeare is thinking of the Swiss soldiers who formed the body-guard of the French kings.
3. The University at Wittenberg. This University was not founded till 1502.
4. Theatrical customs, especially the inhibition of the players, and the employment of child actors. These customs, as in the play, are all based upon the dramatic forms of Shakespeare's day.
5. The wearing of chopines. This was a fashion common amongst the ladies of Venice.
6. Barbary horses. These were not imported into Europe till the sixteenth century.
7. Crowner's quest. The coroner is a Norman official, and dates from the Norman times.
8. Coaches. Ophelia calls for her coach (IV. v. 64). Coaches did not come into use till the sixteenth century.

THE UNITIES.

The Unities are three in number, viz., Time, Place and Action.

Time. The time taken in the representation of the play must coincide with that of the action of the play.

Place. No scene of the play must be so located that the dramatis personae shall be unable to visit it in the time allotted for the performance of the play.

Action. All characters must contribute to the action of the play, i.e., no unnecessary characters should be introduced.

All scenes must contribute to the action of the play, i.e., no unnecessary scenes should be introduced.

The Unity of Action is the only Unity observed in Hamlet. The Tempest and The Comedy of Errors are examples of Shakespeare's plays in which all the Unities are observed.
SCENE OF THE PLAY.

At Elsinore or Helsingör, a town on the island of Zealand, where all vessels passing through the Sound had to stop and pay Sound duties.

The "Castle" is the castle of Kronberg, built by Frederick II.

DURATION OF THE PLAY.

Day 1.—Act I., sc. i. ii. iii.

Day 2.—Act I., sc. iv. v.

There is a considerable interval between Acts I. and II., which has been put down as two months for (1) Hamlet speaks of his father "But two months dead" (I. ii. 138), whilst Ophelia says "Nay, 'tis twice two months" (III. ii. 119). This gives an interval of two months.

Such an interval would give time—

(1) For money to be sent to Laertes. "Give this money and these notes, Reynaldo" (II. i. 1).

(3) The return of the Ambassadors from Norway.

Their departure is mentioned (I. ii. 33-34), and their return (II. ii. 40).

Day 3.—Act II., sc. i. ii.

Day 4.—Act III., sc. i. ii. iii. iv. Act IV., sc. i. ii. iii.

Day 5.—Act IV., sc. iv.

An interval which it is impossible to estimate. Shakespeare seems to have overlooked the fact that Hamlet's sudden return is irreconcilable with the return of the Ambassadors from England the day after his own return.

We have—

(1) The return of Hamlet, "sudden and more strange," for which a week is sufficient if not, indeed, too long. He had sailed two days on the voyage to England and returned immediately and unexpectedly.

(3) The return of the Ambassadors from England. They had set out with Hamlet, and had gone to England. Yet they return the day after Hamlet's arrival.

(4) The return of Laertes from Paris.

(4) The return of Fortinbras. We must assign sufficient time for him to have marched to Poland, to have won his victory, and to have returned.

Nearly the sudden return of Hamlet cannot be fitted in with the time required by Laertes, the Ambassadors and Fortinbras.

Critics differ from the space of a week to the extent of two months.

Day 6.—Act IV., sc. v. vi. vii.

Day 7.—Act V., sc. i. ii.

Seasons. The opening scene cannot have been later than March "'Tis bitter cold" (I. i. 8).

The flowers gathered by Ophelia must have been plucked late in May or early in June. This incident gives the time of the later scenes.
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLAY.

"To the common public 'Hamlet' is a famous piece by a famous poet, with crime, a ghost, battle, and carnage; and that is sufficient. To the youthful enthusiast 'Hamlet' is a piece handling the mystery of the universe, and having throughout cadences, phrases, and words full of the divinest Shakespearian magic; and that too is sufficient. To the pedant, finally, 'Hamlet' is an occasion for airing his psychology; and what does pedant require more? But to the spectator who loves true and powerful drama, and can judge whether he gets it or not, 'Hamlet' is a piece which opens, indeed, simply and admirably and then; 'The rest is puzzle!' . . . . . 'Hamlet' thus comes at last to be not a drama followed with perfect comprehension and profoundest emotion, which is the ideal for tragedy but a problem soliciting interpretation and solution. It will never, therefore, be a piece to be seen with pure satisfaction by those who will not deceive themselves. But such is its power and such is its fame that it will always continue to be acted and we shall all of us continue to go and see it."—Matthew Arnold, in the Pall Mall Gazette.

"If the principles that are fought out in this drama, in tragic conflict, were to be described by catchwords, we might say: Reason stands against Dogma; Nature against Tradition; Self-Reliance against Submission. The great elementary forces are here at issue which the Reformation had unchained, and with which we all have to reckon."—Jacob Feis, Shakespere and Montaigne.

CHARACTER INTERPRETATION.

The following simple rules are intended to guide students of the play to form their own estimate of the various characters, a much more useful and interesting process than that of merely committing to memory the opinions of others.

(1) In judging of the character of any of the dramatis personæ take into account all that is said of him in the play by others. Hamlet himself will assist you to frame for yourself a general conception of almost every other character in the play.

(2) In estimating a person's character by what he himself says, note attentively the circumstances under which his speeches are made. Soliloquy is the form in which most of the clues to the interpretation of Hamlet's character are conveyed. In conversation with other characters he often, of set purpose, misrepresents himself.

(3) Do not interpret character by single incidents. Many details must be collected and looked upon in the light
CHARACTER INTERPRETATION.

of the general view. Polonius must not be regarded as a sage because he gives wise counsel to Laertes. Compare his speeches with his actions. It will be found that, as Goethe says, he speaks like a book, when he is prepared beforehand; and like an ass, when he utters the overflowings of his heart.

(4) Watch the development of character as time progresses. Frame for yourself a general idea of what each character may have been before the period of the play, and observe the effect of circumstances and surroundings upon that character. Adversity is a touchstone of character. Hamlet would have presented a very different figure in the world if he had not had a duty imposed upon him for the performance of which he was by nature unfitted.

(5) Observe carefully all contrasts. Shakespeare generally adds to the interest of his characterisation by contrast or by duplication. Laertes and Fortinbras are both placed in strongest contrast to Hamlet. Horatio forms a contrast to almost all the other characters of the play. Hamlet himself exhibits to us, the contrast between his father and his step-father.

(6) Finally read over very carefully, and act upon these cautions and hints given by Coleridge. "If you take only what the friends of the character say, you may be deceived, and still more so, if that which his enemies say; nay, even the character himself sees himself through the medium of his character, and not exactly as he is. Take all together, not omitting a shrewd hint from the clown or the fool, and perhaps your impression will be right; and you may know whether you have in fact discovered the poet’s own idea, by all the speeches receiving light from it, and attesting its reality by reflecting it."

Shakespeare "clothed the creatures of his legend with form and sentiments, as if they were people who had lived under his roof; and few real men have left such distinct characters as these fictions."—Emerson.

"It is common for people to talk of Shakespeare’s plays being so natural, that everybody can understand him. They are natural indeed, they are grounded deep in nature, so deep that the depth of them lies out of the reach of most of us."—Lamb.

"We talk of Shakespeare’s admirable observation of life, when we should feel that not from a petty inquisition into those cheap and every-day characters which surrounded him, as they surround us, but from his own mind, which was, to borrow a phrase of Ben Jonson’s, the very ‘sphere of humanity,’ he fetched those images of virtue and of knowledge, of which every one of us recognizing a part, think we comprehend in our nature the whole."—Lamb.
THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.

Prominent among the characteristics of this poisoner and smiling villain is—

His Hypocrisy. He can speak of the king, whom he has murdered, as "Hamlet, our dear brother," for whom he and his kingdom grieve "in one brow of woe"; he can speak of the affection he bears towards the Prince whom he has deprived of his lawful succession to the throne.

"And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you." (I. ii. 110).

In order to keep him under surveillance, he begs him to remain.

"Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son."

(I. ii. 116).

Whilst in the act of making arrangements for Hamlet's murder he affects a tender regard for his "especial safety"

"Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done." (IV. iii. 42-43).

As many of his speeches give evidence of the blackest hypocrisy, so his actions, as might be expected from—

A Crafty Double-minded Schemer, are most often deep-laid plots. He sets spies on Hamlet's movements, and even plays the spy himself. With acuteness and cunning, which he describes as "majesty and skill," he handles the threatening Laertes, and strives on all occasions to avert suspicion from himself. "To bear all smooth and even," is his continual thought; hence, speaking of Hamlet's "mission" to England, he says,

"This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause!" (IV. iii. 8)

But all his craft avails him nothing, for his best laid schemes fail. The death of Polonius and his interment "in hugger-mugger" result in the people becoming "muddied."

"Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers." (IV. v. 73).

And these whispers, "as level as the cannon to his black," make the king their mark.
His Suspicious Nature. Suspicion that "ever haunts the guilty soul," naturally finds a ready lodging in the mind of Claudius. From the first he regards the "lunacy" of Hamlet as "dangerous." After playing the spy he becomes assured that love is not the cause of his madness.

"There's something in his soul, O'er which his melancholy sits on brood; And, I do doubt, the hatch and the disclose, Will be some danger." (III. i. 162-165).

Being seized with what his flatterers call, "most holy and religious fear," he sends the Prince to England, giving as his reason that,

"The terms of our estate may not endure, Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow Out of his lunacies." (III. iii. 5-7).

He harps unceasingly upon this fear. He suspects that the blow that struck Polonius down was aimed at himself.

"It had been so with us, had we been there." (IV. i. 18).

He communes with himself: "How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!" and, demanding Hamlet's death at the hands of the King of England, lays bare his wretched soul.

"For like the hectic in my blood he rages, And thou must cure me; till I know 'tis done, Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun." (IV. iii. 67-69).

His Conscience. To speak of the conscience of one whose hand is "thicker that itself with brother's blood," and whose heart depends on "springs of steel," may appear to be a perversion of the use of the word, but Shakespeare, knowing that no man was ever utterly and irretrievably lost to all sense of right, has in accordance with nature represented Claudius as being the possessor of a conscience which could at least suffer remorse. There is no reason for supposing that he did not in his fashion, love the queen, though practice in knavery enabled him to conceal his feelings at her death. Hamlet's device to "catch the conscience of the king" was successful, and Polonius unwittingly attains a similar result.

"How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!" (III. i. 50).

More than once he wished the deed undone, but only on an impossible condition. He asks most pertinently,

"May one be pardoned and retain the offence?" (III. iii. 56),
He is fully conscious of the two-fold efficacy of prayer, yet he cannot pray; neither can he repent.

"Try what repentance can; what can it not? Yet what can it, when one can not repent?"

(III. iii. 65-66).

Thus he palters with his conscience, and his state of mind is truly wretched. Punishment, proportionate to his crimes, overtakes him while yet alive, and, says he "like to a murdering-piece in many places, gives me superfluous death."

He is Coarse-minded, licentious, drunken. Hamlet contrasts his own father with Claudius, "Hyperion to a satyr," and in another place speaks of the latter as "a mildew'd ear, blasting his wholesome brother." He describes the "heavy-headed revel" in which the king takes the leading part:

"The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse, Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels: And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down, The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out The triumph of his pledge."

(I. iv. 8-13).

The ghost of the murdered Hamlet describes him as,

"That incestuous, that adulterate beast;"

and Hamlet himself can find no epithet strong enough to express his loathing. In his opinion he is "a murderer and a villain," "a vice of kings."

"A cutpurse of the empire and the rule, That from a shelf the precious diadem stole, And put it in his pocket."

(III. iv. 99-101).

"A king of shreds and patches," a "bloat king," "a paddock," "a bat, a gib." He is filled with amazement that a man so plausible can be so wicked, and turning his thoughts to generalisation, as is his wont, marvels

"That one can smile, and smile and be a villain."

(I. v. 92).

As a King he is not altogether despicable. He is energetic, eager to conciliate and specious. Fortinbras, "holding a weak supposal of his worth," finds that he is not to be contemned. With regard to Hamlet, he acts "with quick determination," sending him to England with all possible despatch. He could be resourceful and brave in an emergency, and maintained his composure in the face of Laertes' "giant-like rebellion."

"Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person: There's such divinity doth hedge a king, That treason can but peep to what it would."

(IV. v. 110-111).
"The king himself is a mass of deception and hypocrisy; he is a practised actor, and the perfect master of his looks and movements, and of all his words and actions; his guilty designs are supported in every case by maturely-weighed and well-contrived plans."—\textit{Urbic}.

"No inward virtues adorn the hypocritical ‘laughing villain’; unless it be that quick perception of his understanding and of his guilty conscience, which makes him attentive to every danger and threat, which makes him interpret every event, every word, every sigh, which makes him gather round him with skilful grasp the weakest spies and tools."—\textit{Dervinus},

\textbf{THE QUEEN} is the instrument, by means of which crime is performed, rather than a criminal herself. She is

\textbf{A Weak Woman,} but not consciously wicked or depraved. She is "seeming-virtuous," and no doubt had deceived herself till she came to imagine herself a very pattern of virtue. She succumbed readily to the wiles and cozenage of Claudius, and so gave rise to Hamlet’s reflection upon the sex, "Frailty, thy name is woman." She consented to a too brief widowhood, although her own better feeling told her that her second marriage was "over-hasty," and she weakly allowed herself to be made a tool of by both Claudius and Polonius. Not until Hamlet sets up a glass wherein she may see her inmost part, does she become fully aware of the shamelessness of her actions. Then she sees within her soul

"Such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct." (III. iv. 90),

and henceforth leans upon her son rather than her husband, and does what she can to repair the wrong she has committed.

\textbf{She is Emotional,} illustrating in herself the truth of the Player’s maxim that

"Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament."

(III. ii. 185).

Her emotion however is neither deep-seated nor lasting. She mourned the loss of her first most excellent husband, "like Niobe, all tears," but "within a month,"

"Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears,\nHad left the flushing in her galled eyes,\nShe married."

(I. ii. 15a-156).

She loves her son more than anything else; "lives almost by his looks," but her love, selfish rather than sympathetic, was not such as might enable her to understand him. When Hamlet turned her eyes into her very soul the violence of her remorse and her amazement at the strange behaviour of her son almost drove her mad, so that the
Ghost was constrained to bid Hamlet "step between her and her fighting soul," reminding him that

"Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works."

(III. iv. 114).

After Hamlet had exhibited her crimes to her in their true colours, her sins prey upon her mind, and to her "sick soul"

"Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss."

(IV. v. 18).

Was she Privy to her Husband's Murder? The play affords no evidence that she connived at the murder of her husband by Claudius. On the contrary all the evidence points to the fact that her first knowledge of the crime came from Hamlet. Her surprise at the charge of killing a king was not feigned, and her conscience was not touched, as Claudius' was during the representation of the Interlude. Moreover, the ghost of her first husband appeared to retain some affection for her, and had warned Hamlet not to taint his mind or let his soul contrive aught against her. Finally, we must remember that when once she was made aware of the manner of her husband's death she took the part of Hamlet against Claudius, from whom she hid henceforth all her "dear concernings."

"The affection of the wicked queen for this gentle and innocent creature (Ophelia) is one of those beautiful and redeeming touches, one of those penetrating glances into the secret springs of natural and feminine feeling, which we find only in Shakespeare."—MRS. JAMESON.

"The timid, self-indulgent, sensuous, sentimental queen is as remote from true woman's virtue as Claudius is from the virtues of royal manhood."—DOUDEN.

"In the queen we discern the confidence of a guilty mind, that by the artifice of self-deceit, has put to silence the upbraiding of conscience."—RICHARDSON.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

In our analysis of the character of Hamlet, and in our endeavour to discover his springs of action, or the causes of his want of action, we shall pursue our researches upon the lines which we have laid down for the guidance of the student. Our object is to dive below the surface, to reach, as far as possible, the very mechanism of his being. With this end in view we shall study the character, first with the idea of discovering what Hamlet was, by nature and by education, before the period of the play, and then by observing this attitude with respect to all those who surround him and his behaviour under all the circumstances in which he is placed, we may at length arrive at something like a correct appreciation of those mental and moral qualities, the sum of which constitutes what we understand by the word character.
HAMLET BEFORE THE ACTION OF THE PLAY.

His Personal Appearance. We conceive of Hamlet as being fair, for he was of Scandinavian descent, and of a somewhat phlegmatic, not to say indolent, disposition. He is of slight build, as may be gathered from the comparison he draws between his uncle and his father.

"My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules." (I. ii. 152).

His mother's statement that "he is fat, and scant of breath," need not be taken too literally, for she was speaking at the time under the influence of great emotion and great fear, and in her love for her son she would exaggerate the contrast which he presented to the more striking figure of Laertes. We may presume him to have inherited from his father

"A station like the herald Mercury

and in his face and bearing there will have been an amiability and a grace which have made him the darling of the Queen, who "lives upon his looks," and of the populace, "who like not with their judgment, but their eyes." Ophelia may have regarded him with partial eyes, but even if we allow something for natural exaggeration there must still remain within our mind's eye the image of a very noble and princely youth.

"The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers." (III. i. 149-152).

"Pleasing in form, polished by nature, courteous from the heart, he was meant to be the pattern of youth, and the joy of the world."

*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship.*

His Disposition. By nature Hamlet was of a cheerful, though quiet disposition. In his childhood he had played with Yorick, "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy," whose lips he had kissed he "knows not how oft." He had delighted in those "flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar." The melancholy which he exhibits in the course of the play appears to his former friends and acquaintance altogether unnatural and unaccountable.

"Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it,
Since nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was." (II. ii 4.)
In the play he utters many sallies of humorous wit, and is cheerful and unreserved when he can for a moment forget the burden that is laid upon him, as when he first meets Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, or when he entertains the strolling players (II. ii.). But we shall find generally in the play that his disposition to humour has been changed by the pressure of circumstances, and that it manifests itself chiefly in satire, as in his conversations with Polonius or with Osric, or in quaint familiar language, recalling perhaps the habits of a former and almost forgotten period of existence, as when he addresses the Ghost.

"Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, truepenny?
Come on: you hear this fellow in the cellarsage;"
(I. v. 136.)

Add to his humorous disposition that he is by nature a hater of shams, a despiser of artifice and dissimulation, scrupulous even in the smallest matters, a seeker after the truth, a true friend, a gentle and devoted son, and a warm but not passionate lover.

"One of the deepest characteristics of Hamlet's nature is a longing for sincerity, for truth in mind and manners, an aversion from all that is false, affected or exaggerated."—Dowden.
"To a frame of mind naturally strong and contemplative, but rendered by extraordinary events sceptical and intensely thoughtful, he unites an undeviating love of rectitude, a disposition of the gentlest kind, feelings the most delicate and pure, and a sensibility painfully alive to the smallest deviation from virtue or propriety of conduct."—Drake.

He is a Student. His first thought after receiving the injunction of his father's ghost is to

"wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there."
(I. v. 83-85.)

He frequently expresses himself in abstractions and generalities, a habit often indicative of a highly cultured mind. This he does even when most violently moved, as in the speech from which we have already quoted.

"My tables,—meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain."
(I. v. 91-92.)

And almost immediately after,

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."
(I. v. 150-151.)

He has left the University of Wittenberg, and is living in court which the king would make as gay and frivolous as...
possible; he "keeps aloof," and continues his studious habits (II. i. 169 and ii. 192). He is a critic of the drama, can tell when a play is

"an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning,"

(II. ii. 439-440)

and has quotations from classical and other pieces ready to his tongue. He is not without experience in writing dramas, and has studied deeply the actor's art and everything pertaining to it (III. ii. 1-41).

"He is essentially a man of letters; he carries memorandum books with him; allusions to his reading are ready to him; in advanced years he was still at the University, and longed to return there. . . . No royal ambition urges him to the society of his equals; his associate is the scholar Horatio, the friend of his school days and his fellow-student."—Cervinus.

**His Refined Spirit.** The custom of deep-drinking, and of the "heavy-headed revel" which characterized the Danish court and the Danish nation, is held in abhorrence by him. "To my mind," he says,

"though I am native here,
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance."

(I. iv. 14-16.)

His kingdom was the Kingdom of the Mind, and his thoughts and speculations were more to him than were the common realities of every-day life. The ambition of Fortinbras stirs him not to ambition. His mother's want of modesty and shame, and the king's grossness stir his soul more profoundly than the crime of murder. In respect of this quality of refinement he belongs to a later age than that in which he lives. "Forgive me this my virtue," he says to his mother,

"For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good."

(III. iv. 153-155.)

"Pure in sentiment, he knew the honourable-minded, and could prize the rest which an upright spirit tastes on the bosom of a friend. To a certain degree, he had learned to discern and value the good and the beautiful in arts and sciences; the mean and the vulgar was offensive to him; and if hatred could take root in his tender soul, it was only so far as to make him properly despise the false and changeful insects of a court, and play with them in easy scorn."—Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship.

"Exquisitely sensible of moral beauty and deformity, he discerns turpitude in a parent. Surprise, on a discovery so painful and unexpected, adds bitterness to his sorrow."—Richardson.
His Intellectual Gifts.

"O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!"

(III. 1. 148)

cries Ophelia in heart-broken accents at the end of the interview, in which Hamlet so successfully played the part of a man "blasted with ecstasy," and she goes on to speak of

"that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled," (III. i. 155-156.)

from which we may infer how great had been his reputation for intellectual power in his student days. We see him in the play continually losing sight of his surroundings in his intellectual activity. His thoughts are continually occupied with the infinite and the unknown, his emotions are reflected in words, and almost forgotten in the pleasure he appears to take in giving them utterance. For the rest, he is endowed with a gift of penetration. He reads correctly the thoughts, the motives and the character of others, and is himself deceived neither by Polonius, nor by his former school-fellows, nor yet by Ophelia, whom he loved.

"In Hamlet he seems to have wished to exemplify the moral necessity of a due balance between our attention to the objects of our senses, and our meditation on the workings of our minds—an equilibrium between the real and the imaginary worlds. In Hamlet this balance is disturbed; his thoughts, and the images of his fancy, are far more vivid than his actual perceptions. . . . Hence we see a great, an almost enormous, intellectual activity, and a proportionate aversion to real action consequent upon it."—Coleridge.

He is Emotional. His grief for his dead father is profound; he carries his image constantly in his mind.

"My father!—methinks I see my father."


Pity for the tortures endured by the suffering ghost is the feeling that first possesses him at his interview with it. He has all the sensibilities that belong to a meditative nature, and though it was not his way to be demonstrative yet he is unable to repress entirely the outward indications of that which is going on within him. He says truly,

"I have that within which passeth show." (I. ii. 35).

His emotion is shown by his irritability in this scene between himself, his uncle and his mother; it is evident in his weaknesses exhibited later on, sudden and violent
passions followed by complete exhaustion. After the murder of Polonius

"He weeps for what is done" (IV. i. 27).
"And thus awhile the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
His silence will sit drooping." (V. i. 275).

His apparent cruelty and rudeness to Ophelia resulted probably as much from his attempts to restrain his emotion as from any other single cause. His wavering attitude with respect to religion is due to a continual conflict going on within him between his emotions and his reason, between instinctive faith and intellectual doubt.

Hamlet is not merely or chiefly intellectual; the emotional side of his character is quite as important as the intellectual; his malady is as deep-seated in his sensibilities and in his heart as it is in the brain. If all his feelings translate themselves into thoughts, it is no less true that all his thoughts are impregnated with feeling."—Dowden.

HAMLET DURING THE ACTION OF THE PLAY.

The two characteristics which will perhaps most readily strike the student or the spectator of the play are Hamlet's settled Melancholy and his Irresolution. With his melancholy we may connect his sarcasm and his fits of depression; with his irresolution are closely allied his indolence, his doubts, his inconsistency, fatalism, impulsive action and even, to some extent, his assumed madness.

Hamlet's Melancholy. We have said that his natural disposition was to be cheerful (p. xx.). Circumstances, however, have conspired to throw over him a cloud of melancholy, which attends him almost throughout the play. He appears first in the drama with "dejected 'haviour' of the visage," mourning for his father. The Queen beseeches him

"Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust."
(I. ii. 70-71).

His uncle bids him "throw to earth this unprevailing woe." The company passes out and he is left alone. His first words afford an indication of the depths of despair to which he has fallen through grief and through indulgence in a mysterious foreboding of evil:

"O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!"
(I. ii. 129-130).
Polonius has observed his melancholy, and puts his own construction upon it—that it is a wrong one goes without saying,

"And he, repulsed (a short tale to make),
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;"

(II. ii. 147-148).

In conversation with his old school-fellows Hamlet describes, without accounting for, the change that has taken place within him.

I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you,—this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire,—why, it appears no other thing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.

(II. ii. 297-305).

Thus he has come to look upon all nature, physical and human, in which he once delighted, with a jaundiced eye. He speculates on death, and meditates suicide, he "walks four hours together" in the palace hall, his gait and visage bespeaking woe. The king fears him,

"There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;"

(III. i. 162-163).

After the Player's recitation he refers to his melancholy, ingeniously weaving it into one of the many excuses by which he habitually deceived himself as to the cause of his inaction. "Perhaps," he says, the devil

"Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
(As he is very potent with such spirits,)
Abuses me to damn me;"

(II. ii. 605-606).

He haunts graveyards, he is stirred to a passionate excitement at the sight of Laertes, "whose grief bears such an emphasis," and would "make a match with him in shedding tears," and then again "as patient as the female dove."

"His silence will sit drooping"

(V. i. 289).

He is Sarcastic. He who in former days was witty and humorous, now becomes bitterly sarcastic. He speaks of the king in terms of haughty disdain or of scornful disgust. During the interlude he takes a keen delight in lashing the king's conscience,

"'Tis a knavish piece of work: but what of that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not; let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung"

(III. ii. 227-230).
His mocking words enter like daggers in the ears of the queen, his mother.

"For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide?"  (III. iv. 189-191).

Under the cloak of madness he utters most cutting truths to Polonius, to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and plays satirically with the foppish courtier, Osric. He endangers his own safety by speaking words of double meaning to his uncle, the king, who has all the while been suspicious of him. "Farewell, dear mother," he says to him on leaving for England.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.
Ham. My mother: father and mother is man and wife;
man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother.  (IV. iii. 51-53).

The Causes of his Melancholy. First the death of the father whom he loved threw him into a profound grief, then the impropriety of his mother's behaviour, her ingratitude to the memory of her former husband, and her choice of such a man as Claudius to be her second husband offend his refined spirit, and afflict his soul. Add to these causes a suspicion of his uncle's guilt, afterwards converted into a certainty, and a consciousness of his duty of revenge, together with a feeling of the difficulty of performing this duty. All these causes, acting upon a nature formed for meditation and a tranquil life, throw him into a state of melancholy which soon becomes a permanent habit.

"It has been objected to the character of Hamlet, whose most striking feature is profound melancholy, that its keeping is broken in upon by an injudicious admixture of humour and gaiety; but he who is acquainted with the workings of the human heart, will be far, very far indeed, from considering this as any deviation from the truth of nature. Melancholy, when not the offspring of an ill-spent life . . . will sometimes spring with playful elasticity from the pressure of the heaviest burden, and dissipating, for a moment, the anguish of a breaking heart, will, like a sunbeam in a winter's day, illumine all around it with a bright but transient ray . . . an interchange which serves but to render the returning storm more deep and gloomy."—Drake.

Hamlet's Irresolution.

We shall consider this predominating feature of Hamlet's complex character under various aspects. After pointing out the different occasions upon which he exhibits it and his own consciousness of it, we shall show how it acts upon other phases of his character making him inconsistent, sceptical, a fatalist, cunning and even cruel. We shall then show how it brings its own punishment not only upon himself, but on others also, and finally we shall attempt an explanation as to how it was caused.
How Exhibited. Hamlet's irresolution is exhibited by his inaction on the following occasions:—

1. He does nothing immediately after receiving the Ghost's commands. We shall show later that his madness was not assumed with any view of furthering his revenge.

2. He allows two months to pass without taking any steps to compass his object.

3. He neglects his opportunity of killing the king while at prayer. His determination to allow the king to escape at such a moment is only part of his general indecision and irresolution.

4. He trusts rather to the firmer character of Horatio than to his own to watch the effect of the play upon the king. Having attained his purpose, he rejoices in the success of his stratagem, but this confirmation of his suspicions leads to no action on his part.

5. He allows himself to be sent to England, away from the object of his revenge.

6. The promptings of his heart bid him refuse to fight with Laertes (V. ii. 21), but he will not listen to the advice of Horatio and postpone the duel.

By His Own Confession. After meeting with the Players he shows that he is sensible of his weakness. Contrasting himself with the Actor, he says:—

"What would he do,  
Had he the motive and the cue for passion  
That I have?"  (II. ii. 561-563.)

... "For it cannot be  
But I am pigeon-livered and lack gall  
To make oppression bitter; or ere this,  
I should have fatted all the region kites  
With this slave's offal."  (II. ii. 579-583.)

He comes near the secret of his indecision in his famous soliloquy on death and suicide when he says:—

"Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;  
And enterprises of great pith and moment,  
With this regard, their currents turn awry,  
And lose the name of action."  (III. i. 80-86.)

When the Ghost comes in between himself and his terrified mother, he knows before it speaks that the visitation is "to whet his almost blunted purpose."
“Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?”

(III. iv. 106-108.)

Again the consciousness of his own irresolution strikes him most forcibly by contrast with the impetuous ardour of Fortinbras.

“How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge!”

(IV. iv. 32.)

he exclaims, and again, “Examples gross as earth exhort me” (IV. iv. 46).

“How stand I, then,
That have a father kill’d, a mother stained,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep?”

(IV. iv. 56.)

Finally, in conversation with Horatio, he shows how clearly it is his duty to slay the king that hath killed his father, stained his mother, excluded himself from the throne and angled for his life.

“And with such cozenage—is’t not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm? and is’t not to be damned,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?”

(V. ii. 67-70.)

“Ther is no indecision about Hamlet, as far as his own sense of duty is concerned; he knows well what he ought to do, and over and over again he makes up his mind to do it.” — Coleridge.

Effect of Irresolution on other Phases of Hamlet’s Character.

To such an extent does irresolution work upon the character of Hamlet that it becomes a habit with him, and, permeating his whole being, turns him away from what he once was, thus tending to give to the superficial reader an altogether false impression of his nature. In the following paragraphs we show to what extent his character changes under this influence.

1. His Inconsistency. Infirmity of purpose, joined to a natural nobility of instinct and impulse, cannot fail to lead to many inconsistencies. In this respect Hamlet resembles the great majority of mortals,

“Who see the right and do approve it too,
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue.” *

But not only are Hamlet’s actions inconsistent with his opinions, his purposes and his thoughts, but also his

* Compare Ovid Met. vii. 29.
thoughts themselves are inconsistent with each other. This kind of inconsistency is manifested generally in his reflections on matters connected with religion. We may discern it in

2. **His Scepticism.** At the beginning of the play he is an adherent of all the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church. He believes in purgatory, a hell and a devil, and in the miraculous power of confession, holy communion, and extreme unction. At one time he gives credibility to the re-appearance of the dead in order to reveal and punish murder, at another time he speaks of

"The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns."

(III. i. 76-77.)

At one time he declares that, "touching this vision here,"

"It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you."

(I. v. 122.)

At another time he strives to persuade himself that

"The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil."

(II. ii. 602.)

Towards the end of the play, reason almost ceases to be his guide. He has persuaded himself that

"Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well
When our deep plots do pall."

(V. ii. 8-9.)

His carefully laid schemes have proved abortive because, though full of purpose, he was "void of that quality of the mind which accomplishes purpose,"* and now he willingly allows himself to drift, and

3. **Becomes a Fatalist.** He "worships fatality, and he is apt to regard whatever pertains thereto as incontestable, solemn and beautiful. . . . The unbending, malignant goddess is more acceptable than the divinity, who only asks for an effort that shall avert disaster."† He excuses his inaction by attributing it to a decree of fate.

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will,"

(V. ii. 10-11.)

are the words with which he disclaims responsibility for his own dishonourable actions (e.g. the opening the sealed packet and sending his school-fellows to death). Before the duel with Laertes he again gives expression to his religion of Fatalism.

* Coleridge.
† Maestorlinck.
"There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. 
If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it 
will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come."
(V. ii. 219-222.)

"Hamlet has no firm belief either in himself or in anything else; 
from expressions of religious confidence he passes over to sceptical 
doubts. . . . He has even gone so far as to say, 'There is nothing 
either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.'"—Schlegel.

"Thus all through the play he wavers between materialism and 
spiritualism, between belief in immortality and disbelief, between 
reliance upon providence and a bowing under fate."—Dowden.

"Shakespeare's teaching is, that if the nobler-gifted man who 
stands at the head of the commonwealth, allows himself to be 
driven about by every wind of the occasion, instead of furthering 
his better aims with all his strength and energy of will, the 
wicked, on their part, will all the more easily carry out their own 
ends."—Jacob Fes.

4. His Cunning and Cruelty. As is the way with irresolute 
persons, Hamlet, when he acts, does so impulsively or in 
blind passion. The consequence is that he performs deeds 
suddenly of which he afterwards repents. Such deeds were 
the murder of Polonius and the struggle with Laertes in 
the grave. At other times he acts impulsively and after-
wards persuades himself that he has acted wisely. On the 
ship he acted before he could "make a prologue to his 
brains," and became the murderer of two innocent men. 
His impulsiveness is in reality but a sign of his irresolution. 
He follows his father's ghost in a state of wild excitement, 
uttering the threat,

"By heaven I'll make a ghost of him that lets me."
(I. iv. 85).

When the travelling players arrive in Elsinore he proposes 
immediate action.

"We'll e'en to 't, like French falconers, 
Fly at anything we see: we'll have a speech straight."
(II. ii. 429-430).

And when at last he performed his duty and stabbed the 
king the action was unpremeditated. But his irresolution 
has a worse effect upon his character than to make him 
only impulsive and passionate. It makes him also 
deceptive, a shrewd and cunning contriver. He sacrifices 
innocent men with cold premeditation and rejoices in his 
knavery.

"For 'tis the sport, to have the enginer 
Hoist with his own petard; and it shall go hard, 
But I will delive one yard below their mines, 
And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet, 
When in one line two crafts directly meet."
(III. iv. 206-210).
XXX. THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

"He who is so irritable an enemy to all dissimulation, falsehood, and cunning, venturing not upon the straight path to action, he himself takes the crooked way of cunning circumlocution and deceiving dissimulation."—Gervinus.

"He is made for honesty, and he is compelled to practice a shifting and subtle stratagem; thus he comes to waste himself in ingenuity and crafty device."—Dowden.

Results of Hamlet's Irresolution. To resist temptation is to strengthen character, to give way to it is to weaken the power of resistance. Hamlet gave way to his natural tendency to think rather than to act. Consequently his character deteriorated as we have already seen (pp. xxv. xxvi.). The effect of his irresolution upon himself is a continual torture of the mind which he expresses thus:

"Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting, That would not let me sleep: methought I lay Worse than the mutines in the bilboes." (V. ii. 4).

It resulted in his own death, and more than that, it involved the death of others, of the innocent as well as of the guilty. Horatio promises to explain the dismal sight with which the play concludes. "So shall you hear," he says,

"Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts, Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters, Of deaths put on by cunning, and forced cause; And, in this upshot, purposes mistook Fall'n on the inventors' heads. (V. ii. 381-385).

"In the first tumult of his feelings, and without adequate cause, he throws away the fair flower of Ophelia's love, which he himself had planted and watered; with inconsiderate rashness he kills the old dotard Polonius in mistake for the guilty king, and so brings upon himself the blame of causing Ophelia's madness and death. By a just retribution a tragic end overpowers Hamlet himself, so quickly and unexpectedly, that he has scarcely time for the hurried and precipitate accomplishment of his long meditated purpose."—Ulrici.

The Causes of Hamlet's Irresolution. The irresolution of Hamlet appears to have arisen from several causes, of which the following seem to us to be the predominant ones:

(1) He is naturally prone to think rather than to act. Being continually wrapped in thought he forgets action.

"And thus the native hue of resolution Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." (III. i. 81-82.)

But this cause alone is not enough to account for his indecision, for we know that the necessity for action was often borne in upon him.
(2) Moral scruples and a Christian spirit deterred him. The particular action that was required of him was of a nature most abhorrent to his sensitive and scrupulous spirit. He hesitates lest he should do

"such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on."

(III. ii. 377.)

"O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom."

(III. ii. 379-380.)

Consequently he was ever trying to find some way other than by using the direct means to his end.

(3) The feeling of the enormous difficulty of his task, which he expresses in the lines:

"The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!"

(I. v. 173-174.)

His vivid imagination exaggerated the difficulties, and his natural modesty, together with his previous mode of life, filled him with a sense of his own insufficiency.

"To me it is clear that Shakespeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to me to be composed. There is an oak-tree planted in a costly jar, which should have borne only pleasant flowers in its bosom; the root expands, the jar is shattered.

"A lovely, pure, noble and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear and must not cast away."—Goethe, Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship.

"Hamlet is called upon to assert moral order in a world of moral confusion and obscurity. He has not an open plain or a hillside on which to fight his battle; but a place dangerous and misleading, with dim and winding ways... In the widespread waste of corruption which lies around him, he is tempted to understand and detest things, rather than accomplish some limited practical service. In the unweeded garden of the world, why should he task his life to uproot a single weed?"—Dowden.

"He sees no course clear enough to satisfy his understanding."
—Blackwood's Magazine.

**Hamlet's Attitude towards Ophelia.** We think that Laertes is estimating Hamlet's conduct towards Ophelia by the standard of his own customary behaviour when he speaks of "the trifling of his favour," and bids her regard it as a pastime.

"Forward, not permanent; sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more."

(I. iii. 8-10.)
But even he did not—as some critics have done—charge Hamlet with practising conscious deception upon Ophelia.

"Perhaps he loves you now;
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will."  
(I. iii. 14-16.)

Of Ophelia's love for him there can be no doubt, although she never confesses it. She yields, perhaps, too ready an obedience to her brother and her father, but she certainly places a most implicit trust in the honourableness of her lover.

"My lord, he hath importuned me with love,
In honourable fashion."  
(I. iii. 110.)

The interview described by Ophelia, but not presented on the stage, takes place after Hamlet has seen his father's Ghost and received his injunctions. No doubt Hamlet on this occasion approached Ophelia with the intention, which he afterwards carries out, of renouncing woman, "the begetter of all evil in the world, who makes such monsters of wise men" (Cf. III. i. 139). The depth of the love he felt for her is clearly shown by the picture of the agony he suffered at taking leave of her, when

"He raised a sigh so pitiful and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
And end his being."  
(II. i. 92-94.)

He continues to love her, but he would not have her know it. When he says,

"Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remembered,"  
(III. i. 85-87.)

the words are not intended to reach her ears. When she turns to him he feigns madness again, perhaps with a view, as Lamb says, "to alienate Ophelia by affected discourtesies, so to prepare her mind for the breaking off of that loving intercourse, which can no longer find a place amidst business so serious as that which he has to do." We believe that he speaks from his heart of hearts when he exclaims:

"I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum."  
(V. i. 270-272.)

"His conduct to Ophelia is quite natural in his circumstances. It is that of assumed madness only. It is the effect of disappointed hope, of bitter regrets, of affection suspended, not obliterated, by the distractions of the scene around him. He could neither marry Ophelia, nor wound her mind by explaining the cause of his alienation, which he durst hardly trust himself to think of. In the harassed state of his mind, he could not have done much otherwise than he did."—Hazlitt.
"I do think, with submission, that the love of Hamlet for Ophelia is deep, is real, and is precisely the kind of love which such a man as Hamlet would feel for such a woman as Ophelia."
—Mrs. Jameson.
"He loved her more than a thousand brothers, with all their love put together could have done."—Heine.

Hamlet's Assumed Madness. The question is sometimes asked, Was Hamlet really mad, or did he merely assume madness? Common sense at once replies that he was perfectly sane, and that he feigned madness only that he might deceive others. Medical authorities are at variance with one another, probably owing to the difficulty they experience in attaching a precise and definite significance to the word madness.

We may consider his conduct under three phases.

(1) When he both appears and is perfectly sane.

(2) When he appears mad but is only feigning madness, as in

(a) His interview with Polonius, whom he wishes to deceive (II. ii.).

(b) His interview with Ophelia, whom he cannot trust with his secret (III. i.).

(c) His interview with Claudius, whom he wishes both to deceive and to punish (IV. iii.).

(3) When, under the immediate influence of some stupendous shock, his intellect staggers, but is not overthrown, as

(a) After seeing his father's spirit (I. v.).

(b) On hearing of Ophelia's death, and perceiving Laertes' manifestations of grief (V. i.).

It is only in this third phase that Hamlet's conduct lends any colour to the assumption that he is really mad, and not merely "mad in craft." We acknowledge, as he himself does, that on the first of the two occasions referred to his mind was disordered and his disposition horribly shaken

"With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls."
(I. iv. 56.)

And that on the second occasion he forgot himself, and that, too, for insufficient reason.

"But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me Into a towering passion."
(V. ii. 79-80.)

But if to be violently agitated, and in our agitation to perform actions which in our saner moments we should not dream of, if this is to be mad, which of us can say that he is sane?
The obvious reasons for considering Hamlet's madness as feigned, not real, are:

(1) His actions are perfectly sane until his interview with the Ghost. After this interview he warns his friends that he may perchance "put an antic disposition on."

(2) He appears mad only in the presence of those whom he wishes to deceive. He talks rationally and shews great intellectual power in conversation with Horatio, his schoolfellows, the Players, or himself.

(3) He earnestly and urgently exhorts his mother not to "lay that flatteringunction to her soul" that he is speaking to her "in madness," offering to prove to her his perfect sanity.

"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." (III. iv. 140-145.)

(4) When he does forget himself, he afterwards recognizes the fact and repents of it.

Motives for Assuming Madness.

"Harassed from without, and distracted from within, is it wonderful, if during his endeavour to conceal his thoughts, he should betray inattention to those around him: incoherence of speech and manner, . . . Hamlet was fully sensible how strange those involuntary improprieties must appear to others; he was conscious he could not suppress them; he knew he was surrounded with spies; and was justly apprehensive, lest his suspicions or purposes should be discovered."—Richardson.

