The English Dramatists

THOMAS MIDDLETON

VOLUME THE SECOND

THE WORKS

OF

THOMAS MIDDLETON

EDITED BY

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IN EIGHT VOLUMES

VOLUME THE SECOND

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PUBLISHER'S NOTICE.

Four hundred copies of this Edition have been printed and the type distributed. *No more will be published.*

THE
MAYOR OF QUEENBOROUGH.

The Mayor of Quinborough: A Comedy. As it hath been often Acted with much Applause at Black-Fryars, By His Majesties Servants. Written by Tho. Middleton. London, Printed for Henry Herringman, and are to be sold at his Shop at the Sign of the Blew-Anchor in the Lower-Walk of the New-Exchange. 1661. 4to.

GENTLEMEN,

YOU have the first flight of him, I assure you. This *Mayor of Queenborough*, whom you have all heard of, and some of you beheld upon the stage, now begins to walk abroad in print: he has been known sufficiently by the reputation of his wit, which is enough, by the way, to distinguish him from ordinary mayors; but wit, you know, has skulked in corners for many years past,[1] and he was thought to have most of it that could best hide himself. Now whether this magistrate feared the decimating times, or kept up the state of other mayors, that are bound not to go out of their liberties during the time of their mayoralty, I know not: 'tis enough for me to put him into your hands, under the title of an honest man, which will appear plainly to you, because you shall find him all along to have a great pique to the rebel Oliver. I am told his drollery yields to none the English drama did ever produce; and though I would not put his modesty to the blush, by speaking too much in his commendation, yet I know you will agree with me, upon your better acquaintance with him, that there is some difference in point of wit betwixt the *Mayor of Queenborough* and the *Mayor of Huntingdon*.[2]

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[1] The play-houses had been shut up by the Puritans.

[2] Huntingdon was the birth-place of Oliver Cromwell.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CONSTANTIUS,
AURELIUS AMBROSIUS, } *sons of* CONSTANTINE.
UTHER PENDRAGON,
VORTIGER.
VORTIMER, *his son.*
DEVONSHIRE, } *British lords.*
STAFFORD,
GERMANUS, } *monks.*
LUPUS,
HENGIST.
HORSUS.
SIMON, *a tanner, Mayor of Queenborough.*
AMINADAB, *his clerk.*
OLIVER, *a fustian-weaver.*
Glover.
Barber.
Tailor.
Felt-monger.
Button-maker.
Graziers.
Players.
Gentlemen.
Murderers.
Soldiers, Footmen, &c.

CASTIZA, *daughter to* DEVONSHIRE.
ROXENA, *daughter to* HENGIST.
Ladies.

RAYNULPH HIGDEN, *Monk of Chester, as Chorus.*

THE
MAYOR OF QUEENBOROUGH.

—o—

ACT I.

Enter RAYNULPH.[1]

Ray. What Raynulph, monk of Chester, can
Raise from his Polychronicon,
That raiseth him, as works do men,
To see long-parted light agen,
That best may please this round fair ring,
With sparkling diamonds circled in,
I shall produce. If all my powers
Can win the grace of two poor hours,[2]

---

[1] Raynulph Higden, the compiler of the *Polychronicon*, was a Benedictine of St. Werberg's monastery in Chester, where he died, in or about 1360. His chronicle, translated into English by John de Trevisa, was printed by Caxton in 1482.

[2] The ordinary length of a performance seems to have been two hours. Cf. Prologue to *Henry VIII.* :—

> "Those that come to see
> Only a show or two, and so agree
> The play may pass, if they be still and willing,
> I'll undertake may see away their shilling
> In *two short hours.*"

See also the Induction to *Michaelmas Term;* Prologue to *Romeo and Juliet*, &c.

Well apaid I go to rest.
Ancient stories have been best; 10
Fashions, that are now call'd new,
Have been worn by more than you;
Elder times have us'd the same,
Though these new ones get the name:
So in story what now told
That takes not part with days of old?
Then to approve time's mutual glory,
Join new time's love to old time's story. [*Exit.*

SCENE I.

Before a Monastery.[1]

Shouts within; then enter VORTIGER, *carrying the crown.*

Vort. Will that wide-throated beast, the multitude,
Never leave bellowing? Courtiers are ill
Advisèd when they first make such monsters.
How near was I to a sceptre and a crown!
Fair power was even upon me; my desires
Were casting glory, till this forkèd rabble,

---

[1] "The place of action is not noted in the old ed., and Middleton seems to have troubled himself little about the matter. After some hesitation, I have marked the present scene '*Before a Monastery*,' on account of what Constantius says at p. 12:

'In mind
I will be always *here*; *here* let me stay.'

That the scene cannot be *within* the monastery, is shown by the entrance of the two Graziers."—*Dyce.*

With their infectious acclamations,
Poison'd my fortunes for Constantine's sons.
Well, though I rise not king, I'll seek the means
To grow as near to one as policy can, 10
And choke their expectations.

Enter DEVONSHIRE *and* STAFFORD.

Now, good lords,
In whose kind loves and wishes I am built
As high as human dignity can aspire,
Are yet those trunks, that have no other souls
But noise and ignorance, something more quiet?
Devon. Nor are they like to be, for aught we gather:
Their wills are up still; nothing can appease them;
Good speeches are but cast away upon them.
Vort. Then, since necessity and fate withstand me,
I'll strive to enter at a straiter passage. 20
Your sudden aid and counsels, good my lords.
Staff. They're ours no longer than they do you service.

Enter CONSTANTIUS *in the habit of a monk, attended by* GERMANUS *and* LUPUS: *as they are going into the monastery,* VORTIGER *stays them.*

Vort. Vessels of sanctity, be pleas'd a while
To give attention to the general peace,
Wherein heaven is serv'd too, though not so purely.
Constantius, eldest son of Constantine,
We here seize on thee for the general good,
And in thy right of birth.

Const. On me! for what, lords?
Vort. The kingdom's government.
Const. O powers of blessedness,
Keep me from growing downwards into earth again! 30
I hope I'm further on my way than so.—
Set forwards!
Vort. You must not.
Const. How!
Vort. I know your wisdom
Will light upon a way to pardon us,
When you shall read in every Briton's brow
The urg'd necessity of the times.
Const. What necessity can there be in the world,
But prayer and repentance? and that business
I am about now.
Vort. Hark, afar off still!
We lose and hazard much.—Holy Germanus
And reverend Lupus, with all expedition 40
Set the crown on him.
Const. No such mark of fortune
Comes near my head.
Vort. My lord, we're forc'd to rule you.
Const. Dare you receive heaven's light in at your eyelids,
And offer violence to religion?
Take heed;
The very beam let in to comfort you
May be the fire to burn you. On these knees,
[*Kneeling.*
Harden'd with zealous prayers, I entreat you

Bring not my cares into the world again!
Think with how much unwillingness and anguish 50
A glorified soul parted from the body
Would to that loathsome jail again return:
With such great pain a well-subdu'd affection
Re-enters worldly business.

Vort. Good my lord,
I know you cannot lodge so many virtues,
But patience must be one. As low as earth
[*Kneeling with* DEVONSHIRE *and* STAFFORD.
We beg the freeness of your own consent,
Which else must be constrain'd; and time it were
Either agreed or forc'd. Speak, good my lord,
For you bind up more sins in this delay 60
Than thousand prayers can absolve again.

Const. Were't but my death, you should not kneel so long for't.

Vort. 'Twill be the death of millions if you rise not,
And that betimes too.—Lend your help, my lords,
For fear all come too late.
[*They rise and raise* CONSTANTIUS.

Const. This is a cruelty
That peaceful man did never suffer yet,
To make me die again, that once was dead,
And begin all that ended long before.
Hold, Lupus and Germanus: you are lights
Of holiness and religion; can you offer 70
The thing that is not lawful? stand not I
Clear from all temporal charge by my profession?

Ger. Not when a time so violent calls upon you.

Who's born a prince, is born for [1] general peace,
Not his own only: heaven will look for him
In others' acts,[2] and will require [3] him there.
What is in you religious, must be shown
In saving many more souls than your own.

Const. Did not great Constantine, our noble father,
Deem me unfit for government and rule, 80
And therefore press'd [4] me into this profession?
Which I've held strict, and love it above glory.
Nor is there want of me: yourselves can witness,
Heaven hath provided largely for your peace,
And bless'd you with the lives of my two brothers:
Fix your obedience there, leave me a servant.

[*They put the crown on the head of* CONSTANTIUS.

All. Long live Constantius, son of Constantine,
King of Great Britain!

Const. I do feel a want
And extreme poverty of joy within;
The peace I had is parted 'mongst rude men; 90
To keep them quiet, I have lost it all.
What can the kingdom gain by my undoing?
That riches is not best, though it be mighty,
That's purchas'd by the ruin of another;
Nor can the peace, so filch'd, e'er thrive with them:
And if't be worthily held sacrilege
To rob a temple, 'tis no less offence
To ravish meditations from the soul,

---

[1] Old ed. "a."
[2] Old ed. "actions."
[3] So the old ed.—Dyce reads "requite."
[4] Old ed. "prais'd."

The consecrated altar in a man :
And all their hopes will be beguil'd in me ; 100
I know no more the way to temporal rule,
Than he that's born and has his years come to him
In a rough desert.[1] Well may the weight kill me ;
And that's the fairest good I look for from it.

Vort. Not so, great king : here stoops a faithful servant
Would sooner perish under it with cheerfulness,
Than your meek soul should feel oppression
Of ruder cares : such common coarse employments
Cast upon me your servant, upon Vortiger.
I see you are not made for noise and pains, 110
Clamours of suitors, injuries, and redresses,
Millions of actions, rising with the sun,
Like laws still ending, and yet never done,
Of power to turn a great man to the state
Of his marble monument with over-watching.
To be oppress'd is not requir'd of you, my lord,
But only to be king. The broken sleeps
Let me take from you, sir ; the toils and troubles,
All that is burthenous in authority,
Please you lay it on me, and what is glorious 120
Receive't to your own brightness.

Const. Worthy Vortiger,
If 'twere not sin to grieve another's patience

---

[1] In his essay *The Superannuated Man*, Charles Lamb quoted the words "he that's born . . . desert," but by a slight change (reading "In *some green desert*") gave a novel and richer meaning to the passage.

With what we cannot tolerate ourself,
How happy were I in thee and thy love!
There's nothing makes man feel his miseries
But knowledge only: reason, that is plac'd
For man's director, is his chief afflictor;
For though I cannot bear the weight myself,
I cannot have that barrenness of remorse,[1]
To see another groan under my burthen. 130

Vort. I'm quite blown up a conscionable way:
There's even a trick of murdering in some pity.
The death of all my hopes I see already:
There was no other likelihood, for religion
Was never friend of mine yet. [*Aside.*

Const. Holy partners in strictest abstinence,
Cruel necessity hath forc'd me from you:
We part, I fear, for ever; but in mind
I will be always here; here let me stay.

Devon. My lord, you know the times. 140

Const. Farewell, blest souls; I fear I shall offend:
He that draws tears from you takes your best friend.

[*Exeunt* CONSTANTIUS, DEVONSHIRE, *and* STAFFORD; *while* LUPUS *and* GERMANUS *enter the monastery.*

Vort. Can the great motion of ambition stand,
Like wheels false wrought by an unskilful hand?
Then, Time, stand thou too: let no hopes arrive
At their sweet wishfulness, till mine set forwards.
Would I could stay thy[2] existence, as I can

---

[1] *i.e.* pity. [2] Old ed. "the."

Thy glassy counterfeit in hours of sand!
I'd keep thee turn'd down, till my wishes rose;
Then we'd both rise together. 150
What several inclinations are in nature!
How much is he disquieted, and wears royalty
Disdainfully upon him, like a curse!
Calls a fair crown the weight of his afflictions!
When here's a soul would sink under the burthen,
Yet well recover't.[1] I will use all means
To vex authority from him, and in all
Study what most may discontent his blood,
Making my mask my zeal to the public good
Not possible a richer policy 160
Can have conception in the thought of man.

Enter two Graziers.

First Graz. An honourable life enclose your lordship!
Vort. Now, what are you?
Second Graz. Graziers, if't like your lordship.
Vort. So it should seem by your enclosures.
What's your affair with me?
First Graz. We are your
Petitioners, my lord.
Vort. For what? depart:
Petitioners to me! you've well deserv'd
My grace and favour. Have you not a ruler
After your own election? hie you to court;

---

[1] Old ed. "recovered."

Get near and close, be loud and bold enough, 170
You cannot choose but speed. [*Exit.*
Second Graz. If that will do't,
We have throats wide enough; we'll put them to't.
[*Exeunt.*

DUMB SHOW.

FORTUNE *discovered, in her hand a round ball full of lots; then enters* HENGIST *and* HORSUS, *with others: they draw lots, and having opened them, all depart save* HENGIST *and* HORSUS, *who kneel and embrace: then enter* ROXENA, *seeming to take leave of* HENGIST *in great passion,*[1] *but more especially and warily of* HORSUS, *her lover: she departs one way,* HENGIST *and* HORSUS *another.*

Enter RAYNULPH.

Ray. When Germany was overgrown
With sons of peace too thickly sown,
Several guides were chosen then
By destin'd lots, to lead out men;
And they whom Fortune here withstands
Must prove their fates in other lands.
On these two captains fell the lot;
But that which must not be forgot,
Was Roxena's cunning grief;
Who from her father, like a thief, 10
Hid her best and truest tears,
Which her lustful lover wears

[1] *i.e.* SORROW.

In many a stoln and wary kiss,
Unseen of father. Maids do this,
Yet highly scorn to be call'd strumpets too:
But what they lack of't, I'll be judg'd by you. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Hall in the Palace.

Enter VORTIGER, Felt-monger, Button-maker, Graziers, *and other Petitioners.*

Vort. This way his majesty comes.
All. Thank your good lordship.
Vort. When you hear yon door open—
All. Very good, my lord.
Vort. Be ready with your several suits; put forward.
Graz. That's a thing every man does naturally, sir,
That is a suitor, and doth mean to speed.
Vort. 'Tis well you're so deep learn'd. Take no denials.
All. No, my good lord.
Vort. Not any, if you love
The prosperity of your suits: you mar all utterly,
And overthrow your fruitful hopes for ever,
If either fifth or sixth, nay, tenth repulse 10
Fasten upon your bashfulness.
All. Say you so, my lord?
We can be troublesome if we list.
Vort. I know it:

I felt it but too late in the general sum
Of your rank brotherhood, which now I thank you for.—
While this vexation is in play, I'll study
For a second; then a third to that; one still
To vex another, that he shall be glad
To yield up power; if not, it shall be had.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Butt. Hark! I protest, my heart was coming upwards: I thought the door had open'd.

Graz. Marry, would it had, sir! 21

Butt. I have such a treacherous heart of my own, 'twill throb at the very fall of a farthingale.

Graz. Not if it fall on the rushes.[1]

Butt. Yes, truly; if there be no light in the room, I shall throb presently. The first time it took me, my wife was in the company: I remember the room was not half so light as this; but I'll be sworn I was a whole hour in finding her.

Graz. Byrlady, y'had a long time of throbbing of it then. 31

Butt. Still I felt men, but I could feel no women; I thought they had been all sunk. I have made a vow for't, I'll never have meeting, while I live, by candle-light again.

Graz. Yes, sir, in lanterns.

Butt. Yes, sir, in lanterns; but I'll never trust candle naked again.

---

[1] Before the introduction of carpets, floors were commonly strewn with rushes.

Graz. Hark, hark! stand close: it opens now indeed!

Butt. O majesty, what art thou! I'd give any man half my suit to deliver my petition: it is in the behalf of button-makers, and so it seems by my flesh.[1] 42

Enter CONSTANTIUS *in regal attire, and two* Gentlemen.

Const. Pray do not follow me, unless you do it
To wonder at my garments; there's no cause
I give you why you should: 'tis shame enough,
Methinks, to look upon myself;
It grieves me that more should. The other weeds
Became me better, but the lords are pleas'd
To force me to wear these; I would not else:
I pray be satisfied; I call'd you not. 50
Wonder of madness! can you stand so idle,
And know that you must die?

First Gent. We're all commanded, sir;
Besides, it is our duties to your grace,
To give attendance.

Const. What a wild thing is this!
No marvel though you tremble at death's name,
When you'll not see the cause why you are fools.
For charity's sake, desist here, I pray you!
Make not my presence guilty of your sloth:
Withdraw, young men, and find you honest business.

Second Gent. What hopes have we to rise by following him? 60
I'll give him over shortly.

First Gent. He's too nice,

[1] "An allusion to a very gross saying, which will be found in Ray's *Proverbs*, p. 179, ed. 1737."—*Dyce.*

Too holy for young gentlemen to follow
That have good faces and sweet running fortunes.
[*Exeunt* Gentlemen.

Const. Eight hours a-day in serious contemplation
Is but a bare allowance; no higher food
To the soul than bread and water to the body;
And that's but needful; then more would do better.

Butt. Let us all kneel together; 'twill move pity:
I've been at the begging of a hundred suits.
[*All the Petitioners kneel.*

Const. How happy am I in the sight of you! 70
Here are religious souls, that lose not time:
With what devotion do they point at heaven,
And seem to check me that am too remiss!
I bring my zeal among you, holy men:
If I see any kneel, and I sit out, [*Kneels.*
That hour is not well spent. Methinks, strict souls,
You have been of some order in your times.

Graz. Graziers and braziers some, and this a felt-maker.

Butt. Here's his petition and mine, if it like your grace. [*Giving petitions.* 81

Graz. Look upon mine, I am the longest suitor; I was undone seven years ago.

Const. [*rising with the others*]. You've mock'd
My good hopes. Call you these petitions?
Why, there's no form of prayer among them all.

Butt. Yes, in the bottom there is half a line
Prays for your majesty, if you look on mine.

Const. Make your requests to heaven, not to me.

Butt. 'Las! mine's a supplication for brass buttons, sir. 91

Felt. There's a great enormity in wool; I beseech your grace consider it.

Graz. Pastures rise two-pence an acre; what will this world come to!

Butt. I do beseech your grace——

Graz. Good your grace——

Const. O, this is one of my afflictions
That with the crown enclos'd me! I must bear it.

Graz. Your grace's answer to my supplication. 100

Butt. Mine, my lord.

Const. No violent storm lasts ever;
That is the comfort of't.

Felt. Your highness's answer.

Graz. We are almost all undone, the country beggar'd.

Butt. See, see, he points at heaven, as who should say There's enough there: but 'tis a great way thither. There's no good to be done, I see that already; we may all spend our mouths like a company of hounds in chase of a royal deer, and then go home and fall to cold mutton-bones, when we have done. 111

Graz. My wife will hang me, that's my currish destiny.

[*Exeunt all except* CONSTANTIUS.

Const. Thanks, heaven! 'tis o'er now: we should ne'er know rightly
The sweetness of a calm, but for a storm.
Here's a wish'd hour for contemplation now;
All's still and silent; here is a true kingdom.

Re-enter VORTIGER.

Vort. My lord.
Const. Again?
Vort. Alas, this is but early
And gentle to the troops of businesses
That flock about authority! you must forthwith
Settle your mind to marry.
Const. How! to marry? 120
Vort. And suddenly, there's no pause to be given;
The people's wills are violent, and covetous
Of a succession from your loins.
Const. From me
There can come none: a profess'd abstinence
Hath set a virgin seal upon my blood,
And alter'd all the course; the heat I have
Is all enclos'd within a zeal to virtue,
And that's not fit for earthly propagation.
Alas, I shall but forfeit all their hopes!
I'm a man made without desires, tell them. 130
Vort. I prov'd them with such words, but all were fruitless.
A virgin of the highest subject's blood
They have pick'd out for your embrace, and send her,
Bless'd with their general wishes, into fruitfulness.
Lo! where she comes, my lord.

Enter CASTIZA.

Const. I never felt
Th' unhappy hand of misery till this touch:
A patience I could find for all but this.

Cast. My lord, your vow'd love ventures me but dangerously.

Vort. 'Tis but to strengthen a vexation politic.

Cast.[1] That's an uncharitable practice, trust me, sir. 140

Vort. No more of that.

Cast. But say he should affect me, sir,
How should I 'scape him then? I have but one
Faith, my lord, and that you have already;
Our late contràct is a divine witness to't.

Vort. I am not void of shifting-rooms and helps
For all projècts that I commit with you. [*Exit.*

Cast. This is an ungodly way to come to honour;
I do not like it: I love lord Vortiger,
But not these practices; they're too uncharitable.
[*Aside.*

Const. Are you a virgin?

Cast. Never yet, my lord, 150
Known to the will of man.

Const. O blessèd creature!
And does too much felicity make you surfeit?
Are you in soul assur'd there is a state
Prepar'd for you, for you, a glorious one,
In midst of heaven, now in the state you stand in,
And had you rather, after much known misery,
Cares and hard labours, mingled with a curse,
Throng but to the door, and hardly get a place there?
Think, hath the world a folly like this madness?
Keep still that holy and immaculate fire, 160

---

[1] Old ed. "*Const.*"

You chaste lamp[1] of eternity! 'tis a treasure
Too precious for death's moment to partake,
This twinkling of short life. Disdain as much
To let mortality know you, as stars
To kiss the pavements; you've a substance as
Excellent as theirs, holding your pureness:
They look upon corruption, as you do,
But are stars still; be you a virgin too.

Cast. I'll never marry. What though my truth be engag'd
To Vortiger? forsaking all the world 170
I save it well, and do my faith no wrong. [*Aside.*
You've mightily prevail'd, great virtuous sir;
I'm bound eternally to praise your goodness:
My thoughts henceforth shall be as pure from man,
As ever made a virgin's name immortal.

Const. I will do that for joy, I never did,
Nor ever will again.

As he kisses her, re-enter VORTIGER *and* Gentlemen.

First Gent. My lord, he's taken.

Vort. I'm sorry for't, I like not that so well;
They're something too familiar for their time, methinks.
This way of kissing is no way to vex him: 180
Why I, that have a weaker faith and patience,
Could endure more than that, coming from a woman.
Despatch, and bring his answer speedily. [*Exit.*

First Gent. My lord, my gracious lord!

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[1] Old ed. "lump."

Const. Beshrew thy heart!
Second Gent. They all attend your grace.
Const. I would not have them:
'Twould please me better, if they'd all depart,
And leave me to myself; or put me out,
And take it to themselves.
First Gent. The noon is past;
Meat's on the table.
Const. Meat! away, get from me;
Thy memory is diseas'd; what saint's eve's this? 190
First Gent. Saint Agatha's, I take it.
Const. Is it so?
I am not worthy to be serv'd before her;
And so return, I pray.
Second Gent. He'll starve the guard, if this be suffered: if we set court bellies by a monastery clock, he that breaks a fellow's pate now, will not be able to crack a louse within this twelvemonth.

[*Aside, and exeunt* Gentlemen.

Const. 'Tis sure forgetfulness, and not man's will,
That leads him forth into licentious ways;
He cannot certainly commit such errors, 200
And think upon them truly as they're acting.
Why's abstinence ordain'd, but for such seasons?

Re-enter VORTIGER.

Vort. My lord, you've pleas'd to put us to much pains,
But we confess 'tis portion of our duty.
Will your grace please to walk? dinner stays for you.
Const. I've answer'd that already.

Vort. But, my lord,
We must not so yield to you : pardon me,
'Tis for the general good ; you must be rul'd, sir ;
Your health and life is dearer to us now :
Think where you are, at court ; this is no monastery. 210
Const. But, sir, my conscience keeps still where it was :
I may not eat this day.
Vort. We've sworn you shall,
And plentifully too : we must preserve you, sir,
Though you be wilful ; 'tis no slight condition
To be a king.
Const. Would I were less than man !
Vort. You[1] will make the people rise, my lord,
In great despair of your continuance,
If you neglect the means that must sustain you.
Const. I never eat on eves.
Vort. But now you must ;
It concerns others' healths that you take food : 220
I've chang'd your life, you well may change your mood.
Const. This is beyond all cruelty.
Vort. 'Tis our care, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] Old ed. "Will you."

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Room in the Palace.

Enter VORTIGER *and* CASTIZA.

Cast. My lord, I am resolv'd; tempt me no farther;
'Tis all to fruitless purpose.
Vort. Are you well?
Cast. Never so perfect in the truth of health
As at this instant.
Vort. Then I doubt my own,
Or that I am not waking.
Cast. Would you were then!
You'd praise my resolution.
Vort. This is wondrous!
Are you not mine by contract?
Cast. 'Tis most true, my lord,
And I am better bless'd in't than I look'd for,
In that I am confin'd in faith so strictly:
I'm bound, my lord, to marry none but you,— 10
You'll grant me that,—and you I'll never marry.

Vort. It draws me into violence and hazard:
I saw you kiss the king.
Cast. I grant you so, sir;
Where could I take my leave of the world better?
I wrong'd not you in that; you will acknowledge
A king is the best part of't.
Vort. O, my passion!
Cast. I see you something yielding to infirmity, sir;
I take my leave.
Vort. Why, 'tis not possible!
Cast. The fault is in your faith; time I were gone
To give it better strengthening.
Vort. Hark you, lady——
Cast. Send your intent to the next monastery;
There you shall find my answer ever after;
And so with my last duty to your lordship,
For whose prosperity I will pray as heartily
As for my own. [*Exit.*
Vort. How am I serv'd in this?
I offer a vexation to the king;
He sends it home into my blood with 'vantage.
I'll put off time no longer: I have brought him
Into most men's neglects, calling his zeal
A deep pride hallow'd over, love of ease
More than devotion or the public benefit;
Which catcheth many men's beliefs. I'm strong[1] too
In people's wishes; their affections point at me.
I lose much time and glory; that redeem'd,

[1] Old ed. "I am stronger."

She that now flies returns with joy and wonder:
Greatness and woman's wish ne'er keep asunder. [*Exit.*

DUMB SHOW.

Enter two Villains; to them VORTIGER, *who seems to solicit them with gold, then swears them, and exit. Enter* CONSTANTIUS *meditating; they rudely strike down his book, and draw their swords; he kneels and spreads his arms; they kill him, and hurry off the body. Enter* VORTIGER, DEVONSHIRE, *and* STAFFORD, *in conference; to them the two Villains presenting the head of* CONSTANTIUS; VORTIGER *seems sorrowful, and in rage stabs them both. Then the lords crown* VORTIGER, *and fetch in* CASTIZA, *who comes unwillingly;* VORTIGER *hales her, and they crown her:* AURELIUS *and* UTHER, *brothers of* CONSTANTIUS, *seeing him crowned, draw and fly.*

Enter RAYNULPH.

Ray. When nothing could prevail to tire
The good king's patience, they did hire
Two wicked rogues to take his life;
In whom a while there fell a strife
Of pity and fury; but the gold
Made pity faint, and fury bold.
Then to Vortiger they bring
The head of that religious king;

Who feigning grief, to clear his guilt,
Makes the slaughterers' blood be spilt. 10
Then crown they him, and force the maid,
That vow'd a virgin-life, to wed;
Such a strength great power extends,
It conquers fathers, kindred, friends;
And since fate's pleas'd to change her life,
She proves as holy in a wife.
More to tell, were to betray
What deeds in their own tongues must say:
Only this, the good king dead,
The brothers poor in safety fled. [*Exit.* 20

SCENE II.

A Hall in the Palace.

Enter VORTIGER *crowned, a* Gentleman *meeting him.*

Gent. My lord!
Vort. I fear thy news will fetch a curse, it comes
With such a violence.
Gent. The people are up
In arms against you.
Vort. O this dream of glory!
Sweet power, before I can have time to taste thee,
Must I for ever lose thee?—What's the imposthume
That swells them now?
Gent. The murder of Constantius.
Vort. Ulcers of realms! they hated him alive,
Grew weary of the minute of his reign,

Call'd him an evil of their own electing; 10
And is their ignorant zeal so fiery now,
When all their thanks are cold? the mutable hearts
That move in their false breasts!—Provide me safety:
[*Noise within.*
Hark! I hear ruin threaten me with a voice
That imitates thunder.

Enter Second Gentleman.

Second Gent. Where's the king?
Vort. Who takes him?
Second Gent. Send peace to all your royal thoughts, my lord:
A fleet of valiant Saxons newly landed
Offer the truth of all their service to you.
Vort. Saxons! my wishes: let them have free entrance,
And plenteous welcomes from all hearts that love us; 20
[*Exit* Second Gentleman.
They never could come happier.

Re-enter Second Gentleman *with* HENGIST, HORSUS, *and Soldiers.*

Heng. Health, power, and victory to Vortiger!
Vort. There can be no more pleasure to a king,
If all the languages earth spake were ransack'd.
Your names I know not; but so much good fortune
And warranted worth lightens your fair aspects,
I cannot but in arms of love enfold you.
Heng. The mistress of our birth's hope, fruitful Germany,

Calls me Hengistus, and this captain Horsus;
A man low-built, but yet in deeds of arms 30
Flame is not swifter. We are all, my lord,
The sons of Fortune; she has sent us forth
To thrive by the red sweat of our own merits;
And since, after the rage of many a tempest,
Our fates have cast us upon Britain's bounds,
We offer you the first-fruits of our wounds.

Vort. Which we shall dearly prize: the mean'st blood spent
Shall at wealth's fountain make its own content.

Heng. You double vigour in us then, my lord: 39
Pay is the soul of such as thrive by the sword. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Near the Palace.

Enter VORTIGER *and* Gentlemen. *Alarm and noise of skirmishes within.*

First Gent. My lord, these Saxons bring a fortune with them
Stay[s] any Roman success.

Vort. On, speak, forwards!
I will not take one minute from thy tidings.

First Gent. The main supporters of this insurrection
They've taken prisoners, and the rest so tame[d],
They stoop to the least grace that flows from mercy.

Vort. Never came power guided by better stars

Than these men's fortitudes: yet they're misbelievers,
Which to my reason is wondrous.

Enter HENGIST, HORSUS, *and Soldiers, with Prisoners.*

You've given me such a first taste of your worth, 10
'Twill never from my love; when life is gone,
The memory sure will follow, my soul still
Participating immortality with it.
But here's the misery of earth's limited glory,
There's not a way reveal'd to any honour
Above the fame[1] which your own merits give you.
Heng. Indeed, my lord, we hold, when all's summ'd up
That can be made for worth to be express'd,
The fame that a man wins himself is best;
That he may call his own. Honours put to him 20
Make him no more a man than his clothes do,
And are as soon ta'en off; for in the warmth
The heat comes from the body, not the weeds:
So man's true fame must strike from his own deeds.
And since by this event which fortune speaks us,
This land appears the fair predestin'd soil
Ordain'd for our good hap, we crave, my lord,
A little earth to thrive on, what you please,
Where we'll but keep a nursery of good spirits
To fight for you and yours.
Vort. Sir, for our treasure, 30
'Tis open to your merits, as our love;

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[1] Old ed. "same."

But for ye're strangers in religion chiefly—
Which is the greatest alienation can be,
And breeds most factions in the bloods of men—
I must not yield to that.

Enter SIMON *with a hide.*

Heng. 'S precious, my lord,
I see a pattern; be it but so little
As yon poor hide will compass.
Vort. How, the hide!
Heng. Rather than nothing, sir.
Vort. Since you're so reasonable,
Take so much in the best part of our kingdom.
Heng. We thank your grace.
[*Exit* VORTIGER *with* Gentlemen.
Rivers from bubbling springs 40
Have rise at first, and great from abject things.
Stay yonder fellow: he came luckily,
And he shall fare well for't, whate'er he be;
We'll thank our fortune in rewarding him.
Hor. Stay, fellow!
Sim. How, fellow? 'tis more than you know, whether I be your fellow or no; I am sure you see me not.
Heng. Come, what's the price of your hide? 48
Sim. O unreasonable villain! he would buy the house over a man's head. I'll be sure now to make my bargain wisely; they may buy me out of my skin else. [*Aside.*]—Whose hide would you buy, mine or the beast's? There is little difference in their complexions: I think mine is the blacker of the two: you shall see for

your love, and buy for your money.—A pestilence on you all, how have you deceived me! you buy an ox-hide! you buy a calf's gather! They are all hungry soldiers, and I took them for honest shoemakers. [*Aside.*

Heng. Hold, fellow; prithee, hold;—right a fool worldling
That kicks at all good fortune;—whose man art thou? 60

Sim. I am a servant, yet a masterless man, sir.

Heng. Prithee, how can that be?

Sim. Very nimbly, sir; my master is dead, and now I serve my mistress; ergo, I am a masterless man: she is now a widow, and I am the foreman of her tan-pit.

Heng. Hold you, and thank your fortune, not your wit. [*Gives him money.* 67

Sim. Faith, and I thank your bounty, and not your wisdom; you are not troubled with wit neither greatly, it seems. Now, by this light, a nest of yellow-hammers! What will become of me? if I can keep all these without hanging myself, I am happier than a hundred of my neighbours. You shall have my skin into the bargain; then if I chance to die like a dog, the labour will be saved of flaying me: I'll undertake, sir, you shall have all the skins in our parish at this price, men's and women's.

Heng. Sirrah, give good ear to me: now take the hide
And cut it all into the slenderest thongs
That can bear strength to hold. 80

Sim. That were a jest, i'faith: spoil all the leather? sin and pity! why, 'twould shoe half your army.

Heng. Do it, I bid you.

Sim. What, cut it all in thongs? Hum, this is like the vanity of your Roman gallants, that cannot wear good suits, but they must have them cut and slashed in giggets,[1] that the very crimson taffaties sit blushing at their follies. I would I might persuade you from this humour of cutting;[2] 'tis but a swaggering condition, and nothing profitable: what if it were but well pinked? 'twould last longer for a summer suit. 91

Heng. What a cross lump of ignorance have I lighted on!
I must be forc'd to beat my drift into him.— [*Aside.*
Look you, to make you wiser than your parents,
I have so much ground given me as this hide
Will compass, which, as it [now] is, is nothing.

Sim. Nothing, quotha?
Why, 'twill not keep a hog.

Heng. Now with the 'vantage
Cut into several pieces, 'twill stretch far,
And make a liberal circuit. 100

Sim. A shame on your crafty hide! is this your cunning? I have learnt more knavery now than ever I shall claw off while I live. I'll go purchase land by

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[1] "Gigget" is a provincial term for a leg-of-mutton bone: see Evans' *Leicester Words* in the English Dialect Society's publications (1881). Here "giggets" would seem to refer to the stripes or "panes" in the hose.

[2] "Cutter" was a cant term for a bully or sharper.

cow-tails, and undo the parish; three good bulls' pizzles would set up a man for ever: this is like a pin a-day to set up a haberdasher of small wares.

Heng. Thus men that mean to thrive, as we, must learn
Set in a foot at first.

Sim. A foot do you call it? The devil is in that foot that takes up all this leather. 110

Heng. Despatch, and cut it carefully with all
The advantage, sirrah.

Sim. You could never have lighted upon such a fellow to serve your turn, captain. I have such a trick of stretching, too! I learned it of a tanner's man that was hanged last sessions at Maidstone: I'll warrant you, I'll get you a mile and a half more than you're aware of.

Heng. Pray, serve me so as oft as you will, sir.

Sim. I am casting about for nine acres to make a garden-plot out of one of the buttocks. 120

Heng. 'Twill be a good soil for nosegays.

Sim. 'Twill be a good soil for cabbages, to stuff out the guts of your followers there.

Heng. Go, see it carefully perform'd:
[*Exit* SIMON *with* Soldiers.
It is the first foundation of our fortunes
On Britain's earth, and ought to be embrac'd
With a respect near link'd to adoration.
Methinks it sounds to me a fair assurance
Of large honours and hopes; does it not, captain?

Hor. How many have begun with less at first, 130
That have had emperors from their bodies sprung,

And left their carcasses as much in monument
As would erect a college!
Heng. There's the fruits
Of their religious show too; to lie rotting
Under a million spent in gold and marble.
Hor. But where shall we make choice of our ground, captain?
Heng. About the fruitful flanks of uberous Kent,
A fat and olive soil; there we came in.
O captain, he has given he knows not what!
Hor. Long may he give so! 140
Heng. I tell thee, sirrah, he that begg'd a field
Of fourscore acres for a garden-plot,
'Twas pretty well; but he came short of this.
Hor. Send over for more Saxons.
Heng. With all speed, captain.
Hor. Especially for Roxena.
Heng. Who, my daughter?
Hor. That star of Germany, forget not her, sir:
She is a fair fortunate maid.—
Fair she is, and fortunate may she be;
But in maid lost for ever. My desire
Has been the close confusion of that name. 150
A treasure 'tis, able to make more thieves
Than cabinets set open to entice;
Which learn them theft that never knew the vice.
[*Aside.*
Heng. Come, I'll despatch with speed.
Hor. Do, forget none.
Heng. Marry, pray help my memory.

Hor. Roxena, you remember?
Heng. What more, dear sir?
Hor. I see your memory's clear, sir.
[*Shouts within.*
Heng. Those shouts leap'd from our army.
Hor. They were too cheerful
To voice a bad event.

Enter a Gentleman.

Heng. Now, sir, your news?
Gent. Roxena the fair——
Heng. True, she shall be sent for.
Gent. She's here, sir.
Heng. What say'st?
Gent. She's come, sir.
Hor. A new youth
Begins me o'er again. [*Aside.*
Gent. Follow'd you close, sir,
With such a zeal as daughter never equall'd;
Expos'd herself to all the merciless dangers
Set in mankind or fortune; not regarding
Aught but your sight.
Heng. Her love is infinite to me.
Hor. Most charitably censur'd; 'tis her cunning,
The love of her own lust, which makes a woman
Gallop down hill as fearless as a drunkard.
There's no true loadstone in the world but that;
It draws them through all storms by sea or shame:
Life's loss is thought too small to pay that game.
[*Aside.*

Gent. What follows more of her will take you[1] strongly.
Heng. How!
Gent. Nay, 'tis worth your wonder.
Her heart, joy-ravished with your late success,
Being the early morning of your fortunes,
So prosperously new opening at her coming,
She takes a cup of gold, and, midst the army,
Teaching her knee a reverend cheerfulness,
Which well became her, drank a liberal health 180
To the king's joys and yours, the king in presence;
Who with her sight, but her behaviour chiefly,
Or chief but one or both, I know not which,—
But he's so far 'bove my expression caught,
'Twere art enough for one man's time and portion
To speak him and miss nothing.
Heng. This is astonishing!
Hor. O, this ends bitter now! our close-hid flame
Will break out of my heart; I cannot keep it. [*Aside.*
Heng. Gave you attention, captain? how now, man?
Hor. A kind of grief 'bout[2] these times of the moon still: 190
I feel a pain like a convulsion,
A cramp at heart; I know not what name fits it.
Heng. Nor never seek one for it, let it go
Without a name; would all griefs were serv'd so!

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[1] Old ed. "you take."
[2] Old ed. "about."

Flourish. Re-enter VORTIGER, *with* ROXENA *and* Attendants.

Hor. A love-knot already? arm in arm! [*Aside.*
Vort. What's he
Lays claim to her?
Heng. In right of father-hood
I challenge an obedient part.
Vort. Take it,
And send [me] back the rest.
Heng. What means your grace?
Vort. You'll keep no more than what belongs to you?
Heng. That's all, my lord; it all belongs to me; 200
I keep the husband's interest till he come:
Yet out of duty and respect to majesty,
I send her back your servant.
Vort. My mistress, sir, or nothing.
Heng. Come again;
I never thought to hear so ill of thee.
Vort. How, sir, so ill?
Heng. So beyond detestable.
To be an honest vassal is some calling,
Poor is the worst of that, shame comes not to't;
But mistress, that['s] the only common bait
Fortune sets at all hours, catching whore with it, 210
And plucks them up by clusters. There's my sword, my lord; [*Offering his sword to* VORTIGER.
And if your strong desires aim at my blood,
Which runs too purely there, a nobler way
Quench it in mine.

Vort. I ne'er took sword in vain:
Hengist, we here create thee earl of Kent.
Hor. O, that will do't! [*Aside, and falls.*
Vort. What ails our friend? look to him.
Rox. O, 'tis his epilepsy; I know it well:
I help'd him once in Germany; comes it again?
A virgin's right hand strok'd upon his heart
Gives him ease straight; but it must be a pure virgin, 220
Or else it brings no comfort.
Vort. What a task
She puts upon herself, unurgèd purity!
The truth of this will bring love's rage into me.
Rox. O, this would mad a woman! there's no proof
In love to indiscretion.
Hor. Pish! this cures not.
Rox. Dost think I'll ever wrong thee?
Hor. O, most feelingly!
But I'll prevent it now, and break thy neck
With thy own cunning. Thou hast undertaken
To give me help, to bring in royal credit
Thy crack'd virginity, but I'll spoil all: 230
I will not stand on purpose, though I could,
But fall still to disgrace thee.
Rox. What, you will not?
Hor. I have no other way to help myself;
For when thou'rt known to be a whore imposterous,
I shall be sure to keep thee.
Rox. O sir, shame me not!
You've had what is most precious; try my faith;
Undo me not at first in chaste opinion.

Hor. All this art shall not make me feel my legs.
Rox. I prithee, do not wilfully confound me.
Hor. Well, I'm content for this time to recover, 240
To save thy credit, and bite in my pain;
But if thou ever fail'st me, I will fall,
And thou shalt never get me up again. [*Rises.*
Rox. Agreed 'twixt you and I, sir.—See, my lord,
A poor maid's work! the man may pass for health now
Among the clearest bloods, and those are nicest.
Vort. I've heard of women brought men on their knees,
But few that e'er restored them.—How now, captain?
Hor. My lord, methinks I could do things past man,
I'm so renew'd in vigour; I long most 250
For violent exercise to take me down:
My joy's so high in blood, I'm above frailty.
Vort. My lord of Kent.
Heng. Your love's unworthy creature.
Vort. See'st thou this fair chain? think upon the means
To keep it link'd for ever.
Heng. O my lord,
'Tis many degrees sunder'd from my hope!
Besides, your grace has a young virtuous queen.
Vort. I say, think on it.
Hor. If this wind hold, I fall to my old disease.
[*Aside.*
Vort. There's no fault in thee but to come so late; 260
All else is excellent: I chide none but fate. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Room in the Palace.

Enter HORSUS *and* ROXENA.

Rox. I've no conceit now that you ever lov'd me,
But as lust led you for the time.
Hor. See, see!
Rox. Do you pine at my advancement, sir?
Hor. O barrenness
Of understanding! what a right love's this!
'Tis you that fall, I that am reprehended:
What height of honours, eminence of fortune,
Should ravish me from you?
Rox. Who can tell that, sir?
What's he can judge of a man's appetite
Before he sees him eat?
Who knows the strength of any's constancy 10
That never yet was tempted? We can call
Nothing our own, if they be deeds to come;
They're only ours when they are pass'd and done.
How blest are you above your apprehension,

If your desire would lend you so much patience,
T' examine the adventurous condition
Of our affections, which are full of hazard,
And draw in the time's goodness to defend us!
First, this bold course of ours cannot last long,
Nor ever does in any without shame, 20
And that, you know, brings danger; and the greater
My father is in blood, as he's well risen,
The greater will the storm of his rage be
'Gainst his blood's wronging: I have cast[1] for this.
'Tis not advancement that I love alone;
'Tis love of shelter, to keep shame unknown.

Hor. O, were I sure of thee, as 'tis impossible
There to be ever sure where there's no hold,
Your pregnant hopes should not be long in rising!

Rox. By what assurance have you held me thus far, 30
Which you found firm, despair you not in that.

Hor. True, that was good security for the time;
But in a change of state, when you're advanc'd,
You women have a French toy in your pride,
You make your friend come crouching; or perhaps,
To bow in th' hams the better, he is put
To compliment three hours with your chief woman,
Then perhaps not admitted; no, nor ever,
That's the more noble fashion. Forgetfulness
Is the most pleasing virtue they can have, 40
That do spring up from nothing; for by the same

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[1] Planned.

Forgetting all, they forget whence they came,
An excellent property of oblivion.
Rox. I pity all the fortunes of poor women
In my own unhappiness. When we have given
All that we have to men, what's our requital?
An ill-fac'd jealousy, that resembles much
The mistrustfulness of an insatiate thief,
That scarce believes he has all, though he has stripp'd
The true man[1] naked, and left nothing on him 50
But the hard cord that binds him: so are we
First robb'd, and then left bound by jealousy.
Take reason's advice, and you'll find it impossible
For you to lose me in this king's advancement,
Who's an usurper here; and as the kingdom,
So shall he have my love by usurpation;
The right shall be in thee still. My ascension
To dignity is but to waft thee higher;
And all usurpers have the falling-sickness,
They cannot keep up long.
Hor. May credulous man 60
Put all his confidence in so weak a bottom,
And make a saving voyage?
Rox. Nay, as gainful
As ever man yet made.
Hor. Go, take thy fortunes,
Aspire with my consent,
So thy ambition will be sure to prosper;

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[1] *i.e.* honest man. Cf. *Love's Labour Lost*, iv. 3:—"A *true man* or a thief that gallops thus."

Speak the fair certainties of Britain's queen
Home to thy wishes.
Rox. Speak in hope I may,
But not in certainty.
Hor. I say in both:
Hope, and be sure I'll soon remove the let [1]
That stands between thee and [2] glory.
Rox. Life of love! 70
If lost virginity can win such a day,
I'll have no daughter but shall learn my way. [*Exit.*
Hor. 'Twill be good work for him that first instructs them:
May be some son[s] of mine, got by this woman too,
May match with their own sisters. Peace, 'tis he.

Enter VORTIGER.

Invention, fail me not: 'tis a gallant credit
To marry one's whore bravely. [*Aside.*
Vort. Have I power
Of life and death, and cannot command ease
In my own blood? After I was a king,
I thought I never should have felt pain more; 80
That there had been a ceasing of all passions
And common stings, which subjects use to feel,
That were created with a patience fit
For all extremities. But such as we
Know not the way to suffer; then to do it,
How most preposterous 'tis! Tush, riddles, riddles!

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[1] Obstacle. [2] Old ed. "and thy."

I'll break through custom. Why should not the mind,
The nobler part that's of us, be allow'd
Change of affections, as our bodies are
Change of food and raiment? I'll have it so. 90
All fashions appear strange at first production;
But this would be well followèd.—O, captain!

Hor. My lord, I grieve for you; I scarce fetch breath,
But a sigh hangs at the end of it: but this
Is not the way, if you'd give way to counsel.

Vort. Set me right, then, or I shall heavily curse thee
For lifting up my understanding to me,
To show that I was wrong. Ignorance is safe;
I then slept happily: if knowledge mend me not,
Thou hast committed a most cruel sin, 100
To wake me into judgment, and then leave me.

Hor. I will not leave you, sir; that were rudely done.
First, you've a flame too open and too violent,
Which, like blood-guiltiness in an offender,
Betrays him when nought else can. Out with't, sir;
Or let some cunning coverture be made
Before your practice[1] enters: 'twill spoil all else.

Vort. Why, look you, sir; I can be as calm as silence
All the while music plays. Strike on, sweet friend,
As mild and merry as the heart of innocence; 110
I prithee, take my temper. Has a virgin
A heat more modest?

Hor. He does well to ask me;

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[1] Plot, scheme.

I could have told him once. [*Aside.*]—Why, here's a
government!
There's not a sweeter amity in friendship
Than in this league 'twixt you and health.
Vort. Then since
Thou find'st me capable of happiness,
Instruct me with the practice.
Hor. What will you say, my lord,
If I ensnare her in an act [1] of lust?
Vort.[2] O, there were art to the life! but 'tis impossible;
I prithee, flatter me no further with it. 120
Fie! so much sin as goes to make up that,
Will ne'er prevail with her. Why, I'll tell you, sir,
She's so sin-killing modest, that if only
To move the question were enough adultery
To cause a separation, there's no gallant
So brassy-impudent durst undertake
The words that shall belong to't.
Hor. Say you so, sir?
There's nothing made in the world but has a way to't;
Though some be harder than the rest to find,
Yet one there is, that's certain; and I think 130
I've took the course to light on't.
Vort. O, I pray for't!
Hor. I heard you lately say (from whence, my lord,
My practice receiv'd life first), that your queen
Still consecrates her time to contemplation,
Takes solitary walks.

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[1] Old ed. "action."
[2] In the old ed. this speech is given to Horsus.