To prevent these consequences, and at the same time to afford himself breathing time—for no plan of action immediately occurred to his mind, and he was always reluctant to perform actions—he counterfeits insanity.

"He assumes madness as a means of concealing his actual disturbance of mind. His over-excitability may betray him; but if it be a received opinion that his mind is unhinged, such an excess of over-excitement will pass unobserved and unstudied."—Dowden.

"The disguise which he had adopted was not accidentally chosen. The subtility of his intellect directed him to that tone of wayward sarcasm in which, while he appeared to others to be merely wandering, the bitterness of his soul might be relieved by the utterance of "wild and hurling words." But even in this disguise, his intellectual supremacy is constantly manifested."—Knight.

POLONIUS

Is a man who has grown grey in courts where he has imbibed many a lesson of servility, adulation, and worldly prudence. Of real wisdom he possesses not a trace, and be forfeits all claim to
the respect which his age ought to have gained for him, by his paltry cunning, garrulity, and

Overweening Self-confidence. He is, in fact, in his second childhood, or, as Rosencrantz says, "Happily he's the second time come" to his "swaddling clouts." All his actions betray his self-conceit, and he does not hesitate to proclaim his own high opinion of himself. He is confident that he has found out the cause of Hamlet's madness.

"Hath there been such a time, (I'd fain know that,) That I have positively said, 'Tis so; When it proved otherwise?" (II. ii. 154-156), he asks the king, and when the king replies, "Not that I know," continues,

"Take this from this, if this be otherwise: If circumstances lead me, I will find Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed Within the centre." (II. ii. 157-160).

And further he stakes his reputation as a statesman upon the truth of his statements.

"If he love her not, And be not from his reason fallen thereon, Let me be no assistant for a state, But keep a farm and carters" (II. ii. 165-168).

There is nothing he cannot do, if we may believe him. He poses as a critic of literature and the drama, and says that in his younger days he "was accounted a good actor." It is even a matter for boasting with him that in his youth he "suffered much extremity for love; very near this," referring to Hamlet's apparent distraction.

He is Garrulous and Foolish. Having fallen in love with the sound of his own voice he speaks on every subject, delights in puns and "foolish figures," uses many words in which to clothe little matter, forgets in the middle what he was saying, and with a perversity as strange as it is true to nature, utters wise maxims and sins against them in the same breath, as when he says,

"Since brevity is the soul of wit, And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes, I will be brief" (II. ii. 90-92).

and then by his loquacity draws upon himself the Queen's rebuke, "more matter with less art," and at another time eliciting Hamlet's ejaculation, "Those tedious old fools." His folly arises almost entirely from his self-conceit. He considers that his strength lies in penetration, whereas he was in reality most easily deceived. Being filled with a
most exalted notion of his own shrewdness, and feeling sure that Hamlet is mad, he quite fails to see that he himself is a laughing-stock and the object of the Prince's pointed satire. His folly is apparent to others besides Hamlet; hence when the latter bids the Player "follow that lord," he warns him at the same time.

"And look you mock him not" (II. ii. 545).

After Hamlet has slain Polonius in mistake for the king, having discovered his error he drags forth the corpse, and thus sums up his character in a few words,

"Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave"

(III. iv. 213-215).

As a Courtier. Polonius was just the man to suit the king. Faithful in service, not too scrupulous nor too penetrating, he is a most useful instrument in the hands of the greater villain Claudius, who speaks of him to Laertes with gratitude.

"The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father"

(I. ii. 47-49).

He serves his master with assiduity and officiousness, and declares,

"Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king"

(II. ii. 43-45).

For him, to be deceitful is to be wise, and he takes it to be the mark of a courtier, "too much proved."

"That with devotion's visage
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself"

(III. i. 47-49).

His Crooked Ways. "For crooked ways, for side-thrusts, for eaves-dropping, he has an unwearied predilection, to which he is at length sacrificed." He sets a spy upon his son's actions in Paris, and believes "it is a fetch of warrant." He thinks that to use a "bait of falsehood" in order to take "a earp of truth" is a token "of wisdom and of reach." In the end he falls a victim to his meddlesomeness and taste for eaves-dropping.

"Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;
Thou find'st it to be too busy is some danger."

(III. iv. 81-88).
**THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY. xxxvii.**

**His Worldly Wisdom.** As Goethe says, he speaks like a book when he is prepared beforehand, and like an ass when he utters the overflowings of his heart. His parting speech to Laertes comprises a collection of rules of conduct that are full of worldly wisdom. As long as he confines himself to generalities his advice may be safely followed, but when he advises in particular instances, as in the case of Hamlet's relations with Ophelia, he generally overshoots the mark. Yet even for his unwarranted suspicion, he has an excuse to offer in a maxim which sounds very much like wisdom.

"*Beshrew my jealousy!*

*It seems, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion.*

(II. i. 111-115).

As a Father he has been something of a martinet, exacting ready obedience from both his children. He loves them, of that there is no doubt, and he is anxious for them as for himself, that they should stand well with the world. Therefore, he has kept Ophelia apart from the demoralising tendencies of the court, and, therefore, he is anxious that Laertes should commit no act in Paris, by which his reputation might suffer. But his ideas of education are, to say the least, peculiar; immorality, gaming, drinking, or swearing are trifling offences in his opinion, but it is important that his son should "ply his music."

"Polonius is a perfect character in its kind; nor is there any foundation for the objections which have been made to the consistency of this part. It is said that he acts very foolishly and talks very sensibly. There is no inconsistency in that. Again, that he talks wisely at one time and foolishly at another, that his advice to Laertes is very excellent, and his advice to the King and Queen on the subject of Hamlet's madness very ridiculous. But he gives the one as a father and is sincere in it; he gives the other as a mere courtier, a busy-body, and is accordingly officious, garrulous and impertinent."—Hazlitt.

"A maxim is a conclusion upon observation of matters of fact, and is merely retrospective . . . Polonius is a man of maxims. While he is descanting on matters of past experience, as in that excellent speech to Laertes before he sets out on his travels, he is admirable; but when he comes to advise or project, he is a mere dotard. . . . A man of maxims only is like a cyclop with one eye, and that eye placed in the back of his head."—Coleridge.

"Arrived at a ripe age, the schooled courtier lacks not experience and observation, which he has carefully gathered and loquaciously gives forth; the self-conceit of emptiness is apparent in him, and with the same self-sufficiency he gives good precepts to his son, a lesson on human nature to his servant, and counsels to his king."—Gervinus.

"The shrewd, wary, subtle, pompous, garrulous old courtier."—Mrs. Jameson.
LAERTES is an impetuous youth "of great showing," "the card or calendar of the gentry," a man of action and the greatest possible contrast to Hamlet.

He is determined in the attainment of his object and unscrupulous as to the means he adopts to attain it. "By laboursome petition" he overbore his father's reluctance to allow him to return to Paris, and "at last," says Polonius,

"Upon his will I sealed my hard consent" (I. ii. 60).

He allows no obstacle to stand in the way of his revenge, and is willing even to cut the murderer's throat "in the church." He who claims to be "the continent of what part a gentleman should be" is deterred by no scruples of conscience, no considerations of honour. He envenoms the point of the sword with which he is to "play" with Hamlet.

"I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death" (IV. vii. 145-147).

Such is his determination that he can even exercise patience in the pursuit of his revenge. Having heard of the death of his father and his secret burial, he at once returned from France, but, being as yet doubtful as to the cause of Polonius' death and suspecting no one, he

"Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds" (IV. v. 80).

until suspicion is cast upon the King as the author of Polonius' death. Then he allows free play to

his Impetuosity.

"The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbeares your officers" (IV. v. 90-93).

No dread of "the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns" puzzles his will. "To this point I stand," he says

"That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged
Most throughly for my father" (IV. v. 122-124).

Not all the world shall stay him, and for his means, he'll husband them so well

"They shall go far with little" (IV. v. 127).
At the sight of Ophelia's madness his frenzy is still further excited.

"By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turn the beam"  (IV. v. 144-145).

No wonder then that the King afterwards confided to his wife

"How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again"

(IV. vii. 191-192).

With characteristic impetuosity and violence he shews his grief on hearing of Ophelia's death. He does not, for ever, with vailed lids seek for his father and his sister in the dust. Tears gush forth.

"Nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will"  (IV. vii. 186-187).

When she is laid in her grave he leaps in after her to catch her once more in his arms, and his grief bears such an emphasis, says Hamlet, that it

"Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand,
Like wonder-wounded hearers"  (V. i. 257-258).

He is addicted to pleasure and to wildness. Rumours of his wildness must have reached the ears of Ophelia; otherwise the meek and gentle maiden could never have replied to his fraternal advice with her one almost spirited speech,

"Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whilst, like a puffed and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede"  (I. iii. 47-51).

He had come from the gay city to see the coronation, and as soon as that function was over he returned thither with all possible speed. His father, knowing him to be addicted to

"Such wanton, wild, and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty"  (II. i. 22-24).

had with reluctance allowed him to return to Paris, but, having given his permission, he could not rest without sending Reynaldo to spy out his actions there; so little confidence had the mistrustful father in the son's prudence and self-restraint.

"Laertes is the cultured young gentleman of the period. He is accomplished, chivalric, gallant, but the accomplishments are superficial, the chivalry theatrical, the gallantry of a showy kind. He is master of events up to a certain point, because he sees their
coarse, gaudy, superficial significance. It is his part to do fine things and make fine speeches. . . .
No overweight of thought, no susceptibility of conscience retard the action of the young gallant. He readily falls in with the king's scheme of assassination, and adds his private contribution of villainy—the venom on his rapier's point."—Dowden.

CONTRAST BETWEEN LAERTE AND HAMLET.

Laertes is a man of action; Hamlet a speculative philosopher. Laertes leaves no time for thought but rushes impetuously towards his object; Hamlet is too much taken up with thought to allow of action. Laertes overcomes every obstacle and uses every opportunity; Hamlet has fewer obstacles to overcome and neglects every opportunity. Laertes sullies his knightly honour by poisoning his weapon; Hamlet is of a nature so free and generous that he will not so much as "peruse the foils." With Hamlet revenge was a religious duty, a duty to his country, to his murdered father and to himself; with Laertes it was a matter of honour only. And what a contrast there was between the murdered fathers! the one

"A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man"

(III. iv. 60-62.)

the other a "foolish, prating knave," a ridiculous, tedious, prying, self-complacent sinner.

"Laertes is the opposite and the pendant to Hamlet. The position of both is nearly the same. Laertes, too, has to avenge the death of a father and sister. His soul, however, kindles at once with passionate ardour. Rejecting all deliberation, his resolutions burst forth at once into action, and it is with difficulty that the persuasive eloquence of the King succeeds in restoring him to self-possession, and the adoption of artifice and dissimulation."—ULRIC.

"Laertes, somewhat of a hero à la moço, a fencer, a knight of honour of the French school, of temperament as choleric as Hamlet's is melancholy, a man utterly unendowed with the splendid physical and mental gifts of Hamlet, flees from the distant Paris to Denmark to avenge the death of his father."—Gervinus.

OPHELIA.

"Rose of May," "sweet maid," she possessed more of the qualities of the heart than of the head. Although she appears but rarely in the play, and though half the time she is "divided from herself and her fair judgment,"

"Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts"

(IV. v. 77.)

yet her influence is felt throughout the play, and her purity and innocence afford relief and repose amidst the worldliness, the mystery and the dissimulation which characterise most of the other personages of the drama.
THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY. xli.

She is Childlike and Innocent. Unlike her father and her brother she possessed no knowledge of the world or of its wickedness, and has remained untouched by the vitiating influences of court life.

"Unsifted in such perilous circumstance"
(I. iii. 102.)

and hence, when she has fallen in love with Hamlet and he with her, she devotes herself, heart and soul, to her lover, and, until restrained by the influence of her father and brother,

"Have of her audience been most free an't bounteous"
(I. iii. 93.)

Her innocent mind contains no secret corner, and she answers readily every question put to her on the subject of her lover.

We must not suppose that Hamlet's strictures on women (III. i.) were addressed specially to Ophelia or that they implied any stain on the virtue or honesty of the docile maid. His upbraiding were directed against the sex in general, and were inspired most probably by the recent conduct of his own mother. It is more than possible also, that Ophelia acted her part so ill that Hamlet was able to see from her gestures and behaviour that the meeting was being watched. His one anxiety appears to have been that her innocence and purity might remain unsptoned by contact with the world, and hence he urges her, "Get thee to a nunnery... We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery." Laertes, frivolous and shallow though he be himself, can yet appreciate and reverence the beauty and purity of his sister's brief life. "Lay her i' the earth," he commands the bigoted priest.

"And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling" 
(V. i. 240-243.)

We can hardly wish her to have been in any wise other than she was; yet if she had a fault, it was that she appeared at times

Too Docile. She listens meekly to her brother's precepts and promises.

"I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart" 
(I. iii. 45-46.)

And in all things she obeys her father, no matter how much it costs her to disobey the promptings of her heart. She shews him the letters that are in her keeping and repels
others, and by command, denies Hamlet access to her. She even allows herself to be used as a snare whereby the Prince’s secrets may be discovered, and offers no protest when Polonius bids her play her part of dissimulation, reading on a book.

“That show of such an exercise may colour
Her loneliness”

(III. i. 45).

Her Love for Hamlet was stronger than her discretion. Although she never declares her love in so many words, yet we know that her heart was given entirely to him. We can believe that “she would hang on him,”

“As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on”

(I. ii. 144-145).

We know that she “suck’d the honey of his music vows,” and that his loss to her made her “of ladies most deject and wretched.” And yet we may be sure that her love was not such that Hamlet could derive strength from it, for it was not such that could enable her to understand him. The Queen, we know, hopes in vain that her virtues
to the honour of them both. She was born to live in an atmosphere of calm and comfort, not to strive with the conflicting forces of the world.

“The Margaret of Göethe and Ophelia of Shakespeare had per-force to yield mutely to fate, for they were so feeble that each gesture they witnessed seemed fate’s own gesture to them. But yet, had they only possessed some fragment of Antigone’s strength—the Antigone of Sophocles—would they not then have transformed the desires of Hamlet and Faust as well as their own”—Maeterlinck.

Her Madness. Unlike the apparently random utterances of Hamlet, whose speech “was not like madness” but had method in it, Ophelia’s “speech is nothing,” or carries “but half-sense.” She alternates, between laughter and tears, and in her thoughts, flowers and prettiness are strangely mixed up with the wickedness of the world’s ways. Her conversation about her father is “interlarded with sweet songs.” She becomes a mere picture, “incapable of her own distress,” but in her ruin, beautiful still as ever.

“Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself;
She turns to favour and to prettiness”

(IV. v. 175-176).

As Mrs. Jameson has said: “It is not the suspension, but the utter destruction of the reasoning powers; it is the total imbecility which, as medical people well know, frequently follows some terrible shock to the spirits,
Constance is frantic; Lear is mad; Ophelia is insane. Her sweet mind lies in fragments before us—a pitiful spectacle! . . . . It belonged to Shakespeare alone so to temper such a picture that we can endure to dwell upon it."

"Ophelia—poor Ophelia! Oh, far too soft, too good, too fair, to be cast among the briers of this working-day world, and fall and bleed upon the thorns of life! What should be said of her? for eloquence is mute before her! Like a strain of sad, sweet music, which comes floating by us on the wings of night and silence, and which we rather feel than hear—like the exhalation of the violet, dying even upon the sense it charms—like the snowflake, dissolved in air before it has caught a stain of earth—like the light surf severed from the billow, which a breath disperses; such is the character of Ophelia."—Mrs. Jameson.

HORATIO,
in contrast to all the other characters of the play, is the representative of common-sense and honesty. He is the one man upon whose judgment Hamlet can rely when all others fail him. He alone affords a happy contradiction to the Player's general statement,

"The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies"

(III. ii. 191-192).

Perfect Calmness of Mind and Equability of Temperament are his chief characteristics. He is nothing in extremes. A scholar but not a pedant; he is sceptical, but open to conviction; though not essentially a man of action, as Fortinbras was, he was able to bear his part in the action of the world. He is great in his power of endurance, for he has been—

"As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Has ta'en with equal thanks: and blessed are those,
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please"

(III. ii. 65-70).

Hamlet confides in his discretion and relies upon his calmness and absence of bias to observe his uncle's demeanour during the acting of the play. He resembles Hamlet in his hatred of all that is shallow, affected or false, and does not trouble to conceal his contempt for the "lapwing" Osric. He is the soul of honour, but holds in no esteem the world's false notions of honour. Therefore, he begs of Hamlet to postpone his fencing bout with Laertes, because he sees that the mind of his friend is not attuned
to such a contest, and because he discerns disaster in the issue. Being "more an antique Roman than a Dane," he possesses the firmness of heart, and carelessness about his own life of a Brutus or a Cato, and would have emulated their example and died with his friend had not Hamlet reminded him that there remained for him a duty yet to perform in this world.

As Hamlet's Friend. He is the only man of all those by whom Hamlet was surrounded who seeks no material advantage for himself. He possessed the entire confidence of the prince, and into his bosom Hamlet unburdened himself of "the fulness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce." From Horatio, Hamlet derived the support he needed to preserve what balance of mind he still retained; to Horatio he communicated his suspicions, his griefs, and his designs; without Horatio's sympathy, he would have fallen into a condition of permanent despair and pessimism, from which no effort could have aroused him. And Horatio loved Hamlet as his own life; he alone was fully conscious of the true nobility of the prince's character, and therefore the poet has appropriately given it to him to speak words of praise over his dead body which recall to us our first impressions of the noble son of an excellent father,

"Now cracks a noble heart: good night, sweet prince; And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest"

(V. ii. 359-360).

"The qualities that distinguish Horatio, and render him worthy of the esteem of Hamlet, are not affluence, nor pageantry, nor gay accomplishments, nor vivacity, nor even wit, and uncommon genius, too often allied to an impetuous temper; he is distinguished by that equanimity and independence of soul which arise from governed and corrected passions, from a sound and discerning judgment."—Richardson.

"Horatio's equanimity, his evenness of temper, is like solid land to Hamlet after the tossings and tumult of his own heart."—Dowden.

FORTINBRAS,

the nephew of the King of Norway, a prince, "delicate and tender" but spirited and ambitious, forms a contrast to both Hamlet and Horatio. He is indeed

The Man of Action of the play who must always have some project on hand, and is never happy unless engaged in "some enterprise that hath a stomach in it." Being, as Horatio says,

"Of unimproved metal hot and full" (I. i. 96.)

he engages in martial enterprises merely for the sake of fighting, not for the material advantage he may gain from
victory. He furnishes Hamlet with an example which the latter is quick to perceive and to admire, but powerless to follow. "Examples gross as earth, exhort me," says Hamlet,

"Witness this army, of such mass and charge,
   Led by a delicate and tender prince;
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,
   Makes mouths at the invisible event;
Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,
   To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell"

(IV. iv. 47-53).

He is obedient to his uncle, the King of Norway, who, appreciating his spirit of adventure, pardons his indiscretion and furnishes him with assistance in order that he may satisfy his craving for action. As he is single-minded and keeps his object ever before his eyes,

He is Successful. He returns successful from his expedition against Poland, an expedition

"That hath in it no profit but the name"

(IV. iv. 19.)

and receives Hamlet's dying voice for his election to the sovereignty of Denmark. His whole heart is wrapped up in soldiery, the sound of war is music to him, scenes of death a "feast." "Such a sight as this," he says, referring to the scene of carnage with which the play concludes,

"Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss"

(V. ii. 402).

Being a successful leader he must have been a good judge of character, and though Hamlet in the play exhibits very few of the qualities of a great soldier, still the commendation of Fortinbras contributes much towards raising our final impression of the Danish prince. He grieves over the series of disasters that has made his own fortunes, and pays a soldier's tribute to Hamlet.

"Let four captains
   Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
   To have proved most royally"

(V. ii. 395-398).

"With none of the rare qualities of the Danish Prince, he excels him in plain grasp of ordinary fact. Shakespeare knows that the success of these men who are limited, definite, positive, will do no dishonour to the failure of the rarer natures to whom the problem of living is more embarrassing, and for whom the tests of the world are stricter and more delicate."—Dowden.

OSRIC

is the representative of the showy and fashionable courtier of Elizabeth's reign rather than a type belonging to any period in the history of Denmark. His wealth and terri-
torial possessions have sufficed to procure him a position at court,—"he hath much land, and fertile"—his slender intellectual equipment, together with a desire to distinguish himself from ordinary mortals, have led him to ape, to the best of his ability, the latest fashion set at the court by a few brilliant spirits, scholars and litterati (Lily and his fellow-Euphuists); but, as is the way with imitators and converts, he goes further than his models whose purposes he misunderstands. He mistakes extravagance and absurdity of diction for wit, ridiculous formality for true politeness and courtliness, affectation for originality.

"Thus has he (and many more of the same breed, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out" (V. ii. 190-195).

He is superficial and shallow, forward and insincere. He either fails to see or pretends not to see that he is a mark for the contempt of Horatio and a butt for the satire and mimicry of Hamlet. Although it is not directly stated in the play, that he was a party to the treachery of Laertes, we are, nevertheless, led to infer that he was conscious of it, for it was he who handed the foils to the combatants, and it was to him that Laertes, dying, said,

"Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric; I am justly killed with mine own treachery"

(V. ii. 307-308.)

a confession he receives without betraying any mark of astonishment.

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN

were fellow-students with Hamlet at Wittenberg, and were much beloved by him. "Good gentlemen," says the Queen,

"he hath much talked of you; And, sure I am, two men there are not living To whom he more adheres" (II. ii. 19-21).

They are received with cordiality by the Prince, who meets them freely and without reserve until he perceives that they have suffered themselves to be corrupted by the King. They are typical of the class of men whose inclinations are good enough, but who are without the force of character necessary even to follow their own inclinations. They are, in fact, so weak that they cannot even practice villainy with success. "You were sent for," says Hamlet, "and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour" (II. ii. 280-282)
They commit no actual crime in the play, and are apparently no worse than the society in which they move. But they "soak up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities; he keeps them, like an ape doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed; when he needs what you have gleaned," says Hamlet, "it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again" (IV. ii. 15-21).

They are fools more than they are knaves, but Shakespeare knew that folly is often more harmful in the world than knavery. When death is meted out to them as a punishment for their base servility, Hamlet satisfies himself with the reflection,

"Why, man, they did make love to this employment; They are not near my conscience; their defeat Does by their own insinuation grow"

(V. ii. 57-59).

He feels no compunction at their fate, and we ourselves feel that though their punishment was severe, they left the world no poorer for their loss.

Wilhelm Meister translates Hamlet and adapts it for the stage; a difficulty arises in finding characters to fill all the parts and Serlo, the stage manager, suggests that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern should be compressed into one. "Heaven preserve me from all such curtailments!" answered Wilhelm, "they destroy at once the sense and the effect. What these two persons are and do, it is impossible to represent by one. In such small matters, we discover Shakespeare's greatness. These soft approaches, this smirking and bowing, this assenting, wheedling, flattering, this whisking agility, this wagging of the tail, this illness and emptiness, this legal knavery, this ineptitude and insipidity,—how can they be expressed by a single man? There ought to be at least a dozen of these people, if they could be had: for it is only in society that they are anything; they are society itself, and Shakespeare showed no little wisdom and discernment in bringing in a pair of them."—Goethe.

**THE GRAVEDIGGERS** are characters interesting from many points of view. They represent the lower stratum in the social organization of the times—and of all times—and so help to complete the picture of society presented in the play; they afford relief also to the mind of spectator or reader from the excitement and tension of preceding scenes. They belong to the type of workmen with which we are familiar in the present day. They sing and dally over their work, they argue with one another and discuss topics which they cannot comprehend, but to which, nevertheless, they bring a considerable amount of common-sense. They are tinged with socialism and are at enmity with privilege, freely expressing their views on the legality of Ophelia's burial in sanctified ground. Hamlet remarks of them, "By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked, that the ten
of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibes" (V. i. 188). The First Clown seeks to show his cleverness and ingenuity in words—"How absolute the knave is!"—he has caught the trick of the age, and can reason and philosophise with the prince of philosophers.

THE GHOST.

"I am thy father's spirit" . . . (I. v. 1).

"The awful horror excited by the foregoing passage, is accomplished by simplicity of expression, and by the uncertainty of the thing described. The description is indirect, and by exhibiting a picture of the effects which an actual view of the real object would necessarily produce in the spectator, it affects us more strongly than by a positive enumeration of the most dreadful circumstances. The imagination left to her own inventions, overwhelmed with obscurity, travels far into the regions of error, into the abysses of fiery and unfathomable darkness."—Richardson.
HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

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Dramatis Personæ.

| CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.       | REYNALDO, Servant to Polonius. |
| HAMLET, Son to the former King, and Nephew to the present. | A Captain. |
| HORATIO, Friend of HAMLET.      | Ambassadors. |
| POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain.     | Ghost of HAMLET's Father. |
| LAERTES, his Son.               | FORTINBRAS, Prince of Norway. |
| VOLTIMAND,                      | Two Clowns, Grave-diggers. |
| CORNELIUS,                      | GERTRUDE, Queen of Denmark. |
| ROSENCRANTZ, Courtiers.         | and Mother to HAMLET. |
| GUILDENSTERN,                   | OPHelia, Daughter to Polonius. |
| OSRIC,                          | Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Sailors, Messengers, and Attendants. |
| MARCELLUS, Officers.            | |
| BERNARDO, Officers.             | |
| FRANCISCO, a Soldier.           | |

Scene: Elsinore.

ACT I.

Scene I.—Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle.

FRANCISCO at his post. Enter BERNARDO.

BERNARDO. Who's there?
FRANCISCO. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.
BERNARDO. Long live the king!
FRANCISCO. Bernardo?
BERNARDO. He.
FRANCISCO. You come most carefully upon your hour.
BERNARDO. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed,
   Francisco.
Francisco. For this relief much thanks: ’tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Bernardo. Have you had quiet guard?

Francisco. Not a mouse stirring. 10

Bernardo. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Francisco. I think I hear them.—Stand! Who’s there?

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Horatio. Friends to this ground.

Marcellus. And liegemen to the Dane.

Francisco. Give you good night.

Marcellus. O! farewell, honest soldier:

Who hath relieved you?

Francisco. Bernardo hath my place.

Give you good night. [Exit.

Marcellus. Holla! Bernardo!

Bernardo. Say, what, is Horatio there?

Horatio. A piece of him.

Bernardo. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

Marcellus. What, has this thing appeared again tonight?

Bernardo. I have seen nothing.

Marcellus. Horatio says ’tis but our fantasy,

And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night;
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes, and speak to it.


Bernardo. Sit down awhile; 30

And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen.
Horatio. Well, sit we down, And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Bernardo. Last night of all, When yond same star, that's westward from the pole, Had made his course to illume that part of heaven Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one—

Marcellus. Peace! break thee off;—look, where it comes again!

Enter Ghost.

Bernardo. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

Marcellus. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Bernardo. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Horatio. Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

Bernardo. It would be spoke to.

Marcellus. Question it, Horatio.

Horatio. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark Did sometimes march? by heaven, I charge thee, speak!

Marcellus. It is offended.

Bernardo. See, it stalks away.

Horatio. Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak! [Exit Ghost.

Marcellus. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Bernardo. How now, Horatio! you tremble, and look pale:
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on't?

Horatio. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Marcellus. Is it not like the king?

Horatio. As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frowned he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polack on the ice.
'Tis strange!

Marcellus. Thus, twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Horatio. In what particular thought to work I know not;
But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Marcellus. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land;
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint labourer with the day:
Who is't that can inform me?

Horatio. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appeared to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto pricked on by a most emulate pride,
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteemed him)
Did slay this Fortinbras: who, by a sealed compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seized of; to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gagèd by our king; which had returned
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant
And carriage of the article designed,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras.
Of unimproved metal hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
Sharked up a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in't: which is no other
(As it doth well appear unto our state)
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsative, those 'foresaid lands
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Bernardo. I think it be no other but even so:
Well may it sort, that this portentous figure
Comes arm'd through our watch—so like the king
That was, and is, the question of these wars.

Horatio. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
As stars with trains of fire, and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
And even the like precurse of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates,
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.

Re-enter Ghost.

But soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me:
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid.
C, speak!
Or if thou hast uphoard in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,  

[Toasts crows.

Speak of it: stay, and speak!—Stop it, Marcellus.

Marcellus. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?  140

Horatio. Do, if it will not stand.

Bernardo. 'Tis here!

Horatio. 'Tis here!  [Exit Ghost.

Marcellus. 'Tis gone!

We do it wrong, being so majestic,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Bernardo. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Horatio. And then it started, like a guilty thing

Upon a fearful summons. I have heard
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine: and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

Marcellus. It faded on the crowing of the cock.

Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long:
And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm;
So hallowed and so gracious is the time.

Horatio. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.

But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

_Marcellus._ Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently.  

[Exeunt.

_SCENE II._—_A Room of State in the Castle_

_Enter the King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, Voltimand, Cornelius, Lords, and Attendants._

_King._ Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death

_The memory be green_; and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our _sometime_ sister, now our queen,
The imperial _jointress_ of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere with a _defeated_ joy,—
With one _auspicious_, and one _dropping_ eye,
With mirth in funeral, and with _dirge_ in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and _dole_,—
Taken to wife: nor have we herein _barred_
Your better _wisdoms_, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, _that you know_, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak _supposal_ of our worth,
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be _disjoint_ and out of frame,
_1_ Colleaguèd with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not failed to _pester_ us with message,
_Importing_ the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother.—So much for him

_1_ Co-operated with the idle fancy he entertained of turning the occasion to his advantage.
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting:
Thus much the business is. We have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew’s purpose, to suppress
His further gait herein: in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject: and we here despatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearing of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope
Of these dilated articles allow.
Farewell; and let your haste commend your duty.
Cornelius. | In that, and all things, will we show
Voltimand. | our duty.
King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.
[Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.

And now, Laertes, what’s the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is’t, Laertes?

You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice: what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laertes. | My dread lord,

Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation;
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father’s leave? What says
Polonius?

Polonius. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow
leave

1 Speak of any reasonable request to the King of Denmark.
By laboursome petition; and, at last,
Upon his will I sealed my hard consent:
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son—

Hamlet. [Aside] A little more than kin, and less
than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Hamlet. Not so, my lord; I am too much i’ the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not, for ever, with thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know’st ’tis common—all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Hamlet. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

Hamlet. Seems, madam! Nay, it is; I know not
“seems.”
’Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly. These, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. ’Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,
Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father:
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound,
In filial obligation, for some term
To do obsequious sorrow: but to persever
In obstinate condolence is a course
Of impious stubbornness; ’tis unmanly grief:
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven;
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient;
An understanding simple and unschooled:
For what we know must be, and is as common.
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day,
"This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe; and think of us
As of a father: for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire:
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

Hamlet. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heaven shall bruise again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder.—Come away.

[Exeunt all except Hamlet.

Hamlet. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the *uses* of this world!
Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it *merely*. That it should come to this!
But two months dead!—nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother,
That he *might* not *betwixt* the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month,—
Let me not think on't,—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A *little* month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she followed my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears;—why she, even she,—
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourned longer,—married with mine uncle,
My father's brother; but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules: within a month;
Ere yet the salt of most *unrighteous* tears
Had left the flushing in her *galled* eyes,
She married:—O, most wicked speed, to *post*
With such *dexterity* to incestuous sheets!
It is not, *nor* it *cannot* come to, good:
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

*Enter* Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo.

**Horatio.** Hail to your lordship!

**Hamlet.** I am glad to see you well:

**Horatio,—or I do forget myself.**

**Horatio.** The same, my lord, and your *poor* servant ever.

**Hamlet.** Sir, my good friend; I'll *change* that name with you:

'And what make *you* from Wittenbürg, Horatio?

**Marcellus.** My good lord,—

'What are you doing away from Wittenbürg?
Hamlet. I am very glad to see you. Good even, sir.—

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Horatio. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Hamlet. I would not hear your enemy say so, Nor shall you do mine ear that violence, To make it truster of your own report Against yourself: I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore?

Horatio. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Hamlet. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Horatio. Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

Hamlet. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked meats Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven Ere I had ever seen that day, Horatio!—

My father,—methinks I see my father.

Horatio. O, where, my lord?

Hamlet. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Horatio. I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

Hamlet. He was a man, take him for all in all,

I shall not look upon his like again.

Horatio. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Hamlet. Saw who?

Horatio. My lord, the king your father.

Hamlet. The king, my father!

Horatio. Season your admiration for a while

With an attent ear, till I may deliver,

Upon the witness of these gentlemen,

This marvel to you.

Hamlet. For God's love, let me hear.

Horatio. Two nights together had these gentlemen, Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,

In the dead vast and middle of the night,

Been thus encountered. A figure like your father,

 Armed at all points exactly, cap-à-pè,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walked
By their oppressed and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distilled
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them the third night kept the watch:
Where, as they had delivered, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes: I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.

Hamlet. But where was this?

Marcellus. My lord, upon the platform where we
watched.

Hamlet. Did you not speak to it?

Horatio. My lord, I did;
But answer made it none: yet once, methought,
It lifted up its head, and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak:
But, even then, the morning cock crew loud;
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanished from our sight.

Hamlet. 'Tis very strange.

Horatio. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Hamlet. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

Marcellus. We do, my lord.

Bernardo. Armed, say you?

Marcellus. Armed, my lord.

Bernardo. From top to toe?

Marcellus. My lord, from head to foot.

Bernardo. Then saw you not his face?

Horatio. O yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

Hamlet. What, looked he frowningly?
Horatio. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.
Hamlet. Pale, or red?
Horatio. Nay, very pale.
Hamlet. And fixed his eyes upon you?
Horatio. Most constantly.
Hamlet. I would I had been there!
Horatio. It would have much amazed you.
Hamlet. Very like.

Very like. Stayed it long?
Horatio. While one with moderate haste might tell a
hundred.

Marcellus. } Longer, longer.
Bernardo. }
Horatio. Not when I saw it.
Hamlet. His beard was grizzled? no? 240
go grey
Horatio. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silvered.

Hamlet. I will watch to-night;
Perchance 'twill walk again.

Horatio. I warrant it will.

Hamlet. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto concealed this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still,
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue:
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Hamlet. Your loves, as mine to you: farewell.

[Exeunt Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo.

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

[Exit.
Scene III.—A Room in Polonius’ House.

Enter Laertes and Ophelia.

Laertes. My necessaries are embarked: farewell!
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Ophelia. Do you doubt that?

Laertes. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

Ophelia. No more but so?

Laertes. Think it no more:
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now;
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
His greatness weighed, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and the health of the whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head: then, if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs;
Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure open

* Is able to carry his words into effect.
To his unmastered importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
1 And keep you in the rear of your affection.
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes;
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclosed;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary, then; best safety lies in fear:
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Ophelia. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whilst, like a puffed and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede.

Laertes. O, fear me not.
I stay too long:—but here my father comes.

Enter Polonius.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Polonius. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stayed for. There,—my blessing with you!

[laying his hand on Laertes' head]

And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;

---

1 "Do not advance as far as your affection would lead you" (Johnson).
2 Tried after having adopted them.
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatched, unsledged comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
Bear't, that the opposed may beware of thee. Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
And they in France, of the best rank and station,
Are most select and generous, chief in that.
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all,—to thine ownself be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

Laertes. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Polonius. The time invites you; go, your servants attend.

Laertes. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Ophelia. 'Tis in my memory locked,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laertes. Farewell. [Exit Laertes.

Polonius. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Ophelia. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Polonius. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:
If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution,) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Ophelia. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.
Polonius. Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?
Ophelia. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.
Polonius. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or,—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus,—you'll tender me a fool.
Ophelia. My lord, he hath importuned me with love,
In honourable fashion.
Polonius. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.
Ophelia. And hath given countenance to his speech,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.
Polonius. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,—
You must not take for fire. From this time
Be somewhat scantier of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young;
And with a larger tether may he walk
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,—
Not of that dye which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,
The better to beguile. This is for all,—
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,

These blazes (fires of passion) are like flashes giving more light than heat, and which go out even while the promise is being made,
Have you so slander any moment’s leisure,
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to’t, I charge you: come your ways.

Ophelia. I shall obey, my lord.  

[Exeunt.]

Scene IV.—The Platform.

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.

Hamlet. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
Horatio. It is a nipping and an eager air.
Hamlet. What hour now?
Horatio. I think it lacks of twelve.
Marcellus. No, it is struck.
Horatio. Indeed? I heard it not: then it draws near the season Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.

What does this mean, my lord?

Hamlet. The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out The triumph of his pledge.

Horatio. Is it a custom?

Hamlet. Ay, marry, is’t:
But to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honoured in the breach than the observance.

1 This heavy-headed revel, east and west,

1 These drinking habits of ours cause other nations to overlook our good qualities and to regard us as drunkards. So with individuals: some particular trait (vicious mole)—either inherited at birth and therefore no fault of the man, developing (o’ergrowth) some disposition that proves too strong for him, or brought about by some bad habit that outweighs (o’erleavens) his pleasant manners—no matter if inherited (nature’s livery) or an acquired habit (fortune’s star)—is enough to cause most people to judge the man (general censure) by this particular defect, and to overlook his other qualities (their virtues else), though they be many (infinite) and full of goodness (pure as grace).
Makes us traduced and taxed of other nations:
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and, indeed, it takes
From our achievements, though performed at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin,)
By the o’ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or by some habit, that too much o’er-leavens
The form of plausible manners;—that these men,—
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature’s livery, or fortune’s star,—
Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo,)
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: the dram of base
Doth all the noble substance often dout,
To his own scandal.

Enter Ghost.

Horatio. Look, my lord! it comes.
Hamlet. Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damned,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com’st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee: I’ll call thee Hamlet,
King, Father, Royal Dane: O, answer me!
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urned,
Hath opened his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again! What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,
Revisit’st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,
So horridly to shake our disposition,
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[The Ghost beckons Hamlet.

Horatio. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Marcellus. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

Horatio. No, by no means.

Hamlet. It will not speak; then will I follow it.

Horatio. Do not, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again:—I'll follow it.

Horatio. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetle's o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,
And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.

Hamlet. It waves me still.—Go on; I'll follow thee.

Marcellus. You shall not go, my lord.

Hamlet. Hold off your hands. 80

Horatio. Be ruled; you shall not go.

Hamlet. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.

[Ghost beckons.

Still am I called:—unhand me, gentlemen;—

[Breaking from them.

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me:—
I say, away!—Go on; I’ll follow thee.

[Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.]

Horatio. He waxes desperate with imagination.
Marcellus. Let’s follow; ’tis not fit thus to obey him.
Horatio. Have after.—To what issue will this come?

Marcellus. (Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.)

Horatio. Heaven will direct it.
Marcellus. Nay, let’s follow him.

[Exeunt.]

Scene V.—A more remote Part of the Platform.

Re-enter Ghost and Hamlet.

Hamlet. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak; I’ll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Hamlet. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Hamlet. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not; but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Hamlet. Speak; I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Hamlet. What?

Ghost. I am thy father’s spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,
And, for the day, confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;
Thy knotted and combinèd locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine:
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood.—List, list, O list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love——

Hamlet. O God!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Hamlet. Murder?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Hamlet. Haste me to know it, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
’Tis given out that, sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abused: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father’s life
Now wears his crown.

Hamlet. O my prophetic soul! my uncle!

Ghost. But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;
Brief let me be.—Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body;
And, with a sudden vigour, it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter barked about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother’s hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once despatched:
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled;
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursu’st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught leave her to heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And ‘gins to pale his ineffectual fire:
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me.
[Exit.
Hamlet. O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
And shall I couple hell?—O fie!—Hold, hold, my heart!
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee?
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I’ll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmixed with baser matter: yes, by heaven!
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables, my tables—meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least I’m sure it may be so in Denmark: [ Writing.
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is, “Adieu, adieu! remember me”:
I have sworn’t.
Horatio. [ Within.] My lord! my lord
Lord Hamlet!  
Heaven secure him!  
So be it!  
Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!  
Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

How is't, my noble lord?  
What news, my lord?  
O, wonderful!  
Good my lord, tell it.

You'll reveal it.  
Not I, my lord, by heaven!  
Nor I, my lord!  
How say you, then; would heart of man once think it?—

But you'll be secret?  
Ay, by heaven, my lord.

There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark.  
But he's an arrant knave.

There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave.

Why, right; you are i' the right;  
And so, without more circumstance at all,  
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:

You, as your business and desire shall point you;  
For every man hath business and desire,

Such as it is:—and, for mine own poor part,

Look you, I'll go pray.

These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

I am sorry they offend you, heartily;

Yes, 'faith, heartily.

There's no offence, my lord.

Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,

And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster it as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

_Horatio._ What is't, my lord? we will.
_Hamlet._ Never make known what you have seen to-
night.

_Marcellus._ My lord, we will not.
_Hamlet._ Nay, but swear't.
_Horatio._ In faith,

My lord, not I.

_Marcellus._ Nor I, my lord, in faith.
_Hamlet._ Upon my sword.
_Marcellus._ We have sworn, my lord, already.
_Hamlet._ Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.
_Ghost._ [Beneath.] Swear.
_Hamlet._ Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there,

truepenny?—

Come on—you hear this fellow in the cellage,—
Consent to swear.

_Horatio._ Propose the oath, my lord.
_Hamlet._ Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.

_Ghost._ [Beneath.] Swear.
_Hamlet._ Hic et ubique? then we'll shift our ground.—

Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Never to speak of this that you have heard,
Swear by my sword.

_Ghost._ [Beneath.] Swear.
_Hamlet._ Wells aid, old mole! canst work i' the earth

so fast?
A worthy pioneer!—Once more remove, good friends.

_Horatio._ O day and night, but this is wondrous

strange!
_Hamlet._ And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
But come;—
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd so'er I bear myself,
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on,—
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumbered thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtfull phrase,
As, "Well, well, we know;"—or, "We could, an if we
would;"
Or, "If we list to speak;"—or, "There be, an if they
might;"
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me:—this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you.
Swear.

Ghost. [Beneath.] Swear.

Hamlet. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!—So, gentlemen
With all my love I do commend me to you;
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, to express his love and friendliness to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint:—O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!
Nay, come, let's go together. [Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in Polonius' House.

Enter Polonius and Reynaldo.

Polonius. Give him this money and these notes,
Reynaldo.

Reynaldo. I will, my lord.

Polonius. You shall do marvellous wisely, good
Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

assume
strange
folded
and if
should please
exclamation
greatest
friendliness
be lacking
utterly disordered
will
marvellously

Relief scene
a. Introduce
Hamlet's pretense
Reynaldo. My lord, I did intend it.
Polonius. Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,

1 Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it;
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus, "I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him;
"—do you mark this, Reynaldo?
Reynaldo. Ay, very well, my lord.
Polonius. "And, in part, him; but," you may say,
"not well:
But if't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so;"—and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.
Reynaldo. As gaming, my lord?
Polonius. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing;—you may go so far.
Reynaldo. My lord, that would dishonour him.
Polonius. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly
That they may seem the taints of liberty;
The flash and out-break of a fiery mind;

1 Get to know what Danes (Danskers) are in Paris, and how they live (how), with whom they associate (who), what their fortune is (what means), where they lodge (keep), what company they frequent (what company), and at what cost (expense).

2 By this roundabout and indirect inquiry you will arrive much nearer to the truth than you possibly could by direct questions.
A savageness in unrecogMNed blood,
Of general assault.

Reynaldo. But, my good lord,—
Polonius. Wherefore should you do this?
Reynaldo. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Polonius. Marry, sir, here's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soiled i' the working,
Mark you,

1 Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured,
He closes with you in this consequence;
"Good sir," or so; or "friend," or "gentleman,"—
According to the phrase, or the addition,
Of man, and country.

Reynaldo. Very good, my lord.
Polonius. And then, sir, does he this,—he does—
What was I about to say?
I was about to say something:—where did I leave?

Reynaldo. At "closes in the consequence,"
At "friend or so," and "gentleman."

Polonius. At "closes in the consequence,"—ay, marry;
He closes with you thus:—"I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in's rouse;
There falling out at tennis;" or so forth.—

See you now;

2 Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:

3 And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses, and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out:
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?
Reynaldo. My lord, I have.
Polonius. God be wi' you; fare you well.
Reynaldo. Good my lord!
Polonius. Observe his inclination in yourself.
Reynaldo. I shall, my lord.
Polonius. And let him ply his music.
Reynaldo. Well, my lord.
Polonius. Farewell! [Exit Reynaldo.]

Enter Ophelia.

How now, Ophelia! what's the matter?
Ophelia. Alas, my lord, I have been so affrighted!
Polonius. With what, in the name of God?
Ophelia. My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbraced;
No hat upon his head; his stockings fouled,
Ungartered, and down-gyved to his ancle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loos'd out of hell
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.
Polonius. Mad for thy love?
Ophelia. My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.
Polonius. What said he?
Ophelia. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long stayed he so;
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,
That it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
And end his being: that done, he lets me go:
And, with his head over his shoulder turned,
He seemed to find his way without his eyes;  
For out o' doors he went without their help,  
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

*Polonius.* Come, go with me: I will go seek the king.

This is the very ecstasy of love;  
Whose violent property *fordoes* itself,  
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,  
As oft as any passion under heaven  
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.—

What, have you given him any hard words of late?

*Ophelia.* No, my good lord; but, as you did command.  
I did repel his letters, and denied  
His access to me.

*Polonius.* That hath made him mad.  
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment  
I had not quoted him: I feared he did but trifle,  
And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!  
It seems, it is as proper to our age  
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,  
As it is common for the younger sort  
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:  
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move

1 More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.  

[Exeunt.

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**Scene II.—A Room in the Castle.**

*Enter* King, Queen, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Attendants.

*King.* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!  
Moreover that we much did long to see you,  
The need we have to use you did *provoke*  
Our hasty *sending*. Something have you heard  
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,  
Since *nor* the exterior nor the inward man  
Resembles that it was. What it should be,

1 Hamlet's madness would cause more grief if concealed than the revelation of his affection for Ophelia cause resentment (*i.e.* on the part of the king and queen).
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
That, being of so young days brought up with him,
And since so neighboured to his youth and humour,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time: so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, opened, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talked of you;
And, sure I am, two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us a while,
'For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Rosencrantz. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guildenstern. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,
To lay our service freely at your feet,
And be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.
Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz:
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son; go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guildenstern. Heavens make our presence, and our
practices,
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and
some Attendants.

"As the means and for the furtherance of what we hope to accomplish" (Hunter).
Enter Polonius.

Polonius. The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,

Are joyfully returned.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Polonius. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,

I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king:
And I do think (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath used to do) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Polonius. Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[Exit Polonius.

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt, it is no other but the main,
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

King. Well, we shall sift him.

Re-enter Polonius, with Voltimand and Cornelius.

Welcome, my good friends!

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Voltimand. Most fair return of greetings, and desires: Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appeared
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better looked into, he truly found
It was against your highness: whereat grieved,—
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand,—sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway; and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
 Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
 Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee;
 And his commission to employ those soldiers,
 So levied as before, against the Polack:
 With an entreaty, herein further shown, [Giving a paper.]
 That it might please you to give quiet pass
 Through your dominions for this enterprise,
 On such regards of safety and allowance
 As therein are set down.

  * * *

  King.  It likes us well;
 And, at our more considered time, we'll read,
 Answer, and think upon this business.
 Meantime, we thank you for your well-took labour:
 Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:
 Most welcome home.

  [Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.

  Polonius.  This business is well ended.
 My liege, and madam, to expostulate
 What majesty should be, what duty is,
 Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
 Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
 Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
 And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
 I will be brief:—your noble son is mad:
 Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
 What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
 But let that go.

  Queen.  *More matter, with less art.
  Polonius.  Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
 That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity,
 And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;
 But farewell it, for I will use no art.
 Mad let us grant him, then: and now remains,
 That we find out the cause of this effect,—
 Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
 For this effect defective comes by cause;

  make trial of battle
  reward
  authority
  Pole
  passage
  pleases
  greater leisure
  liege lord
  enlarge upon ought to
  essence
  wisdom
  pass
  ingenuity
  (it) remains
  really a defect

  Give some more definite information; do not exhibit such ingenuity in explanation (i.e. come to the point).
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.

Perpend.

I have a daughter—have while she is mine—
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: now, gather, and surmise.

[Reads.] “To the celestial, and my soul’s idol, the most beautified Ophelia,”—
That’s an ill phrase, a vile phrase, “beautified” is a vile phrase: but you shall hear. Thus:

[Reads.] “In her excellent white bosom, these,” etc.—

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?
Polonius. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.

[Reads.] “Doubt thou the stars are fire;
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.

“O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.

“Thine evermore, most dear lady,
whilst this machine is to him,

Hamlet.”

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me;
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Received his love?

Polonius. What do you think of me?
King. As of a man faithful and honourable.
Polonius. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceived it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me,) what might you,
Or my dear majesty, your queen here, think,
If I had played the desk, or table-book;
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb;
Or looked upon this love with idle sight;—
What might you think? No, I went round to work,
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
"Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy sphere;
This must not be:" and then I precepts gave her
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed, (a short tale to make,)
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;
Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;
Thence to a lightness; and by this declension
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Polonius. Hath there been such a time, (I'd fain know that,) That I have positively said, "'Tis so,"
When it proved otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Polonius. Take this from this, if this be otherwise:
[Pointing to his head and shoulder.
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Polonius. You know, sometimes he walks for hours together
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Polonius. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him:
Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter: if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.
Enter Hamlet, reading.

Queen. But look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Polonius. Away, I do beseech you, both away: I'll board him presently:—O, give me leave.—

[Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.]

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Hamlet. Well, God-a-mercy.

Polonius. Do you know me, my lord?

Hamlet. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Polonius. Not I, my lord.

Hamlet. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Polonius. Honest, my lord!

Hamlet. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Polonius. That's very true, my lord.

Hamlet. 'For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter?'

Polonius. I have, my lord.

Hamlet. 'Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing; but not as your daughter may conceive:—friend, look to't.

Polonius. How say you by that?—[Aside] Still harping on my daughter:—yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger: he is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Hamlet. Words, words, words.

Polonius. What is the matter, my lord?

Hamlet. Between who?

Polonius. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Hamlet. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says

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1 If the sun, though he is a god, by his heat and light breeds maggots in a dead dog which is dead flesh, so no influence, however good, can do otherwise than bring out the vileness of man who is so corrupt a creature.

2 Do not allow her free liberty: understanding is a blessing, but if you allow your daughter to be free from restraint, she may understand what you would not approve of.
here, that old men have grey beards; that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honestly to have it thus set down; for you yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Polonius. [Aside] Though this be madness, yet there is method in it.—Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Hamlet. Into my grave?

Polonius. Indeed, that is out o' the air.—[Aside] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Hamlet. You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life.

Polonius. Fare you well, my lord. [Going.]

Hamlet. These tedious old fools!

Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Polonius. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Rosencrantz. [To Polonius.] God save you, sir! [Exit Polonius.

Guildenstern. Mine honoured lord!

Rosencrantz. My most dear lord!

Hamlet. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Rosencrantz. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guildenstern. Happy in that we are not overhappy; On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Hamlet. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Rosencrantz. Neither, my lord.

Hamlet. What's the news?
Rosencrantz. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

Hamlet. Then is dooms-day near: but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guildenstern. Prison, my lord?

Hamlet. Denmark's a prison.

Rosencrantz. Then is the world one.

Hamlet. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one of the worst.

Rosencrantz. We think not so, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Rosencrantz. Why, then, your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Hamlet. O God! I could be bounded in a nut-shell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guildenstern. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Hamlet. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Rosencrantz. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Hamlet. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Rosencrantz. We'll wait upon you.

Guildenstern. 

Hamlet. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

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*If ambition is a shadow, then beggars (men without ambition) are the only real bodies, whilst monarchs and heroes (ambitious men) are only shadows.*
Rosencrantz. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Hamlet. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guildenstern. What should we say, my lord?

Hamlet. Why any thing,—but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

Rosencrantz. To what end, my lord?

Hamlet. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no.

Rosencrantz. [Aside to Guildenstern] What say you?

Hamlet. [Aside] Nay, then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

Guildenstern. My lord, we were sent for.

Hamlet. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late (but wherefore I know not) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you,—this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted with golden fire,—why, it appears no other thing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form, in moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me;
no, nor woman neither, though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

Rosencrantz. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Hamlet. Why did you laugh, then, when I said "man delights not me"?

Rosencrantz. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what Lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Hamlet. He that plays the king shall be welcome,—his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o’ the sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for’t.—What players are they?

Rosencrantz. Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Hamlet. ¹ How chances it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Rosencrantz. I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Hamlet. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Rosencrantz. No, indeed, they are not.

Hamlet. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Rosencrantz. ² Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace; but there is, sir, an aiery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for’t! these are now the

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¹ How does it happen that they are a strolling company? Permanent occupation of a theatre would bring them more profit and higher reputation.

² No, they do their best (endeavour) to act as well as ever (keep their wonted pace); but there is a company (aiery) of boy-actors (eyases) who shriek out their parts at the highest pitch of their voices, and are vehemently applauded. In the plays they act they cry down (berattle) the regular actors (common stages), so that many men (wearing rapiers) hardly dare frequent these theatres on account of the sharp witticisms indulged in by the writers of the plays (goose quills).
fashion; and so berattle the common stages, (so they call them,) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Hamlet. What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted? 1 Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like, if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Rosencrantz. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Hamlet. Is it possible?

Guildenstern. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Hamlet. Do the boys carry it away?

Rosencrantz. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules, and his load too.

Hamlet. It is not strange; for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make moves at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[Flourish of trumpets within.

Guildenstern. There are the players.

Hamlet. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands,—come: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this cosh; 2 lest my extent to the players, (which, I tell you, must show fairly outward,) should more appear like

1 Will these boys only follow the profession of actor as long as they are in a choir? When older will they not most likely become regular actors? The playwrights are putting them in the false position of causing them to declaim against a profession which they will eventually adopt.

2 Lest it should appear that my reception (extent) of the players, whom I must greet cordially, is more hearty than that I give to you.
entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

_Guildenstern._ In what, my dear lord?

_Hamlet._ I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw. 380

_Enter Polonius._

_Polonius._ Well be with you, gentlemen!

_Hamlet._ Hark you, Guildenstern;—and you too;—at each ear a hearer: that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swathing-clouts.

_Rosencrantz._ Happily he's the second time come to them; for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

_Hamlet._ I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say right, sir: o' Monday morning; 'twas so, indeed.

_Polonius._ My lord, I have news to tell you. 390

_Hamlet._ My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

_Polonius._ The actors are come hither, my lord.

_Hamlet._ Buz, buz!

_Polonius._ Upon my honour,—

_Hamlet._ Then came each actor on his ass,—

_Polonius._ The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.

_Hamlet._ O Jephthah, Judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

_Polonius._ What a treasure had he, my lord?

_Hamlet._ Why,

"One fair daughter and no more,
The which he loved passing well." 400
Polonius. [Aside] Still on my daughter.

Hamlet. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Polonius. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Hamlet. Nay, that follows not.

Polonius. What follows, then, my lord?

Hamlet. Why, "As by lot, God wot."

And then, you know,

"It came to pass, as most like it was."—

The first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look, where my abridgment comes.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all:—I am glad to see thee well:—welcome, good friends.—O, my old friend! Thy face is valanced since I saw thee last; com'st thou to beard me in Denmark?—What, my young lady and mistress! By'r lady, your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrenct gold, be not cracked within the ring.—Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at anything we see: we'll have a speech straight: come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1st Player. What speech, my lord?

Hamlet. I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general: but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine) an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember one said, there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly
loved: 'twas Aeneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line;—let me see, let me see;

"The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,"—tis not so:—it begins with Pyrrhus:—

"The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smeared
With heraldry more dismal: head to foot
Now is he total gules; horridly tricked
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons;
Baked and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their vile murders: roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks."

So proceed you.

Polonius. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion.

1st Player. "Anon, he finds him,
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: unequal matched,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for lo! his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seemed i' the air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;
And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.

1 Unable to decide between his will and that upon which he would vent his anger.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Arousèd vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forged for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!
Polonius. This is too long.
Hamlet. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—
Pr'ythee, say on;—he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or
he sleeps:—say on;—come to Hecuba.
1st Player. "But who, O, who had seen the mobled queen—"
Hamlet. "The mobled queen"?
Polonius. That's good; "mobled queen" is good.
1st Player. "Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning
the flames
With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steeped,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced:
But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made
(Unless things mortal move them not at all)
Would have made milk the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods."
Polonius. Look, whether he has not turned his colour,
and has tears in's eyes. Pr'ythee, no more.
Hamlet. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest soon.—Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstractions, and brief chronicles, of the time: 'after your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Polonius. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Hamlet. God's bodykins, man, much better: use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping? 530 Use them after your own honour and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Polonius. Come, sirs.

Hamlet. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow.—[Exit Polonius, with all the Players except the first.] Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1st Player. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. We'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in't, could you not?

1st Player. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. Very well.—Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [Exit 1st Player.] [To Rosencrantz and Guildenstern] My good friends, I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Rosencrantz. Good my lord!

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Hamlet. Ay, so, God be wi' you!—Now I am alone. 550 O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That, from her working, all his visage wanned,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,

---

1 A bad character during life is worse than a bad epitaph.
2 Conceit = conception of the part he is playing.
A broken voice, and his whole function suit ing
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecub a !
What’s Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears.
Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, ¹ peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property, and most dear life,
A damned defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this, Ha!
Why, I should take it: ² for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-livered, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal: bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O, vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!
Fie upon't! foh! About, my brain! I have heard

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¹ Mope like a dreamer, unquickened by any active thoughts relating to my cause.
² For it must be that I am none other than a coward and without that spirit which feels insult bitterly.
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaimed their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil: and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
(As he is very potent with such spirits,)
Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds
More relative than this: the play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. [Exit.

ACT III.

Scene I.—A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

King. And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Rosencrantz. He does confess he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause, he will by no means speak.

Guildenstern. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded;
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?
Rosencrantz. Most like a gentleman.
Guildenstern. But with much forcing of his disposition.
Rosencrantz. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,  
Most free in his reply. Did you assay him  
To any pastime?  
Rosencrantz. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players  
We o'er-raught on the way; of these we told him:  
And there did seem in him a kind of joy  
To hear of it: they are about the court;  
And, as I think, they have already order  
This night to play before him.  
Polonius. 'Tis most true:  
And he beseeched me to entreat your majesties  
To hear and see the matter.  
King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me  
To hear him so inclined.—  
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,  
And drive his purpose on to these delights.  
Rosencrantz. We shall, my lord.  
[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.  
King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;  
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,  
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here  
Affront Ophelia:  
Her father and myself, (lawful espials,)  
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,  
We may of their encounter frankly judge;  
And gather by him, as he is behaved,  
If't be the affection of his love, or no,  
That thus he suffers for.  
Queen. I shall obey you.  
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish  
That your good beauties be the happy cause  
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope your virtues  
Will bring him to his wonted way again,  
To both your honours.

1 We obtained very little of what we tried to draw out of him, but he was very ready in replying to our questions.
Ophelia. Madam, I wish it may. [Exit Queen.]

Polonius. Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious, so please you.
We will bestow ourselves.—[To Ophelia] Read on this book;
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,—
’Tis too much proved,—that with devotion’s visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o’er
The devil himself.

King. [Aside] O, ’tis too true! how smart
A lash that speech doth give my conscience!

O heavy burden!

Polonius. I hear him coming: let’s withdraw, my lord. [Exeunt King and Polonius.

Enter Hamlet.

Hamlet. To be, or not to be,—that is the question:
Whether ’tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous Fortunes,
1 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die,—to sleep,—
No more; and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—’tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die,—to sleep;—
To sleep! perchance to dream:—ay, there’s the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil, 
Must give us pause: there’s the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor’s wrong, the proud man’s contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law’s delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,

1 “Take arms against a host of troubles which break in upon us like a sea” (C. & W.).

* When we have put off this mortal body now coiled round the soul.
When he himself might his *quietus* make
With a bare *bodkin?* who would *fardels* bear,
To *grunt* and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country, from whose *bourn*
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;

And thus the *native hue* of resolution
Is sicklied o’er with the pale cast of *thought*:
And enterprises of great *pith* and *moment*,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action. — *Soft you now!*
The fair Ophelia! — *Nymph*, in thy *orisons*
Be all my sins remembered.

*Ophelia.* Good my lord,
How does your honour for this *many a day*?

*Hamlet.* I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

*Ophelia.* My lord, I have *remembrances* of yours,
That I have longed long to *redeliver*;
I pray you, now receive them.

*Hamlet.* No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

*Ophelia.* My honoured lord, I know right well you did;
And with them, words of so sweet breath composed,
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these *again*; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Ha, ha! are you honest?

*Ophelia.* My lord!

*Hamlet.* Are you fair?

*Ophelia.* What means your lordship?

*Hamlet.* That if you be honest and fair, your honesty
should admit no discourse to your beauty.

*Ophelia.* Could beauty, my lord, have better *commerce* than with honesty?

---

1 Resolution loses its *natural colour* and becomes pale through *anxiety*.
Hamlet. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Ophelia. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Hamlet. You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

Ophelia. I was the more deceived.

Hamlet. Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Ophelia. At home, my lord.

Hamlet. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool nowhere but in's own house. Farewell. 130

Ophelia. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Hamlet. If thou dost marry, I'll give you this plague for thy dowry,—be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go: farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Ophelia. O heavenly powers, restore him!

Hamlet. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wanton-

1 Virtue cannot be so grafted on our nature as to remove all flavour of our natural badness.

2 You give wrong names to God's creatures out of affectation, and pretend it is ignorance.
ness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

[Exit.

Ophelia. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown! The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword; The expectancy and rose of the fair state, The glass of fashion, and the mould of form, The observed of all observers, quite, quite down! And I, of ladies most deject and wretched, That sucked the honey of his music vows, Now see that noble and most sovereign reason, Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh; That unmatched form and feature of blown youth Blasted with ecstasy. O, woe is me! To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King and Polonius.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend; Nor what he spake, though it lacked form a little, Was not like madness. There's something in his soul, O'er which his melancholy sits on brood; And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose, Will be some danger: which, for to prevent, I have, in quick determination, Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England, For the demand of our neglected tribute: Haply, the seas, and countries different, With various objects, shall expel This something settled matter in his heart; Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Polonius. It shall do well: but yet do I believe The origin and commencement of his grief Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia! You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said; We heard it all. My lord, do as you please; But, if you hold it fit, after the play

1 Mirror of courtesy and model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves.
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief: let her be round with him;
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him; or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatched go.

[Exeunt.

Scene II.—A Hall in the Castle.

Enter Hamlet and certain Players.

Hamlet. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounce it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

1st Player. I warrant your honour.

Hamlet. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing; whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh,
cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of 30 Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so struttet and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. 1st Player. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

Hamlet. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though in the meantime some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [Exeunt Players.

Enter Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

How now, my lord! will the king hear this piece of work?

Polonius. And the queen, too, and that presently. 

Hamlet. Bid the players make haste. [Exit Polonius.

Will you two help to hasten them?

Rosencrantz. We will, my lord. 

Guildenstern. [Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Hamlet. What ho, Horatio!

Enter Horatio.

Horatio. Here, sweet lord, at your service. 

Hamlet. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man As e'er my conversation coped withal. 

Horatio. O, my dear lord,—

Hamlet. Nay, do not think I flatter: For what advancement may I hope from thee, That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act there, my imaginations are as foul and my imaginations are as foul. In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart, that they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger to sound what stop she please. Give me that man. Where thrift may follow fawning. Do not itself unkennel in one speech, and all our judgments join. If the thief steal the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If the thief steal the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If the thief steal the whilst this play is playing. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the Whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join. If he be not the whilst this play is playing, and all our judgments join.
Danish march. A flourish. Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and other Lords attendant, with the Guard carrying torches.

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?
Hamlet. Excellent, i’ faith; of the chameleon’s dish: I eat the air, promise-crammed: you cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet: these words are not mine.
Hamlet. No, nor mine now.—[To Polonius] My lord, you played once in the university, you say?
Polonius. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.
Hamlet. And what did you enact?
Polonius. I did enact Julius Caesar; I was killed in the Capitol; Brutus killed me.
Hamlet. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?
Rosencrantz. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.
Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.
Hamlet. No, good mother, here’s metal more attractive.

[Lying down at Ophelia’s feet.

Polonius. [To the King] O ho! do you mark that?
Ophelia. You are merry, my lord.
Hamlet. Who, I?
Ophelia. Ay, my lord.
Hamlet. O God! your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Ophelia. Nay, ’tis twice two months, my lord.
Hamlet. So long? Nay, then, let the devil wear black, for I’ll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there’s hope a great man’s memory may outlive his life half a year: but, by’r lady, he must build churches, then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-
horse, whose epitaph is, "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

_Trumpet sounds. The dumb show enters._

_Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner woos the Queen with gifts: she seems loth and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love._ [Exeunt.

_Ophelia._ What means this, my lord?

_Hamlet._ Marry, this is _mischling mallecho_; it means mischief.

_Ophelia._ Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

_Enter Prologue._

_Hamlet._ We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

_Ophelia._ Will he tell us what this show meant?

_Prologue._ For us and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

_Hamlet._ Is this a prologue, or the _posy_ of a ring?

_Ophelia._ 'Tis brief, my lord.

_Hamlet._ As woman's love.

_Enter a King and a Queen._

_P. King._ Full thirty times had _Phæbus'_ cart gone round
Neptune's _salt wash_, and Tellus' orbèd ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrowed sheen,
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
'For women's fear and love hold quantity;
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is sized, my fear is so:
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

P. King. Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honoured, beloved; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou——

P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who killed the first.


P. Queen. The instances, that second marriage move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

P. King. I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine, oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory;
Of violent birth, but poor validity:
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;

1 "Women's fear and love vary together, are proportionable; they either contain nothing, or what they contain is in extremes" (Abbott).
2 Resolutions are suddenly formed, but are of little strength, and endure only as long as we remember them.
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy:
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye; nor 'tis not strange,
That even our love should with our fortunes change;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend:
For who not needs shall never lack a friend;
'And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun,
Our wills and fates do so contrary run,
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thou thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me, day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here and hence, pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Hamlet. If she should break it now!

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here a while;

1 If a needy man test a false friend by asking for assistance he will at once turn him (ripen) into an enemy.
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [Sleeps.]

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain ;
And never come mischance between us twain !

Hamlet. Madam, how like you this play ?
Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Hamlet. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument ? Is there no
offence in’t ?

Hamlet. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest ; no
offence i’ the world.

King. What do you call the play ?

This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna :
Gonzago is the duke’s name ; his wife, Baptista : you
shall see anon; ’tis a knavish piece of work : but what
of that ? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it
touches us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers
are unwrung.

Enter Lucianus.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Ophelia. You are as good as a chorus, n.y lord.

Hamlet. I could interpret between you and your love,
if I could see the puppets dallying.

Ophelia. Still better, and worse.

Hamlet. Begin, murderer: leave thy damnable faces,
and begin. Come: the croaking raven doth bellow
for revenge.

Lucianus. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and
time agreeing ;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing :
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate’s ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[Pours the poison into the sleeper’s ears.]
Hamlet. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Ophelia. The king rises.

Hamlet. What, frighted with false fire!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Polonius. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light: away.

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[Exeunt all except Hamlet and Horatio.]

Hamlet. Why, let the stricken deer go weep, The hart ungalled play; For some must watch, while some must sleep: So runs the world away.

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me,) with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

Horatio. Half a share.

Hamlet. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear, This realm dismantled was Of Jove himself; and now reigns here A very, very—Peacock.

Horatio. You might have rhymed.

Hamlet. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Horatio. Very well, my lord.

Hamlet. Upon the talk of poisoning,—

Horatio. I did very well note him.

Hamlet. Ah, ah!—Come, some music! come, the recorders!

For if the king like not the comedy, Why, then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.

Come, some music!

Re-enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Guildenstern. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.
Hamlet. Sir, a whole history.

Guildenstern. The king, sir,—

Hamlet. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guildenstern. Is, in his retirement, marvellous dis-

Hamlet. With drink, sir?

Guildenstern. No, my lord, rather with choler.

Hamlet. Your wisdom should show itself more richer,

to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would perhaps plunge him into more choler.

Guildenstern. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Hamlet. I am tame, sir: pronounce.

Guildenstern. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Hamlet. You are welcome.

Guildenstern. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Hamlet. Sir, I cannot.

Guildenstern. What, my lord?

Hamlet. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say,—

Rosencrantz. Then, thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Hamlet. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!—but is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Rosencrantz. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Hamlet. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Rosencrantz. My lord, you once did love me.

Hamlet. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers. 320

Rosencrantz. Good my lord, what is your cause of
distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Hamlet. Sir, I lack advancement.

Rosencrantz. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Hamlet. Ay, sir, but "While the grass grows,"—the proverb is something musty.

Re-enter the Players, with recorders.

O, the recorders! let me see one.—To withdraw with you:—why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guildenstern. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Hamlet. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guildenstern. My lord, I cannot.

Hamlet. I pray you.

Guildenstern. Believe me, I cannot.

Hamlet. I do beseech you.

Guildenstern. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Hamlet. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guildenstern. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Hamlet. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter Polonius.

God bless you, sir.
Polonius. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Hamlet. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Polonius. By the mass, and 'tis a camel, indeed.

Hamlet. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Polonius. It is backed like a weasel.

Hamlet. Or, like a whale?

Polonius. Very like a whale.

Hamlet. Then I will come to my mother by and by. — They fool me to the top of my bent. — I will come by and by.

Polonius. I will say so. [Exit.] Hamlet. "By and by" is easily said. Leave me, friends.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, Horatio, and Players.

"Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [Exit.

Scene III.—A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you: I your commission will forthwith despatch, And he to England shall along with you: The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guildenstern. We will ourselves provide:

Most holy and religious fear it is,
To keep those many many bodies safe,
That live, and feed, upon your majesty.

Rosencrantz. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from 'noyance; but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near in with it: it is a massy wheel,
Fixed on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortised and adjoined; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Rosencrantz. We will haste us.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

Enter Polonius.

Polonius. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet:
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process; I'll warrant she'll tax him home:
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

[Exit Polonius.

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder! Pray, can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will:
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intention;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Where'to serves mercy
1 But to confront the visage of offence?
2 And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,
To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
Or pardoned, being down? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murder?"
That cannot be; since I am still possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardoned, and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
3 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compelled,
4 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: what can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! make essay:

1 To meet sin face to face, and to overcome it.
2 The two occasions of prayer: (1) before the sin, i.e. "Lead us not into temptation"; (2) after sinning—a prayer for pardon.
3 A wealthy offender may bribe the judge (buys out the law) and thus put justice aside, for often the prize gained by the crime (wicked prize) is so valuable as to be worth a considerable expenditure in bribes.
4 Straight in the face of our offences; there can be no evasion.
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart, with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well. [Retires and kneels.

Enter Hamlet.

Hamlet. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do't— and so he goes to heaven;
And so am I revenged:— that would be scanned:—
A villain kills my father; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
'He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May:
And how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven?
But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him: and am I, then, revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and seasoned for his passage?
No!
Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
At gaming, swearing; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damned and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [Exit.

The King rises and advances.

King. * My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [Exit.

1 He murdered my father in the midst of indulgence, unpurified by fasting, and his sins unrepented of.
2 The fact that I found you in the act of prayer saves your life for a time.
3 I pray to heaven for pardon, whilst my thoughts are how to compass Hamlet's death. Prayers that are not the expression of the soul's desire can never reach heaven.
Scene IV.—The Queen's Room.

Enter Queen and Polonius.

Polonius. He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him:
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your grace hath screened and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here.
Pray you, be round with him.

Hamlet. [Within.] Mother, mother, mother!

Queen. I'll warrant you;
Fear me not:—withdraw, I hear him coming.

[Polonius hides behind the arras.

Enter Hamlet.

Hamlet. Now, mother, what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Hamlet. Mother, you have my father much offended. 10

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Hamlet. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!

Hamlet. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Hamlet. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife:
And—would it were not so!—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

Hamlet. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?

Help, help, ho!


Hamlet. How now! a rat? [Draws.] Dead, for a ducat, dead! [Makes a pass through the arras.

Polonius. [Behind.] O, I am slain! [Falls and dies.

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?
Hamlet. Nay, I know not: is it the king?

[ Lifts up the arras, and draws forth Polonius. ]

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Hamlet. A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother, As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king?

Hamlet. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.

[ To Polonius ] Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.

Leave wringing of your hands: peace! sit you down,
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff;
If damned custom have not brazed it so,
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Hamlet. Such an act,
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed,
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: 'Heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ah me, what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

Hamlet. Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow;
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;

† Heaven blushes at you; yea, the solid mass of earth, with sorrowful appearance, as if before the day of judgment, is sick with anxiety.

‡ This action complete the affairs for Hamlet.
A station like the herald Mercury,
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildewed ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble.
And waits upon the judgment: and what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
Else could you not have motion: but, sure, that sense
Is apoplexed: for madness would not err;
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd
But it reserved some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil wasn't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more.
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots

1 You must have the power of feeling, or you could not have emotion; but your senses must be paralysed: for a madman would not make such a mistake, for his senses are never so much the slave of his madness as not to retain some power of choice, so as to distinguish a contrast so marked as in these two pictures.

2 If any one of your senses had even the slightest portion remaining.
As will not leave their tinct.

Hamlet. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enameled bed,
Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty,—

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

Hamlet. A murderer, and a villain;
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord: a Vice of kings;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more!

Hamlet. 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!

Hamlet. Do you not come your tardy son to chide
That, lapsed 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 blunted 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.

Hamlet. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporeal 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 excrements,
Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

_Hamlet._ On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!

_2_ His form and cause conjoined, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable.—Do not look upon me,

_3_ Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects: then, what have I to do
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

_Queen._ To whom do you speak this?

_Hamlet._ Do you see nothing there?

_Queen._ Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

_Hamlet._ Nor did you nothing hear?

_Queen._ No, nothing but ourselves.

_Hamlet._ Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!

My father, in his habit as he lived!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[Exit Ghost.

_Queen._ This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

_Hamlet._ Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music; it is not madness
That I have uttered: 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 flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass but my madness speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,

---

1 Your hair, lying flat, starts up and stands on end, as if life were suddenly infused into a mere excretion.

2 His appearance, together with the cause of it, would put some sense and feeling even into stones.

3 Lest by your appeal for pity you turn me away from the accomplishment of my stern resolve.
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. Forgive me this my virtue;
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of Vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo, for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Hamlet. O, throw away the worser 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 eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
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 blessed,
I’ll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,

[Pointing to Polonius.
I do repent: but heaven hath pleased 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?

Hamlet. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;

---
1 Either master the devil once for all, or beat back his attacks.
2 To punish me (Hamlet) by causing me to kill Polonius, and to punish him by making me the instrument of his death.
And let him, for a pair of *reechy* kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damned fingers,
Make you to *ravel* all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'Twere *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 assured, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

*Hamlet.* I must to England; you know that?

*Queen.* Alack, 200

I had *forgot*: 'tis so *concluded* on.

*Hamlet.* There's letters sealed: and my two school-

fellows,—

Whom I will trust as I will adders fanged,—

They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,

And *marshal* me to knavery. Let it work;

For 'tis the *sport*, to have the enginer

Hoist with his own *petard*: and it shall go hard

But I will *delve* one yard below their mines,

And blow them *at the moon*: O, 'tis most sweet,

*1* 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 in*

the body of Polonius.*

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*1* When two crafty persons meet in direct collision.
ACT IV

SCENE I.—The same.

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves: You must translate: 'tis fit we understand them: Where is your son?

Queen. [To Rosencrantz and Guildenstern] Bestow this place on us a little while.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend Which is the mightier: in his lawless fit, Behind the arras hearing something stir, He whips his rapier out, and cries, "A rat, a rat!" And, in his brainish apprehension, kills The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there: His liberty is full of threats to all; To you yourself, to us, to every one. Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answered? It will be laid to us, whose providence Should have kept short, restrained, and out of haunt, This mad young man: but so much was our love, We would not understand what was most fit; But, like the owner of a foul disease, To keep it from divulging, let it feed Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath killed: O'er whom his very madness, 1 like some ore Among a mineral of metals base, Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude, come away!

1 Like a vein of precious metal in a mine (or mass of) common metals.
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho, Guildenstern!

Re-enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragged him:
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done: so, haply, slander,
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank
 Transports his poisoned shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air.—O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay.  

[Exeunt.

Enter Hamlet.

Hamlet. Safely stowed.

Rosencrantz. [Within.] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

here they come.

Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Rosencrantz. What have you done, my lord, with the
dead body?

Hamlet. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Rosencrantz. Tell us where 'tis: that we may take it
thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Hamlet. Do not believe it.
Rosencrantz. Believe what?

Hamlet. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!—what replication should be made by the son of a king?

Rosencrantz. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Hamlet. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Rosencrantz. I understand you not, my lord.

Hamlet. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Rosencrantz. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Hamlet. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing—

Guildenstern. A thing, my lord!

Hamlet. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, 30 and all after.

[Exeunt.

Scene III.—Another Room in the Castle.

Enter King, attended.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.

How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose!

Yet must not we put the strong law on him:

He's loved of the distracted multitude,

Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;

And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weighed,

But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,

This sudden sending him away must seem

Deliberate pause: 2 diseases, desperate grown,

1 They notice the punishment awarded to the offender, but lose sight of the gravity of the offence.

2 Desperate diseases need desperate remedies.
By desperate appliance are relieved,  
Or not at all.

Enter Rosencrantz.

How now! what hath befallen?

Rosencrantz. Where the dead body is bestowed, my lord,

We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Rosencrantz. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Rosencrantz. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter Hamlet and Guildenstern.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Hamlet. At supper.

King. At supper! Where?

Hamlet. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table: that's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Hamlet. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Hamlet. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Hamlet. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. [To some Attendants] Go seek him there.

Hamlet. He will stay till you come.

[Exeunt Attendants.

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence
With fiery quickness: therefore prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Hamlet. For England!
King. Ay, Hamlet.
Hamlet. For England!
King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.
Hamlet. I see a cherub that sees them. But, come;
for England! Farewell, dear mother.
King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.
Hamlet. My mother: father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother.
Come, for England! [Exit.
King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed abroad;
Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night:
Away! for every thing is sealed and done,
That else leans on the affair: pray you, make haste.
[Execunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,) thou mayst not coldly set
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me: till I know 'tis done,
How'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. [Exit.

Scene IV.—A Plain in Denmark. Purpos
Enter Fortinbras and forces, marching.

Fortinbras. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
Tell him that, by his licence, Fortinbras
Claims the conveyance of a promised march  
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.

1 If that his majesty would aught with us,  
We shall express our duty in his eye;  
And let him know so.

Captain. I will do't, my lord.

Fortinbras. Go softly on.

[Exeunt Fortinbras and forces.

Enter Hamlet, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, etc.

Hamlet. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Captain. They are of Norway, sir.

Hamlet. How purposed, sir, 10

I pray you?

Captain. Against some part of Poland.

Hamlet. Who Commands them, sir?

Captain. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Hamlet. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,

Or for some frontier?

Captain. Truly to speak, and with no addition,

We go to gain a little patch of ground,

That hath in it no profit but the name.

2 To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;

Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,

A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Hamlet. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Captain. Yes, 'tis already garrisoned.

Hamlet. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand ducats,

Will not debate the question of this straw:

This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,

That inward breaks, and shows no cause without

Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.

Captain. God be wi' you, sir.

[Exit.

Rosencrantz. Will't please you go, my lord? 30

1 If the king desires to see me, I will come and pay my respects to him in person.

2 "I would not cultivate (farm) it on the condition of paying only five ducats rental" (C. & W.), or "I would not pay five ducats for the right of collecting (farming) its revenues."
Hamlet. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

[Exeunt all except Hamlet.

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
1 If his chief good, and market of his time,
Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, He that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,
A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom,
And ever three parts coward, I do not know
Why yet I live to say, "This thing's to do";
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,
To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me:
Witness this army, of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince;
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;
Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake. How stand I, then,
That have a father killed, a mother stained,
2 Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds; 3 fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,

1 His principal aim, and "that for which he sells his time" (Johnson); or "market" may mean "the employment" of his time.
2 "Provocations which excite both my reason and passion to vengeance" (Johnson).
3 Contend about a plot of ground not large enough to hold the contestants whilst fighting, and not sufficiently capacious to contain the slain when buried.
Which is not tomb enough, and continent,
To hide the slain?  O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!  [Exit.

SCENE V.—Elsinore.  A Room in the Castle.

Enter Queen and Horatio.

Queen.  I will not speak with her.
Horatio.  She is importunate; indeed, distract:
Her mood will needs be pitied.
Queen.  What would she have?
Horatio.  She speaks much of her father; says she hears
There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshapèd use of it doth move
The hearers to collection; they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.
Queen.  'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.
Let her come in.—  [Exit Horatio.
To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter Horatio, with Ophelia.

Ophelia.  Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?
Queen.  How now, Ophelia!
Ophelia.  [Singing.]

_H. 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?

[Singing.]  He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

Oh, oh!
Queen.  Nay, but, Ophelia,—
Ophelia.  Pray you, mark.

[Singing.]  White his _shroud_ as the mountain snow,—

_Enter King_

Queen.  Alas, look here, my lord.
Ophelia.  [Singing.]

_Larded_ with sweet flowers:
Which bewept to the grave did go,
With true-love showers.

King.  How do you, pretty lady?
Ophelia.  Well, God _yield_ you! They say the owl _was_ a baker’s daughter.  Lord! we know what we are, but know not what we may be.  God be at your table!

King.  Conceit upon her father.
Ophelia.  Pray you, let’s have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:

[Singing.]

To-morrow is Saint Valentine’s day,
All in the morning _betime_,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.
Then up he rose, and _donned_ his clothes,
And _dupped_ the chamber door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.
King. Pretty Ophelia!

Ophelia. Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

[Singing.]

By Gis, and by Saint Charity,

Alack, and fie for shame!

King. How long hath she been thus?

Ophelia. I hope all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him 't the cold ground. My brother shall know of it; and so I thank you for your good counsel.—Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [Exit.

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [Exit Horatio.]

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude, 1 When sorrows come, they come not single spies, But in battalions. First, her father slain: Next, your son gone; but he most violent author Of his own just remove: the people muddied, Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers, For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly, In hugger-mugger to inter him: poor Ophelia Divided from herself and her fair judgment, Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts: Last, and as much containing as all these, Her brother is in secret come from France; Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds, 2 And wants not buzzers to infect his ear With pestilent speeches of his father's death; Wherein necessity, of matter beggared, Will nothing stick our person to arraign In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this, Like to a murdering-piece, in many places

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1 Misfortunes never come singly.
2 And is not without whisperers who poison his ear with pestilent accounts of his father's death, and having no sure knowledge, they are driven to stick at nothing in accusing me of the murder to everybody.
Gives me superfluous death. [A noise within.
Queen. Alack, what noise is this?

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.
What is the matter?

Gentleman. Save yourself, my lord:

1 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 trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!

King. The doors are broke. [Noise within.

Enter LAERTES, armed; Danes following.

Laertes. Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

Danes. No, let's come in.

Laertes. I pray you, give me leave.

Danes. We will, we will.

[They retire without the door.

Laertes. I thank you:—keep the door.—O thou vile king,

Give me my father!

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?

Let him go, Gertrude: do not fear our person:

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, Gertrude;
Speak, man.

Laertes. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laertes. How came he dead? I'll not be jugged 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 revenged
Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laertes. 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, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?

Laertes. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them, then?

Laertes. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;
And, like the kind life-rendering 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 sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce,
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [Within.] Let her come in.

Laertes. 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!
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.

Ophelia. [Singing.]