Vort. Nay, late and early
Commands her weak guard from her, which are but
Women at strongest.
Hor. I like all this, my lord:
And now, sir, you shall know what net is us'd
In many places to catch modest women,
Such as will never yield by prayers or gifts. 140
Now there be some will catch up men as fast;
But those she-fowlers nothing concern us;
Their birding is at windows; ours abroad,
Where ring-doves should be caught, that's married wives,
Or chaste maids; what the appetite has a mind to.
Vort. Make no pause then.
Hor. The honest gentlewoman,
When nothing will prevail—I pity her now—
Poor soul, she's entic'd forth by her own sex
To be betray'd to man; who in some garden-house [1]
Or remote walk, taking his lustful time, 150
Binds darkness on her eyelids, surprises her;
And having a coach ready, turns her in,
Hurrying her where he list for the sin's safety,
Making a rape of honour without words;
And at the low ebb of his lust, perhaps
Some three days after, sends her coach'd again
To the same place; and, which would make most mad,

---

[1] *i.e.* summer-house. In the suburbs of London were many gardens ("either paled or walled round about very high, with their arbours and bowers") where wantons took their pleasure.

She's robb'd of all, yet knows not where she's robb'd,
There's the dear precious mischief!

Vort. Is this practis'd?

Hor. Too much, my lord, to be so little known; 160
A springe to catch a maidenhead after sunset,
Clip it, and send it home again to the city,
There 'twill ne'er be perceiv'd.

Vort. My raptures want expression; I conceit [1]
Enough to make me fortunate, and thee great.

Hor. I praise it then, my lord.—I knew 'twould take.
[*Aside.*] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Grounds near the Palace.

Enter CASTIZA *with a book, and two* Ladies.

Cast. Methinks you live strange lives; when I see it not,
It grieves me less; you know how to ease me then:
If you but knew how well I lov'd your absence,
You would bestow't upon me without asking.

First Lady. Faith, for my part, were it no more for ceremony than for love, you should walk long enough without my attendance; and so think all my fellows, though they say nothing. Books in women's hands are as much against the hair,[2] methinks, as to see men wear stomachers, or night-rails.[3]—She that has the green-

[1] Conceive.
[2] Equivalent to our modern expression "against the grain."
[3] Night-gowns.

sickness, and should follow her counsel, would die like an ass, and go to the worms like a salad; not I: so long as such a creature as man is made, she is a fool that knows not what he is good for. [*Exeunt* Ladies. 14

Cast. Though among life's elections, that of virgin
I did speak noblest of, yet it has pleas'd the king
To send me a contented blessedness
In that of marriage, which I ever doubted.

Enter VORTIGER *and* HORSUS *disguised.*

I see the king's affection was a true one;
It lasts and holds out long, that's no mean virtue 20
In a commanding man; though in great fear
At first I was enforc'd to venture on it.

Vort. All's happy, clear, and safe.

Hor. The rest comes gently on.

Vort. Be sure you seize on her full sight at first,
For fear of my discovery.

Hor. Now, fortune, and I am sped.
[*Seizes and blindfolds* CASTIZA.

Cast. Treason! treason!

Hor. Sirrah, how stand you? prevent noise and clamour,
Or death shall end thy service.

Vort. A sure cunning. [*Aside.* 30

Cast. O, rescue! rescue!

Hor. Dead her voice! away, make speed!

Cast. No help? no succour?

Hor. Louder yet, extend

Your voice to the last rack; you shall have leave now,
You're far from any pity.
Cast. What's my sin?
Hor. Contempt of man; and he's a noble creature,
And takes it in ill part to be despis'd.
Cast. I never despis'd any.
Hor. No? you hold us
Unworthy to be lov'd; what call you that?
Cast. I have a lord disproves you.
Hor. Pish! your lord? 40
You're bound to love your lord, that's no thanks to you;
You should love those you are not tied to love,
That's the right trial of a woman's charity.
Cast. I know not what you are, nor what my fault is:
If it be life you seek, whate'er you be,
Use no immodest words, and take it from me;
You kill me more in talking sinfully
Than acting cruelty: be so far pitiful,
To end me without words.
Hor. Long may you live!
'Tis the wish of a good subject: 'tis not life 50
That I thirst after; loyalty forbid
I should commit such treason: you mistake me,
I've no such bloody thought; only your love
Shall content me.
Cast. What said you, sir?
Hor. Thus plainly,
To strip my words as naked as my purpose,
I must and will enjoy thee. [*She faints.*]—Gone already?

Look to her, bear her up, she goes apace;
I fear'd this still, and therefore came provided.
There's that will fetch life from a dying spark,
And make it spread a furnace; she's well straight. 60
[*Pours drops from a vial into* CASTIZA'S *mouth.*
Pish, let her go; she stands, upon my knowledge,
Or else she counterfeits; I know the virtue.
Cast. Never did sorrows in afflicted woman
Meet with such cruelties, such hard-hearted ways
Human invention never found before:
To call back life to live, is but ill taken
By some departing soul[s]; then to force mine back
To an eternal act of death in lust,
What is it but most execrable?
Hor. So, so:
But this is from my business. List to me: 70
Here you are now far from all hope of friendship,
Save what you make in me; 'scape me you cannot,
Send your soul that assurance; that resolv'd on,
You know not who I am, nor ever shall,
I need not fear you then; but give consent,
Then with the faithfulness of a true friend
I'll open myself to you, fall your servant,
As I do now in hope, proud of submission,
And seal the deed up with eternal secrecy;
Not death shall pluck't from me, much less the king's
Authority or torture.
Vort. I admire him. [*Aside.* 81
Cast. O sir! whate'er you are, I teach my knee
Thus to requite you, be content to take [*Kneels.*

Only my sight, as ransom for my honour,
And where you have but mock'd my eyes with darkness,
Pluck them quite out; all outward lights of body
I'll spare most willingly, but take not from me
That which must guide me to another world,
And leave me dark for ever; fast without
That cursed pleasure, which will make two souls 90
Endure a famine everlastingly.

Hor. This almost moves. [*Aside.*

Vort. By this light he'll be taken! [*Aside.*

Hor. I'll wrestle down all pity. [*Aside.*]—What! will you consent?

Cast. I'll never be so guilty.

Hor. Farewell words then!
You hear no more of me; but thus I seize you.

Cast. O, if a power above be reverenc'd by thee,
I bind thee by that name, by manhood, nobleness,
And all the charms of honour!

[VORTIGER *snatches her up, and carries her off.*

Hor. Ah, ha! here's one caught
For an example: never was poor lady
So mock'd into false terror; with what anguish 100
She lies with her own lord! now she could curse
All into barrenness, and beguile herself by't.
Conceit's a powerful thing, and is indeed
Plac'd as a palate to taste grief or love,
And as that relishes, so we approve;
Hence comes it that our taste is so beguil'd,
Changing pure blood for some that's mix'd and soil'd.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Chamber in a Castle near Queenborough.

Enter HENGIST.

Hen. A fair and fortunate constellation reign'd
When we set foot here; for from his first gift
(Which to a king's unbounded eyes seem'd nothing),
The compass of a hide, I have erected
A strong and spacious castle, yet contain'd myself
Within my limits, without check or censure.
Thither, with all th' observance of a subject,
The liveliest witness of a grateful mind,
I purpose to invite him and his queen,
And feast them nobly.

Barber [*speaking without*]. We will enter, sir; 10
'Tis a state business, of a twelve-month long,
The choosing of a mayor.

Hen. What noise is that?

Tailor [*without*]. Sir, we must speak with the good earl of Kent:
Though we were ne'er brought up to keep a door,
We are as honest, sir, as some that do.

Enter a Gentleman.

Hen. Now, sir, what's the occasion of their clamours?

Gent. Please you, my lord, a company of townsmen
Are bent, 'gainst all denials and resistance,
To have speech with your lordship; and that you
Must end a difference, which none else can do. 20

Hen. Why then there's reason in their violence,
Which I ne'er looked for: first let in but one,
And as we relish him, the rest come on.
[*Exit* Gentleman.
'Tis no safe wisdom in a rising man
To slight off such as these; nay, rather these
Are the foundations of a lofty work;
We cannot build without them, and stand sure.
He that ascends first[1] to a mountain's top
Must begin at the foot.

Re-enter Gentleman.

Now, sir, who comes?
Gent. They cannot yet agree, my lord, of that: 30
They say 'tis worse now than it was before,
For where the difference was but between two,
Upon this coming first they're all at odds.
One says, he shall lose his place in the church by't;
Another will not do his wife that wrong;
And by their good wills they would all come first.
The strife continues in most heat, my lord,
Between a country barber and a tailor
Of the same town; and which your lordship names,
'Tis yielded by consent that he shall enter. 40
Heng. Here's no[2] sweet coil! I'm glad they are so reasonable.

---

[1] Old ed. "first ascends."
[2] "No" is frequently used in an ironical sense by the old dramatists to denote a great deal of a thing.

Call in the barber [*Exit* Gentleman]; if the tale be long,
He'll cut it short, I trust; that's all the hope.

Re-enter Gentleman *with* Barber.

Now, sir, are you the barber?

Barb. O, most barbarous! a corrector of enormities in hair, my lord; a promoter of upper lips, or what your lordship, in the neatness of your discretion, shall think fit to call me.

Heng. Very good, I see you have this without book; but what's your business? 50

Barb. Your lordship comes to a very high point indeed: the business, sir, lies about the head.

Heng. That's work for you.

Barb. No, my good lord, there is a corporation, a body, a kind of body.

Heng. The barber is out at the body; let in the tailor. [*Exit* Gentleman.

This 'tis to reach beyond your own profession;
When you let go your head, you lose your memory:
You have no business with the body.

Barb. Yes, sir, I am a barber-chirurgeon; I have had something to do with it in my time, my lord; and I was never so out of the body as I have been of late: send me good luck, I'll marry some whore but I'll get in again. 64

Re-enter Gentleman *with* Tailor.

Heng. Now, sir, a good discovery come from you!

Tail. I will rip up the linings to your lordship,
And show what stuff 'tis made of: for the body
Or corporation—
Heng. There the barber left indeed.
Tail. 'Tis piec'd up of two fashions. 70
Heng. A patch'd town the whilest.
Tail. Nor can we go through stitch, my noble lord,
The choler is so great in the one party:
And as in linsey-woolsey wove together,
One piece makes several suits, so, upright earl,
Our linsey-woolsey hearts make all this coil.
Heng. What's all this now? I'm ne'er the wiser yet.—
Call in the rest.

[*Exit* Gentleman, *and re-enter with* Glover *and others.*

Now, sirs,—what are you?
Glov. Sir-reverence[1] on your lordship, I am a glover.
Heng. What needs that then? 80
Glov. Sometimes I deal in dog's leather, sir-reverence the while.
Heng. Well, to the purpose, if there be any towards.[2]
Glov. I were an ass else, saving your lordship's presence.
We have a body, but our town wants a hand,
A hand of justice, a worshipful master mayor.
Heng. This is well handled yet; a man may take some hold on it.—You want a mayor?
Glov. Right, but there's two at fisty-cuffs about it;

---

[1] A corruption of "save-reverence."
[2] To hand.

Sir, as I may say, at daggers drawing,— 90
But that I cannot say, because they have none,—
And you being earl of Kent, our town does say,
Your lordship's voice shall part and end the fray.

Heng. This is strange work for me. Well, sir, what be they?

Glov. The one is a tanner.

Heng. Fie, I shall be too partial,
I owe too much affection to that trade
To put it to my voice. What is his name?

Glov. Simon.

Heng. How, Simon too?

Glov. Nay, 'tis but Simon one, sir; the very same Simon that sold your lordship a hide. 101

Heng. What sayest thou?

Glov. That's all his glory, sir: he got his master's widow by it presently, a rich tanner's wife: she has set him up; he was her foreman a long time in her other husband's days.

Heng. Now let me perish in my first aspiring,
If the pretty simplicity of his fortune
Do not most highly take me: 'tis a presage, methinks,
Of bright succeeding happiness to mine, 110
When my fate's glow-worm casts forth such a shine.—
And what are those that do contend with him?

Tail. Marry, my noble lord, a fustian-weaver.

Heng. How! he offer to compare with Simon? he a fit match for him!

Barb. Hark, hark, my lord! here they come both in a pelting chafe from the town-house.

Enter SIMON *and* OLIVER.

Sim. How, before me? I scorn thee,
Thou wattle-fac'd sing'd pig.
Oliv. Pig? I defy thee;
My uncle was a Jew, and scorn'd the motion.[1] 120
Sim. I list not brook thy vaunts. Compare with me,
Thou spindle of concupiscence? 'tis well known
Thy first wife was a flax-wench.
Oliv. But such a flax-wench
Would I might never want at my need,
Nor any friend of mine: my neighbours knew her.
Thy wife was but a hempen halter to her.
Sim. Use better words, I'll hang thee in my year else,
Let who will choose thee afterwards.
Glov. Peace, for shame;
Quench your great spirit: do not you see his lordship?
Heng. What, master Simonides? 130
Sim. Simonides? what a fair name hath he made of Simon![2] then he's an ass that calls me Simon again; I am quite out of love with it.

---

[1] "Here S. P. an annotator in Dodsley's *Old Plays*, wishes unnecessarily to read 'mention.' Middleton has the same expression elsewhere; and so in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Cupid's Revenge*, act iv. sc. 3:—

'3 *Cit.* You had best
Go peach; do, peach!
2 *Cit.* Peach? *I scorn the motion.*'"—*Dyce.*

[2] Lucian in his *Somnium* (14) has a story about a man named Simon, who, from squalid poverty was suddenly advanced to opulence. A quondam acquaintance, meeting him, addressed him Χαῖρε ὦ Σίμων:

Heng. Give me thy hand; I love thy fortunes, and like a man that thrives.

Sim. I took a widow, my lord, to be the best piece of ground to thrive on; and by my faith, my lord, there's a young Simonides, like a green onion, peeping up already.

Heng. Thou'st a good lucky hand.

Sim. I have somewhat, sir. 140

Heng. But why to me is this election offer'd?
The choosing of a mayor goes by most voices.

Sim. True, sir, but most of our townsmen are so hoarse with drinking, there's not a good voice among them all.

Heng. Are you content to put it to all these then?
To whom I liberally resign my interest,
To prevent censures.

Sim. I speak first, my lord.

Oliv. Though I speak last, my lord, I am not least: if they will cast away a town-born child, they may; it is but dying some forty years before my time. 150

Heng. I leave you to your choice a while.

All. Your good lordship.

[*Exeunt* HENGIST *and* Gentleman.

Sim. Look you, neighbours, before you be too hasty. Let Oliver the fustian-weaver stand as fair as I do, and the devil do him good on't.

Oliv. I do, thou upstart callymoocher,[1] I do; 'tis well

---

whereupon the upstart, turning in anger to his retainers, said—*Εἴπατε τῷ πτωχῷ τούτῳ μὴ κατασμικρύνειν μου τοὔνομα· οὐ γὰρ Σίμων ἀλλὰ Σιμωνίδης ὀνομάζομαι.* Doubtless Middleton had this passage in his mind.

[1] "A term of reproach. It is probably connected with *micher*."—*Halliwell.*

known to the parish I have been twice ale-conner;[1] thou mushroom, that shot'st up in a night, by lying with thy mistress!

Sim. Faith, thou art such a spiny baldrib, all the mistresses in the town will never get thee up. 161

Oliv. I scorn to rise by a woman, as thou didst: my wife shall rise by me.

Glov. I pray leave your communication; we can do nothing else.

Oliv. I gave that barber a fustian-suit, and twice redeemed his cittern:[2] he may remember me.

Sim. I fear no false measure but in that tailor; the glover and the button-maker are both cock-sure; that collier's eye I like not; now they consult, the matter is in brewing: poor Gill, my wife, lies longing for the news; 'twill make her a glad mother. 172

All [*except* OL.] A Simon, a Simon!

Sim. Good people, I thank you all.

Oliv. Wretch that I am! Tanner, thou hast curried favour.

Sim. I curry! I defy thy fustian fume.

---

[1] An officer appointed to detect adulteration in bread, beer and ale, to destroy false weights and measures, unwholesome provisions, &c.

[2] "A lute or *cittern* formerly used to be part of the furniture of a barber's shop, and, as Sir John Hawkins, in his notes on Walton's *Complete Angler*, p. 236, observes, answered the end of a newspaper, the now common amusement of waiting customers. In an old book of enigmas, to every one of which the author has prefixed a wooden cut of the subject of the enigma, is a barber, and the cut represents a barber's shop, in which there is one person sitting in a chair under the barber's hands, while another, who is waiting for his turn, is playing on the lute; and on the side of the shop hangs another instrument of the lute or *cittern* kind."—*Reed.*

Oliv. But I will prove a rebel all thy year,
And raise up the seven deadly sins against thee. [*Exit.* 179

Sim. The deadly sins will scorn to rise by thee, if they have any breeding, as commonly they are well brought up: 'tis not for every scab to be acquainted with them: but leaving the scab, to you, good neighbours, now I bend my speech. First, to say more than a man can say, I hold it not fit to be spoken: but to say what a man ought to say, there I leave you also. I must confess your loves have chosen a weak and unlearned man; that I can neither write nor read, you all can witness; yet not altogether so unlearned, but I can set my mark to a bond, if I would be so simple; an excellent token of government. Cheer you then, my hearts, you have done you know not what: there's a full point; there you must all cough and hem. [*Here they all cough and hem.*] Now touching our common adversary the fustian-weaver, who threatens he will raise the deadly sins among us, let them come; our town is big enough to hold them, we will not so much disgrace it; besides, you know a deadly sin will lie in a narrow hole: but when they think themselves safest, and the web of their iniquity best woven, with the horse-strength of my justice I will break through the loom of their concupiscence, and make the weaver go seek his shuttle: here you may cough and hem again, if you'll do me the favour. [*They cough and hem again.*] Why, I thank you all, and it shall not go unrewarded. Now for the deadly sins, pride, sloth, envy, wrath; as for covetousness and gluttony, I'll tell you more when I come out of my office; I shall have time to try what they are: I will

prove them soundly; and if I find gluttony and covetousness to be directly sins, I'll bury the one in the bottom of a chest, and the other in the end of my garden. But, sirs, for lechery, I'll tickle that home myself, I'll not leave a whore in the town. 212

Barb. Some of your neighbours must seek their wives in the country then.

Sim. Barber, be silent, I will cut thy comb else. To conclude, I will learn the villany of all trades; my own I know already: if there be any knavery in the baker, I will bolt it out; if in the brewer, I will taste him throughly, and piss out his iniquity at his own suckhole: in a word, I will knock down all enormities like a butcher, and send the hide to my fellow-tanners. 221

All. A Simonides, a true Simonides indeed!

Re-enter HENGIST *with* ROXENA.

Heng. How now? how goes your choice?

Tail. This is he, my lord.

Sim. To prove I am the man, I am bold to take
The upper hand of your lordship: I'll not lose
An inch of my honour.

Heng. Hold, sirs: there's some few crowns
To mend your feast, because I like your choice.

Barb. Joy bless you, sir! 230
We'll drink your health with trumpets.

Sim. I with sackbuts,[1]
That's the more solemn drinking for my state;

[1] (1) Butts of sack; (2) bass trumpets.

No malt this year shall fume into my pate.

[*Exeunt all but* HENGIST *and* ROXENA.[1]

Heng. Continue[s] still that favour in his love?

Rox. Nay, with increase, my lord, the flame grows greater;

Though he has learn'd a better art of late
To set a screen before it.

Heng. Speak lower.

[*Retires to a seat and reads: exit* ROXENA.

Enter VORTIGER *and* HORSUS.

Hor. Heard every word, my lord.

Vort. Plainly?

Hor. Distinctly.

The course I took was dangerous, but not failing, 240
For I convey'd myself behind the hangings
Even just before his entrance.

Vort. 'Twas well ventur'd.

Hor. I had such a woman's first and second longing in me

To hear[1] how she would bear her mock'd abuse
After she was return'd to privacy,
I could have fasted out an ember-week,
And never thought of hunger, to have heard her:
Then came your holy Lupus and Germanus—

Vort. Two holy confessors.

Hor. At whose first sight

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[1] Old ed. "*Exit cum suis.*"
[2] Old ed. "hear her."

I could perceive her fall upon her breast, 250
And cruelly afflict herself with sorrow,
(I never heard a sigh till I heard hers);
Who, after her confession, pitying her,
Put her into a way of patience,
Which now she holds, to keep it hid from you:
There's all the pleasure that I took in't now;
When I heard that, my pains was well remember'd.
So, with applying comforts and relief,
They've brought it lower, to an easy grief;
But yet the taste is not quite gone.
Vort. Still fortune 260
Sits bettering our inventions.
Hor. Here she comes.

Enter CASTIZA.

Cast. Yonder's my lord; O, I'll return again!
Methinks I should not dare to look on him.
[*Aside, and exit.*
Hor. She's gone again.
Vort. It works the kindlier, sir:
Go now and call her back. [*Exit* HORSUS.] She winds herself
Into the snare so prettily, 'tis a pleasure
To set toils for her.

Re-enter CASTIZA *and* HORSUS.

Cast. He may read my shame
Now in my blush. [*Aside.*

Vort. Come, you're so link'd to holiness,
So taken with contemplative desires,
That the world has you, yet enjoys you not: 270
You have been weeping too.
Cast. Not I, my lord.
Vort. Trust me, I fear you have: you're much to blame
To yield so much to passion without cause.
Is not some time enough for meditation?
Must it lay title to your health and beauty,
And draw them into time's consumption too?
'Tis too exacting for a holy faculty.—
My lord of Kent!—I prithee, wake him, captain;
He reads himself asleep, sure.
Hor. My lord!
Vort. Nay,
I'll take away your book, and bestow't here. 280
[*Takes book from* HENGIST.
Heng. Your pardon, sir.
Vort. [*giving book to* CASTIZA]. Lady, you that delight in virgins' stories,
And all chaste works, here's excellent reading for you:
Make of that book as made men do of favours,
Which they grow sick to part from.—And now, my lord,
You that have so conceitedly [1] gone beyond me,
And made so large use of a slender gift,
Which we ne'er minded,[2] I commend your thrift;
And that your building may to all ages

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[1] Ingeniously. [2] Intended.

Carry the stamp and impress of your wit, 290
It shall be call'd Thong-Castle.[1]
Heng. How, my lord,
Thong-Castle! there your grace quits me kindly.
Vort. 'Tis fit art should be known by its right name;
You that can spread my gift, I'll spread your fame.
Heng. I thank your grace for that.
Vort. And, lovèd lord,
So well do we accept your invitation,
With all speed we'll set forwards.
Heng. Your honour loves me. [*Exeunt.*

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[1] "See Lambarde's Perambulation of Kent, 1596, p. 195. Jeffery of Monmouth's British History, B. 6. C. 11."—*Reed.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A Public Way near HENGIST'S *Castle.*

Enter SIMON *and all his brethren, a mace and sword before him, meeting* VORTIGER, CASTIZA, HENGIST, ROXENA, HORSUS, *and two* Ladies.

Sim. Lo,[1] I, the Mayor of Queenborough by name,
With all my brethren, saving one that's lame,
Are come as fast as fiery mill-horse gallops
To greet thy grace, thy queen, and her fair trollops.
For reason of our coming do not look;
It must be done, I find it i' the town-book;
And yet not I myself, I cannot[2] read;
I keep a clerk to do those jobs for need.
And now expect a rare conceit before Thong-Castle see thee.—
Reach me the thing to give the king, the other too, I prithee.— 10

[1] "In *Wit Restored*, 1658 (*Facetiæ*, &c. vol. i. p. 268. ed. 1817), this speech of Simon is printed, with a few very slight variations, under the title of *A Prologue to the Mayor of Quinborough.*" — *Dyce.*

[2] *Wit Restored* gives the more spirited reading "scorne to."

Now here they be, for queen and thee; the gift all steel
and leather,
But the conceit of mickle weight, and here they come
together:
To show two loves must join in one, our town presents
by me
This gilded scabbard to the queen, this dagger unto thee.
[*Offers the scabbard and dagger.*

Vort. Forbear your tedious and ridiculous duties;
I hate them, as I do the riots [1] of your
Inconstant rabble; I have felt your fits:
Sheathe up your bounties with your iron wits.
[*Exit with his train.*

Sim. Look, sirs, is his back turn'd?

All. It is, it is.

Sim. Then bless the good earl of Kent, say I! 20
I'll have this dagger turn'd into a pie,
And eaten up for anger, every bit on't:
And when this pie shall be cut up by some rare cunning
pie-man,
They shall full lamentably sing, Put up thy dagger,
Simon. [*Exeunt.*

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[1] Old ed. "roots."

SCENE II.

A Hall in HENGIST'S *Castle: a feast set out.*

Enter VORTIGER, HENGIST, HORSUS, DEVONSHIRE, STAFFORD, CASTIZA, ROXENA, *two* Ladies, Guards, *and* Attendants.

Heng. A welcome, mighty lord, may appear costlier,
More full of toil and talk, show and conceit;
But one more stor'd with thankful love and truth
I forbid all the sons of men to boast of.
Vort. Why, here's[1] a fabric that implies eternity;
The building plain, but most substantial;
Methinks it looks as if it mock'd all ruin,
Saving that master-piece of consummation,
The end of time, which must consume even ruin,
And eat that into cinders.
Heng. There's no brass 10
Would pass your praise, my lord; 'twould last beyond it,
And shame our durablest metal.
Vort. Horsus.
Hor. My lord.
Vort. This is the time I've chosen; here's a full meeting,
And here will I disgrace her.
Hor. 'Twill be sharp, my lord.
Vort. O, 'twill be best.

---

[1] Old ed. "there's."

Hor. Why, here's the earl her father.
Vort. Ay, and the lord her uncle; that's the height of't;
Invited both on purpose, to rise sick,
Full of shame's surfeit.
Hor. And that's shrewd, byrlady:
It ever sticks close to the ribs of honour,
Great men are never sound men after it; 20
It leaves some ache or other in their names still,
Which their posterity feels at every weather.
Vort. Mark but the least presentment of occasion,
As these times yield enough, and then mark me.
Hor. My observance is all yours, you know't, my lord.—
What careful ways some take to abuse themselves!
But as there be assurers of men's goods
'Gainst storms or pirates, which gives adventurers courage,
So such there must be to make up man's theft,
Or there would be no woman-venturer left.
See, now they find their seats! what a false knot
Of amity he ties about her arm,
Which rage must part! In marriage 'tis no wonder,
Knots knit with kisses oft are broke with thunder.
Music? then I have done; I always learn [*Music.*
To give my betters place.
[*Aside, while the rest seat themselves.*
Vort. Where's captain Horsus?
Sit, sit; we'll have a health anon to all
Good services.
Hor. They are poor in these days;

They'd rather have the cup[1] than the health.
He hears me not, and most great men are deaf 40
On that side. [*Aside.*

Vort. My lord of Kent, I thank you for this welcome;
It came unthought of, in the sweetest language
That ever my soul relish'd.

Heng. You are pleas'd, my lord,
To raise my happiness for slight deservings,
To show what power's in princes; not in us
Aught worthy, 'tis in you that makes us thus.
I'm chiefly sad, my lord, your queen's not merry.

Vort. So honour bless me, he has found the way
To my grief strangely. Is there no delight—— 50

Cast. My lord, I wish not any, nor is't needful;
I am as I was ever.

Vort. That's not so.

Cast. How? O, my fears! [*Aside.*

Vort. When she writ maid, my lord,
You knew her otherwise.

Devon. To speak but truth,
I never knew her a great friend to mirth,
Nor taken much with any one delight;
Though there be many seemly and honourable
To give content to ladies without taxing.

Vort. My lord of Kent, this to thy full deserts,
Which intimates thy higher flow to honour. [*Drinking.* 60

Heng. Which, like a river, shall return in service
To the great master-fountain.

---

[1] Collier's correction for "carp" of the old ed.

Vort. Where's your lord?
I miss'd him not till now,—Lady, and yours?
No marvel then we were so out of the way
Of all pleasant discourse; they are the keys
Of human music; sure at their nativities
Great nature sign'd a general patent to them
To take up all the mirth in a whole kingdom.
What's their employment now?
First Lady. May it please your grace,
We never are so far acquainted with them; 70
Nothing we know but what they cannot keep;
That's even the fashion of them all, my lord.
Vort. It seems ye've great thought in their constancies,
And they in yours, you dare so trust each other.
Second Lady. Hope well we do, my lord; we've reason for it,
Because they say brown men are honestest;
But she's a fool will swear for any colour.
Vort. They would for yours.
Second Lady. Truth, 'tis a doubtful question,
And I'd be loath to put mine to't, my lord.
Vort. Faith, dare you swear for yourselves? that's a plain question. 80
Second Lady. My lord?
Vort. You cannot deny that with honour;
And since 'tis urg'd, I'll put you to't in troth.
First Lady. May it please your grace—
Vort. 'Twould please me very well;
And here's a book, mine never goes without one;
[*Taking book from* CASTIZA.

She's an example to you all for purity:
Come, swear (I've sworn you shall) that you ne'er knew
The will of any man besides your husband's.
Second Lady. I'll swear, my lord, as far as my remembrance—
Vort. How! your remembrance? that were strange.
First Lady. Your grace
Hearing our just excuse, will not say so. 90
Vort. Well, what's your just excuse? you're ne'er without some.
First Lady. I'm often taken with a sleep, my lord,
The loudest thunder cannot waken me,
Not if a cannon's burthen be discharg'd
Close by my ear; the more may be my wrong;
There can be no infirmity, my lord,
More excusable in any woman.
Second Lady. And I'm so troubled with the mother too,
I've often call'd in help, I know not whom;
Three at once have been too weak to keep me down. 100
Vort. I perceive there's no fastening. [*Aside.*
—Well, fair one, then,
That ne'er deceives faith's anchor of her hold,
Come at all seasons; here, be thou the star
To guide those erring women, show the way
Which I will make them follow. Why dost start,
Draw back, and look so pale?
Cast. My lord!
Vort. Come hither;

Nothing but take that oath; thou'lt take a thousand;
A thousand! nay, a million, or as many
As there be angels registers of oaths.
Why, look thee, over-fearful chastity, 110
(That sinn'st in nothing but in too much niceness,)
I'll begin first and swear for thee myself:
I know thee a perfection so unstain'd,
So sure, so absolute, I will not pant on it,
But catch time greedily. By all those blessings
That blow truth into fruitfulness, and those curses
That with their barren breaths blast perjury,
Thou art as pure as sanctity's best shrine
From all man's mixture, save what's lawful, mine! 119

Cast. O, heaven forgive him, he has forsworn himself! [*Aside.*

Vort. Come, 'tis but going now my way.

Cast. That's bad enough. [*Aside.*

Vort. I've clear'd all doubts, you see.

Cast. Good my lord, spare me.

Vort. How! it grows later than so. For modesty's sake,
Make more speed this way.

Cast. Pardon me, my lord,
I cannot.

Vort. What?

Cast. I dare not.

Vort. Fail all confidence
In thy weak kind for ever!

Devon. Here's a storm

Able to wake [1] all of our name inhumed,
And raise them from their sleeps of peace and fame,
To set the honours of their bloods right here, 130
Hundred years after: a perpetual motion
Has their true glory been from seed to seed,
And cannot be chok'd now with a poor grain
Of dust and earth. Her uncle and myself,
Wild [2] in this tempest, as e'er robb'd man's peace,
Will undertake, upon life's deprivation,
She shall accept this oath.

Vort. You do but call me then
Into a world of more despair and horror;
Yet since so wilfully you stand engag'd
In high scorn to be touch'd, with expedition 140
Perfect your undertakings with your fames;
Or, by the issues of abus'd belief,
I'll take the forfeit of lives, lands, and honours,
And make one ruin serve our joys and yours.

Cast. Why, here's a height of miseries never reach'd yet!
I lose myself and others.

Devon. You may see
How much we lay in balance with your goodness,
And had we more, it went; for we presume
You cannot be religious and so vile—

---

[1] In the old ed. the line stands—
"Able to *make* all of our name *inhumid.*"
The emendation is Dyce's.

[2] The line is corrupt—Dyce suggests "In this wild tempest."

Cast. As to forswear myself—'Tis truth, great sir, 150
The honour of your bed hath been abus'd.
Vort. O, beyond patience!
Cast. But give me hearing, sir:
'Twas far from my consent; I was surpris'd
By villains, and so raught.[1]
Vort. Hear you that, sirs?
O cunning texture to enclose adultery!
Mark but what subtle veil her sin puts on;
Religion brings her to confession first,
Then steps in art to sanctify that lust.—
'Tis likely you could be surpris'd!
Cast. My lord!
Vort. I'll hear no more.—Our guard! seize on those lords. 160
Devon. We cannot perish now too fast; make speed
To swift destruction. He breathes most accurst
That lives so long to see his name die first.
[*Exeunt* DEVONSHIRE *and* STAFFORD, *guarded.*
Hor. Here's no[2] dear[3] villany! [*Aside.*
Heng. Let him entreat, sir,
That falls in saddest grief for this event,
Which ill begins the fortune of this building.
My lord! [*Takes* VORTIGER *aside.*
Rox. What if he should cause me to swear too, captain?

---

[1] Snatched, carried away.
[2] Ironical. See note 2, p. 55.
[3] An epithet denoting excessive goodness or baseness.

You know I am as far to seek in honesty
As the worst here can be; I should be sham'd too. 170

Hor. Why, fool, they swear by that we worship not;
So you may swear your heart out, and ne'er hurt yourself.

Rox. That was well thought on; I'd quite lost myself else.

Vort. You shall prevail in noble suits, my lord,
But this does shame the speaker.

Hor. I'll step in now,
Though't shall be to no purpose.—Good my lord,
Think on your noble and most hopeful issue,
Lord Vortimer, the prince.

Vort. A bastard, sir!
I would his life were in my fury now!

Cast. That injury stirs my soul to speak the truth 180
Of his conception.—Here I take the book, my lord:
By all the glorify'd rewards of virtue
And prepar'd punishments for consents in sin,
A queen's hard sorrow ne'er supply'd a kingdom
With issue more legitimate than Vortimer.

Vort. This takes not out the stain of present shame;
Continuance crowns desert: she ne'er can go
For perfect honest that's not always so.—
Beshrew thy heart for urging this excuse;
Thou'st justify'd her somewhat.

Hor. To small purpose. 190

Vort. Among so many women, not one here
Dare swear a simple chastity! here's an age
To propagate virtue in! Since I've begun,

I'll shame you altogether, and so leave you.—
My lord of Kent!
Heng. Your highness?
Vort. That's your daughter?
Heng. Yes, my good lord.
Vort. Though I'm your guest to-day,
And should be less austere to you or yours,
In this case pardon me; I may not spare her.
Heng. Then her own goodness friend her!—she comes, my lord.
Vort. The tender reputation of a maid 200
Makes your honour, or else nothing can:
The oath you take is not for truth to man,
But to your own white soul; a mighty task:
What dare you do in this?
Rox. My lord, as much
As chastity can put a woman to;
I ask no favour. And t'approve the purity
Of what my habit and my time professeth,
As likewise to requite all courteous censure,
Here I take oath I am as free from man
As truth from falsehood, or sanctity from stain. 210
Vort. O thou treasure that ravishes the possessor!
I know not where to speed so well again;
I'll keep thee while I have thee: here's a fountain
To spring forth princes and the seeds of kingdoms!
Away with that infection of black honour,
And those her leprous pledges!—
Here will we store succession with true peace;

And of pure virgins grace the poor increase.

[*Exeunt all but* HORSUS.

Hor. Ha, ha!
He's well provided now: here struck my fortunes. 220
With what an impudent confidence she swore honest,
Having th' advantage of the oath! precious whore!
Methinks I should not hear from fortune next
Under an earldom now: she cannot spend
A night so idly, but to make a lord
With ease, methinks, and play. The earl of Kent
Is calm and smooth, like a deep dangerous water;
He has some secret way; I know his blood;
The grave's not greedier, nor hell's lord more proud.
Something will hap; for this astonishing choice 230
Strikes pale the kingdom, at which I rejoice. [*Exit.*

DUMB SHOW.

Enter LUPUS, GERMANUS, DEVONSHIRE, *and* STAFFORD, *leading* VORTIMER, *and crown him:* VORTIGER *comes to them in passion; they neglect him. Enter* ROXENA *in fury, expressing discontent; then they lead out* VORTIMER: ROXENA *gives two Villains gold to murder him; they swear performance, and go with her:* VORTIGER *offers to run on his sword;* HORSUS *prevents him, and persuades him. The lords bring in* VORTIMER *dead:* VORTIGER *mourns, and submits to them: they swear him, and crown him. Then enters* HENGIST *with Saxons:* VORTIGER *draws,*

threatens expulsion, and then sends a parley; which HENGIST *seems to grant by laying down his weapons: so all depart severally.*

Enter RAYNULPH.

Ray. Of Pagan blood a queen being chose,
Roxena hight,[1] the Britons rose
For Vortimer, and crown'd him king;
But she soon poison'd that sweet spring.
Then unto rule they did restore
Vortiger; and him they swore
Against the Saxons: they (constrain'd)
Begg'd peace, treaty, and obtain'd.
And now in numbers equally
Upon the plain near Salisbury, 10
A peaceful meeting they decreen,
Like men of love, no weapon seen.
But Hengist, that ambitious lord,
Full of guile, corrupts his word,
As the sequel too well proves:—
On that your eyes; on us your loves. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Plain near Salisbury.

Enter HENGIST *with* Saxons.

Heng. If we let slip this opportuneful hour,
Take leave of fortune, certainty, or thought

[1] Called.

Of ever fixing: we are loose at root,
And the least storm may rend us from the bosom
Of this land's hopes for ever. But, dear Saxons,
Fasten we now, and our unshaken firmness
Will endure after-ages.

First Sax. We are resolv'd, my lord.

Heng. Observe you not how Vortiger the king,
Base in submission, threaten'd our expulsion,
His arm held up against us? Is't not time 10
To make our best prevention? What should check me?
He has perfected that great work in our daughter,
And made her queen: she can ascend no higher.
Therefore be quick; despatch. Here, every man
Receive into the service of his vengeance
An instrument of steel, which will unseen
[*Distributing daggers.*
Lurk, like a snake under the innocent shade
Of a spread summer-leaf: there, fly you on.
Take heart, the commons love us; those remov'd
That are the nerves, our greatness stands improv'd. 20

First Sax. Give us the word, my lord, and we are perfect.

Heng. That's true; the word,—I lose myself—*Nemp your sexes:*[1]
It shall be that.

---

[1] "'The appointment being agreed to on both sides, Hengist, with a new design of villany in his head, ordered his soldiers to carry, every one of them, a long dagger under their garments; and while the conference should be held with the Britons, who would have no suspicion of them, he would give them this word of command, *Nemet oure Saxas;* at which moment they were all to be ready to seize boldly every one his

First Sax. Enough, sir: then we strike.

Heng. But the king's mine: take heed you touch him not.

First Sax. We shall not be at leisure; never fear it;
We shall have work enough of our own, my lord.

Heng. Calm looks, but stormy souls possess you all!

Enter VORTIGER *and* British Lords.

Vort. We see you keep your words in all points firm.

Heng. No longer may we boast of so much breath
As goes to a word's making, than of care 30
In the preserving of it when 'tis made.

Vort. You're in a virtuous way, my lord of Kent:
And since both sides are met, like sons of peace,
All other arms laid by in signs of favour,
If our conditions be embrac'd—

Heng. They are.

Vort. We'll use no other but these only here.

Heng. *Nemp your sexes.*

British Lords. Treason! treason!

[*The* Saxons *stab the* British Lords.

Heng. Follow it to the heart, my trusty Saxons!
It is your liberty, your wealth, and honour.— 40
Soft, you are mine, my lord. [*Seizing* VORTIGER.

---

next man, and with his drawn dagger stab him. Accordingly, at the time and place appointed, they all met, and began to treat of peace; and when a fit opportunity for executing his villany served, Hengist cried out, *Nemet oure Saxas;* and the same instant seized Vortegirn, and held him by his cloak.' Jeffrey of Monmouth's British History, translated by Aaron Thompson, 1718, 8vo, p. 194."—*Reed.* "*Nemp your sexes*, i.e. Nymeð eouer seaxes = take your daggers, or short swords."—*Dyce.*

Vort. Take me not basely, when all sense and strength
Lies bound up in amazement at this treachery.
What devil hath breath'd this everlasting part
Of falsehood into thee?
Heng. Let it suffice
I have you, and will hold you prisoner,
As fast as death holds your best props in silence.
We know the hard conditions of our peace,
Slavery or diminution; which we hate
With a joint loathing. May all perish thus, 50
That seek to subjugate or lessen us!
Vort. O, the strange nooks of guile or subtilty,
When man so cunningly lies hid from man!
Who could expect such treason from thy breast
Such thunder from thy voice? Or tak'st thou pride
To imitate the fair uncertainty
Of a bright day, that teems a sudden storm,
When the world least expects one? but of all,
I'll ne'er trust fair sky in a man again:
There's the deceitful weather. Will you heap 60
More guilt upon you by detaining me,
Like a cup taken after a sore surfeit,
Even in contempt of health and heaven together?
What seek you?
Heng. Ransom for your liberty,
As I shall like of, or you ne'er obtain it.
Vort. Here's a most headlong dangerous ambition!
Sow you the seeds of your aspiring hopes
In blood and treason, and must I pay for them?

Heng. Have not I rais'd you to this height of pride?
A work of my own merit, since you enforce it. 70
Vort. There's even the general thanks of all aspirers:
When they have all a kingdom can impart,
They write above it still their own desert.
Heng. I've writ mine true, my lord.
Vort. That's all their sayings.
Have not I rais'd thy daughter to a queen?
Heng. You have the harmony of your pleasure for it;
You crown your own desires; what's that to me?
Vort. And what will crown yours, sir?
Heng. Faith, things of reason:
I demand Kent.
Vort. Why, you've the earldom of it.
Heng. The kingdom of't, I mean, without control, 80
In full possession.
Vort. This is strange in you.
Heng. It seems you're not acquainted with my blood,
To call this strange.
Vort. Never was king of Kent,
But who was general king.
Heng. I'll be the first then:
Everything has beginning.
Vort. No less title?
Heng. Not if you hope for liberty, my lord.
So dear a happiness would not be wrong'd
With slighting.
Vort. Very well: take it; I resign it.
Heng. Why, I thank your grace.
Vort. Is your great thirst yet satisfied?

Heng. Faith, my lord, 90
There's yet behind a pair of teeming sisters,
Norfolk and Suffolk, and I've done with you.
Vort. You've got a dangerous thirst of late, my lord,
Howe'er you came by't.
Heng. It behoves me then,
For my blood's health, to seek all means to quench it.
Vort. Them too?
Heng. There will nothing be abated, I assure you.
Vort. You have me at advantage: he whom fate
Does captivate, must yield to all. Take them.
Heng. And you your liberty and peace, my lord, 100
With our best love and wishes.—Here's an hour
Begins us, Saxons, in wealth, fame, and power.
[*Exit with* Saxons.
Vort. Are these the noblest fruits and fair'st requitals
From works of our own raising?
Methinks,[1] the murder of Constantius
Speaks to me in the voice of't, and the wrongs
Of our late queen, slipt both into one organ.

Enter HORSUS.

Ambition, hell, my own undoing lust,
And all the brood of plagues, conspire against me:
I have not a friend left me.

---

[1] "Shakespeare seems to have imitated this in the *Tempest*, iii. 3:—
'Oh, it is monstrous! monstrous!
Methought, the billows spoke, and told me of it;
The winds did sing it to me; and the thunder,
That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounc'd
The name of Prosper.'"—*Reed.*

Hor. My lord, he dies 110
That says it, but yourself, were't that thief-king,
That has so boldly stoln his honours from you;
A treason that wrings tears from honest manhood.
Vort. So rich am I now in thy love and pity,
I feel no loss at all: but we must part,
My queen and I to Cambria.
Hor. My lord, and I not nam'd,
That have vow'd lasting service to my life's
Extremest minute!
Vort. Is my sick fate blest with so pure a friend? 120
Hor. My lord, no space of earth, nor breadth of sea,
Shall divide me from you.
Vort. O faithful treasure!
All my lost happiness is made up in thee. [*Exit.*
Hor. I'll follow you through the world, to cuckold you;
That's my way now. Every one has his toy
While he lives here: some men delight in building,[1]
A trick of Babel, which will ne'er be left;
Some in consuming what was rais'd with toiling;
Hengist in getting honour, I in spoiling. [*Exit.*

---

[1] Cf. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part I. Sect. 2, Memb. 3, Subs. 13:—"Some men are consumed by mad phantastical buildings, by making galleries, cloisters, terraces, walks, orchards, gardens, pools, rillets, bowers, and such like places of pleasure; *inutiles domos*, Xenophon calls them, which howsoever they be delightsome things in themselves and acceptable to all beholders, an ornament and befitting some great men; yet unprofitable to others, and the sole overthrow of their estates."

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Room in SIMON'S *House.*

Enter SIMON, Glover, Felt-maker, *and other of his brethren,* AMINADAB, *and Servants.*

Sim. Is not that rebel Oliver, that traitor to my year, 'prehended yet?

Amin. Not yet, so please your worship.

Sim. Not yet, sayest thou? how durst thou say, not yet, and see me present? thou malapert, thou art good for nothing but to write and read! Is his loom seized upon?

Amin. Yes, if it like your worship, and sixteen yards of fustian.

Sim. Good: let a yard be saved to mend me between the legs, the rest cut in pieces and given to the poor. 'Tis heretic fustian, and should be burnt indeed; but being worn threadbare, the shame will be as great: how think you, neighbours?

Glov. Greater, methinks, the longer it is wore;
Where[1] being once burnt, it can be burnt no more.
Sim. True, wise and most senseless.—How now, sirrah?

Enter a Footman.

What's he approaching here in dusty pumps?
Amin. A footman, sir, to the great king of Kent.
Sim. The king of Kent? shake him by the hand for me.
Thou'rt welcome, footman: lo, my deputy shakes thee!
Come when my year is out, I'll do't myself.
If 'twere a dog that came from the king of Kent,
I keep those officers would shake him, I trow.
And what's the news with thee, thou well-stew'd footman?
Foot. The king, my master—
Sim. Ha!
Foot. With a few Saxons,
Intends this night to make merry with you.
Sim. Merry with me? I should be sorrow else, fellow,
And take it in ill part; so tell Kent's king.
Why was I chosen, but that great men should make
Merry with me? there is a jest indeed!
Tell him I look'd for't; and me much he wrongs,
If he forget Sim that cut out his thongs.
Foot. I'll run with your worship's answer.
Sim. Do, I prithee. [*Exit* Footman.
That fellow will be roasted against supper;
He's half enough already; his brows baste him.

---

[1] Whereas.

The king of Kent! the king of Kirsendom[1]
Shall not be better welcome;
For you must imagine now, neighbours, this is
The time when Kent stands out of[2] Kirsendom, 40
For he that's king here now was never kirsen'd.[3]
This for your more instruction I thought fit,
That when you're dead you may teach your children wit.—
Clerk!

Amin. At your worship's elbow.

Sim. I must turn
You from the hall to the kitchen to-night.
Give order that twelve pigs be roasted yellow,
Nine geese, and some three larks for piddling[4] meat,
And twenty woodcocks: I'll bid all my neighbours.
Give charge the mutton come in all blood-raw,
That's infidel's meat; the king of Kent's a Pagan, 50
And must be servèd so. And let those officers
That seldom or never go to church bring it in,
'Twill be the better taken. Run, run.

[*Exit* AMINADAB.

Come you hither now.
Take all my cushions down and thwack them soundly,
After my feast of millers; for their buttocks

---

[1] A corruption of *Christendom.*

[2] An allusion to the proverb "In Kent and Christendom."

[3] A corruption of "christened."

[4] Meat to trifle with. A "piddler" was the name for one who ate squeamishly or with little appetite. Pope has a curious couplet:—

"Content on little I can *piddle* here
On brocoli and mutton round the year."

Have left a peck of flour in them: beat them carefully
Over a bolting-hutch,[1] there will be enough
For a pan-pudding, as your dame will handle it.
Then put fresh water into both the bough pots, 60
And burn a little juniper[2] in the hall-chimney:
[*Exeunt* Servants.
Like a beast as I was, I pissed out the fire last night, and never dreamt of the king's coming.