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

Fare you well, my dove!

Laertes. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade
revenge,
It could not move thus.

Ophelia. You must sing a-down a-down, and you
call him a-down-a. O how the wheel becomes it! It
is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

Laertes. This nothing's more than matter.

Ophelia. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;
pray, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for
thoughts.

Laertes. A document in madness—thoughts and re-
membrance fitted.

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

[Singing.]

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Laertes. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.
Ophelia. [Singing.]

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 was as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll:
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan:
God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls! I pray God.—God be wi' you!

Laertes. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice\(^1\) of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
\(^2\) If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touched, 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.

Laertes. Let this be so;

His means of death, his obscure funeral,
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall;

\(^3\) And, where the offence is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you go with me. [Exit.]
Scene VI.—Another Room in the Castle.

Enter Horatio and a Servant.

Horatio. What are they that would speak with me?

Servant. Sailors, sir: they say they have letters for you.

Horatio. 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.

1st Sailor. God bless you, sir.

Horatio. Let Him bless thee too.

1st Sailor. He shall, sir; an't please Him. There's a letter for you, sir; it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Horatio. [Reads.] "Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king: they have letters for him. Ere 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 thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

"He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet." 30

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do t the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. 

[Exeunt.]

1 Inadequate to express the importance of the matter.
SCENE VII.—Another Room in the Castle.

Enter King and Laertes.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,  
And you must put me in your heart for friend,  
Since you have heard, and with a knowing ear,  
That he which hath your noble father slain  
Pursued my life.

Laertes. It well appears:—but tell me why  
You proceed not against these feats,  
So crimeful and so capital in nature,  
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,  
You mainly were stirred up.

King. O, for two special reasons;  
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinewed,  
But yet to me they are strong. The queen, his mother,  
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,  
(My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,)  
She’s so conjunctive to my life and soul,  
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,  
I could not but by her. The other motive,  
Why to a public count I might not go,  
Is the great love the general gender bear him;  
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,  
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,  
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,  
Too slightly timbered for so loud a wind,  
Would have reverted to my bow again,  
And not where I had aimed them.

Laertes. And so have I a noble father lost  
A sister driven into desperate terms;  
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,  
Stood challenger on mount of all the age  
For her perfections: but my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think  
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,

---

1. In their nature so criminal and deserving the punishment of death.  
2. If I may praise her as she was before her madness.
That we can let our beard be shaken with danger,
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
I loved your father; and we love ourselves;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine—

Enter a Messenger.

How now! what news?

_Messenger._ Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

_King._ From Hamlet! who brought them?

_Messenger._ Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:
They were given me by Claudio; he received them
Of him that brought them.

_King._ Laertes, you shall hear them.

Leave us. [Exit Messenger.

_[Reads._] "High and mighty, you shall know I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasions of my sudden and more strange return.

"HAMLET."

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back,
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

_Laertes._ Know you the hand?

_King._ "Tis Hamlet's character:—"naked,"—And, in a postscript here, he says, "alone."

Can you advise me?

_Laertes._ I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
_That_ I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
"Thus diddest thou."

_King._ If it be so, Laertes,
As how should it be so? how otherwise?
Will you be ruled by me?

_Laertes._ Ay, my lord;

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1 Danger being so near as to come into our very face.
2 If he be really returned; but how can he be? and yet to judge from this letter he must be come back.
So you will not o’errule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now returned, As checking at his voyage, and that he means No more to undertake it, I will work him To an exploit, now ripe in my device, Under the which he shall not choose but fall: And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe; But even his mother shall uncharge the practice, And call it accident.

Laertes. My lord, I will be ruled; The rather, if you could devise it so, That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right. You have been talked of since your travel much, And that in Hamlet’s hearing, for a quality Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts Did not together pluck such envy from him, As did that one; and that, in my regard, Of the unworthiest siege.

Laertes. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth, Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes The light and careless livery that it wears, Than settled age his sables and his weeds, Importing health and graveness.—Two months since Here was a gentleman of Normandy: I’ve seen myself, and served against, the French, And they can well on horseback; but this gallant Had witchcraft in’t; he grew unto his seat; And to such wondrous doing brought his horse, As he had been incorporped and demi-natured With the brave beast: so far he topped my thought, That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks, Come short of what he did.

Laertes. A Norman was’t?

King. A Norman.


King. The very same.

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1 So far did he exceed my imagination that I, in conceiving all possible shapes and manoeuvres, etc.
Laertes. I know him well: ¹ he is the brooch, indeed,
And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed
If one could match you: the scimlers of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his
¹Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this——

Laertes. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

Laertes. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your father;
But that ² I know love is begun by time;
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurality,
Dies in his own too-much: that we would do,
We should do when we would; ³ for this "would"
changes,
And hath abatements and delays as many,
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this "should" is like ⁴ a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer:
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

Laertes. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
1 Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet, returned, shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together,
And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,
2 Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice,
Requisite him for your father.

Laertes. I will do't:
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all 3 simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death
That is but scratched withal: I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this:
Weigh what convenience, both of time and means,
4 May fit us to our shape: if this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'Twere better not assayed: therefore this project
Should have a back, or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof. Soft!—let me see:
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings:

1 If you are determined to do this.

* Most noble-hearted and absolutely straightforward.

* Plants that have magic virtues when gathered by moonlight.

* "Enable us to act our proposed part" (C. & W.).
I ha’t:
When in your motion you are hot and dry
(As make your bouts more violent to that end),
And that he calls for drink, I’ll have prepared him
A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venomed stuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet queen!

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another’s heel,
So fast they follow: your sister’s drowned, Laertes.

Laertes. Drowned! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men’s fingers call them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up:
Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes;
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element: but long it could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laertes. Alas, then, she is drowned?

Queen. Drowned, drowned.

Laertes. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Yet shame say what it will: when these are gone,

1 “Connected by nature with and endowed with qualities enabling her to live in water” (C. & W.).

When I have ceased weeping I will put away this womanish way.
The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord: I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze, But that this folly douts it.

[Exit.

King. Let's follow, Gertrude. 190

How much I had to do to calm his rage! Now fear I this will give it start again; Therefore, let's follow.

[Exeunt.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Churchyard.

Enter two Clowns, with spades, etc.

1st Clown. Is she to be buried in Christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2nd Clown. I tell thee, she is; and therefore make her grave straight: the crown'ner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

1st Clown. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2nd Clown. Why, 'tis found so.

1st Clown. It must be se offendendo; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2nd Clown. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1st Clown. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that? but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

2nd Clown. But is this law?

1st Clown. Ay, marry, is't; crown'ner's inquest law.

2nd Clown. Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

1st Clown. Why, there thou say'st; and the more pity, that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even
Christian.—Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditches, and grave-makers: 30 they hold up Adam's profession.

2nd Clown. Was he a gentleman?

1st Clown. He was the first that ever bore arms.

2nd Clown. Why, he had none.

1st Clown. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digged: could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself——

2nd Clown. Go to.

1st Clown. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2nd Clown. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1st Clown. I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come.

2nd Clown. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1st Clown. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2nd Clown. Marry, now I can tell.

1st Clown. To't.


Enter Hamlet and Horatio at a distance.

1st Clown. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say "a grave-maker"; the houses that he makes last till doomsday.

Go, get thee to Youghan; fetch me a stoop of liquor. [Exit 2nd Clown.]

[He digs and sings.]

In youth, when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove,
O, methought, there was nothing meet.

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Hamlet. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Horatio. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Hamlet. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1st Clown. [Sings.]

But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath clawed me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intill the land,
As if I had never been such.

[Throws up a skull.

Hamlet. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once; how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Horatio. It might, my lord.

Hamlet. Or of a courtier; which could say, "Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Horatio. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, e'en so; and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazard with a sexton's spade; here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with them? mine ache to think on't.

1st Clown. [Sings.]

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

[Throws up another skull.

Hamlet. There's another: why may not that be the

1 Custom has made it an easy duty for him: one unhardened by habit would feel it more keenly.
skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha?

Horatio. Not a jot more, my lord.

Hamlet. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Horatio. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Hamlet. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sir?

1st Clown. Mine, sir.

[Sings.] O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

Hamlet. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

1st Clown. You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not ours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

Hamlet. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

1st Clown. 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Hamlet. What man dost thou dig it for?

1st Clown. For no man, sir.

Hamlet. What woman, then?

1st Clown. For none, neither.

Hamlet. Who is to be buried in't?

1st Clown. One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Hamlet. How absolute the knave is! we must speak
by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his knee.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1st Clown. Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Hamlet. How long is that since?

1st Clown. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

Hamlet. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England? 150

1st Clown. Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

Hamlet. Why?

1st Clown. 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Hamlet. How came he mad?

1st Clown. Very strangely, they say.

Hamlet. How strangely?

1st Clown. 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Hamlet. Upon what ground?

1st Clown. Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Hamlet. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

1st Clown. 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, he will last you some eight year or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Hamlet. Why he more than another?

1st Clown. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

Hamlet. Whose was it?

1st Clown. A mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?
Hamlet. Nay, I know not.

1st Clown. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! 'a poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Hamlet. This?

1st Clown. E'en that.

Hamlet. Let me see.—[Takes the skull.]—Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Horatio. What's that, my lord?

Hamlet. Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

Horatio. E'en so.

Hamlet. And smelt so? pah! [Puts down the skull.

Horatio. E'en so, my lord.

Hamlet. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Horatio. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Hamlet. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried. 210 Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!
But soft! but soft! aside:—here comes the king.

Enter Priests, etc., in procession: the corpse of Ophelia, Laertes and Mourners following; King, Queen, their trains, etc.

The queen, the courtiers: who is that they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken...
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo its own life: 'twas of some estate.
Couch we a while, and mark. [Retiring with Horatio.

Laertes. What ceremony else?

Hamlet. That is Laertes,

A very noble youth: mark.

Laertes. What ceremony else?

1st Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarged
As we have warrantise: her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodged,
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her:
Yet here she is allowed her virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laertes. Must there no more be done?

1st Priest. No more be done:
We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a requiem, and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

Laertes. Lay her i' the earth;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Hamlet. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell!

[Scattering flowers.

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought thy bride-bed to have decked, sweet maid,
And not have strewed thy grave.

† Were it not that the express command of the king overrides the decree (or canon) of the Church.
Laertes. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:

[Leaping into the grave.

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Hamlet. [Advancing.] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand,
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [Leaping into the grave.

Laertes. The devil take thy soul!

[Grappling with him.

Hamlet. Thou pray'st not well.
I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For though I am not splenetic and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear: hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,—
Horatio. Good my lord, be quiet.

[The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.

Hamlet. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son, what theme?

Hamlet. I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Hamlet. 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up Esil? eat a crocodile?
I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us; 'till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, and thou'lt mouth,
I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness:
And thus a while the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
His silence will sit drooping.

Hamlet. Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I loved you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [Exit.

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.
[Exit Horatio.

[To Laertes] Strengthen your patience in our last
night's speech;
We'll put the matter to the present push.—
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [Exeunt.

Scene II.—A Hall in the Castle.

Enter Hamlet and Horatio.

Hamlet. So much for this, sir: now shall you see the
other:
You do remember all the circumstance?

Horatio. Remember it, my lord!

Hamlet. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,

¹ Till the spot we stand on burns its top against the zodiac (burning zone),
o7 imaginary path of the sun.
And praised be rashness for it: let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall: and that should teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

Horatio. That is most certain.

Hamlet. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarfed about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them: had my desire;
Fingered their packet; and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,—
O royal knavery!—an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Horatio. Is't possible?

Hamlet. Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

Horatio. I beseech you.

Hamlet. Being thus benetted round with villainies,—
'Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play. I sat me down;
Devised a new commission; wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and laboured much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service: wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?

Horatio. Ay, good my lord.

Hamlet. An earnest conjuration from the king,
As England was his faithful tributary;
As love between them like the palm might flourish;

* Such bugbears and imaginary fears caused through my being alive.
* Ere I could devise a plan, my brains had commenced the work.
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma 'tween their amities;
And many such-like as's of great charge,—
That, on the view and know of these contents,
Without debate further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shivering-time allowed.

Horatio. How was this sealed?

Hamlet. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other;
Subscribed it; gave't the impression; placed it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Horatio. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Hamlet. Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow:
'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Horatio. Why, what a king is this!

Hamlet. Does it not, think'st thee, stand me now upon—

He that hath killed my king, and wronged my mother;
Popped in between the election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such covenage—is't not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be damned
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

1 They undertook this service for the king of their own free will; it exactly accorded with their own wishes.

2 Their destruction (i.e. of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern) has been brought about by their wilful intruding into this business; it is dangerous for any one to come between the thrust (pass) and sword-points of angry (incensed) opponents fighting a deadly (fell) duel.
Horatio. It must be shortly known to him from England. What is the issue of the business there.

Hamlet. It will be short: the interim is mine; and a man's life's no more than to say "One." But I am very sorry, good Horatio, That to Laertes I forgot myself; For, by the image of my cause, I see The portraiture of his: I'll court his favours: But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me Into a towering passion.

Horatio. Peace! who comes here? 80

Enter Osric.

Osric. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Hamlet. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly?

Horatio. No, my good lord.

Hamlet. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osric. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Hamlet. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osric. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Hamlet. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osric. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Hamlet. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry, and hot; or my complexion—

Osric. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how.—But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter——

Hamlet. I beseech you, remember——

[Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.]
Osric. Nay, in good faith; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Hamlet. Sir, his delineation suffers no perdition in you:—though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osric. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Hamlet. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osric. Sir?

Horatio. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

Hamlet. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osric. Of Laertes?

Horatio. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Hamlet. Of him, sir.

Osric. I know you are not ignorant—

Hamlet. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir.

Osric. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

Hamlet. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

1 The description of him suffers no loss in your telling—though to make a detailed list of all his good qualities would bewilder a skilled arithmetician, who would even then come as far from a complete enumeration as a boat holding an unstead course falls behind a fast-sailing vessel.
Osric. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imitation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.

Hamlet. What's his weapon?

Osric. Rapier and dagger.

Hamlet. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osric. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so: three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Hamlet. What call you the carriages?

Horatio. I knew you must be edified by the margin, ere you had done.

Osric. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Hamlet. The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides: I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this imponed, as you call it?

Osric. The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Hamlet. How if I answer "no"?

Osric. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Hamlet. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osric. Shall I redeliver you e'en so?

Hamlet. To this effect, sir: after what flourish your nature will.
Osric. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Hamlet. Yours, yours.—[Exit Osric.] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Horatio. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Hamlet. He did comply with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he (and many more of the same breed, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Hamlet. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now, or whenever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

Hamlet. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Hamlet. She well instructs me. [Exit Lord.

Horatio. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Hamlet. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter

Horatio. Nay, good my lord——

Hamlet. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Horatio. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestal their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Hamlet. Not a whit; we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be
now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is’t to leave betimes? Let be.

Enter King, Queen, Laertes, Lords, Osric, and Attendants with foils, etc.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[The King puts the hand of Laertes into that of Hamlet.

Hamlet. Give me your pardon, sir: I’ve done you wrong;
But pardon’t, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punished
With sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was’t Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta’en away,
And, when he’s not himself, does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness: if’t be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged;
His madness is poor Hamlet’s enemy.
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot mine arrow o’er the house,
And hurt my brother.

Laertes. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour,
I stand aloof; and will no reconciliation,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungored. But till that time,
I do receive your offered love like love,

1 “Until I have an opinion and precedent that will justify me in making peace” (C. & W.).
And will not wrong it.

Hamlet. I embrace it freely;

And will this brother’s wager frankly play.

Give us the foils. Come on.

Laertes. Come, one for me.

Hamlet. I’ll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance

Your skill shall, like a star i’ the darkest night,

Stick fiery off indeed.

Laertes. You mock me, sir.

Hamlet. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin

Hamlet,

You know the wager?

Hamlet. Very well, my lord; 260

Your grace hath laid the odds o’ the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both:

But since he is bettered, we have therefore odds.

Laertes. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Hamlet. This likes me well. These foils have all a

length?

Osric. Ay, my good lord. [They prepare to play.

King. Set me the stoops of wine upon that table:

If Hamlet give the first or second hit, 270

\(^1\) Or quit in answer of the third exchange,

Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;

The king shall drink to Hamlet’s better breath;

And in the cup an union shall he throw,

Richer than that which four successive kings

In Denmark’s crown have worn. Give me the cups;

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,

The trumpet to the cannoneer without,

The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,

“Now the king drinks to Hamlet!”—Come, begin;—

And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Hamlet. Come on, sir.

Laertes. Come, my lord. [They play.

Hamlet. One.

Laertes. No.

Hamlet. Judgment. 280

\(^1\) Pay off (Laertes) in meeting him at the third encounter.
Osric. A hit, a very palpable hit.
Laertes. Well;—again.
King. Stay; give me drink.—Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health. Give him the cup.
[Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.
Hamlet. I'll play this bout first; set it by a while.
Come.—[They play.] Another hit; what say you?
Laertes. A touch, a touch, I do confess.
King. Our son shall win.
Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.
Hamlet. Good madam!
King. Gertrude, do not drink. 290
Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.
King. [Aside] It is the poisoned cup; it is too late.
Hamlet. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.
Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.
Laertes. My lord, I'll hit him now.
King. I do not think it.
Laertes. [Aside] And yet it is almost against my conscience.
Hamlet. Come, for the third, Laertes: you but dally;
I pray you, pass with your best violence;
I am afeared you make a wanton of me.
Laertes. Say you so? come on. 300
Laertes. Have at you now.
[Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.
King. Part them; they are incensed.
Hamlet. Nay, come, again. [The Queen falls.
Osric. Look to the queen there, ho!
Horatio. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord?
Osric. How is it, Laertes?
Laertes. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe,
I am justly killed with mine own treachery.

Hamlet. How does the queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear

Hamlet!—

The drink, the drink;—I am poisoned. [Dies. 310]

Hamlet. O villainy!—Ho! let the door be locked:

Treachery! seek it out. [LAERTES falls.

Laertes. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;

No medicine in the world can do thee good;

In thee there is not half an hour of life;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated, and envenomed: the foul practice

Hath turned itself on me; lo, here I lie,

Never to rise again: thy mother’s poisoned:

I can no more:—the king, the king’s to blame.

Hamlet. The point envenomed too!—

Then, venom, do thy work. [Stabs the KING.

All. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends: I am but hurt.

Hamlet. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,

Drink off this potion:—is thy union here?

Follow my mother. [KING dies.

Laertes. He is justly served;

It is a poison tempered by himself.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:

Mine and my father’s death come not upon thee;

Nor thine on me! [Dies.

Hamlet. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.

I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!

You that look pale and tremble at this chance,

That are but mutes or audience to this act,

Had I but time, (as this fell sergeant, Death,

Is strict in his arrest,) O, I could tell you—

But let it be.—Horatio, I am dead;

Thou livest; report me and my cause aright

To the unsatisfied.

Horatio. Never believe it:

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;
Here's yet some liquor left.

_Hamlet._ As thou'rt a man,

Give me the cup: let go; by heaven I'll have it.

O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,

_Absent thee from felicity a while,_

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,

To tell my story. 

_[March afar off, and shot within._

What warlike noise is this?

_Osric._ Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,

To the ambassadors of England gives

_This warlike volley._

_Hamlet._ O, I die, Horatio;

The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy the election 'lights

On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice:

'So tell him, with the occurrences, more and less,
Which have solicited.—The rest is silence. 

_[Dies._

_Horatio._ Now cracks a noble heart:—good night,
sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest! 

_[March within._

Why does the drum come hither?

_Enter Fortinbras, the English Ambassadors, and others._

_Fortinbras._ Where is this sight?

_Horatio._ What is it ye would see?

If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

_Fortinbras._ *This quarry cries on havoc. O proud Death,

What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot

So bloodily hast struck?

1st _Ambassador._ The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:

1 Tell him that, and also inform him of all the events greater and smaller which have called for this deed of mine.

2 This heap of dead bodies cries out against this wanton slaughter.
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his commandment is fulfilled,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?

_**Horatio.**_ Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you:
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arrived, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world,
How these things came about: so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts;
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters;
Of deaths put on by cunning, and forced cause;
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors’ heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.

_**Fortinbras.**_ Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

_**Horatio.**_ Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:
But let this same be presently performed,
Even while men’s minds are wild: lest more mischance
On plots and errors happen.

_**Fortinbras.**_ Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally: and, for his passage,
The soldiers’ music, and the rites of war,
Speak loudly for him.
Take up the bodies: such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[A dead march. Exeunt, bearing away the dead bodies; after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.]
ACT I.—SCENE I.

2. Unfold yourself = declare who you are.
3. Long live the king. The pass-word for the night.
4. Carefully upon your hour. May mean (1) punctually, just as the clock is striking, or (2) immediately after it has struck.
13. Rivals = partners. Rivals (Lat. *rivus*, a stream) originally meant those dwelling near the same river, i.e. neighbours, close companions. The modern sense arose out of contentions which occurred with respect to water rights.
15. This ground = this country, i.e. Denmark.
Liegemen to the Dane = loyal subjects to the king of Denmark.
16. Give you good night. Either (1) God give you, or (2) I give you.
19. A piece of him = something like him.
23. Fantasy = imagination, i.e. the appearance of the ghost was a piece of their imagination.
29. Approve our eyes = confirm what we have reported as to what we saw.
33. What. This word depends upon some verb of speech implied in either (1) "assail your ears," or "story," i.e. = either, "let us assail your ears (telling you) what we have seen," or "our story (relating) what we have seen."
36. Yond same star. Yond is demonstrative pronoun. Star = the Great Bear, which pivots, as it were, round the pole-star.
42. Scholar. And so having a knowledge of Latin, and thus able to exorcise the Ghost by adjuration. "Conjuro te."
44. Harrows = tortures, by rending my heart, as a harrow tears up the ground.
45. It would be spoke (spoken) to. There was a superstitious idea that a ghost must be spoken to first.
Usurp' st = to take possession of and use without any right. The usurpation is twofold (1) of the time of midnight, (2) of the form and person of the king.
48. Buried Denmark = the late king of Denmark, Hamlet's father, now dead and buried.
57. Sensible. Not active but passive meaning = what is apparent to the senses.
63. Sledded Polack = Polander using a sledge. Polack = the king of Poland. Compare the meeting of Napoleon and Alexander of Russia, who arranged the treaty of Tilsit on a raft moored in the river Niemen.
68. The gross and scope of my opinion = I cannot say exactly, but to speak generally my opinion is.

75. Impress = impressment to forced labour

85. This side of the known world = the eastern hemisphere.

\[ \text{So} = \text{as valiant (see l. 84).} \]

87. Law and heraldry. Law = civil law. Heraldry = the formalities of chivalry.

88. With his life, i.e. if he fell in the combat.

90. Moiety competent. Moiety = half, but here evidently means a portion = an equivalent portion of territory.

94. Carriage of the article designed. Carriage = intent. Article = clause in the agreement, i.e. the meaning or intent of the agreement drawn up between them.

96. Unimproved = untried, not taught by experience.

98. Shark'd up a list of landless resolutes. Shark'd up = gathered together indiscriminately and illegally. Resolutes = desperadoes.

99. For food and diet, i.e. no pay given; they enlisted for the keep alone.

100. Hath a stomach in't = affords an opportunity for the display of courage.

101. Our state = the rulers of the state.

107. Romage, lit. roomage or stowage, as of the cargo in a ship's hold; hence, the hurry and bustle of loading a ship.

109. Well may it sort. Sort = agree.

Bernardo and Horatio ascribe the appearance of the ghost as indicating his concern in the impending war. They have no suspicion that he had been murdered. Thus we learn by implication that the murder had been kept secret.

112. Mote = a small thing, i.e. the appearance of the Ghost, but a portent of great troubles.

114. Mightiest Julius = Julius Caesar (see C. A. p. 169).

118. Disasters in the sun. Disaster (L. ãis, in a bad sense; astron, a star) was originally an astronomical term meaning "evil stars." Here it would seem to mean sun-spots, which astronomers connect with adverse meteorological effects. Moist star = the moon. The allusion is to the attraction of the moon in causing tides.

120. Doomsday = the day of judgment.

122. Harbingers (F. auberge, an inn) = persons sent forward in advance to secure accommodation at an inn. Hence = forerunners.

125. Climatures = persons residing in a particular climate.

127. I'll cross it = cross the ghost in his course. It was popularly supposed that misfortune would befall any one crossing the path of a ghost.

136. Uphoarded—Extorted = If you have amassed treasure by extortion and concealed it during your life. The popular superstition was that, if a man had thus wrongfully obtained wealth, his spirit could have no rest till it had revealed the place of concealment of the ill-gotten treasure.
140. **Partisan.** A long handled weapon with axe at the head.

154. **Extravagant and erring** = "Wandering abroad and straying," in the original meaning of the Latin "extravagare" and "errare."

162. **Planets strike.** Planets were supposed to influence human life. Especially were they supposed to injure at night if in an inauspicious conjunction.

166. **Russet** (Lat. *russus*, reddish) = reddish, rosy. It has been pointed out that the first streak of dawn is grey, not red.

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**Scene II.**

4. **Brow of woe** = woeful brow.

18. **A weak supposal of our worth** = forming the estimate that our power is weak.

21. **Colleagued, etc.** Fortinbras has two thoughts in his mind; (1) the weakness of the kingdom of Denmark (2) the hope of gaining advantage. The two thoughts combined (colleagued) lead him to make his demands upon the King.

29. **Bed-rid.** *Lit.* a "bed-rider," i.e. one who is carried or rides on a bed. Confined to his bed, disabled from taking active part in war.

32. **Proportions** = the different parts of the army i.e. horsemen, infantry, etc., being supplied in due proportion.

33. **Subject.** Collective = his subjects.

39. **Commend your duty** = give evidence of your readiness to perform your duty.

44. **Speak of reason** = make a reasonable request.

47. **Native to** = closely connected by nature. The context shows that Claudius had had the support of Polonius in his election as king.

53. **Coronation.** Both Hamlet and Laertes had come to Elsinore. *Hamlet from Wittenberg for the funeral of his father. Laertes from Paris to join in the coronation festivities. Laertes now desires to return to Paris. Hamlet would return to study (see l. 113).*

62. **Take thy fair hour** = make the best use of your opportunities (*Lat.* carpe diem). Enjoy yourself in your youth.

63. **Best graces, etc.** = May your accomplishments and gracious manners assist you to pass the time in Paris as you please.

64. **Cousin.** Hamlet was his stepson. But Shakespeare uses "cousin" to express any relationship.

65. **Kin** = of the same race. **Kind** = of the same nature (see p. 174). A play on words.

67. **Too much i’ the sun** = the sunshine of the King’s presence. The play on words is continued (see p. 174).

68. **Nighted colour** = dark as night. Hamlet is wearing black in mourning for his father. The rest of the court were in gay dresses for the coronation.

70. **Vailed lids** = downcast eyelids. To vail = to lower (see Glossary).

74-75. **Common** (74) contrasted with particular (75)

77. **Inky cloak** = black like ink.

78. **Customary suits.** May mean (1) black suits usually worn as a sign of mourning, or (2) the suits Hamlet was used to wear.
92. **Obsequious sorrow** = dutiful mourning, as from a son mourning a father, and also sorrow befitting funeral ceremonies.

95. **Incorrect = unsubdued.** Participle (see p. 165).

99. **Any the most, etc. = anything the most commonly perceived.**

109. **The most immediate =** the next heir to the throne. The remark is intended to conciliate Hamlet, and to reconcile him to his present non-election to the throne.

113. **Wittenberg.** The University was not founded till 1502, so the mention of it is an anachronism. It was famous in Shakespeare's day in connection with Martin Luther. It was a favourite University with the Danes.

114. **Retrograde to our desire =** going back or contrary to our wish. Originally an astronomical term used of the apparent backward motion of planets in the heavens.

115. **Bend you =** Change your mind and decide upon staying. We speak of following our "bent" or "inclination."

118. **Lose her prayers =** entreat you in vain.

124. **In grace whereof =** as an honour in return for Hamlet's acquiescence.

125. **Denmark drinks.** Johnson remarks on the tendency of the King to feast and drink whenever occasion presents itself.

126. **Cannon.** An anachronism (see p. x.).

127. **Rouse = a deep draught (see Glossary).**

132. **Canon =** a religious law.

133. **Self-slaughter.** The first reference to Hamlet’s idea of suicide (see III. i. 56).

134. **Uses =** the ordinary, customary habits of life.

150. **Discourse of reason, i.e.** a beast lacks intellect and is thus without the power to reason.

155. **The flushing =** transient redness, ere her tears had left (i.e. had had time) the redness in her eyes (Schmidt). This rendering makes "flushing" to be a noun.

If flush is gerundial, we may render "had ceased the reddening of her eyes."

159. **Hold my tongue.** Mark Hamlet’s reticence in public on his mother’s shame.

163. **Change =** exchange. Hamlet will change places with Horatio. He will be Horatio’s "servant," Horatio shall be his "friend."

180. **Thrift =** a thrifty arrangement. Spoken in sarcasm.

182. **Dearest foe =** my most bitter enemy. "Dear" is used by Shakespeare as having an intensive force.

200. **Cap-a-pé =** from head to foot.

204. **Truncheon =** staff of command.

230. **Beaver, the lower front part of the helmet, which could be lifted up and thus expose the lower part of the face (see p. 183).**

242. **Sable-silvered =** dark hair tinged with grey.

247. **Tenable in your silence =** regarded as still to be kept secret.
SCENE III.

2—4. Let me hear from you whenever the wind is favourable, and you have the means of conveying a letter by a vessel sailing to France.


7. Primi nature = nature in the time of spring.

10. No more but so? = nothing more than that.

16. The virtue of his will = his honest intention in love.

22. Choice. Hamlet, as a prince, is not free to choose his wife. His choice must be approved of by the state.

63. Hoops of Steel = binding them to thyself by an encircling band as strong as steel.

64. Dull thy palm. Dull = make dull, i.e. soil = do not make yourself too common in being friendly with everyone.

71. Not expressed in fancy = not marked by eccentricity in style.

76. There is a double loss—(1) of the money lent; (2) of the friend to whom it is lent.

86. Shall keep the key, etc. = I will remember your advice and follow it till you release me from obedience.

90. Marry = an oath = By (the Virgin) Mary.

107. Sterling, true, pure; used of gold, i.e. pure gold. The word is an abbreviation of Esterling, a name for the Eastern merchants, who dealt in pure money, i.e. money of pure gold and of exact weight. Polonius suggests that Hamlet's vows are not to be regarded as of true metal—they are unreliable. Tender yourself more dearly = regard or value yourself more highly.

108. Crack the wind = to overstrain, e.g. to break a horse’s wind by overdriving.

113. Given countenance = has strengthened his declaration of love by vows of constancy.

115. Woodcocks, foolish birds, easily caught. The phrase is proverbial for taking in a simple fellow.

125. Larger tether = a longer rope giving an animal more space for movement. Tether is the rope by which the animal is tied to a stake and yet leaving him liberty of movement to graze. Hamlet, as if tethered with a longer rope, has more liberty of action than Ophelia.

127. Brokers = go-betweens, negotiators.

133. Slander = disgrace.

SCENE IV.

9. Up-spring. According to Elze, the word corresponds to the German "Huf'fauf," and was "the last and consequently the wildest dance at the old German merry-makings."

12. Triumph, sarcastic, representing the drinking of a pledge as some victorious event.

19. Swinish phrase = some allusion to us as being no better than swine.

20. Soil our addition = sully our title by thus comparing us to swine.

22. The pith and marrow of our attribute. "The best and most valuable part of the praise that otherwise would be attributed to us." Johnson.
32. Nature's livery = a natural defect, bestowed by nature at birth.

Fortune's star = an accidental defect through the influence of circumstances. A person's life or fortune was supposed to be influenced by the stars.

35. General censure = public opinion.


40. Spirit of health = a saved spirit, i.e. a good spirit.

43. Questionable shape. Variously rendered (1) in a form inviting question, (2) capable of being questioned, (3) arousing questions in Hamlet's mind.

47. Canonized = buried according to the service prescribed by the canons of the Church.

49. In-turn = entombed. Urn here = grave.

53. Glimpses = seen at intervals, i.e. the moonbeams struggling to appear from behind the clouds.

54. We fools of nature. "We" should be "us," objective after "making" = making us the sport of nature.

79. Deprive your sovereignty of reason = take away the control of reason, the ruling principle of the mind, i.e. deprive you of the faculty of reason.

Scene V.

3. My hour, i.e. cock-crow, when ghosts must return to the lower regions.

10. To walk the night = to pass the night in wandering on earth.

11. To fast, etc. One of the supposed punishments of hell.

12. Days of nature = the period of my natural life.


16. Harrow = to tear up in agony.

20. Fretful porcupine. An animal which, when irritated, shoots out its quills erect.

21. Eternal blazon = a revelation concerning the spirit world. Blazon = the blowing of a trumpet (see Glossary).

37. Process = the full account of. "Perhaps here the sense of an official narrative, coming nearly to the meaning of the French proces verbal" (C. P.).

46. Hebenon, oil made from henbane, which, according to Pliny, if dropped into the ear affects the brain.

81. Distracted globe may mean (1) "the troubled world" or (2) "a bewildered brain." In acting the play Hamlet puts his hand upon his head.

82. Table = writing tablet of slate or ivory.

99. Hillo, etc. Hamlet, desiring his friends to approach, calls to them in terms which falconers use to a hawk in the air, when they would have him come down to them.

132. Upon my sword. The hilt of the sword formed a cross, so that the oath was taken upon the cross. It was usual to use a sword in this fashion.

133. True-penny. "A familiar phrase for an honest fellow." According to Collier it was "a mining term indicating where true ore was to be found."
149. As stranger give it welcome = Treat it as you would a stranger, and politely comply with its request.

156. Antic. May mean either (1) strange, fantastic or (2) disguised, with reference to a person wearing a grotesque mask in a masque.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

8. Keep = lodge, live.

26. You may go so far = you may charge him with such pursuits, but do not make him out as any worse than these.

29. Another scandal = a different and more scandalous vice.

34. Unreclaimed = untamed, a term in falconry. Reclaim = to call back the falcon.

38. A fetch of warrant = a device warranted to succeed in its object; or it may mean a device for which you have warrant or approval. Quartos read "fetch of wit" = a cunning device.

45. In this consequence = with a reply somewhat as follows.

62. We of wisdom and of reach = we persons of wisdom and foresight, i.e. we wise, far-seeing persons.

63. Assays of bias = indirect attempts. A metaphor from the game at bowls. The balls are weighted on one side so as to run not in a direct course but in a curve, and the tendency to deviate from the straight line is called bias. In the game the player does not aim directly at the Jack, but so that the ball may travel in a curve, the bias acting and bringing the ball round to the Jack. By this means the player is able to direct the ball so as to pass round any ball lying in the direct path. What we now call the Jack was called the "mistress" in Shakespeare's time.

69. Observe his inclination in yourself. This line has been variously interpreted:—

(1) Your own inclinations will enable you to judge what his bent is likely to be.

(2) Shape your course according to his inclinations.

(3) Observe for yourself, do not trust to the reports of others.

71. Ply his music = let him take his own course freely without interference.

78. Down-gyved = hanging down over his ankles like gyves or fetters.

88. Falls to = sets to eagerly, i.e. as a hungry man to food.

113. To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions = to be over suspicious, over cautious. This is the failing of age. The young "lack discretion" (I. 116), i.e. are not sufficiently cautious.

SCENE II.

5. Transformation = complete change in manner and appearance.

32. To be commanded = serv'y to carry out any commission on you (the King) may give us.

52. Fruit = dessert. As the dessert follows the dinner, so the message of the Ambassadors from Norway will be followed by the news that Polonius has to tell the King about Hamlet.
56. The main = the principal cause.

57. Our o'er hasty marriage. The queen shrewdly divines the real cause of Hamlet's behaviour.

58. Sift = examine thoroughly, and learn the truth.

61. Upon our first = at our first interview with him, when we made your wishes known to him.

67. Falsely borne in hand = trifled with and deceived. Fortinbras had taken advantage of the feebleness of the King of Norway through sickness and old age.

78. This enterprise = the body of troops engaged in the expedition.

79. Regards of safety and allowance = guarantees for the security of the country and conditions on which the troops shall be allowed to pass through Denmark.

81. More considered = when we have had full time for further consideration.

113. Bosom. Ladies had a pocket in the front of their dress in which they carried love-letters or any thing they prized.

120. Ill at these numbers = unskilled in writing verses

137. If I had played the desk or table-book. Table-book = writing tablet. A sentence variously interpreted:

(1) If I had acted as the agent of their correspondence.

(2) If I had minutely recorded their correspondence.

(3) If I had been like a desk or memorandum book, of no intelligence, and simply receiving impressions, and not communicating them to others.

163. Loose = let loose, as one lets a dog loose.

164. Arras = tapestry, so called from Arras, a town in France, where there was a famous manufactory. The tapestry hung some distance from the walls so that Polonius could readily conceal himself behind it.

175. Fishmonger = one sent to fish out any secret.

221. These tedious old fools. An expression of Hamlet's relief at finding himself free from the presence of Polonius. He is his natural self for a moment, but resumes his assumed manner on the entrance of Rosencrantz and Guilderstern.

249. Thinking makes it so. Compare—

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a hermitage."—LOVELACE.

297. Moult no feather = suffer no loss of honour, lose none of their dignity. Allusion may be "to dislodgment of feathers from the helmets of knights at tilting matches."—HUNTER.

304. Congregation of vapours = collection of mist clouds hiding the face of the sun.

310. Quintessence = the fifth essence (Lat. quintus, the fifth). The ancients recognized four elements—earth, air, fire and water; after these had been extracted from any substance, they supposed there remained the pure essence—the fifth.
326. Tickled o' the sere. This phrase describes persons easily moved to laughter; ready to laugh at any joke. The metaphor is taken from the lock of a gun, the sere being the catch which prevents the hammer falling, and which is released by the pulling of the trigger.

327. The blank verse shall halt. May mean (1) the lady shall have full liberty to express herself even if she break the metre, (2) Elze suggests that it refers to the omission of oaths, forbidden by statute, which would spoil the metre.

333. Inhibition. An allusion to an occurrence which had taken place in England. Several companies of actors in Shakespeare's time had been deprived of their licence to act in an established theatre. The passage is often referred to in assigning the date of the Play.

340. Aiery of children. Aiery = brood. A reference to the young singing lads of the Chapel Royal of St. Paul's, who performed plays to the detriment of the regular actors.

341. Little eyases = nestlings or unfledged birds.

Cry out on the top of question = shout out at the top of their voices. Some editors regard the passage as indicating a declamation on the burning question of the day—the one that was on the top, i.e. the most prominent subject of the day. It is better, however, to regard it as descriptive of the acting; the children are like young nestlings—creatures just out of the egg, who cry or declaim in that high tone of voice usual in children.

355. Tarre them on to controversy = urge them on to quarrel, as one sets dogs on to fight.

357. Hercules and his load, too. Probably an allusion to the Globe Theatre, Shakespeare's Theatre, the sign of which was Hercules carrying the Globe. Shakespeare infers that the boys carried away much of the patronage of this theatre.

380. Handsaw, a corruption of "heronshaw" = a heron. In Norfolk we find "herna." A bird when disturbed generally flies before the wind. The wind being southerly, the heron would fly to the north; the watcher would not be dazzled by the sun, and could easily distinguish between the two birds, the hawk and the heron (C. & W.).

394. Buz, buz! Nonsense, nonsense. An interruption intended as discourteous to Polonius. "Buz," says Blackstone, "used to be an interjection at Oxford when anyone began a story which was generally known there." If so, we may take it as equivalent to saying "stale news."

396. Then came each actor, etc. Probably a line from some old ballad (see l. 409).

398. Tragedy, comedy, etc. Shakespeare is here satisfying the numerous sub-divisions of the drama in his day. A licence granted to the Globe Company, 1603, gives them permission "freely to use and exercise the art and faculty of playing Comedies, Tragedies, Histories, Enterludes, Moralls, Pastoralls, Stage plays, and such other like."
400. Scene indivisible = a play that observed the unities of place.
400. Poem unlimited = a play in which the unity of place was not observed.
403. "O J e p h t h a h, etc." Hamlet is quoting snatches from an old ballad, which is found in Percy’s Reliques.
419. Pious chanson. A kind of Christmas carol, containing some scripture story, in loose rhymes, and sung in the streets.
423. Valanced = fringed with a beard. The Valance (from Valence, near Lyons, famous for its silk manufactories) is the fringe or drapery round the tester of a bed.
424. Young lady. Women’s parts were played by boys.
427. Chopine (Italian cioppino). A high shoe worn by Venetian ladies to give them the appearance of being tall. The boy actors wore these to add to their height.
428. Cracked within the ring. “There was a ring or circle on the coin, within which the sovereign’s head was placed; if the crack extended from the edge beyond this ring, the coin was rendered unfit for currency. Such pieces were hoarded by the usurers of the time and lent out as lawful money.” (Douce Illustrations of Shakespere).
429. French falconers = poor sportsmen. The French falconers were not particular what birds they caught, game or not game.
437. Caviare to the general. Caviare is a preparation from the roe of the sturgeon, and comes from Russia. It is considered a great luxury to those whose tastes are cultivated to it, but not palatable to others. The meaning is that the play was a great treat to educated people, but thrown away upon the ordinary public.

The general = the public generally.
438. Cried in the top of mine = whose judgments had more authority than mine.
439. Well digested in the scenes. The scenes were well arranged so that the audience could readily follow the plot of the play.
457. Total gules = all bloody. Gules, a term in heraldry = red. Tricked, a term in heraldry = a description by drawing.
459. Parching streets. The heat from the burning houses had dried the blood upon Pyrrhus, so that he was caked all over as with a kind of paste.
462. O’er-sized with coagulate gore.
Size is a kind of glue.
Coagulate blood = the blood dried on his body by the heat of the blazing houses.
Pyrrhus appears as if smeared over with dried blood.
480. Painted tyrant. Like a tyrant in a picture. His sword is drawn, but does not descend.
481. Neutral = indifferent, choosing neither one side nor the other. His will is the one side; the matter or action, i.e. the sword stroke, the other.
495. Fellies = Felloes. The pieces of wood composing the rim into which the spokes are inserted, and the whole bound together by the tire.
502. Moble d = muffled up. Moble is diminutive of “mob.” We still have the word descriptive of the Mob-cap, or
large caps worn by old women. It describes Hecuba as roused by the alarm of fire, and wrapping herself up in the first garments that come to hand.