Re-enter AMINADAB.

How now, returned so quickly?

Amin. Please your worship, here are a certain company of players—

Sim. Ha, players!

Amin. Country comedians, interluders, sir, desire your worship's favour and leave to enact in the town-hall. 70

Sim. In the town-hall? 'tis ten to one I never grant them that. Call them before my worship. [*Exit.* AMINADAB.]—If my house will not serve their turn, I would fain see the proudest he lend them a barn.

Re-enter AMINADAB *with* Players.[3]

Now, sir, are you comedians?

Second Play. We are, sir; comedians, tragedians, tragi-comedians, comi-tragedians, pastorists, humourists,

---

[1] The wooden trough into which meal is sifted.

[2] Juniper-wood was burnt to sweeten rooms.

[3] It appears presently that these "Players" had "taken the name of country comedians, to abuse simple people."

clownists, satirists: we have them, sir, from the hug to the smile, from the smile to the laugh, from the laugh to the handkerchief. 80

Sim. You're very strong in the wrists, methinks. And must all these good parts be cast away upon pedlars and maltmen, ha?

First Play. For want of better company, if it please your worship.

Sim. What think you of me, my masters? Hum; have you audacity enough to play before so high a person as myself? Will not my countenance daunt you? for if you play before me, I shall often look on you; I give you that warning before hand. Take it not ill, my masters, I shall laugh at you, and truly when I am least offended with you: it is my humour; but be not you abashed. 93

First Play. Sir, we have play'd before a lord ere now,
Though we be country actors.

Sim. A lord? ha, ha!
Thou'lt find it a harder thing to please a mayor.

Second Play. We have a play wherein we use a horse.

Sim. Fellows, you use no horse-play in my house;
My rooms are rubb'd: keep it for hackney-men.

First Play. We'll not offer it to your worship. 100

Sim. Give me a play without a beast, I charge you.

Second Play. That's hard; without a cuckold or a drunkard?

Sim. O, those beasts are often the best men in a parish, and must not be kept out. But which is your merriest play? that I would hearken after.

Second Play. Your worship shall hear their names, and take your choice.

Sim. And that's plain dealing. Come, begin, sir.

Second Play. The Whirligig, The Whibble, The Carwidgeon. 110

Sim. Hey-day! what names are these?

Second Play. New names of late. *The Wildgoose Chase.*[1]

Sim. I understand thee now.

Second Play. Gull upon Gull.

Sim. Why this is somewhat yet.

First Play. Woodcock of our side.[2]

Sim. Get thee further off then.

Second Play. The Cheater and the Clown.

Sim. Is that come up again? 120
That was a play when I was 'prentice first.

Second Play. Ay, but the Cheater has learn'd more tricks of late,
And gulls the Clown with new additions.

Sim. Then is your Clown a coxcomb; which is he?

First Play. This is our Clown, sir.

Sim. Fie, fie, your company must fall upon him and beat him: he's too fair, i'faith, to make the people laugh.

First Play. Not as he may be drest, sir.

Sim. Faith, dress him how you will, I'll give him that

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[1] It is hardly likely that this is an allusion to Fletcher's comedy.

[2] "Taylor, the water-poet, in the preface to *Sir Gregory Nonsense*, mentions a book so called; but perhaps he merely invented the title — This expression was proverbial, and frequently occurs in our early writers: *woodcock* was a cant term for a simpleton."—*Dyce.*

gift, he will never look half scurvily enough. O, the clowns[1] that I have seen in my time! The very peeping out of one of them would have made a young heir laugh, though his father lay a-dying; a man undone in law the day before (the saddest case that can be) might for his twopence[2] have burst himself with laughing, and ended all his miseries. Here was a merry world, my masters! 137

Some talk of things of state, of puling stuff;
There's nothing in a play to[3] a clown, if he
Have the grace to hit on't; that's the thing indeed:
The king shows well, but he sets off the king.
But not the king of Kent, I mean not so;
The king is one, I mean, I do not know.

Second Play. Your worship speaks with safety, like a rich man;
And for your finding fault, our hopes are greater,
Neither with him the Clown, nor me the Cheater.

Sim. Away, then; shift, Clown, to thy motley crupper.
[*Exeunt* Players.
We'll see them first, the king shall after supper.

---

[1] "Nash tells us that, 'amongst other cholericke wise Justices he was one that, hauing a play presented before him and his Township, by Tarlton and the rest of his fellows, her Maiesties seruants, as they were new entring into their first merriment (as they call it), the people began exceedingly to laugh, when Tarlton first peept out his head.'—*Pierce Pennilesse*, sig. D, 2, ed. 1595. And in the Præludium to Goff's *Careless Shepherdes*, 1656, Thrift says—

'I never saw Rheade peeping through the Curtain,
But ravishing joy enter'd into my heart.'—p. 5."—*Dyce.*

[2] Old ed. "2d," which Dodsley absurdly printed "second."

[3] In comparison with.

Glov. I commend your worship's wisdom in that, master mayor. 150

Sim. Nay, 'tis a point of justice, if it be well examined, not to offer the king worse than I'll see myself. For a play may be dangerous: I have known a great man poisoned in a play—

Glov. What, have you, master mayor?

Sim. But to what purpose many times, I know not.

Felt. Methinks they should [not] destroy one another so.

Sim. O, no, no! he that's poisoned is always made privy to it; that's one good order they have among them.—[*A shout within.*] What joyful throat is that? Aminadab, what is the meaning of this cry? 162

Amin. The rebel is taken.

Sim. Oliver the puritan?

Amin. Oliver, puritan, and fustian-weaver altogether.

Sim. Fates, I thank you for this victorious day!
Bonfires of pease-straw burn, let the bells ring!

Glov. There's two in mending, and you know they cannot.

Sim. 'Las, the tenor's broken! ring out the treble!

Enter OLIVER, *brought in by* Officers.

I'm over-cloy'd with joy.—Welcome, thou rebel! 170

Oliv. I scorn thy welcome, I.

Sim. Art thou yet so stout?
Wilt thou not stoop for grace? then get thee out.

Oliv. I was not born to stoop but to my loom;
That seiz'd upon, my stooping days are done.
In plain terms, if thou hast anything to say to me, send

me away quickly, this is no biding-place; I understand there are players in thy house; despatch me, I charge thee, in the name of all the brethren.

Sim. Nay, now, proud rebel, I will make thee stay;
And, to thy greater torment, see a play. 180

Oliv. O devil! I conjure thee by Amsterdam![1]

Sim. Our word is past;
Justice may wink a while, but see at last.

[*Trumpet sounds*[2] *to announce the commencement of the play.*

The play begins. Hold, stop him, stop him!

Oliv. O that profane trumpet! O, O!

Sim. Set him down there, I charge you, officers.

Oliv. I'll hide my ears and stop[3] my eyes.

Sim. Down with his golls,[4] I charge you.

Oliv. O tyranny, tyranny! revenge it, tribulation!
For rebels there are many deaths; but sure the only way
To execute a puritan, is seeing of a play. 191
O, I shall swound![5]

Sim. Which if thou dost, to spite thee,
A player's boy shall bring thee aqua-vitæ.

Enter First Player *as* First Cheater.

Oliv. O, I'll not swound at all for't, though I die.

---

[1] Amsterdam was the city of refuge for fanatics, who found employment there as button-makers and weavers.

[2] Concerning the practice of sounding a trumpet before the commencement of a play, see Collier's *Hist. of Engl. Dram. Lit.* vol. iii. p. 251, 2nd ed.

[3] So the old ed. Dyce reads "I'll stop my ears and hide my eyes,"—but the absurdity was doubtless intentional.

[4] A cant term for hands.

[5] Swoon.

Sim. Peace, here's a rascal! list and edify.

First Play. I say still he's an ass that cannot live by his wits.

Sim. What a bold rascal's this! he calls us all asses at first dash: sure none of us live by our wits, unless it be Oliver the puritan.

Oliv. I scorn as much to live by my wits as the proudest of you all. 101

Sim. Why then you're an ass for company; so hold your prating.

Enter Second Player *as* Second Cheater.

First[1] *Play. Fellow in arms, welcome! the news, the news?*

Sim. Fellow in arms, quoth he? He may well call him fellow in arms; I am sure they're both out at the elbows.

Second Play. Be lively, my heart, be lively; the booty is at hand. He's but a fool of a yeoman's eldest son; he's balanced on both sides, bully;[2] *he's going to buy household-stuff with one pocket, and to pay rent with the other.* 111

First Play. And if this be his last day, my chuck, he shall forfeit his lease, quoth the one pocket, and eat his meat in wooden platters, quoth the other.

Sim. Faith, then he's not so wise as he ought to be, to let such tatterdemallions get the upper hand of him.

First Play. He comes.

---

[1] Old ed "2."

[2] Comrade.

Enter Third Player *as* Clown.

Second Play. Ay, but smally to our comfort, with both his hands in his pockets. How is it possible to pick a lock, when the key is on the inside of the door? 120

Sim. O neighbours, here's the part now that carries away the play! if the clown miscarry, farewell my hopes for ever; the play's spoiled.

Third Play. They say there is a foolish kind of thing called a cheater abroad, that will gull any yeoman's son of his purse, and laugh in his face like an Irishman. I would fain meet with some of these creatures: I am in as good state to be gulled now as ever I was in my life, for I have two purses at this time about me, and I would fain be acquainted with that rascal that would take one of them now. 130

Sim. Faith, thou mayest be acquainted with two or three, that will do their good wills, I warrant thee.

First Play. That way's too plain, too easy, I'm afraid.

Second Play. Come, sir, your most familiar cheats take best,
They show like natural things and least suspected.
Give me a round shilling quickly.

First Play. It will fetch but one of his hands neither, if it take.

Second Play. Thou art too covetous: let's have one out first, prithee; there's time enough to fetch out th' other after. Thou liest, 'tis lawful current money. [*They draw.* 141

First Play. I say 'tis copper in some countries.

Third Play. Here is a fray towards; but I will hold my hands, let who will part them.

Second Play. Copper? I defy thee, and now I shall disprove

thee. Look you, here's an honest yeoman's son of the country, a man of judgment—

Third Play. Pray you be covered, sir; I have eggs in my cap, and cannot put it off.

Second Play. Will you be tried by him?

First Play. I am content, sir. 150

Sim. They look rather as if they would be tried next sessions.

First Play. Pray give your judgment of this piece of coin, sir.

Third Play. Nay, if it be coin you strive about, let me see it; I love money.

First Play. Look on it well, sir. [*They pick his pocket.*

Second Play. Let him do his worst, sir.

Third Play. You'd both need wear cut[1] *clothes, you're so choleric.*

Second Play. Nay, rub it, and spare not, sir.

Third Play. Now by this silver, gentlemen, it is good money; would I had a hundred of them! 161

Second Play. We hope well, sir.—Th' other pocket, and we are made men. [*Exeunt* First *and* Second Players.

Sim. O neighbours, I begin to be sick of this fool, to see him thus cozened! I would make his case my own.

Third Play. Still would I meet with these things called cheaters.

Sim. A whoreson coxcomb; they have met with thee. I can no longer endure him with patience.

---

[1] A pun is intended. "Cut-work" was the name for "open work in linen, stamped or cut by hand" (*Nares*); and "cutter" was a cant name for swaggerer.

Third Play. O my rent! my whole year's rent! 170

Sim. A murrain on you! This makes us landlords stay so long for our money.

Third Play. The cheaters have been here.

Sim. A scurvy hobby-horse, that could not leave his money with me, having such a charge about him! A pox on thee for an ass! thou play a clown! I will commit thee for offering it.—Officers, away with him!

Glov. What means your worship? why, you'll spoil the play, sir.

Sim. Before the king of Kent shall be thus serv'd,
I'll play the clown myself.—Away with him! 180

[Officers *seize* Third Player.

Third Play. With me? if it please your worship, 'twas my part.

Sim. But 'twas a foolish part as ever thou playedst in thy life: I'll make thee smoke for it; I'll teach thee to understand to play a clown; thou shalt know every man is not born to it.—Away with him quickly! He'll have the other pocket picked else; I heard them say it with my own ears.

Re-enter Second Player *as* Second Cheater.

See, he's come in another disguise to cheat thee again.

[*Exit* Third Player *with* Officers.

Second Play. Pish, whither goes he now? 190

Sim. Come on, sir, let us see what your knaveship can do at me now: you must not think you have a clown in

hand. The fool I have committed too, for playing the part.

[*Throws off his gown, discovering his doublet with a satin forepart, and a canvas back.*

Second Play. What's here to do?

Glov. Fie, good sir, come away: will your worship base yourself to play a clown?

Second Play. I beseech your worship let us have our own clown; I know not how to go forwards else. 199

Sim. Knave, play out thy part with me, or I'll lay thee by the heels all the days of thy life.—Why, how now, my masters, who is that laughed at me? cannot a man of worship play the clown a little for his pleasure, but he must be laughed at? Do you know who I am? Is the king's deputy of no better account among you? Was I chosen to be laughed at?—Where's my clerk?

Amin. Here, if it please your worship.

Sim. Take a note of all those that laugh at me, that when I have done, I may commit them. Let me see who dare do it now.—And now to you once again, sir cheater: look you, here are my purse-strings; I do defy thee. 212

Second Play. Good sir, tempt me not; my part is so written, that I should cheat your worship if you were my father.

Sim. I should have much joy to have such a rascal to my son.

Second Play. Therefore I beseech your worship pardon me; the part has more knavery in it than when your worship saw it at first: I assure you you'll be deceived

in it, sir; the new additions will take any man's purse in Kent or Kirsendom. 222

Sim. If thou canst take my purse, I'll give it thee freely:
And do thy worst, I charge thee, as thou'lt answer it.

Second Play. I shall offend your worship.

Sim. Knave, do it quickly.

Second Play. Say you so? then there's for you, and here is for me.

[*Throws meal in his face, takes his purse, and exit.*

Sim. O bless me! neighbours, I am in a fog,
A cheater's fog; I can see nobody.

Glov. Run, follow him, officers. 230

Sim. Away! let him go; he will have all your purses, if he come back. A pox on your new additions![1] they spoil all the plays that ever they come in: the old way had no such roguery in it. Call you this a merry comedy, when a man's eyes are put out in't? Brother Honeysuckle—— [*Exit* AMINADAB.

Felt. What says your sweet worship?

Sim. I make you deputy, to rule the town till I can see again, which will be within these nine days at farthest. Nothing grieves me now, but that I hear Oliver the rebel laugh at me. A pox on your puritan face! this will make you in love with plays as long as you live; we shall not keep you from them now. 243

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[1] There is an allusion to the practice, so common in Elizabethan times, of introducing additional matter into plays on the occasion of their revival.

Oliv. In sincerity, I was never better pleased at an exercise.[1] Ha, ha, ha!

Sim. Neighbours, what colour was the dust the rascal threw in my face?

Glov. 'Twas meal, if it please your worship.

Sim. Meal! I am glad of it; I'll hang the miller for selling it. 250

Glov. Nay, ten to one the cheater never bought it; he stole it certainly.

Sim. Why, then I'll hang the cheater for stealing it, and the miller for being out of the way when he did it.

Felt. Ay, but your worship was in the fault yourself; you bid him do his worst.

Sim. His worst? that's true; but the rascal hath done his best; for I know not how a villain could put out a man's eyes better, and leave them in his head, as he has done mine. 260

Re-enter AMINADAB.

Amin. Where is my master's worship?

Sim. How now, Aminadab? I hear thee, though I see thee not.

Amin. You are sure cozened, sir; they are all professed cheaters: they have stolen two silver spoons, and the clown took his heels with all celerity. They only take the name of country comedians to abuse simple people with a printed play or two, which they bought at Canterbury for sixpence; and what is worse, they speak but what they list of it, and fribble out the rest. 270

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[1] The week-day sermons of the Puritans were called *exercises.*

Sim. Here's no[1] abuse to the commonwealth, if a man could see to look into it!
But mark the cunning of these cheating slaves,
First they make justice blind, then play the knaves.

Heng. [*without*]. Where's master mayor?

Glov. Od's precious, brother! the king of Kent is newly alighted.

Sim. The king of Kent!
Where is he? that I should live to this day,
And yet not live to see to bid him welcome! 280

Enter HENGIST *attended.*

Heng. Where is Simonides, our friendly host?

Sim. Ah, blind as one that had been fox'd[2] a seven-night!

Heng. Why, how now, man?

Sim. Faith, practising a clown's part for your grace, I have practis'd both my eyes out.

Heng. What need you practise that?

Sim. A man is never too old to learn; your grace will say so, when you hear the jest of it: the truth is, my lord, I meant to have been merry, and now it is my luck to weep water and oatmeal; I shall see again at supper, I make no doubt of it. 291

Heng. This is strange to me, sirs.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. Arm, arm, my lord!

Heng. What's that?

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[1] See note 2, p. 55. [2] A cant term for "drunk."

Gent. With swiftest speed,
If ever you'll behold the queen, your daughter,
Alive again.
Heng. Roxena?
Gent. They are besieg'd:
Aurelius Ambrose, and his brother Uther,
With numbers infinite of British forces,
Beset their castle, and they cannot 'scape
Without your speedy succour.
Heng. For her safety
I'll forget food and rest; away! 300
Sim. I hope your worship will hear the jest ere you go.
Heng. The jest! torment me not.
Sim. I'll follow you to Wales with a dog and a bell, but I will tell it you.
Heng. Unseasonable folly!
[*Exit with* Attendants.
Sim. 'Tis sign of war when great men disagree.
Look to the rebel well, till I can see;
And when my sight's recover'd, I will have
His eyes pull'd out for a fortnight.
Oliv. My eyes? hang thee!
A deadly sin or two shall pluck them out first; 310
That is my resolution. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Before a Castle in Wales.

Enter AURELIUS *and* UTHER, *and* Lords, *with* Soldiers.

Uth. My lord, the castle is so fortified—
Aur. Let wild-fire ruin it,
That his destruction may appear to him
In the figure of heaven's wrath at the last day,
That murderer of our brother. Hence, away !
I'll send my heart no peace till't be consum'd.
[*Enter above* VORTIGER *and* HORSUS.
Uth. There he appears again—behold, my lord !
Aur. O that the zealous fire on my soul's altar,
To the high birth of virtue consecrated,
Would fit me with a lightning now to blast him, 10
Even as I look upon him !
Uth. Good my lord,
Your anger is too noble and too precious
To waste itself on guilt so foul as his :
Let ruin work her will.
Vort. Begirt all round ?
Hor. All, all, my lord ; 'tis folly to make doubt of't :
You question things, that horror long ago
Resolv'd us on.
Vort. Give me leave, Horsus, though——

Hor. Do what you will, sir; question them again; I'll tell them to you.

Vort. Not so, sir; 20
I will not have them told again.

Hor. It rests then—

Vort. That's an ill word put in, when thy heart knows
There is no rest at all, but torment waking.[1]

Hor. True; my heart finds it, that sits weeping blood now
For poor Roxena's safety.—[*Aside.*] You'll confess, my lord,
My love to you has brought me to this danger?
I could have liv'd, like Hengist king of Kent,
London, York, Lincoln, and Winchester,
Under the power of my command, the portion
Of my most just desert, enjoyèd now 30
By pettier deservers.

Vort. Say you so, sir?
And you'll confess, since you began confession,
(A thing I should have died ere I had thought on),
You've marr'd the fashion of your affection utterly,
In your own wicked counsel, there you paid me:
You were bound in conscience to love me after;
You were bound to't, as men in honesty,
That vitiate virgins, to give dowries to them:
My faith was pure before to a faithful woman.

---

[1] Old ed. "making."

Hor. My lord, my counsel—
Vort. Why, I'll be judg'd by these 40
That knit death in their brows, and hold me now
Not worth the acception of a flattery;
Most of whose faces smil'd when I smil'd once.—
My lords!
Uth. Reply not, brother.
Vort. Seeds of scorn,
I mind you not; I speak to them alone
Whose force makes yours a power, which else were none.
Show me the main food of your hate,
Which cannot be the murder of Constantius,
That crawls in your revenges, for your loves
Were violent long since that.
First Lord. And had been still, 50
If from that Pagan wound thou'dst kept thee free;
But when thou fled'st from heaven, we fled from thee.
Vort. This was your counsel now.
Hor. Mine? 'twas the counsel
Of your own lust and blood; your appetite knows it.
Vort. May thunder strike me from these walls, my lords,
And leave me many leagues off from your eyes,
If this be not the man whose Stygian soul
Breath'd forth that counsel to me, and sole plotter
Of all those false injurious disgraces,

That have abus'd the virtuous patience 60
Of our religious queen.

Hor. A devil in madness!

Vort. Upon whose life I swear there sticks no stain
But what's most wrongful: and where now she thinks
A rape dwells on her honour, only I
Her ravisher was, and his the policy.

Aur. Inhuman practice!

Vort. Now you know the truth,
Will his death serve your fury?

Hor. My death?

Vort. Say, will it do it?

Hor. Say they should say 'twould do't?

Vort. Why, then it must.

Hor. It must?

Vort. It shall.— 70
Speak but the word, it shall be yielded up.

Hor. Believe him not; he cannot do it.

Vort. Cannot?

Hor. 'Tis but a false and base insinuation
For his own life, and like his late submission.

Vort. O sting to honour! Alive or dead, thou goest
For that word's rudeness only. [*Stabs him.*

First Lord. See, sin needs
No other destruction than [what] it breeds
In its own bosom.

Vort. Such another brings him.
Hor. What! has thy vile rage stampt a wound upon me?
I'll send one to thy soul shall never heal for't. 80
Vort. How, to my soul?
Hor. It shall be thy master torment,
Both for the pain and th' everlastingness.
Vort. Ha, ha, ha!
Hor. Dost laugh? take leave of't: all eternity
Shall never see thee do so much again.
Know, thou'rt a cuckold.
Vort. What!
Hor. You change too soon, sir.
Roxena, whom thou'st rais'd to thy own ruin,
She was my whore in Germany.
Vort. Burst me open,
The violence of whirlwinds!
Hor. Hear me out first.
For her embrace, which my flesh yet sits warm in, 90
I was thy friend and follower.
Vort. Defend me,
Thou most imperious noise that starts the world!
Hor. And to serve both our lusts, I practis'd with thee
Against thy virtuous queen.
Vort. Bane to all comforts!
Hor. Whose faithful sweetness, too precious for thy blood,
I made thee change for love's hypocrisy.
Vort. Insufferable!

Hor. Only to make
My way to pleasure fearless, free, and fluent.
Vort. Hell's trump is in that throat!
Hor. It shall sound shriller.
Vort. I'll dam it up with death first.
[*They stab each other. Enter* ROXENA *above.*
Rox. O for succour!
Who's near me? Help me, save me! the flame follows me;
'Tis in the figure of young Vortimer, the prince,
Whose life I took by poison.
Hor. Hold out, breath,
And I shall find thee quickly.
Vort. I will tug
Thy soul out here
Hor. Do, monster!
Rox. Vortiger!
Vort. Monster!
Rox. My lord!
Vort. Toad! Pagan!
Hor. Viper! Christian!
Rox. O hear me, O help me, my love, my lord! 'tis here!
Horsus, look up, if not to succour me,
To see me yet consum'd. O what is love,
When life is not regarded!
Vort. What strength's left
I'll fix upon thy throat.
Hor. I have some force yet.
[*They stab each other,* HORSUS *falls.*

Rox. No way to 'scape? is this the end of glory?
Doubly beset with enemies' wrath, and fire?
It comes nearer—rivers and fountains, fall!—
It sucks away my breath; I cannot give
A curse to sin, and hear't out while I live.
Help, help! [*Falls.*

Vort. Burn, burn! Now I can tend thee.
Take time with her in torment, call her life
Afar off to thee, dry up her strumpet-blood,
And hardly parch the skin: let one heat strangle her,
Another fetch her to her sense again,
And the worse pain be only her reviving;
Follow her eternally! O mystical harlot,
Thou hast thy full due! Whom lust crown'd queen before,
Flames crown her now a most triumphant whore;
And that end crowns them all! [*Falls.*

Aur. Our peace is full
In yon usurper's fall; nor have I known
A judgment meet [the bad] more fearfully.
Here, take this ring; deliver the good queen,
And those grave pledges of her murder'd honour,
Her worthy father and her noble uncle.

[*Exit* Second Lord *with ring. Trumpets sound.*

How now! the meaning of these sounds?

Enter DEVONSHIRE, STAFFORD, *and* Soldiers, *with* HENGIST *prisoner.*

Hen. The consumer has been here; she's gone, she's lost;
In glowing cinders now lie all my joys:
The headlong fortune of my rash captivity
Strikes not so deep a wound into my hopes
As thy dear loss.
Aur. Her father and her uncle!
First Lord. They are indeed, my lord.
Aur. Part of my wishes.
What fortunate power has prevented[1] me,
And ere my love came, brought them victory? 140
First Lord. My wonder sticks in Hengist, king of Kent.
Devonshire. My lord, to make that plain which now I see
Fix'd in astonishment; the only name
Of your return and being, brought such gladness
To this distracted kingdom, that, to express
A thankfulness to heaven, it grew great
In charitable actions; from which goodness
We taste our liberty, who liv'd engag'd
Upon the innocence of woman's honour,
(A kindness that even threaten'd to undo us): 150

[1] Anticipated.

And having newly but enjoy'd the benefit
And fruits of our enlargement, 'twas our happiness
To intercept this monster of ambition,
Bred in these times of usurpation,
The rankness of whose insolence and treason
Grew to such height, 'twas arm'd to bid you battle;
Whom, as our fame's redemption, on our knees
We present captive.

Aur. Had it needed reason,
You richly came provided. I understood
Not your deserts till now.—My honour'd lords, 160
Is this that German Saxon, whose least thirst
Could not be satisfied under a province?

Heng. Had but my fate directed this bold arm
To thy life, the whole kingdom had been mine;
That was my hope's great aim: I have a thirst
Could never have been full quench'd under all;
The whole must do't, or nothing.

Aur. A strange drought!
And what a little ground shall death now teach you
To be content withal!

Heng. Why let it then,
For none else can; you've nam'd the only way 170
To limit my ambition; a full cure
For all my fading hopes and sickly fears;
Nor shall it be less welcome to me now,
Than a fresh acquisition would have been
Unto my new-built kingdoms. Life to me,
'Less it be glorious, is a misery.

Aur. That pleasure we will do you.—Lead him out:
And when we have inflicted our just doom
On his usurping head, it will become
Our pious care to see this realm secur'd 180
From the convulsions it hath long endur'd.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE OLD LAW.

The Excellent Comedy, called The Old Law, or A new way to please you.

By { *Phil. Massinger.*
Tho. Middleton.
William Rowley.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

EVANDER, *Duke of Epire.*
CRATILUS, *the executioner.*
CREON, *father to* SIMONIDES.
SIMONIDES, } *young courtiers.*
CLEANTHES, }
LYSANDER, *husband to* EUGENIA, *and uncle to* CLEANTHES.
LEONIDES, *father to* CLEANTHES.
GNOTHO, *the clown.*
Lawyers.
Courtiers.
Dancing-master.
Butler, }
Bailiff, }
Tailor, } *Servants to* CREON.
Coachman, }
Footman, }
Cook, }
Clerk.
Drawer.

ANTIGONA, *wife to* CREON.
HIPPOLITA, *wife to* CLEANTHES.
EUGENIA, *wife to* LYSANDER, *and mother to* PARTHENIA.
PARTHENIA.
AGATHA, *wife to* GNOTHO.
Old women, wives to CREON'S *servants.*
Courtezan.

Fiddlers, Servants, Guard, &c.

SCENE, EPIRE.

THE OLD LAW.

—o—

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Room in CREON'S *House.*

Enter SIMONIDES *and two* Lawyers.

Sim. Is the law firm, sir?
First Law. The law! what more firm, sir,
More powerful, forcible, or more permanent?
Sim. By my troth, sir,
I partly do believe it; conceive, sir,
You have indirectly answered my question.
I did not doubt the fundamental grounds
Of law in general, for the most solid;
But this particular law that me concerns,
Now, at the present, if that be firm and strong,
And powerful, and forcible, and permanent? 10
I am a young man that has an old father.
Second Law. Nothing more strong, sir.
It is—*Secundum statutum principis, confirmatum cum voce*

senatus,[1] *et voce reipublicæ;* nay, *consummatum et exemplificatum.*
Is it not in force,
When divers have already tasted it,
And paid their lives for penalty?
Sim. 'Tis true.
My father must be next; this day completes
Full fourscore years upon him. 20
Second Law. He's here, then,
Sub pœna statuti: hence I can tell him,
Truer than all the physicians in the world,
He cannot live out to-morrow; this
Is the most certain climacterical year—
'Tis past all danger, for there's no 'scaping it.
What age is your mother, sir?
Sim. Faith, near her days too;
Wants some two of threescore.
First Law. So! she'll drop away
One of these days too: here's a good age now
For those that have old parents and rich inheritance!
Sim. And, sir, 'tis profitable for others too: 30
Are there not fellows that lie bedrid in their offices,
That younger men would walk lustily in?
Churchmen, that even the second infancy
Hath silenc'd, yet hath spun out their lives so long,
That many pregnant and ingenious spirits
Have languish'd in their hop'd reversions,
And died upon the thought? and, by your leave, sir,

---

[1] Old ed. "senatum."

Have you not places fill'd up in the law
By some grave senators, that you imagine
Have held them long enough, and such spirits as you, 40
Were they remov'd, would leap into their dignities?

First Law. Dic quibus in terris, et eris mihi magnus Apollo.[1]

Sim. But tell me, faith, your fair opinion:
Is't not a sound and necessary law,
This, by the duke enacted?

First Law. Never did Greece,
Our ancient seat of brave philosophers,
'Mongst all her *nomothetæ*[2] and lawgivers,
Not when she flourish'd in her sevenfold sages,
Whose living memory can never die,
Produce a law more grave and necessary. 50

Sim. I'm of that mind too.

Second Law. I will maintain, sir,
Draco's oligarchy, that the government
Of community reduced into few,
Fram'd a fair state; Solon's *chreokopia*,[3]
That cut off poor men's debts to their rich creditors,
Was good and charitable, but not full allow'd;[4]
His *seisactheia*[5] did reform that error,

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[1] Virgil, *Eclog.* iii. 104.
[2] Old ed. "nomotheta."
[3] Χρεωκοπία, a cancelling of debts.—Old ed. "Crecopedi."
[4] Approved.
[5] Σεισάχθεια, an abolition of debt (literally, a shaking off of burthens). —Old ed. "Sisaithie.

His honourable senate of Areopagitæ.
Lycurgus was more loose, and gave too free
And licentious reins unto his discipline; 60
As that a young woman, in her husband's weakness,
Might choose her able friend to propagate;
That so the commonwealth might be supplied
With hope of lusty spirits. Plato did err,
And so did Aristotle, [in] allowing
Lewd and luxurious limits to their laws:
But now our Epire, our Epire's Evander,
Our noble and wise Prince, has hit the law
That all our predecessive students
Have miss'd, unto their shame.

Enter CLEANTHES.

Sim. Forbear the praise, sir, 70
'Tis in itself most pleasing.—Cleanthes!
O lad, here's a spring for young plants to flourish!
The old trees must down kept the sun from us;
We shall rise now, boy.
Clean. Whither, sir, I pray?
To the bleak air of storms, among those trees
Which we had shelter from?
Sim. Yes, from our growth,
Our sap and livelihood, and from our fruit.
What! 'tis not jubilee with thee yet, I think,
Thou look'st so sad on't. How old is thy father?
Clean. Jubilee! no, indeed; 'tis a bad year with me. 80

Sim. Prithee, how old's thy father? then I can tell thee.

Clean. I know not how to answer you, Simonides;
He's too old, being now exposed
Unto the rigour of a cruel edict;
And yet not old enough by many years,
'Cause I'd not see him go an hour before me.

Sim. These very passions [1] I speak to my father.
Come, come, here's none but friends here, we may speak
Our insides freely; these are lawyers, man,
And shall be counsellors shortly.

Clean. They shall be now, sir, 90
And shall have large fees if they'll undertake
To help a good cause, for it wants assistance;
Bad ones, I know, they can insist upon.

First Law. O sir, we must undertake of both parts;
But the good we have most good in.

Clean. Pray you, say,
How do you allow of this strange edict?

First Law. *Secundum justitiam;* by my faith, sir,
The happiest edict that ever was in Epire.

Clean. What, to kill innocents, sir? it cannot be,
It is no rule in justice there to punish. 100

First Law. O sir,
You understand a conscience, but not law.

Clean. Why, sir, is there so main a difference?

First Law. You'll never be good lawyer if you understand not that.

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[1] Sorrowful speeches.

Clean. I think, then, 'tis the best to be a bad one.

First Law. Why, sir, the very letter and the sense both do[1] overthrow you in this statute, which[2] speaks, that every man living to fourscore years, and women to threescore, shall then be cut off, as fruitless to the republic, and law shall finish what nature linger'd at. 110

Clean. And this suit shall soon be despatch'd in law?

First Law. It is so plain it can have no demur;
The church-book overthrows it.

Clean. And so it does;
The church-book[3] overthrows it, if you read it well.

First Law. Still, you run from the law into error!
You say it takes the lives of innocents;
I say no, and so says common reason;
What man lives to fourscore, and women to three,
That can die innocent?

Clean. A fine lawfull evasion!
Good sir, rehearse the full statute to me. 120

Sim. Fie! that's too tedious; you have already
The full sum in the brief relation.

Clean. Sir,
'Mongst many words may be found contradictions;
And these men dare sue and wrangle with a statute,
If they can pick a quarrel with some error.

---

[1] Old ed. "both do both."

[2] Old ed. "which that."

[3] As Gifford observes, the lawyer's "church-book" is the parish-register, and Cleanthes' "church-book" is Holy Writ.

Second Law. Listen, sir, I'll gather it as brief as I can for you:

Anno primo Evandri, Be it for the care and good of the commonwealth, (for divers necessary reasons that we shall urge,) thus peremptorily enacted,—

Clean. A fair pretence, if the reasons foul it not! 130

Second Law. That all men living in our dominions of Epire, in their decayed nature, to the age of fourscore, or women to the age of threescore, shall on the same day be instantly put to death, by those means and instruments that a former proclamation, had to this purpose, through our said territories dispersed.

Clean. There was no woman in this senate, certain. 137

First Law. That these men—being past their bearing arms to aid and defend their country; past their manhood and livelihood to propagate any further issue to their posterity; and as well past their councils (which overgrown gravity is now run into dotage) to assist their country; to whom, in common reason, nothing should be so wearisome as their own lives,—as it may be supposed, is tedious to their successive heirs, whose times are spent in the good of their country, yet wanting the means to maintain it, and are like to grow old before their inheritance (born to them) come to their necessary use: for the women,[1] *for that they never were defence to their country; never by counsel admitted to the assist of government of their country; only necessary to the propagation of posterity, and now, at the age of threescore, they be past*[2] *that good, and all their goodness: it is thought fit,*

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[1] Old ed. "for the which are the women."

[2] Old ed. "to be past."

then, (a quarter abated from the more worthy member) they[1] *be put to death, as is before recited: provided that, for the just and impartial execution of this our statute, the example shall first begin in and about our court, which ourself will see carefully performed; and not, for a full month following, extend any further into our dominions. Dated the sixth of the second month, at our Palace Royal in Epire.* 159

Clean. A fine edict, and very fairly gilded!
And is there no scruple in all these words
To demur the law upon occasion?

Sim. Pox! 'tis an unnecessary inquisition;
Prithee, set him not about it.

Second Law. Troth, none, sir:
It is so evident and plain a case,
There is no succour for the defendant.

Clean. Possible! can nothing help in a good case?

First Law. Faith, sir, I do think there may be a hole,
Which would protract—delay, if not remedy.

Clean. Why, there's some comfort in that: good sir,
speak it. 170

First Law. Nay, you must pardon me for that, sir.

Sim. Prithee, do not;
It may ope a wound to many sons and heirs,
That may die after it.

Clean. Come, sir, I know
How to make you speak:—will this do't?
[*Gives him his purse.*

First Law. I will afford you my opinion, sir.

---

[1] Old ed. "to."

Clean. Pray you, repeat the literal words expressly,
The time of death.

Sim. 'Tis an unnecessary question; prithee, let it alone.

Second Law. Hear his opinion; 'twill be fruitless, sir.
That man at the age of fourscore, and women at threescore,
shall the same day be put to death. 182

First Law. Thus I help the man to twenty-one years more.

Clean. That were a fair addition.

First Law. Mark it, sir; we say, man is not at age
Till he be one-and-twenty; before, 'tis[1] infancy,
And adolescency; nor, by that addition,
Fourscore he cannot be till a hundred and one.

Sim. O poor evasion!
He's fourscore years old, sir.

First Law. That helps more, sir; 190
He begins to be old at fifty, so, at fourscore
He's but thirty years old; so, believe it, sir,
He may be twenty years in declination;
And so long may a man linger and live by't.

Sim. The worst hope of safety that e'er I heard!
Give him his fee again, 'tis not worth two deniers.

First Law. There's no law for restitution of fees, sir.

Clean. No, no, sir; I meant it lost when 'twas given.

Enter CREON *and* ANTIGONA.

Sim. No more, good sir!
Here are ears unnecessary for your doctrine. 200

[1] Old ed. "his"

First Law. I have spoke out my fee, and I have done, sir.

Sim. O my dear father!

Creon. Tush! meet me not in exclaims;[1]
I understand the worst, and hope no better.
A fine law! if this hold, white heads will be cheap,
And many watchmen's places will be vacant;
Forty of 'em I know my seniors,
That did due deeds of darkness too:—their country[2]
Has watch'd 'em a good turn for't,
And ta'en 'em napping now:
The fewer hospitals will serve too, many 210
May be us'd for stews and brothels; and those people
Will never trouble 'em to fourscore.

Ant. Can you play and sport with sorrow, sir?

Creon. Sorrow! for what, Antigona? for my life?
My sorrow's I have kept it so long well,
With bringing it up unto so ill an end:
I might have gently lost it in my cradle,
Before my nerves and ligaments grew strong,
To bind it faster to me.

Sim. For mine own sake,
I should have been sorry for that.

Creon. In my youth 220
I was a soldier, no coward in my age;
I never turn'd my back upon my foe;

---

[1] Exclamations.

[2] So Gifford and Dyce. The old ed. gives—

"That did due deeds of darknesse to their countrey,
Has watch'd 'em," &c.

I have felt nature's winters, sicknesses,[1]
Yet ever kept a lively sap in me
To greet the cheerful spring of health again.
Dangers on horseback,[2] on foot, by water,
I have 'scap'd to this day; and yet this day,
Without all help of casual accidents,
Is only deadly to me, 'cause it numbers
Fourscore years to me. Where is the fault now? 230
I cannot blame time, nature, nor my stars,
Nor aught but tyranny. Even kings themselves
Have sometimes tasted an even fate with me.
He that has been a soldier all his days,
And stood in personal opposition
'Gainst darts and arrows, the extremes of heat
And pinching cold, has treacherously at home,
In's secured[3] quiet, by a villain's hand
Been[4] basely lost, in his stars' ignorance:—
And so must I die by a tyrant's sword. 240

First Law. O say not so, sir; it is by the law.

Creon. And what's that, sir, but the sword of tyranny,
When it is brandish'd against innocent lives?
I'm now upon my deathbed, sir; and 'tis fit
I should unbosom my free conscience,
And show the faith I die in:—I do believe
'Tis tyranny that takes my life.

---

[1] I should prefer "winter-sicknesses."

[2] Gifford and Dyce read "Dangers on horse, on foot, [by land,] by water,"—but it is uncritical to restore the measure by such violent treatment.

[3] Gifford and Dyce read "In's secure."

[4] Old ed. "*Am* basely lost in *my*," &c.

Sim. Would it were gone,
By one means or other! what a long day
Will this be ere night! [*Aside.*
Creon. Simonides.
Sim. Here, sir.[1] [*Weeping.*[2] 250
Creon. Wherefore dost thou weep?
Clean. 'Cause you make no more haste to your end.
[*Aside.*
Sim. How can you question nature so unjustly?
I had a grandfather, and then had not you
True filial tears for him?
Clean. Hypocrite!
A disease of drought dry up all pity from him,
That can dissemble pity with wet eyes! [*Aside.*
Creon. Be good unto your mother, Simonides;
She must be now your care.
Ant. To what end, sir?
The bell of this sharp edict tolls for me, 260
As it rings out for you.—I'll be as ready,
With one hour's stay, to go along with you.
Creon. Thou must not, woman; there are years behind,
Before thou canst set forward in this voyage;
And nature, sure, will now be kind to all:
She has a quarrel in't, a cruel law
Seeks to prevent[3] her, she will therefore fight in't,

---

[1] Old ed. "sit."

[2] Gifford and Dyce give this as part of the text; and Gifford states that it is so printed in the old copy. What the old copy gives is—

"Heer sit —— —— weeping."

It is plain that "weeping" was intended for a stage-direction.

[3] "To anticipate the period she had allotted to life."—*Gifford.*

And draw out life even to her longest thread:
Thou art scarce fifty-five.
Ant. So many morrows!
Those five remaining years I'll turn to days, 270
To hours, or minutes, for thy company.
'Tis fit that you and I, being man and wife,
Should walk together arm in arm.
Sim. I hope
They'll go together; I would they would, i'faith—
Then would her thirds be sav'd too.— [*Aside.*
The day goes away, sir.
Creon. Why, wouldst thou have me gone, Simonides?
Sim. O my heart! Would you have me gone before you, sir,
You give me such a deadly wound?
Clean. Fine rascal! [*Aside.*
Sim. Blemish my duty so with such a question?
Sir, I would haste me to the duke for mercy: 280
He that's above the law may mitigate
The rigour of the law. How a good meaning
May be corrupted by [a] misconstruction!
Creon. Thou corrupt'st mine; I did not think thou mean'st so.
Clean. You were in the more error. [*Aside.*
Sim. The words wounded me.
Clean. 'Twas pity thou died'st not on't. [*Aside.*
Sim. I have been ransacking the helps of law,
Conferring with these learned advocates:
If any scruple, cause, or wrested sense
Could have been found out to preserve your life, 290

It had been bought, though with your full estate,
Your life's so precious to me;—but there is none.

First Law. Sir, we have canvass'd her[1] from top to toe,
Turn'd her[1] upside down; threw her on her side,
Nay, open'd and dissected all her entrails,
Yet can find none: there's nothing to be hop'd,
But the duke's mercy.

Sim. I know the hope of that;
He did not make the law for that purpose. [*Aside.*

Creon. Then to his hopeless mercy last I go;
I have so many precedents before me, 300
I must call it hopeless: Antigona,
See me deliver'd up unto my deathsman,
And then we'll part;—five years hence I'll look for thee.

Sim. I hope she'll not stay so long behind you. [*Aside.*

Creon. Do not bate him an hour by grief and sorrow,
Since there's a day prefix'd, haste[n] it not.
Suppose me sick, Antigona, dying now;
Any disease thou wilt may be my end;
Or when death's slow to come, say tyrants send.

[*Exeunt* CREON *and* ANTIGONA.

Sim. Cleanthes, if you want money, to-morrow use me; 310
I'll trust you while[2] your father's dead.

[*Exit with the* Lawyers.

Clean. Why, here's a villain,
Able to corrupt a thousand by example!
Does the kind root bleed out his livelihood

---

[1] Old ed. "it." [2] Until.

In parent distribution to his branches,
Adorning them with all his glorious fruits,
Proud that his pride is seen when he's unseen;
And must not gratitude descend again,
To comfort his old limbs in fruitless winter?
Improvident, at least partial[1] nature! 320
(Weak woman in this kind), who, in thy last
Teeming,[2] forgets the former, ever making
The burthen of thy last throes still the dearest
Darling; oh yet in noble man reform it,
And make us better than those vegetives
Whose souls die with 'em. Nature, as thou art old,
If love and justice be not dead in thee,
Make some the pattern of thy piety;
Lest all do turn unnaturally against thee,
And thou be blam'd for our oblivious 330

Enter LEONIDES *and* HIPPOLITA.

And brutish reluctations! Ay, here's the ground
Whereon my filial faculties must build

---

[1] For the sake of the metre, I should like to read "impartial," which is occasionally found in the sense of "unkindly." See my note, Marlowe's Works, ii. 60.

[2] The reading of the old edition is—

"Teeming still forgets the former, ever making
The burthen of thy last throws the dearest
Darling; oh yet," &c.

The word "still" appears to have been printed in the wrong line,—an error of common occurrence. Even with this alteration the rhythm is awkward. Gifford and Dyce give—

"(Weak woman in this kind), who, in thy last teeming
Forgetest still the former, ever making
The burthen of thy last throes the dearest darling."

An edifice of honour, or of shame,
To all mankind.
Hip. You must avoid it, sir,
If there be any love within yourself:
This is far more than fate of a lost game,
That another venture may restore again;
It is your life, which you should not subject
To any cruelty, if you can preserve it.
Clean. O dearest woman, thou hast doubled now [1] 340
A thousand times thy nuptial dowry to me!—
Why, she whose love is but deriv'd from me,
Is got before me in my debted duty.
Hip. Are you thinking such a resolution, sir?
Clean. Sweetest Hippolita, what love taught thee
To be so forward in so good a cause?
Hip. Mine own pity, sir, did first instruct me,
And then your love and power did both command me.
Clean. They were all blessed angels to direct thee;
And take their counsel. How do you fare, sir? 350
Leon. Never better, Cleanthes; I have conceiv'd
Such a new joy within this old bosom,
As I did never think would there have enter'd.
Clean. Joy call you it? alas! 'tis sorrow, sir,
The worst of sorrows, sorrow unto death.
Leon. Death! what's that, Cleanthes? I thought not on't,
I was in contemplation of this woman:
'Tis all thy comfort, son; thou hast in her

---

[1] Old ed. "now doubled."

A treasure unvaluable, keep her safe.
When I die, sure 'twill be a gentle death, 360
For I will die with wonder of her virtues;
Nothing else shall dissolve me.
Clean. 'Twere much better, sir,
Could you prevent their malice.
Leon. I'll prevent 'em,
And die the way I told thee, in the wonder
Of this good woman. I tell thee there's few men
Have such a child: I must thank thee for her.
That the stranger[1] tie of wedlock should do more
Than nature in her nearest ligaments
Of blood and propagation! I should ne'er
Have begot such a daughter of my own: 370
A daughter-in-law! law were above nature,
Were there more such children.
Clean. This admiration
Helps nothing to your safety: think of that, sir.
Leon. Had you heard her, Cleanthes, but labour
In the search of means to save my forfeit life,
And knew the wise and sound preservatives[2]
That she found out, you would redouble all
My wonder, in your love to her.
Clean. The thought,
The very thought, claims all that [love] from me,
And she is now possest of't; but, good sir, 380

---

[1] Old ed. "stronger."—Gifford and Dyce give "strong."
[2] This is my own correction (*metri causa*) of the old ed.'s "preservations."

If you have aught receiv'd from her advice,
Let's follow it; or else let's better think,
And take the surest course.
Leon. I'll tell thee one;
She counsels me to fly my severe country;
Turn all into treasure, and there build up
My decaying fortunes in a safer soil,
Where Epire's law cannot claim me.
Clean. And, sir,
I apprehend it as a safest course,
And may be easily accomplished;
Let us be all most expeditious. 390
Every country where we breathe will be our own,
Or better soil; heaven is the roof of all;
And now, as Epire's situate by this law,
There is 'twixt us and heaven a dark eclipse.
Hip. O then avoid it, sir; these sad events
Follow those black predictions.
Leon. I prithee, peace;
I do allow[1] thy love, Hippolita,
But must not follow it as counsel, child;
I must not shame my country for the law.
This country here hath bred me, brought me up, 400
And shall I now refuse a grave in her?
I'm in my second infancy, and children
Ne'er sleep so sweetly in their nurse's cradle
As in their natural mother's.
Hip. Ay, but, sir,

---

[1] Approve.