506. **Bisson** = blind.

Rheum, anything that flows.

Bisson rheum = blinding tears.

529. **God's bodykins.** An oath = by God's body.

570. **John-a-dreams** = John the dreamer, *i.e.* a sleepy, dreamy fellow. (c.f. Jack-a-Lantern). The name occurs in Armin's *Nest of Ninnies* 1608. "His name is John, indeed, says the cynic; but neither John-a-nods, nor John-a-dreams, but either as you take it."

580. **Pigeon-livered** = timid as a pigeon. The liver was supposed to be the seat of courage and passion.

**Lack gall.** Gall = courage.

583. **This slave's offal.** Offal = refuse. This slave = the king, Hamlet's uncle. Hamlet is reproaching himself for his lack of courage in not having slain the usurper, and not having given his dead body as food for the birds of prey (region kites).

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**ACT III.**

**SCENE I.**

43. **Gracious.** Polonius is now addressing the king.

48. **Sugar o'er.** Like a pill coated with sugar to make it pleasant to the palate, and to disguise its true taste.

62. **Rub.** Taken from the game of bowls. Any impediment or obstacle in the course of the bowl is termed a "rub."

72. **Quietus.** A legal term denoting the acquittance given by the sheriff as the official discharge of an account.

73. **Bare bodkin.** A bodkin is an old term for a small dagger. Bare = unsheathed.

84. **Pith = pitch, *i.e.* the highest point of a falcon's flight.

111. **Paradox = an assertion contrary to general experience.**

142. **Amble = to walk with mincing, effeminate step.**

143. **Nick-name.** Literally, "an additional name." *An eke-name, *i.e.* a name given to eke out another name.

154. **Music vows.** Vows sweet as music to Ophelia's ears.

157. **Blown youth.** Full blown —Hamlet was in his prime—thirty years of age.

151. **Glass of fashion = the mirror in which was reflected all that was in the best taste.**

**Mould of form = the model upon which all others should form themselves.**

163. **Tribute.** Probably, an allusion to the Danegelt, a tax originally levied to provide the money to buy off the Danish invaders in Saxon times. It was first levied in the reign of Ethelred the Unready, A.D. 994.

164. **Disclose = the revelation.**

Brood, hatch, disclose, all refer to the hen hatching her chickens.

Disclose is the technical term for the moment when the young bird just peeps through the shell, and discloses itself.

170. **Variable objects.** Variable = various. The king is suggesting that a change of scene will be the best cure for Hamlet's indisposition.
ACT III.

SCENE II.

9. Periwig-pated. Periwig (Fr. perruque) = a wig. It was the custom for actors to wear wigs, though wigs did not come into general use till the reign of Charles II.

13. Termagant, supposed to be a Saracen god. Represented in the mystery plays as a violent, boisterous personage (see p. 175).

Herod. Another character in the mystery plays. The personification of a tyrant. It was played with great noise and rant (see p. 175).

33. Journeymen = men working and paid by the day.

38. Speak no more, etc. It was the custom of the clown to improvise jokes (the modern "gag" in a play). Shakespeare is probably hitting at Tarleton, an actor of his day, who was notorious for his power of "gagging."


68. Blood and judgment. "According to the doctrine of the four humours, desire and confidence were seated in the blood, and judgment in the phlegm, and the due mixture of the humours made a perfect character" (JOHNSON).

75. One scene. The lines that Hamlet had written for the actors (see II. ii. 541).

78. The very comment of thy soul = observe the king closely with all your powers of observation.

80. Unkennel = is not brought to light — i.e. as a dog is brought out of his kennel into the open.

83. Stithy = the forge or smithy of a blacksmith (see Gloss.).

92. The chameleon's dish. The chameleon was popularly supposed to feed on air. "Though the chameleon, Love, can feed on the air" (Two Gent. ii. i. 178).

93. Promise-crammed = stuffed with promises. Claudius had promised Hamlet that he should be "his son" (I. ii. 64), i.e. his heir to the throne.

98. University. An allusion to the practice of performing plays in the college halls.

103. I' the Capitol. Caesar was not assassinated in the Capitol, but in the Curia Pompeii, at the foot of Pompey's statue. Shakespeare in all these plays (Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra), alluding to Caesar's death, places the scene of his murder in the Capitol.

115. Jig-maker = a composer or player of jigs. Jig was a ludicrous ballad, or a merry dance accompanying it.

121. Suit of sables. Hamlet intends to say that he will cast aside his suit of mourning and will wear magnificent garments trimmed with fur, and be dressed as the rest of the court.

126. Hobby-horse, a character in the May-games and Morris-dances. It was represented by a man with the figure of a horse fastened round his waist, the man's legs being concealed by a long foot-cloth. There appears to have been a popular ballad in which was this line, "For O, for O, the hobby-horse is forgot." It is again quoted in Love's Labour's Lost III. i. 30. The ballad is supposed to be a satire on the Puritan objection to May-games.
129. Miching Mallecho.  
Miching = skulking about for some sinister purpose.  
Mallecho = mischief.  
Miching Mallecho = Mischief or the spirit of mischief on the watch for an opportunity to do some one harm.

139. Posy of a ring. A motto in verse inscribed inside a ring.

143. Tellus' orbed ground = the earth (see p. 175).

143. Borrowed sheen = the light of the moon. The moon shines by the reflected light of the sun.

157. And as my love is sized, etc. My fear is in exact proportion to the size or quantity of my love.

206. Anchor's cheer = the fare of a hermit. Anchor (shortened form of "anchorite") = hermit.

224. Mouse-trap. Hamlet names the Play thus, because it was intended to entrap the guilty conscience of the King.

229. Let the galled jade, etc.  
A proverbial expression.  
Jade = a poor, sorry nag.  
The proverb is found in Damon and Pythias (1582). "I know the galled horse will soonest wince."  
Withers = that part of the horse between the shoulders which takes the strain of the collar, or supports the saddle.  
Galled = rubbed into a sore. A horse with a sore on the withers would draw back on feeling the pressure of the collar, or the weight in the saddle.  
Unwring = without a sore. Let those whose conscience is seared with sin shrink at this Play of a murder, We who are innocent, need feel no compunctions.

232. Chorus. A character, as in the old Greek Plays, whose part it was to explain the action of a Play. Shakespeare introduces a chorus in Henry V., Romeo and Juliet, and the Winter's Tale.

234. Puppets (Fr. poupée, a doll) = marionettes. The allusion is to puppet shows, common in Shakespeare's day. These were explained to the spectators by an interpreter, who sat upon the stage for that purpose. Hamlet cynically likens Ophelia and her lover to marionettes or dolls.

240. Confederate season. Season = time or opportunity. The opportunity for the ill deed is represented as aiding or assisting the murderer, and so becoming his accomplice.

246. Extant = in existence, and so a true story.

255. Why, let the strucken deer go weep. The deer is said to retire from the herd when badly wounded, and go apart to weep and die. Cf. As You Like It, II. i. 33. So the King flees to hide his guilty face.

256. The ungalled halt = the uninjured deer. This represents Hamlet, who, innocent of crime, remains to enjoy the rest of the Play.

259. This = this Play of mine.

259. Forest of feathers. An allusion to the actors of Shakespeare's time, who wore gaudy dresses and sported plumes of feathers in their caps.
260. **Turn Turk**, *i.e.* change from Christian to infidel = to become a renegade or traitor. A common phrase of the period equivalent to the modern “go to the bad.”

261. **Provincial roses** = rosettes of ribbons worn on the shoes. The name is from either Provence or Provins, the latter about forty miles from Paris.

261. **Razed shoes.** Shoes cut or slashed to a distinctive pattern.

262. **A fellowship in a cry of players** = a partnership in a company of actors. Cry = a pack of hounds; hence “a theatrical company.” The word is used in hunting to signify a pack of hounds chosen so that their united barking may make a musical cry.

263. **Half a share.** An allusion to the custom of the day, when actors were paid not by salaries, but by shares of the takings according to their abilities.

266. **Realm dismantled.** Hamlet suggests that Denmark had been robbed of a King (his father), who could be compared to Jove, and was replaced by his uncle, whom he styles a peacock.

269. **Rhymed.** The rhyme to “was” (l. 266) would be “ass.” Horatio suggests that this word would well describe Claudius.

270. **The ghost’s word.** The conduct of the conscience-stricken Claudius has convinced Hamlet that the tale told him by his father’s ghost is true.

275. **Recorder** = a kind of flageolet or flute. Here it refers to those playing upon that instrument.

291. **Purgation.** Here used in a double sense—

   (1) Legal = to clear oneself on oath.

   (2) Medical = means adopted to cure the patient.

291. **Frame** = connected order. The words “start not so wildly” and “tame” suggest an allusion to the tying of a restive horse in a frame when it is being shod.

320. **Pickers and stealers** = these hands. “To keep my hands from picking and stealing” (Church Catechism).

322. **You bar the door, etc.** You deny yourself freedom from your sorrows by refusing to tell your cause of grief to your friend.

323. “While the grass grows the steed starves” is the full quotation.

331. **To recover the wind.** A term in hunting. The hunter would lay the snare away from the windward side of the game. Then he would endeavour to stalk round to the windward side of the animal, which, scenting the hunter, would endeavour to escape in the direction of the wind and thus would be caught in the snare.

342. **Vantages, the air-holes in the pipe of the recorder.**

   **Stops** (l. 345) signifies the stopping of the holes with the fingers, thus producing the different notes on the instrument.

354. ‘**Sblood** = an oath = God’s blood.

365. Backed like a weasel = its back is shaped like that of a weasel. Polonius is so bent upon humouring Hamlet that he actually sees a likeness to the back of a weasel in the hump of a camel.
### ACT III. NOTES. SC. II.-III.

<table>
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<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>369.</td>
<td>They fool me to the top of my bent = they humour me in whatever I say. Hamlet is thus assured that he is regarded as being mad. It is a common practice in the treatment of lunatics to appear to agree with everything they say, in order to soothe them, and not to give them cause for irritation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>380.</td>
<td><strong>Soul of Nero.</strong> Nero murdered his mother, Agrippina. Hamlet prays that he may not, in his resentment for the death of his father, commit a similar crime.</td>
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<tr>
<td>385.</td>
<td><strong>Give them seals.</strong> To affix seals to a document is to give it legal validity. So Hamlet prays that he may not in impulse be let to give effect to his words by committing the crime of matricide.</td>
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<td><strong>SCENE III.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td><strong>Single and peculiar life.</strong> Single life = the life of an individual. Peculiar life = that he is a private person, with no public issues dependent upon his life. Rosencrantz is comparing Hamlet, a private individual, with the king, upon whose life the whole state depends in a certain degree.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td><strong>Mortised</strong> = joined with a mortise. To mortise is to cut out a portion of one piece of wood to receive a corresponding portion called the <em>tenon</em>, or holder of another piece. Thus the two pieces are firmly united to each other. <strong>Which</strong> = the ruin of which (see 1. 22).</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td><strong>Annexment</strong> = that which is annexed. A word not found elsewhere in Shakespeare.</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td><strong>Fear</strong> = Hamlet, the object of the king's fear.</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td><strong>Process</strong> = the full recital. Fr. <em>procès verbal</em> = the official transcription of a statement made before a magistrate. <strong>Tax him home</strong> = thoroughly probe or examine him, and get the whole truth out of it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td><strong>Of vantage</strong> = from a position of advantage. Polonius will have the advantage of Hamlet in being able from his place of concealment to hear all that passes between Hamlet and his mother.</td>
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<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td><strong>Primal eldest curse</strong> = the curse of Cain. Cain was the eldest son of Adam, and the first murderer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>51.</td>
<td><strong>The action lies.</strong> A legal phrase meaning that &quot;there is ground for commencing the suit at law.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>68.</td>
<td><strong>Limed soul.</strong> A soul entangled in sin, as a bird caught by means of bird-lime. The more it struggles the more it becomes smeared with the sticky substance.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>SCENE IV.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td><strong>Dead, for a ducat. I will wager a ducat that he is dead.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td><strong>Is it the king?</strong> Hamlet naturally thinks that it was the king who had concealed himself behind the tapestry. He acted upon impulse, but it is clear (see 1. 32) that he intended to kill his uncle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td><strong>Penetrable</strong> = capable of receiving moral impressions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td><strong>Brazed</strong> = become hardened like brass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td><strong>Proof</strong> = unpenetrable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td><strong>Sets a blister</strong> = brands as a wanton. Such persons were liable to be branded on the forehead.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
48. Rhapsody of words = a confused utterance of words without connection.

52. Index = prologue to a play, or preface. The index was formerly placed at the commencement of a book, not at the end.

59. Heaven-kissing = reaching to the clouds.

98. A Vice of kings. The Vice was one of the characters in the Moral Plays. He acted the part of the buffoon, and supplied the comic element. He was so named from the vicious or mischievous qualities attributed to him. He wore a motley or patch-work dress. The fool or clown in later plays was developed from the Vice of these old Morality Plays. So "Vice of King" = a very buffoon or clown of a king.

99. Cutpurse = a thief. The purse was worn outside, attached to the girdle. A thief used to cut the purse away from the girdle, and thus possess himself of the money.

102. A king of shreds and patches, referring to the motley dress worn by the Vice (l. 99).

103. When the Ghost first appeared to Hamlet he was visible to others, even before he was seen by Hamlet. Now he is seen by Hamlet alone. So the ghost of Banquo appears to Macbeth only.

135. Habit. Note the differences between this appearance and the former visits of the Ghost. At the castle he appears to those on guard as well as to Hamlet, he is clad in complete armour and stalks away.

Now he appears to Hamlet alone, is clad in royal garb, and steals away.

175. Their scourge and minister. Their = of heaven. Scourge = the instrument to inflict the punishment decreed by heaven.

Minister = the servant to obey heaven's commands.

183. Mouse = a term of endearment.

190. Paddock = a toad. Hamlet compares the queen's telling the king what had taken place to the custom of witches consulting toads, bats and cats.

Gib = a tom-cat. It is a contraction of Gilbert, and was a name often given to a cat.

194. The famous ape. An allusion to some fable well-known at the time, but now forgotten. From the text we may gather that it is a fable concerning an ape who having watched birds fly out of a basket which was opened to let them loose at the top of a house, endeavoured ape-like to imitate them. He crept into the basket, then jumped out as if to fly like the birds, and fell to the ground breaking his neck.

195. To try conclusions = to make experiment.

204. Mandate = the commission of the king entrusted to Rosen-crantz and Guildenstern to take to England.

207. Petard, a kind of mortar used for blowing open gates and doors. Hamlet pictures the engineer whose duty it was to place the petard in position against the gate, as being blown up by the premature explosion of his own petard.
311. Packing = (1) plotting, i.e. Hamlet must set to work at once to meet the plots of his enemies by a counterplot, or (2) that he will be sent off at once for England.

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.

1. Matter = some important reason causing the sighs.
2. Your son = yours (the queen’s), not mine (the king’s).
4. Out of haunt = apart from his companions, or away from the usual haunts of men.
5. Blank = the mark or target. The mark in the target would be painted white.

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SCENE II.

12. Spunge. Taken from a saying of the Emperor Vespasian, who, when found fault with for the appointment of rapacious officers, replied, “that he served his turn with such officers as with spunges, which, when they had drunk their fill, were fittest to be pressed.”

23. A knavish speech, etc. This has become a proverb.

30. Hide fox, etc. This is said to have been a name for the game of “Hide and Seek.”

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SCENE III.

21. Politic worms. An allusion to the famous Diet of Worms, before which Martin Luther was summoned to appear, A.D. 1521.

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24. Variable service. Variable = various—referring to the different courses of a dinner.
32. Progress, the technical term for a royal journey of state.
35. Lobby = a passage or waiting room.
45. At help = ready to help, i.e. favourable.

49. I see a cherub, etc. This has been variously interpreted—
1. The modern saying, “a little bird told me.”
2. I have an inkling of your intentions.
3. The angels are fighting on my side.
4. My times are in God’s hand.

62. Free awe. The superior might of Denmark is now freely acknowledged by England.

65. Conjuring = calling upon him to do our bidding. Quartos read, “conjuring” = that the letters agree with the verbal message, calling for the death of Hamlet.

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SCENE IV.

15. The main, either (1) the mainland of Poland, or (2) the main body of the Polish forces.
22. Sold in fee. This means an absolute sale conveying all rights in the land.
36. Large discourse = a wide range of intelligence, and power of reason.
40. Bestial oblivion = forgetfulness, worthy only of one of the lower animals.
50. Invisible event. Event = issue or result. An issue that cannot be foreseen.
64. Continent. In the sense of “that which holds or contains anything.”
9. **Collection**, etc. = to gather up the disjointed remarks of Ophelia, and to endeavour to aim or guess at their meaning.

10. **Botch** = to put to pieces clumsily, to mend unskilfully.

15. **Ill-breeding minds.** Minds ready to conceive mischief.

25. **Cockle hat and staff, etc.** Alluding to the dress of a pilgrim. The cockle shell was worn in the hat as an emblem of their intention to go beyond the sea to the Holy Land. A pilgrim’s dress, being held sacred, was often worn as a disguise in love adventures.

39. **True love-showers.** Tears showered upon his grave by those who truly loved him.

41. **The baker’s daughter.** A tradition current in Gloucestershire is related by Douce:—“Our Saviour went into a baker’s shop where they were baking and asked for bread. The mistress put some dough in the oven to bake for him. The daughter protested that it was too large, and reduced it to a very small size. The dough began to swell and became of enormous size. 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. The story was often told to children as a warning against churlish behaviour towards poor people.”

50. **Donned** = do on or put on.

51. **Dropped** = do up, i.e. pushed the latch up and so opened the door.

57. **By Gis.** There is no saint of such name. The word is probably a corruption of I.H.S.

64. **My coach,** i.e. calling for her carriage. An anachronism (see p. x.).

69. **Single spies** = singly, one by one, as spies, not in companies.

75. **Hugger-mugger** = secretly, hurriedly, and without ceremony.

86. **Murdering-piece.** The name given to a cannon or mortar when loaded with case shot scattering bullets when fired and thus wounding many by a single discharge.

88. **Switzers** = My body guard. An allusion to the practice of the French Kings in employing Swiss soldiers as their body guard. An anachronism (see p. x.).

90. **List.** A barrier or boundary, enclosing a space, and intended to prevent spectators encroaching on the ground railed off.

92. **Riotous head.** Head = An armed force. Laertes is at the head of an armed rabble.

101. **Counter.** A hunting term descriptive of hounds taking up a false trail, or running back upon the true one. We may note the attitude of both King and Queen. The King faces Laertes in a dignified manner. Secure, as he thinks, by Hamlet’s absence he meets Laertes with calm assurance, asserting the divine right of Kings (I. 111). The Queen staunchly upholds her consort. She seizes Laertes to prevent him striking the King (II. 110-114), and asserts that the charge is false, for, of course, she knew that Hamlet had slain Polonius.
122. Both the worlds, i.e. this world and the next. Laertes casts off all ties of duty in both worlds—viz. "his allegiance" and "vows" of fidelity to the King in this world, "conscience and grace" in the next.

125. My will may mean—
(1) Only by the accomplishment of my purpose.
(2) My own change of purpose, for nothing else shall stay me.

130. Sweepstake. A wager where the winner "sweeps in" all the money staked, receiving both his own stake and that of any loser.

134. Life-rendering = giving up its own life. An allusion to the fable which represents that the pelican pierced its breast and fed its young on its own blood.

159. The Wheel. Ophelia is uttering snatches of old ballads sung to the spinning wheel. Another suggestion is that the "wheel" means the refrain of a song.

162. We may note how Ophelia suits the flowers to the several persons.
To Laertes—
Rosemary = remembrance.
Pansies = thoughts.
As if to say—keep me in memory in your thoughts.
To the King—
Fennel = flattery.
Columbine = ingratitude.
Thus marking the two great faults of the King.
To the Queen—
Rue = ruth or sorrow.
Daisy = faithlessness.
Again marking the sorrow (ruth) coming upon the queen for her faithlessness (daisy) towards her first husband. We may also notice the delicate hint that she cannot give the queen violets, the emblem of faithfulness.

165. Laertes may well term this distribution "a document in madness."
Document, here = a lesson, an instruction, an example.

170. With a difference. An heraldic term denoting the slight change in a coat of arms to distinguish the different members of the same family. The phrase is intended to point out that Ophelia and the Queen had different causes for their respective sorrows.
Ophelia mourns for her dead father.
The Queen will meet with sorrow in punishment for her hasty marriage.


201. Hatchment, an escutcheon. Knights and persons of rank were buried with great ceremony, and "the sword, the helmet, the gauntlet, spurs and tabard were hung over the tomb."

**Scene VI.**

26. Bore of the matter. Bore refers to some large piece of ordnance discharging a heavy shot. Hamlet suggests that his words are too light for the occasion, like shot too small to fit the barrel of a large cannon.

**Scene VII.**

7. Capital = deserving of the death penalty. (Lat. caput, the head).

10. Unsinewed = without nerve or sinew, so, lacking strength, insufficient for the purpose.
15. **Sphere.** An allusion to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, which supposed the universe to be composed of hollow spheres, one within the other.

20. **Spring.** A reference to lime springs. These springs are so impregnated with lime that they deposit a coating of lime upon any substance placed in them, and so apparently petrify or turn it into stone. Knaresborough, in Yorkshire, is famous for such a well.

21. **Gyves** = fetters for the ankles.

22. **Too slightly timbered** = an arrow with too slender and light a shaft, so that its flight is strongly affected by the wind.

28. **Stood challenger.** "The allusion must be to the coronation ceremony of the Emperor of Germany; as King of Hungary; when on the Mount of Defiance, at Presburg, he unsheathes the ancient sword of state, and shaking it towards north, south, east and west challenges the four corners of the earth to dispute his rights." —MOBERLY.

47. **More strange.** The return was sudden, and that was strange, but the strangest thing to the king’s mind was that Hamlet should return at all.

50. **Naked,** either (1) alone, without attendants, or (2) having lost all his possessions.

61. **Checking.** A metaphor taken from falconry. The falcon was said "to check," if it left the proper game to fly after some other bird.

72. **Your sum of parts.** Parts = qualities. The king means that Hamlet did not envy Laertes, all his good qualities put together, but only his skill as a fencer.

75. **Unworthiest siege.** Siege = seat. Persons sat at table according to their rank or position.

88. **Incorpored and deminatured.** Descriptive of a good horseman, who sits his steed as if he were part of the animal.

92. **Brooch** = any conspicuous ornament. Generally worn in the cap as is the custom amongst the Highlanders of Scotland in the present day.

95. **Masterly report** = his high eulogium on your wonderful skill in fencing. He reported you a master of the art.

116. **Plurisy,** this word must not be confounded with "pleurisy," a disease of the lungs, which is derived from pleura, a part of the lungs. Plurisy here is a word derived from the Latin plus, pluris, more, and signifies "excess," "too much."

121. **Spendthrift sigh.** A sigh that wastes the vital flame. It was a common notion that sighs impaired the strength, and wore out the vitality.

122. **That hurts by easing.** The sigh relieves the mind, but, according to the notion above, injured the strength of the body.

126. **Sanctuarize** = be a shelter or protection to a murderer. "Murder should not have the protection of privilege or sanctuary in any place." An allusion to the right of sanctuary.
Certain religious places were privileged to give protection to those who took refuge there, not only to escape from some private enemy, but even if they were criminals against the law.

148. **Simples** = herbs, so-called because each herb was supposed to possess a simple or single element. Simples also means the elements making up any mixture or compound.

172. **Sliver** = a branch broken off from a tree.

188. **The woman will be out.** My present weakness in weeping like a woman will end with my tears, and I shall then be fit and ready to do a man’s work in avenging the deaths of my father and of my sister.

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**ACT V.**

**SCENE I.**

2. **Wilfully.** The body of a person committing suicide is buried without the usual ceremonies of the Church.

4. **Coroner** = coroner, i.e. an officer under the Crown.

9. **So offendendo.** The clown’s mistake for *se defendendo*, which is, however, the verdict in the case of justifiable homicide. *Se offendendo* = by attacking himself—and so can well describe an act of suicide.

11. **The branches.** The clown defines the three parts of any deed.

(1) The inception in the mind.

(2) The resolution to act.

(3) The actual performance.

14. **Goodman deliver.** The first clown is the sexton proper, the second clown is his assis-

tant, a mere labourer employed to dig the graves.

31. **Adam’s profession,** i.e. that of a gardener, and so “a delver” or digger.

“When Adam delved and Eve span
Who was then the gentleman?”

52. **Unyoke.** An expression borrowed from husbandry. When the day’s work is done the team is unyoked or unharnessed. So the phrase means “then your task of guessing can be regarded as completed.”

60. **Yaughan.** An alehouse near the Globe Theatre, was kept by a Jew named Johan. It is suggested that “Yaughan” is a corruption of this name.

61. **These verses inaccurately rendered are taken from “The aged lover renouneth love,” in Tottel’s Miscellany, 1557.**

67. **Property of easiness.** Property = something specially his own. Long custom in burying the dead had rendered the gravedigger indifferent to the mournful task. It was part of his usual routine, and his singing over his task was natural to him.

77. **Cain’s jaw-bone.** An allusion to the old tradition that Cain slew his brother Abel with the jaw-bone of an ass.

79. **O’erreaches.** In the sense of goes beyond, surpasses. Hamlet means that the humble gravedigger is now the superior of the dead politician. It may also mean “reaches over for,” in order to put it back into the ground.

88. **My Lady Worm’s.** This skull which was once my Lord such-a-one’s (l. 84) is now my Lady Worm’s.
92. **Loggats**, diminutive of log
   = a small piece of wood.

Loggats was a game which somewhat resembled bowls. It was played, not upon a green, but on a sanded floor. It consisted in pitching cone-shaped pieces of wood at a Jack in the shape of a ring.

109. **Pair of indentures.** Such agreements are always drawn up and signed in duplicate, each party to the agreement retaining a copy.

138. **By the card** = precisely or exactly, taking this meaning from
   (1) A ship’s chart, which would be accurately drawn.
   or (2) A card of etiquette, containing precise instructions on behaviour.
   or (3) The actor’s card on which his part was exactly written out.

227. **Doubtful, i.e.** no evidence to show if Ophelia’s death had been accidental, or that she had committed suicide.

230. **Unsanctified** = unconsecrated. Alluding to the ancient practice of burying suicides away from the churchyard.

234. **Strewments** = strewing her grave with flowers.

**The bringing home.** The body of Ophelia is carried to the grave (her last home), to the sound of the tolling bell, as a bride is welcomed to her home by the merry chimes of the wedding bells.

277. **Eisel.** Variousy interpreted as
   (1) The name of some river as
   (a) The **Yssel**, a branch of the Rhine.
   (b) The **Weissel**.
   (c) The **Nile**, suggested by the mention of the crocodiles.
   (2) **Eisel** = Vinegar.

284. **Ossa like a wart** = cause a mountain to appear to be no larger than a pimple.

288. **Golden couplets.** The dove lays two eggs and no more. The young on appearing from the shell are covered with yellow golden down. Disclosed is the technical term for the young bird chipping the shell and first appearing.

299. **Living monument.** The king may be referring to an enduring, lasting monument placed over the grave, or he may mean that the death of Hamlet shall be metaphorically the monument.

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**SCENE II.**

6. **Mutines in the bilboes.**

Mutines = mutineers.

A ship’s name is the bilboes, the name for the ship’s prison, and also for the stocks or fetters used on board ship. The bilboes were iron bars with rings at each end.

11. **Rough-hew, i.e.** as a carpenter first works a piece of timber, before finally planing and smoothing it to exact shape and workmanship.

13. **Scarfed.** A verb formed from the noun = to throw the garment round one like a scarf.

36. **Yeoman’s service.** The yeomen (see p. 195) were the small freeholders of England. The allusion is to the great part taken by English yeomen as archers and infantry in the
wars of the 14th and 15th centuries. The phrase has become proverbial for "good and faith-ful service."

42. A comma 'tween their amities. Blending close connection between England and Denmark. The idea is connection not separation. "A comma is the note of connection and continuity of sentences; the period is the note of abruption and disjunction." —Johnson.

47. Not shriving-time allowed, i.e. their death was immediate, and with no time allowed for confession to a priest.

53. Changeling never known. Hamlet compares his substitution of his letter for that of the King's to the supposed practice of fairies, who were believed to take away very beautiful children at their birth, and to replace them with ugly ones. The child brought by the fairy was termed a changeling.

77. Image of my cause. Hamlet can sympathize with Laertes in his grief and indignation, for he knows him to be in a similar case to himself. Hamlet had lost his father, murdered; so had Laertes lost his father, Polonius. Both Hamlet and Laertes mourned for Ophelia, the one for his lover, and the other for his sister.

84. Water-fly. A fly which skims up and down a stream, descriptive of Osric, a mere trifler or hanger-on at Court.

94. Your bonnet to its right use. Put your cap on your head, and do not stand before me uncovered like an obse- quious courtier.

111. Card. Johnson points out the distinction between the card and the calendar. Card or chart, by which to direct his conduct. Calendar, by which to choose his time. So he knows both how and when to behave.

152. Hangers = the straps by which the sword is attached to the belt.

163. Twelve for nine. The terms of the wager. The King wagers that Laertes would hit Hamlet twelve times before Hamlet hit him nine times.

175. Breathing time of day = the time of day taken up in exercise.

187. Lapwing. The lapwing was supposed to run away with its shell on its back in its eagerness to be hatched after coming out of the shell. Hamlet terms Osric a lapwing, i.e. calls him a forward fellow.

189. Comply with his dug, i.e. Osric was imbued with foppish politeness from his birth, so much so as to compliment the breast before he sucked it.

192. Outward habit of encounter. To encounter = to address. Outside polish of manner—veneer of courtesy.

193. Yesty collection = frothy opinions gathered from anywhere.

205. In happy time = just at the right time to witness our fencing match.

212. At the odds, i.e. of 12 to 9 (l. 169). Good fencer though Laertes may be Hamlet is confident that from his own practice he is able to meet him on the above terms of fencer's match.
272. **Union.** A very precious pearl (see p. 194). To swallow a pearl in a draught was a piece of extravagance not uncommon in ancient times.

303. **They change rapiers.**
A stage direction.
This is brought about differently by various actors.

1) **Mutual disarmament,** each picks up the scarcest rapier and thus gets his opponent’s weapon.

2) Hamlet disarms Laertes, and then courteously offers him his own weapon.

3) Laertes rushes in to close quarters and seizes Hamlet’s rapier by the hilt. The proper way to meet this attack would be for Hamlet to seize the hilt of Laertes’ sword—thus the exchange is made.

335. **Mutes** = silent spectators.
The Court generally were, of course, in ignorance of the plot against Hamlet’s life.

340. **The unsatisfied,** i.e. those who could not understand Hamlet’s action in stabbing the King. The dying Hamlet entreats Horatio to explain his acting so that all might see what good cause he had for the deed.

341. **Roman.** An allusion to the Romans of old, who preferred death to a life of disgrace, e.g. Cato.

344. **Wounded name.** Unless the truth is known my name will remain as being stained with the crime of the assassination of the King.

351. **Unnatural acts,** viz. the murder of Hamlet’s father; the hasty marriage of his mother; the plots of the King against Hamlet.

382. **Accidental judgments,** viz. the death of Polonius stabbed by Hamlet in mistake for the King; the death of the Queen on drinking the poisoned cup intended for Hamlet. **Casual slaughters,** the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guilderstern.

383. **Cunning,** the death of Laertes, his own device recoiling on himself. **Forced,** the death of the King, well merited by his crimes.

384. **Upshot.** A term in archery = the last shot. The death of Hamlet was the final act in the drama of murder and death.

389. **Rights of memory** = rights which the Danes must remember are well founded. Fortinbras is alluding to his claim to succeed to the throne of Denmark now that both the King and Hamlet are dead.
VERSIFICATION.

For this we have followed somewhat closely the lines laid down by Abbot in his Shakespearian Grammar.

(1) The ordinary line of Blank Verse or Iambic Pentameter consists of five feet (Pentameter) of two syllables, each with the accent on the second syllable (Iambus).

[A foot with the accent on the first syllable is called a Trochee]

"Was false' | ly borne' | in hand', | —and sends' | arrest'" | (II. ii. 67).

On Fort' | inbras'; | which he', | in brief, | obeys'" | (II. ii. 68).

Receives' | rebuke' | from Nor' | way: and', | in fine, | (II. ii. 69).

Makes vows' | before' | his un' | cle new' | er more'" | (II. ii. 70).

(2) A Trochee often occurs, especially as the first foot of a line.

"Looks' it | not like' | the king'? | mark it', | Horat'io || (I. i. 43).

"Cost'ly | thy hab' | it as' | thy purse' | can buy'" | (I. iii. 70).

"Mar'ry | I'll teach' | you: think' | yourself' | a baby'" | (I. iii. 105).

"Run'ning | it thus', | you'll tend' | er me' | a fool'" | (I. iii. 109).

"When' the | blood burns' | how prod' | igal' | the so'ul" | (I. iii. 116).

"Why' to | a pub' | lic count' | I may' | not go'" | (IV. vii. 17).

Examples of a Trochee not as the first foot of a line.

"Affect' | ion! poch'! | you speak' | like' a | green girl'" | (I. iii. 101).

"A broth' | er's mur' | der'! | Pray' can | I not'" | (III. iii. 88).

(3) An extra syllable is often added before a pause, especially at the end of a line.

"But not' | expressed' | in fan' | cy; rich', | not gaudy'" | (I. iii. 71).

"And that' | in way' | of caut' | ion I | must tell' you" | (I. iii. 95).

"You' do | not und' | ersta'nd' | yourself' | so clearly'" | (I. iii. 96).

"As' it' | behoves' | my daugh' | ter and' | your honour'" | (I. iii. 97).

"Do not' | believe' | his vows'': | for they' | are bro'kers" | (I. iii. 127).

Example of extra syllables in the middle of a line.

"Had he' | been van'quisher, | as by' | the same' | covenant'," | (I. i. 93).

(4) Accented Monosyllables and prepositions. Sometimes an unemphatic monosyllable is allowed to stand in an emphatic place, and to receive an accent.

"So please' | you some' | thing touch' | ing the' | Lord Ham'let" | (I. iii. 89).

(5) Two extra syllables are sometimes allowed, if unemphatic, before a pause, especially at the end of a line.

"Had he' | been van'quisher, | as by' | the same' | covenant'" | (I. i. 93).

"My lord', | I came' | to see' | your fa' | ther's fu'neral" | (I. ii. 176).

"And meant' | to wreck' | thee; but' | beshrew' | my jeal'ousy" | (II. i. 111).

"O'erbears' | your officers' | The rab' | ble call' | him King'" | (IV. v. 93).

(6) Prefixes are dropped in the following words:—

'Count for "account."  'Haviour for "behaviour."

'Gain-giving for "against giving."  'Noyance for "annoyance."

'Gainst for "against."  'Tend for "attend."
(7) R frequently softens or destroys a following vowel (the vowel being nearly lost in the burr which follows the r).

"And then', 'they say', 'no spirit' | dares stir' | abroad' || " (I. i. 161).

Ham. Perchance', 'twill walk' | again.

Hor. I warrant' | it will' || (I. ii. 243).
' My fa' | ther's spirit' | in arms' | all is' | not well' || " (I. ii. 255).

"For'ward, | not per' | manent', | sweet' | not lasting' || " (I. iii. 8).

"Tru'ly | to spe' | ak and' | with no | addi'tion' || " (IV. iv. 17).

"I'll | be | with you strai' | ght. Go' | a little' | before' || " (IV. iv. 31).

"Be thou' | a spirit' | of health', | or gob' | lin dam'n'd || " (I. iv. 40).

(8) Whether and Ever, and similar words pronounced as one syllable.

"Whether love' | lead for | tune, or' | else for' | tune love' || " (III. ii. 190).

"But never' | the offence'. | To bear' | all smooth' | and even' || " (IV. iii. 7).

"To rust' | in us' | unused'. | Now whether' | it be' || " (IV. iv. 39).

(9) I in the middle of a trisyllable, if unaccented, is frequently dropped.

"To do' | obse' | quious sorrow' | but to' | perse'ver' || " (I. ii. 92).

"Himself' | the prim' | rose path' | of dall' | iance tre'ads' || " (I. iii. 50).

"Unsift' | ed in' | such pe'ril | ous cir' | cumstance' || " (I. iii. 102).

"And ted' | iousness' | the limbs' | and out' | ward flour'ishes' || " (II. ii. 91).

(10) Any unaccented syllable of a polysyllable may sometimes be softened and almost ignored.

"A lit' | the ere' | the migh't | iest Jul' | ius fell', || " (I. i. 114).

"The graves' | stood tenant' | less, and' | the sheet' | ed dead' || " (I. i. 115).

"A count' | enance more' | in sor' | row than' | in anger' || " (I. ii. 232).

"And hath' | given count' | enance to' | his speech', | my lord' || ' (I. i. 112).

"As fits' | a king's' | remem' | brance. Both' | your maj'es'ties' || " (II. ii. 26).

"To give' | the assay' | of arms' | against' | your maj'es'ty || " (II. ii. 71).

(11) Polysyllabic names often receive but one accent at the end of the line in pronunciation.

"Thou art' | a schol' | ar; spea'k | to it', |Hora'tio' || " (I. i. 42).

"I pray' | thee stay' | with us', | go not' | to Witt'en'ber'g' || " (I. ii. 119).

Or we may scan—

"I pray thee (pri'hee) stay' | with us', | go not' | to Witt' | enber'g' || " (I. i. 143).

"Than may' | be giv' | en you': | In few', | Oph'elia' || " (I. iii. 126).

"When thou' | liest howl' | ing. What' | the fair' | Oph'elia' || " (V. i. 243).

Examples in the middle of a line—

"How now', | Hora'tio? | you trem' | ble and' | look pale' || " (I. i. 53).

"Thrift, thrift!', | Hora'tio! | the fun', | ural' | baked meats' || " (I. ii. 180).

(12) Words in which a light vowel word is preceded by a heavy vowel or diphthong are frequently contracted.

"We do' | it wrong', | being so' | majes'ty' | ic' al' || " (I. i. 143).

"Of en' | trance to' | a quarr' | el: but' | being in' || " (I. iii. 66).

"That you' | at such' | times seeing' | me nev' | er shall' || " (I. v. 157).

"Will' so | bestow' | ourselves' | that, seeing', | unseen' || " (III. i. 33).

(13) Ed following d or t is often not pronounced, even if written.

"I had' | not quot'ed him | I fear'd' | he did' | but trifle' || " (I. i. 110).
(14) Er final pronounced with a kind of "burr," giving the effect of an additional syllable.

"Lends' the | tongue vows'; | these blaz' | es, daugh | ter' ||" (I. iii. 117).
"To speak' | of hor' | rors',- | he comes' | before' me||" (II. i. 82).
"A broth' | er's mur | der'? | Pray' can | I not' ||" (III. iii. 38).

(15) The terminative "ion" is frequently pronounced as two syllables at the end of a line. The i is also sometimes pronounced in such words as soldier, marriage, conscience, etc.; and the e in surgeon, vengeance, etc.

"As you' | are friends', | schol'ars, | and sol | diers' ||" (I. v. 125).
"Of Ham' | let's trans' | forma' | tion'. | So call' it||" (II. ii. 5).
"Do not' | forget'; | this vis' | ita't | ion'||" (III. iv. 110).
"With sor'e | distract' | ion'. | What have' | I done'? ||" (V. ii. 230).

(16) Fear, dear, year, fire, and other monosyllables ending in r or re, preceded by a long vowel or diphthong, are frequently pronounced as dissyllables.

"Hor. | Where', | my lord'? |
Ham. | In' my | miud's eye', | Hor'atio||" (I. ii. 165).
"You must' | not take' | for fi' | re. | From' | this time'. ||" (I. iii. 120).
"Fear' | me not: | withdraw', | I hear' | him coming'||" (III. iv. 7).

(17) Monosyllabic (1) exclamations; (2) emphasized by position or antithesis; (3) containing long vowels or diphthongs; (4) containing a vowel followed by r.

"Where'fore | should you' | do this'? | Ay', | my lord'||" (II. i. 36).
"Thence' to | a watch'; | thence' | into' | a weak'ness||" (II. ii. 149).
"The devil' | himself'. |
O' 'tis' | too tr'ue! | how sm'art||" (III. i. 49).

"One wor' | d more', | good lady'. |
What shall' | I do'||" (III. iv. 180).
"Tru'ly | to spe' | ak, sir', | and with' | no addi'tion|| (IV. iv. 17).

Or as a Trimeter Couplet.
"Tru'ly | to spe' | ak, sir', | and with' | no add' | iti'on,'" or "Tru'ly | to speak' | and with no' | addit' | ion'. ||" "I will be' | with you strai' | ght. | Go' | a little' | befo're||" (IV. iv. 31).
"To hide' | the stain'? | O' | from this' | time forth||" (IV. iv. 65).
"Will you' | be ruled' | by me'? | Ay', | my lo'rd||" (IV. vii. 53).

(18) Accent

1. Words in which the accent is nearer the end than with us.

Aspect'. Tears' in | her eyes', | distract' | ion in's' | aspect' ||" (II. ii. 556).

Canon'ized. "Why thy' | canon' | ized bones' | hearsed' | in death'||" (I. iv. 47).

Chara'cter. "Look' thou | charact' | er. Give' | thy thought' | ns | no tong'ue||" (I. iii. 59).

Commend'able. '"'Tis sweet and | commend' | able in' | your na' | ture
Ham'let||" (I. ii. 87).

Compact' (noun). "Did slay' | this Fort'inbras; | who by | a seal'd | compact'||" (I. i. 86).

Comrade'. "Of each' | new-hatched', | unfledged' | comrade'. | Bew'ars'||" (I. iii. 65).
Contra'ry. "Our wills' | and fates' | do so' | contra' | ry run' ||" (III. ii. 196).

Converse.' "Your par' | ty in' | converse', | him you' | would sound' ||" (II. i. 42).

Purpo'rt. "And with' | a look' | so pit' | eous in' | purport' ||" (II. i. 80).

Records' (noun). "I'll wipe' | away' | all triv' | al fond' | records' || (I. v. 83).

Reve'nue. "That no' | reve' | nue hast' | but thy' | good spirits' ||" (III. ii. 57).

2. Words in which the accent is nearer the beginning than with us,

Ab'surd. No, let' | the cand' | ied tongue' | lick ab' | surd pomp' || (III. ii. 59).


En'gineer. "For 'tis | the sport' | to have' | the en'gineer' || (III. iv. 206).

So Abbott, but it is better to scan "engineer" with two accents.

"For 'tis | the sport' | to have' | the en' | gineer' ||" (III. iv. 206).

Impor'tuned. "My lord', | he hath' | impor't | uned me' | with love' ||" (I. iii. 110).

Ob'scure. "His means' | of death', | his ob' | sere fun' | eral' ||" (IV. v. 200).

Perse'ver. "I do' | obs'e | quious sorrow' | but to' | perse'ver' ||" (I. ii. 92).

Pi'oneer, "A worth' | y pi'oneer! | Once more' | remove', | good friends' ||" (I. v. 147).

So'cure. "Up'on | my so' | cure hour' | thy un' | cle stole' ||" (I. v. 45).

(19) A Proper Alexandrine (i.e. a line with six accents) is rarely found in Shakespeare.

An example of an Alexandrine.

"And now' | by winds' | and waves' | my life' | less limbs' | are tossed' ||" DRYDEN.

(20) Apparent Alexandrines.

"Had he' | been van'quisher; | as, by' | the same' | covenant' ||" (I. i. 93).

Both vanquisher and "covenant" are examples of extra syllables in the foot (see 3).

"Hyper' | ion to' | a sa'tyr: | so lov' | ing to' | my mo'ther' ||" (I. ii. 140).

Igor. "Hail to | your lord'ship! |

Ham. I am (I'm) glad' to see' | you well' ||" (I. ii. 160).

"Unto that' | element' | but long' | it could' | not be' ||" (IV. vii. 179).

"Unt' that' | "el'ment' " are contracted.

"I'll be' | your foil', | La'vettes, in | mine ig' | norance' ||" (V. ii. 255).

(21) Many apparent Alexandrines are Trimeter Couplets, or two verses of three accents each.

"Where'of | he is' | the head'; | then', if | he says' | he loves' you' ||" (I. iii. 24).

"To what' | I shall' | unfold' |

Speak', I | am bound' | to hear' ||" (I. v. 7).

"God will' | ing, shall' | not lack'. || Let us' | go in' | to'gther' ||" (I. v. 171).
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"Contag' [ion to'] this world'. || Now could' I drink' hot blood' ||" (III. ii. 376).

"Ov'er [the nast'] y sty',—

O, speak' to me' no more' ||" (III. iv. 94).

"To whom' do you' speak this'?||

Do you' see no' thing there' ||" (III. iv. 131).

"Nor did' you no' thing hear'?

No, no' thing but' ourselves' ||" (III. iv. 133).

"Of your' dear fa' ther's death', is't writ' in your' revenge' ||" (IV. v. 129).

(22) Amphibious section. When a verse consists of two parts uttered by

two speakers, the latter part of the first verse is frequently the former

part of the following verse, being, as it were, amphibious.

"The bell' then beat' ing one'—|

Peace, break' thee off' look, where' it comes' again' ||" (I. i. 39-40).

Oph. "Of his' affect' ion to me'. ||

Pol. Affect' ion? pooh'! You speak' like' a green girl' ||" (I. iii. 100-1).

Ham. "You will' reveal' it',||

Hor. Not I', my lord', by heaven' ! |

Mar. Nor I', my Lord' ||" (I. v. 103).

Mar. Of his' true state||

Did he' receive' you well' ||

Most like' a gentleman' ||" (III. i. 10-11).

"Can you' advise me'. ||

I am lost' in it', my lord'. But let' him come' ||" (IV. vii. 52-3).

Sometimes a section will, on the one side, form part of a regular line, and

on the other, part of a Trimeter Couplet.

Hor. "Of mine' own eyes'. || Mar. Is' it not like' the King' ?||

Hor. As thou' art to' thyself' ||" (I. i. 58-59).

Oph. "In hon' our' ble fashion'|

Pol. "Ay, fash' ion you' may call it'. || Go to', go to' ||" (III. i. 111-112).

Mar. "No', it is struck'. |

Hor. Indeed', I heard' it not'; then it draws near' the sea'son' ||" (I. iv. 4.5).

In the second line we may take "indeed" as a detached interjection as

regards that line, i.e. the second portion of the section.

(23) Lines of four accents.

"My father',—methinks', I see' my father' ||" (I. ii. 184).

"As he' would draw' it. Long stay'ed he so' ||" (II. i. 89).

"Must give' us pause'. There's the respect' ||" (III. i. 65).

And many others.

(24) Lines are often broken up between two speakers.

Mar. "It' is offend' ed. |

Ber. See', it stalks' away' ||" (I. i. 50).

Hor. "Do', if it will' not stand'.
(25) Interruptions are sometimes not allowed to interfere with the completeness of the verse.

Pol. "Pray' you | be round' | with him'. |
      (Hamlet [within] Mother, mother, mother).

Queen. I'll war' | rant you' ||" (III. iv. 5, 6).

Ham. "There's a | divin' | ity' | that shapes' | our ends', |
      Rough-hew' | them how' | we will'. |
      (Hor. That is | most certain)  
      Up from' | my ca'bin ||" (V. ii. 10-12).

(26) Scan the following lines thus.

"I'll' | speak to it' | though hell' | itself' | should gape' ||" (I. ii. 245).

"Let' it' | be ten' | able in' | your si' | lence still' ||" (I. ii. 248).

"The sa' | fety' | and the health' | of the' | whole state' ||" (I. iii. 21).

Scan "safety" as a trisyllable. The Folio reads "sanctity," so "sanity" has been suggested as an emendation for "safety."

"Bear 't that' | the oppos' | or may' | beware' | of thee' ||" (I. iii. 67).

"Have' of' | your aud' | ience been' | most free' | and boun'tiful ||" 
      (I. iii. 93).

"Which' are' | not sterling'. | Ten'der | yourself' | more dearly' ||" 
      (I. iii. 107).

"Why thy' | canon' | ized bones' | hearded' | in death' ||" (I. iv. 47).

"I had' | not quoted him' : | I fear'd' | he did' | but trifle' ||" (II. i. 110).

"And thus' | o'er-siz' | ed with' | coag' | ulate gors' ||" (II. ii. 462).

"What's Hec' | uba' | to him', | or he' | to Hec'uba ||" (II. ii. 560).

"But never' | the offence'. | To bear' | all smooth' | and even' ||" 
      (IV. iii. 7).

"But never'" = But ne'er; "the offence'" = Th' offence.

"Next,' your | son gone'; | and he' | most vi' | (o)lent au'thor ||" 
      (IV. v. 71).

Scan III. ii. 255—p. as eight and six.

" Why, let' | the strick' | en deer' | go weep', |
      The hart' | ungall' | ed play', | etc. ||

Scan Ophelia's song thus:

"And will' | a' not come' | again' ? |
And will' | a' not come' | again' ? |
     No, no' | he is dead' : |
     Go to' | thy death-bed : |
     He never' | will come' | again'. ||

"His beard' | was as white' | as snow', |
     All flax' | en was' | his poll' : |
     He is gone', | he is gone', |
     And we cast' | away' | moan' ; |
     God ha' mer' | cy on' | his soul' ! ||"
Rhyme. "Rhyme was often used as an effective termination at the end of a scene. When the scenery was not changed, or the arrangements were so defective that the change was not easily perceptible, it was perhaps additionally desirable to mark a scene that was finished."

"Rhyme was also sometimes used in the same conventional way to mark an aside, which otherwise the audience might have great difficulty in knowing to be an aside."—ABBOTT.

Examples of rhyme at the end of a scene are: I. ii., II. i., II. ii., III. i., III. ii., III. iii., IV. i., IV. iv., IV. v., V. i., V. ii.

Prose. Prose is not only used in comic scenes; it is adopted for letters (M. of V. IV. i. 149-66), and on other occasions when it is desirable to lower the dramatic pitch: for instance, in the more colloquial parts of the household scene between Volumnia and Virgilia (Coriol., I. iii.), where the scene begins with prose, then passes into verse, and returns finally to prose. It is also used to express frenzy (Othello, IV. i. 34-44); and madness (Lear, IV. vi. 130), and the higher flights of the imagination.

Prose in Hamlet is:

II. ii. 169-449. Madness and colloquial.
II. ii. 519-549. Colloquial.

[When his friends leave him Hamlet speaks in verse (550).]

III. i. 100-148. Hamlet simulates madness when in conversation with Ophelia.

III. ii. 1-52. Colloquial. Hamlet's conversation with the players.
III. ii. 91-141, 163, 211, 216-254. Interruptions in the play scene; the prose marks the conversation of the audience.

III. ii. 255-279. Colloquial; Hamlet conversing with Horatio.
III. ii. 279-378. On the entrance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Hamlet simulates madness.

III. ii. 374-385. Now that Hamlet is alone he speaks in verse.

IV. iii. 17-40 } Hamlet simulating madness.
IV. iii. 49-54

IV. v. 21-65. Ophelia, really mad, speaks in prose.

IV. vi. 6-31. Colloquial between Hamlet and the sailors. The letter is also in prose.

IV. vii. 43-47. A letter.
V. i. 1-213. Partly Comedy, partly colloquial between the grave-diggers and Hamlet.
V. ii. 81-224. The conversation with Osric. Colloquial,
THE ENGLISH OF SHAKESPEARE.

The Student should closely examine the language of a play of Shakespeare, but not with the intention of discovering what he may consider grammatical errors. We must remember that the English of Shakespeare is the English of the Elizabethan period. Accordingly, a play should be studied with the object of contrasting Elizabethan and Victorian English. The Student should note:

1. **The Elizabethan Period is transitional.**
   
   (a) In the abandonment of inflections. Early English is marked by inflections. Modern English is marked by the comparative absence of inflections. Elizabethan English comes between the two.
   
   (b) Increase of intercourse with foreign nations and active maritime development caused an influx of new ideas, requiring the coining of new words and expressions to voice them.
   
   (c) The revival of classical studies enabled authors to enrich the language by words derived from Latin and Greek sources.

2. **The chief characteristics of Elizabethan English are:**
   
   (a) Clearness, Vigour and Emphasis.
   
   (b) Brevity.
   
   (c) The Interchangeability of Parts of Speech.
   
   (d) The Introduction of New Words.

Writers did not hesitate to sacrifice grammatical accuracy to clearness and brevity. In addition we must remember that the Plays were intended to be spoken, not read. Absolute grammatical accuracy and precise syntax might have produced polished sentences and phrases, but would have sacrificed the vigour and fire, which are such marked features of the Plays.

The following lists give illustrations of these characteristics of the language as found in the present Play:

### I. INTERCHANGEABILITY OF PARTS OF SPEECH.

Not only shall we find adjectives for adverbs, nouns as verbs, etc.—but abstract words used in a concrete sense. Transitive verbs used intransitively, and many other free methods indicative of the use of the Period. Some examples are:

1. **Adjectives.**
   
   (a) Used interchangeably as Adverbs.

   "'Tis bitter (bitterly) cold" (I. i. 8).
   "Goes slow (slowly) and stately by them" (I. ii. 202).
   "Very like, very like" = likely (I. ii. 236).
   "New-hatched" = newly hatched (I. iii. 65).
   "How prodigious (prodigally) the soul lends the tongue vows" (I. iii. 116).
   "Grow not instant (instantly) old" (I. v. 79).
   "This is wondrous (wonderfully) strange" (I. v. 158).
   "You shall do marvellous (marvellously) wisely, good Reynaldo" (II. i. 8).
   "I went round (roundly) to work" (II. ii. 140).
   "You say right (rightly)" (II. ii. 388).
   "We'll have a speech straight" (straightway, immediately) (II. ii. 430).
   "I am myself indifferent (fairly) honest" (III. i. 119).
   "Excellent (excellently) I' faith" (III. ii. 92).
   "Or come tardy (tardily) off" (III. ii. 95).
He will come straight" (straightway, immediately) (III. iv. 1).
"New-lighted = newly lighted" (III. iv. 59).
"Pinch wanton (wantonly) on your cheek" (III. iv. 183).
"Speak fair (fairly, or fair words), and bring the body (IV. i. 36).
Follow her close (closely)" (IV. v. 66).
"It shall as level (directly) to your judgment pierce" (IV. v. 133).
"And do't the speedier (= the more speedily)" (IV. vi. 32).
"It falls right (rightly)" (IV. vii. 69).
"It is indifferent (Indifferently) cold" (V. ii. 39).

(b) Used interchangeably as Nouns.
"A list of lawless resolves" (I. i. 98) = resolve men.
"I shall in all my best obey you" (I. ii. 120).
"In the dead vast and middle of the night" (I. ii. 198).
"In few, Ophelia" (I. iii. 126).
"'Twas caviare to the general" (II. ii. 437) = the majority.
"Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss" (IV. v. 18) = misfortune.

(c) Used interchangeably as Verbs.
"And 'gins to pale his ineffectual fire" (I. v. 74) = to make pale.
"And all his visage wanred" (II. ii. 555) = become wan or pale.
"We fat all creatures else to fat us; and we fat ourselves for maggoses" (IV. iii. 22-23) = to fatien.
"And since he's bettered" (V. ii. 263) = has improved.

2. Nouns.
(a) Used interchangeably as Adjectives.
"Maiden presence" (I. iii. 121).
"Region kites" (II. ii. 559).
"Music vows" (III. i. 154).
"The neighbour room" (III. iv. 212).
"Mountain snow" (IV. v. 34).
"Coronet weeds" (V. vii. 171).

(b) Used interchangeably as Adverbs.
"We doubt it nothing" (I. ii. 41) = in no wise, not at all.
"This something settled matter" (III. i. 171) = somewhat.
"Discomfit you, my lord, it nothing must" (III. ii. 153) = in no wise.

(c) Used interchangeably as Verbs.
"Sharked up a list of lawless resolves" (I. i. 98).
"To business with the King" (I. ii. 37).
"Cast thy nighted colour off" (I. ii. 68).
"The heavens shall resound again" (I. ii. 127) = resound.
"I look thee character" (I. iii. 59) = engrave.
"It doth posset and curd" (I. v. 53-53). Curd may be abbreviation of "curdle."
"We do sugar o'er the devil himself" (III. i. 48).
"It out-herod's Herod" (III. ii. 14).
"You shall nose him as you go up the stairs" (IV. iii. 39) = smell.
"Repast them with my blood" (IV. v. 135) = feed them on.
"My sea-gown scarfed about me" (V. ii. 13) = wrapped about me as a scarf.

3. Verbs.
(a) Used interchangeably as Nouns.
"Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own ears" (I. i. 57-8).
"For this 'would' changes" (IV. vii. 118).

(b) Intransitive used interchangeably with Transitive.
"So nightly toils the subject of the land" (I. i. 72) = makes the subject to toil.
"If with too credent ear you list his songs" (I. iii. 30).
"Haste me to know it" (I. v. 39) = make me to go quickly.

(c) Used interchangeably as Adjectives.
"As hush (silent) as death" (II. ii. 486).
4. Abstract words used in a concrete sense.

"Needful in our loves (i.e. on account of our love)" (I. i. 173).
"Your better wisdoms" (I. ii. 15).
"You cannot speak of reason" (I. ii. 44), i.e. name a reasonable request.
"My necessaries are embarked" (I. iii. 1) = needful things.
"Between you and your love" (III. iii. 233) = lover.
"Tis meet that some more audience than a mother (III. iii. 31) = persons hearing.
"With this contagion" (IV. vii. 146) = poisonous drug.

II. BREVITY AND EMPHASIS.

The desire for brevity will explain many omissions. Notable illustrations are:

"Do you consent (that) we shall acquaint him with it" (I. i. 172).
"Now follows, (that) that you know, young Fortinbras" (I. ii. 17).
"Give these fellows some means (of access) to the king" (IV. vi. 14).

1. Omission of the relative.

"That which (who was) lost" (I. ii. 90) } omission of relative and verb.
"And they (that are) in France" (I. iii. 73) } omission of relative and verb.
"What is't, Ophelia, (that) he has said to you" (I. iii. 88).
"Even with the vow (that) I made to her in marriage" (I. v. 49-50).
"Your party in converse, him (whom) you would sound" (II. i. 49).
"And (whom) all we mourn for" (II. ii. 152).
"Those ills (which) we have" (III. i. 78).
"To draw apart the body (which) he hath killed" (IV. i. 24).
"I have words to speak in thine ear (that) which will make thee dumb" (IV. vi. 24-25).
"That (which) we would do" (IV. vii. 117).
"We'll put on those (who) shall praise your excellence" (IV. vii. 130).
"The fame (which) the Frenchman gave you" (IV. vii. 132).
"There is a willow (which) grows aslant a brook" (IV. vii. 165).
"The corpse (which) they follow" (V. i. 221).

2. Omission of the subject.

"(He) sends out arrests" (II. ii. 67).
"And now (it) remains" (II. ii. 100).
"Well be (it) with you" (II. ii. 381).
"But with a crafty madness, (he) keeps aloof" (III. i. 8).
"None wed the second, but (he) who killed the first" (III. ii. 167).

3. Omission of the verb of motion.

"(Go) away, I do beseech you, both (go) away" (II. ii. 170).
"Shall we (go) to the court" (II. ii. 264).
"He shall (go) with speed to England" (III. i. 167).
"Shall (go) along with you" (III. iii. 4).
"I must (go) to England" (III. iv. 200).

Emphasis is denoted.

1. In the Double Negative.

"It is not, nor it cannot come to, good" (I. ii. 159).
"Nor no matter in the phrase" (II. ii. 443).
"Nor 'tis not strange" (III. ii. 187).
"Nor did you nothing hear" (III. iv. 134).
"Not this, by no means, that I bid you do" (III. iv. 181)

2. In double comparatives and superlatives.

"Come you more nearer" (II. i. 11).
"O most best believe it" (II. ii. 122).
"Shows itself more richer" (III. ii. 289).
"The worser part of it" (III. iv. 157).
"More rawer breath" (V. ii. 125).
3. **In the repetition of the subject.**

   "He hath not fail'd to pester us with message" (I. ii. 22).

   The subject proper is "Fortinbras" (line 17).

4. **In the repetition of the object.**

   "The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
   Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel" (I. iii. 62-63).

### III. WE MAY NOTE ALSO:

1. **The use of the Nominative Absolute.**

   The absolute case in Greek is the Genitive; in Latin the Ablative; in Anglo-Saxon, the Dative. Shakespeare in the transition period drops the inflection but retains the idiom. The use of the Dative Absolute in Early English writers explains the frequent use of the Nominative Absolute by Elizabethan writers.

   "Yet now, I must confess, that duty done" (I. ii. 54).

   "Hys greatness weighd, his will is not his own" (I. iii. 17).

   "The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried"
   Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel" (I. iii. 62-63).

   "The great man (being) down, you mark his favourite flies" (III. ii. 191).

   "Else no creature seeing" (III. ii. 240).

   "No leisure bated" (V. ii. 23).

   "The changeling never known" (V. ii. 53).

   "The gentleman willing" (V. ii. 176).

   "Things standing thus alone" (V. ii. 345).

2. **The use of "His" with a neuter noun, where we should now use "Its."**

   The neuter possessive form "its" is of later date than Shakespeare's time, when it was just beginning to be used. The A.S. possessive form both in the masculine and neuter gender was "his."

   "Nor any unproportioned thought his act" (I. iii. 60).

   "Since nature cannot choose his origin" (I. iv. 26).

   "The dram of base—to his own scandal" (I. iv. 36-38).

   "As level as the cannon to his blank" (IV. i. 42).

   "That treason can but peep to what it would,
   Acts little of his will" (IV. iv. 127).

   "Act, as the star moves not but in his sphere" (IV. vii. 15).

   "Than settled age his sables and his weeds" (IV. vii. 79).

   "Sir, this report of his
   Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy" (IV. vii. 101-102).

   "There's a willow—that shows his hoar leaves" (IV. vii. 165-166).

3. **The frequent non-agreement of the verb with the subject. e.g**

   (a) A singular verb with a plural nominative.

   "For on his choice depends
   The safety and health of the whole state" (I. iii. 20-21).

   The double nominative follows the verb, and express one idea.

   "His sickness, age, and impotence
   Was falsely borne in hand" (II. ii. 66-67).

   The three nominatives express the state of health of the king of Norway.

   "Your fat king, and your lean beggar is but variable service" (IV. iii. 24-5)

   The verb is attracted to agree with service.

   "There's letters sealed" (III. iv. 202).

   "There's tricks I the world" (IV. v. 5).

   "There is pansies, that's for thoughts" (IV. v. 163-4).

   "That's two of his weapons" (V. ii. 148).

   In these instances the subject is yet future, and so a speaker might well make such errors of syntax.
(b) A plural verb with a singular nominative.

"More than the scope

Of these dilated articles allow" (I. ii. 37-38).

"Scope," the subject, is singular. " Allow," the verb is attracted to agree with "articles," the nearer noun.

"Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be" (III. ii. 177-178).

Fall is attracted to agree with " they " the nearer subject.

"The violence of either grief or joy

Their own enactures with themselves destroy" (III. ii. 183-184).

The verb is attracted to agree with "enactures," the nearest noun.

(c) Participial Forms.

Bed-rid = bed-ridden (I. ii. 29).
Broke = broken (IV. v. 102).
Deject = dejected (III. i. 153).
Disjoint = disjoined (I. ii. 20).
Eat = eaten (IV. iii. 29).
Forbid = forbidden (I. v. 13).
Forgot = forgotten (III. ii. 127, III. iv. 201).

Hoist = hoisted (III. iv. 207).
O' er-took = over-taken (II. i. 58).
Shook = shaken (IV. vii. 32).
Spoke = spoken (I. i. 45).
Well-took = well-taken (II. ii. 83).
Writ = written (I. ii. 27), also (I. ii. 222, IV. v. 129).

4. The use of compound words.

Elizabethan writers freely coined Compound Words, in order to express their meaning, and in doing so did not follow rules which would be now observed. Examples of Compound Words are:

"Demi-natured" (IV. vii. 86).
"Down-gyved" (II. i. 78).
"Fear-surprised" (I. ii. 203).
"Free-footed" (III. iii. 26).
"Gain-giving" (V. ii. 216).
"Giant-like" (IV. v. 109).
"Heaven-kissing" (III. iv. 59).
"Heavy-headed" (I. iv. 17).
"Hugger-mugger" (IV. v. 75).
"Ill-breeding" (IV. v. 15).
"In-urned" (I. iv. 49).
"Jig-maker" (III. ii. 115).
"Lazar-like" (I. v. 56).
"Liberal-conceited" (V. ii. 163).
"Life-rendering" (IV. v. 134).
"Muddy-mettled" (II. ii. 569).
"Murdering-piece" (IV. v. 86).
"New-hatched" (I. iii. 65).
"New-lighted" (III. iv. 59).
"O' er-crows" (V. ii. 353).

"O' er-leavens" (I. v. 29).
"O' er-sized" (II. ii. 462).
"O' er-teemed" (II. i. 503).
"Out-face" (V. i. 279).
"Out-herod" (III. ii. 14).
"Peace-parted" (V. i. 239).
"Periwig-pated" (III. ii. 9).
"Pigeon-livered" (II. ii. 580).
"Promise-crammed" (III. ii. 93).
"Re-speaking" (I. ii. 128).
"Rough-hew" (V. ii. 11).
"Self-slaughter" (I. ii. 132).
"Shrill-sounding" (I. i. 151).
"Shriving-time" (V. ii. 47).
"Thought-sick" (III. iv. 51).
"Up-boarded" (I. i. 136).
"Up-spring" (I. iv. 9).
"Well-took" (II. ii. 83).
"Wonder-wounded" (V. i. 258).
5. Words which have changed either their form or meaning.

Words occurring in *Hamlet* only are marked with an asterisk.

Abuse = trick, deception (IV vii. 48).
Addition = title (I. iv. 20).
Anchor (anchorite) = hermit (III. ii. 206).
*Annexment = what is annexed (III. iii. 21).
*Apoplexed = struck with apoplexy (III. iv. 78).
Attent = attentive (I. ii. 193).
Benetted = ensnared (V. ii. 29).
Beteem = permit (I. ii. 141).
Bisson = blind or purblind (II. ii. 506).
Blank = mark (IV. i. 42).
Blanks = makes pale, whitens (III. ii. 207).
Brevity = fine show, display (V. ii. 79).
Buzzers = whisperers, talebearers (IV. v. 81).
*Blastments = blight (I. iii. 42).
Cautel = deceit (I. iii. 15).
*Cease = deccase (III. iii. 15).
Character = engrave (I. ii. 59).
Character = handwriting (IV. vii. 50).
Circumstance = circumspection (I. v. 111).
Clepe = call, name (I. iv. 19).
*Climatures = those living under the same climate (I. i. 125).
Collection = inference (IV. v. 9).
Compulsatory = compulsory Compulsive} (I. i. 103).
Condolement = grief (I. ii. 93).
Conceit = conception (II. ii. 554).
Confine = limit, boundary (I. i. 155, II. ii. 245).
Continent = that which contains, or encloses (IV. iv. 64).
*Contraction = marriage (III. iv. 46).
Concernancy = connection, *i.e.* what does it relate to (V. ii. 124).
Credent - believing (I. iii. 30).
Cunnings = skill (IV. vii. 154).
*Danskers = Danes (II. i. 7).
Distributed = deprived (I. v. 59).
Distilment = distillation (I. v. 48).
Document = a lesson (IV. v. 165).
*Emulate = emulous (I. i. 83).
*Encumbrance = resolutions (III. ii. 184).
Encompassment = circumvention (II. i. 10).
*Encumbered = folded (I. v. 158).
*Entreatments = favours (I. iii. 122).
Espials = spies (III. i. 32).
*Even = fellow (V. i. 28).
Excrements = that which grows out of the body, hair (III. iv. 121).
Express = expressive (II. ii. 307).
Extraordinary = wandering (I. i. 154).
Fantasy = whim, caprice (IV. iv. 61).
Favour = appearance (V. i. 195).
Fond = foolish (V. ii. 194).
Foredoes = destroys (II. i. 101).
Fore-knowing = fore-knowledge (I. i. 184).
Fust = to grow mouldy (IV. iv. 39).
Hectic = fever (IV. iii. 67).
*Hent = opportunity (III. iii. 83).
*Incorrect = unsubdued (I. ii. 95).
Imparable = communication (I. iv. 59).
*Impasted = made into paste (II. ii. 459).
Implorators = implorers (I. iii. 129).
*Imperious = imperial (V. i. 214).
*Imposthume = abscess, tumour (IV. iv. 27).

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**ENGLISH OF SHAKESPEARE.** 165
Impress = impressment (I. i. 75).
Imputation = reputation (V. ii. 143).
*Incorpsed = made one body (IV. vii. 86).
Incorporeal = incorporeal, immaterial (III. iv. 118).
Indifferent = moderately (V. ii. 99).
Jointress = joint possessor (I. ii. 9).
Jump = just, exactly (I. i. 64) and (V. ii. 376).
Luxury = lust (I. v. 67).
Majestical = majestic (I. i. 143).
Motion = a thrust in fencing (IV. vii. 100).
*Mutine = to mutiny (III. iv. 83).
Mutines = mutineers (V. ii. 6).
Occurrents = incidents, occurrences (V. ii. 357).
Opposites = opponents (V. ii. 62).
*Ordinant = ordaining, overruling (V. ii. 48).
*Polack = Pole (I. i. 63).
Plausible = pleasing (I. iv. 30).
*Plurisy = plethora, redundancy of blood (IV. vii. 116).
Powers = forces, army (IV. iv. 9).
Pressures = impressions (I. v. 84).
Prevent = anticipate (II. ii. 296).
*Precurse = precursor (I. i. 121).
Prenominate = forenamed (II. i. 43).
*Reconcilement = reconciliation (V. ii. 247).

Replication = reply (IV. ii. 13).
Romage = bustle, stir (I. i. 107).
Round = outspoken, plain (III i. 181).
*Sanctuarize = be a sanctuary to (IV. vii. 126).
Scrimer = fencer (IV. vii. 99).
Semblable = likeness (V. ii. 120).
Shent = reproached, put to shame (III. ii. 384).
*Skyish = lofty (V. i. 254).
Still = ever, always (I. i. 122).
Stuck = thrust (IV. vii. 160).
*Suppliance = what supplies or fills up (I. iii. 9).
*Supposal = supposition, opinion (I. ii. 18).
*Suspiration = sigh (I. ii. 79).
Takes = infects (I. i. 163).
Taxed = accused (I. iv. 18).
*Uncharge = to make no charge against (IV. vii. 66).
Uneffectual = ineffectual (I. v. 74).
*Ungored = unstained (V. ii. 250).
*Unimproved = untutored (I. i. 96).
Unsure = not safe (IV. iv. 51).
Warrantize = warranty, authorization (V. i. 228).
*Woundless = incapable of inflicting a wound (IV. i. 44).
Much thanks (I. i. 8). An instance of the use of "much" as an ordinary adjective.

What we have seen (I. i. 33). What is a relative pronoun, according to Shakespeare's use. It depends upon a verb of speech implied either in "assail your ears," or "story," i.e. "let us tell you what we have seen," or "our story describing what we have seen."

Sit we down (I. i. 34). Sit, the simple form of the subjunctive. May be regarded as an imperative in the first person plural, but the subjunctive is apparent if we supply as "What if we sit down," or "Suppose we sit down."

When yond same star (I. i. 36). Yond, a demonstrative pronoun.

Summons (I. i. 149). Singular. The derivation is from F. sémonce, L. submoneas = be thou warned. It is the first word of the legal document.

Break we our watch up (I. i. 168). Break, subjunctive, used imperatively.

Most incorrect to heaven (I. ii. 95). Incorrect is a participle rather than an adjective = "not corrected," "unsubdued."

What (I. ii. 98). Relative (see I. i. 33).

As any the most vulgar thing to sense (I. ii. 99) = as anything the most vulgar to sense, i.e. anything most commonly perceived.

Who still hath cried (I. ii. 104). The antecedent is "reason" (line 103) personified.

Till he that died to-day (I. ii. 105). Till is a preposition, requiring an objective case, i.e. "him."

Than that which, dearest father (I. ii. 111). Note the omission of "the."

See also "Best safety lies in fear" (I. iii. 43).

Impart (I. ii. 112). Used intransitively = impart myself.

Bend you to remain (I. ii. 115). "You" = yourself. Reflexive use of the verb.

Tell (I. ii. 126). Intransitive = say or speak.

Truster (I. ii. 172). Er added denotes the agent = one who trusts.

Followed hard upon (I. ii. 179). Upon is used adverbially.

Saw who? (I. ii. 190). An instance of the neglect of the inflection of who. We should use "whom."

In dreadful secrecy (I. ii. 207). Dreadful is active = inspiring terror.

Methought (I. ii. 215) = it seemed to me. Me is dative case, and thinks is an impersonal verb from A.S. thencan, to seem. A.S. thencan is the root of the verb "to think," "to imagine."

As it would speak (I. ii. 217). Supply "if" = as if.

Fear me not (I. iii. 51). Me dative = fear not for me.

As it is a-making (I. iii. 119). Making, Gerundial form, verbal noun = in the making.

Come your ways (I. iii. 135). Ways is the old A.S. genitive case of "way," used as an adverb.

And we fools of nature (I. iv. 54). We = us, is the direct, fools the indirect (factitive) object of "making."

Deprive your sovereignty of reason (I. iv. 73). Deprive = take away.

Of reason, attributive to "sovereignty" = to take away your controlling principle of reason.

Come (I. v. 109). Infinitive (to come) dependent upon "needs."

I will go pray (I. v. 116). Pray, infinitive of purpose dependent upon "go" = go to pray. So also, "I will go seek" (II. i. 99).
By pronouncing of (I. v. 159). Pronouncing, Gerund as verbal noun. Inquire me first (II. i. 7). Me dative = inquire for me.
Shaking of my arm (II. i. 90). Shaking, Gerund as verbal noun. So also “waving” (line 91).
Between who (II. ii. 196). Who = whom (see I. ii. 104).
Well be with you (II. ii. 381). Be impersonal: optative subjunctive = be it well with you.
Speak me a speech (II. ii. 434). Me, ethrio dative = to please me. Speech, objective of cognate meaning.
In mincing with (II. ii. 514).
You were better (II. ii. 514). The original idiom is (it) were better (for) you. Shakespeare uses “You” as nominative.
Who does me this? (II. ii. 577). Me dative = who does this to me.
That your beauties be the happy cause (III. i. 39). Example of the subjunctive denoting futurity.
The oppressor’s wrong (III. i. 66). Subjective genitive. The wrong done by the oppressor.
Soft you now (III. i. 85). The sense is “hold,” “stop talking,” “speak softly.” The form is “adjectival,” i.e. soft for softly. Can be parsed as verb in the imperative mood = Hush; or as adverb modifying some verb understood.
Must give (III. i. 65). The subject is “what dreams” (I. 63).
Fair state (III. i. 150). Fair, an instance of the proleptic use of the adjective. The state is made fair by the rose.
There be players (III. ii. 28). Be is indicative = are (see III. ii. 42).
In suffering all (III. ii. 65). Suffering (see I. v. 175).
The whilst this play is playing (III. ii. 87). Whilst is a noun. While was originally a noun meaning “time.”
Leave to do (III. ii. 161). To do. Infinitive as noun, object of leave. Leave = cease (see also III. iv. 66).
Vouchsafe me (III. ii. 230). Me is dative = grant to me.
Fear me not (III. iv. 7). Me is dative = fear not for me.
Strongest works (III. iv. 114). Adverb superlative = most strongly.
Heaven hath pleased it so (III. iv. 173). Pleased, transitive = willed. Heaven = heavenly powers. The implied plural accounts for the plural “their”—“their scourge and minister” (line 175).
Your worm is your only emperor (IV. iii. 22). Your is used to appropriate the objects spoken of (worm, emperor) to the person.
Shoon (IV. v. 26) = Shoes. Shoon is the old English plural in “n,” as brethren, kine, oxen.
Fear our person (IV. v. 110) = fear for, be anxious about. Person is dative.
Deny me right (IV. v. 190). Me = dative, indirect object of “deny” = deny justice to me. So “You” (IV. vi. 31). I will give you way = I will give a way to you.
Be it either which (IV. vii. 13). Either which = which-one-so-ever-of-the-two.
My sudden and more strange return (IV. vii. 47) = sudden and more strange than sudden.
Can well (IV. vii. 83). Can in the sense of able = they are skilful.
I’ll have prepared him (IV. vii. 159). Him is dative, indirect object of prepared = I will have a chalice made ready for him.
Methought (V. i. 64). Me is dative = it seemed to me.
I sat me down (V. ii. 31). Me is used reflexively.
ALLUSIONS.

Adam. "The Scripture says, Adam digged" (V. i. 36).
See Genesis II. 15.

Æneas. "'Twas Æneas' tale to Dido" (II. ii. 46).
Æneas, the Trojan hero and ancestor of the Romans. On his journey from Greece to Italy he was shipwrecked off the coast of Africa, and was received by Dido, Queen of Carthage.
Æneas' tale, is the story of the fall of Troy, recounted in the Second Book of Virgil's Æneid. Æneas is represented in that book as relating to Dido the tale of the capture and destruction of Troy.

Alexander. "The noble dust of Alexander" (V. i. 204-5).
Alexander the Great, son of Philip, King of Macedon. His conquests over the Persians and in Asia Minor gained for him the name of Great. Born B.C. 356; died B.C. 323.

Brutus. "I did enact Julius Caesar; I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me" (III. ii. 102-3).
Marcus Junius Brutus, the chief of the conspirators against Cæsar. He was a descendant of the famous Brutus who headed the people against the Tarquins, destroyed kingly power, and established the Roman republic. Brutus, with Cassius and other conspirators, was defeated at Philippi by Antony and Octavius, and perished in the battle.

Cain. "As if it were Cain's jawbone that did the first murder" (V. i. 77).
See Genesis IV., also note on the line (p. 149).

Cyclops. "And never did the Cyclop's hammers fall—
On Mars's armour, forged for proof eterne" (II. ii. 489, 490).
Cyclopes, a race of one-eyed monsters (the name signifies creatures with round or circular eyes) living in Sicily. Polyphemus was the chief. They were regarded as the assistants of Vulcan, who was supposed to have his workshop under Mount Ætna. As the assistants of Vulcan they made the metal armour and ornaments for gods and heroes.

Damon. "For thou dost know, O Damon, dear" (III. ii. 265).
Hamlet styles Horatio his "Damon"; the allusion is to the well known friendship of Damon and Pythias (generally called Pythias), which has become proverbial for disinterestedness and close friendship.

Dido. "'Twas Æneas' tale to Dido" (II. ii. 446) (see Æneas).
Dido, queen and founder of Carthage. She received Æneas when shipwrecked off the coast of Africa. When Æneas sailed away and deserted her, Dido burned herself on a funeral pyre.

Fortune. "Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! all you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round knave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends" (II. ii. 493-497).
Fortune, the goddess of fortune. She is represented in mythology under different attributes.
(1) With a rudder, guiding and conducting the affairs of the world.
(2) With a wheel, as representing the changes of fortune.
(3) With a ball as representing the varying unsteadiness of fortune.
(4) As blind, representing the blind chance displayed in the bestowal of her favours.

Hecate. "With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected" (III. ii. 242).
Hecate, a mysterious divinity represented as a threefold goddess with three bodies or three heads. She is said to have been—
(1) Selene or Luna in heaven.
(2) Artemis or Diana on earth.
(3) Persephone or Proserpina in the lower world.
From being an infernal deity she came to be regarded as a spectral being, who sent at night all kinds of demons and phantoms from the lower world, and who taught sorcery and witchcraft.

Shakespeare here represents her as the compounder and dispenser of poisons.

**Hecuba.** "Come to Hecuba" (II. ii. 501).
"What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba" (II. ii. 560).

Hecuba was the wife of Priam, King of Troy. Priam was slain by Pyrrhus before her eyes.

**Hercules.** "Than I to Hercules" (I. ii. 153).

Hercules, also known as Alcides and Herakles, was the son of Zeus (Jupiter) and Alcmene. He was famous for his great strength and exploits. His twelve labours or tasks accomplished in the service of Eurystheus are well known. After his death he was taken to Olympus and married to Hebe.

"Hercules, and his load too" (II. ii. 362).

This is an allusion to Hercules bearing the weight of heaven instead of Atlas, while Atlas went to fetch the golden apples.

"Let Hercules himself do what he may" (V. i. 292).

A reference to the great strength of the hero. (See Nemaean lion).

**Herod.** "It out-herods Herod" (III. ii. 14).

Herod the Great, king of Judæa, was notorious for cruelty and tyranny. Herod was one of the principal characters in the old mystery plays, and was represented as a furious tyrant.

**Hymen.** "Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands" (III. ii. 146-147).

Hymen. The god of marriage.

**Hyperion.** (1) Hyperion to a satyr (I. ii. 140).
(2) Hyperion's curls (III. iv. 56).

Hyperion was a Titan, and the father of Helios, the sun. Helios is often termed the sun.

The classical accent is on the third syllable Hy-per-i-'on. Shakespeare places the accent on the second syllable.

The references are, however, to Apollo the sun-god, regarded as the type of manly beauty. Hamlet describes his father as a model of manly grace like Hyperion; his uncle is as a Satyr compared with him.

**Hyrcanian beast.** "The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast" (II. ii. 450).

Hyrcania was a province of the ancient Persian Empire on the south and south-east shores of the Caspian or Hyrcanian Sea.

The Hyrcanian beast is the tiger, and Pyrrhus, in his ruthless slaughter of the hapless Trojans, is likened to the tiger in its thirst for blood.

**Ilium.**
"Then senseless Ilium
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base" (II. ii. 474-476).

Ilium is a name of the famous city of Troy. It is so called from its mythical founder Ilus, son of Tros. The city was called Ilium after the son Ilus, and Troja after the father Tros.

**Jephthah.** "O Jephthah, Judge of Israel—what a treasure hadst thou."
"One fair daughter and no more
The which he loved passing well" (II. ii. 403-408).

Jephthah. Judge of Israel, who delivered the Israelites from the Ammonite oppression. The allusion is to the sacrifice of his daughter.
Jephthah had vowed to sacrifice to Jehovah, the first that came out of his house to meet him on his return, should he be victorious over the Ammonites. His only daughter met him to hail her father with timbrels and dances.

Hamlet makes the comparison thus:—

Polonius is Jephthah.
Ophelia, daughter of Polonius, is Jephthah’s daughter.
Polonius accepts the comparison. “If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter I love passing well.”

Jove (1) “This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very—peacock” (III. ii. 266-268).

(2) “The front of Jove himself” (III. iv. 56).

Jove or Jupiter, the King of the Gods.

Hamlet likens his father to Jupiter—his uncle to a mere showy peacock.

Julius Caesar. (1) “A little ere the mightiest Julius fell” (I. i. 114).

Julius Caesar, the famous Roman general, who shattered the aristocratic senatorial party in Rome, headed by Pompey, and became virtual master of the state.

He was assassinated by Marcus Junius Brutus and other conspirators. Horatio is here referring to the prodigies that are said to have occurred just previous to the death of Caesar.

(2) “I did enact Julius Caesar; I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me” (III. ii. 102-3).

Polonius is relating how he had once played the part of Julius Caesar in a play of that name. The reference is to the assassination of Caesar.