She is unnatural; then the stepmother
Is to be preferr'd before her.
Leon. Tush! she shall
Allow it me despite of her entrails.
Why, do you think how far from judgment 'tis,
That I should travel forth to seek a grave
That is already digg'd for me at home, 410
Nay, perhaps find it in my way to seek it?—
How have I then sought a repentant sorrow?
For your dear loves, how have I banish'd you
From your country ever? With my base attempt,
How have I beggar'd you, in wasting that
Which only for your sakes I bred together;
Buried my name in Epire, which I built
Upon this frame, to live for ever in?
What a base coward shall I be, to fly from
That enemy which every minute meets me, 420
And thousand odds he had not long vanquish'd me
Before this hour of battle! Fly my death!
I will not be so false unto your states,
Nor fainting to the man that's yet in me:
I'll meet him bravely; I cannot (this knowing) fear
That, when I am gone hence, I shall be there.[1]
Come, I have days of preparation left.
Clean. Good sir, hear me:
I have a genius that has prompted me,

---

[1] Gifford says:—"The conclusion of this speech I do not understand." Should we read "here," and understand by the passage—"I cannot doubt but that, after my death, my name will live among my countrymen"? Cf. l. 417, "Buried my name in Epire," &c.

And I have almost form'd it into words— 430
'Tis done, pray you observe 'em; I can conceal you;
And yet not leave your country.
Leon. Tush! it cannot be,
Without a certain peril on us all.
Clean. Danger must be hazarded, rather than accept
A sure destruction. You have a lodge, sir,
So far remote from way of passengers,
That seldom any mortal eye does greet with't;
And yet[1] so sweetly situate with thickets,
Built with such cunning labyrinths within,
As if the provident heavens, foreseeing cruelty, 440
Had bid you frame it to this purpose only.
Leon. Fie, fie! 'tis dangerous—and treason too,
To abuse the law.
Hip. 'Tis holy care, sir,
Of your dear life, which is your own to keep,
But not your own to lose, either in will
Or negligence.
Clean. Call you it treason, sir?
I had been then a traitor unto you,
Had I forgot this; beseech you, accept of it;
It is secure, and a duty to yourself.
Leon. What a coward will you make me!
Clean. You mistake; 450
'Tis noble courage; now you fight with death,
And yield not to him till you stoop under him.

---

[1] Old ed. "yes."

Leon. This must needs open to discovery,
And then what torture follows!
Clean. By what means, sir?
Why, there is but one body in all this counsel,
Which cannot betray itself: we two are one,
One soul, one body, one heart, think all one[1] thought;
And yet we two are not completely one,
But as [I] have deriv'd myself from you.—
Who shall betray us where there is no second? 460
Hip. You must not mistrust my faith, though my sex plead
Weak[ness] and frailty for me.
Leon. O I dare not!
But where's the means that must make answer for me?
I cannot be lost without a full account,
And what must pay that reckoning?
Clean. O sir, we will
Keep solemn obits for your funeral;
We'll seem to weep, and seem to joy withal,
That death so gently has prevented you
The law's sharp rigour; and this no mortal ear shall
Participate the knowledge of.
Leon. Ha, ha, ha! 470
This will be a sportive fine demur,
If the error be not found.
Clean. Pray doubt of none.
Your company and best provision,
Must be no further furnish'd than by us:

---

[1] Old ed. "that think all."

And, in the interim, your solitude may
Converse with heaven, and fairly prepare
[For that] which was too violent and raging
Thrown headlong on you.
Leon. Still, there are some doubts
Of the discovery; yet I do allow't.
Hip. Will you not mention now the cost and charge 480
Which will be in your keeping!
Leon. That will be somewhat,
Which you might save too.
Clean. With his will against him,
What foe is more to man than man himself?
Are you resolved, sir?
Leon. I am, Cleanthes:
If by this means I do get a reprieve,
And cozen death awhile, when he shall come
Armed in his own power to give the blow,
I'll smile upon him then, and laughing go. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Before the Palace.

Enter EVANDER, *three* Courtiers, *and* CRATILUS.

Evan. Executioner!
Crat. My lord.
Evan. How did old Diocles take his death?
Crat. As weeping brides receive their joys at night;[1]
With trembling, yet with patience.
Evan. Why, 'twas well.
First Court. Nay, I knew my father would do well, my lord,
Whene'er he came to die; I'd that opinion of him,
Which made me the more willing to part from him;
He was not fit to live i'the world, indeed,
Any time these ten years, my lord, 10
But I would not say so much.
Evan. No! you did not well in't,
For he that's all spent is ripe for death at all hours,
And does but trifle time out.

---

[1] Old ed. "at night, my lord."

First Court. Troth, my lord,
I would I had known your mind nine years ago.
Evan. Our law is fourscore years, because we judge
Dotage complete then, as unfruitfulness
In women at threescore; marry, if the son
Can, within compass, bring good solid proofs
Of his own father's weakness, and unfitness
To live, or sway the living, though he want five 20
Or ten years of his number, that's not it;
His defect makes him fourscore, and 'tis fit
He dies when he deserves; for every act
Is in effect then, when the cause is ripe.
Second Court. An admirable prince! how rarely he talks!
O that we'd known this, lads! What a time did we endure
In two-penny commons, and in boots twice vamp'd![1]
First Court. Now we have two pair a week, and yet not thankful;
'Twill be a fine world for them, sirs, that come after us.
Second Court. Ay, and[2] they knew't.
First[3] *Court.* Peace, let them never know't. 30
Third Court. A pox, there be young heirs will soon smell't out.
Second Court. 'Twill come to 'em by instinct, man. May your grace
Never be old, you stand so well for youth!

---

[1] Cobbled. [2] If.
[3] Old ed. "2."

Evan. Why now, methinks, our court looks like a spring,
Sweet, fresh, and fashionable, now the old weeds are gone.
First Court. 'Tis as a court should be:
Gloss and good clothes, my lord, no matter for merit;
And herein your law proves a provident act,[1]
When men pass not the palsy of their tongues,
Nor colour in their cheeks.
Evan. But women, 40
By that law, should live long, for they're ne'er past it.
First Court. It will have heats though, when they see the painting
Go an inch deep i' the wrinkle, and take up
A box more than their gossips: but for men, my lord,
That should be the sole bravery of a palace,
To walk with hollow eyes and long white beards,
As if a prince dwelt in a land of goats;
With clothes as if they sat on[2] their backs on purpose
To arraign a fashion, and condemn't to exile;
Their pockets in their sleeves, as if they laid 50
Their ear to avarice, and heard the devil whisper!
Now ours lie downward, here, close to the flank;
Right spending pockets, as a son's should be
That lives i' the fashion: where our diseas'd fathers,
Worried[3] with the sciatica and aches,

---

[1] Old ed. "act, my lord."
[2] Old ed. "upon."
[3] So Gifford for the old eds. "Would." Dyce follows Mason's correction "Wood" (*i.e.* "mad").

Brought up your pan'd [1] hose first, which ladies laugh'd at,
Giving no reverence to the place lies ruin'd :
They love a doublet that's three hours a buttoning,
And sits so close makes a man groan again,
And his soul mutter half a day ; yet these are those 60
That carry sway and worth ; prick'd up in clothes,
Why should we fear our rising ?

Evan. You but wrong
Our kindness, and your own deserts, to doubt on't.
Has not our law made you rich before your time ?
Our countenance then can make you honourable.

First Court. We'll spare for no cost, sir, to appear worthy.

Evan. Why, you're i' the noble way then, for the most
Are but appearers ; worth itself is lost,
And bravery [2] stands for't.

Enter CREON, ANTIGONA, *and* SIMONIDES.

First Court. Look, look, who comes here !
I smell death, and another courtier, 70
Simonides.

Second Court. Sim !

Sim. Push ! [3] I'm not for you yet,
Your company's too costly ; after the old man's
Despatch'd, I shall have time to talk with you ;
I shall come into the fashion, ye shall see too,

---

[1] Breeches with *panes* or stripes of coloured cloth inserted.
[2] Finery. [3] The old form of "Pish."

After a day or two; in the meantime,
I am not for your company.
Evan. Old Creon, you have been expected long;
Sure you're above fourscore.
Sim. Upon my life,
Not four-and-twenty hours, my lord; I search'd
The church-book yesterday. Does your grace think 80
I'd let my father wrong the law, my lord?
'Twere pity a' my life then! no, your act
Shall not receive a minute's wrong by him,
While I live, sir; and he's so just himself too,
I know he would no[t] offer't:—here he stands.
Creon. 'Tis just
I die, indeed, my lord; for I confess
I'm troublesome to life now, and the state
Can hope for nothing worthy from me now,
Either in force or counsel; I've a' late 90
Employ'd myself quite from the world, and he
That once begins to serve his Maker faithfully
Can never serve a worldly prince well after;
'Tis clean another way.
Ant. O, give not confidence
To all he speaks, my lord, in his own injury.
His preparation only for the next world
Makes him talk widely, to his wrong, of this;
He is not lost in judgment.
Sim. She spoils all again. [*Aside.*
Ant. Deserving any way for state employment.
Sim. Mother—— 100

Ant. His very household laws prescribed at home by him
Are able to conform seven Christian kingdoms,
They are so wise and virtuous.
Sim. Mother, I say——
Ant. I know your laws extend not to desert, sir,
But to unnecessary years; and, my lord,
His are not such; though they show white, they're worthy,
Judicious, able, and religious.
Sim. I'll help you to a courtier of nineteen, mother.
Ant. Away, unnatural!
Sim. Then I am no fool, I'm sure,
For to be natural at such a time 110
Were a fool's part indeed.
Ant. Your grace's pity, sir,
And 'tis but fit and just.
Creon. The law, my lord,
And that's the justest way.
Sim. Well said, father, i'faith!
Thou wert ever juster than my mother still.
Evan. Come hither, sir.
Sim. My lord.
Evan. What are those orders?
Ant. Worth observation, sir,
So please you hear them read.
Sim. The woman speaks she knows not what, my lord.
He make a law, poor man! he bought a table, indeed,
Only to learn to die by't, there's the business, now; 120

Wherein there are some precepts for a son too,
How he should learn to live, but I ne'er look'd upon't:
For, when he's dead, I shall live well enough,
And keep a better table[1] than that, I trow.

Evan. And is that all, sir?

Sim. All, I vow, my lord;
Save a few running admonitions
Upon cheese-trenchers,[2] as—

Take heed of whoring, shun it;
'Tis like a cheese too strong of the runnet.

And such calves' maws of wit and admonition, 130
Good to catch mice with, but not sons and heirs;
They're not so easily caught.

Evan. Agent for death!

Crat. Your will, my lord?

Evan. Take hence that pile of years,
Before [he] surfeit[3] with unprofitable age,
And, with the rest, from the high promontory,
Cast him into the sea.

Creon. 'Tis noble justice!

[*Exit* CRATILUS *with* CREON.

Ant. 'Tis cursed tyranny!

---

[1] "This wretched fellow is punning upon the word *table*, which, as applied to his father, meant a large sheet of paper, where precepts for the due regulation of life were set down in distinct lines; and as applied to himself—that he would keep a better house, *i.e.* live more sumptuously, than his father."—*Gifford.*

[2] Old authors frequently allude to the practice of inscribing posies on cheese-trenchers. See Middleton's *No Wit, No Help like a Woman's*, ii. 1.

[3] Gifford reads "Forfeit before," which Dyce (though "not quite satisfied") adopts.

Sim. Peace! take heed, mother;
You've but a short time to be cast down yourself;
And let a young courtier do't, and you be wise,
In the meantime.
Ant. Hence, slave!
Sim. Well, seven-and-fifty, 140
You've but three years to scold, then comes your payment. [*Exit* ANTIGONA.
First Court. Simonides.
Sim. Push, I'm not brave enough to hold you talk yet;
Give a man time; I have a suit a making.
Second Court. We love thy form first; brave clothes will come, man.
Sim. I'll make 'em come else, with a mischief to 'em,
As other gallants do, that have less left 'em.
[*Recorders within.*
Evan. Hark! whence those sounds? what's that?
First Court. Some funeral,
It seems, my lord; and young Cleanthes follows.

Enter[1] *a funeral procession; the hearse followed by* CLEANTHES *and* HIPPOLITA *gaily dressed.*

Evan. Cleanthes!
Second Court. 'Tis, my lord, and in the place 150
Of a chief mourner too, but strangely habited.
Evan. Yet suitable to his behaviour; mark it;

---

[1] Old ed. "*Enter Cleanthes and Hipolita with a hears.*"

He comes all the way smiling, do you observ't?
I never saw a corse so joyfully follow'd:
Light colours and light cheeks! who should this be?
'Tis a thing worth resolving.
Sim. One, belike,
That doth participate this[1] our present joy.
Evan. Cleanthes.
Clean. O my lord!
Evan. He laugh'd outright now;
Was ever such a contrariety seen
In natural courses yet, nay, profess'd openly? 160
First Court. I ha' known a widow laugh closely, my lord,
Under her handkercher, when t'other part
Of her old face has wept like rain in sunshine;
But all the face to laugh apparently,
Was never seen yet.
Sim. Yes, mine did once.
Clean. 'Tis, of a heavy time, the joyfull'st day
That ever son was born to.
Evan. How can that be?
Clean. I joy to make it plain,—my father's dead.
Evan. Dead!
Second Court. Old Leonides!
Clean. In his last month dead:
He beguil'd cruel law the sweetliest 170
That ever age was blest to.——
It grieves me that a tear should fall upon't,

---

[1] Old ed. "in this."

Being a thing so joyful, but his memory
Will work it out, I see: when his poor heart broke,
I did not [do] so much: but leap'd for joy
So mountingly, I touch'd the stars, methought;
I would not hear of blacks,[1] I was so light,
But chose a colour orient like my mind;
For blacks are often such dissembling mourners,
There is no credit given to't; it has lost 180
All reputation by false sons and widows.
Now I would have men know what I resemble,
A truth, indeed; 'tis joy clad like a joy,
Which is more honest than a cunning grief,
That's only fac'd with sables for a show,
But gawdy-hearted. When I saw death come
So ready to deceive you, sir,—forgive me,
I could not choose but be entirely merry,
And yet to see now!—of a sudden,
Naming but death, I show myself a mortal, 190
That's never constant to one passion long.
I wonder whence that tear came, when I smil'd
In the production on't! sorrow's a thief,
That can, when joy looks on, steal forth a grief.
But, gracious leave, my lord; when I've perform'd
My last poor duty to my father's bones,
I shall return your servant.

Evan. Well, perform it;
The law is satisfied; they can but die:
And by his death, Cleanthes, you gain well,

---

[1] Mourning garments.

A rich and fair revenue.

[*Flourish. Exeunt* DUKE, Courtiers, *&c.*

Sim. I would I had e'en 200
Another father, condition he did the like.

Clean. I have past it bravely now ; how blest was I
To have the duke[1] in sight ! now 'tis confirmed,
Past fear or doubts confirm'd : on, on, I say,
He that brought me to man, I bring to clay.

[*Exit funeral procession, followed by* CLEANTHES *and* HIPPOLITA.

Sim. I'm rapt now in a contemplation,
Even at the very sight of yonder hearse ;
I do but think what a fine thing 'tis now
To live, and follow some seven uncles thus,
As many cousin-germans, and such people, 210
That will leave legacies ; a pox ! I'd see 'em hang'd else,
Ere I'd follow one of them, and[2] they could find the way.
Now I've enough to begin to be horrible covetous.

Enter Butler, Tailor, Bailiff,[3] Cook, Coachman, *and* Footman.

But. We come to know your worship's pleasure, sir,
Having long serv'd your father, how your good will
Stands towards our entertainment.

Sim. Not a jot, i'faith ;
My father wore cheap garments, he might do't ;

---

[1] Mason's certain correction for "To have the dim sight." The MS. probably had, as Gifford suggests, "the *d. in sight.*"

[2] If.

[3] Old ed. "Bayly."

I shall have all my clothes come home to-morrow;
They will eat up all you, and[1] there were more of you, sirs.
To keep you six at livery, and still munching! 220

Tail. Why, I'm a tailor; you've most need of me, sir.

Sim. Thou mad'st my father's clothes, that I confess;
But what son and heir will have his father's tailor,
Unless he have a mind to be well laugh'd at?
Thou'st been so used to wide long-side things, that when
I come to truss, I shall have the waist of my doublet
Lie upon my buttocks, a sweet sight!

But. I a butler.

Sim. There's least need of thee, fellow; I shall ne'er drink at home, I shall be so drunk abroad. 230

But. But a cup of small beer will do well next morning, sir.

Sim. I grant you; but what need I keep so big a knave for a cup of small beer?

Cook. Butler, you have your answer. Marry, sir, a cook I know your mastership cannot be without.

Sim. The more ass art thou to think so; for what should I do with a mountebank, no drink in my house? —the banishing the butler might have been a warning for thee, unless thou meanest to choke me. 240

Cook. I' the meantime you have chok'd me, methinks.

Bail. These are superfluous vanities, indeed,
And so accounted of in these days, sir;
But then, your bailiff to receive your rents——

---

[1] If.

Sim. I prithee, hold thy tongue, fellow; I shall take a course to spend 'em faster than thou canst reckon 'em; 'tis not the rents must serve my turn, unless I mean to be laughed at; if a man should be seen out of slash-me, let him ne'er look to be a right gallant. But, sirrah, with whom is your business? 250

Coach. Your good mastership.

Sim. You have stood silent all this while, like men
That know their strengths: i'these days, none of you
Can want employment; you can win me wagers,
Footman, in running races.

Foot. I dare boast it, sir.

Sim. And when my bets are all come in, and store,
Then, coachman, you can hurry me to my whore.

Coach. I'll firk 'em into foam else.

Sim. Speaks brave matter:
And I'll firk some too, or't shall cost hot water.

[*Exeunt* SIMONIDES, Coachman, *and* Footman.

Cook. Why, here's an age to make a cook a ruffian, 260
And scald the devil indeed! do strange mad things,
Make mutton-pasties of dog's flesh,
Bake snakes for lamprey-pies, and cats for conies.

But. Come, will you be ruled by a butler's advice once? for we must make up our fortunes somewhere now, as the case stands; let's e'en, therefore, go seek out widows of nine-and-fifty, and[1] we can, that's within a year of their deaths, and so we shall be sure to be quickly

---

[1] If.

rld of 'em; for a year's enough of conscience to be troubled with a wife, for any man living. 270

Cook. Oracle butler! oracle butler! he puts down all the doctors a' the name.[1] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in CREON'S *House.*

Enter EUGENIA *and* PARTHENIA.

Eug. Parthenia.

Parth. Mother.

Eug. I shall be troubled
This six months with an old clog; would the law
Had been cut one year shorter!

Parth. Did you call, forsooth?

Eug. Yes, you must make some spoonmeat for your father,
And warm three nightcaps for him. [*Exit* PARTHENIA.
Out upon't:
The mere conceit turns a young woman's stomach.
His slippers must be warm'd, in August too,
And his gown girt to him in the very dog-days,
When every mastiff lolls out's tongue for heat.

---

[1] The allusion is to Dr. William Butler, a famous Elizabethan physician, who (in the words of Fuller) "quickened Galenical physic with a touch of Paracelsus, trading in chymical receits with great success." He was very slovenly in his dress and eccentric in his manners. He died in 1618 at the age of eighty-two, and was buried in St. Mary's Church, Cambridge.

Would not this vex a beauty of nineteen now? 10
Alas! I should[1] be tumbling in cold baths now,
Under each armpit a fine bean-flower bag,
To screw out whiteness when I list—
And some seven of the properest men i'the dukedom
Making a banquet ready i'the next room for me;
Where he that gets the first kiss is envied,
And stands upon his guard a fortnight after.
This is a life for nineteen! 'tis but justice:
For old men, whose great acts stand in their minds,
And nothing in their bodies, do ne'er think 20
A woman young enough for their desire;
And we young wenches, that have mother-wits,
And love to marry muck first, and man after,
Do never think old men are old enough,
That we may soon be rid on 'em; there's our quittance.
I've waited for the happy hour this two year,
And, if death be so unkind to let[2] him live still,
All that time I have[3] lost.

Enter Courtiers.

First Court. Young lady!
Second Court. O sweet precious bud of beauty!
Troth, she smells over all the house, methinks. 30
First Court. The sweetbriar's but a counterfeit to her——

---

[1] Old ed. "shall." [2] Old ed. "still to let him live."
[3] So Gifford; old ed. "am."

It does exceed you only in the prickle,
But that it shall not long, if you'll be rul'd, lady.

Eug. What means this sudden visitation, gentlemen?
So passing well perfum'd[1] too! who's your milliner?

First Court. Love, and thy beauty, widow.

Eug. Widow, sir!

First Court. 'Tis sure, and that's as good: in troth, we're suitors;
We come a wooing, wench; plain dealing's best.

Eug. A wooing! what, before my husband's dead?

Second Court. Let's lose no time; six months will have an end, you know; 40
I know't by all the bonds that e'er I made yet.

Eug. That's a sure knowledge; but it holds not here, sir.

First Court. Do not we know the craft of you young[2] tumblers?
That [when] you wed an old man, you think upon
Another husband as you are marrying of him;—
We, knowing your thoughts, made bold to see you.

Enter SIMONIDES *richly drest, and* Coachman.

Eug. How wondrous right he speaks! 'twas my thought, indeed.

Sim. By your leave, sweet widow, do you lack any gallants?

Eug. Widow, again! 'tis a comfort to be call'd so.

---

[1] So Gifford; old ed. "perform'd."
[2] Old ed. "you *know* . . . . your *young*."

First Court. Who's this? Simonides?
Second Court. Brave Sim, i'faith! 50
Sim. Coachman!
Coach. Sir.
Sim. Have an especial care of my new mares.
They say, sweet widow, he that loves a horse well,
Must needs love a widow well.—When dies thy husband?
Is't not July next?
Eug. O, you're too hot, sir!
Pray cool yourself, and take September with you.
Sim. September! O, I was but two bows wide.
First Court. Mr. Simonides.
Sim. I can entreat you, gallants, I'm in fashion too. 60

Enter LYSANDER.

Lys. Ha! whence this herd of folly? what are you?
Sim. Well-willers to your wife: pray, 'tend your book, sir;
We've nothing to say to you, you may go die,
For here be those in place that can supply.
Lys. What's thy wild business here?
Sim. Old man, I'll tell thee;
I come to beg the reversion of thy wife:
I think these gallants be of my mind too.—
But thou art but a dead man, therefore what should a man do talking with thee? Come, widow, stand to your tackling. 70
Lys. Impious blood-hounds!
Sim. Let the ghost talk, ne'er mind him.
Lys. Shames of nature!

Sim. Alas, poor ghost! consider what the man is.

Lys. Monsters unnatural! you that have been covetous
Of your own fathers' deaths, gape ye for mine now?
Cannot a poor old man, that now can reckon
E'en all the hours he has to live, live quiet,
For such wild beasts as these, that neither hold
A certainty of good within themselves, 80
But scatter others' comforts that are ripen'd
For holy uses? is hot youth so hasty,
It will not give an old man leave to die,
And leave a widow first, but will make one,
The husband looking on? May your destructions
Come all in hasty figures to your souls!
Your wealth depart in haste, to overtake
Your honesties, that died when you were infants!
May your male seed be hasty spendthrifts too,
Your daughters hasty sinners, and diseas'd 90
Ere they be thought at years to welcome misery!
And may you never know what leisure is,
But at repentance!—I am too uncharitable,
Too foul; I must go cleanse myself with prayers.
These are the plagues of fondness to old men,
We're punish'd home with what we dote upon. [*Exit.*

Sim. So, so!
The ghost is vanish'd: now, your answer, lady.

Eug. Excuse me, gentlemen; 'twere as much impudence
In me to give you a kind answer yet, 100
As madness to produce a churlish one.
I could say now, come a month hence, sweet gentlemen,

Or two, or three, or when you will, indeed;
But I say no such thing: I set no time,
Nor is it mannerly to deny any.
I'll carry an even hand to all the world:
Let other women make what haste they will,
What's that to me? but I profess unfeignedly,
I'll have my husband dead before I marry;
Ne'er look for other answer at my hands, gentlemen. 110

Sim. Would he were hanged, for my part, looks for other!

Eug. I'm at a word.

Sim. And I am at a blow then;
I'll lay you o' the lips, and leave you. [*Kisses her.*

First Court. Well struck, Sim.

Sim. He that dares say he'll mend it, I'll strike him.

First Court. He would betray himself to be a botcher,[1]
That goes about to mend it.

Eug. Gentlemen,
You know my mind; I bar you not my house:
But if you choose out hours more seasonably,
You may have entertainment.

Re-enter PARTHENIA.

Sim. What will she do hereafter, when she's a widow,
Keeps open house already?

[*Exeunt* SIMONIDES *and* Courtiers.

Eug. How now, girl! 121

---

[1] Old ed. "brother."

Parth. Those feather'd fools that hither took their flight
Have griev'd my father much.
Eug. Speak well of youth, wench,
While thou'st a day to live; 'tis youth must make thee,
And when youth fails, wise women will make it;
But always take age first, to make thee rich:
That was my counsel ever, and then youth
Will make thee sport enough all thy life after.
'Tis [the] time's policy, wench; what is't to bide
A little hardness for a pair of years, or so? 130
A man whose only strength lies in his breath,
Weakness in all parts else, thy bedfellow,
A cough o' the lungs, or say a wheezing[1] matter;
Then shake off chains, and dance all thy life after?
Parth. Every one to their liking; but I say
An honest man's worth all, be he young or gray.
Yonder's my cousin. [*Exit.*

Enter HIPPOLITA.

Eug. Art, I must use thee now;
Dissembling is the best help for a virtue,
That ever women had; it saves their credit oft.[2]
Hip. How now, cousin! 140
What, weeping?
Eug. Can you blame me, when the time
Of my dear love and husband now draws on?

---

[1] Old ed. "wheening."
[2] Old ed. "Often."

I study funeral tears against the day
I must be a sad widow.

Hip. In troth, Eugenia, I have cause to weep too;
But, when I visit, I come comfortably,
And look to be so quited:—yet more sobbing?

Eug. Oh! the greatest part of your affliction's past,
The worst of mine's to come; I have one to die;
Your husband's father is dead, and fix'd in his 150
Eternal peace, past the sharp tyrannous blow.

Hip. You must use patience, coz.

Eug. Tell me of patience!

Hip. You have example for't, in me and many.

Eug. Yours was a father-in-law, but mine a husband:
O, for a woman that could love, and live
With an old man, mine is a jewel, cousin;
So quietly he lies by one, so still!

Hip. Alas! I have a secret lodg'd within me,
Which now will out in pity:—I can't hold. [*Aside.*

Eug. One that will not disturb me in my sleep 160
For[1] a whole month together, 'less it be
With those diseases age is subject to,
As aches, coughs, and pains, and these, heaven knows,
Against his will too:—he's the quietest man,
Especially in bed.

Hip. Be comforted.

Eug. How can I, lady? None knows the terror of
An husband's loss, but they that fear to lose him.

Hip. Fain would I keep it in, but 'twill not be;

---

[1] Old ed. "After."

She is my kinswoman, and I'm pitiful.
I must impart a good, if I know't once, 170
To them that stand in need on't; I'm like one
Loves not to banquet with a joy alone,
My friends must partake too. [*Aside.*]—Prithee, cease, cousin;
If your love be so boundless, which is rare,
In a young woman, in these days, I tell you,
To one so much past service as your husband,
There is a way to beguile law, and help you;
My husband found it out first.

Eug. O sweet cousin!

Hip. You may conceal him, and give out his death
Within the time; order his funeral too; 180
We had it so for ours, I praise heaven for't,
And he's alive and safe.

Eug. O blessed coz,
How thou revivest me!

Hip. We daily see
The good old man, and feed him twice a day.
Methinks, it is the sweetest joy to cherish him,
That ever life yet show'd me.

Eug. So should I think,
A dainty thing to nurse an old man well!

Hip. And then we have his prayers and daily blessing;
And we two live so lovingly upon't,
His son and I, and so contentedly, 190
You cannot think unless you tasted on't.

Eug. No, I warrant you. O loving cousin,
What a great sorrow hast thou eas'd me of!

A thousand thanks go with thee!
Hip. I have a suit to you,
I must not have you weep when I am gone. [*Exit.*
Eug. No, if I do, ne'er trust me. Easy fool,
Thou hast put thyself into my power for ever;
Take heed of angering of me. I conceal!
I feign a funeral! I keep my husband!
'Las! I've been thinking any time these two years, 200
I have kept him too long already.—
I'll go count o'er my suitors, that's my business,
And prick the man down; I ha' six months to do't,
But could despatch't[1] in one, were I put to't. [*Exit.*

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[1] Old ed. "dispatch him."

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Before the Church.

Enter GNOTHO *and* Clerk.

Gnoth. You have searched o'er the parish-chronicle, sir?

Clerk. Yes, sir; I have found out the true age and date of the party you wot on.

Gnoth. Pray you, be covered, sir.

Clerk. When you have showed me the way, sir.

Gnoth. O sir, remember yourself, you are a clerk.

Clerk. A small clerk, sir.

Gnoth. Likely to be the wiser man, sir; for your greatest clerks are not always so, as 'tis reported. 10

Clerk. You are a great man in the parish, sir.

Gnoth. I understand myself so much the better, sir; for all the best in the parish pay duties to the clerk, and I would owe you none, sir.

Clerk. Since you'll have it so, I'll be the first to hide my head.

Gnoth. Mine is a capcase: now to our business in[1] hand. Good luck, I hope; I long to be resolved.

Clerk. Look you, sir, this is that cannot deceive you:
This is the dial that goes ever true; 20
You may say *ipse dixit* upon this witness,
And 'tis good in law too.

Gnoth. Pray you, let's hear what it speaks.

Clerk. Mark, sir.—*Agatha, the daughter of Pollux,* (this is your wife's name, and the name of her father,) *born*——

Gnoth. Whose daughter, say you?

Clerk. The daughter of Pollux.

Gnoth. I take it his name was Bollux.

Clerk. Pollux the orthography I assure you, sir; the word is corrupted else. 31

Gnoth. Well, on, sir,—of Pollux; now come on, Castor.

Clerk. Born in an. 1540, and now 'tis 99. By this infallible record, sir, (let me see,) she is now just fifty-nine, and wants but one.

Gnoth. I am sorry she wants so much.

Clerk. Why, sir? alas, 'tis nothing; 'tis but so many months, so many weeks, so many——

Gnoth. Do not deduct it to days, 'twill be the more tedious; and to measure it by hour-glasses were intolerable. 42

Clerk. Do not think on it, sir; half the time goes away in sleep, 'tis half the year in nights.

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[1] Old ed. "in your hand."

Gnoth. O, you mistake me, neighbour, I am loath to leave the good old woman; if she were gone now it would not grieve me; for what is a year, alas, but a lingering torment? and were it not better she were out of her pain? 'T must needs be a grief to us both. 50

Clerk. I would I knew how to ease you, neighbour!

Gnoth. You speak kindly, truly, and if you say but Amen to it, (which is a word that I know you are perfect in,) it might be done. Clerks are the most indifferent honest men,—for to the marriage of your enemy, or the burial of your friend, the curses or the blessings to you are all one; you say Amen to all.

Clerk. With a better will to the one than the other, neighbour: but I shall be glad to say Amen to anything might do you a pleasure. 60

Gnoth. There is, first, something above your duty [*gives him money*]: now I would have you set forward the clock a little, to help the old woman out of her pain.

Clerk. I will speak to the sexton;[1] but the day will go ne'er the faster for that.

Gnoth. O, neighbour, you do not conceit me; not the jack[2] of the clock-house; the hand of the dial, I mean. —Come, I know you, being a great clerk, cannot choose but have the art to cast a figure.

Clerk. Never, indeed, neighbour: I never had the judgment to cast a figure. 71

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[1] Old ed. "sexton for that."

[2] The figure that struck the bell of the clock.

Gnoth. I'll show you on the back side of your book, look you,—what figure's this?

Clerk. Four with a cipher, that's forty.

Gnoth. So! forty; what's this now?

Clerk. The cipher is turned into 9 by adding the tail, which makes forty-nine.

Gnoth. Very well understood; what is't now?

Clerk. The 4 is turned into 3; 'tis now thirty-nine.

Gnoth. Very well understood; and can you do this again? 81

Clerk. O, easily, sir.

Gnoth. A wager of that! let me see the place of my wife's age again.

Clerk. Look you, sir, 'tis here, 1540.

Gnoth. Forty drachmas, you do not turn that forty into thirty-nine.

Clerk. A match with you.

Gnoth. Done! and you shall keep stakes yourself; there they are. 90

Clerk. A firm match—but stay, sir, now I consider it, I shall add a year to your wife's age; let me see—*Sciro-phorion* the 17,—and now 'tis *Hecatombaion* the 11.[1] If I alter this, your wife will have but a month to live by the law.

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[1] Old ed. "Scirophon . . . . Hecatomcaon."—"Scirophorion, Hecatombaion, *and, soon after*, December; what a medley! This miserable ostentation of Greek literature is, I believe, from the pen of Middleton, who was 'a piece' of a scholar."—*Gifford.* Dyce remarks that the Grecian months "were formerly not unfamiliar to the vulgar; see for instance the last page of Pond's Almanac, 1610" (where are also given the Hebrew and Egyptian months).

Gnoth. That's all one, sir; either do it, or pay me my wager.

Clerk. Will you lose your wife before you lose your wager?

Gnoth. A man may get two wives before half so much money by 'em; will you do't? 101

Clerk. I hope you will conceal me, for 'tis flat corruption.

Gnoth. Nay, sir, I would have you keep counsel; for I lose my money by't, and should be laughed at for my labour, if it should be known.

Clerk. Well, sir, there!—'tis done; as perfect 39 as can be found in black and white: but mum, sir,—there's danger in this figure-casting.

Gnoth. Ay, sir, I know that: better men than you have been thrown over the bar for as little; the best is, you can be but thrown out of the belfry. 112

Enter the Cook, Tailor, Bailiff, *and* Butler.

Clerk. Lock close, here comes company; asses have ears as well as pitchers.

Cook. O Gnotho,[1] how is't? here's a trick of discarded cards of us! we were ranked with coats,[2] as long as our old master lived.

Gnoth. And is this then the end of serving-men?[3]

Cook. Yes, 'faith, this is the end of serving-men: a

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[1] Old ed. "Gnothos." [2] Court cards.
[3] An allusion to the old ballad.

wise man were better serve one God than all the men in the world. 121

Gnoth. 'Twas well spoke[1] of a cook. And are all fallen into fasting-days and Ember-weeks, that cooks are out of use?

Tail. And all tailors will be cut into lists and shreds; if this world hold, we shall grow both out of request.

But. And why not butlers as well as tailors? if they can go naked, let 'em neither eat nor drink.

Clerk. That's strange, methinks, a lord should turn away his tailor, of all men:—and how dost thou, tailor?

Tail. I do so, so; but, indeed, all our wants are long of this publican, my lord's bailiff; for had he been rent-gatherer still, our places had held together still, that are now seam-rent, nay, cracked in the whole piece. 134

Bail. Sir, if my lord had not sold his lands that claim his rents, I should still have been the rent-gatherer.

Cook. The truth is, except the coachman and the footman, all serving-men are out of request.

Gnoth. Nay, say not so, for you were never in more request than now, for requesting is but a kind of a begging; for when you say, I beseech your worship's charity, 'tis all one [as] if you say, I request it; and in that kind of requesting, I am sure serving-men were never in more request. 144

Cook. Troth, he says true: well, let that pass, we are upon a better adventure. I see, Gnotho,[2] you have been

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[1] Old ed. "spak."
[2] Old ed. "Gnothos."

before us; we came to deal with this merchant for some commodities.

Clerk. With me, sir? anything that I can.

But. Nay, we have looked out our wives already: marry, to you we come to know the prices, that is, to know their ages; for so much reverence we bear to age, that the more aged, they shall be the more dear to us.

Tail. The truth is, every man has laid by his widow; so they be lame enough, blind enough, and old [enough], 'tis good enough. 156

Clerk. I keep the town-stock; if you can but name 'em, I can tell their ages to [a] day.

All. We can tell their fortunes to an hour, then.

Clerk. Only you must pay for turning of the leaves.

Cook. O, bountifully.—Come, mine first.

But. The butler before the cook, while you live; there's few that eat before they drink in a morning.

Tail. Nay, then the tailor puts in his needle of priority, for men do clothe themselves before they either drink or eat. 166

Bail. I will strive for no place; the longer ere I marry my wife, the older she will be, and nearer her end and my ends.

Clerk. I will serve you all, gentlemen, if you will have patience. 171

Gnoth. I commend your modesty, sir; you are a bailiff, whose place is to come behind other men, as it were in the bum of all the rest.

Bail. So, sir! and you were about this business too, seeking out for a widow?

Gnoth. Alack! no, sir; I am a married man, and have those cares upon me that you would fain run into.

Bail. What, an old rich wife! any man in this age desires such a care.

Gnoth. 'Troth, sir, I'll put a venture with you, if you will; I have a lusty old quean to my wife, sound of wind and limb, yet I'll give out to take three for one at the marriage of my second wife. 184

Bail. Ay, sir, but how near is she to the law?

Gnoth. Take that at hazard, sir; there must be time, you know, to get a new. Unsight, unseen, I take three to one.

Bail. Two to one I'll give, if she have but two teeth in her head.

Gnoth. A match; there's five drachmas for ten at my next wife. 192

Bail. A match.

Cook. I shall be fitted bravely; fifty-eight and upwards; 'tis but a year and a half, and I may chance make friends, and beg a year of the duke.

But. Hey, boys! I am made sir butler; my wife that shall be wants but two months of her time; it shall be one ere I marry her, and then the next will be a honey-moon. 200

Tail. I outstrip you all; I shall have but six weeks of Lent, if I get my widow, and then comes eating-tide, plump and gorgeous.

Gnoth. This tailor will be a man, if ever there were any.

Bail. Now comes my turn, I hope, goodman Finis, you that are still at the end of all, with a *so be it.* Well

now, sirs, do you venture there as I have done; and I'll venture here after you. Good luck, I beseech thee!

Clerk. Amen, sir.

Bail. That deserves a fee already—there 'tis; please me, and have a better. 211

Clerk. Amen, sir.

Cook. How, two for one at your next wife! is the old one living?

Gnoth. You have a fair match, I offer you no foul one; if death make not haste to call her, she'll make none to go to him.

But. I know her, she's a lusty woman; I'll take the venture.

Gnoth. There's five drachmas for ten at my next wife.

But. A bargain. 221

Cook. Nay, then we'll be all merchants: give me.

Tail. And me.

But. What has the bailiff sped?

Bail. I am content; but none of you shall know my happiness.

Clerk. As well as any of you all, believe it, sir.

Bail. O, clerk, you are to speak last always.

Clerk. I'll remember't hereafter, sir. You have done with me, gentlemen?

Enter AGATHA.

All. For this time, honest register. 231

Clerk. Fare you well then; if you do, I'll cry Amen to't. [*Exit.*

Cook. Look you, sir, is not this your wife?

Gnoth. My first wife, sir.

But. Nay, then we have made a good match on't; if she have no froward disease, the woman may live this dozen years by her age.

Tail. I'm afraid she's broken-winded, she holds silence so long.

Cook. We'll now leave our venture to the event; I must a wooing. 242

But. I'll but buy me a new dagger, and overtake you.

Bail. So we must all; for he that goes a wooing to a widow without a weapon, will never get her.

[*Exeunt all but* GNOTHO *and* AGATHA.

Gnoth. O wife, wife!

Aga. What ail you, man, you speak so passionately? [1]

Gnoth. 'Tis for thy sake, sweet wife: who would think so lusty an old woman, with reasonable good teeth, and her tongue in as perfect use as ever it was, should be so near her time?—but the Fates will have it so. 251

Aga. What's the matter, man? you do amaze me.

Gnoth. Thou art not sick neither, I warrant thee.

Aga. Not that I know of, sure.

Gnoth. What pity 'tis a woman should be so near her end, and yet not sick!

Aga. Near her end, man! tush, I can guess at that;
I have years good yet of life in the remainder:
I want two yet at least of the full number;
Then the law, I know, craves impotent and useless, 260
And not the able women.

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[1] Sorrowfully.

Gnoth. Ay, alas! I see thou hast been repairing time as well as thou couldst; the old wrinkles are well filled up, but the vermilion is seen too thick, too thick—and I read what's written in thy forehead; it agrees with the church-book.

Aga. Have you sought my age, man? and, I prithee, how is it?

Gnoth. I shall but discomfort thee.

Aga. Not at all, man; when there's no remedy, I will go, though unwillingly. 271

Gnoth. 1539. Just; it agrees with the book: you have about a year to prepare yourself.

Aga. Out, alas! I hope there's more than so. But do you not think a reprieve might be gotten for half a score—and 'twere but five year, I would not care? an able woman, methinks, were to be pitied.

Gnoth. Ay, to be pitied, but not helped; no hope of that: for, indeed, women have so blemished their own reputations now-a-days, that it is thought the law will meet them at fifty very shortly. 281

Aga. Marry, the heavens forbid!

Gnoth. There's so many of you, that, when you are old, become witches; some profess physic, and kill good subjects faster than a burning fever; and then school-mistresses of the sweet sin, which commonly we call bawds, innumerable of that sort: for these and such causes 'tis thought they shall not live above fifty.

Aga. Ay, man, but this hurts not the good old women.

Gnoth. I'faith, you are so like one another, that a man cannot distinguish 'em: now, were I an old woman, I

would desire to go before my time, and offer myself willingly, two or three years before. O, those are brave women, and worthy to be commended of all men in the world, that, when their husbands die, they run to be burnt to death with 'em: there's honour and credit! give me half a dozen such wives. 297

Aga. Ay, if her husband were dead before, 'twere a reasonable request; if you were dead, I could be content to be so.

Gnoth. Fie! that's not likely, for thou hadst two husbands before me. 302

Aga. Thou wouldst not have me die, wouldst thou, husband?

Gnoth. No, I do not speak to that purpose; but I say what credit it were for me and thee, if thou wouldst; then thou shouldst never be suspected for a witch, a physician, a bawd, or any of those things: and then how daintily should I mourn for thee, how bravely[1] should I see thee buried! when, alas, if he goes before, it cannot choose but be a great grief to him to think he has not seen his wife well buried. There be such virtuous women in the world, but too few, too few, who desire to die seven years before their time, with all their hearts. 314

Aga. I have not the heart to be of that mind; but, indeed, husband, I think you would have me gone.

Gnoth. No, alas! I speak but for your good and your credit; for when a woman may die quickly, why should she go to law for her death? Alack, I need not wish thee

[1] Finely.

gone, for thou hast but a short time to stay with me: you do not know how near 'tis,—it must out; you have but a month to live by the law. 322

Aga. Out, alas!

Gnoth. Nay, scarce so much.

Aga. O, O, O, my heart! [*Swoons.*

Gnoth. Ay, so! if thou wouldst go away quietly, 'twere sweetly done, and like a kind wife; lie but a little longer, and the bell shall toll for thee.

Aga. O my heart, but a month to live!

Gnoth. Alas, why wouldst thou come back again for a month?—I'll throw her down again—O, woman, 'tis not three weeks; I think a fortnight is the most. 332

Aga. Nay, then I am gone already. [*Swoons.*

Gnoth. I would make haste to the sexton now, but I'm afraid the tolling of the bell will wake her again. If she be so wise as to go now—she stirs again; there's two lives of the nine gone.

Aga. O, wouldst thou not help to recover me, husband?

Gnoth. Alas, I could not find in my heart to hold thee by thy nose, or box thy cheeks; it goes against my conscience. 341

Aga. I will not be thus frighted to my death;
I'll search the church-record: a fortnight! 'tis
Too little of conscience, I cannot be so near;
O time, if thou be'st kind, lend me but a year! [*Exit.*

Gnoth. What a spite's this, that a man cannot persuade his wife to die in any time with her good will! I have another bespoke already; though a piece of old beef will serve to breakfast, yet a man would be glad of

a chicken to supper. The clerk, I hope, understands no Hebrew, and cannot write backward what he hath writ forward already, and then I am well enough. 352
'Tis but a month at most; if that were gone,
My venture comes in with her two for one:
'Tis use enough a' conscience for a broker[1]—if he had a conscience. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Room in CREON'S *House.*

Enter EUGENIA *at one door,* SIMONIDES *and* Courtiers *at the other.*

Eug. Gentlemen courtiers.
First Court. All your servants vow'd, lady.
Eug. O, I shall kill myself with infinite laughter!
Will nobody take my part?
Sim. An't be a laughing business,
Put it to me, I'm one of the best in Europe;
My father died last too, I have the most cause.
Eug. You ha' picked out such a time, sweet gentlemen,
To make your spleen a banquet.
Sim. O the jest!
Lady, I have a jaw stands ready for't, 10
I'll gape half way, and meet it.
Eug. My old husband,
That cannot say his prayers out for jealousy,
And madness at your coming first to woo me——

[1] Old ed. "brother."

Sim. Well said.
First Court. Go on.
Second Court. On, on.
Eug. Takes counsel with
The secrets of all art, to make himself
Youthful again.
Sim. How? youthful! ha, ha, ha!
Eug. A man of forty-five he would fain seem to be,
Or scarce so much, if he might have his will, indeed.
Sim. Ay, but his white hairs, they'll betray his hoariness.
Eug. Why, there you are wide: he's not the man you take him for, 20
Nor[1] will you know him when you see him again;
There will be five to one laid upon that.
First Court. How!
Eug. Nay, you did well to laugh faintly there;
I promise you, I think he'll outlive me now,
And deceive law and all.
Sim. Marry, gout forbid!
Eug. You little think he was at fencing-school
At four o'clock this morning.
Sim. How, at fencing-school!
Eug. Else give no trust to woman.
Sim. By this light,
I do not like him, then; he's like to live 30
Longer than I, for he may kill me first, now.
Eug. His dancer now came in as I met you.

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[1] Old ed. "Nay."

First Court. His dancer, too!
Eug. They observe turns and hours with him;
The great French rider will be here at ten,
With his curvetting horse.
Second Court. These notwithstanding,
His hair and wrinkles will betray his age.
Eug. I'm sure his head and beard, as he has order'd it,
Look not past fifty now: he'll bring't to forty
Within these four days, for nine times an hour at least[1]
He takes a black-lead comb, and kembs it over: 40
Three quarters of his beard is under fifty;
There's but a little tuft of fourscore left,
All of one side, which will be black by Monday.

Enter LYSANDER.

And, to approve my truth, see where he comes!
Laugh softly, gentlemen, and look upon him.
[*They go aside.*
Sim. Now, by this hand, he's almost black i'the mouth, indeed.
First Court. He should die shortly, then.
Sim. Marry, methinks he dies too fast already,
For he was all white but a week ago.
First Court. O, this same coney-white takes an excellent black, 50
Too soon, a mischief on't!

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[1] Gifford and Dyce omit the words "at least," for the sake of the metre.

Second Court. He will beguile[1]
Us all, if that little tuft northward turn black too.
Eug. Nay, sir, I wonder 'tis so long a turning.
Sim. May be some fairy's child, held forth at midnight,
Has piss'd upon that side.
First Court. Is this the beard?
Lys. Ah, sirrah? my young boys, I shall be for you:
This little mangy tuft takes up more time
Than all the beard beside. Come you a wooing,
And I alive and lusty? you shall find
An alteration, jack-boys; I have a spirit yet, 60
(And I could match my hair to't, there's the fault,)
And can do offices of youth yet lightly;
At least, I will do, though it pain me a little.
Shall not a man, for a little foolish age,
Enjoy his wife to himself? must young court tits
Play tomboys' tricks with her, and he live? ha!
I have blood that will not bear't; yet, I confess,
I should be at my prayers—but where's the dancer, there!

Enter Dancing-Master.

Mast. Here, sir.
Lys. Come, come, come, one trick a day,
And I shall soon recover all again. 70
Eug. 'Slight, and you laugh too loud, we are all discover'd, gentlemen.

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[1] Old ed. "beguild."