Lethe. “And dullest thou be than the fat weed,
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf” (I. v. 32-3).

A river of the lower world of which the souls of the departed drank, and thus forgot all they had said and done in the upper world. Lethe has become the personification of oblivion.

Mars. “An eye like Mars” (III. iv. 57).
Mars. The Roman god of war.

Hamlet gives his father a martial, warlike appearance in thus likening him to the god of war.

Mercury. “A station like the herald Mercury” (III. iv. 58).

Mercury. The herald of the Gods, and as such regarded as the god of eloquence. The principal attributes of Mercury are: (1) a travelling hat with a broad brim; (2) the herald’s staff; (3) the sandals, golden and provided with wings at the ankles, which carried the god across land and sea with the rapidity of the wind.

Station here means “attitude.” Hamlet represents his father as having the graceful pose of the god Mercury.

Nemæan lion. “As hardy as the Nemæan lion’s nerve” (I. iv. 83).
The Nemæan lion inhabited the valley of Nemæa in Argolis. Eurystheus ordered Hercules to slay this monster as one of his twelve labours. After using his club and arrows in vain against the lion, Hercules strangled it with his own hands.

Neptune. (1) “And the moist star,
Upon whose influence Neptune’s empire stands” (I. i. 118-119).

Neptune was the god of the sea, so Neptune’s empire means the ocean.
The allusion is to the moon (the moist star), whose attraction causes the tides.

(2) "Neptune's salt wash" (III. ii. 143).

A term for the ocean.

Nero.

"Let not ever

The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom" (III. ii. 379-380).

Nero, the infamous Roman emperor, a monster of vice and cruelty. He gained the imperial purple through the intrigues of his mother Agrippina, who exercised great influence and authority during the early years of his reign. Nero, becoming weary of his mother's influence, and urged by his mistress Poppaea caused Agrippina to be assassinated. The allusion in the quotation is to the murder of the mother, Agrippina, by the son, Nero, and Hamlet prays lest his wrath at his own father's murder should lead him to follow Nero's example and put the queen, his mother, to death.

Niobe.

"Like Niobe, all tears" (I. ii. 149).

Niobe is the beau-ideal of grief. She is said to have been the mother of six sons and six daughters, and proud of the number of her children, boasted herself as superior to Leto or Latona, the mother of Apollo and Artemis (Diana). Apollo and Artemis, indignant at her presumption, slew all her children with their arrows. In her excessive grief she desired Zeus (Jupiter) to turn her into stone. The god complied with her request, and metamorphosed her into stone, which still shed tears in sorrow for the slain children.

Hamlet is describing the grief put on by his mother for the death of his father.

Olympus.

"Or the skyish head

Of blue Olympus" (V. i. 254-255).

Olympus. The range of mountains separating Thessaly from Macedonia, and forming the northern boundary of ancient Greece proper. In mythology Olympus was the chief seat of the gods of whom Zeus was the head. Homer describes the gods as having their palaces on the summit of Olympus. The later poets transfer the real abode of the gods from the summit of Olympus to the vault of heaven (i.e. the sky) itself.

In the war between the Titans and the gods, the Titans are said to have piled Pelion on the top of Ossa, and both on the lower slopes of Olympus to scale the summit of Olympus itself, the abode of the gods.

Ossa.

"Make Ossa like a wart" (V. i. 254) (see Olympus).

Ossa. A celebrated mountain in Thessaly, connected with Pelion on the S.E., and divided from Olympus on the N.W. by the Vale of Tempe.

Pelion.

To o'ertop old Pelion" (V. i. 254) (see Olympus).

Pelion. A lofty range of mountains in Thessaly. Near the summit was the cave of the centaur Chiron. On Pelion also the timber was felled, with which the ship Argo was built.

Phoebus.

"Full thirty times hath Phoebus cart gone round" (III. ii. 142).

Phoebus, the god of the sun, supposed to drive the chariot of the sun from east to west. Thirty times would indicate a full month.

Plautus.

"Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light" (II. ii. 401).

Plautus was the most celebrated comic poet of Rome. He is said to have written 130 comedies, of which twenty are extant. Polonius refers to him as the greatest authority on comedy.
Priam. "Old grandsire Priam" (II. ii. 464).

Priam was the King of Troy. At the capture of the city he was slain by Pyrrhus, son of Achilles. The account of his death is found in Virgil’s Æneid Book II. 526-558.

Pyrrhus. "The rugged Pyrrhus like the Hyrcanian beast (II. ii. 452).

"With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus" (II. ii. 463).

Pyrrhus or Neoptolemus was the son of Achilles. He was one of the Grecian heroes concealed in the wooden horse. He distinguished himself in the capture of Troy, and was ruthless in the slaughter of the Trojans. The aged Priam is said to have been slain by him at the sacred heart of Zeus.

Roscius. "When Roscius was an actor in Rome" (II. ii. 392).

The most celebrated actor in Rome. He was considered to have reached such perfection in his profession that it became the fashion to call any one particularly distinguished in the art by the name of Roscius. (B.C. 134—61).

Saint Patrick. "Yes by Saint Patrick, but there is Horatio" (I. v. 120).

Saint Patrick. The tutelar saint of Ireland. He is said to have cleared Ireland of vermin. St. Patrick’s day is March 17th.

Saint Valentine. "To-morrow is Saint Valentine’s day" (IV. v. 46).

A Roman priest, who befriended the martyrs in the persecution under Claudius II., and was in consequence arrested, beaten with clubs, and finally beheaded (February 14th, A.D. 270). This day is now kept as the lovers’ day, for which no reason can be given, save that it is in the early spring-time when the birds pair.

Seneca. "Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light." (II. ii. 401).

The famous Roman philosopher, tutor of the Emperor Nero, and his chief adviser during the early part of the reign. He was put to death by Nero A.D. 65. He was the author of ten tragedies.

Polonius in descanting on the abilities of the actors, mentions Seneca as the great authority on the tragic drama.

Tellus. "Tellus’ orbed ground" (III. ii. 143).

Tellus, Gaea or Ge, the personification of the earth. At Rome the earth was worshipped under the name of Tellus.

Termagant. "I have such a fellow whipped for o’erdoing Termagant" (III. ii. 12-13).

Termagant was an imaginary being supposed by the Crusaders to have been one of the Saracen deities. It was a character frequently represented in the mystery plays, and was conspicuously a ranting part. In these plays, the degree of rant was the measure of the wickedness portrayed.

The Capitol. "I did enact Julius Caesar; I was killed i’ the Capitol; Brutus killed me" (III. ii. 102-3).

The Capitol was the citadel of Rome, situated on the Capitoline hill. Shakespeare, both in this play and in the play of Julius Caesar, represents Caesar as being assassinated in the Capitol. His death actually occurred in the Curia or Senate house.

Vulcan. "And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan’s stithy" (III. ii. 83).

Vulcan. The Roman god of fire. He is said to have had his workshop under Mount Ætna, in Sicily. The Cyclopes were his workmen (see Cyclopes).

Vulcan’s stithy = Vulcan’s forge, or blacksmith’s shop.
PLAYS ON WORDS.

Kin and Kind "A little more than kin and less than kind" (I. ii. 45).
(1) Kin = of the same race; (2) Kind = of the same nature, or, kindly, well disposed.
A play on words variously explained—
(1) "More than kin," i.e. more than three letters. "Less than kind," less than four.
(2) More than cousin, and less than son to the king.
(3) More than thy kinsman (Hamlet is now stepson to the king), and less than kind to thee, for I hate thee for thy marriage to my mother.
(4) Marriage to his mother had made the king Hamlet's kinsman, yet his nature was unworthy of Hamlet's race, his kind.

Sun } "Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun" (I. ii. 67).
Son } There may be a play of words between sun and son (see I. ii. 64).
You call me your son, but there is too much of this sonship,
I ought to be king, not merely regarded as your son and heir to the throne.

Tender "Tender yourself more dearly:
Or,—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus,—you'll tender me a fool" (I. iii. 107-109).
(1) Tender = regard, consider; (2) tender = offer.

Fashion Oph. "My lord, he hath importuned me with love,
In honourable fashion.
Pol. "Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to" (I. iii. 110-2).
(1) Fashion = manner; (2) fashion = a passing fancy.

Attended "I am most dreadfully attended" (II. ii. 268).
(1) Attended = filled with miserable thoughts; (2) attended = followed and watched in a most annoying manner.

Abridgment "For look, my abridgment comes" (II. ii. 420).
(1) Abridgment = shortening, i.e. the entrance of the actors cuts short the conversation with Polonius; (2) abridgment, a technical term for a dramatic performance, so-called from its abridging or passing over the time.

Brute } Pol. "I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed in the Capitol;
Brutus killed me." (III. ii. 102-3).

Capitol } Ham. "It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there."
(1) Brute. Caesar's last words when Brutus stabbed him were "Et tu Brute," and "thou Brutus" to whom I have shewn such kindness; (2) brute, i.e. acting like a brute beast.
(1) Capitol = the citadel of Rome; (2) capital = excellent, i.e. such a rare good calf.

Purification "For me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler" (III. ii. 290-391).
(1) Purification = cleansing, healing; (2) purgation = to clear oneself on oath.
Fret "Though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me" (III. ii. 536).
(1) Fret = annoy; (2) Fret = the lines or ridges on a guitar denoting stops.

Act "Ah me, what act
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index" (III. iv. 51-52).
(1) Act = a deed; (2) act = an act in a play or drama.

Packing "This man shall set me packing" (III. iv. 211).
(1) Packing = set off at once; (2) packing = plotting.

Politic "A certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him" (IV. iii. 21).
(1) Politic = discussing matters of policy; (2) politic = leasting on a politician (Polonius).

Fine "Is this the fine of his fines" (V. i. 105).
(1) Fine = end; (2) fine = forfeit.

Assurance "They are sheep and calves which seek assurance in that" (V. i. 115).
(1) Assurance = perfect security; (2) assurance = conveyance by deed.

Box "The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box" (V. i. 109-110).
(1) Box = grave; (2) box = lawyer's box to hold deeds.

Lie "I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in it, etc." (V. i. 121-122).
(1) Lie = to rest in; (2) lie = to say what is not the truth.

Quick Ham. "'Tis for the dead and not the quick; therefore, thou liest."
Clown. "'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you" (V. i. 126-129).
(1) Quick = living, not dead; (2) quick = speedy, swift.

See also "To be buried quick with her" (V. i. 280).

Living "This grave shall have a living monument" (V. i. 298).
(1) Living = enduring, lasting; (2) living, in the living sacrifice of Hamlet, whose death is intended by the king, who is the speaker.

Answer Osric "And it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.
Ham. How if I answer, no? (V. ii. 168-171).
(1) Answer = an encounter, meeting in combat; (2) answer = reply.

Foil Ham. "Give us the foils; come on.
Laer. Come, one for me.
Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes" (V. ii. 254-255).
(1) Foil, a weapon; (2) foil, a set off (see p. 188).

Union "Drink off this portion: Is the union here? Follow my mother (V. ii. 326-327).
(1) Union = pearl; (2) Union = marriage union. Hamlet bids his uncle drink the poison and die, and thus join his mother who had drunk from the same cup.
QUOTATIONS FROM OTHER PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE ILLUSTRATIVE OF WORDS USED IN AN UNUSUAL SENSE.

(The Editor would acknowledge his obligation to the Clarendon Press Edition).

Fantasy (I. i. 23) = imagination.
"Art thou alive, or is it fantasy,
That plays upon our eyesight" (2 Hen. IV., V. iv. 134-5).

Approve (I. i. 29) = to prove, to justify.
"Approve it with a text" (M. of V., III. ii. 72).

Jump (I. i. 65) = exactly.
"And bring him jump, where he may Cassio find" (Oth., II. iii. 392)

Scope (I. i. 68) = room to move in, range.
"And as you answer, I do know the scope,
And warrant limited unto my tongue" (K. John, V. ii. 122-3).

Subject (I. i. 72) = Subjects, people under the rule of a monarch.
"The greater file of the subject held the duke to be wise" (M. for M., III. ii. 145).

Impress (I. i. 75) = impressment, enforced public service.
"Ingross'd by swift impress" (A. and C., III. vii. 37).

Competent (I. i. 90) = sufficient, adequate.
"A very competent injury" (Twelfth Night, III. iv. 270).

Stomach (I. i. 100) = courage.
"That he which hath no stomach to this fight,
Let him depart" (Hen. V., IV. iii. 35).

Sort (I. i. 109) = agree, be in accordance with.
"I am glad that all things sort so well" (Much Ado, V. iv. 7).

Confine (I. i. 155) = district to which one is limited.
"Here in these confines silly have I lurked" (Rich. III., IV. iv. 3).

Takes (I. i. 163) = infects (particularly of the malignant influence of superhuman powers).
"He blasts the tree, and takes the cattle" (Merry Wives, IV. iv. 32).

Defeat (I. ii. 10) = disfigure.
"Defeat thy favour with an usurped beard" (Oth., I. iii. 346).

Dole (I. ii. 13) = sorrow, grief.
"Making such pitiful dole over them" (As You Like It, I. ii. 139).

Laboursome (I. ii. 59) = laborious, requiring pains and industry.
"Your laboursome and dainty trims" (Cymb., III. iv. 167).

Nighted (I. ii. 68) = dark as night.
"To despatch his nighted life" (Lear, IV. v. 13).

Vail (I. ii. 70) = to lower, to let fall.
"Vailing her high top lower than her ribs" (M. of V., I. i. 28).

Unschooled (I. ii. 97) = uneducated.
"An unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractised" (M. of V., III. ii. 160).
QUOTATIONS FROM OTHER PLAYS. 177

Resolve (I. ii. 130) = dissolve, melt.
"His passion resolved my reason into tears" (Compl. 296).

Merely (I. ii. 137) = absolutely.
"We are merely cheated of our lives by drunkards" (Temp., I. i. 59).

Season (1) (I. ii. 192) = to qualify, to temper.
"When mercy seasons justice" (M. of V., IV. i. 197).
(2) (I. iii. 81) = to mature, ripen, prepare.
"How many things by season season'd are" (M. of V., V. i. 107).

Convoy (I. iii. 3) = means of transporting.
"To which place we have convenient convoy" (All's Well, IV. iv. 10).

Cautel (I. iii. 15) = deceit, falseness.
"In him a plenitude of subtle matter, applied to cautels" (A Lover's Complaint, 303).

Sit (I. iii. 56). Used of the wind = to have a direction.
"The wind sits fair to go to Ireland" (Rich. II., II. i. 3).

Husbandry (I. iii. 77) = economy, thrift.
"There's husbandry in heaven:
Their candles are all out" (Macbeth, II. i. 4).

Tax (I. iv. 18) = to blame, to censure.
"You tax Signior Benedict too much" (Much Ado, I. i. 46).

Plausive (I. iv. 30) = plausible.
"A very plausible invention" (All's Well, IV. i. 29).

Removed (I. iv. 61) = remote, retired, sequestered.
"Visited that removed house" (Winter's Tale, V. ii. 116).

Saws (I. v. 84) = sayings, maxims.
"Now I find thy saw of might" (As You Like It, III. v. 52).

Circumstance (I. v. 111) = circumlocution.
"To wind about my love with circumstance" (M. of V., I. i. 154).

Keep (II. i. 8) = to dwell, to live.
"This habitation where thou keepest" (Measure for Measure, I. iii. 10).

Put on (II. i. 19) = to impose, to attribute.
"When first they put the name of King upon me" (Macb., III. i. 25)

Quaintly (II. i. 31) = neatly, skilfully.
"'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly ordered" (M. of V., II. iv. 6).

Taints (II. i. 32) = defects, blemishes.
"The taints and blames I laid upon myself" (Macb., IV. iii. 124).

Indirection (II. i. 64) = indirect cause or method.
"To wring
From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash,
By any indirection" (J. Caesar, IV. iii. 75).

Unbraced (II. i. 76) = unfastened, unbuttoned.
"To walk unbraced, and suck up the humours
Of the dank morning" (J. Caesar, II. ii. 262).

Quote (II. i. 110) = to note, to observe, to examine.
"Note how she quotes the leaves" (Tit., IV. i. 50).

Proper (II. i. 112) = peculiar to, belonging to a particular person or state.
"Conceptions only proper to myself" (J. Caesar, I. ii. 41).
Remembrance (II. ii. 26) = a token by which one is kept in memory, a keepsake.
   "Take some remembrance of us" (M. of V., IV. i. 142).
Admittance (II. ii. 51) = permission to enter, reception.
   "Grave admittance to your majesty" (Hen. V., II. iv. 66).
Bear in hand (II. ii. 67) = to deceive with false pretences.
   "She bears me fair in hand" (Taming of the Shrew, IV. ii. 3).
Pass (II. ii. 77) = passage.
   "Charming the narrow seas
To give you gentle pass" (Hen. V., II. Chor. 39).
Expostulate (II. ii. 86) = to discuss.
   "Stay not to expostulate, make speed" (III. Hen. VI., II. v. 135).
Wit (II. ii. 90) = understanding, judgment, intelligence, wisdom.
   "Few of any wit in such matters" (Measure for Measure, II. i. 282).
Perpend (II. ii. 105) = to consider.
   Schmidt remarks that this word is "used only by Pistol, Polonius, and the clowns."
   "Learn of the wise, and perpend" (As You Like It, III. ii. 69).
Round (II. ii. 140) = plain spoken, direct, honest.
   "I will a round unvarnished tale deliver" (Oth., I. iii. 90).
Bespeak (II. ii. 141) = to speak to, to address.
   "I bespeak you fair, and hurt you not" (Twelfth Night, V. i. 192).
Board (II. ii. 171) = to address, to accost.
   "He would never have accosted me in this fury" (Merry Wives, II. i. 92).
Aiery (II. ii. 340) = the brood of an eagle, an eagle's nest.
   "Your aiery buildeth in our aiery's nest" (R. III., I. iii. 270).
Quality (III. ii. 348) = profession.
   "What is thy name? I know thy quality" (Hen. V., III. vi. 146).
Tarre (II. ii. 354) = to set on (dogs).
   "Pride alone
Must tarre the mastiffs on" (T. and C., I. iii. 392).
Argument (II. ii. 356) = a dramatic plot.
   "The argument shall be thy running away" (I. Hen. IV., II. iv. 310).
Passionate (II. ii. 481) = expressing great emotion.
   "She is sad and passionate at your highness tent" (K. John, II. i. 544).
The general (II. ii. 437) = the people, the public.
   "I know no personal cause to spurn at him, but for the general"
   (J. C., II. i. 12).
Conceit (II. ii. 554) = conception, idea in the mind.
   "You have a noble and true conceit of godlike amity" (M. of V.
   III. iv. 2).
Blench (II. ii. 601) = to start back, to flinch.
   "There can be no evasion
To blench from this and to stand firm by honour" (T. and C., II. ii. 83).
Abuse (II. ii. 609) = to deceive.
   "Some enchanted trifle to abuse me" (Temp. V. i. 112).
QUOTATIONS FROM OTHER PLAYS.

Closely (III. i. 29) = secretly.
"Meaning to keep her closely at my cell" (R. and J., V. iii. 255).

Affront (III. i. 31) = to meet, to encounter.
"Unless another,
As like as Hermione as is her picture
Affront his eye" (Winter's Tale, V. i. 75).

Espial (II. i. 32) = a spy.
"The prince's espials have informed me" (I. Hen. VI., I. iv. 8).

Wildness (III. i. 40) = madness.
"Put thyself Into a haviour of less fear,
ere wildness
Vanquish my staider senses" (Cymb., III. iv. 8-10).

Respect (III. i. 65) = consideration.
"I would have daffed all other respects" (Much Ado, II. iii. 176).

Variable (III. i. 170) = various, different.
"I never heard a passion so confused,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable" (M. of V., II. viii. 12-13).

From (III. ii. 20) = otherwise than, differently to, contrary to.
"Quite from the main opinion he held once" (J. C., II. i. 196).

Barren (III. ii. 40) = dull, foolish.
"The shallowest thickskin of that barren sort" (M. N. D., III. ii. 13).

Thrift (III. ii. 61) = profit, gain.
"My bargains and my well-won thrift" (M. of V., I. iii. 51).

Seeming (III. ii. 86) = appearance.
"My false seeming" (Measure for Measure, II. iv. 15).

Idle (III. ii. 89) = foolish, absurd, crazy.
"A foolish, idle boy" (All's Well, IV. iii. 242).

Cheer (III. ii. 151) = cheerfulness.
"I have not that alacrity of spirit
Nor cheer of mind" (Rich. III., V. iii. 74).

Operant (III. ii. 161) = active.
"With thy most operant poison" (Timon, IV. iii. 25).

Instances (III. ii. 169) = cause, motive.
"Gave thee no instance why tho shouldst do treason" (Hen. V., II. ii. 119).

Cry (III. ii. 262) = a pack of hounds, a company.
"Yon common cry of curs" (Cor. III. iii. 120).

Shent (III. ii. 384) = blamed, reproached.
"I am shent for speaking to you" (Twelfth Night, IV. vii. 112).

Gulf (III. iii. 16) = a whirlpool.
"As water to the sucking of a gulf" (Hen. V., II. iv. 10).

Massy (III. iii. 17) = bulky, massive.
"Your swords are now too massy for your strength" (Temp. III. iii. 37).

Rest (III. iii. 64) = to remain.
"Let it rest where it began at first" (I Hen. VI., IV. i. 121).
Sense (III. iv. 38) = feeling.
   "Spirit of sense
   As hard as the palm of ploughman" (T. and C., I. i. 58).

Station (III. iv. 58) = act or mode of standing.
   "Her motion and her station are as one" (A. and C., III. iii. 22).

Conceit (III. iv. 114) = conception, imagination.
   "You have a noble and true conceit of godlike amity"
   (M. of V., III. iv. 2).

Excrement (III. iv. 121) = hair, beard.
   "Assume but valour's excrement" (M. of V., III. ii. 87).

Packing (III. iv. 211) = plotting.
   "Here's packing" (Taming of the Shrew, V. i. 121).

Blank (IV. i. 42) = mark.
   "Out of the blank
   And level of my brain" (Winter's Tale, II. iii. 5).

Countenance (IV. ii. 15) = authority, credit, favour.
   "Abuse the countenance of the king" (2 Hen. IV., IV. ii. 13).

Nose (IV. iii. 37) = to smell.
   "To nose the offence" (Cor. V. i. 28).

Power (IV. iv. 8) = a force, a body of troops.
   "Never such a power was levied" (K. John, IV. ii. 210).

Unsure (IV. iv. 5) = unsafe, not secure.
   "A habitation giddy and unsure" (2 Hen. IV., I. iii. 89).

Continent (IV. iv. 64) = that which contains or encloses.
   "Heart, once be stronger than thy continent" (A. and C. IV., iv. 40).

Remove (IV. v. 72) = removal, departure.
   "Our quick remove from hence" (A. and C., I. ii. 203).

Counter (IV. v. 101) = the wrong way (a hunting term).
   "A hound that runs counter" (Comedy of Errors, IV. ii. 39).

Appointment (IV. vi. 16) = equipment.
   "In best appointment all our regiments" (K. John, II. i. 296).

Character (IV. vii. 50) = handwriting.
   "This is not my writing
   Though much like the character" (Twelfth Night, V. i. 354).

Practice (IV. vii. 66) = stratagem, plot.
   "Sworn unto the practices of France" (Hen. V., II. ii. 90).

Siege (IV. vii. 75) = seat, place, rank.
   "Upon the very siege of justice" (M. for M., IV. ii. 101).

Forgery (IV. vii. 88) = invention, imagination.
   "These are the forgeries of love" (M.N.D., II. i. 81).

Motion (IV. vii. 100) = an attack or thrust in fencing.
   "He gives me the stuck in, with such a mortal motion"
   (Twelfth Night, III. iv. 304).

Mortal (IV. vii. 141) = deadly, fatal.
   "This news is mortal to the queen" (Winter's Tale, III. ii. 149).
Trick (IV. vii. 186) = a particular habit.
   "It was always yet the trick of our English nation"
   (2 Hen. IV., I. ii. 240).

Stoop (V. i. 60) = a drinking vessel.
   "Marian, I say! A stoop of wine" (Twelfth Night, II. iii. 14).

Mazzard (V. i. 89) = the head.
   "I'll knock thee o'er the mazzard" (Oth. II. iii. 155).

Absolute (V. i. 137) = positive.
   "You are too absolute" (Cor. III. ii. 29).

Picked (V. i. 140) = refined.
   "He is too picked, too spruce, too affected" (L. L. L., V. i. 14).

Flaw (V. i. 217) = a gust of wind.
   "A great sea-mark, standing every flaw" (Cor., V. iii. 74).

Estate (V. i. 223) = rank, dignity.
   "O that estates, degrees, and offices" (M. of V., II. ix. 41).

Mutines (V. ii. 6) = a rebel, a mutineer.
   "Do like the mutines in Jerusalem" (K. John, II. i. 378).

Bugs (V. ii. 22) = bug bear.
   "The bug that you would fight me with" (Winter's Tale, III. ii. 93).

Statists (V. ii. 33) = a statesman, a politician.
   "Statist though I am none" (Cymb., II. iv. 16).

Model (V. ii. 50) = a copy, an image.
   "O England, model to thy inward greatness" (Hen. V., II., Cor. 16).

Writ (V. ii. 51) = writing.
   "Let's see the devil's writ" (2 Hen. VI., I. iv. 60).

Opposite (V. ii. 62) = adversary, opponent.
   "Your opposite" (Twelfth Night, III. ii. 68).

Bravery (V. ii. 79) = splendour, finery.
   "His bravery is not of my cost" (As You Like It, II. vii. 80).

Absolute (V. ii. 109) = highly accomplished, perfect.
   "Thou would'st make an absolute courtier" (Merry Wives, III. iii. 66).

Semblable (V. ii. 120) = resembling, similar, equal.
   "His semblable, yea, himself, Timon disdains" (Timon, IV. iii. 22).

Trace (V. ii. 121) = to follow.
   "The search so slow, that could not trace them" (Cymb., I. i. 65).

Napkin (V. ii. 288) = handkerchief.
   "And to that youth he sends this bloody napkin"
   (As You Like It, IV. iii. 94).

Havoc (V. ii. 364) = indiscriminate slaughter.
   "Cry "Havoc," and let slip the dogs of war" (J. C., III. i. 273).
GLOSSARY.

The Editors would acknowledge their obligation to Skeat's Etymological Dictionary.


Absolute (L. absolutus = set free, L. ab from, solve to loose) = unrestrained, complete. "How absolute the knave is" = positive, i.e. free from contradiction. "An absolute gentleman" = perfect.

Adder (A.S. naedre, a snake) = a viper. (An adder resulted from a nadder by mistake). "Whom I will trust as I will adders fanged."

Aiery (F. aire. Low L. area, a nest of a bird of prey) = an eagle's nest, brood of eagles or hawks. "An aiery of children, little eyases."

Alarm (It. All'arme. L. ad to, ulla those, arma arms) = a call to arms. "And as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm."

Alley (O.F. alee, a gallery. F. aller, to go) = a passage, a gallery. "The natural gates and alleys of the body."

Anchor, Anchoret or Anchorite (F. anchorete. Gk. ἀναχωρητής, (anachoretes), one who retires from the world. Gk. ἀνά (ana) back, χωρέω (chorein) to withdraw) = a recluse, a hermit. "An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope."

Anon (A.S. on án, in a moment) = immediately. "Anon, he finds him."

Antic (either L. antiquus, ancient or from It. antico, a cavern decorated with grotesque figures) = fantastic. "To put an antic disposition on."

Antique (L. antiquus, ancient) = old, ancient. "I am more an antique Roman than a Dane."

Apparel (O.F. appareiller to dress, a to parailler = to put like things with like L. ad to, par equal) = to clothe, to dress. "The apparel oft proclaims the man."

Approve (L. approbare, to approve) = to prove, to justify. "He may approve our eyes."

Apt (L. aptus, fit) = fit, ready to hand. "Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing."

Argal. The clown's corruption of the Latin word ergo = therefore. "Argal, she drowned herself wittingly."

Argument (L. arguere, to prove by argument, lit. to make clear) = subject, especially the plot of a play. "No money bid for argument" = plot of a play.

Arrant (a variant of "errant." L. errasse, to wander) = Knavish, thoroughly bad. "But he's an arrant knave."

Arras. Tapestry, so named from Arras in Artois, North of France. "Behind the arras I'll convey myself."

Assail (L. ad to, salire to leap) = to assault, to attack. "Let us once again assail your ears."
Assay or Essay (O.F. essai, a trial. L. exagium, a trial of weight) = an attempt, a trial. “With assays of bias.”

Audit (L. auditus, a hearing; L. audire, to hear) = a final account. “And how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven.”

Aught (A.S. dwih, one whit or thing) = a thing, any thing. “Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him.”

Auspicious (L. auspicium, watching of birds for the purpose of augury. L. avis, a bird; spicere, to spy, to look into) = favourable, betokening good fortune. “With one auspicious, and one dropping eye” = cheerful.

Avouch (M.E. avouchen, to avouch. L. vocare, to call) = to warrant. “Without the sensible and true avouch” Here, a noun = warrant.

Ban (M.E. ban, a proclamation, also, to order out, to excommunicate) = proclamation, excommunication, curse. “With Hecate’s ban thrice blasted” = curse.

Batten (Ic. batna, to grow better, recover) = to grow fat, to fatten. “And batten on this moor.”

Beaver (F. bavière, a child’s bib) = the lower part of the helmet. “He move his beaver up.”

Beetle (A.S. bītel, sharp, bitan, to bite) = to project over. “That beetles o’er its base into the sea.”

Bestow (A.S. be, a prefix; stów, a place) = to pack away. “Where the dead body is bestowed.”

Bias (F. biais, a slant, a slope. Low Lat. bifacem, one who squints or looks sideways. L. bi, double and facies, a face) = inclination to one side. “With windlasses, and with assays of bias.”

Bilboes Fetters, named from Bilboa in Spain, famous for iron and steel. “Worse than the mutines in the bilboes.”

Bisson (A.S. bisen, blind) = purblind. “With bisson rheum,” i.e. with blinding tears.

Blank (F. blanc, white) = a mark, the centre of the target, which was painted white. “As level as the cannon to his blank.”

Blazon (M.E. blazen, to proclaim) = a proclamation. “But this eternal blazon must not be” = proclamation of eternity.

Bodkin (Diminutive of W. bidog, a dagger), originally a small dagger. “With a bare bodkin.”

Bodykins is diminutive of body. “God’s bodykins,” an oath = By G. j’s body.

Botch (M.E. bocchen, to strike, repair. From the notion of repairing roughly by hammering) = to patch. “And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts.”

Bourn (F. borne, a bound) = a boundary. “From whose bourn no traveller returns.”
Broker (F. brocours, an agent: originally a "broacher" or seller of wine. L. brocous), an agent, a go between. "They are brokers."

Bruit (F. bruit, a noise) = a rumour, a report. "And the King's rouse the heavens shall bruit again" = report loudly.

Budge (F. bouger, to stir) = to stir. "You shall not budge."

Bulk (Old Dut. bulche, the trunk) = the trunk of the body. "That did seem to shatter all his bulk."

Bulwark (Dan. bui., trunk of a tree; Sw. verk, a work). Lit. log-work = a barrier formed of logs of wood, then a barrier of any kind. "That it is proof and bulwark against sense."

Button (F. bouton, a bud, a button. O.F. boter, to push out) = properly a round knob pushed out. "Too oft before their buttons be disclosed."

Calendar (L, Kalendce, the first day of the Roman month) = an almanac. Originally, an account book kept by money lenders, so called because interest was due on the first day of each month. "He is the card or calendar of gentry."

Canker (L. cancer, a crab, hence, that which corrodes). "The canker (cankerworm) galls the infants of the spring."

Canon (A.S. canon. L. canon, a rule. Gk. κανόν (kanon) a rod, rule. Cane is from Gk. κάννα (kanna), a straight rod = an ecclesiastical rule. "Or that the Everlasting had not fixed His canon 'gainst self-slaughter."

Cap-a-pe (L. caput, head; ad to pes, the foot) = from head to foot, i.e completely covering the whole body. "Armed at all points exactly cap-a-pe."

Carbuncle (L. carbunculus, dim. of carbo, coal) = (1) a small coal, (2) a gem, from its glowing appearance. "With eyes like carbuncles."

Carouse (Ger. garaus, right out, used of emptying a bumper; gar, quite; aus; out) = a deep draught. "The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet."

Carp (M.E. carpe, a fish). "Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth."

Carriion (Low L. caronia, a carcase. L. caro, flesh) = a carcase, putrid flesh. "Being a god kissing carriion."

Cataplasm (Gk. κατά πλάσμα (cataplasma), a plaster. κατά fully, πλάσμα to spread over = a plaster, a poultice. "No cataplasm so rare."

Cautel (L. cavere, to warn) = deceit. "And no soil nor cautel doth besmirch."

Caviare (F. caviar Turk. hávyár, caviare) = the row of a sturgeon. "'Twas caviare to the general."
Censure (L. *censura*, opinion; *censere*, to give an opinion) = originally opinion, then, an unfavourable opinion, blame. "Take each man a censure, but reserve thy judgment" = opinion.

Cerement (L. *cera*, wax with suffix *mentum* = a waxed cloth) = grave clothes. "Have burst their cerements."

Chameleon (L. *chamaelion*. Gk. *χαμαιλέων* (chameleon) = a ground lion. *χαμαί* on the ground, *λέων* a lion) = a kind of lizard, supposed to feed on the air. "Of the chameleon's dish; I eat the air."

Character (Gk. *χαρακτήρ* (character), an engraved or stamped mark) = handwriting, character. "You know the hand, 'tis Hamlet's character" = handwriting. "These few precepts see thou character" = engrave.

Chary (A.S. *cearu*, care) = careful, cautious. "The chariest maid is prodigal enough."

Cheer (O.F. *chere*, the face. Low L. *cara*, the head) = the mien, the expression of the face, cheerfulness. "So far from cheer and your former state" = cheerfulness.

Choler (Gk. *χολή* (chole) bile) = bile, anger. "No, my lord, rather with choler."

Chopine (It. *cioppino*, a high shoe) = a kind of high shoe worn by boy actors to give the appearance of height. "Your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last, by the attitude of a chopine."

Chough (M.E. *chough*. A.S. *ced*, a bird, so named from cawing) = any chattering bird. "'Tis a chotigh."

Cicatrice (L. *cicatrix*, a scar) = the scar left by a wound. "Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red."

Clepe (A.S. *cleopian*, to name) = to call, to name. "They clepe us drunkards."

Clout (A.S. *clút*, a patch) = a patch. "A clout upon his head."

Columbine (L. *columbinus*, like a dove; *columba*, a dove) = a plant. "There's fennel for you, and columbines."

Competent (L. *competere*, to be sufficient for) = sufficient, adequate. "A moiety competent was gaged by our king" = a corresponding amount.

Compost (L. *compositus*, mixed; *com*, together; *ponere*, to put) = a mixture. "And do not spread the compost on the weeds" = manure.

Condolement (L. *condolere*, to grieve for) = grief, sorrow for anyone. "To obstinate condolement."

Convoy (O.F. *convoyer*, to convey. Low L. *conviare*, to accompany. L. *con*, with via way) = to accompany, to escort. "And convoy is assistant." Here = means of conveyance.
Cope (M.E. copen, to barter, to bargain with) = to vie with, to encounter. "As o'er my conversation coped withal."

Cote (F. cotoyer, to coast along. F. cote, rib, slope of a hill, a shore) = to coast alongside, to overtake. "We coted them on the way."

Counterfeit (F. contrefaire, to imitate. L. contra, against; facere, to make) = to imitate. "The counterfeit presentment of two brothers."

Courtier (L. co (cum) together hortus, a garden. E. suffix ier (yer) denoting agent). Court, originally an enclosure, a yard, a royal court or palace. Courtier one of the royal retinue. "Our chiefest courtier, cousin and our son."

Cozen (F. cousiner, to call cousin, to sponge upon) = to call cousin or kinsman for the purpose of sponging upon a person; hence, to beguile, to cheat. "That thus have cosened you at hoodman-blind."

Crants (Dut. krans, a garland) = a garland, a wreath. "Her virgin crans."

Craven (A.S. crafan, to beg earnestly) = to beg for mercy when overcome; hence, a coward. "On some craven scruple."

Credent (L. credere, to believe) = believing, credulous. "If with too credent ear you list his songs."

Crescent (L. crescre (part crescens, to grow) = growing. "For nature, crescent, does not grow alone."

Crown and Coroner (L. corona, a crown) = an officer under the crown. "The crowner hath sat on her."

Cue or Queue (F. queue. L. cauda, a tail) = a technical word on the stage. An actor knows when it is his turn to speak when the previous speaker gives him the "cue," i.e. speaks the last words.

Cunning (A.S. cunnen, to know) = originally, knowledge, skill. "With as much modesty as cunning" = skill.

Daily (M.E. dallere, to play, to trifle) = to trifle. "Laertes, you but daily." "The primrose path of dalliance" = trifling.

Delve (A.S. delfan, dig) = to dig. "I will delve one yard below their mines." "Goodman deliver" = digger.

Despatched (O.F. despecher. F. dépêcher, to hasten. Low L. despedicare, to remove hindrances. L. pedica, a fetter; pes, the foot) = to remove a hindrance; hence, to hasten. "Of life, of crown, of queen, at once despatched" = quickly deprived of.

Dirge (formerly dirige; from the first word of the anthem "dirige, Dominus meus." Ps. v. 8, in the office for the dead. L. dirige = direct thcu) = a funeral anthem. "With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage."

Distil (L. distillare, to drop or trickle down. L. de down, stilla a drop) = to let fall in drops. "Whilst they, distilled almost to jelly with the act of fear" = melted.
Distilment (see Distil) = what is extracted by distilling. "The leperous distilment."

Document (L. documentum, a proof. L. docere, to teach) = a paper of instructions or proof. "A document in madness" = a lesson, or instruction.

Dole (L. dolere, to grieve) = grief, lamentation. "Weighing delight and dole."

Doom (A.S. dóm, a thing set or decided upon) = a judgment, a decision. "With tristful visage, as against the doom."

Doomsday (see Doom) = the day of doom or judgment. "Was sick almost to doomsday."

Doublet (M.E. dobbelet. O.F. doublet = two-fold) = an inner (double) garment. "With his doublet all unbraced."

Dout = to do out, to extinguish. "This folly douts it."

Ducat (It. ducato, a ducat; also a duchy; named from ducatus (duchy of Apulia) in the legend upon it) = a coin. "Dead, for a ducat, dead."

Dungeon (O.F. donjon. L. dominium, a lordship. L. dominus, a lord) = the chief tower of a castle. Here were the cells in which prisoners were confined; hence, the modern meaning of the word. "In which there are many confines, wards and dungeons."

Eager (F. aigre. L. acrem acc. of acer, sharp) = sharp, ardent, earnest. "It is a nipping and an eager air" = sharp, biting.

Ecstasy (Low L. ecstasis, a trance. Gk. ἐκστάσις, displacement, trance. ἐκ (ek) out, στάσις (stasis), a standing) = a state of excessive rapture or enthusiasm. "Blasted with ecstasy." Here = madness.

Escotter (O.F. escotter, to pay one's share. A.S. scot = payment; especially a contribution into a common fund, into which it is shot) = paid. "How are they escotted?"

Espial (O.F. espier, to spy. L. spicere, to look, see) = spies. "Her father and myself lawful espials.

Excrement (L. ex out of, crescere, to grow) = the hair, the beard as growing out of the body. "Your bedded hair, like life in excrements."

Extravagant (L. extra, beyond; vagare, to wander) = wandering beyond, spending more than one's income. "The extravagant and erring spirit," referring to the Ghost wandering beyond the limits assigned to spirits.

Eyas (F. niais, a nestling) = an unfledged bird, a nestling. "An aiery of children, little eyases."

Fain (A.S. fagen, glad) = glad, gladly. "I would fain prove so."

Fantasy (L. phantasma. Gk. φάντασμα, a vision, spectre; φαντάζειν, to display) = an apparition; also imagination of the mind. Horatio says, "'tis but our fantasy" = imagination.
Fardel (O.F. fardel, dim. of farde, a burden. Arab. fardah, a package) = a pack, a bundle. "Who would fardels bear."

Fay (M.E. fey, faith) = faith. "For, by my fay, I cannot reason."

Feat (O.F. fait, L. factum, a deed) = a deed well done. "Why you proceeded not against these feats" = deeds, actions.

Fee (A.S. feah, cattle, property) = a grant of land, property, payment. "Gives him these thousand coins in annual fee." In early times cattle were the chief part of a man's property, and were used as a medium of exchange.

Fell (A.S. fel, cruel) = cruel, fierce. "The whiff and wind of his fell sword."

Felly, Felloe (A.S. felga, a felly. So named from the pieces being put together. A.S. feolan, to stick, to cleave) = part of a wheel-rim. "Break all her spokes and fellies from her wheel."

Fennel (M.E. fenel, a plant. Dim. of L. fenum, hay) = plant. "There's fennel for you."

Foil (O.F. feuille, a leaf. L. folium, a leaf) = a set off, as in setting a gem. The material placed at the back of a jewel to display its lustre to advantage. "I'll be your foil, Laertes."

Foil (F. fouler, to stamp upon) = a weapon with its point blunted for fencing. "Give them the foils, young Osric."

Fond (M.E. fonnen, to be foolish) = foolish. "All trivial fond records."

Fordo = destroys. For has a negative force. "Whose violent property for-does itself."

Forfeit (O.F. forfeiture, a crime, punishable by fine. Low L. forisfactum a trespass, a fine. L. foris (out of doors) facere, to do, i.e. to do beyond, to trespass) = penalty or fine for a misdeed. Also something lost by the misdeed. "Did forfeit, with his life, all these his lands."

Fret (1) (A.S. fretan, to eat away) = to eat away, to worry.
(2) A.S. freotedan, to adorn) = to adorn or ornament. "This majestic roof fretted with golden fire."