Sim. And I have a scurvy grinning[1] laugh a' mine own,
Will spoil all, I am afraid.
Eug. Marry, take heed, sir.
Sim. Nay, and I should be hang'd, I cannot leave it;
Pup!—there 'tis. [*Bursts into a laugh.*
Eug. Peace! O, peace!
Lys. Come, I am ready, sir.
I hear the church-book's lost where I was born too,
And that shall set me back one[2] twenty years;
There is no little comfort left in that:
And—[then] my three court-codlings, that look parboil'd,
As if they came from Cupid's scalding-house—— 80
Sim. He means me specially, I hold my life.
Mast. What trick will your old worship learn this morning, sir?
Lys. Marry, a trick, if thou couldst teach a man,
To keep his wife to himself; I'd fain learn that.
Mast. That's a hard trick, for an old man specially;
The horse-trick comes the nearest.
Lys. Thou sayst true, i'faith,
They must be hors'd indeed, else there's no keeping on 'em,
And horse-play at fourscore is not so ready.
Mast. Look you, here's your worship's horse-trick,[3] sir. [*Gives a spring.*

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[1] So Dyce and Gifford for the old ed.'s "ginny."
[2] Old ed. "one and."
[3] "Some rough curvetting is here meant, but I know not the precise motion. The word occurs in a *Woman killed with Kindness.* 'Though

Lys. Nay, say not so, 90
'Tis none of mine; I fall down horse and man,
If I but offer at it.
Mast. My life for yours, sir.
Lys. Sayst thou me so? [*Springs aloft.*
Mast. Well offer'd, by my viol, sir.
Lys. A pox of this horse-trick! 't has play'd the jade with me,
And given me a wrench i'the back.
Mast. Now here's your inturn, and your trick above ground.
Lys. Prithee, no more, unless thou hast a mind
To lay me under ground; one of these tricks
Is enough in a morning.
Mast. For your galliard, sir,
You are complete enough, ay, and may challenge 100
The proudest coxcomb of 'em all, I'll stand to't.
Lys. Faith, and I've other weapons for the rest too:
I have prepar'd for 'em, if e'er I take
My Gregories here again.
Sim. O, I shall burst.
I can hold out no longer.
Eug. He spoils all. [*They come forward.*
Lys. The devil and his grinners! are you come?
Bring forth the weapons, we shall find you play!
All feats of youth too, jack-boys, feats of youth,
And these the weapons, drinking, fencing, dancing:

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we be but country fellows, it may be, in the way of dancing, we can do the *horse*-trick as well as the serving-men.'—A. I."—*Gifford.*

Your own road-ways, you gylster-pipes! I'm old, you say; 110
Yes, parlous old, kids, and you mark me well!
This beard cannot get children, you lank suck-eggs,
Unless such weasels come from court to help us.
We will get our own brats, you lecherous dog-bolts.

Enter a Servant *with foils and glasses.*

Well said, down with 'em: now we shall see your spirits.
What! dwindle you already?

Second Court. I have no quality.

Sim. Nor I, unless drinking may be reckon'd for one.

First Court. Why, Sim, it shall.

Lys. Come, dare you choose your weapon now?

First Court. I? dancing, sir, and you will be so hasty. 120

Lys. We're for you, sir.

Second Court. Fencing, I.

Lys. We'll answer you too.

Sim. I am for drinking; your wet weapon there.

Lys. That wet one has cost many a princox[1] life;
And I will send it through you with a powder!

Sim. Let [it] come, with a pox! I care not, so't be drink.
I hope my guts will hold, and that's e'en all
A gentleman can look for of such trillibubs.[2]

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[1] Coxcomb.

[2] "This seems to be a cant word for anything of a trifling nature." —*Gifford.*

Lys. Play the first weapon; come, strike, strike, I say. 130
Yes, yes, you shall be first; I'll observe court rules:
Always the worst goes foremost, so 'twill prove, I hope.
[First Courtier *dances a galliard.*[1]
So, sir! you've spit your poison; now come I.
Now, forty years go [2] backward and assist me,
Fall from me half my age,, but for three minutes,
That I may feel no crick! I will put fair for't,
Although I hazard twenty sciaticas. [*Dances.*
So, I have hit you.

First Court. You've done well, i'faith, sir.

Lys. If you confess it well, 'tis excellent,
And I have hit you soundly; I am warm now: 140
The second weapon instantly.

Second Court. What, so quick, sir?
Will you not allow yourself a breathing-time?

Lys. I've breath enough at all times, Lucifer's muskcod,
To give your perfumed worship three vennies:[3]

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[1] In the old ed. the stage-direction is "A Gailliard Laminiard." The word "Laminiard" probably represents the name of the tune, perhaps a corruption of "La Mignarde." The galliard is thus described in Sir John Davies' Poem on Dancing:—

"But for more diverse and more pleasing show
A swift and wand'ring dance he did invent,
With passages uncertain to and fro
Yet with a certain answer and consent
To the quick movement of the instrument.
Five was the number of the music's feet,
Which still the dance did with five paces meet:
With lofty turns and capriols in the air,
Which with the lusty tunes accordeth fair."

[2] Old ed. "ago."

[3] Assaults in fencing.

A sound old man puts his thrust better home
Than a spic'd young man: there I. [*They fence.*
Second Court. Then have at you, fourscore.
Lys. You lie, twenty, I hope, and you shall find it.
Sim. I'm glad I miss'd this weapon, I['d] had an eye
Popt out ere this time, or my two butter-teeth 150
Thrust down my throat instead of a flap-dragon.[1]
Lys. There's two, pentweezle. [*Hits him.*
Mast. Excellently touch'd, sir.
Second Court. Had ever man such luck! speak your opinion, gentlemen.
Sim. Methinks, your luck's good, that your eyes are in still;
Mine would have dropt out, like a pig's half-roasted.
Lys. There wants a third—and there it is again!
[*Hits him again.*
Second Court. The devil has steel'd him.
Eug. What a strong fiend is jealousy!
Lys. You're despatch'd, bear-whelp.
Sim. Now comes my weapon in.
Lys. Here, toadstool, here. 160
'Tis you[2] and I must play these three wet vennies.
Sim. Vennies in Venice glasses! let 'em come,
They'll bruise no flesh, I'm sure, nor break no bones.
Second Court. Yet you may drink your eyes out, sir.
Sim. Ay, but that's nothing;

---

[1] Gallants in former days used to show their devotion to their mistresses by swallowing candles' ends soaked in lighted brandy.
[2] Old ed. "with you."

Then they go voluntarily : I do not
Love to have 'em thrust out, whether they will or no.
Lys. Here's your first weapon, duck's-meat.
Sim. How ! a Dutch what-you-call-'em,
Stead of a German faulchion ! a shrewd weapon, 170
And, of all things, hard to be taken down :
Yet down it must, I have a nose goes into't ;
I shall drink double, I think.
First Court. The sooner off, Sim.
Lys. I'll pay you speedily,[1] ——— with a trick
I learnt once amongst drunkards ; here's half-pike.[2]
[*Drinks.*
Sim. Half-pike comes well after Dutch what-you-call-'em,
They'd never be asunder by their good will.[3]
First Court. Well pull'd of an old fellow !
Lys. O, but your fellows
Pull better at a rope.
First Court. There's a hair, Sim,
In that glass. 180
Sim. An't be as long as a halter, down it goes ;
No hair shall cross me. [*Drinks.*

---

[1] It was left to the actor to fill up the blank with some opprobrious term.

[2] "A particular exercise with the pike.

'*Jer.* Well, I'll try one course with thee at the *half-pike*,
And then go,—come, draw thy pike.'

Tragedy of Hoffman, 1631."—Nares' Glossary, ed. Halliwell.

[3] "This stuff is not worth explaining ; but the reader, if he has any curiosity on the subject, may amply gratify it by a visit to Pantagruel and his companions on the Isle Ennasin. Below, there is a miserable pun upon *hair*—the *crossing* of an *hare* was ominous."—*Gifford.*

Lys. I['ll] make you stink worse than your pole-cats do:
Here's long-sword, your last weapon.
[*Offers him the glass.*

Sim. No more weapons.

First Court. Why, how now, Sim? bear up, thou sham'st us all, else.

Sim. ['S]light, I shall shame you worse, and I stay longer.
I ha' got the scotomy[1] in my head already,
The whimsey: you all turn round—do not you dance, gallants?

Second Court. Pish! what's all this? why, Sim, look, the last venny.

Sim. No more vennies goes down here, for these two
Are coming up again. 191

Second Court. Out! the disgrace of drinkers!

Sim. Yes, 'twill out;
Do you smell nothing yet?

First Court. Smell!

Sim. Farewell quickly, then;
It will do, if I stay. [*Exit.*

First Court. A foil go with thee!

Lys. What, shall we put down youth at her own virtues?
Beat folly in her own ground? wondrous much!
Why may not we be held as full sufficient
To love our own wives then, get our own children, 200

---

[1] Dizziness.

And live in free peace till we be dissolv'd,
For such spring butterflies that are gaudy-wing'd,
But no more substance than those shamble-flies
Which butchers' boys snap between sleep and waking?
Come but to crush you once, you are[1] but maggots,
For all your beamy outsides!

Enter CLEANTHES.

Eug. Here's Cleanthes;
He comes to chide;—let him alone a little,
Our cause will be reveng'd; look, look, his face
Is set for stormy weather; do but mark
How the clouds gather in't, 'twill pour down straight. 210

Clean. Methinks, I partly know you, that's my grief.
Could you not all be lost? that had been handsome;
But to be known at all, 'tis more than shameful.
Why, was not your name wont to be Lysander?

Lys. 'Tis so still, coz.

Clean. Judgment, defer thy coming! else this man's miserable.

Eug. I told you there would be a shower anon.

Second Court. We'll in, and hide our noddles.

[*Exeunt* EUGENIA *and* Courtiers.

Clean. What devil brought this colour to your mind,
Which, since your childhood, I ne'er saw you wear? 220
[Sure] you were ever of an innocent gloss
Since I was ripe for knowledge, and would you lose it,
And change the livery of saints and angels

---

[1] Old ed. "are all." (The compositor's eye caught the word "all" from the following line.)

For this mixt monstrousness; to force a ground
That has been so long hallow'd like a temple,
To bring forth fruits of earth now; and turn back[1]
To the wild cries of lust, and the complexion
Of sin in act, lost and long since repented!
Would you begin a work ne'er yet attempted,
To pull time backward? 230
See what your wife will do! are your wits perfect?

Lys. My wits!

Clean. I like it ten times worse; for't had been safer
Now to be mad,[2] and more excusable:
I hear you dance again, and do strange follies.

Lys. I must confess I have been put to some, coz.

Clean. And yet you are not mad! pray, say not so;
Give me that comfort of you, that you are mad,
That I may think you are at worst; for if
You are not mad, I then must guess you have 240
The first of some disease was never heard of,
Which may be worse than madness, and more fearful:
You'd weep to see yourself else, and your care
To pray would quickly turn you white again.
I had a father, had he liv'd his month out,
But to ha' seen this most prodigious folly,
There needed not the law to have him cut off;
The sight of this had prov'd his executioner,
And broke his heart: he would have held it equal
Done to a sanctuary,—for what is age 250

---

[1] Old ed. "black."

[2] "*Minus est insania turpis.* There are many traits of Massinger in this part of the scene."—*Gifford.*

But the holy place of life, chapel of ease
For all men's wearied miseries? and to rob
That of her ornament, it is accurst
As from a priest to steal a holy vestment,
Ay, and convert it to a simple covering.
[*Exit* LYSANDER.
I see't has done him good; blessing go with it,
Such as may make him pure again.

Re-enter EUGENIA.

Eug. 'Twas bravely touch'd, i'faith, sir.
Clean. O, you're welcome.
Eug. Exceedingly well handled.
Clean. 'Tis to you I come; he fell but i' my way. 260
Eug. You mark'd his beard, cousin?
Clean. Mark me.
Eug. Did you ever see a hair so changed?
Clean. I must be forc'd to wake her loudly too,
The devil has rock'd her so fast asleep.—
Strumpet!
Eug. Do you call, sir?
Clean. Whore!
Eug. How do you, sir?
Clean. Be I ne'er so well,
I must be sick of thee; thou'rt a disease
That stick'st to th'heart,—as all such women are.
Eug. What ails our kindred?
Clean. Bless me, she sleeps still!
What a dead modesty is i' this woman, 270
Will never blush again! Look on thy work

But with a Christian eye, 'twould turn thy heart
Into a shower of blood, to be the cause
Of that old man's destruction ; think upon't,
Ruin eternally ; for, through thy loose follies,
Heaven has found him a faint servant lately !
His goodness has gone backward, and engender'd
With his old sins again ; has[1] lost his prayers,
And all the tears that were companions with 'em :
And like a blindfold man, (giddy and blinded,) 280
Thinking he goes right on still, swerves but one foot,
And turns to the same place where he set out ;
So he, that took his farewell of the world,
And cast the joys behind him, out of sight,
Summ'd up his hours, made even with time and men,
Is now in heart arriv'd at youth again,
All by thy wildness : thy too hasty lust
Has driven him to this strong apostacy.
Immodesty like thine was never equall'd :
I've heard of women, (shall I call 'em so?) 290
Have welcom'd suitors ere the corpse were cold ;
But thou, thy husband living :—thou'rt too bold.

Eug. Well, have you done now, sir?

Clean. Look, look ! she smiles yet.

Eug. All this is nothing to a mind resolv'd ;
Ask any woman that, she'll tell you so much :
You have only shown a pretty saucy wit,
Which I shall not forget, nor to requite it.
You shall hear from me shortly.

---

[1] *i.e.* he has.

Clean. Shameless woman !
I take my counsel from thee, 'tis too honest,
And leave thee wholly to thy stronger master : 300
Bless the sex of thee from thee ! that's my prayer.
Were all like thee, so impudently common,
No man would be found to wed a woman.

[*Exit.*

Eug. I'll fit you gloriously.
He that attempts to take away my pleasure,
I'll take away his joy ; and I can sure.
His conceal'd father pays for't : I'll e'en tell
Him that I mean to make my husband next,
And he shall tell the duke—mass, here he comes.

Re-enter SIMONIDES.

Sim. Has had a bout with me too.
Eug. What ! no ? since, sir ? 310
Sim. A flirt, a little flirt ; he call'd me strange names,
But I ne'er minded him.
Eug. You shall quit him, sir,
When he as little minds you.
Sim. I like that well.
I love to be reveng'd when no one thinks of me ;
There's little danger that way.
Eug. This is it then ;
He you shall strike, your stroke shall be profound,
And yet your foe not guess who gave the wound.
Sim. A' my troth, I love to give such wounds.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Before a Tavern.

Enter GNOTHO, Butler, Bailiff, Tailor, Cook, Drawer, *and* Courtezan.

Draw. Welcome, gentlemen; will you not draw near? will you drink at door, gentlemen?

But. O, the summer air's best.

Draw. What wine will['t] please you drink, gentlemen?

But. De Clare, sirrah. [*Exit* Drawer.

Gnoth. What, you're all sped already, bullies?[1]

Cook. My widow's a' the spit, and half ready, lad; a turn or two more, and I have done with her.

Gnoth. Then, cook, I hope you have basted her before this time.

Cook. And stuck her with rosemary too, to sweeten her; she was tainted ere she came to my hands. What an old piece of flesh of fifty-nine, eleven months, and upwards! she must needs be fly-blown.

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[1] Companions.

Gnoth. Put her off, put her off, though you lose by her; the weather's hot.

Cook. Why, drawer!

Re-enter Drawer.

Draw. By and by:—here, gentlemen, here's the quintessence of Greece; the sages never drunk better grape. 21

Cook. Sir, the mad Greeks of this age can taste their Palermo as well as the sage Greeks did before 'em.—Fill, lick-spiggot.

Draw. *Ad imum*, sir.

Gnoth. My friends, I must doubly invite you all, the fifth of the next month, to the funeral of my first wife, and to the marriage of my second, my two to one; this is she.

Cook. I hope some of us will be ready for the funeral of our wives by that time, to go with thee: but shall they be both of a day? 32

Gnoth. O, best of all, sir; where sorrow and joy meet together, one will help away with another the better. Besides, there will be charges saved too; the same rosemary[1] that serves for the funeral will serve for the wedding.

But. How long do you make account to be a widower, sir?

Gnoth. Some half an hour; long enough a' conscience.

---

[1] Rosemary, as being symbolical of remembrance, was commonly used at weddings and funerals.

Come, come, let's have some agility; is there no music in the house? 42

Draw. Yes, sir, here are sweet wire-drawers in the house.

Cook. O, that makes them and you seldom part; you are wine-drawers, and they wire-drawers.

Tail. And both govern by the pegs too.

Gnoth. And you have pipes in your consort [1] too.

Draw. And sackbuts too, sir.

But. But the heads of your instruments differ; yours are hogs-heads, their[s] cittern and gitternheads. 51

Bail. All wooden heads; there they meet again.

Cook. Bid 'em strike up, we'll have a dance, Gnotho; [2] come, thou shalt foot [3] it too. [*Exit* Drawer.

Gnoth. No dancing with me, we have Siren here.

Cook. Siren! 'twas Hiren,[4] the fair Greek, man.

Gnoth. Five drachmas of that. I say Siren, the fair Greek, and so are all fair Greeks.

Cook. A match! five drachmas her name was Hiren.

Gnoth. Siren's name was Siren, for five drachmas. 60

Cook. 'Tis done.

Tail. Take heed what you do, Gnotho.[5]

Gnoth. Do not I know our own countrywomen, Siren

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[1] Band of musicians.

[2] Old ed. "Gnothoes."

[3] Old ed. "foole."

[4] Peele wrote a play (that has not come down) entitled *The Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the Fair Greek.* Probably in this play occurred the words "Have we not Hiren here?" quoted by Pistol in 2 *Henry IV.*

[5] Old ed. "Gnothoes."

and Nell of Greece, two of the fairest Greeks that ever were?

Cook. That Nell was Helen of Greece too.

Gnoth. As long as she tarried with her husband, she was Ellen; but after she came to Troy, she was Nell of Troy, or Bonny Nell, whether you will or no.

Tail. Why, did she grow shor[t]er when she came to Troy? 71

Gnoth. She grew longer,[1] if you mark the story. When she grew to be an ell, she was deeper than any yard of Troy could reach by a quarter; there was Cressid was Troy weight, and Nell was avoirdupois;[2] she held more, by four ounces, than Cressida.

Bail. They say she caused many wounds to be given in Troy.

Gnoth. True, she was wounded there herself, and cured again by plaster of Paris; and ever since that has been used to stop holes with. 81

Re-enter Drawer.

Draw. Gentlemen, if you be disposed to be merry, the music is ready to strike up; and here's a consort[3] of mad Greeks, I know not whether they be men or women, or between both; they have, what-you-call-'em, wizards[4] on their faces.

---

[1] "This miserable trash, which is quite silly enough to be original, has yet the merit of being copied from Shakespeare."—*Gifford.*

[2] Old ed. "haberdepoyse."

[3] Band.

[4] Old ed. "vizards."

Cook. Vizards, good man lick-spiggot.

But. If they be wise women, they may be wizards too.

Draw. They desire to enter amongst any merry company of gentlemen good-fellows, for a strain or two. 90

Enter old Women *and* AGATHA *in masks.*

Cook. We'll strain ourselves with 'em, say; let 'em come, Gnotho;[1] now for the honour of Epire!

Gnoth. No[2] dancing with me, we have Siren here.

[*A dance by the old* Women *and* AGATHA; *they offer to take the men, all agree except* GNOTHO, *who sits whispering with the* Courtezan.[3]

Cook. Ay! so kind! then every one his wench to his several room; Gnotho,[4] we are all provided now, as you are.

[*Exeunt all but* GNOTHO, Courtezan, *and* AGATHA.

Gnoth. I shall have two, it seems: away! I have Siren here already.

Aga. What, a mermaid?[5] [*Takes off her mask.*

Gnoth. No, but a maid, horse-face: O old woman! is it you? 101

Aga. Yes, 'tis I; all the rest have gulled themselves, and taken their own wives, and shall know that they have done more than they can well answer; but I pray you, husband, what are you doing?

Gnoth. Faith, thus should I do, if thou wert dead, old

---

[1] Old ed. "Gnothoes." [2] Old ed. "she."

[3] The stage-direction in the old ed. is—"*The Dance of old women maskt, then offer to take the men, they agree all but Gnothoes: he sits with his Wench after they whisper.*"

[4] Old ed. "Gnothoes." [5] Cant term for "whore."

Ag; and thou hast not long to live, I'm sure: we have Siren here.

Aga. Art thou so shameless, whilst I am living, to keep one under my nose? 110

Gnoth. No, Ag, I do prize her far above thy nose; if thou wouldst lay me both thine eyes in my hand to boot, I'll not leave her: art not ashamed to be seen in a tavern, and hast scarce a fortnight to live? O old woman, what art thou? must thou find no time to think of thy end?

Aga. O unkind villain!

Gnoth. And then, sweetheart, thou shalt have two new gowns; and the best of this old[1] woman's shall make thee raiments for the working days.

Aga. O rascal! dost thou quarter my clothes already too? 121

Gnoth. Her ruffs will serve thee for nothing but to wash dishes; for thou shalt have thine[2] of the new fashion.

Aga. Impudent villain! shameless harlot!

Gnoth. You may hear, she never wore any but rails[3] all her lifetime.

Aga. Let me come, I'll tear the strumpet from him.

Gnoth. Darest thou call my wife strumpet, thou preterpluperfect tense of a woman! I'll make thee do penance in the sheet thou shalt be buried in; abuse my choice, my two to one! 132

Aga. No, unkind villain! I'll deceive thee yet;

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[1] Old ed. "old old." [2] Old ed. "nine."

[3] "A *rayle* or kercher, mamillare."—*Withal's Dictionary*, ed. 1608.

I have a reprieve for five years of life;
I am with child.

Court. Cud so, Gnotho,[1] I'll not tarry so long: five years! I may bury two husbands by that time.

Gnoth. Alas! give the poor woman leave to talk: she with child! ay, with a puppy: as long as I have thee by me, she shall not be with child, I warrant thee. 140

Aga. The law, and thou, and all, shall find I am with child.

Gnoth. I'll take my corporal oath I begat it not, and then thou diest for adultery.

Aga. No matter, that will ask some time in the proof.

Gnoth. O, you'd be stoned to death, would you? all old women would die a' that fashion with all their hearts; but the law shall overthrow you the tother way, first.

Court. Indeed, if it be so, I will not linger so long, Gnotho.[2] 151

Gnoth. Away, away! some botcher has got it; 'tis but a cushion, I warrant thee: the old woman is *loath to depart;*[3] she never sung other tune in her life.

Court. We will not have our noses bored with a cushion, if it be so.

Gnoth. Go, go thy ways, thou old almanac at the twenty-eighth day of December, e'en almost out of date! Down on thy knees, and make thee ready; sell some of

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[1] Old ed. "Gnothoes." [2] Old ed. "Gnothoes."

[3] "There was anciently both a tune and a dance of this name; to the former of which Gnotho alludes."—*Gifford.*

thy clothes to buy thee a death's head, and put upon thy middle finger: your least considering bawd[1] doe[s] so much; be not thou worse, though thou art an old woman, as she is: I am cloyed with old stock-fish; here's a young perch is sweeter meat by half: prithee, die before thy day, if thou canst, that thou mayst not be counted a witch. 166

Aga. No, thou art a witch, and I'll prove it: I said I was with child, thou knewest no other but by sorcery: thou said'st it was a cushion, and so it is; thou art a witch for't, I'll be sworn to't.

Gnoth. Ha, ha, ha! I told thee 'twas a cushion. Go, get thy sheet ready; we'll see thee buried as we go to church to be married. 173

[*Exeunt* GNOTHO *and* Courtezan.

Aga. Nay, I'll follow thee, and show myself a wife. I'll plague thee as long as I live with thee; and I'll bury some money before I die,[2] that my ghost may haunt thee afterward. [*Exit.*

---

[1] It appears to have been a common practice for bawds to wear rings with death's heads on them: Cf. Marston's *Dutch Courtezan*:—"As for their death how can it be bad, since their wickedness is always before their eyes and a death's head most commonly on their middle finger."

[2] It was a common superstition that ghosts haunted the spot where in their lifetime they had concealed treasure.

SCENE II.

The Country. A Forest.

Enter CLEANTHES.

Clean. What's that? O, nothing but the whispering wind
Breathes through yon churlish hawthorn, that grew rude,
As if it chid the gentle breath that kiss'd it.
I cannot be too circumspect, too careful;
For in these woods lies hid all my life's treasure,
Which is too much [n]ever to fear to loose,
Though[1] it be never lost: and if our watchfulness
Ought to be wise and serious 'gainst[2] a thief
That comes to steal our goods, things all without us,
That proves vexation often more than comfort; 10
How mighty ought our providence to be,
To prevent those, if any such there were,
That come to rob our bosom of our joys,
That only makes poor man delight to live!
Pshaw! I'm too fearful—fie, fie! who can hurt me?
But 'tis a general cowardice, that shakes
The nerves of confidence: he that hides treasure,
Imagines every one thinks of that place,
When 'tis a thing least minded; nay, let him change
The place continually; where'er it keeps, 20

---

[1] In the old ed. the prefix "*Hip.*" is given to this line.
[2] Old ed. "against."

There will the fear keep still: yonder's the store-house
Of all my comfort now—and see! it sends forth

Enter HIPPOLITA *from the wood.*

A dear one to me:—Precious chief of women,
How does the good old soul? has he fed well?
Hip. Beshrew me, sir, he made the heartiest meal to-day—
Much good may't do his health.
Clean. A blessing on thee,
Both for thy news and wish!
Hip. His stomach, sir,
Is better'd wondrously since his concealment.
Clean. Heaven has a blessed work in't. Come, we're safe here;
I prithee, call him forth; the air's much wholesomer. 30
Hip. Father!

Enter LEONIDES.

Leon.[1] How sweetly sounds the voice of a good woman!
It is so seldom heard, that, when it speaks,
It ravishes all senses. Lists[2] of honour!
I've a joy weeps[3] to see you, 'tis so full,
So fairly fruitful.

---

[1] In the old ed. the prefix is "*Hip.*"

[2] The old ed. gives the words "Lists of honour . . . . So fairly fruitful" to Cleanthes.

[3] In the *Changeling* we have the same idea beautifully expressed:—

"Our sweet'st delights
Are evermore born weeping."

Clean. I hope to see you often and return
Loaden with blessings, still to pour on some;
I find 'em all in my contented peace,
And lose not one in thousands; they're disperst 40
So gloriously, I know not which are brightest.
I find 'em, as angels are found, by legions:
First, in the love and honesty of a wife,
Which is the first and chiefest of all[1] temporal blessings;
Next, in yourself, which is the hope and joy
Of all my actions, my affairs, my wishes;
And lastly, which crowns all, I find my soul
Crown'd with the peace of 'em, th' eternal riches,
Man's only portion for his heavenly marriage!

Leon. Rise; thou art all obedience, love, and goodness. 50
I dare say that which thousand fathers cannot,
And that's my precious comfort; never son
Was in the way more of celestial rising:
Thou art so made of such ascending virtue,
That all the powers of hell can't sink thee.

[*A horn sounded within.*

Clean. Ha!

Leon. What was't disturb'd my joy?

Clean. Did you not hear,
As afar off?

---

[1] By omitting this word and reading "chief'st," the line would be brought within proper dimensions. (Dyce and Gifford read "Which is the chiefest of all," &c.)

Leon. What, my excellent comfort?[1]
Clean. Nor you?
Hip. I heard a—— [*A horn.* 60
Clean. Hark, again!
Leon. Bless my joy,
What ails it on a sudden?
Clean. Now? since lately?
Leon. 'Tis nothing but a symptom of thy care, man.
Clean. Alas, you do not hear well!
Leon. What was't, daughter?
Hip. I heard a sound twice. [*A horn.*
Clean. Hark! louder and nearer:
In, for the precious good of virtue, quick, sir!
Louder and nearer yet! at hand, at hand!
[*Exit* LEONIDES.
A hunting here! 'tis strange: I never knew
Game follow'd in these woods before. 70

Enter EVANDER, SIMONIDES, Courtiers, *and* CRATILUS.

Hip. Now let 'em come, and spare not.
Clean. Ha! 'tis—is't not the duke?—look sparingly.
Hip. 'Tis he; but what of that? alas, take heed, sir;
Your care will overthrow us.
Clean. Come, it shall not be:

---

[1] "The old copy has *consort*, which induced Coxeter to give the speech to Hippolita. I have little doubt but that the mistake is in this word, which should be *comfort*, as it stands in the text: by this term the fond parent frequently addresses his children. In the mouth of Leonides, too, it forms a natural reply to the question of Cleanthes, who then turns to make the same demand of his wife."—*Gifford.*

Let's set a pleasant face upon our fears,
Though our hearts shake with horror.—Ha, ha, ha!
Evan. Hark!
Clean. Prithee, proceed;
I'm taken with these light things infinitely,
Since the old man's decease; ha?—so they parted? 80
Ha, ha, ha!
Evan. Why, how should I believe this? look, he's merry,
As if he had no such charge: one with that care
Could never be so; still he holds his temper,
And 'tis the same still (with no difference)
He brought his father's corpse to the grave with;
He laugh'd thus then, you know.
First Court. Ay, he may laugh, my lord,
That shows but how he glories in his cunning;
And [is], perhaps, done more to advance his wit, 90
That[1] only he has over-reach'd the law,
Than to express affection to his father.
Sim. He tells you right, my lord; his own cousin-german
Reveal'd it first to me; a free-tongued woman,
And very excellent at telling secrets.
Evan. If a contempt can be so neatly carried,
It gives me cause of wonder.
Sim. Troth, my lord,
'Twill prove a delicate cozening, I believe:
I'd have no scrivener offer to come near it.

---

[1] In the old ed. this line and the next are transposed.

Evan. Cleanthes.
Clean. My lov'd lord.
Evan. Not mov'd a whit, 100
Constant to lightness[1] still! 'Tis strange to meet you
Upon a ground so unfrequented, sir:
This does not fit your passion; you're for mirth,
Or I mistake you much.
Clean. But finding it
Grow to a noted imperfection in me,
For anything too much is vicious,
I come to these disconsolate walks, of purpose,
Only to dull and take away the edge on't.
I ever had a greater zeal to sadness,
A natural propension,[2] I confess, my lord, 110
Before that cheerful accident fell out—
If I may call a father's funeral cheerful,
Without wrong done to duty or my love.
Evan. It seems, then, you take pleasure i'these walks, sir.
Clean. Contemplative content I do, my lord:
They bring into my mind oft meditations
So sweetly precious, that, in the parting,
I find a shower of grace upon my cheeks,
They take their leave so feelingly.
Evan. So, sir!
Clean. Which is a kind of grave delight, my lord. 120
Evan. And I've small cause, Cleanthes, to afford you
The least delight that has a name.

---

[1] Old ed. "lightning."
[2] Old ed. "proportion."

Clean. My lord!
Sim. Now it begins to fadge.
First Court. Peace! thou art so greedy, Sim.
Evan. In your excess of joy you have express'd
Your rancour and contempt against my law:
Your smiles deserve fining; you've profess'd
Derision openly, e'en to my face,
Which might be death, a little more incensed.
You do not come for any freedom here, 130
But for a project of your own:—
But all that's known to be contentful to thee,
Shall in the use prove deadly. Your life's mine,
If ever thy presumption do but lead thee
Into these walks again,—ay, or that woman;
I'll have 'em watch'd a' purpose.
[CLEANTHES *retires from the wood, followed by* HIPPOLITA.
First Court. Now, now, his colour ebbs and flows.
Sim. Mark her's too.
Hip. O, who shall bring food to the poor old man, now!
Speak, somewhat, good sir, or we're lost for ever.
Clean. O, you did wondrous ill to call me again! 140
There are not words to help us; if I entreat,
'Tis found; that will betray us worse than silence;
Prithee, let heaven alone, and let's say nothing.
First Court. You've struck 'em dumb, my lord.
Sim. Look how guilt looks!
I would not have that fear upon my flesh,
To save ten fathers.

Clean. He is safe still, is he not?
Hip. O, you do ill to doubt it.
Clean. Thou art all goodness.
Sim. Now does your grace believe?
Evan. 'Tis too apparent.
Search, make a speedy search; for the imposture
Cannot be far off, by the fear it sends. 150
Clean. Ha!
Sim. Has[1] the lapwing's cunning, I'm afraid, my lord,
That cries most when she's farthest[2] from the nest.
Clean. O, we're betray'd!
Hip. Betray'd, sir!
Sim. See, my lord,
It comes out more and more still.
[SIMONIDES *and* Courtiers *enter the wood.*
Clean. Bloody thief!
Come from that place; 'tis sacred, homicide!
'Tis not for thy adulterate hands to touch it.
Hip. O, miserable virtue, what distress
Art thou in at this minute!
Clean. Help me, thunder,
For my power's lost! angels, shoot plagues, and help me! 160
Why are these men in health, and I so heart-sick?
Or why should nature have that power in me
To levy up a thousand bleeding sorrows,
And not one comfort? only makes me lie

---

[1] *i.e.* he has.
[2] Allusions to the lapwing's subtlety are very common. Among Ray's Proverbs we find—"The lapwing cries most farthest from her nest."

Like the poor mockery of an earthquake here,
Panting with horror,
And have not so much force in all my vengeance,
To shake a villain off me ![1]

Re-enter SIMONIDES *and* Courtiers *with* LEONIDES.

Hip. Use him gently,
And heaven will love you for't.
Clean. Father! O father! now I see thee full 170
In thy affliction;[2] thou'rt a man of sorrow,
But reverently becom'st it, that's my comfort:
Extremity was never better grac'd
Than with that look of thine; O, let me look still,
For I shall lose it! all my joy and strength [*Kneels.*
Is e'en eclips'd together. I transgressed
Your law, my lord, let me receive the sting on't;
Be once just, sir, and let the offender die:
He's innocent in all, and I am guilty.
Leon. Your grace knows, when affection only speaks,
Truth is not always there; his love would draw 181
An undeserved misery on his youth,
And wrong a peace resolv'd, on both parts sinful.
'Tis I am guilty of my own concealment,
And, like a worldly coward, injur'd heaven
With fear to go to't:—now I see my fault,
I am prepar'd with joy to suffer for't.

---

[1] Old ed. "a mee."
[2] Old ed. "affection."

Evan. Go, give him quick despatch, let him see death:
And your presumption, sir, shall come to judgment.
[*Exeunt* EVANDER, Courtiers, SIMONIDES; *and* CRATILUS *with* LEONIDES.
Hip. He's going! O, he's gone, sir!
Clean. Let me rise. 190
Hip. Why do you not then, and follow?
Clean. I strive for't:
Is there no hand of pity that will ease me,
And take this villain from my heart awhile? [*Rises.*
Hip. Alas! he's gone.
Clean. A worse supplies his place then,
A weight more ponderous; I cannot follow.
Hip. O misery of affliction!
Clean. They will stay
Till I can come; they must be so good ever,
Though they be ne'er so cruel:
My last leave must be taken, think a' that,
And his[1] last blessing given; I will not lose 200
That for a thousand comforts.[2]
Hip. That hope's wretched.
Clean. The unutterable stings of fortune!
All griefs are to be borne save this alone;
This, like a headlong torrent, overturns
The frame of nature:
For he that gives us life first, as a father,

---

[1] Old ed. "this."
[2] Old ed. "consorts." See note, p. 206.

Locks all his natural sufferings in our blood;
The sorrows that he feels are our heart's too,[1]
They are incorporate to us.
Hip. Noble sir!
Clean. Let me behold thee[2] well.
Hip. Sir!
Clean. Thou shouldst be good, 210
Or thou'rt a dangerous substance to be lodg'd
So near the heart of man.
Hip. What means this, dear sir?
Clean. To thy trust only was this blessed secret
Kindly committed; 'tis destroy'd, thou seest;
What follows to be thought on't?
Hip. Miserable!
Why here's th' unhappiness of woman still,
That, having forfeited in old times her[3] trust,
Now makes their faiths suspected that are just.
Clean. What shall I say to all my sorrows then,
That look for satisfaction? 220

Enter EUGENIA.

Eug. Ha, ha, ha! cousin.
Clean. How ill dost thou become this time!
Eug. Ha, ha, ha!
Why, that's but your opinion; a young wench
Becomes the time at all times.
Now, coz, we're even: and you be remember'd,

---

[1] Old ed. —"blood, *to*
The sorrows that he feels, are our heads."
[2] Old ed. "him."
[3] Old ed. "their."

You left a *strumpet* and a *whore* at home with me,
And such fine field-bed words,which could not cost you
Less than a father.

Clean. Is it come that way?

Eug. Had you an uncle, 230
He should go the same way too.

Clean. O eternity!
What monster is this fiend in labour with?

Eug. An ass-colt with two heads, that's she and you:
I will not lose so glorious a revenge,
Not to be understood in't; I betray['d] him;
And now we're even, you'd best keep you so.

Clean. Is there not poison yet enough to kill me?

Hip. O sir, forgive me! it was I betray'd him.

Clean. How!

Hip. I. 240

Clean. The fellow of my heart! 'twill speed me, then.

Hip. Her tears that never wept, and mine own pity
E'en cozen'd me together, and stole from me
This secret, which fierce death should not have purchas'd.

Clean. Nay, then we're at an end; all we are false ones,
And ought to suffer. I was false to wisdom,
In trusting woman; thou wert false to faith,
In uttering of the secret; and thou false
To goodness, in deceiving such a pity:
We are all tainted some way, but thou worst, 250
And for thy infectious spots ought to die first.

[*Offers to kill* EUGENIA.

Eug. Pray turn your weapon, sir, upon your mistress ;
I come not so ill friended.—Rescue, servants !

Re-enter SIMONIDES *and* Courtiers.

Clean. Are you so whorishly provided ?
Sim. Yes, sir,
She has more weapons at command than one.
Eug. Put forward, man ; thou art most sure to have me
Sim. I shall be surer, if I keep behind, though.
Eug. Now, servants, show your loves.
Sim. I'll show my love, too, afar off.
Eug. I love to be so courted ; woo me there. 260
Sim. I love to keep good weapons, though [I] ne'er fought.
I'm sharper set within than I am without.
Hip. O gentlemen ! Cleanthes !
Eug. Fight ! upon him !
Clean.[1] Thy thirst of blood proclaims thee now a strumpet.
Eug. 'Tis dainty, next to procreation fitting ;
I'd either be destroying men or getting.

Enter Guard.

First Officer. Forbear, on your allegiance, gentlemen !
He's the duke's prisoner, and we seize upon him
To answer this contempt against the law.

---

[1] Old ed. "*Hip.*"

Sim. I obey fate in all things.

Hip. Happy rescue! 270

Sim. I would you'd seized upon him a minute sooner; 't had saved me a cut finger: I wonder how I came by't, for I never put my hand forth, I'm sure; I think my own sword did cut it, if truth were known; may be the wire in the handle: I have lived these five-and-twenty years, and never knew what colour my blood was before. I never durst eat oysters, nor cut peck-loaves.

Eug. You have shown your spirits, gentlemen; but you
Have cut your finger.

Sim. Ay, the wedding-finger too, a pox on't! 280

Court. You'll prove a bawdy bachelor, Sim, to have a cut upon your finger before you are married.

Sim. I'll never draw sword again, to have such a jest put upon me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Court of Justice.

Enter SIMONIDES *and* Courtiers, *sword and mace carried before them.*

Sim. Be ready with your prisoner; we'll sit instantly,
And rise before eleven,[1] or when we please;
Shall we not, fellow[2]-judges?
First Court. 'Tis committed
All to our power, censure, and pleasure, now;
The duke hath made us chief lords of this sessions,
And we may speak by fits, or sleep by turns.
Sim. Leave that to us; but, whatsoe'er we do,
The prisoner shall be sure to be condemn'd;
Sleeping or waking, we are resolv'd on that,
Before we sit[3] upon him?
Second Court. Make you question 10
If not?—Cleanthes! and an[4] enemy!
Nay, a concealer of his father too!
A vild example in these days of youth.

---

[1] Old ed. "leaven."
[2] Old ed. "follow."
[3] Old ed. "set."
[4] Old ed. "one."

Sim. If they were given to follow such examples ;
But sure I think they are not : howsoever,
'Twas wickedly attempted ; that's my judgment,
And it shall pass whilst I am in power to sit.
Never by prince were such young judges made ;
But now the cause requires it : if you mark it,
He must make young or none ; for all the old ones, 20
Their fathers,[1] he hath sent a fishing—and
My father's one, I humbly thank his highness.

Enter EUGENIA.

First Court. Widow ![2]
Eug. You almost hit my name no[w], gentlemen ;
You come so wondrous near it, I admire you
For your judgment.
Sim. My wife that must be ! She.
Eug. My husband goes upon his last hour now.
First Court. On his last legs, I am sure.
Sim.[3] September the seventeenth—
I will not bate an hour on't, and to-morrow 30
His latest hour's expir'd.
Second Court. Bring him to judgment ;
The jury's panell'd, and the verdict given
Ere[4] he appears ; we have ta'en course for that.
Sim. And officers to attach the gray young man,
The youth of fourscore. Be of comfort, lady ;
You[5] shall no longer bosom January ;

---

[1] Old ed. "her father." [2] Old ed. "Widdows."
[3] The old ed. gives this to Eugenia. I have followed Gifford and Dyce. [4] Old ed. "Ever." [5] Old ed. "We."

For that I will take order, and provide
For you a lusty April.
Eug. The month that ought, indeed,
To go before May.
First Court. Do as we have said,
Take a strong guard, and bring him into court. 40
Lady Eugenia, see this charge perform'd
That, having his life forfeited by the law,
He may relieve his soul.
Eug. Willingly.
From shaven chins never came better justice
Than these ne'er touch'd by razor.[1] [*Exit.*
Sim. What you do,
Do suddenly, we charge you, for we purpose
To make but a short sessions :—a new business !

Enter HIPPOLITA.

First Court. The fair Hippolita ! now what's your suit?
Hip. Alas ! I know not how to style you yet ;
To call you judges doth not suit your years, 50
Nor heads and beards show more antiquity ;[2]
Yet sway yourselves with equity and truth,
And I'll proclaim you reverend,[3] and repeat

---

[1] Old ed. "new tucht by reason." This excellent emendation was made by Mason.

[2] "Mr. M. Mason reads,

To call you judges doth not suit your years,
Nor heads ; and brains show more antiquity.

It is evident that he did not comprehend the sense, which, though ill-conceived and harshly expressed, is,—You have not the years of judges, nor do your heads and *beards* (old copy, *brains*) show more of age."—*Gifford.*

[3] Old ed. "reverent."

Once in my lifetime I have seen grave heads
Plac'd upon young men's shoulders.
Second Court. Hark! she flouts us,
And thinks to make us monstrous.
Hip. Prove not so;
For yet, methinks, you bear the shapes of men,
(Though nothing more than mercy beautifies,[1]
To make you appear angels); but if [you] crimson
Your name and power with blood and cruelty, 60
Suppress fair virtue, and enlarge bold[2] vice,
Both against heaven and nature draw your sword,
Make either will or humour turn the soul[3]
Of your created greatness, and in that
Oppose all goodness, I must tell you there
You're more than monstrous; in the very act
You change yourselves[4] to devils.
First Court. She's a witch;
Hark! she begins to conjure.
Sim. Time, you see,
Is short, much business now on foot:—shall I
Give her her answer?
Second Court. None upon the bench 70
More learnedly can do it.
Sim. He, he, hem! then list:
I wonder at thine impudence, young huswife,
That thou dar'st plead for such a base offender.

---

[1] This is my own emendation. The old ed. reads "merely beautifeaus." Gifford and Dyce give "meerly beauty serves,"—which to me is unintelligible.
[2] Old ed. "of old."
[3] Coxeter and Mason read "scale."
[4] Old ed. "yourselfe."

Conceal a father past his time to die!
What son and heir would have done this but he?
First Court. I vow, not I.
Hip. Because ye are parricides;
And how can comfort be deriv'd from such
That pity not their fathers?
Second Court. You are fresh and fair; practise young women's ends;
When husbands are distress'd, provide them friends. 80
Sim. I'll set him forward for thee without fee:[1]
Some wives would pay for such a courtesy.
Hip. Times of amazement! what duty, goodness dwell[2]——
I sought for charity, but knock at hell. [*Exit.*

Re-enter EUGENIA, *and* Guard *with* LYSANDER.

Sim. Eugenia come! Command a second guard
To bring Cleanthes in; we'll not sit long;
My stomach strikes[3] to dinner.
Eug. Now, servants, may a lady be so bold
To call your power so low?
Sim. A mistress may;

---

[1] The old ed. has "forward fee thee," giving the words "without fee" as a stage-direction.

[2] I should prefer "where doth goodness dwell?"

[3] Old ed. "strives." Gifford suggested "strikes" but printed "strives." Cf. pro-dialogue to Day's *Isle of Gulls*:—"I lay in bed till past three o'clock, slept out my dinner, and my *stomach will toll to supper* afore five." So in Heywood's *English Traveller* (Works, iv. 13):—"I know not how the day goes with you, but *my stomach has struck twelve.*"

She can make all things low; then in that language 90
There can be no offence.

Eug. The time's now come
Of manumissions; take him into bonds,
And I am then at freedom.

Second Court. This the man!
He hath left off [o'] late to feed on snakes;[1]
His beard's turn'd white again.

First Court. Is't possible these gouty legs danc'd lately,
And shatter'd in a galliard?

Eug. Jealousy
And fear of death can work strange prodigies.

Second Court. The nimble fencer this, that made me tear
And traverse 'bout the chamber?

Sim. Ay, and gave me 100
Those elbow-healths, the hangman take him for't!
They had almost fetch'd my heart out: the Dutch venny[2]
I swallow'd pretty well; but the half-pike
Had almost pepper'd[3] me; but had I took [long-sword],
Being swollen, I had cast my lungs out.

---

[1] A recipe for recovering youth. Cf. Fletcher's *Elder Brother*, iv. 4:—
"He's your loving brother, sir, and will tell nobody,
But all he meets, that you have *eat a snake*,
And are grown young, gamesome and rampant."

[2] Gifford reads "Dutch *what-you-call.*"

[3] Old ed. "prepar'd."

A Flourish.[1] *Enter* EVANDER *and* CRATILUS.

First[2] *Court.* Peace, the duke!

Evan. Nay, back[3] t' your seats: who's that?

Second Court. May't please your highness, it is old Lysander.[4]

Evan. And brought in by his wife! a worthy precedent
Of one that no way would offend the law,
And should not pass away without remark. 110
You have been look'd for long.

Lys. But never fit
To die till now, my lord. My sins and I
Have been but newly parted; much ado
I had to get them leave me, or be taught
That difficult lesson, how to learn to die.
I never thought there had been such an art,[5]
And 'tis the only discipline we are born for:
All studies else[6] are but as circular lines,
And death the centre where they must all meet.
I now can look upon thee, erring woman, 120
And not be vex'd with jealousy; on young men,
And no way envy their delicious health,

---

[1] Old ed. Florish.
Duk. A flemish. *Enter the Duke.*"

[2] Old ed. "2."

[3] Old ed. "Nay, bathe your seats." The emendation is Gifford's. In the old edition the line is given to the Second Courtier.

[4] Old ed.
"*Duk.* May't please your highness.
Sim. 'Tis old Lisander."

[5] Old ed. "act" (and so later editors).

[6] Old ed. "as are."

Pleasure, and strength; all which were once mine own,
And mine must be theirs one day.

Evan. You have tam'd him.

Sim. And know how to dispose him; that, my liege,
Hath been before determin'd. You confess
Yourself of full age?

Lys. Yes, and prepar'd to inherit——

Eug. Your place above.[1]

Sim. Of which the hangman's strength
Shall put him in possession.

Lys. 'Tis still car'd[2]
To take me willing and in mind to die; 130
And such are, when the earth grows weary of them,
Most fit for heaven.

Sim. The court shall make his mittimus,
And send him thither presently: i' th' meantime——

Evan. Away[3] to death with him.

[*Exit* CRATILUS *with* LYSANDER.

Enter Guard *with* CLEANTHES, HIPPOLITA *following, weeping.*

Sim. So! see another person brought to the bar.

First Court. The arch-malefactor.

---

[1] Old ed.
"*Hip.* Your place above—Duke—away to death with him.
[*Cleanthes* Guard."
I have followed Gifford's arrangement.

[2] Old ed. "guard." The words "Tis still . . . heaven" form part of Simonides' speech in the old ed.

[3] See note 1.

Second Court. The grand offender,[1] the most refractory
To all good order;[2] 'tis Cleanthes, he——
Sim. That would have sons grave fathers, ere their fathers
Be sent unto their graves.
Evan. There will be expectation
In your severe proceedings against him; 140
His act being so capital.
Sim. Fearful and bloody;
Therefore we charge these women leave the court,
Lest they should swoon[3] to hear it.
Eug. I, in expectation
Of a most happy freedom. [*Exit.*
Hip. I, with the apprehension
Of a most sad and desolate widowhood. [*Exit.*
First Court. We bring him to the bar——
Second Court. Hold up your hand, sir.
Clean. More reverence to the place than to the persons:
To the one I offer up a [spreading][4] palm
Of duty and obedience, [a]s to heaven,
Imploring justice, which was never wanting 150
Upon that bench whilst their own fathers sat;
But unto you, my hands contracted thus,

---

[1] Old ed. "offenders."
[2] Old ed. "orders."
[3] Old ed. "stand."
[4] "I have inserted *spreading*, not merely on account of its completing the verse, but because it contrasts well with *contracted*. Whatever the author's word was, it was shuffled out of its place at the press, and appears as a misprint (*showdu*) in the succeeding line."—*Gifford.*

As threatening vengeance against murderers,
For they that kill in thought shed innocent blood.—
With pardon of[1] your highness, too much passion
Made me forget your presence, and the place
I now am call'd to.

Evan. All our[2] majesty
And power we have to pardon or condemn
Is now conferr'd on them.

Sim. And these we'll use
Little to thine advantage.

Clean. I expect it: 160
And as to these, I look no mercy from [them],
And much less mean[3] to entreat it. I thus now
Submit me [to] the emblems of your power,
The sword and bench: but, my most reverend judges,
Ere you proceed to sentence, (for I know
You have given me lost,) will you resolve me one thing?

First Court. So it be briefly questioned.

Second Court. Show your humour;[4]
Day spends itself apace.

Clean. My lords, it shall.[5]
Resolve me, then, where are your filial tears,
Your mourning habits, and sad hearts become, 170

---

[1] Old ed. "to."

[2] Old ed. "one."

[3] "For *mean* the old copy has *shown*, which is pure nonsense: it stands, however, in all the editions. I have, I believe, recovered the genuine text by adopting *mean*, which was superfluously inserted in the line immediately below it."—*Gifford.*

[4] Old ed. "honour."

[5] *i.e.* it shall be briefly questioned.

That should attend your fathers' funeral?
Though the stric[t] law (which I will not accuse,
Because a subject) snatch'd away their lives,
It doth not bar you[1] to lament their deaths:
Or if you cannot spare one sad suspire,
It doth not bid you laugh them to their graves,
Lay subtle trains to antedate their years,
To be the sooner seis'd of their estates.
O, time of age! where's that Æneas now,
Who letting all his jewels to the flames; 180
Forgetting country, kindred, treasure, friends,
Fortunes, and all things, save the name of son,
Which you so much forget, godlike[2] Æneas,
Who took his bedrid father on his back,
And with that sacred load (to him no burthen)
Hew'd out his way through blood, through fire, through [arms],
Even all the arm'd streets of bright-burning Troy,
Only to save a father?
Sim. We've no leisure now
To hear lessons read from Virgil; we're past school,
And all this time thy judges.
Second Court. It is fit 190
That we proceed to sentence.
First Court. You are the mouth,
And now 'tis fit to open.
Sim. Justice, indeed,

---

[1] Old ed. "them."
[2] Old ed. "goe *like*."

Should ever be close-ear'd and open-mouth'd;
That is, to hear a[1] little, and speak much.
Know[2] then, Cleanthes, there is none can be
A good son and bad[3] subject; for, if princes
Be call'd the people's fathers, then the subjects
Are all his sons, and he that flouts the prince
Doth disobey his father: there ye're gone.
First Court. And not to be recover'd.
Sim. And again—— 200
Second Court. If he be gone once, call him not again.
Sim. I say again, this act of thine expresses
A double disobedience: as our princes
Are fathers, so they are our sovereigns too;
And he that doth rebel 'gainst sovereignty
Doth commit treason in the height of degree:
And now thou art quite gone.
First Court. Our brother in commission
Hath spoke his mind both learnedly and neatly,
And I can add but little; howsoever, 210
It shall send him packing.
He that begins a fault that wants example
Ought to be made example for the fault.
Clean. A fault! no longer can I hold myself
To hear vice upheld and virtue thrown down.
A fault! judge, I desire, then,[4] where it lieth,
In those that are my judges, or in me:
Heaven stand on my side, pity, love, and duty.

---

[1] Old ed. "him."
[2] Old ed. "Low."
[3] Old ed. "a bad."
[4] Old ed. "judge then, I desire."

Sim. Where are they, sir? who sees them but yourself?

Clean. Not you; and I am sure 220
You never had the gracious eyes to see them.
You think [that] you arraign me, but I hope
To sentence you at the bar.

Second Court. That would show brave.

Clean. This were the judgment-seat we [stand at] now![1]
[Of] the heaviest crimes that ever made up [sin],
Unnaturalness and inhumanity,
You are found foul and guilty, by a jury
Made of your fathers' curses, which have brought
Vengeance impending on you; and I, now,
Am forc'd to pronounce judgment on my judges. 230
The common laws of reason and of nature
Condemn you, *ipso facto;* you are parricides,
And if you marry, will beget the like,[2]
Who, when you're grown to full maturity,
Will hurry you, their fathers, to their graves.

---

[1] "*i.e.* O, that this were, &c. But, indeed, this speech is so strangely printed in the quarto, that it is almost impossible to guess what the writer really meant. The first three lines stand thus:

Clean. *This were the judgment seat, we now*
The heaviest crimes that ever made up
Unnaturalness in humanity.

Whether the genuine, or, indeed, any sense be elicited by the additions which I have been compelled to make, is not mine to say; but certainly some allowance will be made for any temperate endeavour to regulate a text where the words, in too many instances, appear as if they had been shook out of the printer's boxes by the hand of chance."—*Gifford.*

[2] Old ed. "lyar."

Like traitors, you take council from the living,
Of upright judgment you would rob the bench,
(Experience and discretion snatch'd away
From the earth's face,) turn all into disorder,
Imprison virtue, and enfranchise vice, 240
And put the sword of justice into the hands
Of boys and madmen.

Sim. Well, well, have you done, sir?

Clean. I have spoke my thoughts.

Sim. Then I'll begin and end.

Evan. 'Tis time I now begin—
Here [1] your commission ends.
Cleanthes, come you [2] from the bar. Because
I know you're severally disposed, I here
Invite you to an object will, no doubt,
Work in you contrary effects.—Music!

Loud Music. Enter LEONIDES, CREON, LYSANDER, *and other old men.*

Clean. Pray, heaven, I dream not! sure he moves, talks comfortably, 250
As joy can wish a man. If he be chang'd
(Far above from me), he is not ill entreated;
His face doth promise fulness of content,
And glory hath a part in't.

Leon. O my son!

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[1] Old ed. "Where."

[2] Old ed. "you come."

Evan. You that can claim acquaintance with these lads,
Talk freely.
Sim. I can see none there that's worth
One hand to you from me.
Evan. These are thy judges, and by their grave law
I find thee clear, but these delinquents guilty.
You must change places, for 'tis so decreed: 260
Such just pre-eminence hath thy goodness gain'd,
Thou art the judge now, they the men arraign'd.
[*To* CLEANTHES.
First Court. Here's fine dancing, gentlemen.
Second Court. Is thy father amongst them?
Sim.[1] O a pox! I saw him the first thing I look'd on.
Alive again! 'slight, I believe now a father
Hath as many lives as a mother.
Clean.[2] 'Tis full as blessed as 'tis wonderful.
O, bring me back to the same law again!
I am fouler than all these; seize on me, officers, 270
And bring me to new sentence.
Sim.[3] What's all this?
Clean. A fault not to be pardon'd,
Unnaturalness is but sin's[4] shadow to it.
Sim. I am glad of that; I hope the case may alter,
And I turn judge again.
Evan. Name your offence.
Clean. That I should be so vild
As once to think you cruel.

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[1] Old ed. "*Clean.*" [2] Old ed. "*Sim.*" [3] Old ed. "*Clean.*"
[4] Old ed. "suns."

Evan. Is that all?
Twas pardon'd ere confess'd: you that have sons,
If they be worthy, here may challenge them.[1]

Creon.[2] I should have one amongst them, had he had grace 280
To have retain'd that name.

Sim. I pray you, father. [*Kneels.*

Creon.[3] That name, I know, hath been long since forgot.

Sim. I find but small comfort in remembering it now.

Evan. Cleanthes, take your place[4] with these grave father[s],
And read what in that table is inscrib'd.
[*Gives him a paper.*
Now set these at the bar,
And read, Cleanthes, to the dread and terror
Of disobedience and unnatural blood.

Clean. [*reads*]. *It is decreed by the grave and learned council of Epire, that no son and heir shall be held capable of his inheritance at the age of one-and-twenty, unless he be at that time as mature*[5] *in obedience, manners, and goodness.*

Sim. Sure I shall never be at full age, then, though I live to an hundred years; and that's nearer by twenty than the last statute allowed. 295

First Court. A terrible act!

Clean. *Moreover,*[6] *is enacted that all sons aforesaid, whom*

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[1] Old ed. "my challenge then."
[2] Old ed. "*Cle.*"
[3] Old ed. "*Cle.*"
[4] Old ed. "places."
[5] Old ed. "nature."
[6] In the old ed. these words are given to the First Courtier.

either this law, or their own grace, shall[1] *reduce into the true method of duty, virtue, and affection,* [*shall appear before us*][2] *and relate their trial and approbation from Cleanthes, the son of Leonides*—from me, my lord! 301

Evan. From none but you, as fullest. Proceed, sir.

Clean. Whom, for his manifest virtues, we make such judge and censor of youth, and the absolute reference of life and manners.

Sim. This is a brave world! when a man should be selling land, he must be learning manners. Is't not, my masters?

Re-enter EUGENIA.

Eug. What's here to do? my suitors at the bar!
The old band[3] shines again: O miserable! 400

[*She swoons.*

Evan. Read the law over to her, 'twill awake her:
'Tis one deserves small pity.

Clean. Lastly, it is ordained, that all such wives now whatsoever, that shall design the[*ir*] *husbands' death, to be soon rid of them, and entertain suitors in their husbands' lifetime*—

Sim. You had best read that a little louder; for, if anything, that will bring her to herself again, and find her tongue.

---

[1] Old ed. "whom it shall."

[2] "Whether the words which I have inserted convey the author's meaning, or not, may be doubted; but they make some sense of the passage, and this is all to which they pretend."—*Gifford.*

[3] "So Gifford. Old ed. 'baud.'—Qy. did the author write '*The old* bald sires *again?*'"—*Dyce.*

Clean. Shall not presume, on the penalty of our heavy displeasure, to marry within ten years after. 411

Eug. That law's too long by nine years and a half,
I'll take my death upon't, so shall most women.

Clean. And those incontinent women so offending, to be judge[d] and censured by Hippolita, wife to Cleanthes.

Eug. Of all the rest, I'll not be judg['d] by her.

Re-enter HIPPOLITA.

Clean. Ah! here she comes. Let me prevent thy joys,
Prevent them but in part, and hide the rest;
Thou hast not strength enough to bear them, else.

Hip. Leonides! [*She faints.*

Clean. I fear'd it all this while; 420
I knew 'twas past thy power. Hippolita!—
What contrariety is in women's blood!
One faints for spleen and anger, she for grace.

Evan. Of sons and wives we see the worst and best.
M[a]y future ages yield Hippolitas
Many; but few like thee, Eugenia!
Let no Simonides henceforth have a fame,
But all blest sons live in Cleanthes' name—
[*Harsh music within.*
Ha! what strange kind of melody was that?
Yet give it entrance, whatsoe'er it be, 430
This day is all devote to liberty.

Enter Fiddlers, GNOTHO, Courtezan, Cook, Butler, &c., *with the old* Women, AGATHA, *and one bearing a bridecake for the wedding.*

Gnoth. Fiddlers, crowd [1] on, crowd on ; let no man lay a block in your way.—Crowd on, I say.

Evan. Stay the crowd awhile ; let's know the reason of this jollity.

Clean. Sirrah, do you know where you are ?

Gnoth. Yes, sir ; I am here, now here, and now here again, sir.

Lys. Your hat is too high crown'd, the duke in presence.

Gnoth. The duke ! as he is my sovereign,[2] I do give him two crowns for it, and that's equal change all the world over: as I am lord of the day (being my marriage-day the second) I do advance [my] bonnet. Crowd on afore. 443

Leon. Good sir, a few words, if you will vouchsafe 'em ; Or will you be forc'd ?

Gnoth. Forced ! I would the duke himself would say so.

Evan. I think he dares, sir, and does ; if you stay not, You shall be forced.

Gnoth. I think so, my lord, and good reason too ; shall not I stay, when your grace says I shall ? I were unworthy to be a bridegroom in any part of your highness's dominions, then : will it please you to taste of the wedlock-courtesy ? 453

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[1] Fiddle.

[2] A sovereign was a gold coin of the value of ten shillings.

Evan. O, by no means, sir; you shall not deface
So fair an ornament for me.

Gnoth. If your grace please to be cakated, say so.

Evan. And which might be your fair bride, sir?

Gnoth. This is my two for one that must be, [the] *uxor uxoris*, the remedy *doloris*, and the very *syceum amoris.* 460

Evan. And hast thou any else?

Gnoth. I have an older, my lord, for other uses.

Clean. My lord,
I do observe a strange decorum here:
These that do lead this day of jollity
Do march with music and most mirthful cheeks;
Those that do follow, sad and wofully,
Nearer the haviour of a funeral
Than a wedding.

Evan. 'Tis true: pray expound that, sir. 470

Gnoth. As the destiny of the day falls out, my lord, one goes[1] to wedding, another goes to hanging; and your grace, in the due consideration, shall find 'em much alike; the one hath the ring upon her finger, the other a halter about her neck. *I take thee, Beatrice,* says the bridegroom; *I take thee, Agatha,* says the hangman; and both say together, *to have and to hold, till death do part us.*

Evan. This is not yet plain enough to my understanding. 480

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[1] Old ed. "*goes* out" (the word "out" being caught from the previous line).

Gnoth. If further your grace examine it, you shall find I show myself a dutiful subject, and obedient to the law, myself, with these my good friends, and your good subjects, our old wives, whose days are ripe, and their lives forfeit to the law: only myself, more forward than the rest, am already provided of my second choice.

Evan. O, take heed, sir, you'll run yourself into danger!
If the law finds you with two wives at once,
There's a shrewd premunire. 489

Gnoth. I have taken leave of the old, my lord. I have nothing to say to her; she's going to sea, your grace knows whither, better than I do: she has a strong wind with her, it stands full in her poop; when you please, let her disembogue.

Cook. And the rest of her neighbours with her, whom we present to the satisfaction of your highness' law.

Gnoth. And so we take our leaves, and leave them to your highness.—Crowd on.

Evan. Stay, stay, you are too forward. Will you marry
And your wife yet living? 500

Gnoth. Alas! she'll be dead before we can get to church. If your grace would set her in the way, I would despatch her: I have a venture on't, which would return me, if your highness would make a little more haste, two for one.

Evan. Come, my lords, we must sit again; here's a case
Craves a most serious censure.

Cook. Now they shall be despatch'd out of the way.

Gnoth. I would they were gone once; the time goes away.

Evan. Which is the wife unto the forward bridegroom?

Aga. I am, and it please your grace. 511

Evan. Trust me, a lusty woman, able-bodied,
And well-blooded cheeks.

Gnoth. O, she paints, my lord; she was a chamber-maid once, and learnt it of her lady.

Evan. Sure I think she cannot be so old.

Aga. Truly I think so too, and please your grace.

Gnoth. Two to one with your grace of that! she's threescore by the book.

Leon. Peace, sirrah, you're too loud. 520

Cook. Take heed, Gnotho:[1] if you move the duke's patience, tis' an edge-tool; but a word and a blow; he cuts off your head.

Gnoth. Cut off my head! away, ignorant! he knows it cost more in the hair; he does not use to cut off many such heads as mine: I will talk to him too; if he cut off my head, I'll give him my ears. I say my wife is at full age for the law; the clerk shall take his oath, and the church-book shall be sworn too.

Evan. My lords, I leave this censure to you. 530

Leon. Then first, this fellow does deserve punishment,
For offering up a lusty able woman,
Which may do service to the commonwealth,
Where the law craves one impotent and useless.

Creon. Therefore to be severely punish'd,

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[1] Old ed. "Gnothoes."

For thus attempting a second marriage,
His wife yet living.

Lys. Nay, to have it trebled ;
That even the day and instant when he should mourn,
As a kind husband, to her funeral,
He leads a triumph to the scorn of it ; 540
Which unseasonable joy ought to be punish'd
With all severity.

But. The fiddles will be in a foul case too, by and by.

Leon. Nay, further ; it seems he has a venture
Of two for one at his second marriage,
Which cannot be but a conspiracy
Against the former.

Gnoth. A mess of wise old men !

Lys. Sirrah, what can you answer to all these ?

Gnoth. Ye are good old men, and talk as age will give you leave. I would speak with the youthful duke himself ; he and I may speak of things that shall be thirty or forty years after you are dead and rotten. Alas ! you are here to-day, and gone to sea to-morrow. 553

Evan. In troth, sir, then I must be plain with you.
The law that should take away your old wife from you,
The which I do perceive was your desire,
Is void and frustrate ; so for the rest :
There has been since another parliament
Has cut it off.

Gnoth. I see your grace is disposed to be pleasant. 560

Evan. Yes, you might perceive that ; I had not else
Thus dallied with your follies.

Gnoth. I'll talk further with your grace when I come

back from church; in the meantime, you know what to do with the old women.

Evan. Stay, sir, unless in the meantime you mean
I cause a gibbet to be set up in your way,
And hang you at your return.

Aga. O gracious prince!

Evan. Your old wives cannot die to-day by any
Law of mine; for aught I can say to 'em 570
They may, by a new edict, bury you,
And then, perhaps you pay a new fine too.

Gnoth. This is fine, indeed!

Aga. O gracious prince! may he live a hundred years more.

Cook. Your venture is not like to come in to-day, Gnotho.[1]

Gnoth. Give me the principal back.

Cook. Nay, by my troth we'll venture still—and I'm sure we have as ill a venture of it as you; for we have taken old wives of purpose, that [2] we had thought to have put away at this market, and now we cannot utter a pennyworth. 582

Evan. Well, sirrah, you were best to discharge your new charge, and take your old one to you.

Gnoth. O music! no music, but prove most doleful trumpet;[3]
O bride! no bride, but thou mayst prove a strumpet;
O venture! no venture, I have, for one, now none;

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[1] Old ed. "Gnothoes."
[2] Old ed. "Where *that.*"
[3] Old ed. "trumpets."

O wife! thy life is sav'd when I hop'd it had been gone.
Case up your fruitless strings; no penny, no wedding;
Case up thy maidenhead; no priest, no bedding: 590
Avaunt, my venture! it can ne'er be restor'd,
Till Ag, my old wife, be thrown overboard:
Then come again, old Ag, since it must be so;
Let bride and venture with woful music go.

Cook. What for the bridecake, Gnotho?[1]

Gnoth. Let it be mouldy, now 'tis out of season,
Let it grow out of date, currant, and reason;[2]
Let it be chipt and chopt, and given to chickens.
No more is got by that than William Dickins
Got by his wooden dishes. 600
Put up your plums, as fiddlers put up pipes,
The wedding dash'd, the bridegroom weeps and wipes.
Fiddlers, farewell! and now, without perhaps,
Put up your fiddles as you put up scraps.

Lys. This passion[3] has given some satisfaction yet. My lord, I think you'll pardon him now, with all the rest, so they live honestly with the wives they have.

Evan. O, most freely; free pardon to all.

Cook. Ay, we have deserved our pardons, if we can live honestly with such reverend wives, that have no motion in 'em but their tongues. 611

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[1] Old ed. "Gnothoes."

[2] "Raisin" seems to have been pronounced as "reason." Falstaff plays upon the word—"If reasons were as common as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I."

[3] Sorrowful exclamation.

Aga. Heaven bless your grace! you're a just prince.

Gnoth. All hopes dash'd; the clerk's duties lost,
[My] venture gone; my second wife divorc'd;
And which is worst, the old one come back again!
Such voyages are made now-a-days!
I will weep two salt [ones out] of my[1] nose, besides these two fountains of fresh water. Your grace had been more kind to your young subjects—heaven bless and mend your laws, that they do not gull your poor countrymen [in this] fashion: but I am not the first, by forty, that has been undone by the law. 'Tis but a folly to stand upon terms; I take my leave of your grace, as well as mine eyes will give me leave: I would they had been asleep in their beds when they opened 'em to see this day! Come, Ag; come, Ag. 627

[*Exeunt* GNOTHO *and* AGATHA.

Creon. Were not you all my servants?

Cook. During your life, as we thought, sir; but our young master turned us away.

Creon. How headlong, villain, wert thou in thy ruin!

Sim. I followed the fashion, sir, as other young men did. If you were[2] as we thought you had been, we should ne'er have come for this, I warrant you. We did not feed, after the old fashion, on beef and mutton, and such like.

Creon. Well, what damage or charge you have run yourselves into by marriage, I cannot help, nor deliver

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[1] Old ed. "our." [2] Old ed. "have."

you from your wives; them you must keep; yourselves shall again return [1] to me. 640

All. We thank your lordship for your love, and must thank ourselves for our bad bargains. [*Exeunt.*

Evan. Cleanthes, you delay the power of law,
To be inflicted on these misgovern'd men,
That filial duty have so far transgress'd.

Clean. My lord, I see a satisfaction
Meeting the sentence, even preventing it,
Beating my words back in their utterance.
See, sir, there's salt sorrow bringing forth fresh
And new duties, as the sea propagates. 650
The elephants [2] have found their joints too——
[*They kneel.*
Why, here's humility able to bind up
The punishing hand of the severest masters,
Much more the gentle fathers'.

Sim. I had ne'er thought to have been brought so low as my knees again; but since there's no remedy, fathers, reverend fathers, as you ever hope to have good sons and heirs, a handful of pity! we confess we have deserved more than we are willing to receive at your hands, though sons can never deserve too much of their fathers, as shall appear afterwards. 661

Creon. And what way can you decline your feeding now?
You cannot retire to beeves and muttons, sure.

---

[1] Old ed. "retaine."

[2] Cf. Rowley's *All's Lost by Lust*, c. 3, verso:—
"Stubborn as an *elephant's leg*, no bending in her."

Sim. Alas! sir, you see a good pattern for that, now we have laid by our high and lusty meats, and are down to our marrow bones already.

Creon. Well, sir, rise to virtues: we'll bind[1] you now;
[*They rise.*
You that were too weak yourselves to govern,
By others shall be govern'd.

Lys. Cleanthes, 670
I meet your justice with reconcilement:
If there be tears of faith in woman's breast,
I have receiv'd a myriad, which confirms me
To find a happy renovation.

Clean. Here's virtue's throne,
Which I'll embellish with my dearest jewels
Of love and faith, peace and affection!
This is the altar of my sacrifice,
Where daily my devoted knees shall bend.
Age-honour'd shrine! time still so love you, 680
That I so long may have you in mine eye
Until my memory lose your beginning!
For you, great prince, long may your fame survive,
Your justice and your wisdom never die,
Crown of your crown, the blessing of your land,
Which you reach to her from your regent[2] hand!

Leon. O Cleanthes, had you with us tasted
The entertainment of our retirement,
Fear'd and exclaim'd on in your ignorance,
You might have sooner died upon the wonder, 690

---

[1] Old ed. "bound." [2] Old ed. "regents."

Than any rage or passion for our loss.
A place at hand we were all strangers in,
So spher'd about with music, such delights,
[Such] viands and attendance, and once a day
So cheered with a royal visitant,
That ofttimes, waking, our unsteady phantasies
Would question whether we yet liv'd or no,
Or had possession of that paradise
Where angels be the guard!

Evan. Enough, Leonides,
You go beyond the praise; we have our end, 700
And all is ended well: we have now seen
The flowers and weeds that grew about our court.

Sim. If these be weeds,[1] I'm afraid I shall wear none so good again as long as my father lives.

Evan. Only this gentleman we did abuse
With our own bosom: we seem'd a tyrant,
And he our instrument. Look, 'tis Cratilus,
[*Discovers* CRATILUS.
The man that you suppos'd had now been travell'd;
Which we gave leave to learn to speak,
And bring us foreign languages to Greece. 710
All's joy,[2] I see; let music be the crown:
And set it high, "The good needs fear no law,
It is his safety, and the bad man's awe."
[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

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[1] Simonides looks ruefully at his handsome apparel. (Weeds = garments.)

[2] Old ed. "joyed."

A TRICK TO CATCH THE OLD ONE.

A Tricke to Catch the Old-one. As it hath beene often in Action, both at Paules, and the Black-Fryers. Presented before his Maiestie on New-yeares night last. Composde by T. M. At London Printed by G: E. and are to be sold by Henry Rockytt, at the long shop in the Poultrie vnder the Dyall. 1608. 4to. Second ed., 1616, 4to.

This drama was licensed by Sir George Buc for printing on 7th October 1607.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

WITGOOD.
LUCRE, *his uncle.*
HOARD.
ONESIPHORUS HOARD, *his brother.*
LIMBER, KIX, LAMPREY, SPICHCOCK, } *friends of* HOARD.
DAMPIT.
GULF.
FREEDOM, *son to* MISTRESS LUCRE.
MONEYLOVE.
Host.
SIR LAUNCELOT.
Creditors.
Gentlemen.
GEORGE.
Drawer.
Boy.
Scrivener.
Servants, &c.

Courtesan.
MISTRESS LUCRE.
JOYCE, *niece to* HOARD.
LADY FOXSTONE.
AUDREY, *servant to* DAMPIT.

SCENE (except during the first two scenes of act i.), LONDON.

A TRICK TO CATCH THE OLD ONE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Street in a Country Town.

Enter WITGOOD.

Wit. All's gone! still thou'rt a gentleman, that's all; but a poor one, that's nothing. What milk brings thy meadows forth now? where are thy goodly uplands, and thy down lands? all sunk into that little pit, lechery. Why should a gallant pay but two shillings for his ordinary[1] that nourishes him, and twenty times two for his brothel[2] that consumes him? But where's Long-acre?[3] in my uncle's conscience, which is three years'

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[1] See note 2, vol. i. p. 189.

[2] A term applied to a harlot.

[3] The editor of 1816 took this to be the name of Witgood's estate; but the term is applied generally to any estate. Dyce compares *Lady Alimony*, 1659:—"It will run like Quicksilver over all their husbands Demains; and in very short time make a quick despatch of all his *Long-acre*." Sig. B. 3.

voyage about: he that sets out upon his conscience ne'er finds the way home again; he is either swallowed in the quicksands of law-quillets, or splits upon the piles of a *præmunire;* yet these old fox-brained and ox-browed uncles have still defences for their avarice, and apologies for their practices, and will thus greet our follies: 14

He that doth his youth expose
To brothel, drink, and danger,
Let him that is his nearest kin
Cheat him before a stranger:

and that's his uncle; 'tis a principle in usury. I dare not visit the city: there I should be too soon visited by that horrible plague, my debts; and by that means I lose a virgin's love, her portion, and her virtues. Well, how should a man live now that has no living? hum,—why, are there not a million of men in the world that only sojourn upon their brain, and make their wits their mercers; and am I but one amongst that million, and cannot thrive upon't? Any trick out of the compass[1] of law now would come happily to me. 28

Enter Courtesan.

Cour. My love!

Wit. My loathing! hast thou been the secret consumption of my purse, and now comest to undo my last means, my wits? wilt leave no virtue in me, and yet thou ne'er the better?

---

[1] "Out of the compass of" = not punishable by.

Hence, courtesan, round-webb'd tarantula,
That dry'st the roses in the cheeks of youth!

Cour. I've been true unto your pleasure; and all your lands
Thrice rack'd was never worth the jewel which
I prodigally gave you, my virginity:
Lands mortgag'd may return, and more esteem'd,
But honesty once pawn'd, is ne'er redeem'd. 40

Wit. Forgive: I do thee wrong
To make thee sin, and then to chide thee for't.

Cour. I know I am your loathing now; farewell.

Wit. Stay, best invention, stay.

Cour. I that *have been the secret consumption of your purse*, shall I stay now *to undo your last means, your wits? hence, courtesan, away!*

Wit. I prithee, make me not mad at my own weapon: stay (a thing few women can do, I know that, and therefore they had need wear stays), be not contrary: dost love me? Fate has so cast[1] it that all my means I must derive from thee. 52

Cour. From me? be happy then;
What lies within the power of my performance
Shall be commanded of thee.

Wit. Spoke like
An honest drab, i'faith: it may prove something;
What trick is not an embryon at first,
Until a perfect shape come over it?

Cour. Come, I must help you: whereabouts left you?

---

[1] Planned, devised.

I'll proceed: 60
Though you beget, 'tis I must help to breed.
Speak, what is't? I'd fain conceive it.

Wit. So, so, so: thou shalt presently take the name and form upon thee of a rich country widow, four hundred a-year valiant,[1] in woods, in bullocks, in barns, and in rye-stacks; we'll to London, and to my covetous uncle.

Cour. I begin to applaud thee; our states being both desperate, they are soon resolute: but how for horses?

Wit. Mass, that's true; the jest will be of some continuance. Let me see; horses now, a bots on 'em! Stay, I have acquaintance with a mad host, never yet bawd to thee; I have rinsed the whoreson's gums in mull-sack many a time and often: put but a good tale into his ear now, so it come off cleanly, and there's horse and man for us, I dare warrant thee. 75

Cour. Arm your wits then
Speedily; there shall want nothing in me,
Either in behaviour, discourse, or fashion,
That shall discredit your intended purpose.
I will so artfully disguise my wants, 80
And set so good a courage on my state,
That I will be believ'd.

Wit. Why, then, all's furnished.[2] I shall go nigh to catch that old fox mine uncle: though he make but some amends for my undoing, yet there's some comfort in't, he cannot otherwise choose (though it be but in hope to cozen me again) but supply any hasty want that I bring

[1] Worth.
[2] The editor of 1816 gives the unnecessary correction "finish'd."

to town with me. The device well and cunningly carried, the name of a rich widow, and four hundred a-year in good earth, will so conjure up a kind of usurer's love in him to me, that he will not only desire my presence,—which at first shall scarce be granted him, I'll keep off a' purpose,—but I shall find him so officious to deserve, so ready to supply! I know the state of an old man's affection so well: if his nephew be poor indeed, why, he lets God alone with him; but if he be once rich, then he'll be the first man that helps him. 97

Cour. 'Tis right the world; for, in these days, an old man's love to his kindred is like his kindness to his wife, 'tis always done before he comes at it.

Wit. I owe thee for that jest. Begone: here's all my wealth; prepare thyself, away. I'll to mine host with all possible haste; and with the best art, and most profitable form, pour the sweet circumstance into his ear, which shall have the gift to turn all the wax to honey. [*Exit Courtesan.*]—How no[w]? O, the right worshipful seniors of our country!

Enter[1] ONESIPHORUS HOARD, LIMBER, *and* KIX.

Ones. H. Who's that?

Lim. O, the common rioter; take no note of him.

Wit. You will not see me now; the comfort is, 110
Ere it be long you will scarce see yourselves.

[*Aside, and exit.*

[1] In the old eds. there is no stage-direction, and the prefixes to the speeches of the "right worshipful seniors" are 1, 2, and 3. That 1 is Onesiphorus Hoard is shown by l. 114, "His uncle and my *brother*," &c. In the last scene of the play Limber and Kix accompany Onesiphorus.

Ones. H. I wonder how he breathes; has consum'd all
Upon that courtesan.

Lim. We have heard so much.

Ones. H. You've heard all truth. His uncle and my brother
Have been these three years mortal adversaries:
Two old tough spirits, they seldom meet but fight,
Or quarrel when 'tis calmest:
I think their anger be the very fire
That keeps their age alive.

Lim. What was the quarrel, sir? 119

Ones. H. Faith, about a purchase, fetching over a young heir. Master Hoard, my brother, having wasted much time in beating the bargain, what did me old Lucre, but as his conscience moved him, knowing the poor gentleman, stept in between 'em, and cozened him himself.

Lim. And was this all, sir?

Ones. H. This was e'en it, sir; yet, for all this, I know no reason but the match might go forward betwixt his wife's son and my niece: what though there be a dissension between the two old men, I see no reason it should put a difference between the two younger; 'tis as natural for old folks to fall out, as for young to fall in. A scholar comes a-wooing to my niece; well, he's wise, but he's poor: her son comes a-wooing to my niece; well, he's a fool, but he's rich. 134

Lim. Ay, marry, sir.

Ones. H. Pray, now, is not a rich fool better than a poor philosopher?

Lim. One would think so, i'faith.

Ones. H. She now remains at London with my brother,

her second uncle, to learn fashions, practise music; the voice between her lips, and the viol[1] between her legs, she'll be fit for a consort[2] very speedily: a thousand good pound is her portion; if she marry, we'll ride up and be merry. 144

Kix. A match, if it be a match. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Another Street in the same Town.

Enter WITGOOD, *meeting* Host.

Wit. Mine host!

Host. Young master Witgood!

Wit. I have been laying[3] all the town for thee.

Host. Why, what's the news, bully[4] Had-land?[5]

Wit. What geldings are in the house, of thine own? Answer me to that first.

Host. Why, man, why?

Wit. Mark me what I say: I'll tell thee such a tale in thine ear, that thou shalt trust me spite of thy teeth, furnish me with some money wille nille, and ride up with me thyself *contra voluntatem et professionem.* 11

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[1] *i.e.* viol-de-gambo (a six-stringed violin).

[2] A pun is intended. "Consort"=(1) a company of musicians, (2) a husband.

[3] "Is used in the same sense by Jack Cade in the *Second Part of Henry VI.*, act iv. scene 10: 'These five days have I hid me in these woods, and durst not peep out, for all the country is *lay'd* for me.'"—*Editor of* 1816.

[4] A familiar term of address.

[5] See note 2, vol. i. p. 315.

Host. How? let me see this trick, and I'll say thou hast more art than a conjurer.

Wit. Dost thou joy in my advancement?

Host. Do I love sack and ginger?

Wit. Comes my prosperity desiredly to thee?

Host. Come forfeitures to a usurer, fees to an officer, punks to an host, and pigs to a parson desiredly? why, then, la.

Wit. Will the report of a widow of four hundred a-year, boy, make thee leap, and sing, and dance, and come to thy place again? 22

Host. Wilt thou command me now? I am thy spirit; conjure me into any shape.

Wit. I ha' brought her from her friends, turned back the horses by a slight; not so much as one among her six men, goodly large yeomanly fellows, will she trust with this her purpose: by this light, all unmanned, regardless of her state, neglectful of vain-glorious ceremony, all for my love. O, 'tis a fine little voluble tongue, mine host, that wins a widow! 31

Host. No, 'tis a tongue with a great T, my boy, that wins a widow.

Wit. Now, sir, the case stands thus: good mine host, if thou lovest my happiness, assist me.

Host. Command all my beasts i' th' house.

Wit. Nay, that's not all neither: prithee, take truce with thy joy, and listen to me. Thou knowest I have a wealthy uncle i' th' city, somewhat the wealthier by my follies: the report of this fortune, well and cunningly carried, might be a means to draw some goodness from

the usuring rascal; for I have put her in hope already of some estate that I have either in land or money: now, if I be found true in neither, what may I expect but a sudden breach of our love, utter dissolution of the match, and confusion of my fortunes for ever? 46

Host. Wilt thou but trust the managing of thy business with me?

Wit. With thee? why, will I desire to thrive in my purpose? will I hug four hundred a-year, I that know the misery of nothing? Will that man wish a rich widow that has ne'er a hole to put his head in? With thee, mine host? why, believe it, sooner with thee than with a covey of counsellors. 54

Host. Thank you for your good report, i'faith, sir; and if I stand you not in stead, why then let an host come off *hic et hæc hostis*, a deadly enemy to dice, drink, and venery. Come, where's this widow?

Wit. Hard at Park-end.

Host. I'll be her serving-man for once. 60

Wit. Why, there we let off together: keep full time; my thoughts were striking then just the same number.

Host. I knew't: shall we then see our merry days again?

Wit. Our merry nights—which ne'er shall be more seen. [*Aside.*] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Street in London.

Enter[1] LUCRE *and* HOARD *quarrelling;* LAMPREY, SPICHCOCK, FREEDOM, *and* MONEYLOVE, *coming between to pacify them.*

Lam. Nay, good master Lucre, and you, master Hoard, anger is the wind which you're both too much troubled withal.

Hoa. Shall my adversary thus daily affront[2] me, ripping up the old wound of our malice, which three summers could not close up? into which wound the very sight of him drops scalding lead instead of balsamum.

Luc. Why, Hoard, Hoard, Hoard, Hoard, Hoard! may I not pass in the state of quietness to mine own house? answer me to that, before witness, and why? I'll refer the cause to honest, even-minded gentlemen, or require the mere indifferences of the law to decide this matter. I got the purchase,[3] true: was't not any man's case? yes: will a wise man stand as a bawd, whilst another wipes his nose[4] of the bargain? no; I answer no in that case. 16

Lam. Nay, sweet master Lucre.

Hoa. Was it the part of a friend—no, rather of a Jew; —mark what I say—when I had beaten the bush to the

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[1] Old eds. "*Enter* at seuerall doores."

[2] *i.e.* face me.

[3] A cant term for plunder.

[4] *To wipe a person's nose of* = rob or deprive of. See Nares' Glossary.

last bird, or, as I may term it, the price to a pound, then, like a cunning usurer, to come in the evening of the bargain, and glean all my hopes in a minute? to enter, as it were, at the back door of the purchase? for thou ne'er camest the right way by it.

Luc. Hast thou the conscience to tell me so without any impeachment to thyself? 26

Hoa. Thou that canst defeat thy own nephew, Lucre, lap his lands into bonds, and take the extremity of thy kindred's forfeitures, because he's a rioter, a wastethrift, a brothel-master, and so forth; what may a stranger expect from thee but *vulnera dilacerata*, as the poet says, dilacerate dealing?

Luc. Upbraidest thou me with nephew? is all imputation laid upon me? what acquaintance have I with his follies? if he riot, 'tis he must want it; if he surfeit, 'tis he must feel it; if he drab it, 'tis he must lie by't: what's this to me? 37

Hoa. What's all to thee? nothing, nothing; such is the gulf of thy desire and the wolf of thy conscience: but be assured, old Pecunius Lucre, if ever fortune so bless me, that I may be at leisure to vex thee, or any means so favour me, that I may have opportunity to mad thee, I will pursue it with that flame of hate, that spirit of malice, unrepressed wrath, that I will blast thy comforts.

Luc. Ha, ha, ha!

Lam. Nay, master Hoard, you're a wise gentleman——

Hoa. I will so cross thee——

Luc. And I thee.

Hoa. So without mercy fret thee——

Luc. So monstrously oppose thee—— 50

Hoa. Dost scoff at my just anger? O, that I had as much power as usury has over thee!

Luc. Then thou wouldst have as much power as the devil has over thee.

Hoa. Toad!

Luc. Aspic!

Hoa. Serpent!

Luc. Viper!

Spi. Nay, gentlemen, then we must divide you perforce. 60

Lam. When the fire grows too unreasonable hot, there's no better way than to take off the wood.

[*Exeunt* LAMPREY *and* SPICHCOCK, *drawing off* LUCRE *and* HOARD *different ways: manent* FREEDOM *and* MONEYLOVE.

Free. A word, good signior.

Mon. How now, what's the news?

Free. 'Tis given me to understand that you are a rival of mine in the love of mistress Joyce, master Hoard's niece: say me ay, say me no?

Mon. Yes, 'tis so.

Free. Then look to yourself, you cannot live long: I'm practising every morning; a month hence I'll challenge you. 71

Mon. Give me your hand upon't; there's my pledge I'll meet you. [*Strikes him, and exit.*

Free. O, O! what reason had you for that, sir, to strike before the month? you knew I was not ready for you,

and that made you so crank:[1] I am not such a coward to strike again, I warrant you. My ear has the law of her side, for it burns horribly. I will teach him to strike a naked face, the longest day of his life: 'slid, it shall cost me some money but I'll bring this box into the chancery.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Another Street.

Enter WITGOOD *and* Host.

Host. Fear you nothing, sir; I have lodged her in a house of credit, I warrant you.

Wit. Hast thou the writings?

Host. Firm, sir.

Wit. Prithee, stay, and behold two the most prodigious rascals that ever slipt into the shape of men; Dampit, sirrah, and young Gulf his fellow-caterpillar.

Host. Dampit? sure I have heard of that Dampit?

Wit. Heard of him? why, man, he that has lost both his ears may hear of him; a famous infamous trampler of time; his own phrase. Note him well: that Dampit, sirrah, he in the uneven beard and the serge cloak, is the most notorious, usuring, blasphemous, atheistical, brothel-vomiting rascal, that we have in these latter times now extant; whose first beginning was the stealing of a masty[2] dog from a farmer's house. 16

Host. He looked as if he would obey the commandment[s] well, when he began first with stealing.

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[1] Spirited, lively. [2] Mastiff.

Wit. True: the next town he came at, he set the dogs together by th' ears. 20

Host. A sign he should follow the law, by my faith.

Wit. So it followed, indeed; and being destitute of all fortunes, staked his masty against a noble,[1] and by great fortune his dog had the day, how he made it up ten shillings, I know not; but his own boast is, that he came to town but with ten shillings in his purse, and now is credibly worth ten thousand pound.

Host. How the devil came he by it?

Enter DAMPIT *and* GULF.

Wit. How the devil came he not by it? If you put in the devil once, riches come with a vengeance: has been a trampler of the law,[2] sir; and the devil has a care of his footmen. The rogue has spied me now; he nibbled

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[1] A gold coin worth 6*s.* 8*d.*

[2] "Taylor, the water-poet, begins the account of 'A Corrupted Lawyer and a Knauish Vndershriue,' with the following lines:

'A hall, a hall, the *tramplers* are at hand,
A shifting Master, and as sweetly man'd;
His Buckram-bearer, one that knowes his ku,
Can write with one hand and receiue with two.
The *trampler* is in hast, O cleere the way,
Takes fees with both hands cause he cannot stay,
No matter wheth'r the cause be right or wrong,
So hee be payd for letting out his tongue.'

A Brood of Cormorants, p. 13; *Workes*, 1630.

In Brome's *Sparagus Garden*, 1640 (acted 1635), one of the characters is a lawyer named *Trampler.*"—*Dyce.* Cf. Powell's *Tom of all Trades*, 1631:—"But after the civil lawyer is once grown to maturity his way of advancement is more beneficial, more certain, and more easy to attain than is the common lawyer's. . . . And they admit few or no solicitors to *trample* between them and the client" (p. 22).

me finely once, too :—a pox search you! [*Aside.*]—O, master Dampit!—the very loins of thee! [*Aside.*]—Cry you mercy, master Gulf; you walk so low, I promise you I saw you not, sir. 36

Gulf. He that walks low walks safe, the poets tell us.

Wit. And nigher hell by a foot and a half than the rest of his fellows.— [*Aside.*

But, my old Harry!

Dam. My sweet Theodorus!

Wit. 'Twas a merry world when thou camest to town with ten shillings in thy purse. 41

Dam. And now worth ten thousand pound, my boy. Report it; Harry Dampit, a trampler of time, say, he would be up in a morning, and be here with his serge gown, dashed up to the hams in a cause; have his feet stink about Westminster Hall, and come home again; see the galleons, the galleasses,[1] the great armadas of the law; then there be hoys and petty vessels, oars and scullers of the time; there be picklocks of the time too: then would I be here; I would trample up and down like a mule: now to the judges, *May it please your reverend honourable fatherhoods;* then to my counsellor, *May it please your worshipful patience;* then to the examiner's office, *May it please your mastership's gentleness;* then to one of the clerks, *May it please your worshipful lousiness,* —for I find him scrubbing in his cod-piece; then to the hall again, then to the chamber again—— 57

Wit. And when to the cellar again?

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[1] Large, heavy galleys.

Dam. E'en when thou wilt again: tramplers of time, motions[1] of Fleet Street, and visions of Holborn; here I have fees of one, there I have fees of another; my clients come about me, the fooliaminy and coxcombry of the country: I still trashed[2] and trotted for other men's causes; thus was poor Harry Dampit made rich by others laziness, who, though they would not follow their own suits, I made 'em follow me with their purses.

Wit. Didst thou so, old Harry?

Dam. Ay, and I soused 'em with bills of charges, i'faith; twenty pound a-year have I brought in for boat-hire, and I ne'er stept into boat in my life. 70

Wit. Tramplers of time!

Dam. Ay, tramplers of time, rascals of time, bull-beggars![3]

Wit. Ah, thou'rt a mad old Harry!—Kind master Gulf, I am bold to renew my acquaintance.

Gulf. I embrace it, sir. [*Exeunt.*

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[1] "Motions" = puppet-shows. I do not know what allusion is intended in "visions of Holborn."

[2] Under the word *Trashing* Nares quotes from the *Puritan*, iv. 1: "A guarded lackey to run before it, and pied liveries to come *trashing* after it." The meaning of *trash* in both passages would seem to be,—move with bustle.

[3] Hobgoblins.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Room in LUCRE'S *House.*

Enter LUCRE.

Luc. My adversary evermore twits me with my nephew, forsooth, my nephew: why may not a virtuous uncle have a dissolute nephew? What though he be a brotheller, a wastethrift, a common surfeiter, and, to conclude, a beggar, must sin in him call up shame in me? Since we have no part in their follies, why should we have part in their infamies? For my strict hand toward his mortgage, that I deny not: I confess I had an uncle's pen'worth; let me see, half in half, true: I saw neither hope of his reclaiming, nor comfort in his being; and was it not then better bestowed upon his uncle than upon one of his aunts?—I need not say bawd, for every one knows what aunt stands for in the last translation. 13

Enter Servant.

Now, sir?

Ser. There's a country serving-man, sir, attends to speak with your worship.

Luc. I'm at best leisure now; send him in to me.
[*Exit* Servant.

Enter Host *disguised as a serving-man.*

Host. Bless your venerable worship.

Luc. Welcome, good fellow.

Host. He calls me thief[1] at first sight, yet he little thinks I am an host. [*Aside.*

Luc. What's thy business with me? 22

Host. Faith, sir, I am sent from my mistress, to any sufficient gentleman indeed, to ask advice upon a doubtful point: 'tis indifferent, sir, to whom I come, for I know none, nor did my mistress direct me to any particular man, for she's as mere a stranger here as myself; only I found your worship within, and 'tis a thing I ever loved, sir, to be despatched as soon as I can.

Luc. A good, blunt honesty; I like him well. [*Aside.*]—What is thy mistress? 31

Host. Faith, a country gentlewoman, and a widow, sir. Yesterday was the first flight of us; but now she intends to stay till a little term business be ended.

Luc. Her name, I prithee?

Host. It runs there in the writings, sir, among her lands; widow Medler.

Luc. Medler? mass, have I ne'er heard of that widow?

Host. Yes, I warrant you, have you, sir: not the rich widow in Staffordshire? 40

Luc. Cuds me, there 'tis indeed; thou hast put me

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[1] *Good fellow* was a cant term for a thief.

into memory: there's a widow indeed; ah, that I were a bachelor again!

Host. No doubt your worship might do much then; but she's fairly promised to a bachelor already.

Luc. Ah, what is he, I prithee?

Host. A country gentleman too; one whom your worship knows not, I'm sure; has spent some few follies in his youth, but marriage, by my faith, begins to call him home: my mistress loves him, sir, and love covers faults, you know: one master Witgood, if ever you have heard of the gentleman. 52

Luc. Ha! Witgood, sayst thou?

Host. That's his name indeed, sir; my mistress is like to bring him to a goodly seat yonder; four hundred a-year, by my faith.

Luc. But, I pray, take me with you.[1]

Host. Ay, sir.

Luc. What countryman might this young Witgood be?

Host. A Leicestershire gentleman, sir. 60

Luc. My nephew, by th' mass, my nephew? I'll fetch out more of this, i'faith: a simple country fellow, I'll work't out of him. [*Aside.*]—And is that gentleman, sayst thou, presently to marry her?