Fust or Fusty (O.F. fusté, tasting of the cask. O.F. fuste, a cask; originally, a stock, a log. L. fustis, a cudgel, a thick stick) = to become mouldy. "To fust in us unused."

Gage (F. gage, a pledge. Low L. vadium, a pledge. L. vas) = a pledge. As a verb = to pledge. "Was gaged by our king."

Gambol (It. gamba, the leg. F. gambe) = a frisk, caper, frolicsome dance. "Which madness, would gambol from" = skip away.

Gibe (Sw. gibâ, to gape) = to jeer. "Where be your gibles now" = your jeers.

Gore (A.S. gor, filth, dirt) = clotted blood. "O'ersized with coagulate gore."

Gorge (O.F. gorge, the throat) = the throat. "My gorge rises at it," Here = stomach, i.e. I feel sick at it.
Gross (F. grosse, gross, great. L. grossa, fat, thick) = great. "In the gross and scope of my opinion" = in the sum total.

Gules (F. guêules, red. L. guila, throat). A term in heraldry = red. Probably from the colour of the open mouth of the heraldic lion. "Now is he total guiles" = red, bloody.

Harbinger (M.E. herbergeour, one who provides lodgings for a man of rank. O.F. herberge, a lodging) = a forerunner. "As harbingers preceding still the fates."

Havoc (O.F. havoc, plunder; O.F. haver, to hook up) = destruction; indiscriminate slaughter. "This quarry cries on havoc."

Hearse (M.E. herse; O.F. herce, a harrow. L. hirpen) = (1) a harrow; (2) a frame like a harrow for supporting lights at a church service, especially a funeral; (3) a funeral pageant; (4) a monument; (5) a bier or carriage for a dead body. "Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death" = entombed.

Hectic (Gk. ἐκτικός (hecticos), habitual = continual; applied to the constant bright spot that appears on the cheek during fever."For like the hectic in my blood he rages" = fever.

Husbandry (Lc. húsbonde, the master of the house; hús, house; biandí, dwelling in) = the providing for the house. "Borrowing dullest the edge of husbandry" = Here = thrift.

Indentures (L. indentare, to notch. L. in in dens, a tooth), a legal term. Agreements were made in duplicate and were indented along the edges to fit one another.

Inoculate (L. inoculare, to insert a graft; in, into; oculus, an eye) = to graft, to bud. "For virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock."

Jot (The English form of L. iota, Gk. ιότα, the smallest letter in the Greek alphabet, or from yod the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet) = a point, a little, the least quantity imaginable. "Not a jot more my lord."

Jowl, Jole (M.E. jolle, the cheek) = the jaw or cheek. "How the knave jowls it to the ground." Here a verb = to knock the jole or head. The modern word is "jolt."

Juggle (O.F. jogleor. F. jongleur. L. joculator, a jester; joculus, dim. of focus, a jest) = to play tricks and amuse by sleight of hand; to practice artifice or imposture. "I'll not be juggled with" = deceived by a trick.

Kibe (W. cibwst, chilblain; W. cip, a cup, i.e. a cup like malady, taking the name from the rounded form) = a chilblain. "He galls his kibe."

Kin (A.S. cyn, kin, race) = of the same race. "A little more than kin and less than kind."

Kind (A.S. cynde, natural) = of the same nature. "A little more than kin and less than kind."

Let (A.S. lettan, to make late) = to hinder. "I'll make a ghost of him that lets me."
Lief (A.S. leof, dear) = gladly, willingly. "I had as lief the town-rior spoke my lines."

Liege (O.H.G. leidie, free, especially from all obligations of service). Originally "a liege lord" was a lord of a free band, and his lieges were privileged free men, faithful to him, but free from all other services. The modern meaning "bound by feudal tenure" has arisen by confusion with L. ligatus, bound. "And liegenmen to the Dane."

List (1) (O.F. lisse or lice, a barrier. L. licie, a girdle, barriers) = barriers enclosing a piece of ground. "The ocean, overpowering of his list."
(2) (F. liste, a roll) = a catalogue, a muster roll. "Sharked up a list of lawless resolutes."
(3) (A.S. hlystan, to listen) = to listen. "If with too credent ear you list his songs."
(4) (A.S. lystan, to desire) = to desire, to please. "If we list to speak."

Livery (M.E. livere. F. livrée = a thing given. L. liberare to set free, give freely) = a delivery, a thing delivered, uniform allowed to servants. "The light and careless livery that it wears."

Lug (Swd. lugga, to pull by the hair) = to drag. "I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room."

Mart, shortened form of market. (L. mercatus, traffic) = trade, a place where trade is carried on. "And foreign mart for implements of war."

Mass (M.E. messes; L. missus, p. part of mittere, to send) = the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Usually said to be derived from the sentence, ite missa est (go, the congregation is dismissed) said at the end of the service. "Mass, I cannot tell."

Matin (F. matin, morning. L. matutinus, belonging to the morning) = the morning. "The glow-worm shows the matin to be near."

Mazzard (Supposed to be derived from mazer or meser, a bowl. The skull being smooth and round like a bowl) = the head, the skull. "Knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade."

Moiey (F. moicé, a half. L. medius, middle) = a half share. "A moiey competent." Here = share; any portion, not necessarily the half.

Moult (L. mutare, to change) = to cast feathers as birds. "Your secrecy to the King and Queen moult no feather."

Mountebank (Lit. one who mounts a bench to proclaim his nostrums. It. montrare, to mount in on bancó a bench) = a quack doctor. "I bought an union of a mountebank."

Mow (F. moue, a mow or mouth) = a grimace. "Those that would make mows at him."

Nickname (M.E. neke-name. An ekename, corrupted into a nekename, eke, to augment. L. ag-nomen) = an additional name. "And nickname God's creatures." Here = to misname i.e. to give wrong names to.
Niggard (M.E. nigard. Lc. knögr, stingy) = miserly, stingy. "Niggard of question," i.e. not putting many questions.

Nonce (M.E. for then anes = for the once) = for the occasion. "A chalice for the nonce."

Obsequies (L. obsequias, acc. of obsequiae, funeral rites, lit. followings. L. obsequi, to follow near). "Her obsequies have been as far enlarged."

Obsequious (L. obsequiosus, full of compliance; obsequi, to follow near, to comply with) = very complying. "To do obsequious sorrow."

Orisons (O.F. orison. L. orationem, acc. of oratio, a prayer; orare, to pray) = prayers. "Nymph, in thy orisons, be all my sins remembered."

Pander, Pandar (From Pandarus, the name of the man who procured for Troilus the love of Chryseis (Cressida) = a procurer. "And reason panders will."

Pansy (F. pensée, a thought. It is the flower of thought or remembrance). A flower, also called heart's-ease. "And there is pansies, that's for thoughts."

Paragon (F. paragon, a model of excellence. It owes its origin to two prepositions united in one phrase, para, in comparison, con with) = a model of perfection. "The paragon of animals."

Partisan or Partizan (O.H.G. partá, a battle axe) = a halbert, a battle axe. "Shall I strike at it with my partisan."

Peasant (F. pays, a country, with suffix an. L. pagus, a village) = a rustic, a villager. "O, what a rogue and peasant slave I am."

Perpend (Per, thoroughly. L. pendere, to weigh) = to consider thoroughly. "Perpend, I have a daughter," etc.

Peruse (L. per, thoroughly; usus past part. utor, to use) = to use up, to go through thoroughly, to examine thoroughly, to read over carefully. "He falls to such perusal of my face."

Pester (O.F. empestrer, to entangle, incumber. Originally, "to hobble a horse at pasture." Low L. im upon, pastorium, a clog for a horse at pasture. L. pastus, perf. part; pascere, to feed) = to trouble, to annoy. "To pester us with message."

Petard (F. petard, an explosive) = an explosive machine made of metal, formerly used for blowing open gates of fortresses. "To have the engineer hoist with his own petard."

Pioneer (F. pionnier, an extension of F. pion, a foot-soldier) = a soldier who clears the way before an army, especially applied to sappers and miners. "Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so fast? A worthy pioneer."

Planet (Gk. πλανήτης (planetes), a wanderer) = the wandering stars or planets. "The nights are wholesome; then the planets strike."

Poniard (F. poignard, a dagger. O.F. poigne, the fist, with the suffix ard. L. pugnus, the fist) = a dagger. "Six French rapiers and poniards."

GLOSSARY.
Porcupine or Porphentine (L. porcus, a pig; spina, a thorn) = the prickly pig. "Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

Posset (M.E. possyt, W. posel, curdled milk) = a warm curdled drink. "It doth posset and curd," i.e. it curdles.

Posy short for Poesy (Gk. ποίησις, poësis, a composition, a poem) = a short poem, especially a short motto in verse, on Knives and Rings. "Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring."

Prevent (L. pra before, venire to go). The old meaning was "to go before, to anticipate." "So shall my anticipation prevent your discovery."

Pursy (O.F. poulser, to gasp for breath) = short-winded. "For in the fatness of these pursy times."

Quaintly (O.F. coint, neat, fine. L. cognitus, known) = neatly, oddly, fantastically (taking this meaning from confusion with. L. comptus, comere, to adorn). "But breathe his faults so quaintly" = ingeniously.

Quarry (M.E. guerre. O.F. cuiree, the intestines of a slain animal, the part given to the hounds; so called because wrapped in the skin. F. cuir. L. corium, the skin) = (1) a heap of slaughtered game, (2) the animal pursued. "Th's quarry cries on havoc."

Quiddity or Quiddit (L. quid'itas, the nature of a thing) = a nicety, a cavil, a subtle distinction. "Where be his quiddits now?"

Quietus (L. quies, rest) = a ñeal discharge or acquittance. "When he himself might his quietus make."

Quillet (Short for L. quidlibet, anything you choose) = a sly trick in argument. "Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks?"

Quintessence (L. quinta, essentia, the fifth essence). Lit. the fifth essence = pure essence (see p. 136). "What is this quintessence of dust."

Quote (O.F. quoter, coter, to quote. L. quotare, to mark off in chapters and verses. L. quotus, how many) = to give a reference. "I had not quoted him" = observed in order to describe him.

Rack (M.E. rak = drift, motion, a thing drifted) = a cloud. "A silence in the heavens, the rack stood still."

Rapier (F. rapiere, a Spanish sword. A name given in contempt = raspiere, rasper or poker) = a light narrow sword used for thrusting. "He whips his rapier out."

Raze (L. radere, rasum, to scrape) = to demolish entirely. "Provincial roses on my razed shoes" = slashed (see p. 142).

Reck (A.S. recan, to care) = to care for, regard. "And recks not his own rede."

Reeche (A.S. hrcan, to try to vomit) = begrimed, foul. "A pair of reechy kisses."
Requiem (L. requiem, acc. of requies, rest). The mass for the dead; called requiem because it began. "Requiem eternam dona eis" = grant eternal repose to those, etc. "To sing a requiem."

Rival (L. rivus, a stream. Originally meant dwellers by the same river. Contentions as to water rights led to the modern meaning) = a competitor. "The rivals of my watch" = partners.

Romage or Rummage (A.S. rum, a place, with suffix, age = stowage). Used in this play in the nautical sense of "clearing a ship's hold," and so = bustle and confusion. "Of this post haste and romage in the land."

Rood (A.S. rod, a gallows, a cross, properly, a rod or pole) = the cross. "No, by the rood, not so."

Rouse (Dan. rius, intoxication) = a drinking-bout. "And the king's rouse the heaven shall bruit again."

Russet (F. rousset, dim. of roux, red) = reddish, reddish brown. "In russet mantle clad."

Rusty (A.S. rust, rust; originally, redness) = covered with rust. "Do they grow rusty."

Satyr (Gk. σάτυρος, a satyr, a sylvan god, i.e. part man, part god). "Hyperion to a satyr."

Saw (A.S. sagu, a saying) = a saying, a maxim. "All saws of books."

Scan (Short for scand. L. scandere, to climb; also to scan a verse) = to examine closely. "That would be scanned," i.e. must be inquired into.

Sconce (O. Dut. schantse, a fortress. O.F. esconcer, to hide or cover. L. absconsus, used as a perf. part. of abscondere, to hide) = a small fort, bulwark. Also applied to a helmet, and even to the head. "To knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel."

Scrimers (F. escrimeur, a fencer). "The scrimers of their nation," i.e. fencers.

Scullion (O.F. escouillon, a dish-clout) = a kitchen servant. "And fall a cursing, like a very drab, a scullion."

Secure (L. securus, free from anxiety, se without, cura anxiety) = free from anxiety. "Heaven secure him" = protect.

Shard (A.S. sceard, a fragment. Lit. "a cut thing." A.S. sceran, to shear) = a fragment. "Shards, flints and pebbles should be thrown on her."

Sheen (A.S. scène, fair, showy) = brightness, splendour. "And thirty dozen moons with borrowed sheen."

Shent (A.S. Past part. of scendan, to put to shame) = put to shame, harshly reproved. "How in my words soever she be shent."

Shrive or Shrieve (A.S. scrifan, to shrive, to impose a penance. L. scribere, to write). Lit. to impose a penance in writing. There were three parts—(1) the confession of the penitent, (2) the penance imposed, (3) the absolution pronounced. "Not shriving-time allowed."
Skirt (M.E. skyrт, a skirt, a kind of kirtle) = noun, the lower loose part of a dress; verb, to border, to be on the border. “Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there, sharked up a list of lawless resolutes.”

Sliver (M.E. sliver, dimin. of slive, a slice, a chip. A.S. slifan, to cleave) = a splinter, a twig. “Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke.”

Soil (O.F. souiller, to soil, to wallow as a sow. L. sus, a sow) = to defile. “A thing a little soiled i' the working.”

Sovereign (O.F. soverain, princely, chief. Low L. superanus, chief. L. super, above) = a chief, a monarch. “By the sovereign power you have over us” = the power of a monarch over his subjects.

Springe (A.S. springan, to spring) = a snare made with a flexible (springing) rod. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks.”

Spurn (M.E. spurnen, to kick against) = to reject; kick against. “Spurns enviously at straws.”

Stalk (M.E. stalken. A.S. staelcan, to walk warily) = to stride. “See it stalks away.”

Sterling (M.E. sterling, a sterling coin of standard size and weight; named from the Hanselings (i.e. the men of the East); this was the name for the Hanse merchants in London) = of standard worth, genuine. “That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay, which are not sterling.”

Stithy (M.E. stith, an anvil. A.S. stede, a place, a fixed place; so named from its firmness) = a smithy, a blacksmith’s shop. “As foul as Vulcan’s stithy.”

Sully (A.S. sylian, to sully, defile) = to tarnish, to spot. “You laying these slight sullies on my son” = defects.

Synod (F. synode. Gk. σύνοδος (synodos), a coming together, a meeting) = an assembly, especially ecclesiastical. “All you gods, in general synod take away her power.”

Target (Dimin. of A.S. targe, a shield) = a small shield. “The adventurous knight shall use his foil and target.”

Tarre (A.S. tyrgan, to imitate) = to urge on, incite, like setting on dogs. “To tarre them to controversy.”

Tell (A.S. telan, to count) = to count, to number. The word remains in the “tellers,” who count the votes in a division in Parliament. “While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.”

Tether (Formerly written tedder, M.E. tedir. Gael. taod, a halter) = a rope for fastening up. “And with a larger tether may he walk.”

Tropically (Gk. τροπικός (tropicos), belonging to a turn, τρόπος a turn) = figuratively, i.e. by turning aside a word from its original meaning. “Marry, how? Tropically.”

Truant (F. truand, a beggar) = an idler. “A truant disposition, good, my lord.”

Truncheon (M.E. truncheon, a little stick. Dim. of trone, a trunk) = a staff of office. “Within his truncheon’s length.”
GLOSSARY.

Unaneled (A.S. ele, oil. L. oleum, oil. Lit. un-on—oiled, i.e. not oiled upon) = without having received extreme unction. "Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled."

Unhouseled (A.S. housel, to sacrifice) = without having received the Sacrament. "Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled."

Union (L. unio, oneness, also a single pearl of large eye) = a large pearl. "And in the cup an unio shall he throw."

Vail (O.F. avalen, to let fall down) = to lower. "Do not, for ever, with thy vailed lids."

Valanced (From Valence in France, near Lyons, famous for oaths) = a kind of drapery, now applied to a part of the bed-hangings. "Thy face is valanced, since I saw thee last" = fringed with a beard.

Ventages (F. vent. L. ventus, wind) = an air-hole. Govern these ventages with your finger and thumb."

Vulgar (L. vulgus, the common people) = belonging to the common people. "As any the most vulgar thing to sense" = common.

Yaw (Norwegian gaga to bend backwards) = to go unsteadily as a ship. "And yet but yaw neither in respect of his quick sail."

Yawn (A.S. ginian, to gape) = to gape, to open widely. "When churchyards yawn."

Yeoman (O. Frisian geoman, a villager, ga a village) = dweller in a village. The yeoman soldiers were drawn from small farmers and villagers. "Yeoman's service," i.e. right trusty service.

Wan (M.E. wan, colourless) now applied to pale objects deficient in colour. "All his visage wanned = become pale."

Wanton (M.E prefix wan, lacking. A.S. towen, educated) = unrestrained. "Such wanton wild and usual slips."

Wassail (A.S. wes hál, Lit. be whole; a form of wishing your health) = revelry: originally a drinking of the health. "Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels."

Weeds (A.S. vaed, a garment) = garments, especially mourning garments. "Than settled age his sable and his weeds."

Wharf (A.S. wherfe, a dam or bank) = a place for landing goods; bank of a river. "That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf."

Windlasses (Put for wind-lace, a winding course, from wind to turn, lace, a snare, a twisted string) = a circuit. "With windlasses and with assays of bias" = roundabout ways. Windlass, a machine with a turning handle is a corruption of windas Ic. vindass, a windlass. Ic. vinda, to wind; ñass, a rounded beam or pole). Withers (A.S. wither, against, withre, resistance) = the ridge between the shoulder blades of a horse. So called because it is the part which a horse opposes to the strain, or on which the stress of the collar comes in drawing. "Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung."

Wit (A.S. wit, knowledge) = wisdom, knowledge. "Brevity is the soul of wit."

Wont (The part of won, to dwell, remain. A.S. wuna, custom, use) = used, accustomed. "Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk."
EXAMINATION PAPERS.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

1. What part do Marcellus and Francisco take in the play?
2. Describe (by quotations) the appearance, dress, and features of the Ghost.
3. What was the state of the kingdom at the period of the opening of the play?
4. Write out passage commencing
   "In the most high and palmy state of Rome, to Our climatures and countrymen" (113-125).
5. Explain the following words and expressions: fantasy, approve, sometimes, jump, mart, divide, stomach, romage, still, foreknowing, extravagant, takes, russet, stands.
6. Paraphrase:—
   "I have heard to Made probation" (149-156).
7. What is the probable date of the play? Assign reasons.
9. Mention any superstitious beliefs referred to in this scene.

ACT I.—SCENE II.

1. How does Claudius endeavour to justify his marriage with the Queen?
2. What contrasts in the play does Hamlet draw between his father and his uncle?
3. Quote Hamlet's enumeration of the ordinary signs of woe.
4. Name the speaker, explain the meaning and allusion in: "cast thy nighted colour off," "colleagued with the dream of his advantage," "the most immediate to our throne," "what make you from Wittenberg?" "I doubt some foul play." "lose your voice," "my hard consent."
5. Write out passage commencing
   "O that this too too solid flesh would melt, Let me not think on't" (129-146).
6. What meaning does Shakespeare attach to the following words: change, dexterity, post, rouse, exactly, constantly, jointress, sometime, pardon, laboursome, behaviour, denote, retrograde, supposal, merely, cousin, dexterity? Give the context.

7. Quote instances of double negatives in the play.

8. Paraphrase:—
   "A figure like your father,
   Stand dumb, and speak not to him" (199-206).

9. Explain the grammar of: "we have here writ to Norway," "more than the scope of these dilated articles allow," "we doubt it nothing," "as any the most vulgar," "than that which dearest father bears his son."

10. Derive and give meaning of: tell, beaver, veiled lids, impotent, dilated, jocund, obsequious, vulgar.

11. Write notes upon: "Wittenberg university," "the great cannon," "like Niobe, all tears," "hath left the flushing in her galled eyes," "windy suspiration of forced breath."

12. What caused Fortinbras to choose the opportunity for attacking Denmark?

ACT I.—SCENE III.

1. Give the sources of the play, and the story as told in the original version of the legend.

2. What differences are there in the story as told in the ancient records?

3. What view does Laertes take of Hamlet's favour to Ophelia? what advice does he give her? how do subsequent events justify or condemn the warning?

4. Quote the precepts of Polonius to Laertes, tabulating them under following heads: (1) general conduct, (2) friendship, (3) quarrels, (4) dress, (5) loans.

5. Give the meaning of following words: convoy, suppliance, soil, main voice, unmastered, ungracious, puff'd, occasion, character, censure, chief, husbandry, season, tenders, entreatment, tether, charge, cautel, unsifted, tend.

6. Scan lines 21, 33, 64, 101, 117, 120.

7. Write notes upon: "a violet in the youth of primy nature," "dull thy palm," "shall keep the key," "he may not... carve for himself," "and with a larger tether may he walk," "to crack the wind," "springes to catch woodcocks."

8. Paraphrase:—
   "In few, Ophelia,
   The better to beguile" (126-131).


10. Quote the play on the words (and explain) "tender," "fashion.

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11. Grammatical notes on:

"How prodigal the soul lends the tongue vows."
"I would not have you so slander any moment's leisure."
"As it is a-making."
"Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy."
"Best safety lies in fear."
"Nor any unproportioned thought his act."
"The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried."

**ACT I.—SCENE IV.**

1. Show from the play that when Hamlet is excited he is capable of independent action.
2. What previous plays were written on Hamlet?
3. Write out passage:

   "It is a custom, to To his own scandal" (15-38).
4. Paraphrase:

   "What if it tempt you, And hears it roar beneath" (69-78).
5. Explain allusions: "Nemean lion's nerve," "fortune's star."
6. "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark." Justify the statement. Who was the speaker?
7. Derive and give meaning of: *eager, wassail, clepe, livery, dout.*
8. Give meaning of: *nerve, toys, removed, impartment, disposition, inurned, undergo, dram of base, cerements, plausible, pales, up-spring reels, wont, beetles.* Give the context.
9. Explain: "the king doth wake," "soil our addition," "mole of nature," "the dram of base," "too much o'erleavens."
10. How does Hamlet address the Ghost? How does the Ghost reply in this scene?
11. Illustrate the acquaintance with legal terminology in *Hamlet.*

**ACT I.—SCENE V.**

1. Name *only, with dates*, the various editions of the play. What is the source of the text of the present play?
2. What was the general idea of the late king's death?
3. Quote the Ghost's account of his murder.
4. Give the meanings of: *haste, render, posset, fond, saws, truepenny, antic, harrow, secure, rankly, luxury, globe, arrant, circumstance, pioneer, pressures.*
5. Derive: *porcupine, blazon, wharf, process, secure, alleys, lazard, unhoused, table, fond, saws.*
6. Explain: "eternal blazon," "a most instant tetter barked about," "unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled," "upon my sword," "in the cellarage," "hic et ubique," "the time is out of joint."

7. Comment upon the grammar of:
   "But this is wondrous strange."
   "At your most need."
   "'Gins to pale his uneffectual fire."

8. Scan: "As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers."

9. What was Hamlet's object in feigning madness?

10. What lines in this scene does Goethe refer to as giving the keynote of Hamlet's action?

11. Quote in Shakespeare's words an allusion to the doctrine of purgatory.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

1. Who is Reynaldo? What part does he take in the play?

2. Mention any anachronisms in the play. What is an anachronism?

3. What conclusions would you draw as to the character of Polonius in this scene?

4. Paraphrase:—
   "Look you, sir,
   And, in part, him." (6-15).


6. "This is the very ecstasy of love." What actions on the part of Hamlet cause Polonius to make this comment?

7. "Wherefore should you do this?" Who puts this question, and what answer is given?

8. Paraphrase:—
   "Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:
   And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
   With windlasses, and with assays of bias,
   By indirections find directions out."

ACT II.—SCENE II.

1. What parts of the play are found only in the 2nd Quarto?

2. What part in the plot against Hamlet is taken by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern? With what success?

3. Describe in the words of Polonius the gradual decline of Hamlet "into the madness wherein he now raves." How did Polonius propose to test his theory?

5. Explain the use and give context of: provoke, sending, fruit, distemper, pass, expostulate, perpend, machine, round, watch, arras, indifferent, gentry.

6. Explain: "vouchsafe your rest," "upon our first," "assay of arms," "I am ill at these numbers," "idle sight," "mark the encounter," "I'll board him presently," "if I had played the desk," "in her excellent white bosom."

7. Explain the grammar of: "the power you have of us," "and now remains," "and all we wait for," "excellent well," "upon our first, he sent out to suppress," "of so young days," "he truly found it was against your highness," "as hush as death," "you were better have a bad epitaph."

8. Paraphrase:—
"For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion."
"Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing; but not as your daughter may conceive."

9. Explain the allusions in:—
"Of Fortune's cap we are the very button."
"Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light."
"'Twas Æneas' tale to Dido."
"The satirical rogue says."
"Your secrecy . . . moult no feather."
"What is this quintessence of dust?"

10. How does Hamlet discuss the charge of ambition?

**ACT II.—SCENE II (Continued.)**

1. What evidence is there that the 1st Quarto was derived from notes taken during representation? Show that it refers to a different play than that of the 2nd Quarto.

2. Give an account (1) of the conversation between Hamlet and Polonius in the lobby, (2) of the meeting between Hamlet and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

3. Explain the use of: brave, fretted, rusty, aiery, direct, quality, argument, comply, buzz, row, abridgment.

4. Explain: "outstretched heroes," "a free visitation," "a better proposer," "tickled in the sere," "top of question," "picture in little," "your ladyship is nearer heaven," "thy face is valanced," "cracked within the ring," "scene indivisibly," "poem unlimited," "the altitude of a chopine."

5. Paraphrase:—
"Nay, their endeavour, to
Scarce come thither" (339-345).

6. Explain and give the context of:—
"'What's Hecuba to him?"
"Then are our beggars bodies."
"What make you at Elsinore?"
"I know a hawk from a handsaw."
"'Twas caviare to the general."
7. "What a piece of work is man!" How does Hamlet describe him?

8. Derive and give meaning of: sift, confines, fay, prevent, paragon, coted, escoted, cunning, cue, tent, blench.

9. How does Hamlet receive the players?

**Act II.—Scene II. (Continued.)**

1. What is said about child-actors? How did they come to take part in plays?

2. Assign a date to the play, and give reasons.

3. Write out passage:

   "O, what a rogue,
   to
   Faculties of eyes and ears" (551-567).

4. Describe the death of Priam very briefly. What was the play described by Hamlet as one that "pleased not the million"?

5. Explain the use and give context of: rack, region, nobled, passion, function, amaze, abuses, kindless, relative.


7. Who were Pyrrhus, Priam, Hecuba?

8. Comment on grammar of "Who does me this?" and give other examples from the play of a like construction.

9. Explain the allusions in:

   "When he lay couched in the ominous horse."
   "The Cyclops' hammers."
   "I was killed i' the Capitol."

10. What plan does Hamlet form to test the conscience of King Claudius?

**Act III.—Scene I.**

1. Write out passage commencing

   "To be, or not to be,
   to
   And lose the name of action" (53-85).

   What is the theme upon which Hamlet meditates in this soliloquy?

2. What report do Rosengrantz and Guildenstern make to the King on the subject of Hamlet's eccentric behaviour? What questions are put to them (1) by the King, (2) by the Queen?

3. What fresh contrivance is arranged for discovering the cause of Hamlet's distraction?
4. Give the meaning, with context, of: o'er-raught, closely, affront, 
rub, spurns, takes, remembrances, redeliver, honest, wanton-
ness, bodkin, pith, disclose.

5. Explain: "drift of circumstance," "to both your honours." 
"when we have shuffled off this mortal coil," "the native 
hue of resolution," "the glass of fashion and the mould of 
form," "variable objects," "give him a further edge,' "keeps aloof."

6. Comment on the grammar of: "from her working all his visage 
warmed," "and he beseeched me," "I shall obey you," 
"soft you now," "the time gives it proof," "which for to 
prevent," "he shall with speed to England," "who would 
bear . . . the oppressor's wrong?" "their perfume lost, take 
these again," "whereon his brains still beating puts him 
thus."

7. Derive and give meaning of: quietus, fardel, orisons, aught, 
nickname.

8. Describe the scene between Hamlet and Ophelia following the 
soliloquy in question 1.

9. Account for Hamlet's strange behaviour to Ophelia.

ACT III.—SCENE II.


2. Where is the scene of the play? Give the duration of the play 
and the seasons of the year.

3. Give the substance of Hamlet's instructions to the players.

4. Describe the dumb show enacted by the players.

5. Give the meaning, with context, of: groundlings, pressure, 
modesty, censure, barren, coped, advancement, thrift, idle, 
stay, leave, instances, opposite, blanks.

6. Explain: "candied tongue," "crook the pregnant hinges of the 
knee," "the chameleon's dish," "what did you enact?" 
"miching mallecho," "posy of a ring," "an anchor's cheer," 
"let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung," 
"hobby-horse."

7. Comment on the grammar of: "nor do not saw the air too 
much," "a thousand pound," "in one line two crafts directly 
meet," "discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must," "the 
littlest doubts are fear," "nor 'tis not strange," "which 
now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree; but fall unshaken 
when they mellow be."

8. Explain allusions in: "whipped for o'erdoing Termagant: it 
out-herods Herod," "Phæbus' cart," "Neptune's salt wash," 
"with Hecate's ban thrice blasted," "for thou dost know, 
O Damon dear," "the soul of Nero."

9. Derive and explain: journeymen, unkennel, stithy, periwig, 
puppets, toil, shent.
10. Write out passage:—

"The great man down,  
 to  
 Seasons him his enemy" (191-196).

**ACT III.—SCENE II. (Continued.)**

1. What are the unities? Which of them is observed in this play?
2. Does the play of "the mouse-trap" succeed in "catching the conscience of the king"?
3. What reasons can be given for considering the madness of Hamlet to be real?
4. Give the meaning of: tropically, image, anon, cry, wholesome, fret.
6. Write out:—

"Tis now the very witching time of night,  
 to  
 Never, my soul, consent!" (374-385).

7. What are the steps by which Hamlet becomes satisfied that Claudius is his father's murderer?
8. What do we learn from the play about the stage in Shakespeare's time?
9. Quote a few expressions from the play that have become proverbial.
10. What allusions are there to contemporary history and customs in the play?

**ACT III.—SCENE III.**

1. Paraphrase:—

"The single and peculiar,  
 to  
 Attends the boisterous ruin" (11-22).

2. Quote passage:—

"O, my offence is rank,  
 to  
 To wash it white as snow" (36-46).

3. What thoughts does the King give utterance to on (1) mercy, (2) prayer, (3) repentance?
4. What reasons does Hamlet give for not putting the King to death when at prayer? Comment upon the same.
5. Explain meaning of: closet, scanned, hent, effects, rests, free-footed, gulf, flush, mortised.

7. Comment upon the grammar of: "and he to England shall along with you," "we will ourselves provide," "ten thousand lesser things," "should o'erhear the speech of vantage," "the action lies in his true nature," "the wicked prize itself buys out the law."

8. Explain the allusions in: "and what's in prayer but this twofold force," "offence's gilded hand may shove by justice," "when he is fit and seasoned for his passage," "primal eldest curse."

ACT III.—SCENE IV.

1. In the scene between Hamlet and the Queen, describe (a) the death of Polonius, (b) the reappearing of the Ghost.

2. What effect have Hamlet's upbraiding on the Queen?

3. Reproduce in the words of Shakespeare the pictures of the present and the late King as described by Hamlet.

4. What epithets during the play does Hamlet bestow upon Polonius? Is he justified in his descriptions?

5. In what words does Hamlet maintain his own sanity?

6. Give the meaning of the following, with context: broad, round, idle, rood, rat, station, batten, motion, hoodman-blind, mope, mutine, cutpurse, visitation, conceit, coinage, pursy, minister, recchy, ravel, paddock, gib, sport, delve, packing.

7. Explain: "new-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill," "enseamed bed," "a Vice of kings," "to try conclusions," "I'll lug the guts."

8. Paraphrase:—

   "Heaven's face doth glow,
   to
   Is thought-sick at the act" (48-51);

   also

   "Sense, sure, you have,
   to
   Could not so mope" (71-81).

9. Explain the grammar of: "there's letters sealed," "fear me not," "nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thralled," "O throw away the worser part of it," "let the bloat king tempt you," "I had forgot: 'tis so concluded," "into the neighbour room," "and blow them at the moon."

ACT IV.—SCENES I., II., III.

1. What comment does the King make upon the death of Polonius, and what course of action does he decide upon?

2. Why was the King unable to get rid of Hamlet by direct means?
3. What reference is made to England in the play? What conclusion can you draw from it as to the date of the events related in the play?

4. Give the meaning of: authorities, convocation, fat, rose, liberty, threats, woundless.

5. Explain: "variable service," "with fiery quickness," "the wind at help," "the associates tend," "his brainish apprehension," "the owner of a foul disease," "the pith of life."

6. Explain the meaning of: "Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!" By whom were the words spoken, and to whom do they refer? Justify the contemptuous epithet "sponge."

7. Explain allusions: "a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar," "seek him i' the other place yourself," "hide, fox, and so all after," "yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red," "as level as the cannon to his blank."


Act IV.—Scenes IV., V.

1. Illustrate the character of Fortinbras from the play. Contrast him with Hamlet. How does Hamlet contrast Fortinbras with himself?

2. Write out the passage:

   "What is a man,
   to
   To fust in us unused" (33-39).

3. Paraphrase:

   "How stand I, then,
   to
   To hide the slain" (56-65).

4. Explain: "the conveyance of a promised march," "truly to speak and with no addition," "army of such mass and charge," "makes mouths at the invisible event," "trick of fame," "the beauteous majesty of Denmark," "God 'ield you," "each toy seems prologue to some great amiss."

5. Explain the use of: debate, imposthume, fust, puffed, blood, conceit, betime, larded, spurns, collection, aim, botch.

6. Comment upon the grammar of: "and his sandal shoon," "her mood will needs be pitied," "there's tricks i' the world," "I cannot choose but weep."

7. With regard to Ophelia's madness, (1) Give indications of her insanity; (2) Note the principal points of difference between her state and Hamlet's assumed madness; (3) Upon what subjects do her thoughts run? (4) What was the cause of her madness?

8. Quote Ophelia's song commencing "To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day."

9. Explain allusions: "St. Valentine's day," "cockle hat and shoon," "the owl was a baker's daughter."
ACT IV.—SCENE V.

1. "When sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions." What are these "sorrows" as enumerated by the King?

2. What reasons have you for thinking that the madness of Hamlet was assumed?


4. Explain: "and we cast away moan," "I must commune with your grief," "sense and virtue of mine eye," "as much containing," "our person to arraign in ear and ear," "keeps himself in clouds."

5. What is the signification of rosemary, pansies, columbine, fennel, rue, violets, and to whom does Ophelia present them?

6. Explain allusions: "how cheerfully on the false trail they cry," "where are my Switzers?" "come, my coach," "the kind life-rendering pelican," "like to a murdering piece," "you may wear your rue with a difference."

7. Explain grammar of: "for good Polonius' death," "the doors are broke," "treason can but peep to what it would," "gives me superfluous death," "will nothing stick our person to arraign," "follow her close," "acts little of his will," "or you deny me right," "make choice of whom your wisest friends you will," "is't writ in your revenge," "do not fear our person," "his means of death."

ACT IV.—SCENES VI., VII.


2. "Of them I have much to tell thee." To whom does Hamlet refer? When does he give the explanation to Horatio, and what did he tell him?

3. Who was Lamond? What mention is made of him?

4. Give the meaning of: nonce, trick, liberal, unbated, contagion, crineful, count, gyves, naked, abuse, character, venomed, sliver, weeds, scrimers, motion.

5. Explain: "blast in proof," "long purples," "pass of practice," "the quick of the ulcer," "the bore of the matter," "it well appears," "the queen lives almost by his looks," "the general gender," "my sudden and more strange return," "wind of blame," "such a masterly report."

6. Comment on the grammar of: "I'll give you way for these letters, and do't the speedier," "which time she chanted snatches of old tunes," "no place should murder sanctuarize," "what are they?" "let our beard be shook with danger," "he shall not choose but fall."
.. Write out the passage describing the death of Ophelia, beginning

"There is a willow grows aslant a brook,

To muddy death" (165-182).

8. Give a description of her death in your own words.


10. Explain allusions: "the spring that turneth wood to stone," "stood challenger on mount of all the age," "as checking at his voyage," "he is the brooch and gem of all the nation."

ACT V.—Scene I.

1. At what point in the play does Hamlet cease to feign madness?

2. What allusions does Hamlet make to Alexander and Imperial Caesar?

3. Explain: "their even Christian," "tell me that and unyoke," "speak by the card," "he galls his kibes," "wonder-wounded hearers," "peace-parted souls," "thy most ingenious sense," "we'll put the matter to the present push."

4. Give the meaning of: deliver, argal, stoop, intill, jowls, mazzard, politician, sconce, absolute, picked, quick, fordo, requiem, shards, crants, disclosed, jester, chapfallen.

5. What remarks does Hamlet make (a) on the skull of a lawyer, (b) on the social position of a peasant?

6. Explain allusions: "Adam's profession," "get thee to Yaughan," "to play at loggats," "she should in ground unsanctified have lodged," "to o'ertop old Pelion," "make Ossa like a wart," "her golden couplets," "Cain's jawbone," "not a jot more," "the bringing home of bell and burial."

7. What instances are there of "play on words" in Act V. Sc. i.? Mention other instances in the play.

8. What are the three branches of an act?

9. Explain the grammar of: "one that would circumvent God," "for and a shrouding sheet."

10. What allusions are made in Act V. Sc. i. to Hamlet's age and to England?

11. Give instances of the Clowns or Grave-diggers using words conveying opposite meaning to that intended.

ACT V.—Scene II.

1. Describe the entrance of the funeral procession in Act V. Sc. i.

2. Give a summary of the action and behaviour of the priest.

3. "There is in Hamlet a terrible power of sudden and desperate action" (Dowden). Illustrate this remark from the play.
4. How does Hamlet justify himself for the death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?

5. Who is Osric? What part does he take in the play? What affectations of his time does Shakespeare satirise in this character?


7. Explain: “on the supervise no leisure bated,” “my seagown scarfed about me,” “gave’t the impression,” “full of most excellent differences,” “his definement suffers no perdition.”

8. Explain allusions: “not to stay the grinding of the axe,” “not shriving-time allowed,” “this lapwing runs away with his shell on his head,” “he did comply with his dug before he sucked it,” “the changeling never known.”

9. Comment upon the grammar of: “does it not stand me now upon?” “I should impart a thing to you,” “it is indifferent cold,” “in our more rawer breath,” “it would not much approve me.”

10. What were the terms of the wager? What were the stakes?

ACT V.—SCENE II. (Continued.)

1. What conversation took place between Hamlet and Laertes previous to the duel?

2. What were the stratagems of the King and Laertes for the destruction of Hamlet? How did they fail?

3. Describe the conduct of the Queen during the duel.

4. Quote the dying words of Laertes.

5. What was Hamlet’s dying charge to Horatio, and what rôle did he appoint to Fortinbras?

6. Give the meaning and context of: gain-giving, union, kettle, napkin, unbated, tempered, chance, occurrences, toward, jump, upshot, presently.

7. Explain: “use some gentle entertainment,” “this presence knows,” “I am satisfied in nature,” “to keep my name ungored,” “stick fiery off,” “whose voice will draw on more.”

8. Explain allusions: “a special providence in the fall of a sparrow,” “Sir, in this audience,” “this fell sergeant Death,” “I am more an antique Roman than a Dane,” “this quarry cries on havoc,” “go, bid the soldiers shoot.”

9. Explain with reference to the context: “there’s a divinity which shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will,” “it did me yeoman’s service,” “the interim is mine,” “dost know this water-fly,” “put your bonnet to its right use,” “you will lose this wager, my lord,” “now you shall see the other.”
GENERAL JUNIOR.

1. Discuss the character of Polonius; illustrating, if you can, by quotations.

2. Explain the following passages, referring in each case to the context:
   
   (a) To be or not to be: that is the question,
   
   (b) It is a custom

   More honour'd in the breach than in the observance.
   
   (c) I am but mad north-north-west, when the wind is

   southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.
   
   (d) Call me what instrument you will, though you can

   fret me yet you cannot play upon me.
   
   (e) There lives within the very flame of love

   A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it.

3. What part is played in the drama by Laertes?

4. Hamlet is alternately irresolute and passionate. Give any instances of both moods that you can remember.

5. What is meant by—bugs, cautel, an union, caviare, mobled, douts, shent, loggats, imposthume, eyases, John-a-dreams.

6. Write not more than twelve or fourteen lines of one only of the following passages:
   
   (a) Oh, that this too too solid flesh would melt.
   
   (b) I am thy father's spirit.
   
   (c) Oh, my offence is rank.

GENERAL SENIOR.

Explain carefully the meaning of the following passages, and give the name of the speaker and the occasion of the speech:

(a) But there is, Sir, an aery of little children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't.

(b) Yet I,

   A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
   
   Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
   
   And can say nothing.

(c) There's such divinity doth hedge a king

   That treason can but peep to what it would,
   
   Act little of his will.

(d) Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures and his tricks?

(e) Witness this army, of such mass and charge,

   Led by a delicate and tender prince,
   
   Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,

   Makes mouths at the invisible event.

2. Describe and explain Hamlet's treatment of—
   
   (a) his mother.
   
   (b) Ophelia.

3. Contrast the character of Hamlet with that of Horatio.

4. How do you account for Hamlet's procrastination in taking vengeance on his father's murderer,
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2. Good judge
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3. Crafty
4. Suspicious
5. Course-minded
6. Cool
7. Quick to act
8. Selfish

Laertes
1. Impulsive
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