Host. Faith, he brought her up to town, sir; has the best card in all the bunch for't, her heart; and I know my mistress will be married ere she go down; nay, I'll swear that, for she's none of those widows that will go down

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[1] "Take me with you" was a common expression for "let me understand you."

first, and be married after; she hates that, I can tell you, sir. 70

Luc. By my faith, sir, she is like to have a proper gentleman, and a comely; I'll give her that gift.

Host. Why, does your worship know him, sir?

Luc. I know him? does not all the world know him? can a man of such exquisite qualities be hid under a bushel?

Host. Then your worship may save me a labour, for I had charge given me to inquire after him.

Luc. Inquire of him? If I might counsel thee, thou shouldst ne'er trouble thyself further; inquire of him of no more but of me; I'll fit thee. I grant he has been youthful; but is he not now reclaimed? mark you that, sir: has not your mistress, think you, been wanton in her youth? if men be wags, are there not women wagtails?[1]

Host. No doubt, sir. 85

Luc. Does not he return wisest that comes home whipt with his own follies?

Host. Why, very true, sir.

Luc. The worst report you can hear of him, I can tell you, is that he has been a kind gentleman, a liberal, and a worthy: who but lusty Witgood, thrice-noble Witgood!

Host. Since your worship has so much knowledge in him, can you resolve me, sir, what his living might be? my duty binds me, sir, to have a care of my mistress' estate; she has been ever a good mistress to me, though I say it: many wealthy suitors has she nonsuited for his

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[1] "Wagtail" was a term for a wanton woman.

sake; yet, though her love be so fixed, a man cannot tell whether his non-performance may help to remove it, sir; he makes us believe he has lands and living. 99

Luc. Who, young master Witgood? why, believe it, he has as goodly a fine living out yonder,—what do you call the place?

Host. Nay, I know not, i'faith.

Luc. Hum—see, like a beast, if I have not forgot the name—pooh! and out yonder again, goodly grown woods and fair meadows: pax[1] on't, I can ne'er hit of that place neither: he? why, he's Witgood of Witgood Hall; he an unknown thing!

Host. Is he so, sir? To see how rumour will alter! trust me, sir, we heard once he had no lands, but all lay mortgaged to an uncle he has in town here. 111

Luc. Push,[2] 'tis a tale, 'tis a tale.

Host. I can assure you, sir, 'twas credibly reported to my mistress.

Luc. Why, do you think, i'faith, he was ever so simple to mortgage his lands to his uncle? or his uncle so unnatural to take the extremity of such a mortgage?

Host. That was my saying still, sir.

Luc. Pooh, ne'er think it.

Host. Yet that report goes current.

Luc. Nay, then you urge me:
Cannot I tell that best that am his uncle? 120

Host. How, sir? what have I done!

Luc. Why, how now! in a swoon, man?

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[1] The affected pronunciation of "pox."

[2] Pish.

Host. Is your worship his uncle, sir?

Luc. Can that be any harm to you, sir?

Host. I do beseech you, sir, do me the favour to conceal it: what a beast was I to utter so much! pray, sir, do me the kindness to keep it in; I shall have my coat pulled o'er my ears, an't should be known; for the truth is, an't please your worship, to prevent much rumour and many suitors, they intend to be married very suddenly and privately. 131

Luc. And dost thou think it stands with my judgment to do them injury? must I needs say the knowledge of this marriage comes from thee? am I a fool at fifty-four? do I lack subtlety now, that have got all my wealth by it? There's a leash of angels for thee: come, let me woo thee speak where lie they?

Host. So I might have no anger, sir——

Luc. Passion of me, not a jot: prithee, come.

Host. I would not have it known, sir,[1] it came by my means. 141

Luc. Why, am I a man of wisdom?

Host. I dare trust your worship, sir; but I'm a stranger to your house; and to avoid all intelligencers, I desire your worship's ear.

Luc. This fellow's worth a matter of trust. [*Aside.*]—Come, sir. [Host *whispers to him.*] Why, now thou'rt an honest lad.—Ah, sirrah, nephew!

Host. Please you, sir, now I have begun with your

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[1] So ed. 2.—Not in ed. 1.

worship, when shall I attend for your advice upon that doubtful point? I must come warily now. 151

Luc. Tut, fear thou nothing;
To-morrow's evening shall resolve the doubt.

Host. The time shall cause my attendance.

Luc. Fare thee well. [*Exit* Host.]—There's more true honesty in such a country serving-man than in a hundred of our cloak companions:[1] I may well call 'em companions, for since blue[2] coats have been turned into cloaks, we can scarce know the man from the master.—George! 160

Enter GEORGE.

Geo. Anon, sir.

Luc. List hither: [*whispers*] keep the place secret: commend me to my nephew; I know no cause, tell him, but he might see his uncle.

Geo. I will, sir.

Luc. And, do you hear, sir?
Take heed to use him with respect and duty.

Geo. Here's a strange alteration; one day he must be turned out like a beggar, and now he must be called in like a knight. [*Aside, and exit.* 170

Luc. Ah, sirrah, that rich widow!—four hundred a-year! beside, I hear she lays claim to a title of a hundred more. This falls unhappily that he should bear a grudge to me now, being likely to prove so rich: what is't, trow,[3] that he makes me a stranger for? Hum,—I hope he

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[1] Knaves, rogues.
[2] Blue coats were worn by serving-men.
[3] Think you.

has not so much wit to apprehend that I cozened him: he deceives me then. Good heaven, who would have thought it would ever have come to this pass! yet he's a proper gentleman, i'faith, give him his due, marry, that's his mortgage; but that I ne'er mean to give him: I'll make him rich enough in words, if that be good: and if it come to a piece of money, I will not greatly stick for't; there may be hope some of the widow's lands, too, may one day fall upon me, if things be carried wisely. 184

Re-enter GEORGE.

Now, sir, where is he?

Geo. He desires your worship to hold him excused; he has such weighty business, it commands him wholly from all men.

Luc. Were those my nephew's words?

Geo. Yes, indeed, sir. 190

Luc. When men grow rich, they grow proud too, I perceive that; he would not have sent me such an answer once within this twelvemonth: see what 'tis when a man's come to his lands! [*Aside.*]—Return to him again, sir; tell him his uncle desires his company for an hour; I'll trouble him but an hour, say; 'tis for his own good, tell him: and, do you hear, sir? put *worship* upon him: go to, do as I bid you; he's like to be a gentleman of worship very shortly.

Geo. This is good sport, i'faith. [*Aside, and exit.* 200

Luc. Troth, he uses his uncle discourteously now: can he tell what I may do for him? goodness may come from me in a minute, that comes not in seven year again:

he knows my humour; I am not so usually good; 'tis no small thing that draws kindness from me, he may know that and[1] he will. The chief cause that invites me to do him most good is the sudden astonishing of old Hoard, my adversary: how pale his malice will look at my nephew's advancement! with what a dejected spirit he will behold his fortunes, whom but last day he proclaimed rioter, penurious makeshift, despised brothel-master! Ha, ha! 'twill do me more secret joy than my last purchase, more precious comfort than all these widow's revenues. 214

Re-enter GEORGE, *showing in* WITGOOD.

Now, sir?

Geo. With much entreaty he's at length come, sir.

[*Exit.*

Luc. O, nephew, let me salute you, sir! you're welcome, nephew.

Wit. Uncle, I thank you.

Luc. You've a fault, nephew; you're a stranger here:
Well, heaven give you joy! 221

Wit. Of what, sir?

Luc. Hah, we can hear!
You might have known your uncle's house, i'faith,
You and your widow: go to, you were to blame;
If I may tell you so without offence.

Wit. How could you hear of that, sir?

Luc. O, pardon me!

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[1] If.

'Twas your will to have kept it[1] from me, I perceive now.

Wit. Not for any defect of love, I protest, uncle.

Luc. O, 'twas unkindness, nephew! fie, fie, fie. 230

Wit. I am sorry you take it in that sense, sir.

Luc. Pooh, you cannot colour it, i'faith, nephew.

Wit. Will you but hear what I can say in my just excuse, sir?

Luc. Yes, faith, will I, and welcome.

Wit. You that know my danger i' th' city, sir, so well, how great my debts are, and how extreme my creditors, could not out of your pure judgment, sir, have wished us hither.

Luc. Mass, a firm reason indeed. 240

Wit. Else, my uncle's house! why, 't had been the only make-match.

Luc. Nay, and thy credit.

Wit. My credit? nay, my countenance: push,[2] nay, I know, uncle, you would have wrought it so by your wit, you would have made her believe in time the whole house had been mine.

Luc. Ay, and most of the goods too.

Wit. La, you there! well, let 'em all prate what they will, there's nothing like the bringing of a widow to one's uncle's house. 251

Luc. Nay, let nephews be ruled as they list, they shall find their uncle's house the most natural place when all's done.

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[1] So ed. 2.—Ed. 1 "it kept."

[2] Pish.

Wit. There they may be bold.

Luc. Life, they may do anything there, man, and fear neither beadle nor somner:[1] an uncle's house! a very Cole-Harbour.[2] Sirrah, I'll touch thee near now: hast thou so much interest in thy widow, that by a token thou couldst presently send for her? 260

Wit. Troth, I think I can, uncle.

Luc. Go to, let me see that.

Wit. Pray, command one of your men hither, uncle.

Luc. George!

Re-enter GEORGE.

Geo. Here, sir.

Luc. Attend my nephew. [WITGOOD *whispers to* GEORGE, *who then goes out.*]—I love a' life[3] to prattle with a rich widow; 'tis pretty, methinks, when our tongues go together: and then to promise much and perform little; I love that sport a' life, i'faith: yet I am in the mood now to do my nephew some good, if he take me handsomely. [*Aside.*]—What, have you despatched?

Wit. I ha' sent, sir. 273

Luc. Yet I must condemn you of unkindness, nephew.

Wit. Heaven forbid, uncle!

Luc. Yes, faith, must I. Say your debts be many, your creditors importunate, yet the kindness of a thing is

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[1] "*Summoner* signifieth one used to call or cite a man to any court." —Cowell's *Interpreter.*

[2] A corruption of *Cold Harbour*, a mansion (in Dowgate Ward) where debtors and vagabonds found sanctuary.

[3] As my life.

all, nephew: you might have sent me close word on't, without the least danger or prejudice to your fortunes.

Wit. Troth, I confess it, uncle; I was to blame there; but, indeed, my intent was to have clapped it up suddenly, and so have broke forth like a joy to my friends, and a wonder to the world: beside, there's a trifle of a forty pound matter toward the setting of me forth; my friends should ne'er have known on't; I meant to make shift for that myself. 286

Luc. How, nephew? let me not hear such a word again, I beseech you: shall I be beholding[1] to you?

Wit. To me? Alas, what do you mean, uncle?

Luc. I charge you, upon my love, you trouble nobody but myself. 291

Wit. You've no reason for that, uncle.

Luc. Troth, I'll ne'er be friends with you while you live, and[2] you do.

Wit. Nay, and you say so, uncle, here's my hand; I will not do't.

Luc. Why, well said! there's some hope in thee when thou wilt be ruled; I'll make it up fifty, faith, because I see thee so reclaimed. Peace; here comes my wife with Sam, her t'other husband's son. 300

Enter MISTRESS LUCRE *and* FREEDOM.

Wit. Good aunt.

Free. Cousin Witgood, I rejoice in my salute; you're

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[1] Beholden. [2] If.

most welcome to this noble city, governed with the sword in the scabbard.

Wit. And the wit in the pommel. [*Aside.*]—Good master Sam Freedom, I return the salute.

Luc. By the mass, she's coming, wife; let me see now how thou wilt entertain her.

Mis. L. I hope I am not to learn, sir, to entertain a widow; 'tis not so long ago since I was one myself. 310

Enter Courtesan.

Wit. Uncle ——

Luc. She's come indeed.

Wit. My uncle was desirous to see you, widow, and I presumed to invite you.

Court. The presumption was nothing, master Witgood: is this your uncle, sir?

Luc. Marry am I, sweet widow; and his good uncle he shall find me; ay, by this smack that I give thee [*kisses her*], thou'rt welcome.—Wife, bid the widow welcome the same way again. 320

Free. I am a gentleman now too by my father's occupation, and I see no reason but I may kiss a widow by my father's copy: truly, I think the charter is not against it; surely these are the words, *The son once a gentleman may revel it, though his father were a dauber;* 'tis about the fifteenth page: I'll to her.

[*Aside, then offers to kiss the* Courtesan, *who repulses him.*

Luc. You're not very busy now; a word with thee, sweet widow.

Free. Coads-nigs ![1] I was never so disgraced since the hour my mother whipt me. 330

Luc. Beside, I have no child of mine own to care for; she's my second wife, old, past bearing: clap sure to him, widow; he's like to be my heir, I can tell you.

Court. Is he so, sir?

Luc. He knows it already, and the knave's proud on't: jolly rich widows have been offered him here i' th' city, great merchants' wives; and do you think he would once look upon 'em? forsooth, he'll none: you are beholding to him i' th' country, then, ere we could be: nay, I'll hold a wager, widow, if he were once known to be in town, he would be presently sought after; nay, and happy were they that could catch him first. 342

Court. I think so.

Luc. O, there would be such running to and fro, widow! he should not pass the streets for 'em: he'd be took up in one great house or other presently: faugh! they know he has it, and must have it. You see this house here, widow; this house and all comes to him; goodly rooms, ready furnished, ceiled with plaster of Paris, and all hung about[2] with cloth of arras.—Nephew. 350

Wit. Sir.

Luc. Show the widow your house; carry her into all the rooms, and bid her welcome.—You shall see, widow. —Nephew, strike all sure above and[3] thou beest a good boy,—ah! [*Aside to* WITGOOD.

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[1] A vulgar meaningless oath. Cf. Marston's *Second Part of Anton. and Mell.*, iv. 3, "*Gods neaks*, he has wrong, that he has."

[2] So ed. 2.—Ed. 1 "above." [3] If.

Wit. Alas, sir, I know not how she would take it!

Luc. The right way, I warrant t'ye: a pox, art an ass? would I were in thy stead! get you up, I am ashamed of you. [*Exeunt* WITGOOD *and* Courtesan.] So: let 'em agree as they will now: many a match has been struck up in my house a' this fashion: let 'em try all manner of ways, still there's nothing like an uncle's house to strike the stroke in. I'll hold my wife in talk a little.—Now, Jenny, your son there goes a-wooing to a poor gentlewoman but of a thousand [pound] portion: see my nephew, a lad of less hope, strikes at four hundred a-year in good rubbish. 367

Miss. L. Well, we must do as we may, sir.

Luc. I'll have his money ready told for him again[1] he come down: let me see, too;—by th' mass, I must present the widow with some jewel, a good piece of[2] plate, or such a device; 'twill hearten her on well: I have a very fair standing cup; and a good high standing cup will please a widow above all other pieces. [*Exit.*

Mis. L. Do you mock us with your nephew?—I have a plot in my head, son;—i'faith, husband, to cross you.

Free. Is it a tragedy plot, or a comedy plot, good mother?

Mis. L. 'Tis a plot shall vex him. I charge you, of my blessing, son Sam, that you presently withdraw the action of your love from master Hoard's niece. 381

Free. How, mother?

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[1] Against.

[2] So ed. 2.—Ed. 1 "a."

Mis. L. Nay, I have a plot in my head, i'faith. Here, take this chain of gold, and this fair diamond: dog me the widow home to her lodging, and at thy best opportunity fasten 'em both upon her. Nay, I have a reach: I can tell you thou art known what thou art, son, among the right worshipful, all the twelve companies.

Free. Truly, I thank 'em for it.

Mis. L. He? he's a scab to thee: and so certify her thou hast two hundred a-year of thyself, beside thy good parts—a proper person and a lovely. If I were a widow, I could find in my heart to have thee myself, son; ay, from 'em all. 394

Free. Thank you for your good will, mother; but, indeed, I had rather have a stranger: and if I woo her not in that violent fashion, that I will make her be glad to take these gifts ere I leave her, let me never be called the heir of your body.

Mis. L. Nay, I know there's enough in you, son, if you once come to put it forth.

Free. I'll quickly make a bolt or a shaft on't.[1] 402

[*Exeunt.*

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[1] *To make a bolt or a shaft of a thing* occurs in Ray's Proverbs. The meaning of the phrase (which occurs in *Merry Wives*, iii. 4) is to take the risk, succeed or fail. *Shafts* were sharp-pointed arrows; *bolts* were blunted at the extremity.

SCENE II.

A Street.

Enter HOARD *and* MONEYLOVE.

Mon. Faith, master Hoard, I have bestowed many months in the suit of your niece, such was the dear love I ever bore to her virtues: but since she hath so extremely denied me, I am to lay out for my fortunes elsewhere.

Hoa. Heaven forbid but you should, sir! I ever told you my niece stood otherwise affected.

Mon. I must confess you did, sir; yet, in regard of my great loss of time, and the zeal with which I sought your niece, shall I desire one favour of your worship? 10

Hoa. In regard of those two, 'tis hard but you shall, sir.

Mon. I shall rest grateful: 'tis not full three hours, sir, since the happy rumour of a rich country widow came to my hearing.

Hoa. How? a rich country widow?

Mon. Four hundred a-year landed.

Hoa. Yea?

Mon. Most firm, sir; and I have learnt her lodging: here my suit begins, sir; if I might but entreat your

worship to be a countenance for me, and speak a good word (for your words will pass), I nothing doubt but I might set fair for the widow; nor shall your labour, sir, end altogether in thanks; two hundred angels—— 24

Hoa. So, so: what suitors has she?

Mon. There lies the comfort, sir; the report of her is yet but a whisper; and only solicited by young riotous Witgood, nephew to your mortal adversary.

Hoa. Ha! art certain he's her suitor?

Mon. Most certain, sir; and his uncle very industrious to beguile the widow, and make up the match. 31

Hoa. So: very good.

Mon. Now, sir, you know this young Witgood is a spendthrift, dissolute fellow.

Hoa. A very rascal.

Mon. A midnight surfeiter.

Hoa. The spume of a brothel-house.

Mon. True, sir; which being well told in your worship's phrase, may both heave him out of her mind, and drive a fair way for me to the widow's affections. 40

Hoa. Attend me about five.

Mon. With my best care, sir. [*Exit.*

Hoa. Fool, thou hast left thy treasure with a thief,
To trust a widower with a suit in love!
Happy revenge, I hug thee! I have not only the means laid before me, extremely to cross my adversary, and confound the last hopes of his nephew, but thereby to enrich my state, augment my revenues, and build mine own fortunes greater: ha, ha!
I'll mar your phrase, o'erturn your flatteries,

Undo your windings, policies, and plots, 50
Fall like a secret and despatchful plague
On your secured comforts. Why, I am able
To buy three of Lucre; thrice outbid him,
Let my out-monies be reckoned and all.

Enter three of WITGOOD'S Creditors.

First C. I am glad of this news.

Sec. C. So are we, by my faith.

Third C. Young Witgood will be a gallant again now.

Hoa. Peace. [*Listening.*

First C. I promise you, master Cockpit, she's a mighty rich widow. 61

Sec. C. Why, have you ever heard of her?

First C. Who? widow Medler? she lies open to much rumour.

Third C. Four hundred a-year, they say, in very good land.

First C. Nay, take't of my word, if you believe that, you believe the least.

Sec. C. And to see how close he keeps it!

First C. O, sir, there's policy in that, to prevent better suitors. 71

Third C. He owes me a hundred pound, and I protest I ne'er looked for a penny.

First C. He little dreams of our coming; he'll wonder to see his creditors upon him.

[*Exeunt* Creditors.

Hoa. Good, his creditors: I'll follow. This makes for me:
All know the widow's wealth; and 'tis well known
I can estate her fairly, ay, and will.
In this one chance shines a twice happy fate;
I both deject my foe and raise my state. [*Exit.* 80

ACT III.

SCENE I.

WITGOOD'S *Lodging.*

Enter WITGOOD *and three* Creditors.

Wit. Why, alas, my creditors, could you find no other time to undo me but now? rather your malice appears in this than the justness of the debt.

First C. Master Witgood, I have forborne my money long.

Wit. I pray, speak low, sir: what do you mean?

Sec. C. We hear you are to be married suddenly to a rich country widow.

Wit. What can be kept so close but you creditors hear on't! well, 'tis a lamentable state, that our chiefest afflictors should first hear of our fortunes. Why, this is no good course, i'faith, sirs: if ever you have hope to be satisfied, why do you seek to confound the means that should work it? there's neither piety, no, nor policy in that. Shine favourably now: why, I may rise and spread again, to your great comforts. 16

First C. He says true, i'faith.

Wit. Remove me[1] now, and I consume for ever.

Sec. C. Sweet gentleman!

Wit. How can it thrive which from the sun you sever?

Third C. It cannot, indeed.

Wit. O, then, show patience! I shall have enough
To satisfy you all.

First C. Ay, if we could
Be content, a shame take us!

Wit. For, look you;
I am but newly sure[2] yet to the widow,
And what a rend might this discredit make!
Within these three days will I bind you lands
For your securities.

First C. No, good master Witgood:
Would 'twere as much as we dare trust you with!

Wit. I know you have been kind; however, now, 30
Either by wrong report or false incitement,
Your gentleness is injured: in such
A state as this a man cannot want foes.
If on the sudden he begin to rise,
No man that lives can count his enemies.
You had some intelligence, I warrant ye,
From an ill-willer.

Sec. C. Faith, we heard you brought up a rich widow, sir, and were suddenly to marry her.

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[1] "This and the next speech of Witgood's form a couplet, and are, I am inclined to think, a quotation."—*Editor of* 1816.

[2] Affianced.—"Accordailles. The betrothing or making *sure* of a man and woman together."—*Cotgrave.*

Wit. Ay, why there it was: I knew 'twas so: but since you are so well resolved [1] of my faith toward you, let me be so much favoured of you, I beseech you all—— 42

All. O, it shall not need, i'faith, sir!——

Wit. As to lie still awhile, and bury my debts in silence, till I be fully possessed of the widow; for the truth is—I may tell you as my friends——

All. O, O, O!——

Wit. I am to raise a little money in the city, toward the setting forth of myself, for mine own credit and your comfort; if my former debts should be divulged, all hope of my proceedings were quite extinguished. 51

First C. Do you hear, sir? I may deserve your custom hereafter; pray, let my money be accepted before a stranger's: here's forty pound I received as I came to you; if that may stand you in any stead, make use on't. [*Offers him money, which he at first declines.*] Nay, pray, sir; 'tis at your service. [*Aside to* WITGOOD.

Wit. You do so ravish me with kindness, that
I am constrain'd to play the maid, and take it.

First C. Let none of them see it, I beseech you.

Wit. Faugh! 60

First C. I hope I shall be first in your remembrance
After the marriage rites.

Wit. Believe it firmly.

First C. So.—What, do you walk, sirs?

Sec. C. I go.—Take no care, sir, for money to furnish you; within this hour I'll send you sufficient. [*Aside to*

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[1] Convinced.

WITGOOD.]—Come, master Cockpit, we both stay for you.

Third C. I ha' lost a ring, i'faith; I'll follow you presently [*exeunt* First *and* Second Creditors]—but you shall find it, sir; I know your youth and expenses have disfurnished you of all jewels: there's a ruby of twenty pound price, sir; bestow it upon your widow. [*Offers him the ring, which he at first declines.*]—What, man! 'twill call up her blood to you; beside, if I might so much work with you, I would not have you beholding to those bloodsuckers for any money. 76

Wit. Not I, believe it.

Third C. They're a brace of cut-throats.

Wit. I know 'em.

Third C. Send a note of all your wants to my shop, and I'll supply you instantly.

Wit. Say you so? why, here's my hand then, no man living shall do't but thyself.

Third C. Shall I carry it away from 'em both, then?

Wit. I'faith, shalt thou.

Third C. Troth, then, I thank you, sir. 86

Wit. Welcome, good master Cockpit. [*Exit* Third Creditor.]—Ha, ha, ha! why, is not this better now than lying a-bed? I perceive there's nothing conjures up wit sooner than poverty, and nothing lays it down sooner than wealth and lechery: this has some savour yet. O that I had the mortgage from mine uncle as sure in possession as these trifles! I would forswear brothel at noonday, and muscadine[1] and eggs at midnight.

[1] A rich, sweet-smelling wine. The mixture of muscadine and eggs was taken as an aphrodisiac.

Court. [*within*]. Master Witgood, where are you?
Wit. Holla! 96

Enter Courtesan.

Court. Rich news?
Wit. Would 'twere all in plate!
Court. There's some in chains and jewels: I am so haunted with suitors, master Witgood, I know not which to despatch first.
Wit. You have the better term,[1] by my faith.
Court. Among the number
One master Hoard, an ancient gentleman.
Wit. Upon my life, my uncle's adversary.
Court. It may well hold so, for he rails on you,
Speaks shamefully of him.
Wit. As I could wish it.
Court. I first denied him, but so cunningly,
It rather promis'd him assured hopes,
Than any loss of labour.
Wit. Excellent! 110
Court. I expect him every hour with gentlemen,
With whom he labours to make good his words,
To approve you riotous, your state consum'd.
Your uncle——
Wit. Wench, make up thy own fortunes now; do thyself a good turn once in thy days: he's rich in money, movables, and lands; marry him: he's an old doating

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[1] Profligate persons (*termers*, as they were called) resorted to the metropolis in term-time. Witgood is playing on the word *suitors*.

fool, and that's worth all; marry him: 'twould be a great comfort to me to see thee do well, i'faith; marry him: 'twould ease my conscience well to see thee well bestowed; I have a care of thee, i'faith. 121

Court. Thanks, sweet master Witgood.

Wit. I reach at farther happiness: first, I am sure it can be no harm to thee, and there may happen goodness to me by it: prosecute it well; let's send up for our wits, now we require their best and most pregnant assistance.

Court. Step in, I think I hear 'em. [*Exeunt.*

Enter HOARD *and* Gentlemen, *with the* Host *as Servant.*

Hoa. Art thou the widow's man? by my faith, sh'as a company of proper men then.

Host. I am the worst of six, sir; good enough for blue[1] coats. 131

Hoa. Hark hither: I hear say thou art in most credit with her.

Host. Not so, sir.

Hoa. Come, come, thou'rt modest: there's a brace of royals;[2] prithee, help me to th' speech of her.

[*Gives him money.*

Host. I'll do what I may, sir, always saving myself harmless.

Hoa. Go to, do't, I say; thou shalt hear better from me. 140

Host. Is not this a better place than five mark a-year

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[1] See note 2, p. 273.

[2] Gold pieces worth fifteen shillings.

standing wages? Say a man had but three such clients in a day, methinks he might make a poor living on't; beside, I was never brought up with so little honesty to refuse any man's money; never: what gulls there are a' this side the world! now know I the widow's mind; none but my young master comes in her clutches: ha, ha, ha!

[*Aside, and exit.*

Hoa. Now, my dear gentlemen, stand firmly to me;
You know his follies and my worth.

First G. We do, sir.

Sec. G. But, master Hoard, are you sure he is not i' th' house now? 151

Hoa. Upon my honesty, I chose this time
A' purpose, fit: the spendthrift is abroad:
Assist me; here she comes.

Enter Courtesan.

Now, my sweet widow.

Court. You're welcome, master Hoard.

Hoa. Despatch, sweet gentlemen, despatch.—
I am come, widow, to prove those my words
Neither of envy sprung nor of false tongues,
But such as their[1] deserts and actions
Do merit and bring forth; all which these gentlemen,
Well known, and better reputed, will confess. 161

Court. I cannot tell
How my affections may dispose of me;
But surely if they find him so desertless,

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[1] Lucre's and Witgood's.

They'll have that reason to withdraw themselves:
And therefore, gentlemen, I do entreat you,
As you are fair in reputation
And in appearing form, so shine in truth:
I am a widow, and, alas, you know,
Soon overthrown! 'tis a very small thing 170
That we withstand, our weakness is so great:
Be partial unto neither, but deliver,
Without affection, your opinion.

Hoa. And that will drive it home.

Court. Nay, I beseech your silence, master Hoard;
You are a party.

Hoa. Widow, not a word.

First G. The better first to work you to belief,
Know neither of us owe him flattery,
Nor t'other malice; but unbribed censure,[1]
So help us our best fortunes![2]

Court. It suffices. 180

First G. That Witgood is a riotous, undone man,
Imperfect both in fame and in estate,
His debts wealthier than he, and executions
In wait for his due body, we'll maintain
With our best credit and our dearest blood.

Court. Nor land nor living, say you? Pray, take heed
You do not wrong the gentleman.

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[1] Judgment.

[2] "The declaration of this gentleman somewhat resembles the oath taken by grand jurymen respecting their presentations, and was probably formed on that model."—*Editor of* 1816.

First G. What we speak
Our lives and means are ready to make good.
Court. Alas, how soon are we poor souls beguil'd!
Sec. G. And for his uncle——
Hoa. Let that come to me. 190
His uncle['s] a severe extortioner;
A tyrant at a forfeiture; greedy of others'
Miseries; one that would undo his brother,
Nay, swallow up his father, if he can,
Within the fathoms of his conscience.
First G. Nay, believe it, widow,
You had not only match'd yourself to wants,
But in an evil and unnatural stock.
Hoa. Follow hard, gentlemen, follow hard.
[*Aside to* Gent.
Court. Is my love so deceiv'd? Before you all
I do renounce him; on my knees I vow [*Kneeling.* 201
He ne'er shall marry me.
Wit. [*looking in*]. Heaven knows he never meant it!
[*Aside.*
Hoa. There take her at the bound.
[*Aside to* Gent.
First G. Then, with a new and pure affection,
Behold yon gentleman; grave, kind, and rich,
A match worthy yourself: esteeming him,
You do regard your state.
Hoa. I'll make her a jointure, say.
[*Aside to* Gent.
First G. He can join land to land, and will possess you
Of what you can desire.

Sec. G. Come, widow, come. 210

Court. The world is so deceitful!

First G. There 'tis deceitful,
Where flattery, want, and imperfection lies;
But none of these in him: push![1]

Court. Pray, sir——

First G. Come, you widows are ever most backward when you should do yourselves most good; but were it to marry a chin not worth a hair now, then you would be forward enough. Come, clap hands, a match.

Hoa. With all my heart, widow. [HOARD *and* Courtesan *shake hands.*]—Thanks, gentlemen:
I will deserve your labour, and [*to* Courtesan] thy love.

Court. Alas, you love not widows but for wealth! I promise you I ha' nothing, sir.

Hoa. Well said, widow, 222
Well said; thy love is all I seek, before
These gentlemen.

Court. Now I must hope the best.

Hoa. My joys are such they want to be express'd.

Court. But, master Hoard, one thing I must remember you of, before these gentlemen, your friends: how shall I suddenly avoid the loathed soliciting of that perjured Witgood, and his tedious, dissembling uncle? who this very day hath appointed a meeting for the same purpose too; where, had not truth come forth, I had been undone, utterly undone! 232

Hoa. What think you of that, gentlemen?

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[1] Pish.

First G. 'Twas well devised.

Hoa. Hark thee, widow: train out young Witgood single; hasten him thither with thee, somewhat before the hour; where, at the place appointed, these gentlemen and myself will wait the opportunity, when, by some slight removing him from thee, we'll suddenly enter and surprise thee, carry thee away by boat to Cole-Harbour,[1] have a priest ready, and there clap it up instantly. How likest it, widow? 242

Court. In that it pleaseth you, it likes me well.

Hoa. I'll kiss thee for those words. [*Kisses her.*]—
Come, gentlemen,
Still must I live a suitor to your favours,
Still to your aid beholding.

First G. We're engag'd, sir;
'Tis for our credits now to see't well ended.

Hoa. 'Tis for your honours, gentlemen; nay, look to't.
Not only in joy, but I in wealth excel:
No more sweet widow, but, sweet wife, farewell. 250

Court. Farewell, sir. [*Exeunt* HOARD *and* Gentlemen.

Re-enter WITGOOD.

Wit. O for more scope! I could laugh eternally! Give you joy, mistress Hoard, I promise your fortune was good, forsooth; you've fell upon wealth enough, and there's young gentlemen enow can help you to the rest. Now it requires our wits: carry thyself but heedfully now, and we are both——

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[1] See note 2, p. 277.

Re-enter Host.

Host. Master Witgood, your uncle.

Wit. Cuds me! remove thyself awhile; I'll serve for him. [*Exeunt* Courtesan *and* Host. 260

Enter LUCRE.

Luc. Nephew, good morrow, nephew.

Wit. The same to you, kind uncle.

Luc. How fares the widow? does the meeting hold?

Wit. O, no question of that, sir.

Luc. I'll strike the stroke, then, for thee; no more days.[1]

Wit. The sooner the better, uncle. O, she's mightily followed!

Luc. And yet so little rumoured!

Wit. Mightily: here comes one old gentleman, and he'll make her a jointure of three hundred a year, forsooth; another wealthy suitor will estate his son in his lifetime, and make him weigh down the widow; here a merchant's son will possess her with no less than three goodly lordships at once, which were all pawns to his father. 275

Luc. Peace, nephew, let me hear no more of 'em; it mads me. Thou shalt prevent[2] 'em all. No words to the widow of my coming hither. Let me see—

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[1] The editor of 1816 reads "delays;" but the correction is not needed. Lucre is employing usurers' language. A borrower who found himself at the stipulated time unable to pay his debts would crave for "further day" (or "longer day"), *i.e.* a postponement of the settlement.

[2] Anticipate.

'tis now upon nine: before twelve, nephew, we will have the bargain struck, we will, faith, boy. 280

Wit. O, my precious uncle! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in HOARD'S *House.*

Enter HOARD *and* JOYCE.

Hoa. Niece, sweet niece, prithee, have a care to my house; I leave all to thy discretion. Be content to dream awhile; I'll have a husband for thee shortly: put that care upon me, wench, for in choosing wives and husbands I am only fortunate; I have that gift given me. [*Exit.*

Joy. But 'tis not likely you should choose for me,
Since nephew to your chiefest enemy
Is he whom I affect: but, O, forgetful!
Why dost thou flatter thy affections so, 10
With name of him that for a widow's bed
Neglects thy purer love? Can it be so,
Or does report dissemble?

Enter GEORGE.

How now, sir?

Geo. A letter, with which came a private charge.

Joy. Therein I thank your care. [*Exit* GEORGE.
—I know this hand—
[*Reads.*] *Dearer than sight, what the world reports of me, yet believe not; rumour will alter shortly: be thou constant;*

I am still the same that I was in love, and I hope to be the same in fortunes. THEODORUS WITGOOD.

I am resolv'd :[1] no more shall fear or doubt
Raise their pale powers to keep affection out. [*Exit.* 21

SCENE III.

A Tavern.

Enter HOARD, Gentlemen, *and* Drawer.

Dra. You're very welcome, gentlemen.—Dick, show those gentlemen the Pomegranate there.

Hoa. Hist !

Dra. Up those stairs, gentlemen.

Hoa. Pist,[2] drawer !

Dra. Anon, sir.

Hoa. Prithee, ask at the bar if a gentlewoman came not in lately.

Dra. William, at the bar, did you see any gentlewoman come in lately ? Speak you ay, speak you no. 10

[*Within.*] No, none came in yet, but mistress Florence.

Dra. He says none came in yet, sir, but one mistress Florence.

Hoa. What is that Florence ? a widow ?

Dra. Yes, a Dutch[3] widow.

Hoa. How ?

---

[1] Convinced. [2] 2 Ed. 2, "Hist."
[3] Cant term for a whore.

Dra. That's an English drab, sir: give your worship good morrow. [*Exit.*

Hoa. A merry knave, i'faith! I shall remember a Dutch widow the longest day of my life. 20

First G. Did not I use most art to win the widow?

Sec. G. You shall pardon me for that, sir; master Hoard knows I took her at best 'vantage.

Hoa. What's that, sweet gentlemen, what's that?

Sec. G. He will needs bear me down, that his art only wrought with the widow most.

Hoa. O, you did both well, gentlemen, you did both well, I thank you.

First G. I was the first that moved her.

Hoa. You were, i'faith.

Sec. G. But it was I that took her at the bound. 30

Hoa. Ay, that was you: faith, gentlemen, 'tis right.

Third G. I boasted least, but 'twas I join'd their hands.

Hoa. By th' mass, I think he did: you did all well, Gentlemen, you did all well; contend no more.

First G. Come, yon room's fittest.

Hoa. True, 'tis next the door. [*Exeunt.*

Enter WITGOOD, Courtesan, Host, *and* Drawer.

Dra. You're very welcome: please you to walk up stairs; cloth's laid, sir.

Court. Up stairs? troth, I am very[1] weary, master Witgood.

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[1] So ed. 2.—Not in ed. 1.

Wit. Rest yourself here awhile, widow; we'll have a cup of muscadine in this little room. 41

Dra. A cup of muscadine? You shall have the best, sir.

Wit. But, do you hear, sirrah?

Dra. Do you call? anon, sir.

Wit. What is there provided for dinner?

Dra. I cannot readily tell you, sir: if you please you may go into the kitchen and see yourself, sir; many gentlemen of worship do use to do it, I assure you, sir. [*Exit.*

Host. A pretty familiar, prigging[1] rascal; he has his part without book. 51

Wit. Against you are ready to drink to me, widow, I'll be present to pledge you.

Court. Nay, I commend your care, 'tis done well of you. [*Exit* WITGOOD.]—'Las,[2] what have I forgot!

Host. What, mistress?

Court. I slipt my wedding-ring off when I washed, and left it at my lodging: prithee, run; I shall be sad without it. [*Exit* Host.]—So, he's gone. Boy.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Anon, forsooth. 60

Court. Come hither, sirrah: learn secretly if one master Hoard, an ancient gentleman, be about house.

Boy. I heard such a one named.

Court. Commend me to him.

---

[1] "*Prigging* is used in this passage merely as a jocular term of reproach."—*Dyce.*

[2] Old eds. "asse."

Re-enter HOARD *and* Gentlemen.

Hoa. Ay, boy,[1] do thy commendations.
Court. O, you come well: away, to boat, begone.
Hoa. Thus wise men are reveng'd, give two for one.
[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter WITGOOD *and* Vintner.

Wit. I must request
You, sir, to show extraordinary care:
My uncle comes with gentlemen, his friends, 70
And 'tis upon a making.[2]
Vin. Is it so?
I'll give a special charge, good master Witgood.
May I be bold to see her?
Wit. Who? [t]he widow?
With all my heart, i'faith, I'll bring you to her.
Vin. If she be a Staffordshire gentlewoman, 'tis much if I know her not.
Wit. How now? boy! drawer!
Vin. Hie!

Re-enter Boy.

Boy. Do you call, sir?
Wit. Went the gentlewoman up that was here? 80
Boy. Up, sir? she went out, sir.
Wit. Out, sir?
Boy. Out, sir: one master Hoard, with a guard of

---

1 Old eds. "I bee."
2 "*i.e.* matching: in our early writers *make* is often used for mate." —*Dyce.*

gentlemen, carried her out at back door, a pretty while since, sir.

Wit. Hoard? death and darkness! Hoard?

Re-enter Host.

Host. The devil of ring I can find.

Wit. How now? what news? where's the widow?

Host. My mistress? is she not here, sir?

Wit. More madness yet! 90

Host. She sent me for a ring.

Wit. A plot, a plot!—To boat! she's stole away.

Host. What?

Enter LUCRE *and* Gentlemen.

Wit. Follow! inquire old Hoard, my uncle's adversary. [*Exit* Host.

Luc. Nephew, what's that?

Wit. Thrice-miserable wretch!

Luc. Why, what's the matter?

Vin. The widow's borne away, sir.

Luc. Ha? passion of me!—A heavy welcome, gentlemen.

First G. The widow gone?

Luc. Who durst attempt it?

Wit. Who but old Hoard, my uncle's adversary? 100

Luc. How?

Wit. With his confederates.

Luc. Hoard, my deadly enemy?—Gentlemen, stand to me,

I will not bear it; 'tis in hate of me;

That villain seeks my shame, nay, thirsts my blood;
He owes me mortal malice.
I'll spend my wealth on this despiteful plot,
Ere he shall cross me and my nephew thus.
Wit. So maliciously!

Re-enter Host.

Luc. How now, you treacherous rascal? 110
Host. That's none of my name, sir.
Wit. Poor soul, he knew not on't!
Luc. I'm sorry. I see then 'twas a mere plot.
Host. I trac'd 'em nearly——
Luc.[1] Well?
Host. And hear for certain
They have took Cole-Harbour.[2]
Luc. The devil's sanctuary!
They shall not rest; I'll pluck her from his arms.—
Kind and dear gentlemen,
If ever I had seat within your breasts——
First G. No more, good sir; it is a wrong to us
To see you injur'd: in a cause so just 120
We'll spend our lives but we will right our friends.
Luc. Honest and kind! come, we've delayed too long:
Nephew, take comfort; a just cause is strong.
Wit. That's all my comfort, uncle. [*Exeunt all but* WITGOOD.] Ha, ha, ha!
Now may events fall luckily and well:
He that ne'er strives, says wit, shall ne'er excel. [*Exit.*

---

[1] So ed. 1.—Ed. 2 "*Wit.*"
[2] See note 2, p. 277.

SCENE IV.

A Room in DAMPIT'S *House.*

Enter DAMPIT, *drunk.*

Dam. When did I say my prayers? In anno 88, when the great armada was coming; and in anno 89,[1] when the great thundering and lightning was, I prayed heartily then, i'faith, to overthrow Poovies' new buildings; I kneeled by my great iron chest, I remember.

Enter AUDREY.

Aud. Master Dampit, one may hear you before they see you: you keep sweet hours, master Dampit; we were all a-bed three hours ago.

Dam. Audrey?

Aud. O, you're a fine gentleman! 10

Dam. So I am, i'faith, and a fine scholar: do you use to go to bed so early, Audrey?

Aud. Call you this early, master Dampit?

Dam. Why, is't not one of clock i' th' morning? is not that early enough? fetch me a glass of fresh beer.

Aud. Here, I have warmed your nightcap for you, master Dampit.

---

[1] "Both the quartos read '99;' but Stow does not mention any *very* great storm in that year, although he has noticed one or two; whereas in the year 1589, he observes, that on 'the 1st August, at night, was the greatest lightning and thunder that had, at any time, bin seene or heard about London in the memory of any man living; and yet, thankes be given to God, little hurt heard of.'"—*Editor of* 1816.

Dam. Draw it on then. I am very weak truly: I have not eaten so much as the bulk of an egg these three days. 20

Aud. You have drunk the more, master Dampit.

Dam. What's that?

Aud. You mought, and[1] you would, master Dampit.

Dam. I answer you, I cannot: hold your prating; you prate too much, and understand too little: are you answered? Give me a glass of beer.

Aud. May I ask you how you do, master Dampit?

Dam. How do I? i'faith, naught.

Aud. I ne'er knew you do otherwise.

Dam. I eat not one pen'north of bread these two years. Give me a glass of fresh beer. I am not sick, nor I am not well. 32

Aud. Take this warm napkin about your neck, sir, whilst I help to make you unready.[2]

Dam. How now, Audrey-prater, with your scurvy devices, what say you now?

Aud. What say I, master Dampit? I say nothing, but that you are very weak.

Dam. Faith, thou hast more cony-catching[3] devices than all London. 40

Aud. Why, master Dampit, I never deceived you in all my life.

Dam. Why was that? because I never did trust thee.

Aud. I care not what you say, master Dampit.

---

[1] "Mought, and" = might, if.

[2] Undress you.

[3] Sharping.

Dam. Hold thy prating: I answer thee, thou art a beggar, a quean, and a bawd: are you answered?

Aud. Fie, master Dampit! a gentleman, and have such words?

Dam. Why, thou base drudge of infortunity, thou kitchen-stuff-drab of beggary, roguery, and cockscombry, thou cavernesed quean of foolery, knavery, and bawd-reaminy, I'll tell thee what, I will not give a louse for thy fortunes. 53

Aud. No, master Dampit? and there's a gentleman comes a-wooing to me, and he doubts [1] nothing but that you will get me from him.

Dam. I? If I would either have thee or lie with thee for two thousand pound, would I might be damned! why, thou base, impudent quean of foolery, flattery, and coxcombry, are you answered? 60

Aud. Come, will you rise and go to bed, sir?

Dam. Rise, and go to bed too, Audrey? How does mistress Proserpine?

Aud. Fooh!

Dam. She's as fine a philosopher of a stinkard's wife, as any within the liberties. Faugh, faugh, Audrey!

Aud. How now, master Dampit?

Dam. Fie upon't, what a choice of stinks here is! what hast thou done, Audrey? fie upon't, here's a choice of stinks indeed! Give me a glass of fresh beer, and then I will to bed. 71

Aud. It waits for you above, sir.

---

[1] Fears.

Dam. Foh! I think they burn horns in Barnard's Inn. If ever I smelt such an abominable stink, usury forsake me. [*Exit.*

Aud. They be the stinking nails of his trampling feet, and he talks of burning of horns. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at Cole-Harbour.[1]

Enter HOARD, Courtesan, LAMPREY, SPICHCOCK, *and* Gentlemen.

First G. Join hearts, join hands,
In wedlock's bands,
Never to part
Till death cleave your heart.
[*To* HOARD.] You shall forsake all other women;
[*To* Courtesan.] You lords, knights, gentlemen, and yeomen.
What my tongue slips
Make up with your lips.
Hoa. [*kisses her.*] Give you joy, mistress Hoard; let the kiss come about. [*Knocking.*
Who knocks? Convey my little pig-eater[2] out. 10
Luc. [*within.*] Hoard!
Hoa. Upon my life, my adversary, gentlemen!

---

[1] See note 2, p. 277.
[2] "An odd term of endearment: *pigsnie* is common enough."—*Dyce.*

Luc. [*within.*] Hoard, open the door, or we will force it ope:
Give us the widow.
Hoa. Gentlemen, keep 'em out.
Lam. He comes upon his death that enters here.
Luc. [*within.*] My friends, assist me!
Hoa. He has assistants, gentlemen.
Lam. Tut, nor him nor them we in this action fear.
Luc. [*within.*] Shall I, in peace, speak one word with the widow?
Court. Husband, and gentlemen, hear me but a word.
Lam. Freely, sweet wife.
Court. Let him in peaceably; 20
You know we're sure from any act of his.
Hoa. Most true.
Court.[1] You may stand by and smile at his old weakness:
Let me alone to answer him.
Hoa. Content;
Twill be good mirth, i'faith. How think you, gentlemen?
Lam. Good gullery!
Hoa. Upon calm conditions let him in.
Luc. [*within.*] All spite and malice!
Lam. Hear me, master Lucre:
So you will vow a peaceful entrance
With those your friends, and only exercise 30
Calm conference with the widow, without fury,
The passage shall receive you.

---

1 Old ed. "*Luc.*"

Luc. [*within.*] I do vow it.
Lam. Then enter and talk freely : here she stands.

Enter LUCRE, Gentlemen, *and* Host.

Luc. O, master Hoard, your spite has watch'd the hour!
You're excellent at vengeance, master Hoard.
Hoa. Ha, ha, ha!
Luc. I am the fool you laugh at:
You are wise, sir, and know the seasons well.—
Come hither, widow: why is it thus?
O, you have done me infinite disgrace, 40
And your own credit no small injury!
Suffer mine enemy so despitefully
To bear you from my nephew? O, I had
Rather half my substance had been forfeit
And begg'd by some starv'd rascal!
Court. Why, what would you wish me do, sir?
I must not overthrow my state for love:
We have too many precedents for that;
From thousands of our wealthy undone widows
One may derive some wit. I do confess 50
I lov'd your nephew, nay, I did affect him
Against the mind and liking of my friends;[1]
Believ'd his promises; lay here in hope
Of flatter'd living, and the boast of lands:
Coming to touch his wealth and state, indeed,
It appears dross; I find him not the man;

[1] So ed. 2.—Ed. 1 "friend."

Imperfect, mean, scarce furnish'd of his needs:
In words, fair lordships; in performance, hovels:
Can any woman love the thing that is not?
Luc. Broke you for this?
Court. Was it not cause too much? 60
Send to inquire his state: most part of it
Lay two years mortgag'd in his uncle's hands.
Luc. Why, say it did, you might have known my mind:
I could have soon restor'd it.
Court. Ay, had I but seen any such thing perform'd,
Why, 'twould have tied my affection, and contain'd
Me in my first desires: do you think, i'faith,
That I could twine such a dry oak as this,
Had promise in your nephew took effect?
Luc. Why, and there's no time past; and rather than 70
My adversary should thus thwart my hopes,
I would——
Court. Tut, you've been ever full of golden speech:
If words were lands, your nephew would be rich.
Luc. Widow, believe't, I vow by my best bliss,
Before these gentlemen, I will give in
The mortgage to my nephew instantly,
Before I sleep or eat.
First G. [*friend to* LUCRE.] We'll pawn our credits,
Widow, what he speaks shall be perform'd
In fulness.
Luc. Nay, more; I will estate him 80
In farther blessings; he shall be my heir;

I have no son;
I'll bind myself to that condition.

Court. When I shall hear this done, I shall soon yield
To reasonable terms.

Luc. In the mean season,
Will you protest, before these gentlemen,
To keep yourself as you're now at this present?

Court. I do protest, before these gentlemen,
I will be as clear then as I am now.

Luc. I do believe you. Here's your own honest servant, 90
I'll take him along with me.

Court. Ay, with all my heart.

Luc. He shall see all perform'd, and bring you word.

Court. That's all I wait for.

Hoa. What, have you finished, master Lucre? ha, ha, ha, ha!

Luc. So laugh, Hoard, laugh at your poor enemy, do;
The wind may turn, you may be laugh'd at too;
Yes, marry may you, sir.—Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exeunt* LUCRE, Gentlemen, *and* Host.

Hoa. Ha, ha, ha! if every man that swells in malice
Could be reveng'd as happily as I, 100
He would choose hate, and forswear amity.—
What did he say, wife, prithee?

Court. Faith, spoke to ease his mind.

Hoa. O, O, O!

Court. You know now little to any purpose.

Hoa. True, true, true!

Court. He would do mountains now.

Hoa. Ay, ay, ay, ay.

Lam. You've struck him dead, master Hoard.

Spi. And[1] his nephew desperate.

Hoa. I know't, sirs, I.

Never did man so crush his enemy. [*Exeunt.* 111

SCENE II.

A Room in LUCRE'S *House.*

Enter LUCRE, Gentlemen, *and* Host, *meeting* FREEDOM.

Luc. My son-in-law, Sam Freedom, where's my nephew?

Free. *O man in lamentation,*[2] father.

Luc. How!

Free. He thumps his breast like a gallant dicer that has lost his doublet, and stands in's shirt to do penance.

Luc. Alas, poor gentleman!

Free. I warrant you may hear him sigh in a still evening to your house at Highgate.

Luc. I prithee, send him in.

Free. Were it to do a greater matter, I will not stick with you, sir, in regard you married my mother. [*Exit.* 11

Luc. Sweet gentlemen, cheer him up; I will but fetch the mortgage and return to you instantly.

---

[1] So ed. 2.—Ed. 1 "I [ay] and."

[2] "*O man in* desperation" is an old tune mentioned in Nashe's *Summer's Last Will and Testament* (Hazlitt's Dodsley, viii. 51) and Peele's *The Old Wives' Tale.* See also Ebsworth's *Roxburghe Ballads*, iv. 365, 468.

First G. We'll do our best, sir. [*Exit* LUCRE.]—
See where he comes,
E'en joyless and regardless of all form.

Enter WITGOOD.

Sec. G. Why, how now,[1] master Witgood? Fie! you a firm scholar, and an understanding gentleman, and give your best parts to passion?[2]

First G. Come, fie fie![3]

Wit. O, gentlemen——

First G. Sorrow of me, what a sigh was there, sir!
Nine such widows are not worth it.

Wit. To be borne from me by that lecher Hoard!

First G. That vengeance is your uncle's; being done
More in despite to him than wrong to you:
But we bring comfort now.

Wit. I beseech you, gentlemen——

Sec. G. Cheer thyself, man; there's hope of her, i'faith.

Wit. Too gladsome to be true.

Re-enter LUCRE.

Luc. Nephew, what cheer?
Alas, poor gentleman, how art thou chang'd!
Call thy fresh blood into thy cheeks again:
She comes.

Wit. Nothing afflicts me so much,
But that it is your adversary, uncle,
And merely plotted in despite of you.

---

[1] So ed. 2.—Omitted in ed. 1. [2] Sorrow.
[3] So ed. 2.—Ed. 1 "Come, fie!"

Luc. Ay, that's it mads me, spites me! I'll spend my wealth ere he shall carry her so, because I know 'tis only to spite me. Ay, this is it. Here, nephew [*giving a paper*], before these kind gentlemen, I deliver in your mortgage, my promise to the widow; see, 'tis done: be wise, you're once more master of your own. The widow shall perceive now you are not altogether such a beggar as the world reputes you; you can make shift to bring her to three hundred a-year, sir. 43

First G. Byrlady,[1] and that's no toy, sir.

Luc. A word, nephew.

First G. [*to* Host.] Now you may certify the widow.

Luc. You must conceive it aright, nephew, now;
To do you good I am content to do this.

Wit. I know it, sir.

Luc. But your own conscience can tell I had it 50
Dearly enough of you.

Wit. Ay, that's most certain.

Luc. Much money laid out, beside many a journey
To fetch the rent; I hope you'll think on't, nephew.

Wit. I were worse than a beast else, i'faith.

Luc. Although to blind the widow and the world,
I out of policy do't, yet there's a conscience, nephew.

Wit. Heaven forbid else!

Luc. When you are full possess'd,
'Tis nothing to return it.

Wit. Alas, a thing quickly done, uncle!

Luc. Well said! you know I give it you but in trust. 60

---

[1] By our Lady.

Wit. Pray, let me understand you rightly, uncle:
You give it me but in trust?

Luc. No.

Wit. That is, you trust me with it?

Luc. True, true.

Wit. But if ever I trust you with it again,
Would I might be truss'd up[1] for my labour! [*Aside.*

Luc. You can all witness, gentlemen; and you, sir yeoman? 69

Host. My life for yours, sir, now, I know my mistress's mind so[2] well toward your nephew, let things be in preparation, and I'll train her hither in most excellent fashion. [*Exit.*

Luc. A good old boy!—Wife! Jenny!

Enter MISTRESS LUCRE.

Mis. L. What's the news, sir?

Luc. The wedding-day's at hand: prithee, sweet wife, express thy housewifery; thou'rt a fine cook, I know't; thy first husband married thee out of an alderman's kitchen; go to, he raised thee for raising of paste. What! here's none but friends; most of our beginnings must be winked at.—Gentlemen, I invite you all to my nephew's wedding against Thursday morning. 81

First G. With all our hearts, and we shall joy to see
Your enemy so mock'd.

---

[1] "Brome has the same poor play on words:
'When Lodovico
Does not prove *trustie*, then let me be *truss'd*.'
The Queen and Concubine, p. 106.—*Five New Playes*, 1659."—*Dyce.*

[2] Ed. 1 "to."—Ed. 2 "too."

Luc. He laugh'd at me, gentlemen; ha, ha, ha!
[*Exeunt all but* WITGOOD.

Wit. He has no conscience, faith, would laugh at them:
They laugh at one another;
Who then can be so cruel? troth, not I;
I rather pity now, than ought envy?[1]
I do conceive such joy in mine own happiness,
I have no leisure yet to laugh at their follies. 90
Thou soul of my estate, I kiss thee! [*To the mortgage.*
I miss life's comfort when I miss thee;
O, never will we part agen,
Until I leave the sight of men!
We'll ne'er trust conscience of our kin,
Since cozenage brings that title in. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Street.

Enter three Creditors.

First C. I'll wait these seven hours but I'll see him caught.

Sec. C. Faith, so will I.

Third C. Hang him, prodigal! he's stript of the widow.

First C. A' my troth, she's the wiser; she has made the happier choice: and I wonder of what stuff those widows' hearts are made of, that will marry unfledged boys before comely thrum-chinned[2] gentlemen.

---

[1] Bear malice.

[2] Rough-chinned. See note 4. vol. i. p. 232.

Enter Boy.

Boy. News, news, news!

First C. What, boy?

Boy. The rioter is caught. 10

First. C. So, so, so, so! it warms me at the heart;
I love a' life to see dogs upon men.
O, here he comes.

Enter Sergeants, *with* WITGOOD *in custody.*

Wit. My last joy was so great, it took away the sense of all future afflictions. What a day is here o'ercast! how soon a black tempest rises!

First C. O, we may speak with you now, sir! what's become of your rich widow? I think you may cast your cap at the widow, may you not, sir?

Sec. C. He a rich widow? who, a prodigal, a daily rioter, and a nightly vomiter? he a widow of account? he a hole[1] i' th' counter. 22

Wit. You do well, my masters, to tyrannise over misery, to afflict the afflicted: 'tis a custom you have here amongst you; I would wish you never leave it, and I hope you'll do as I bid you.

First C. Come, come, sir, what say you extempore now to your bill of a hundred pound? a sweet debt for froating[2] your doublets.

Sec. C. Here's mine of forty. 30

Third C. Here's mine of fifty.

---

[1] See note 3, vol. i. p. 192.

[2] Perhaps the meaning is *fretting*, *embroidering*. Usually *frote* = *rub*.—"I think *froating* means here nothing more than dressing up, repairing."—*Dyce*.

Wit. Pray, sirs,—you'll give me breath?

First C. No, sir, we'll keep you out of breath still; then we shall be sure you will not run away from us.

Wit. Will you but hear me speak?

Sec. C. You shall pardon us for that, sir; we know you have too fair a tongue of your own; you overcame us too lately, a shame take you! we are like to lose all that for want of witnesses: we dealt in policy then; always when we strive to be most politic we prove most coxcombs: *non plus ultra* I perceive by us, we're not ordained to thrive by wisdom, and therefore we must be content to be tradesmen. 43

Wit. Give me but reasonable time, and I protest I'll make you ample satisfaction.

First C. Do you talk of reasonable time to us?

Wit. 'Tis true, beasts know no reasonable time.

Sec. C. We must have either money or carcass.

Wit. Alas, what good will my carcass do you?

Third C. O, 'tis a secret delight we have amongst us! we that are used to keep birds in cages, have the heart to keep men in prison, I warrant you. 52

Wit. I perceive I must crave a little more aid from my wits: do but make shift for me this once, and I'll forswear ever to trouble you in the like fashion hereafter; I'll have better employment for you, and I live. [*Aside.*] —You'll give me leave, my masters, to make trial of my friends, and raise all means I can?

First C. That's our desire, sir.

Enter Host.

Host. Master Witgood. 60

Wit. O, art thou come?

Host. May I speak one word with you in private, sir?

Wit. No, by my faith, canst thou; I am in hell here, and the devils will not let me come to thee.

First C. Do you call us devils? you shall find us puritans.—Bear him away; let 'em talk as they go: we'll not stand to hear 'em.—Ah, sir, am I a devil? I shall think the better of myself as long as I live: a devil, i'faith? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A room in HOARD'S *House.*

Enter HOARD.

Hoa. What a sweet blessing hast thou, master Hoard, above a multitude! wilt thou never be thankful? how dost thou think to be blest another time? or dost thou count this the full measure of thy happiness? by my troth, I think thou dost: not only a wife large in possessions, but spacious in content; she's rich, she's young, she's fair, she's wise: when I wake, I think of her lands—that revives me; when I go to bed, I dream of her beauty—and that's enough for me: she's worth four hundred a-year in her very smock, if a man knew how to use it. But the journey will be all, in troth, into the country; to ride to her lands in state and order following[1]; my brother, and other worshipful gentlemen, whose companies I ha' sent down for already, to ride along with us in their goodly

[1] Compare Quomodo's soliloquy in *Michaelmas Term*, vol. i. p. 299.

decorum beards, their broad velvet cassocks, and chains of gold twice or thrice double; against which time I'll entertain some ten men of mine own into liveries, all of occupations or qualities; I will not keep an idle man about me: the sight of which will so vex my adversary Lucre—for we'll pass by his door of purpose, make a little stand for [the] nonce, and have our horses curvet before the window—certainly he will never endure it, but run up and hang himself presently. 23

Enter Servant.

How now, sirrah, what news? any that offer their service to me yet?

Ser. Yes, sir, there are some i' th' hall that wait for your worship's liking, and desire to be entertained.

Hoa. Are they of occupation?

Ser. They are men fit for your worship, sir.

Hoa. Sayest so? send 'em all in. [*Exit* Servant.]—To see ten men ride after me in watchet liveries, with orange-tawny capes,[1]—'twill cut his comb, i'faith. 32

Enter Tailor, Barber, Perfumer, Falconer, *and* Huntsman.

How now? of what occupation are you, sir?

Tai. A tailor, an't please your worship.

Hoa. A tailor? O, very good: you shall serve to make all the liveries.—What are you, sir?

Bar. A barber, sir.

Hoa. A barber? very needful: you shall shave all the

[1] The editor of 1816 reads "caps."

house, and, if need require, stand for a reaper i' th' summer time.—You, sir? 40

Per. A perfumer.

Hoa. I smelt you before: perfumers, of all men, had need carry themselves uprightly; for if they were once knaves, they would be smelt out quickly.—To you, sir?

Fal. A falconer, an't please your worship.

Hoa. Sa ho, sa ho, sa ho!—And you, sir?

Hunt. A huntsman, sir.

Hoa. There, boy, there, boy, there, boy! I am not so old but I have pleasant days to come. I promise, you, my masters, I take such a good liking to you, that I entertain you all; I put you already into my countenance, and you shall be shortly in my livery; but especially you two, my jolly falconer and my bonny huntsman; we shall have most need of you at my wife's manor-houses i' th' country; there's goodly parks and champion[1] grounds for you; we shall have all our sports within ourselves; all the gentlemen a' th' country shall be beholding to us and our pastimes. 58

Fal. And we'll make your worship admire, sir.

Hoa. Sayest thou so? do but make me admire, and thou shall want for nothing.—My tailor.

Tai. Anon, sir.

Hoa. Go presently in hand with the liveries.

Tai. I will, sir.

Hoa. My barber.

Bar. Here, sir.

---

[1] The old form of *champaign*.

Hoa. Make 'em all trim fellows, louse 'em well,—especially my huntsman,—and cut all their beards of the Polonian fashion.—My perfumer.

Per. Under your nose, sir. 70

Hoa. Cast a better savour upon the knaves, to take away the scent of my tailor's feet, and my barber's lotium-water.

Per. It shall be carefully performed, sir.

Hoa. But you, my falconer and huntsman, the welcomest men alive, i'faith!

Hunt. And we'll show you that, sir, shall deserve your worship's favour.

Hoa. I prithee, show me that.—Go, you knaves all, and wash your lungs i' th' buttery, go. [*Exeunt* Tailor, Barber, *&c.*]—By th' mass, and well remembered! I'll ask my wife that question.—Wife, mistress Jane Hoard!

Enter Courtesan, *altered in apparel.*

Court. Sir, would you with me? 82

Hoa. I would but know, sweet wife, which might stand best to thy liking, to have the wedding dinner kept here or i' th' country?

Court. Hum:—faith, sir, 'twould like me better here; here you were married, here let all rites be ended.

Hoa. Could a marquesse[1] give a better answer? Hoard, bear thy head aloft, thou'st a wife will advance it.

Enter Host *with a letter.*

What haste comes here now? yea, a letter? some dreg of my adversary's malice. Come hither; what's the news?

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[1] Marchioness.

Host. A thing that concerns my mistress, sir. 92

[*Giving a letter to* Courtesan.

Hoa. Why then it concerns me, knave.

Host. Ay, and you, knave, too (cry your worship mercy): you are both like to come into trouble, I promise you, sir; a pre-contract.[1]

Hoa. How? a pre-contract, sayest thou?

Host. I fear they have too much proof on't, sir: old Lucre, he runs mad up and down, and will to law as fast as he can; young Witgood laid hold on by his creditors, he exclaims upon you a' t'other side, says you have wrought his undoing by the injurious detaining of his contract. 103

Hoa. Body a' me!

Host. He will have utmost satisfaction;
The law shall give him recompense, he says.

Court. Alas, his creditors so merciless! my state being yet uncertain, I deem it not unconscionable to further him. [*Aside.*

Host. True, sir. 110

Hoa. Wife, what says that letter? let me construe it.

Court. Curs'd be my rash and unadvised words!

[*Tears the letter and stamps on it.*

I'll set my foot upon my tongue,
And tread my inconsiderate grant to dust.

Hoa. Wife——

Host. A pretty shift, i'faith! I commend a woman

---

[1] A pre-contract of marriage could not be set aside without the mutual consent of the parties. If the Courtesan had been pre-contracted to Witgood, her marriage with Hoard would be invalid. See the subject discussed in Swinburne's *Treatise of Spousals*, 1686.

when she can make away a letter from her husband handsomely, and this was cleanly done, by my troth.

[*Aside.*

Court. I did, sir;
Some foolish words I must confess did pass, 120
Which now litigiously he fastens on me.

Hoa. Of what force? let me examine 'em.

Court. Too strong, I fear: would I were well freed of him!

Hoa. Shall I compound?

Court. No, sir, I'd have it done some nobler way
Of your side; I'd have you come off with honour;
Let baseness keep with them. Why, have you not
The means, sir? the occasion's offer'd you.

Hoa. Where? how, dear wife? 129

Court. He is now caught by his creditors; the slave's needy; his debts petty; he'll rather bind himself to all inconveniences than rot in prison: by this only means you may get a release from him: 'tis not yet come to his uncle's hearing; send speedily for the creditors; by this time he's desperate; he'll set his hand to anything: take order for his debts, or discharge 'em quite: a pax on him, let's be rid of a rascal!

Hoa. Excellent!
Thou dost astonish me.—Go, run, make haste;
Bring both the creditors and Witgood hither. 140

Host. This will be some revenge yet.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Hoa. In the mean space I'll have a release drawn.—
Within there!

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir?

Hoa. Sirrah, come take directions; go to my scrivener.

Court. [*aside, while* HOARD *gives directions to the* Servant.] I'm yet like those whose riches lie in dreams,
If I be wak'd, they're false; such is my fate,
Who venture[1] deeper than the desperate state.
Though I have sinn'd, yet could I become new,
For where I once vow, I am ever true. 150

Hoa. Away, despatch, on my displeasure quickly.

[*Exit* Servant.

Happy occasion! pray heaven he be in the right vein now to set his hand to't, that nothing alter him; grant that all his follies may meet in him at once, to besot him enough!

I pray for him, i'faith, and here he comes.

Enter WITGOOD *and* Creditors.

Wit. What would you with me now, my uncle's spiteful adversary?

Hoa. Nay, I am friends.

Wit. Ay, when your mischief's spent.

Hoa. I heard you were arrested.

Wit. Well, what then? 160

You will pay none of my debts, I am sure.

Hoa. A wise man cannot tell;
There may be those conditions 'greed upon
May move me to do much.

Wit. Ay, when?—
'Tis thou, perjurèd woman! (O, no name

[1] Old eds. "ventures."

Is vild enough to match thy treachery !)
That art the cause of my confusion.

Court. Out, you penurious slave !

Hoa. Nay, wife, you are too froward ; 170
Let him alone ; give losers leave to talk.

Wit. Shall I remember thee of another promise
Far stronger than the first ?

Court. I'd fain know that.

Wit. 'Twould call shame to thy cheeks.

Court. Shame !

Wit. Hark in your ear.—
Will he come off, think'st thou, and pay my debts roundly ?

Court. Doubt nothing ; there's a release a-drawing and all, to which you must set your hand.

Wit. Excellent !

Court. But methinks, i'faith, you might have made some shift to discharge this yourself, having in the mortgage, and never have burdened my conscience with it.

Wit. A' my troth, I could not, for my creditors' cruelties extend to the present.

Court. No more.— *They converse apart.*
Why, do your worst for that, I defy you.

Wit. You're impudent : I'll call up witnesses. 190

Court. Call up thy wits, for thou hast been devoted
To follies a long time.

Hoa. Wife, you're too bitter.—
Master Witgood, and you, my masters, you shall hear a mild speech come from me now, and this it is : 't has

been my fortune, gentlemen, to have an extraordinary blessing poured upon me a' late, and here she stands; I have wedded her, and bedded her, and yet she is little the worse: some foolish words she hath passed to you in the country, and some peevish[1] debts you owe here in the city; set the hare's head to the goose-giblet,[2] release you her of her words, and I'll release you of your debts, sir.

Wit. Would you so? I thank you for that, sir; I cannot blame you, i' faith. 203

Hoa. Why, are not debts better than words, sir?

Wit. Are not words promises, and are not promises debts, sir?

Hoa. He plays at back-racket with me. [*Aside.*

First C. Come hither, master Witgood, come hither; be ruled by fools once.

Sec. C. We are citizens, and know what belong[s] to't.

First C. Take hold of his offer: pax on her, let her go; if your debts were once discharged, I would help you to a widow myself worth ten of her. 213

Third C. Mass, partner, and now you remember me on't, there's master Mulligrub's sister newly fallen a widow.

First C. Cuds me, as pat as can be! there's a widow left for you; ten thousand in money, beside plate, jewels, *et cetera:* I warrant it a match; we can do all in all with her; prithee, despatch; we'll carry thee to her presently.

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[1] Slight, trivial.

[2] A proverbial expression. Cf. Dekker and Webster's *Westward Ho*, v. 4:—"She has her diamonds, you shall have your money; the child is recovered, the false collier discovered; they came to Brainford to be merry; you were caught in bird-lime; and therefore *set the hare's head against the goose-giblets*," &c.

Wit. My uncle will ne'er endure me when he shall hear I set my hand to a release. 222

Sec. C. Hark, I'll tell thee a trick for that: I have spent five hundred pound in suits in my time, I should be wise; thou'rt now a prisoner; make a release; take't of my word, whatsoever a man makes as long as he is in durance, 'tis nothing in law, not thus much.

[*Snaps his fingers.*

Wit. Say you so, sir?

Third C. I have paid for't, I know't.

Wit. Proceed then; I consent. 230

Third C. Why, well said.

Hoa. How now, my masters, what have you done with him?

First C. With much ado, sir, we have got him to consent.

Hoa. Ah—a—a! and what come[1] his debts to now?

First C. Some eight score odd pounds, sir.

Hoa. Naw, naw, naw, naw, naw! tell me the second time; give me a lighter sum; they are but desperate debts, you know; ne'er called in but upon such an accident; a poor, needy knave, he would starve and rot in prison: come, come, you shall have ten shillings in the pound, and the sum down roundly. 244

First C. You must make it a mark,[2] sir.

Hoa. Go to then, tell your money in the meantime; you shall find little less there. [*Giving them money.*]—

---

[1] Old eds. "came."

[2] "Mark" = 13*s.* 4*d.*

—Come, master Witgood, you are so unwilling to do yourself good now !

Enter Scrivener.

Welcome, honest scrivener.—Now you shall hear the release read. 251

Scri. [*reads.*] *Be it known to all men, by these presents, that I, Theodorus Witgood, gentleman, sole nephew to Pecunius Lucre, having unjustly made title and claim to one Jane Medler, late widow of Anthony Medler, and now wife to Walkadine Hoard, in consideration of a competent sum of money to discharge my debts, do for ever hereafter disclaim any title, right, estate, or interest in or to the said widow, late in the occupation of the said Anthony Medler, and now in the occupation of Walkadine Hoard; as also neither to lay claim by virtue of any former contract, grant, promise, or demise, to any of her manor*[*s*], *manor-houses, parks, groves, meadow-grounds, arable lands, barns, stacks, stables, dove-holes, and coney-burrows; together with all her cattle, money, plate, jewels, borders, chains, bracelets, furnitures, hangings, moveables or immoveables.*[1] *In witness whereof, I the said Theodorus Witgood have interchangeably set to my hand and seal before these presents, the day and date above written.* 269

Wit. What a precious fortune hast thou slipt here, like a beast as thou art !

Hoa. Come, unwilling heart, come.

Wit. Well, master Hoard, give me the pen ; I see
'Tis vain to quarrel with our destiny. [*Signs the paper.*

[1] So ed. 2.—Ed. 1 "immouerables."

Hoa. O, as vain a thing as can be! you cannot commit a greater absurdity, sir. So, so; give me that hand now; before all these presents, I am friends for ever with thee. 278

Wit. Troth, and it were pity of my heart now, if I should bear you any grudge, i'faith.

Hoa. Content: I'll send for thy uncle against the wedding dinner; we will be friends once again.

Wit. I hope to bring it to pass myself, sir.

Hoa. How now? is't right, my masters?

First C. 'Tis something wanting, sir; yet it shall be sufficient.

Hoa. Why, well said; a good conscience makes a fine show now-a-days. Come, my masters, you shall all taste of my wine ere you depart.

All the Cred. We follow you, sir. 290

[*Exeunt* HOARD *and* Scrivener.

Wit. I'll try these fellows now. [*Aside.*]—A word, sir: what, will you carry me to that widow now?

First C. Why, do you think we were in earnest, i'faith? carry you to a rich widow? we should get much credit by that: a noted rioter! a contemptible prodigal! 'twas a trick we have amongst us to get in our money: fare you well, sir. [*Exeunt* Creditors.

Wit. Farewell, and be hanged, you short pig-haired, ram-headed rascals! he that believes in you shall ne'er be saved, I warrant him. By this new league I shall have some access[1] unto my love. 301

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[1] "The quarto of 1616 reads, 'some *above* access;' and the niece

JOYCE *appears above.*

Joyce. Master Witgood!

Wit. My life!

Joyce. Meet me presently; that note directs you [*throws him a letter*]: I would not be suspected: our happiness attends us: farewell.

Wit. A word's enough. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE V.

DAMPIT'S *Bed-chamber.*

DAMPIT *in bed;* AUDREY *spinning by;* Boy.

Aud. [*singing.*]
Let the usurer cram him, in interest that excel,
There's pits enow to damn him, before he comes to hell;
In Holborn some, in Fleet Street some,
Where'er he come there's some, there's some.

Dam. Trahe, trahito, draw the curtain; give me a sip of sack more.

While he drinks, enter LAMPREY *and* SPICHCOCK.

Lam. Look you; did not I tell you he lay like the devil in chains, when he was bound for a thousand year? [1]

[Joyce] speaks without a notice of her having entered: whereas in the first quarto there is a stage-direction, 'She is *above;*' and I suppose the word caught the printer's eye, and was erroneously introduced into the text."—*Editor of* 1816.

[1] "Our poet alludes here to a passage in the Revelation of St. John, chap. xx. 2."—*Editor of* 1816.

Spi. But I think the devil had no steel bedstaffs; he goes beyond him for that. 10

Lam. Nay, do but mark the conceit of his drinking; one must wipe his mouth for him with a muckinder,[1] do you see, sir?

Spi. Is this the sick trampler? why, he is only bed-rid with drinking.

Lam. True, sir. He spies us.

Dam. What, Sir Tristram? you come and see a weak man here, a very weak man.

Lam. If you be weak in body, you should be strong in prayer, sir. 20

Dam. O, I have prayed too much, poor man!

Lam. There's a taste of his soul for you!

Spi. Faugh, loathsome!

Lam. I come to borrow a hundred pound of you, sir.

Dam. Alas, you come at an ill time! I cannot spare it, i'faith; I ha' but two thousand i' th' house.

Aud. Ha, ha, ha!

Dam. Out, you gernative[2] quean, the mullipood[3] of villany, the spinner of concupiscency!

Enter SIR LAUNCELOT *and others.*

Sir L. Yea, gentlemen, are you here before us? how is he now? 31

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[1] Handkerchief.—The term is used by Ben Jonson (*Tale of a Tub*, iii. 1) and others.

[2] "Gernative" means, I suppose, *grinning*. The form *girn* for *grin* is not uncommon.

[3] Multiple.

Lam. Faith, the same man still: the tavern bitch has bit him i' th' head.[1]

Sir L. We shall have the better sport with him: peace.—And how cheers master Dampit now?

Dam. O, my bosom, Sir Launcelot, how cheer I! thy presence is restorative.

Sir L. But I hear a great complaint of you, master Dampit, among gallants.

Dam. I am glad of that, i'faith: prithee, what? 40

Sir L. They say you are waxed proud a' late, and if a friend visit you in the afternoon, you'll scarce know him.

Dam. Fie, fie; proud? I cannot remember any such thing: sure I was drunk then.

Sir L. Think you so, sir?

Dam. There 'twas, i'faith; nothing but the pride of the sack; and so certify 'em.—Fetch sack, sirrah.

Boy. A vengeance sack you once!

[*Exit, and returns presently with sack.*

Aud. Why, master Dampit, if you hold on as you begin, and lie a little longer, you need not take care how to dispose your wealth; you'll make the vintner your heir.

Dam. Out, you babliaminy, you unfeathered, cremitoried quean, you cullisance of scabiosity! 53

Aud. Good words, master Dampit, to speak before a maid and a virgin!

Dam. Hang thy virginity upon the pole of carnality!

Aud. Sweet terms! my mistress shall know 'em.

Lam. Note but the misery of this usuring slave: here he lies, like a noisome dunghill, full of the poison of his

[1] "One of the many proverbs expressive of inebriety."—*Editor of* 1816.

drunken blasphemies; and they to whom he bequeaths all, grudge him the very meat that feeds him, the very pillow that eases him. Here may a usurer behold his end: what profits it to be a slave in this world, and a devil i' th' next? 64

Dam. Sir Launcelot, let me buss thee, Sir Launcelot; thou art the only friend that I honour and respect.

Sir L. I thank you for that, master Dampit.

Dam. Farewell, my bosom Sir Launcelot.

Sir L. Gentlemen, and you love me, let me step behind you, and one of you fall a-talking of me to him. 70

Lam. Content.—Master Dampit——

Dam. So, sir.

Lam. Here came Sir Launcelot to see you e'en now.

Dam. Hang him, rascal!

Lam. Who? Sir Launcelot?

Dam. Pythagorical rascal!

Lam. Pythagorical?

Dam. Ay, he changes his cloak when he meets a sergeant.

Sir L. What a rogue's this! 80

Lam. I wonder you can rail at him, sir; he comes in love to see you.

Dam. A louse for his love! his father was a comb-maker; I have no need of his crawling love: he comes to have longer day,[1] the superlative rascal!

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[1] To postpone the payment of money he had borrowed. See note 1, p. 298. Dyce quotes from Brome's *City Wit*, i. 1:—

"You know this meeting
Was for the creditors to give *longer day*."

Cf. Prologue to Marston's *What you Will*:—

Sir L. 'Sfoot, I can no longer endure the rogue!—Master Dampit, I come to take my leave once again, sir.

Dam. Who? my dear and kind Sir Lancelot, the only gentleman of England? let me hug thee: farewell, and a thousand.[1] 90

Lam. Compos'd of wrongs and slavish flatteries!

Sir L. Nay, gentlemen, he shall show you more tricks yet; I'll give you another taste of him.

Lam. Is't possible?

Sir L. His memory is upon departing.

Dam. Another cup of sack!

Sir L. Mass, then 'twill be quite gone! Before he drink that, tell him there's a country client come up, and here attends for his learned advice.

Lam. Enough. 100

Dam. One cup more, and then let the bell toll: I hope I shall be weak enough by that time.

Lam. Master Dampit——

Dam. Is the sack spouting?

Lam. 'Tis coming forward, sir. Here's a countryman, a client of yours, waits for your deep and profound advice, sir.

Dam. A coxcombry, where is he? let him approach: set me up a peg higher.

Lam. [*to* SIR LAUN.] You must draw near, sir. 110

"A silly subject, too too simply clad,
Is all his present, all his ready pay
For many debts. Give *further day.*"

[1] "Farewell, and a thousand" = a thousand times farewell. The expression is found in Peele's *Old Wives' Tale.* Cf. Shakespeare's "Sweet, and twenty."

Dam. Now, good man fooliaminy, what say you to me now?

Sir L. Please your good worship, I am a poor man, sir——

Dam. What make you in my chamber then?

Sir L. I would entreat your worship's device[1] in a just and honest cause, sir.

Dam. I meddle with no such matters; I refer 'em to master No-man's office.

Sir L. I had but one house left me in all the world, sir, which was my father's, my grandfather's, my great-grandfather's, and now a villain has unjustly wrung me out, and took possession on't. 123

Dam. Has he such feats? Thy best course is to bring thy *ejectione firmæ*, and in seven year thou mayst shove him out by the law.

Sir L. Alas, an't please your worship, I have small friends and less money!

Dam. Hoyday! this geer will fadge well:[2] hast no money? why, then, my advice is, thou must set fire a' th' house, and so get him out. 131

Lam. That will break strife, indeed.

Sir L. I thank your worship for your hot counsel, sir. —Altering but my voice a little, you see he knew me not: you may observe by this, that a drunkard's memory holds longer in the voice than in the person. But, gentlemen, shall I show you a sight? Behold the little

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[1] "So a clown in Randolph's *Hey for Honesty*, 1651: 'Ile tell you what I do *devise* you now, this is my pinion,' act i. scene 1."—*Dyce.*

[2] This business will succeed well.

dive-dapper[1] of damnation, Gulf the usurer, for his time worse than t'other.

Lam. What's he comes with him? 140

Sir L. Why, Hoard, that married lately the widow Medler.

Lam. O, I cry you mercy, sir.

Enter HOARD *and* GULF.

Hoa. Now, gentlemen visitants, how does master Dampit?

Sir L. Faith, here he lies, e'en drawing in, sir, good canary as fast as he can, sir; a very weak creature truly, he is almost past memory.

Hoa. Fie, master Dampit! you lie lazing a-bed here, and I come to invite you to my wedding-dinner: up, up, up! 151

Dam. Who's this? master Hoard? who hast thou married, in the name of foolery?

Hoa. A rich widow.

Dam. A Dutch widow?[2]

Hoa. A rich widow; one widow Medler.

Dam. Medler? she keeps open house.

Hoa. She did, I can tell you, in her t'other husband's days; open house for all comers; horse and man was welcome, and room enough for 'em all. 160

Dam. There's too much for thee then; thou mayst let out some to thy neighbours.

---

[1] Or *didapper*,—the small bird *dabchick*. We have the form *dive-dapper* again in *More Dissemblers Besides Women*, iii. 1.

[2] See note 3, p. 300.

Gulf. What, hung alive in chains? O spectacle! bed-staffs of steel? *O monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum!*[1] O Dampit, Dampit, here's a just judgment shown upon usury, extortion, and trampling[2] villany!

Sir L. This [is] excellent, thief rails upon the thief!

Gulf. Is this the end of cut-throat usury, brothel, and blasphemy? now mayst thou see what race a usurer runs. 171

Dam. Why, thou rogue of universality, do not I know thee? thy sound is like the cuckoo, the Welch ambassador:[3] thou cowardly slave, that offers to fight with a sick man when his weapon's down! rail upon me in my naked[4] bed? why, thou great Lucifer's little vicar! I am not so weak but I know a knave at first sight: thou inconscionable rascal! thou that goest upon Middlesex juries, and wilt make haste to give up thy verdict[5] because thou wilt not lose thy dinner! Are you answered? 181

Gulf. An't were not for shame——

[*Draws his dagger.*

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[1] Virg. *Æn.* iii. 658. [2] See note 2, p. 264.

[3] "A jocular name for the cuckoo, I presume from its migrating hither from the west."—*Nares' Gloss. in v.*

[4] *i.e.* undressed in my bed. The expression "naked bed" was very common. Cf. the much-ridiculed line in the *Spanish Tragedy*—

"Who calls Jeronymo from his *naked bed.*"

[5] "Did Pope remember this passage?

'The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang, that jurymen may dine.'
The Rape of the Lock, iii. 21."—*Dyce.*

Dam. Thou wouldst be hanged then.

Lam. Nay, you must exercise patience, master Gulf, always in a sick man's chamber.

Sir L. He'll quarrel with none, I warrant you, but those that are bed-rid.

Dam. Let him come, gentlemen, I am armed: reach my close-stool hither.

Sir L. Here will be a sweet fray anon: I'll leave you, gentlemen. 191

Lam. Nay, we'll along with you.—Master Gulf——

Gulf. Hang him, usuring rascal!

Sir L. Push[1] set your strength to his, your wit to his!

Aud. Pray, gentlemen, depart; his hour's come upon him.—Sleep in my bosom, sleep.

Sir L. Nay, we have enough of him, i'faith; keep him for the house.

Now make your best:
For thrice his wealth I would not have his breast. 200

Gulf. A little thing would make me beat him now he's asleep.

Sir L. Mass, then 'twill be a pitiful day when he wakes: I would be loath to see that day: come.

Gulf. You overrule me, gentlemen, i'faith.

[*Exeunt.*

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[1] Pish.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Room in LUCRE'S *House.*

Enter LUCRE *and* WITGOOD.

Wit. Nay, uncle, let me prevail with you so much; I'faith, go, now he has invited you.

Luc. I shall have great joy there when he has borne away the widow!

Wit. Why, la, I thought where I should find you presently: uncle, a' my troth, 'tis nothing so.

Luc. What's nothing so, sir? is not he married to the widow?

Wit. No, by my troth, is he not, uncle.

Luc. How? 10

Wit. Will you have the truth on't? he is married to a whore, i'faith.

Luc. I should laugh at that.

Wit. Uncle, let me perish in your favour if you find it not so; and that 'tis I that have married the honest woman.

Luc. Ha! I'd walk ten mile a' foot to see that, i'faith.

Wit. And see't you shall, or I'll ne'er see you again.

Luc. A quean, i'faith? ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in HOARD'S *House.*

Enter HOARD *tasting wine,* Host *following in a livery cloak.*

Hoa. Pup, pup, pup, pup, I like not this wine : is there never a better tierce in the house?

Host. Yes, sir, there are as good tierce in the house as any are in England.

Hoa. Desire your mistress, you knave, to taste 'em all over ; she has better skill.

Host. Has she so? the better for her, and the worse for you. [*Aside, and exit.*

Hoa. Arthur !

Enter ARTHUR.

Is the cupboard [1] of plate set out? 10

Arth. All's in order, sir. [*Exit.*

Hoa. I am in love with my liveries every time I think on 'em ; they make a gallant show, by my troth. Niece !

Enter JOYCE.

Joyce. Do you call, sir?

Hoa. Prithee, show a little diligence, and overlook the knaves a little ; they'll filch and steal to-day, and send whole pasties home to their wives : and [2] thou be'st a good niece, do not see me purloined.

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[1] "*i. e.* a moveable sideboard, or buffet, containing the plate."—*Dyce.*

[2] If.

Joyce. Fear it not, sir—I have cause: though the feast be prepared for you, yet it serves fit for my wedding-dinner too. [*Aside, and exit.* 21

Enter LAMPREY *and* SPICHCOCK.

Hoa. Master Lamprey and master Spichcock, two the most welcome gentlemen alive! your fathers and mine were all free a' th' fishmongers.

Lam. They were indeed, sir. You see bold guests, sir; soon entreated.

Hoa. And that's best, sir.

Enter Servant.

How now, sirrah?

Ser. There's a coach come to th' door, sir.

[*Exit.*

Hoa. My Lady Foxtone, a' my life!—Mistress Jane Hoard! wife!—Mass, 'tis her ladyship indeed! 31

Enter LADY FOXTONE.

Madam, you are welcome to an unfurnished house, dearth of cheer, scarcity of attendance.

L. Fox. You are pleased to make the worst, sir.

Hoa. Wife!

Enter Courtesan.

L. Fox. Is this your bride?

Hoa. Yes, madam.—Salute my Lady Foxtone.

Court. Please you, madam, awhile to taste the air in the garden?

L. Fox. 'Twill please us well. 40

[*Exeunt* L. FOXTONE *and* Courtesan.

Hoa. Who would not wed? the most delicious life! No joys are like the comforts of a wife.

Lam. So we bachelors think, that are not troubled with them.

Re-enter Servant.

Ser. Your worship's brother, with other ancient gentlemen,[1] are newly alighted, sir. [*Exit.*

Hoa. Master Onesiphorus Hoard? why, now our company begins to come in.

Enter ONESIPHORUS HOARD, LIMBER, *and* KIX.

My dear and kind brother, welcome, i'faith.

Ones. H. You see we are men at an hour, brother. 50

Hoa. Ay, I'll say that for you, brother; you keep as good an hour to come to a feast as any gentleman in the shire.—What, old master Limber and master Kix! do we meet, i'faith, jolly gentlemen?

Lim. We hope you lack guess,[2] sir?

Hoa. O, welcome, welcome! we lack still such guess as your worships.

Ones. H. Ah, sirrah brother, have you catched up widow Medler?

Hoa. From 'em all, brother; and I may tell you I had mighty enemies, those that stuck sore; old Lucre is a sore fox, I can tell you, brother. 62

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[1] Old eds. "an other ancient gentleman." [2] Guests.

Ones. H. Where is she? I'll go seek her out: I long to have a smack at her lips.

Hoa. And most wishfully, brother, see where she comes.

Re-enter Courtesan *and* LADY FOXTONE.

Give her a smack[1] now we may hear it all the house over. [Courtesan *and* ONES. H. *start and turn away.*

Court. O heaven, I am betray'd! I know that face.

Hoa. Ha, ha, ha! why, how now? are you both ashamed?—Come, gentlemen, we'll look another way. 71

Ones. H. Nay, brother, hark you: come, you're disposed to be merry.

Hoa. Why do we meet else, man?

Ones. H. That's another matter: I was ne'er so 'fraid in my life but that you had been in earnest.

Hoa. How mean you, brother?

Ones. H. You said she was your wife.

Hoa. Did I so? by my troth, and so she is.

Ones. H. By your troth, brother? 80

Hoa. What reason have I to dissemble with my friends, brother? if marriage can make her mine, she is mine. Why—— [ONESIPHORUS HOARD *is about to retire.*

Ones. H. Troth, I am not well of a sudden: I must crave pardon, brother; I came to see you, but I cannot stay dinner, i'faith.

Hoa. I hope you will not serve me so, brother?

Lim. By your leave, master Hoard——

---

[1] Old eds. "smerck."

Hoa. What now? what now? pray, gentlemen :—you were wont to show yourselves wise men. 90

Lim. But you have shown your folly too much here.

Hoa. How?

Kix. Fie, fie! a man of your repute and name!
You'll feast your friends, but cloy 'em first with shame.

Hoa. This grows too deep; pray, let us reach the sense.

Lim. In your old age doat on a courtesan!

Hoa. Ha!

Kix. Marry a strumpet!

Hoa. Gentlemen!

Ones. H. And Witgood's quean! 100

Hoa. O! nor lands nor living?

Ones. H. Living!

Hoa. [*to* Courtesan.] Speak.

Court. Alas, you know, at first, sir,
I told you I had nothing!

Hoa. Out, out! I am cheated; infinitely cozen'd!

Lim. Nay, master Hoard——

Enter LUCRE, WITGOOD, *and* JOYCE.

Hoa. A Dutch widow![1] a Dutch widow! a Dutch widow!

Luc. Why, nephew, shall I trace thee still a liar?
Wilt make me mad? is not yon thing the widow? 110

Wit. Why, la, you are so hard a' belief, uncle! by my troth, she's a whore.

Luc. Then thou'rt a knave.

Wit. *Negatur argumentum*, uncle.

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[1] See note 2, p. 300.

Luc. Probo tibi, nephew: he that knows a woman to be a quean must needs be a knave; thou sayst thou knowest her to be one; *ergo*, if she be a quean, thou'rt a knave.

Wit. Negatur sequela majoris, uncle; he that knows a woman to be a quean must needs be a knave; I deny that. 121

Hoa. Lucre and Witgood, you're both villains; get you out of my house!

Luc. Why, didst not invite me to thy wedding-dinner?

Wit. And are not you and I sworn perpetual friends before witness, sir, and were both drunk upon't?

Hoa. Daintily abus'd! you've put a junt [1] upon me!

Luc. Ha, ha, ha!

Hoa. A common strumpet!

Wit. Nay, now 130
You wrong her, sir; if I were she, I'd have
The law on you for that; I durst depose for her
She ne'er had common use nor common thought.

Court. Despise me, publish me, I am your wife;
What shame can I have now but you'll have part?
If in disgrace you share, I sought not you;
You pursu'd, nay,[2] forc'd me; had I friends would follow it,
Less than your action has been prov'd a rape.

Ones. H. Brother!

Court. Nor did I ever boast of lands unto you, 140
Money, or goods; I took a plainer course,

---

[1] Whore.—I do not remember to have met the word elsewhere.

[2] Old eds. "pursued me, nay."

And told you true, I'd nothing :
If error were committed, 'twas by you ;
Thank your own folly : nor has my sin been
So odious, but worse has been forgiven ;
Nor am I so deform'd, but I may challenge
The utmost power of any old man's love.
She that tastes not sin before [twenty], twenty to one but she'll taste it after : most of you old men are content to marry young virgins, and take that which follows ; where, marrying one of us, you both save a sinner and are quit from a cuckold for ever : 152
And more, in brief, let this your best thoughts win,
She that knows sin, knows best how to hate sin.

Hoa. Curs'd be all malice ! black are the fruits of spite,
And poison first their owners. O, my friends,
I must embrace shame, to be rid of shame !
Conceal'd disgrace prevents a public name.
Ah, Witgood ! ah, Theodorus ! 159

Wit. Alas, sir, I was pricked in conscience to see her well bestowed, and where could I bestow her better than upon your pitiful worship ? Excepting but myself, I dare swear she's a virgin ; and now, by marrying your niece, I have banished myself for ever from her : she's mine aunt now, by my faith, and there's no meddling with mine aunt, you know : a sin against my nuncle.[1]

Court. Lo, gentlemen, before you all [*Kneels.*
In true reclaimed form I fall.
Henceforth for ever I defy[2]
The glances of a sinful eye, 170

[1] A common corruption of *uncle.* [2] Renounce.

Waving of fans[1] (which some suppose
Tricks of fancy[2]), treading of toes,
Wringing of fingers, biting the lip,
The wanton gait, th' alluring trip;
All secret friends and private meetings,
Close-borne letters and bawds' greetings;
Feigning excuse to women's labours
When we are sent for to th' next neighbour's;
Taking false physic, and ne'er start
To be let blood though sign[3] be at heart; 180
Removing chambers, shifting beds,
To welcome friends in husbands' steads,
Them to enjoy, and you to marry,
They first serv'd, while you must tarry,
They to spend, and you to gather,
They to get, and you to father:
These, and thousand, thousand more,
New reclaim'd, I now abhor.

Luc. [*to* WITGOOD.] Ah, here's a lesson, rioter, for you!

Wit. I must confess my follies; I'll down too: [*Kneels.*

---

[1] "Here Middleton recollected the Palinode which closes *Cynthia's Revels*:

'From *secret friends*,
. . . . . .
From waving fans, coy *glances*.'
JONSON'S *Works*, vol. ii. p. 380, ed. Giff."—*Dyce.*

[2] Love.

[3] The editor of 1816 read "sin"—wrongly. Dyce remarks that "according to the directions for bleeding in old almanacs, blood was to be taken from particular parts under particular planets;" and he adduces a passage from Yarington's *Two Tragedies in One*:—

"Chill let our blood, but yet it is no time
Vntill *the zygne be gone below the hart.*" (sig. H. 4.)

And here for ever I disclaim 191
The cause of youth's undoing, game,
Chiefly dice, those true outlanders,
That shake out beggars, thieves, and panders;
Soul-wasting surfeits, sinful riots,
Queans' evils, doctors' diets,
'Pothecaries' drugs, surgeons' glisters;
Stabbing of arms[1] for a common mistress;
Riband favours, ribald speeches;
Dear perfum'd jackets, pennyless breeches; 200
Dutch flapdragons,[2] healths in urine;[3]
Drabs that keep a man too sure in:
I do defy[4] you all.
Lend me each honest hand, for here I rise
A reclaim'd man, loathing the general vice.

Hoa. So, so, all friends! the wedding-dinner cools:
Who seem most crafty prove ofttimes most fools.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

---

[1] "Here again Middleton has an eye to Jonson:

'From *stabbing of arms, flapdragons.*'—*Works*, ibid.

To stab their arms with daggers, and drink off the blood mixed with wine, to the health of their mistresses, was formerly a frequent practice among gallants."—*Dyce.*

[2] See note 1, p. 187. Dutchmen had the reputation of being very expert in swallowing flapdragons. Cf. Lodowick Barry's *Ram Alley*—

"My brother
Swallows it with more ease than a Dutchman
Does flapdragons."

[3] There is an allusion to this filthy practice in Marston's *Dutch Courtezan*, iv. i.

[4] Renounce.

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